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From Pillage to Conquest: The Normans in Ireland, 1167-1185

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FROM PILLAGE TO CONQUEST:
THE NORMANS IN IRELAND, 1167-1185

by

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B.S., May 1985, Western Washington University

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ABSTRACT

FROM PILLAGE TO CONQUEST:
THE NORMANS IN IRELAND, 1167-1185

Ray E. Etheridge
Old Dominion University, 1990
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The history of Ireland and England has been intertwined since the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in the last half of the twelfth century. It is easy to view this invasion as a well planned and state sponsored endeavor of the Angevin kings and the Anglo-Norman nobility. However, this is a great simplification of Irish Anglo-Norman history. It is the purpose of this study to determine to what extent and when the Anglo-Norman adventures in Ireland became an invasion. The two primary sources for doing so are the works of Gerald Cambrensis, and the anonymous Song of Dermot and the Earl. By comparing the adventures of the early Anglo-Norman lords to each other it can be seen how and when order and administration began to take precedence over chaos of pillage and battle.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND

Invasions are rarely easy things to explain and the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland is no exception. When Dermot MacMurrough lost his kingdom to Rory O'Conner in 1166 he had to turn to forces outside Ireland to regain his lands. He went to Henry II, the Angevin emperor. Although Henry provided him with no direct aid, he did give Dermot permission to recruit nobles to his cause from throughout the Empire, and this was to have profound consequences for both Ireland and the Angevin Empire.

The nobles Dermot recruited were but the first of many Anglo-Normans who would seek to win lands for themselves in Ireland over the next several decades. According to the contemporary Song of Dermot and the Earl, Richard FitzGodibert was the first of the Anglo-Normans to set foot in Ireland.¹ Richard FitzStephen and Meiler FitzHenry were soon to follow, as was Richard de Clare, better known as Strongbow. These men have been called many things. Some have called them adventurers, others have called them invaders, but whatever descriptive adjective might be applied, in order to understand what the Anglo-

¹ Song of Dermot and the Earl, trans. and ed. Goddard Henry Orpen (London: Oxford University Press, 1892), 33.

Norman invasion of Ireland truly was, it is necessary to look at each of these men so that we may uncover how and why they came to be involved in Ireland's history.

The Anglo-Norman lords who replied to Dermot's call between 1167 and 1171 were but the first of many to try their hand at winning land in Ireland throughout the next several decades. That others followed was in no small measure due to their successes in taking over large tracts of Irish land so quickly. It is all too easy to see their individual adventures as part of an organized conquest. However, to do so is an oversimplification of the complex interaction of cultures and personalities which constituted the Anglo-Norman involvement in Ireland. It is the purpose of this study to determine how and to what extent the Anglo-Norman intervention in Ireland was transformed into an invasion.

There exist two main reasons that this study needs to be undertaken. First, it is necessary to dispel the myths and clouds of rationalization that surround the Anglo-Norman expeditions in Ireland; and second, it is necessary to show how the policies and actions of those involved came about. It is easy to rationalize about the reasons for the Anglo-Normans' success. Some have thought of the Irish as backwards and uncivilized. To these people, such as James Henry Ramsay,² the Irish in many ways were a backward and

² James Henry Ramsay, The Angevin Empire (London: Swan Sonnenschein Co., 1903; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1978), 139-40.

uncivilized people. Thus, they were unable to resist the course of history, in the form of the invincible Norman soldiers. The tread of these mail-clad warriors thus became the march of destiny.

Modern researchers have shown that such a picture of twelfth-century Ireland is not accurate, and yet they often err in the opposite way. Gaelic revivalists call Dermot a criminal or a traitor.³ The Normans thus are viewed as an invading army intent on conquest and destruction of the local Irish nobility and culture from the moment they first set foot in the country.

In several of these papers Rory O'Conner is made out to be the first High King, or ard-ri, since 1022 to completely unify Ireland.⁴ The Anglo-Normans, prompted by Dermot, are made into the destroyers of a unified Irish state. Blame is often placed on Rory for not seeing the danger the foreigners posed and eradicating them earlier. Was Rory more interested in his recognition as ard-ri than he was worried about Dermot's foreigners, as some authors have suggested?⁵ If so, why? Why did he not eradicate the

³ Goddard Henry Orpen, Ireland Under the Normans 1169-1216 (Oxford: University Press, 1911; reprint, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 1:72.

⁴ Donncha O'Corrain, Ireland Before the Normans (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972), 168.

⁵ Orpen, Ireland Under the Normans, 173.

Normans early in the invasion? Was he unable to do so, unwilling to do so, or did he simply not see the Anglo-Normans in the same way as modern researchers? Answers to these questions will help illuminate much about the Anglo-Normans expeditions to Ireland. Similarly, the Anglo-Norman side needs to be studied with a similar question in mind. Why did Henry II act as he did, and what was his overall policy with regard to Ireland? However, before turning to these questions, it will be prudent to examine our terminology and source material.

Before proceeding further it may be useful to define certain terms. First of all, there is the difficulty of explaining what exactly is meant by the term Anglo-Norman, which seems to imply that these men were of mixed English, or more accurately Anglo-Saxon, and Norman blood. The Norman invasion of England had occurred exactly a century earlier in 1066, but, by no means had the Norman invaders and the Anglo-Saxon Englishmen been fully socially assimilated. Large settlements with very diverse and separate cultural groups still remained in many areas of Britain, notably in southern Wales, the area from which came nearly all of the Anglo-Normans who answered Dermot's call. Here, these groups consisted of two distinct types of people, the locals and the outsiders. The locals included the Anglo-Saxons and the Welsh. The Welsh had resisted the Norman invasion somewhat more successfully than the English had. This fact is not without consequence for Ireland, as

we shall see later. The outsiders consisted of Normans, who had been invading Wales over the course of the last century. Moreover, many of those involved in the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland were neither Norman nor Anglo-Saxon, but rather were of Flemish stock. Many were drawn from the large group of Flemings that Henry I had settled in Pembrokeshire, and who had managed to retain their own culture and language.⁶

Having noted this diversity, for the purposes of this paper the conventional usage shall be employed, whereby any outside adventurers from the Angevin lands will be referred to as Anglo-Norman. Exceptions to this will be made only when an individual's personal background is discussed or their ethnicity is germane to an understanding of their actions in Ireland.

It is also necessary to introduce precision into the usage of the words adventure, invasion, and expedition. An adventure will refer to any expedition essentially led for personal gain, usually in the form of either booty or land. An adventure is undertaken by one man, or a small group of men, for their own advantage. There is risk involved, but they risk nothing beyond their own personal fortunes. Specifically, this term will mark the boundary between a small personal expedition, and a planned campaign of

⁶ Brian Eagar, The Cambro-Normans and the Lordship of Leinster, in Settlement and Society in Medieval Ireland, ed. J. Bradley (Dublin: Privately printed, 1986), 196.

conquest, otherwise known as an invasion. The word invasion will refer to those attempts to gain land, or provide administration, as part of a long term plan for military occupation. However, care must be taken to differentiate between those lands ruled by Anglo-Normans but still essentially held by the Irish, and lands where the Irish had been supplanted. Finally, where no specific intent is to be implied about what the Anglo-Norman purpose in Ireland was, the word expedition will be used.

When we turn to the sources for the history of the Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland we are confronted with further difficulties, as there are two distinct historiographic traditions, one Anglo-Norman, and the other Irish. It is fortunate that two excellent Anglo-Norman accounts of this period have survived. These are the various works of Giraldus Cambrensis,⁷ especially Expugnatio Hibernica, and the anonymous Song of Dermot and the Earl. These two works contain a great amount of information about the early Anglo-Norman adventures in Ireland, but care must be exercised in using each.

Giraldus had very close family ties to many of the early Anglo-Norman adventurers, and his account of their

⁷ Giraldus Cambrensis is the author of one of the two main books which cover the Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland, and he is the only one we know by name. In fact, he is related to many of the Anglo-Normans who took part in the early expeditions and visited the country himself on several occasions.

adventures is therefore naturally biased.⁸ On the one hand, he viewed the Irish king who prompted the invasion, Dermot, as a cruel and unpopular tyrant.⁹ On the other hand, his treatment of Richard de Clare, Strongbow, has to be handled carefully as well. Strongbow was one of the principal men involved in the Anglo-Norman adventures in Ireland.

Giraldus sees him as a diplomat and deal-maker. Yet, since Giraldus was related to the earlier adventurers he would naturally seek to enhance their reputation while diminishing Strongbow's. However, even in the Song of Dermot Strongbow is described as taking advantage of the successful men who went to Ireland before him to further his own position.¹⁰

If there are problems concerning Strongbow's representation in these works, even greater difficulties surround the various accounts of Dermot MacMurrough. MacMurrough was the king of Leinster for nearly four decades before his expulsion in 1166 by Rory O'Conner and Tiernan O'Rourke, yet his place in both history and historiography remains a controversial issue. We have already noted that he was viewed rather critically by Giraldus Cambrensis, but, to modern day Irish revivalists he is seen as a criminal and

⁸ Maurice Powicke, The Christian Life in the Middle Ages (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935; reprint, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 111.

⁹ Giraldus Cambrensis, Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland, ed. A. B. Scott and F. X. Martin (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1978), 25.

¹⁰ Song of Dermot, 191.

traitor for bringing the Anglo-Normans into Ireland.¹¹ Seen by some writers as cruel and despotic, to others he has appeared merely as a man of his times, albeit an exceptionally influential man. In many ways the controversy surrounding Dermot mirrors the controversy surrounding the Anglo-Normans themselves. Exactly what he was planning leads directly into the question of what the Anglo-Normans were trying to do. Dermot's own plans were adopted by the Anglo-Normans, who thus become Irish landlords in more ways than one. They picked up right where he left off. However, in doing so they focused the attention of a person far more powerful than Rory O'Conner on the Irish situation, namely Henry II, King of England, and emperor of the Angevin Empire. This fact makes reliance on Giraldus's information all the more delicate, but fortunately another contemporary chronicle of the period exists to aid in our understanding of the Anglo-Norman adventures in Ireland, the anonymous Song of Dermot and the Earl.

The Song of Dermot and the Earl provides us with another account of the early Anglo-Norman adventures in Ireland. The Song of Dermot is a Norman-French poem, a heroic Anglo-Norman epic describing their actions in Ireland. Although the Song provides a point of view without an Geraldine overtone, it unfortunately ends in 1175.¹²

¹¹ Orpen, Ireland Under the Normans, 70.

¹² Without such a source for balance it becomes more difficult to evaluate Giraldus. Giraldus is the grandson of Gerald of Windsor and Nesta, the daughter of Welsh king Rhys

Until it ends this poem allows us to paint a more balanced picture of the Anglo-Norman adventures in Ireland as well, and provides access to a better determination of the personalities and motives of the adventurers themselves. Combined with other contemporary sources of information a fairly accurate and detailed picture of the Anglo-Norman adventures in Ireland can be determined.

Other surviving English sources include records of royal grants and charters as well as chronicles which touch on Ireland at least occasionally. While not as useful as Giraldus and the Song of Dermot, such sources nevertheless provide a good amount of supplementary material. The Papal Bull Laudabiliter is another important source, useful in both understanding the religious connotations of the invasion, and in shedding light on royal policy and desires.¹³ The Treaty of Windsor shows how Henry II tried to deal with the chaotic and dangerous balance of power that developed in Ireland.¹⁴ These sources show how the Anglo-

ap Tewdr, both of whom had many of their descendants take part in the Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland. Their descendants are known collectively as the Geraldines. Maurice FitzGerald, Robert FitzStephen, Raymond FitzWilliam, Giraldus Cambrensis, and a host of others are included in this family. See Appendix A for the genealogical table of this family.

¹³ David C. Douglas and George W. Greenaway, eds., Laudabiliter, in English Historical Documents: 1042-1189, vol. 2, English Historical Documents, general ed. David C. Douglas (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), 776.

¹⁴ Flanagan, Marie Therese, Irish Society, Anglo-Norman Settlers, Angevin Kingship: Interactions in Ireland in the Late Twelfth Century (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 312-13.

Norman invasion of Ireland influenced, and was influenced by, outside forces.

The Irish sources for the period consist mostly of various Annals. For this study they shall be of secondary importance. This is primarily due to the fact that several key periods of the Anglo-Norman invasion are not recorded in them. For example, in the Annals of Ulster the Normans are barely mentioned until the siege of Dublin in 1171.¹⁵ This is, in and of itself, revealing. However, the Irish reaction to the invaders is a key point and thus must not be ignored. An understanding of the Irish background is, therefore, crucial in understanding the reactions of the natives to the Anglo-Norman invaders.

Ireland in the twelfth century has been described as a trembling sod.¹⁶ Warfare was a constant feature of this period. Kings from each of the various provinces of Ireland fought each other for cattle, honor, and the office of the ard-ri, or High Kingship.¹⁷ From the 1130s up to 1166,

¹⁵ Annals of Ulster, trans. and ed. B. MacCarthy (Dublin: The Queen's Printing Office, Alex. Thom & Co., 1893), 163.

¹⁶ Art Cosgrove, ed. A New History of Ireland II: Medieval Ireland 1169-1534 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 1. He refers to a statement made by the seventeenth-century annalists known as the Four Masters, who were referring specifically to Ireland in the year 1154.

¹⁷ The position of the ard-ri originally belonged to the O'Neill family from A.D. 483 to 1000, with only one serious intermission in that time. When Brian Boru succeeded in securing the thrones of Thomond and Cashel, the sovereignty of the southern half of Ireland, and then the High Kingship of Tara, he broke this tradition and afterwards the position was open to all with the ambition

Dermot MacMurrough figures prominently as one of several powerful Irish nobles striving for control over Ireland.¹⁸ Three other men figure prominently in this era, Murtough O'Loughlin, Rory O'Conner, and Tiernan O'Rourke.

Murtough O'Loughlin was the most powerful king of southern Ireland during much of this period. Murtough held the position of ard-ri from 1156 to 1166. Dermot MacMurrough was his subordinate ally, not his equal.¹⁹ From 1014 and the death of Brian Boru the position of any High King had been at best tenuous and no ard-ri had ruled without opposition.²⁰ No one man or family had been able to hold the office for long. Murtough's and Dermot's chief enemies in the war for control of Ireland, and the ard-ri, were Rory O'Conner and Tiernan O'Rourke.

and power to seize it. By the twelfth century if any provincial king could gain, or force, the support of the majority of the seven major kings of Ireland he became the ard-ri. See Edmund Curtis, A History of Medieval Ireland from 1086 to 1513 (New York: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1938; reprint, New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968) for further details. For a more modern review of the position of the ard-ri see Katherine Simms's From Kings to Warlords (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 1987); Francis J. Byrne's Irish Kings and High Kings (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1975); and Art Cosgrove's, ed., A New History of Ireland 1169-1534 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

¹⁸ O'Corrain, Ireland Before the Normans, 155-61.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 163. Murtough was the King of Aileach, or the North, while Rory ruled the Connacht in western Ireland. Dermot was the King of Leinster in southeastern Ireland, and Tiernan ruled Meath in central Ireland. See Map #1.

²⁰ Orpen, Ireland Under the Normans, 37.

Rory's father had been ard-ri before his death in 1156, at which point Murtough had taken his place.²¹ Naturally this made Rory an enemy of Murtough and Dermot. Tiernan O'Rourke had been a sworn enemy of Dermot since the day that Dermot had carried off Tiernan's wife, Dervogilla, in 1152.²² She apparently went willingly and even arranged her own kidnapping, adding insult far worse than any injury done to him by Dermot. This political, and personal, infighting lasted up to 1166 and it had considerable effect on the early Anglo-Norman expeditions.

While Ireland was politically fragmented during the twelfth century it had also been undergoing a period of religious reformation. Ireland at this time was considered by many to be an uncivilized and impious place. However, the Irish clergy had recently been organized into an episcopal structure. Synods at Rathbreasail, Cashel, and Kells had resulted in an episcopal organization that was extensive, but not yet complete. In 1152 Armagh, Cashel, Dublin, and Tuam were recognized as archbishoprics and had received their pallia from John Paparo, a papal legate from Rome.²³ While the Irish clergy still had to deal with many "impious" problems caused by Irish culture and society,

²¹ Curtis, A History of Medieval Ireland, 22.

²² O'Corrain, Ireland Before the Normans, 161.

²³ Otway-Ruthven, Annette Jocelyn, A History of Medieval Ireland, 2d ed., (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1980), 39. The pallium, which confers archiepiscopal rights, is only given out by the Pope.

such as drunkenness and secular interference in religious affairs, major steps had been taken to bring the Irish clergy in line with the practices standard on the continent.²⁴ This fact was often ignored by the English clergy who saw Ireland as a possible area of expansion.

Culturally, Ireland in the twelfth century was still pre-feudal in nature. Ireland was thinly populated in comparison with the rest of Western Europe. The economy was based more on cattle and raiding than on agriculture and trade.²⁵ The vast majority of Irishmen lived in rural settlements scattered across the length and breadth of Ireland. Political fragmentation was due in part to the fact that any male child could claim a right to his father's lands and position. Warfare was constant and often fraternal in nature. Nobles fought for honor, and warfare consisted of many small, local, and personal conflicts. Because of these conditions, Irish warfare generally consisted of cattle rustling and punitive raids against recalcitrant nobles. Thus, Irish military capacity lagged far behind that of the invading Anglo-Normans.

The Irish were easily two or three centuries outdated in their military equipment. They had adopted the vicious and deadly battle ax from the Norsemen of the towns, but wore no armor. Even the Norsemen of Ireland had fallen out

²⁴ Ramsay, The Angevin Empire, 139-40.

²⁵ Otway-Ruthven, Medieval Ireland, 2.

of the habit of wearing heavy armor.²⁶ The Irish soldiers, or kerns, carried javelins into battle and used plashing and natural obstructions, such as bogs and marshes, as their defenses. They had no archers, but instead used stone slings.²⁷ Their cavalry used only blankets for saddles and used crooked sticks to goad their horses on. Their tactics consisted of pell mell charges, perfectly suited to raiding and skirmishing, but ill-suited to fighting in the open against mail-clad cavalry, like the Normans.²⁸ The only fortified places were the towns of the Norsemen, towns through which the Irish maintained tenuous contact with the rest of the world.

The towns of Ireland played an important part in its economic and military history. Since the defeat of the Norsemen at Clontarf in 1014, the power of the Scandinavians had been broken.²⁹ It is interesting to note that Normans

²⁶ Orpen, Ireland Under the Normans, 152.

²⁷ Otway-Ruthven, Medieval Ireland, 44.

²⁸ For more information of the military aspects of warfare in medieval Ireland see Simms' From Kings to Warlords, and the military history bibliography of Cosgrove's A New History of Ireland.

²⁹ R. Dudley Edwards, A New History of Ireland (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 24. At Clontarf in 1014 Brian Boru, the ard-ri, defeated the army of Mael Morda, the king of Leinster, and his Viking allies from Orkney, Scandinavia, Iceland, and Normandy. Since Irishmen and Norsemen fought on both sides, the battle was not the great nationalist victory that it has been seen as. Although Brian's forces won the battle, he died in the fighting, leaving Ireland without strong leadership for a century and a half. For more information see G. A. Hayes-McCoy's Irish Battles: A Military History of Ireland (London: Longmans, 1969).

had taken part in this battle as well. While the Norsemen still controlled the towns, these towns had been fitted into the Irish pattern rather than the other way around.³⁰ Irish bishops populated the churches, and Irish lords fought for control of the towns and their resources. However, this is not to say that the townsmen were without power. In fact, it was the townsmen of Dublin who killed Dermot's father and buried him with a dog as a token of humiliation, an event that showed the power they still possessed.³¹ When the Anglo-Normans came to Ireland it was in these towns that they first sought to gain control.

The three main cities in southern Ireland were Wexford, Waterford, and Dublin. They had their own military forces, including navies, and maintained ties with their overseas cousins in the Isle of Man, Scotland, the Hebrides, and Norway. They also provided contact with the English ports.³² For example, in 1165 the Norsemen of Dublin and Wexford provided Henry II with aid against the Welsh Princes.³³ It was through these contacts that Dermot

³⁰ Ibid., 24.

³¹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 67 and 298. Dermot's father, Donnchad, had been fighting the Ostmen of Dublin and Domnall O'Brien when he has killed. Dermot's desire for revenge on Dublin is, therefore, understandable from the Irish point of view.

³² Flanagan, Irish Society, 58.

³³ Orpen, Ireland Under the Normans, 80.

MacMurrough felt able to travel from Ireland to Aquitaine in order to seek out and petition help from the Angevin King.

Henry II was the ruler of the largest empire that Western Europe had seen for several hundred years. He possessed lands from Aquitaine and the Pyrenees to Scotland. He had gained some of his lands by inheritance, namely England, Anjou, Normandy, and Brittany; some of them by marriage, Poitou and Aquitaine; and some by conquest, Wales, and Scotland.³⁴ However, Henry II was by no means entirely secure in these lands. In fact, his inheritance of the English kingdom had only been obtained after years of war between his mother, Matilda, and Stephen of Blois.³⁵ Nor were these wars without effect on the course of the Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland.

Henry II had been interested in Ireland for some time by 1166. As early as 1155 King Henry had proposed an invasion of Ireland in order to acquire an apanage for his brother William. Henry had even obtained a Papal Bull, Laudabiliter, to this end. However, the Dowager Empress, Matilda, had opposed the scheme and it was dropped.³⁶

³⁴ John Gillingham, The Angevin Empire (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers Inc., 1981), 1.

³⁵ Ibid., 11. For a more detailed study of the reigns of Stephen and Matilda see R. H. C. Davis in "What happened in King Stephen's Reign" History 49 (1964). See also John Le Patourel in "What did not happen in Stephen's Reign" History 58 (1973).

³⁶ Ramsay, The Angevin Empire, 141. There is extensive literature on Laudabiliter. See J. A. Watt, "Laudabiliter in Medieval Diplomacy and Propaganda" I.E.R. 87 (1957): 420-32; Kate Norgate "The Bull Laudabiliter"

However, these earlier designs came to nothing. Aside from the suspicions of Gaelic revivalist scholars, there is no evidence that Henry had ever considered implementing this scheme. After Henry became king, Ireland was far too distant to warrant much concern. Thus, Ireland was forgotten.

Henry's treatment of Dermot shows his plans, or lack thereof, for Ireland. In 1167 Henry was totally absorbed with other concerns.³⁷ Nevertheless, Henry treated Dermot well, accepted his offer of fealty, and gave him many gifts. He supposedly gave Dermot a license to recruit throughout his lands for people willing to help Dermot recover his lands in Ireland.³⁸ Henry then sent Dermot back to Bristol in order to recruit allies on his own. In his lack of direct aid to Dermot Henry showed that he was still not greatly interested in Ireland. Later this would change, when Strongbow's successes there would put him in an

E.H.R., 8 (1893): 18-52. For a more recent review see J. A. Watt, The Church and the Two Nations in Medieval Ireland (Cambridge: University Press, 1970) and Michael Rictor's evaluation of recent discovery of a copy of Laudabiliter by Marie Therese Flanagan in "Giraldiana" I.H.S. 84 (September 1979): 422-37.

³⁷ Henry had to deal with various problems in Normandy, Brittany and Aquitaine. In November of 1166 King Louis of France had offered asylum to Thomas Becket. Becket had demanded that the Pope lay an interdiction England, and war broke out the following year. See W. L. Warren, Henry II (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), 104.

³⁸ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 27. For a summary of this debate see n. 14, 289.

extremely precarious position by 1171.³⁹ Since Henry could not tolerate a potentially hostile Anglo-Norman kingdom in Ireland in 1171, he had to deal with the consequences of his acceptance of Dermot in 1167. This is not to say that a trip to Ireland was without other uses as well, for Henry was not above using Ireland to put pressure on the Papacy in order to clear up his situation regarding the murder of Thomas Becket.⁴⁰ However, in 1167, Ireland was still too distant for much royal concern.

While Ireland was too distant from Henry to warrant much concern, other nobles in the empire might, and did, feel far differently. Specifically, in southern Wales there were many Anglo-Normans, as well as Flemings, who were much more inclined to view Dermot's offer with favor. Wales had been an area of expansion for the ambitious Anglo-Norman

³⁹ Strongbow's father had been one of the most powerful men in England, but Strongbow's support for Stephen of Blois, Matilda's enemy in the war for the English throne, had put him in a precarious position with Henry. Thus, it is not hard to see why Henry was so concerned with the success of Strongbow in Ireland. The unpleasant possibility of Strongbow's success was that Henry would have another independent, and hostile, power on his border. This was the last thing Henry II needed.

⁴⁰ W. L. Warren, Henry II (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973), 530. At a meeting with Papal officials after his return from Ireland, Henry threatened to walk out of the talks and return to Ireland, where he had pressing business. Warren states that Henry had no intention on walking out of the talks and was just using Ireland to get concessions, a not unlikely state of affairs. Also, since ecclesiastical affairs. Also, since accomplished with a strong monarchy, the Church needed Henry if they wanted to bring Ireland in line with continental religious practices. Thus, Henry had a strong bluff going and he used it for all it was worth.

nobility. Henry and his nobles had engaged in many battles with the Welsh princes before this time, sometimes even involving the Irish themselves. For example, in 1165 the Norsemen of Dublin and others had helped Henry in a campaign against the Welsh.⁴¹ However, in 1166 Henry had decided on a policy of reconciliation with the Welsh.⁴² He allowed the Welsh king, Rhys ap Gruffydh, to re-fortify Cardigan and retain control of other lands he had obtained in conflicts with the Anglo-Norman marcher lords. This policy of conciliation bode ill for the Anglo-Norman nobility of southern Wales. Constant warfare in Wales had created a class of men bred and ready for border war. They knew little else.⁴³ Dermot's offer of money and land in Ireland must have seemed like a situation made to their order, because as Wales grew less appealing, Ireland seemingly beckoned to them.⁴⁴ Nevertheless it would be another two years before any sizable Anglo-Norman force came to the aid of Dermot MacMurrough. Why the Anglo-Normans were to take so long to come to Dermot's aid can only be seen by looking into the actions and results of the first three waves of Anglo-Norman adventurers that went to Ireland.

⁴¹ Orpen, Ireland Under the Normans, 80.

⁴² Eagar, Cambro-Normans, 195.

⁴³ Lynn Nelson, The Normans in South Wales, 1070-1171 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1966), 141.

⁴⁴ Robin Frame, Colonial Ireland 1169-1369 (Dublin: Helicon Limited, 1981), 7.

Before discussing the nature of the Anglo-Norman adventurers themselves, a brief overview of the course of the Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland is needed. The Anglo-Norman involvement in Ireland began with the expulsion of Dermot MacMurrough in 1166. Earlier, his ally Murtough O'Loughlin had a hostage king blinded despite the sureties of several notable Irish lords, including the archbishop of Armagh, and the king of Oriel.⁴⁵ This act of treachery brought the wrath Rory O'Conner, Murtough's rival for the office of the ard-ri, and his ally Tiernan O'Rourke. Rory and Tiernan invaded Dermot's lands, killed Murtough and caused Dermot's own men to abandon him. Rory was then declared ard-ri.⁴⁶ Dermot fled from Ireland and sought help from his contacts in Bristol.

The lord of Bristol, Robert FitzHarding, advised Dermot to seek an audience with King Henry II.⁴⁷ The result of this meeting has already been noted. Henry gave Dermot permission to recruit men through his kingdom to help him recover his lands, but gave Dermot no direct aid himself. Dermot then went back to Bristol and met with several Anglo-Norman lords, the chief of whom was Richard de Clare. Dermot agreed to give Richard his daughter's hand in marriage and to declare Richard his heir, if he would help

⁴⁵ Annals of Ulster, 153.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 153.

⁴⁷ Song of Dermot, 19.

him recover his kingdom. This right was by no means Dermot's to give, for in Ireland succession through the female line was not allowed. Thus, Strongbow had virtually no legal claim to an Irish throne under Irish law. However, without some help, Dermot would not have a kingdom to give away.⁴⁸

Having entered into this pact with Strongbow, Dermot went back to Ireland, recruiting men as he traveled through southern Wales. On his trip, Dermot met with, and was able to persuade the Welsh king Rhys ap Gruffydh to free an Anglo-Norman prisoner, Richard FitzStephen, on the condition that Richard would go to Ireland to help Dermot win back his lands.⁴⁹ Dermot also recruited a group of Flemings led by Maurice Prendergast. However, the first small group of Anglo-Normans that went to Ireland was led by Richard FitzGodibert. FitzGodibert and his men accompanied Dermot when he returned to Ireland in 1167. Once there these Anglo-Normans were able to accomplish little beyond helping Dermot to re-establish himself in his castle at Ferns in southern Leinster.⁵⁰ Dermot was then soon forced to come to terms with Rory O'Conner and Tiernan O'Rourke; an agreement

⁴⁸ Orpen, Ireland Under the Normans, 91. For a more complete discussion of Irish succession see F. J. Byrne's Irish Kings and High Kings, and Marie Therese Flanagan's Irish Society, Anglo-Norman Settlers, and Angevin Kingship, especially Chapter Three.

⁴⁹ Song of Dermot, 31.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 33. Ferns is fifteen miles north of Wexford. See Map #2.

which left Dermot holding little more than 10 cantreds of land.⁵¹

Several uneventful years passed while Dermot waited for aid from his Anglo-Norman allies. Finally an appeal sent by him in 1169 produced a large contingent of men who arrived at the island of Bannow. Led by Richard FitzStephen and Meiler FitzHenry, they met up with Dermot and then the allied force proceeded to attack Wexford. Not without some small setbacks they then forced the town to surrender.⁵² By means of this victory, Dermot was able to regain large portions of his former lands in southern Leinster. According to Giraldus, Rory O'Conner then led a hosting into Leinster in order to put Dermot back in place, but battle was averted when Dermot and Rory came to an agreement confirming Dermot as the king of southern Leinster. A secret agreement between Dermot and Rory stated that Dermot would ship the Anglo-Normans back to England as soon as he was finished restoring his power in Leinster.⁵³ However, after Rory had left, Maurice FitzGerald arrived with another

⁵¹ A cantred (from the Welsh cantref) consisted of about 100 villages, with approximately 30 families per village. Thus, a cantred consisted of about 3000 families. There were about 176 cantreds in Ireland at this time. See Giraldus, Expugnatio, 337, and Curtis, A History of Medieval Ireland, xxv.

⁵² Ibid., 37-39. Dermot thus restored his control over Ui Chennselaig and began plundering Osraige with his Anglo-Norman allies. Osraige is about forty miles inland from Wexford.

⁵³ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 51.

contingent of men and Dermot "recalled the grave wrongs which the men of Dublin had so often inflicted on himself and his father, and sought revenge."⁵⁴ Meanwhile, a quarrel had broken out between Rory O'Conner and Domnall O'Brien of Limerick, Dermot's son-in-law. Dermot sent Robert FitzStephen to aid Domnall while Dermot and Maurice raided Dublin. Both groups were incredibly successful. Dublin pledged loyalty to Dermot, and Rory was forced out of Domnall's lands and withdrew his claims to Limerick.⁵⁵ Dermot now saw the Anglo-Normans as his chance to become the ard-ri himself. He called his allies together and they advised him to seek all the help he could from England.

Soon after these victories, Richard De Clare crossed the Irish Sea with a large force of men. He sent two of his vassals, Raymond le Gros and Hervey Montmorency, ahead of him to secure a beachhead. Raymond landed at Bannow Bay and inflicted a defeat on the men of Waterford and Maelsechlainn Ui Faelain when they attacked the Anglo-Norman encampment, probably in mid-summer 1170.⁵⁶ Strongbow then landed, met

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 53. Whether or not Dublin actually submitted to Dermot at this point is unclear. The Song of Dermot makes no mention of this expedition, while Irish sources merely state that Dermot plundered the territory. The Annals of Tigernach say that MacMurrough received the kingship of the foreigners of Leinster, presumably referring to the Ostmen of Dublin. See Giraldus, Expugnatio, n. 59, 298.

⁵⁶ There is some debate over the exact date of Raymond's arrival. Giraldus states Raymond le Gros arrived on the kalends of May, battled the men Waterford at Bannow Bay, Strongbow then arrived around the kalends of September.

Raymond's men, and then attacked, and captured the town of Waterford. Strongbow then summoned Dermot and the other Anglo-Normans to him, and the earl of Pembroke then married Dermot's daughter, Eva. Strongbow, Dermot, and the rest of the Anglo-Normans proceeded to attack Dublin, which they captured on September 21, 1171.⁵⁷ Rory O'Conner and Tiernan O'Rourke then counter-attacked the allies at Dublin, but were soundly defeated. Dermot and Richard had gone far beyond simply re-establishing Dermot's lands, and had Dermot not died so shortly after taking Dublin, he might have finally succeeded in becoming the ard-ri.

Rory was not the only king to notice the success of the Anglo-Normans. Richard's liege, Henry II, had heard of Strongbow's success and he sent word that the Anglo-Normans were to stop their conquests at once and return to England in order to meet with him, or forfeit their lands in England, Wales, and Normandy.⁵⁸ Strongbow met with Henry and did homage to him for all the lands he had taken in Ireland. Richard surrendered any royal rights to his Irish lands that he had inherited through Dermot's daughter and his wife, Eva. These acts effectively restored Strongbow's

The Song of Dermot, 105, states that Strongbow arrived soon after Raymond's battle at Bannow Bay, so Raymond must have landed some time after that given by Giraldus.

⁵⁷ Annals of Ulster, 113-27. We must presume that the Ostmen of Dublin had either renounced their loyalty to Dermot, or they had never had given it. See also Dolley, Anglo-Norman Ireland, 64.

⁵⁸ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 89 and 309.

good graces with Henry II. However, Henry was not entirely satisfied that this problem had been defused and he decided to go to Ireland and see the situation for himself.

However, at this time, Henry's exact disposition towards Ireland remains unclear.⁵⁹ Since Henry clearly took a large army with him, it can be surmised that whatever else he had in mind, this trip was mainly intended as a show of force to both the Anglo-Normans and the Irish.⁶⁰ Henry's trip in 1171-72 produced a variety of results. For example, Henry then called a Synod at Cashel, which began a further series of reforms within the Irish Church. In an interesting political development, many Irish lords swore fealty to Henry after his arrival there. In fact there seemed to be some sort of race among the Irish to be the first to become his vassal. They probably did so in order to put a stop to any more encroachment on their lands by the Anglo-Normans.⁶¹

⁵⁹ The Song of Dermot states that earlier "traitors" had talked to Henry about Strongbow and had tried to persuade him to punish the marcher lord. The Song of Dermot, 161-65, goes on to say that Henry decided to conquer Ireland entirely on advice from Strongbow, 161-65. Giraldus states later that Henry went to Ireland after Strongbow had given him the lands that the earl of Pembroke had conquered, thus making Henry's trip to Ireland that of a landlord checking out newly acquired property. (Expugnatio, 89). The exact nature of Henry's desires and plans for Ireland are quite uncertain.

⁶⁰ The Song of Dermot, 189, states that his force consisted of 400 knights and 4000 men, while Giraldus Expugnatio, 93, says that Henry had 500 knights and numerous men-at-arms with him.

⁶¹ The Annals of Ulster state that Henry received the pledges of Leinster, Munster, Meath, O'Brien, Airgilla, and Ulidia. However, the Song of Dermot states that victuals were dear, since only Leinster, the only territory directly

Henry also brought in several of his own lords and installed them as his representatives in Ireland. Chief among these was Hugh De Lacy, who was given Meath in fee for the service of fifty knights. Meanwhile Robert FitzBernard was given control of the strategically important town of Waterford.⁶² Henry II then returned to the continent after he received news of a possible revolt by his eldest son, also named Henry. Henry II left Ireland on 17 April 1172, never to return.⁶³

Although Henry was never to return to Ireland, his presence was felt through the rest of his reign. During the war of 1173-74, Strongbow was called upon to aid the king in France and, once there, was able to prove his loyalty to Henry.⁶⁴ Strongbow returned to Ireland and, with Henry's

controlled by the Anglo-Normans, provided him with food. This shows that while they might have given their pledges to Henry II, they would give him nothing else. Giraldus, Expugnatio, 95, says that Rory O'Conner submitted as well, but this is quite controversial.

⁶² Song of Dermot, 191-99, cf. n. 60.

⁶³ Assessments of Henry's effectiveness in this trip vary greatly. James Henry Ramsay says that Henry left discord in his wake and made no arrangements for the native Irish. Ramsay regards Henry's visit as mere buccaneering and was therefore extremely demoralizing to the Irish situation. (The Angevin Empire, 157). T. W. Moody and F. X. Martin say that Henry set up Hugh de Lacy as a counter to Strongbow, a view that F. J. Byrne agrees with in A New History of Ireland. See also works by Michael Dolley, Anglo-Norman Ireland: c 1100-1318 (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1972), Marie Therese Flanagan, Irish Society, Anglo-Norman Settlers, and Angevin Kingship (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), and Robin Frame Colonial Ireland 1169-1369 (Dublin: Helicon Limited, 1981).

⁶⁴ Ibid., 213-15.

permission, he took control of Wexford, Waterford, and Dublin, and sent most of Henry's new appointees back to help Henry with the war in France.

Henry was later to try to control the Irish situation in another manner. In 1175, Henry concluded the Treaty of Windsor with Rory O'Conner, which confirmed Rory as a subordinate king who was in charge of what was left of Gaelic Ireland. According to this treaty Rory owed Henry personal service and tribute, but not full feudal homage.⁶⁵ This arrangement proved ineffective, as Rory was not strong enough to resist the depredations of the Anglo-Normans or dominate the Irish provincial kings without help. Henry's apparent lack of concern with Ireland resulted in ever increasing land grabs by rapacious Anglo-Norman marcher lords. Faced with the failure of the Treaty of Windsor, Henry granted large scale enfeoffment of unconquered Irish lands to a variety of Anglo-Normans in 1177, less than a year after Strongbow died.⁶⁶ One such grant, to John de Courcy, was destined to open up northeastern Ireland to Anglo-Norman expansion, although he was only successful

⁶⁵ Warren, Henry II, 201-2. This is an important point since the Irish did not fully understand feudal homage as practiced in the rest of Henry's empire.

⁶⁶ For a classical analysis see Goddard Henry Orpen's Ireland Under the Normans and James Henry Ramsay's The Angevin Empire. For a modern review of this subject see Marie Therese Flanagan in Irish Society, Anglo-Norman Settlers, and Angevin Kingship. Robin Frame comments of the limits imposed on the Anglo-Norman marcher lords in Colonial Ireland, and Donncha O'Corrain comments of the problems with the control of the high king in Ireland Before the Normans.

after many years and several defeats at the hands of the Irish.⁶⁷ Henry also named his son, John, as the lord of Ireland. Since John was still a minor, Henry made Hugh de Lacy the first justiciar of Ireland.⁶⁸ This regency lasted, under various men, until 1185 when John sailed to Ireland in order to take it under his direct control.

John's expedition to Ireland in 1185 marks the end of the formative stage of the early Anglo-Norman expeditions. While several other major drives into Ireland were yet to occur, the pattern of Anglo-Norman settlement had already been established.

In previous studies it has been conventional to break up the invasion into smaller periods, beginning with the initial contact in 1167 to Strongbow's arrival in 1170. During this period the Geraldines are usually seen as the major players in Ireland.⁶⁹ This is possibly due to their later importance in Irish history. The next period began when Strongbow arrived, and, with the death of Dermot,

⁶⁷ Annal of Ulster, 185. Hardly a year passes after this when John does not lead a hosting into various parts of northern Ireland.

⁶⁸ While Hugh de Lacy was made justiciar and given control of Dublin, Wexford was given to William FitzAudelin, and Waterford was given to Robert le Poer. Henry was making sure that no one had as much power as Strongbow had earlier.

⁶⁹ Eagar, Cambro-Normans, 193. The Geraldines were the descendants of Gerald of Windsor, the constable of Pembrokeshire. The Geraldines would more properly be called the Children of Nesta, as Meiler FitzHenry, Robert FitzStephen, and Maurice FitzGerald, the three early leaders of the invasion of Ireland, were all her children.

covers the earl of Pembroke's attempts to carve out his own little Anglo-Norman kingdom in southern Ireland. The third period begins when King Henry II arrives in Ireland and arranges for the control of the lands already acquired, and sets up plans for future attacks on the lands of the Irish.⁷⁰ Finally, the last period begins when Prince John is put in charge, and the invasion became more concerned with the administration of the conquered lands rather than pillaging the few Irish realms that remain. Thus, initial contact is seen as leading inexorably to conquest.

The need for an unbiased account of the Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland is apparent. Ever since the first Anglo-Normans arrived in Ireland their story has almost always been told with prejudice. To the Irish of the period they were always the "foreigners," unwanted and sometimes unimportant. On the one hand, modern Gaelic revivalists view the Anglo-Normans as clearly intent on outright conquest from the start. On the other hand, the Anglo-Norman chroniclers were, quite naturally, intent on showing the valor and courage of the Anglo-Normans themselves.⁷¹ To later equally pro-Norman historians, the conquest of Ireland seemed the natural destiny of the Anglo-Normans, with 1169 in Ireland resembling 1066 in England.

⁷⁰ Ramsay, The Angevin Empire, 156.

⁷¹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 157.

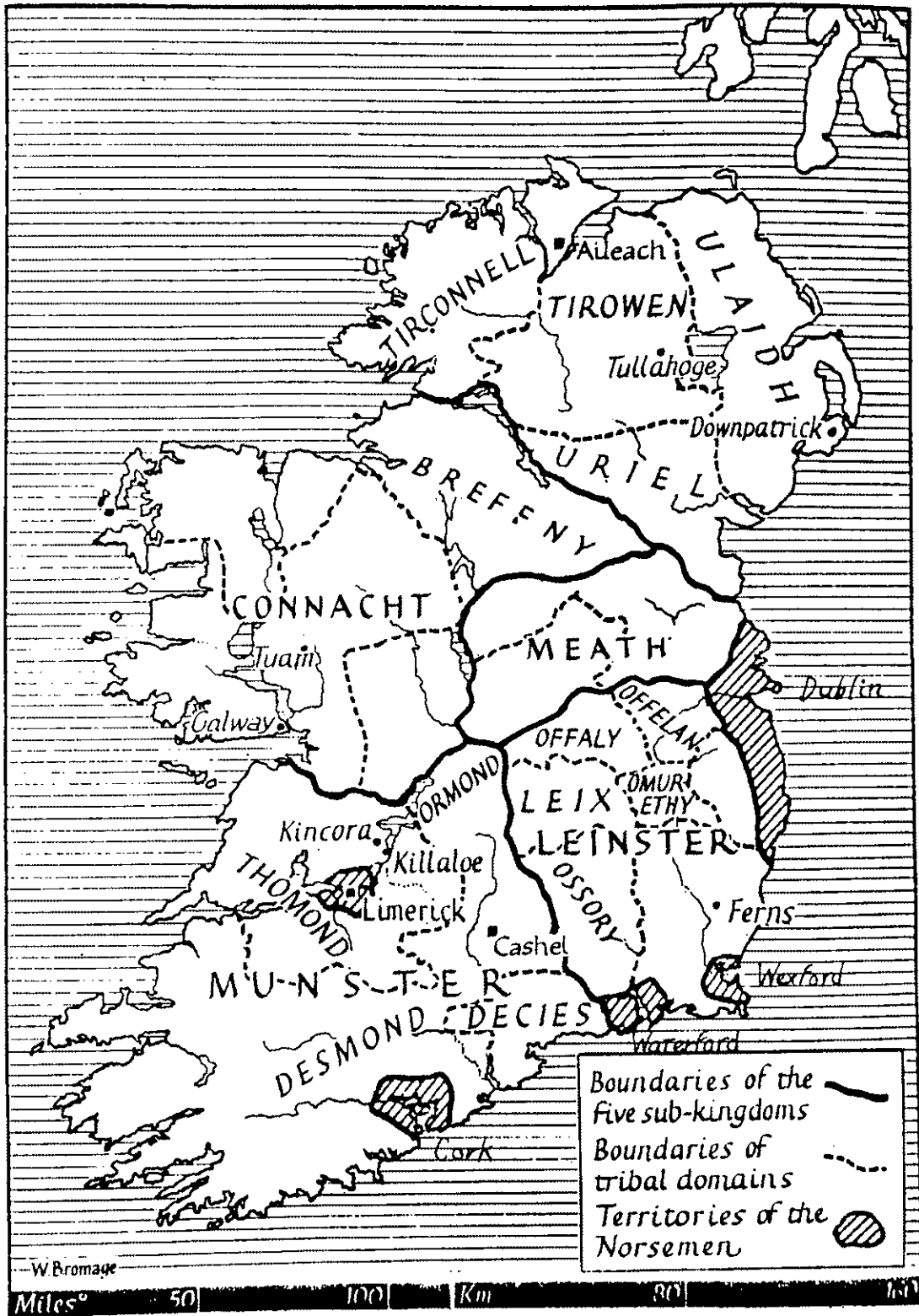
Modern research has also put much blame on Henry for not controlling his rapacious nobles. His policies with regards to Ireland, his supplanting of new nobles in 1171-72, the Treaty of Windsor, and the setting up of the justiciarship in 1177 are all seen as failures. The new nobles, such as William Fitzaudelin were almost all sent packing by Strongbow in 1174. The Treaty of Windsor proved to be a failure because Henry could not support Rory against the Anglo-Norman lords of Ireland.⁷² Henry is seen as accomplishing nothing besides establishing unstable political conditions, especially in regards to the relationship of Strongbow and the Irish.⁷³ Also, it is said that no justiciarship could possibly work when Henry's appointed son, John, was still a minor, and therefore powerless. Thus Ireland is seen as a source of weakness for the Angevin empire.⁷⁴ However, Henry's attempts to control Ireland are not part of a royal policy of conquest, but rather they are an attempt to control both the Anglo-Normans and Irish with a minimum of effort, and still make Ireland serve a valuable role in the empire. Since it is the

⁷² F. X. Martin and T. M. Moody, The Course of Irish History (Cork: Mercier, 1984), 134-35.

⁷³ Ramsay, The Angevin Empire, 156. See also Marie Therese Flanagan in Irish Society, Anglo-Norman Settlers, and Angevin Kingship for a more modern discussion of this question. A New History of Ireland, edited by Art Cosgrove is also useful here, as is Colonial Ireland by Robin Frame.

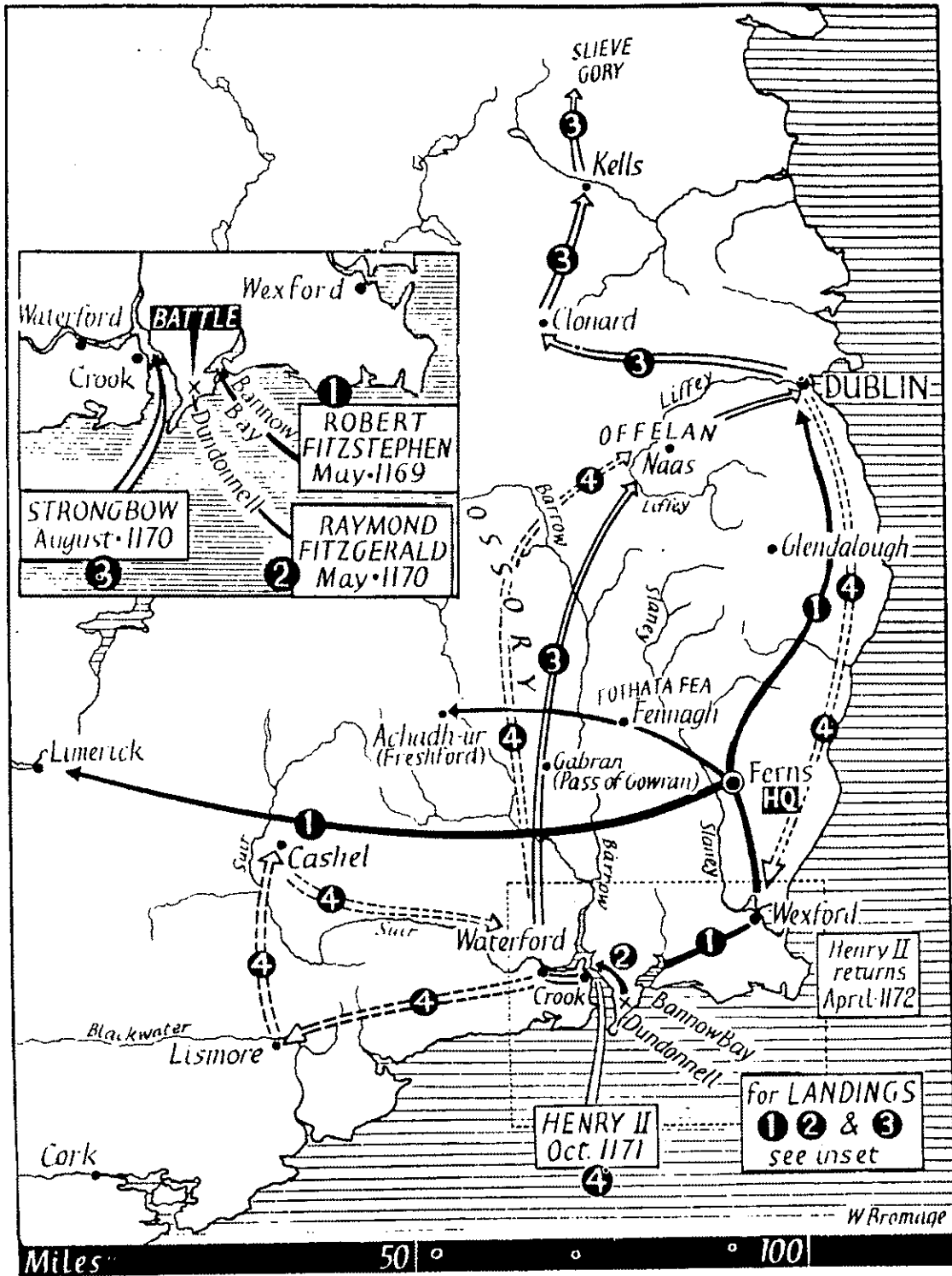
⁷⁴ Maurice Powicke, Medieval England 1066-1485 (London: Thornton Butterworth Ltd., 1931; reprint, Oxford: University Press, 1969), 14.

purpose of this paper to show how the Anglo-Normans went from adventurers to invaders, Henry's role in Ireland is central to our understanding of how this occurred. But next we must look into the nature of the early Anglo-Norman invaders themselves, and their relationship to each other.



22. Ireland before the Normans

[Source: R. Dudley Edwards, *An Atlas of Irish History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978).]



12. The Norman invasion

[Source: R. Dudley Edwards, An Atlas of Irish History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978).]

CHAPTER TWO
THE EARLY ARRIVALS

The Anglo-Norman conquest of Ireland began in late 1166. In August of that year Dermot MacMurrough was expelled from his kingdom of Leinster and sailed to Bristol. In Bristol he met with Richard FitzHarding after which Dermot went off to find King Henry II. When Dermot died six years later he had already been restored to power in Leinster. In between Dermot's flight and his death, Ireland had experienced massive changes. Three waves of Anglo-Norman adventurers had come to Ireland as a result of Dermot's actions, and many of them had come to stay permanently. It is easy to assume that these three waves of Anglo-Normans were all part of an organized invasion of Ireland sponsored by Henry II. Such, however, was not the case. Although the first three waves of Anglo-Norman adventurers to go to Ireland did so as a result of Dermot's trip in 1166-67, they do not constitute an organized invasion. These three waves, while interconnected to a certain degree, clearly constitute three separate adventures, each led by different people for different purposes. In order to see this, each of these three expeditions needs to be examined individually, with a careful eye kept toward the political and social connections

between their leaders: Richard FitzGodibert; the Geraldines; and Richard de Clare, also known as Strongbow.

The leaders of the first three Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland were recruited separately by Dermot MacMurrough. In fact, Dermot could persuade few men to join his cause. Henry II had given Dermot permission to recruit men, possibly by means of a letter, but gave him no direct aid at all.¹ Upon his return to Bristol, Dermot did make a deal with Strongbow that would make the earl of Pembroke his heir in return for aid and encouragement of his men to help Dermot, but, like Henry, Strongbow provided no immediate help to the exiled Irish leader.² After this deal had been made Dermot traveled through Wales and managed to recruit Robert FitzStephen and Maurice FitzGerald.

Robert FitzStephen and Maurice FitzGerald became involved in Ireland in 1167 when Dermot MacMurrough struck a deal with Rhys ap Gruffyd concerning FitzStephen, who was then one of his prisoners. Robert had been a prisoner in Rhys ap Gruffyd's dungeon for three years at this time, and his brother, Maurice, arranged for his release on the condition that Robert travel to Ireland in order to help

¹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 27. Giraldus says that he received a letter and quotes the text. Whether or not this document actually existed, Dermot at least was not rebuffed by Henry and must have had some form of permission to recruit, even if it was just a verbal understanding. The Song of Dermot, 25, says Dermot was given permission by Henry II to recruit men and that Henry sent a letter to FitzHarding saying that he should provide all the necessities for Dermot's stay at Bristol.

² Song of Dermot, 29.

Dermot regain his lands. A deal was struck which would give the Geraldines control of Waterford and two surrounding cantreds.³

It is important that the arrangement Dermot made with Rhys ap Gruffyd and the Geraldines occurred after Dermot's deal with Strongbow, as Giraldus and the Song of Dermot both point out. This is because it shows that Dermot made each of his deals for Anglo-Norman aid separately rather than as part of a package deal with Strongbow.⁴ In making this deal with Rhys ap Gruffyd for the services of Robert FitzStephen and Maurice FitzGerald, Dermot had arranged for a supply of allies independent of Strongbow. Although ties would later develop between Strongbow and the Geraldines, the deals for their services were struck separately. However, neither FitzStephen or FitzGerald was able to provide Dermot with immediate help either, and Dermot returned to Ireland with only a small group of men led by Richard FitzGodibert.

The actual Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland, then, began in 1167 when Dermot MacMurrough returned to Ireland

³ Ibid., 31. Rhys had captured Ceredigion and Emlyn, including the fortress of Cardigan were he took Robert captive, during the Welsh uprising in 1164-65.

⁴ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 29. Although Giraldus was clearly biased in favor of the Geraldines and would try to separate the Geraldines from Strongbow, he does make it fairly clear that Dermot was on his way home when he heard of Robert's plight. The Song of Dermot mentions that Strongbow encouraged his men to go and that he would follow, but it also mentions that Dermot visited Rhys ap Gruffyd on his way home and pleaded for Robert's release. (Song of Dermot, 31.)

with a small band of soldiers under Richard FitzGodibert.⁵ Dermot and his allies tried to restore his power around Ferns, but were quickly defeated by Rory O'Conner and Tiernan O'Roarke. They limited Dermot's power to that of a minor local noble, and FitzGodibert and his soldiers soon returned from whence they came. However, according to Giraldus, Dermot spent the winter in "unusual circumstances" with the clergy at Ferns.⁶ Dermot was hiding out. He had failed to make any gains, and had to wait for more allies to arrive before he could make another attempt to regain his lands. The fact that Giraldus fails to mention FitzGodibert at all shows that Giraldus was more interested in the contributions of the Geraldines than the accomplishments of the Anglo-Normans as a whole.⁷ Yet, Richard FitzGodibert's expedition is significant in demonstrating that the first Anglo-Normans entered Ireland piecemeal, and they came under Dermot MacMurrough's leadership.

This early expedition is clearly an adventure, not an invasion. Richard's lack of importance in Ireland is seen in the fact that he does not take part in any of the later expeditions. The small number of men who went upon this expedition, as described in the Irish sources, indicates

⁵ Song of Dermot, 33.

⁶ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 31.

⁷ Richard is not mentioned later in any of the chronicles on Ireland. However, Robert FitzGodibert, presumably his brother, is mentioned as a vassal of Strongbow. (Song of Dermot, 227.)

that this was no organized Anglo-Norman invasion. Irish sources also mention that the son of the king of Britain, probably a son of Rhys ap Gruffyd, was killed in the battle.⁸ The presence of a Welsh prince in the battle indicates the racial and social diversity of the small band. The diversified nature of this band along with its failure to achieve any major results explain why it is glossed over in the Song of Dermot and ignored by Giraldus. Dermot's submission to Rory would not inspire further Anglo-Norman ventures in Ireland, especially since Dermot's submission would imply that Dermot had no right to call on further foreign aid, and, therefore, the Anglo-Normans would be unable to justify their presence in Ireland. Only two years later, in 1169, does the real Anglo-Norman story begin.

The second Anglo-Norman expedition differed from the first in two major ways. First, it was certainly larger and much better planned than the adventure of 1167, in large part due to the fact that the leaders were almost all members of the Geraldine family. Second, a large number of the Anglo-Normans who went on this expedition clearly intended to stay in Ireland. Given these facts the second Anglo-Norman expedition has often been seen as the beginning of an organized Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland, but, this is not correct.⁹ While the Anglo-Norman leaders of this

⁸ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 292, n.26.

⁹ Michael Dolley expounds this view in Anglo-Norman Ireland: c 1100-1318 (Dublin: Gill and MacMillian, 1972), 59. F. X. Martin does so as well in his article in Art

expedition were generally related, they still did not display the independence of action that characterized later Anglo-Norman expeditions. In fact, the second Anglo-Norman expedition was a family's relocation rather than an invasion. The leaders were not entirely unified in purpose, and the Geraldines' actions were all taken as vassals of Dermot MacMurrough, not as independent Anglo-Norman invaders.

The lack of unity of the early Anglo-Normans can be seen in the fact that two distinct groups were involved in the expedition, the Geraldines and the Flemings. The first group, the Geraldines, were an extended Anglo-Norman/Welsh marcher family, two of the most important of whom were Robert FitzStephen and Maurice FitzGerald.¹⁰ Robert arrived first in Ireland, accompanied by Hervey Montmorency, a vassal of the earl of Pembroke.¹¹ Maurice was not to arrive for some time.

Cosgrove's, ed., A New History of Ireland II: Medieval Ireland 1169-1534 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 68. Edmund Curtis, A History of Medieval Ireland from 1086 to 1513 (New York: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1938; reprint, New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968), 47, provides a traditional interpretation of this point of view as does Goddard Henry Orpen's, Ireland Under the Normans (Oxford: University Press, 1911; reprint, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 1:181-82.

¹⁰ Robert FitzStephen and Maurice FitzGerald were half brothers through Nesta, who was daughter of the southern Welsh king Rhys ap Tewdr. They were also both uncles of Giraldus. See Appendix A for the genealogical tables.

¹¹ Hervey Montmorency was Strongbow's half-uncle through the earl's grandmother Adeliz of Claremont. (Ramsay, The Angevin Empire, 143.) To Giraldus Hervey was a spy for Strongbow and is treated rather poorly by Giraldus. Hervey

The second group, the Flemings, were led by Maurice Prendergast. They were recruited by Dermot as he traveled through Pembrokeshire.¹² The lack of unity of the second Anglo-Norman expedition may be seen first in the fact that the leaders of it were recruited separately from Dermot's deal with the earl of Pembroke, and were therefore fairly independent of any obligations to Strongbow in regards to any land they might acquire in Ireland. This attitude of independence can also be seen in the goals of the various Anglo-Normans of the second expedition.

The goals of the Geraldines are quite clear: they intended to stay in Ireland and acquire land. This is unequivocally stated early on both in the Song of Dermot and Giraldus. Dermot was only able to persuade Robert to come over in 1169 by promising him land.¹³ When the Anglo-

eventually married Nesta, a daughter of Maurice FitzGerald, and later entered a monastery. Giraldus, Expugnatio, 143.

¹² Maurice was from Rhos in South Wales. He must have met Dermot during his travels through Wales on his way back to Ireland. However, neither the Song of Dermot nor Giraldus give any details on how they met or the conditions of the deal they struck.

¹³ Song of Dermot, 35-37. Two years had passed and no aid was forthcoming from his allies, but, fortunately for Dermot, Rory and Tiernan were busy in Munster and Meath during this time. The Song of Dermot mentions that Dermot was only able to convince the Anglo-Normans to come over by sending his interpreter, Morice Regan, to re-recruit his recalcitrant allies. Dermot offered them money and enfeoffment with lands in return for their aid. Giraldus tries to imply that the Anglo-Normans, and especially the Geraldines, came quickly to Dermot's aid, something they clearly did not do.

Normans and Dermot took Wexford it was promptly given to Robert in accordance with this arrangement.¹⁴ Later in a speech to his men at Ferns when Rory O'Conner was besieging the castle, Robert stated that the Geraldines had come not as looters, but settlers.¹⁵ Similarly, when he ordered a castle built at Carrick, Robert Fitzstephen was clearly intending to stay in Ireland.¹⁶ That many of the Anglo-Normans of the second expedition came for land is not in question, yet this is not true of all. Although the Geraldines had come to stay, other leaders of this Anglo-Norman expedition had not planned to do so.

Maurice Prendergast was the leader of a band of Flemings from Pembrokeshire, and he clearly did not share the same goals as the Geraldines. Although neither Giraldus nor the Song of Dermot gives many details on how Dermot acquired the services of Maurice and his men, they were clearly not part of the deal he had made with the

¹⁴ Ibid., 39; Giraldus, Expugnatio, 35. Initially the siege did not go well for the Anglo-Normans. On the first day they lost eighteen men compared to three for the defenders. However, on the next day the residents decided to sue for peace, and Dermot, on the advice of his allies, accepted.

¹⁵ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 49. While Giraldus's speeches are suspect (especially the one by Dermot), it is quite likely that Robert's is fairly accurate since he was probably Giraldus's source for much of the history of these early expeditions.

¹⁶ Ibid., 53. This castle, a mere two miles from Wexford, was clearly built to impose control over the town.

Geraldines.¹⁷ Instead, at the start of this expedition Maurice is clearly an equal partner with the Geraldines. This is easily seen in the fact that he arrived in his own boats, and commanded a large number of men, roughly comparable in numbers to those commanded by Robert FitzStephen and Hervey Montmorency.¹⁸ When he decided to leave he took about two hundred men with him, about one third of the Anglo-Norman force in Ireland at that time. He did this after Wexford had been captured, and Dermot had convinced the Anglo-Normans to raid his neighbor's territories.¹⁹ This type of service, while fairly effective in restoring Dermot to power, would mean large risks to the men involved for little direct gain. These raids were fairly extensive and consisted of attacks of around three

¹⁷ Maurice is first mentioned in the Song of Dermot, 35-37, as accompanying Robert to Ireland with seven companions. The first edition of the Expugnatio makes no mention of his arrival, but later editions mention that he arrived a day after Robert in two ships with two men-at-arms and a large body of archers. The Song of Dermot is nevertheless the best source on Maurice and his adventures in Ireland.

¹⁸ If we assume that Maurice leaves with the men he arrived with then his force is about half the size of that which had arrived with Robert and Hervey, which consisted of about 400 men in three boats.

¹⁹ Song of Dermot; 41, Giraldus, Expugnatio, 37. Both sources agree on the fact that Dermot had to convince his allies of the need to raid his neighbors. In the Song of Dermot, after three weeks at Ferns Dermot tells the Anglo-Normans how the men of Ossory dread the English, while Giraldus mentions the blinding of Dermot's son, calling up old debts that need to be avenged. The Song of Dermot mentions that Ui Faelain and Glendalough were plundered as well.

thousand troops on the men of Osraige, who were said to number around five thousand.²⁰ While raids would restore Dermot to power vis-a-vis the other Irish there was little direct financial reward to be gained from gathering cattle and grain. The Anglo-Normans were conducting Irish style warfare for traditional Irish purposes, their military advantage over the Irish was used to secure their position in Ireland under an Irish king. However, such service was not what all the Anglo-Normans of the second expedition seemed to want, for at this point Maurice Prendergast decided to leave Dermot MacMurrough's service.

Maurice Prendergast's decision clearly shows that he had different goals in mind than those of the Geraldines. Maurice was a mercenary, not a vassal, as proven by his ensuing course of action. Upon his decision to depart, Dermot tried to block him and his men from leaving Ireland. Maurice, in turn, decided to go into service with Dermot's enemy, Domnall Mac Gilpatrick.²¹ It is clear from this that

²⁰ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 43. The allied force of Anglo-Normans, Ostmen, and Irishmen could make little headway into Osraige due to the defenses of plashings the men of Osraige had made in order to take advantage of the lay of the land. Only when the men of Osraige became overconfident and ran out from behind their defenses in order to pursue the retreating Anglo-Normans were the men of Osraige defeated by a sudden charge of the Anglo-Norman cavalry followed up by axe-wielding Irishmen. The Song of Dermot, 43, says that Osraige was defended by a series of three trenches and a stockade.

²¹ Dermot sent his son Domnall to block Maurice's departure, but he failed. Maurice was then recruited by Mac Gilpatrick who proceeded to lay waste to Dermot's lands as well as Leix. When O'More, the ruler of Leix, appealed to Dermot for help, Maurice asked to leave Gilpatrick's service

while some of the Anglo-Normans were willing to serve with Dermot, they were not bound to do so, once again indicating that this second expedition was not a unified invasion force. Also by taking service with Mac Gilpatrick, it is apparent that Maurice Prendergast and his men were quite willing to serve any Irish lord, not Dermot only. If they were in service to Irish lords then they were certainly not part of an invasion. When Prendergast left Ireland after Maurice FitzGerald's arrival, stating that he could accomplish little against the more numerous Anglo-Normans that Dermot had in his service, he reveals the ambiguous nature of the Anglo-Norman presence.²² Although many of the Anglo-Norman adventurers of the second expedition to Ireland had come to Ireland for land, they were not seeking to become independent land owners. They had come to aid in the restoration of Dermot MacMurrough, and it would be through him that these early Anglo-Normans would gain their lands.

Robert FitzStephen was the first of the Geraldines to set foot in Ireland. Initially his actions were those of a vassal of Dermot MacMurrough, not an independent Anglo-Norman marcher lord. This can be seen in the fact that when he landed in Ireland he met up with Dermot before attacking

saying that he could do little against the more numerous Anglo-Normans that Dermot employed. Gilpatrick's men tried to ambush Maurice when he left, but Maurice, apparently alerted by Mac Gilpatrick himself, succeeded in outwitting the ambushers and left Ireland safely. Song of Dermot, 81-103.

²² Song of Dermot, 93.

Wexford.²³ While admittedly this was probably due to military necessity as well as his connections to Dermot it is important nevertheless, as it shows that the early Geraldines were Dermot's men from the start and not holding land for an absent Anglo-Norman master.²⁴ Robert subsequently accepted control of Wexford from Dermot, further reinforcing Dermot's authority.²⁵ Also, in his speeches, Robert stresses the importance of Dermot's friendship and his importance as an Irish king.²⁶ Robert built his castle, Carrick, right in the middle of both his and Dermot's lands. Dermot was using him to shore up his control of the Irish in the region by placing Richard, whose loyalty was unquestioned, squarely in their midst.

Later actions undertaken by the Anglo-Normans show that they were clearly Dermot's vassals and allies, not an

²³ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 33. Giraldus says that Dermot arrived in triumph with about 500 men, and that they renewed their agreements and oaths. They then joined forces with "a common purpose and complete agreement uniting the two different races." The Song of Dermot, 37, describes Dermot as greeting his allies warmly with a kiss and salute. Regardless of which description is more accurate this is clearly not the scene of a traitor greeting his foreign masters.

²⁴ That is to say Strongbow. Since Dermot apparently did perform homage to Henry II, then all of his land could be said to be held of an absentee landlord, although one that so far had shown almost no interest in Ireland. The crucial point is that the Geraldines are vassals of Dermot for their lands in Leinster, they were not holding them for Strongbow although Hervey Montmorency might have been doing so.

²⁵ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 35.

²⁶ Ibid., 49.

invading army. After Maurice FitzGerald's arrival, Dermot and Maurice pillaged the lands of the Ostmen of Dublin.²⁷ Meanwhile, FitzStephen was sent to help Dermot's son-in-law, Domnall O'Brien, against Rory O'Conner.²⁸ After Strongbow landed in Ireland and had taken Waterford, Richard and Maurice arrived there with Dermot. Even though Strongbow had had more than enough time to send for them, he had not done so. Why not, unless because the Anglo-Normans were Dermot's vassals, and Strongbow was unwilling to try to separate them from Dermot's service. FitzStephen remained in Leinster while Dermot, Strongbow, and the rest of the allies attacked Dublin.²⁹ Obviously Robert was meant to hold Dermot's lands while the others were away, and although he failed in this task, his failure is not an indication of his disloyalty to Dermot.³⁰ In fact, during the period

²⁷ Ibid., 53. This first expedition to Dublin is omitted in the Song of Dermot, but is clearly mentioned in both Giraldus and the Irish Annals.

²⁸ Rory was soundly defeated and this expedition marks the advent of the Anglo-Normans into Limerick. That they went there to support an Irish king and not conquer the country tells us quite a bit about the plans of these early Anglo-Norman adventurers. It was also the first time that Rory O'Conner had been successfully opposed since Dermot's exile. A fact not without later importance for Ireland.

²⁹ Ibid., 67.

³⁰ Ibid., 85. Giraldus says that Robert was left in Carrick with thirty-six men and was besieged by at least several hundred men from Wexford. The Song of Dermot, 131, says that it was only after Robert sent a force of men to help Strongbow that the Wexfordmen attacked. Both sources agree that Dermot's son, Domnall, brought the news to the allied force at Dublin. Even though the Wexford men greatly outnumber Robert's men, they used trickery rather

before his capture and Dermot's death, there is no evidence in the sources to indicate that the Geraldines were anything but Dermot's men.

Although Geraldine loyalty might have been unquestioned by Dermot, not all the Anglo-Normans shared this same privilege. Hervey Montmorency was one of the Anglo-Normans that arrived with Robert FitzGerald. Although Hervey had been given an equivalent amount of land by Dermot after the capture of Dublin, Hervey played a minor role in Ireland until Strongbow's arrival. Robert was given two cantreds of land outside of Wexford and Hervey received two cantreds to the west of Wexford, between it and Waterford.³¹ The location of Hervey's two cantreds was very important. They were located where future Anglo-Norman armies, such as Strongbow's, would land in Ireland. Thus, even early on a split seems to have developed in the goals of the early invaders. Since Wexford is crucial to the control of southern Leinster, Robert was clearly trusted by Dermot, for he gave him a very valuable piece of land. Hervey, although given an equal amount of land, was still outside Dermot's explicit trust. Although Hervey's lands were undoubtedly valuable to Dermot, they were not as crucial for the control

than force to get him to surrender. They told him that Strongbow had been defeated and that if he surrendered he and his men would be allowed safe passage out of the country. That Robert accepted these terms shows that he was greatly outnumbered and that the defeat of the allied Anglo-Norman/Irish army was not considered impossible.

³¹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 35.

of Leinster as were Robert's two cantreds. In fact, Hervey's lands bordered several very hostile Irish lords. While Robert had been given a crucial position in Dermot's lands, Hervey was made into a marcher lord.

The Anglo-Normans had been fitted into the Irish system of warfare and politics; they had not established their own. This explains both their actions, and the lack of response from the Irish as a whole, and Rory O'Conner in particular.³² However, Dermot's victories had made him ambitious and he sought to become more than just the king of Leinster.

Dermot MacMurrough now planned to become the ard-ri of Ireland. However, it was only after Dermot suggested becoming the ard-ri that his allies suggested bringing over more English.³³ Dermot's next move was even more

³² Ibid., 51. Rory's first major response to the Anglo-Normans had been his invasion of Leinster in 1169 after Maurice Prendergast's departure from Dermot's service, but just before Maurice FitzGerald's arrival. This attack resulted from Dermot's raids into Ossory, Ui Faelain, and Glendalough. On that occasion Rory negotiated a truce between himself and Dermot. Rory tried to get Robert to leave by offering him gifts, and then appealed to Dermot to help dispose of the Anglo-Normans in return for his old title of king of Leinster. Both offers failed and Rory settled for Dermot as king of Leinster and a promise that Dermot would send the Anglo-Normans home when he had finished restoring himself in Leinster. In return Rory would get Dermot's support for Rory's position as the ard-ri. Only after the allies began raiding the lands of Rory's old ally, Tiernan O'Roarke, did Rory react to Dermot's actions.

³³ Ibid., 55. Giraldus says that Dermot had now recovered his entire inheritance and desired to reduce Connacht to his control, which would obviously leave him as ard-ri. He secretly talked with his allies about this, and they counselled him to bring over more Englishmen.

interesting. He offered first Robert and then Maurice his daughter, Eva, in marriage, "to better persuade them to bring more men of their race to Ireland."³⁴ In doing so he would have broken his deal with Strongbow. Dermot cannot have wanted so powerful a man as Strongbow coming over to Ireland. In offering his daughter, and hence his inheritance, to the Geraldines, he was apparently trying to cement the ties that had developed between them and himself. However, both Robert FitzStephen and Maurice FitzGerald were happily married, and, after a great deal of discussion they sent for Strongbow.

The text of the letter to Strongbow is very interesting, although its authenticity is questionable.³⁵ In this letter, Dermot appealed to Strongbow by saying that he awaited the earl's presence in order to make good Strongbow's "delayed arrival." Dermot called on Strongbow to successfully perform what he had promised so that the earl's word was "false only in point of time."³⁶ By this time Strongbow was three years late and Dermot was

³⁴ Ibid., 53. Giraldus says that Dermot offered Eva "in turn" to Robert and Maurice.

³⁵ For the text of this letter see Appendix B. Giraldus probably penned the text of the letter himself, as Dermot would not style himself the "prince" of Leinster, and is not the sort of man likely to quote Ovid, or use such language as "we have watched the storks and swallows." Nevertheless, it does give us some insight into the minds of the Anglo-Normans at the time.

³⁶ Ibid., 55.

essentially asking Strongbow what he was waiting for. These words express the sentiments of one successful feudal lord writing to a hesitant ally.³⁷ However, the letter goes on to say that one-fifth of Ireland has already fallen and the other four-fifths will easily follow. Robert and Maurice would have obviously advised Dermot on what to say in the letter, and this part seems to be from them to Strongbow. These statements were probably meant to show the weakness of the Irish and to convince Strongbow, who seemed hesitant, to come over to Ireland. If this was Robert FitzStephen's, Maurice FitzGerald's, and Dermot MacMurrough's plan it worked. In fact, for Dermot MacMurrough at least, it worked too well.

The arrival of Strongbow marks the beginning of the third Anglo-Norman expedition to Ireland, which is often said to be a watershed event in the course of the Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland.³⁸ Strongbow's arrival was

³⁷ The Song of Dermot, 135, states that Strongbow came over by the permission and desire of Dermot. In either case, Strongbow had to be convinced to come over to Ireland.

³⁸ Goddard Henry Orpen, in Ireland Under the Normans, says that Strongbow turned a foothold into a settlement, while James Lydon in The Lordship of Ireland in the Middle Ages (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 36, says that Strongbow's arrival turned a local affair into an invasion. The name of the poem the Song of Dermot and the Earl says enough by itself. This view is agreed with by Edmund Curtis in A History of Medieval Ireland, although F. X. Martin says that the taking of Waterford was the most significant part of Strongbow's early actions. (F. X. Martin in Curtis, A New History of Ireland, 76.) W. L. Warren merely says that the arrival of Strongbow was enough to swing the balance to the allied Anglo-Norman/Irish side, Henry II, 193.

certainly a turning point for the Anglo-Norman invasion. When he reached Ireland he had over 1000 men.³⁹ This amounted to a force double or triple the size of all those Anglo-Normans who had already arrived. However, in many ways this fact does not alter certain alliances that had already been made. The Geraldines were clearly Dermot's allies, and Strongbow, from his actions, and those of his vassals, was well aware of this. He was also aware of the fact that if he was to inherit Dermot's power and position that he would have to rely on his own power, and not upon his Anglo-Norman or Irish allies. In fact, all of Strongbow's actions point to the fact that he was a separate player on the Irish scene, and, while he was allied to Dermot, he clearly had his own designs for Ireland.

At this point Strongbow was presented with a dilemma. The letter Strongbow had received from the allies said that Dermot's lands had already been recovered, and therefore, the royal letter, if it did exist, could not provide justification for an Irish expedition on Strongbow's part.⁴⁰ Although Giraldus says that Strongbow received permission of

³⁹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 65. The Song of Dermot, 113, says that he had 1500 men with him, while Giraldus says that he had 200 knights and 1000 other men. If this figure includes Maurice Prendergast's men, whom he had recruited in Wales and who numbered around 200, then he brought between 1000 and 1300 men with him. This is about twice what Robert FitzStephen and Maurice FitzGerald had with them. They had 390 and 140 respectively. The total number of Anglo-Normans in Ireland would have then numbered between 1600 and 2000 after Strongbow's arrival.

⁴⁰ cf. n. 1.

a sort for the trip,⁴¹ other sources say that Strongbow received a messenger from Henry just as he was about to leave for Ireland forbidding the trip.⁴² Thus, it remains unclear whether the earl of Pembroke actually had Henry's approval to travel to Ireland, but, judging by Henry's later acts, Strongbow had either misjudged Henry, or ignored him.

Strongbow's actions indicated not only an ability, but a desire to act alone, or at least without Irish support. Raymond le Gros⁴³ and Hervey Montmorency landed first, clearing the way for Strongbow's arrival by securing a beachhead.⁴⁴ They successfully repulsed the Irish attack

⁴¹ Ibid., 57.

⁴² Raphael Holinshed, Holinshed's Chronicles (London: Privately printed, 1807; reprint, New York: AMS Press, 1965.), 138. This is also mentioned in William of Newburgh, Historia rerum Anglicanarum, 2 vols., (London: Rolls Service, 1884), 168. Henry later recalled Strongbow and threatened to confiscate his lands, as well as the lands of all those Anglo-Normans in Ireland. Giraldus, Expugnatio, 71, says that Henry ordered the closing of the ports and seizure of the estates, as does William of Newburgh. The pipe rolls mention a variety of fines levied on persons who went to Ireland without the King's permission, corroborating this edict. Pipe Roll 17 Henry II, 17, 29, 92. Pipe Roll 18 Henry II, 49.

⁴³ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 57. Raymond le Gros was the son of William FitzGerald and is more properly known as Raymond FitzWilliam. He was the grandson of Nesta and Gerald of Windsor, and Robert FitzStephen and Maurice FitzGerald were both his uncles. Ibid., 139.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 57. After Raymond's and Hervey's arrival Giraldus says that they were attacked by the citizens of Waterford, and Maelsechlainn Ua Faelain, the king of Deisi. However, the Song of Dermot, 105, relates that they proceeded to plunder the countryside, and were attacked by O'Ryan of Odrone as well.

at Bannow Bay, and waited for Strongbow's arrival.⁴⁵ If they had simply been allies of Dermot, then their behavior brings two questions to mind. First, if they intended to aid Dermot, then why did they not send word to him or march to his castle at Ferns? Second, why did they spend several weeks just sitting at Bannow Bay? In other words, what were they waiting for? The answer to both questions can only be that they were waiting for Strongbow to arrive so that they could then proceed to capture Waterford, without Irish help.

Strongbow was certainly attempting to extend his power independent of any help he might receive from any other source. Strongbow landed in force, took Waterford without Irish help, and then called upon Dermot to come with his daughter. Strongbow thus established his base of power in Ireland by himself, and secured Dermot's territorial inheritance, at least in Anglo-Norman eyes. Dermot and Strongbow then proceeded to Dublin, where Dermot attempted to arrange for the surrender of the Ostmen through the intervention of the archbishop of Dublin.⁴⁶ However, Miles

⁴⁵ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 59-61. If the Anglo-Normans did proceed to plunder the Irish countryside after their arrival, and it is certainly likely that they did so, then the attack by the Irish comes as no surprise at all. After the battle seventy prisoners were killed after speeches by Raymond, who argued for clemency, and Hervey, who argued that if they planned to conquer the country then mercy was misplaced. Although these speeches are almost certainly concoctions by Giraldus they do suggest that the Anglo-Norman goals in Ireland had not been clearly defined at the outset.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 67. Laurence, as known as Lorcan Ua Tuathail, was the archbishop of Dublin and also happened to be Dermot's brother-in-law.

de Cogan and Raymond le Gros, two of Strongbow's men, led a surprise attack on the town and captured it, surrendering it in turn, to Strongbow.⁴⁷ Dermot then succeeded in convincing the Anglo-Normans to pillage Meath, although this probably did not take too much effort. Dermot was obviously planning to destroy his old enemy, Tiernan O'Roarke, the king of Meath and Rory O'Conner's chief ally.⁴⁸ This was too much for Rory O'Conner who then sent a message to Dermot saying that he had overstepped his bounds and therefore O'Conner was condemning Dermot's son to death. Dermot replied haughtily that he would not stop attacking until Connacht and the high-kingship were his. Rory then became enraged and executed Dermot's son. At this point Dermot had clearly gained the upper hand in southern Ireland, and the position of ard-ri might have been expected to follow. Unfortunately, Dermot's designs on the position of the ard-ri would go unfulfilled, for, after his return to Ferns, he died in March 1172.

Dermot's death was a critical point in the Anglo-Norman campaigns in Ireland. While hardly unexpected for a man of his age, his death had important effects on the

⁴⁷ The Song of Dermot relates that the surrender had been arranged, but the Ostmen were having difficulty in finding the thirty hostages required. While they were trying to solve this problem Miles and Raymond struck.

⁴⁸ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 69.

Anglo-Normans in Ireland and their connections to one another. It marks the end of the Irish vassalage of the Geraldines. Although Dermot had many Irish heirs, such as his son Domnall Kavanaugh or his brother Murchad Mac Murchada,⁴⁹ to the Anglo-Normans he only had one legitimate heir, and his name was Richard de Clare. However, this does not mean that Strongbow automatically inherited Dermot's position among the Geraldines. In fact, it would be several years before Strongbow was able to solidify his hold on Leinster, and he would never be able to solidify his control over the Geraldines.

The three early Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland were clearly of a personal nature. Richard FitzGodibert was clearly a mercenary hired by Dermot, and his expedition was an adventure, albeit one that failed. The Geraldines had come over as vassals of Dermot. They wanted land and had come to stay. They were also on an adventure, larger than the first and permanent, but certainly not an invasion. Their expedition was at most a family's relocation, not the first element of an organized Anglo-Norman invasion planned and executed by Richard de Clare. Dermot himself came up with the plan to become ard-ri, not the Anglo-Normans. They used this as a temptation to bring over Strongbow, who

⁴⁹ Domnall was illegitimate, but this hardly mattered to the Irish. Dermot's legitimate heirs, Enna and Conon, were ineligible for inheritance of his lands because Enna had been blinded by Donnchad Mac Gilpatrick, and Conon had just been slain by Rory O'Conner. Ibid., 35 and 69.

seemed reluctant to come, but they remained loyal to Dermot until his death. Up to this point the Anglo-Normans had sought to adjust to the Irish political situation rather than having it adjust to them.

CHAPTER THREE

IRELAND BETWEEN THE KINGS Anglo-Norman Leinster from the death of Dermot to the arrival of Henry II

From the death of Dermot MacMurrough up until the arrival of king Henry II, Richard de Clare was the most important leader in Anglo-Norman Ireland. Strongbow attempted to fill the gap that Dermot had left in the Irish political system. Although he failed to take Dermot's place as the king of Leinster, Strongbow did provide a bridge from Ireland to the heart of the Angevin empire.

Dermot's death proved to be a critical point in the relationship between the Irish, the Geraldines, and Dermot's successor to the kingdom of Leinster, Richard de Clare.¹ At the point of Dermot's death, the Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland were at a very perilous crossroads. Dermot's demise, like the death of any powerful Irish noble of the time, provided his various Irish subjects with enough pretense to attempt to establish their independence.² In

¹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 75. Giraldus states the date of Dermot's death as the kalends of May.

² The Song of Dermot, 129, says that the Irish revolted when Dermot died, but as will be seen below, this was only partially the cause of the problems that the Anglo-Normans were to experience in Ireland during the next few months.

fact, any serious reversal could provide the Irish with reason enough to engage in this form of treachery.

That the Irish revolted after's Dermot death was not an exceptional event. However, neither was it the pan-Gaelic crusade that it has been made out to be.³ In fact, such revolts were as common before Dermot left Ireland as they were after his return.⁴ Indeed, more men appear to have remained loyal to the Anglo-Normans in 1172 than had remained loyal to Dermot MacMurrough in 1166.⁵ Such revolts also seemed to be just as common inside the Anglo-Norman's lands as they were in the purely Irish controlled lands to

³ Giraldus and the Song of Dermot both portray it as such. Modern authors such as Michael Dolley, Anglo-Norman Ireland: c 1100-1318 (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1972), and R. Dudley Edwards, A New History of Ireland (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972) have emphasized facets of this belief, although not as fervently as the contemporary authors. Additionally, Donncha O'Corrain, Ireland Before the Normans (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1972), says that the Anglo-Normans destroyed the nascent Irish unity that had developed in Ireland under Rory O'Conner.

⁴ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 27. A similar revolt occurred in 1166 when Dermot was expelled from Ireland in the first place. Giraldus says the men of rank among the men of Leinster recalled the injustices they had long concealed against him and deserted Dermot, making common cause with his enemies. The Song of Dermot, 17, says that after doing so the men of Ossory and Leinster wanted to sell Dermot to O'Roarke, but instead, they gave him to Rory O'Conner. The Annals of Ulster, ed. B. MacCarthy (Dublin: The Queen's Printing Office, Alex. Thom & Co., 1893), 153, says that Rory received the pledges of the men of Meath, Dublin, Mac Murchad and all the men of Leinster.

⁵ Song of Dermot, 129. Domnall Kavanaugh, O'Reilly of Tirbrun, and Auliffe O'Garvy remained loyal to the Anglo-Normans. Only Domnall and the rest of Dermot's immediate family at Ferns remained loyal in 1166.

the west and north.⁶ What was exceptional about this series of rebellions was the fact that there existed an extensive group of men in Ireland who were not likely to engage in this type of rebellion against Dermot's successor, namely, the many Anglo-Normans who lived in Ireland at the time.

The Anglo-Norman unity that occurred after Dermot's death had three points of origin. First, the Anglo-Normans were still quite a small minority in Ireland,⁷ and it would be all too easy for the Anglo-Normans to view the various Irishmen who revolted as all being united into an anti-Anglo-Norman front. Thus, they would be more inclined to work together in order to avoid being annihilated by the

⁶ The dealings between Rory O'Conner and Domnall O'Brien of Limerick show this aspect of Irish history to a good extent. Robert FitzStephen had been sent to help Domnall resist Rory O'Conner's ambitions in Limerick. Giraldus, Expugnatio, 53. Rory later attacked Thomond during an expedition of the Anglo-Normans and Domnall Mac Gillpatrick in 1175. (According to the Annals of Tigernach from Giraldus, Expugnatio, 323-24, n. 241) Domnall O'Brien was also forced to give hostages to Rory in 1176. (Ibid, 327, n. 268), For a more in-depth view of Irish political revolts, see Michael Dolley's Anglo-Norman Ireland: c 1100-1318 (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1972), F. X. Martin and T. W. Moody, The Course of Irish History (Cork: Mercier Press, 1984; reprint, Cork: Mercier Press, 1989), and Art Cosgrove, ed. A New History of Ireland (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987). For an analytical look at political relationships between the Anglo-Normans and the Irish, see Marie Therese Flanagan, Irish Society, Anglo-Norman Settlers, and Angevin Kingship (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

⁷ It has already been shown that there were about 2000 Anglo-Normans in Ireland at the time of Henry's arrival. Henry's army of 500 knights and around 4000 men was therefore twice the size of the Anglo-Norman army under Strongbow's control. Although Henry's army was large, it was about the size needed to deal with Ireland, had Strongbow and the Irish both been ready to resist him.

Irish. Second, the Anglo-Normans in Ireland were generally related,⁸ and, since they were in the minority, these family and racial ties would create loyalty which would not allow them to operate against each other when they were threatened. Finally, it must not be forgotten that the Anglo-Normans had been used by Dermot as enforcers. Dermot had imported them and used them to regain his Irish throne.⁹ Now that Dermot was dead, it was quite natural that the Irish would wish to be rid of those men who had enforced the rule of Dermot MacMurrough. Naturally, the Irish would attempt to escape their oppressor's yoke, and, just as naturally, the Anglo-Normans would see these drives for independence as a unified front. These three factors drove the Anglo-Normans to work together after Dermot's death, and, thus they were able to survive through this period of danger.

The Anglo-Normans had to contend with three serious threats to their control of Leinster. These threats show the relationship of the Anglo-Normans to the Irish during this early period. The first threat came from outside of Ireland. Askulv, the previous ruler of Dublin, came back

⁸ See Appendix A.

⁹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 35. Dermot had placed Robert at Carrick. Later, Robert was one of the few men to remain loyal to Dermot when Rory O'Conner invaded, (Ibid., 41.) According to the Song of Dermot, 45 and 67, Dermot used the Anglo-Normans to plunder Osraige, Offaly, and Glendalough. None of these acts would have made very many of the Irish especially loyal to the Anglo-Normans, no matter if they had been Irish, Welsh, French, or Anglo-Norman.

with a fleet of Northmen and attacked the town.¹⁰ What is interesting about this event is that, according to the Song of Dermot, an Irishman, Gilmohalmock, approached Miles before the battle and offered to help him if the Anglo-Normans were victorious.¹¹ However, if the Anglo-Normans were defeated, Gilmohalmock said that the Irish would help the Vikings kill Miles and his men. Miles accepted this offer, and the Irish helped him capture Askulv and chase off the defeated Vikings.¹²

The second threat to the Anglo-Norman lands came from Gaelic Ireland. Rory O'Conner raised an immense army of Irishmen and besieged Dublin. Giraldus says that after the Irish saw that the earl and his followers were weakened by the loss of their men and the want of provisions from England they decided to attack the Anglo-Normans.¹³ From

¹⁰ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 77. Askulv, the previous ruler of Dublin came back, with a fleet of Danes, led by John the Wode, and other allies from various northern lands. They attacked Dublin, but were beaten back and forced to flee when a surprise attack on the Danish army from behind turned the Viking charge into a rout. John was killed and Askulv captured and then slain when he boasted of returning with a larger force if he was ransomed.

¹¹ Song of Dermot, 169.

¹² *Ibid.*, 77. Richard Cogan, Miles' brother, led the sally from the southern gate that routed the Vikings. As amazing as such an offer may seem, this event is not unique in the history of the Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland. Giraldus, Expugnatio, 163, relates the speech in which Domnall Mac Gillpatrick made the same sort of offer to Raymond le Gros when Domnall led an Anglo-Norman army into Limerick. The Anglo-Normans were victorious here as well. After the arrival of Henry II, Domnall of Osráige remained loyal to the Anglo-Normans.

¹³ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 79.

this it can be seen that even before Henry's arrival his policies were playing an important, if indirect, role in Irish politics. Rory's alliance was virtually identical to that which had been used to overthrow Dermot in 1166.¹⁴ Rory was also able to convince Godfred, the king of the Isle of Man, to lead a fleet and blockade Dublin by sea.¹⁵ Giraldus says that Laurence, the archbishop of Dublin, started the siege for nationalistic reasons.¹⁶ Although this may be true, Giraldus later states that the army Laurence led was composed of all the forces of Leinster except those of Ui Chenneslaig and Wexford, who were busy besieging Robert FitzStephen all on their own. Thus, it can be seen that Laurence's nationalism was Leinster nationalism, not Irish nationalism. Since Laurence was Dermot's brother-in-law, and therefore had a claim to Leinster that was at least as strong as Strongbow's, Laurence's attitude of hostility to Dermot's foreign heir is

¹⁴ Ibid. The second attack was by Rory O'Conner and his allied army. Rory's army included Tiernan O'Roarke, MacDunlevy of Uliad, Domnall O'Brien of Thomond (who had married a daughter of Dermot, and therefore had as much claim to Leinster as Strongbow did), Murchad Mac Murchada of Ui Chenneslaig (Dermot's brother, who, in a legal and social sense, had a much better claim to the kingdom of Leinster), and a number of local chieftains. Rory also received help from the fleets of Godfred of the Isle of Man and the Northmen of the Orkney Islands. These men blockaded the port while Rory besieged it from land.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

quite understandable. Strongbow was besieged for two months when his food began to run out.

While Strongbow was besieged in Dublin, the Anglo-Norman situation in Ireland looked very precarious. At this point, Strongbow sent a message to Rory O'Conner.¹⁷ Strongbow stated that he would be willing to accept Rory as his lord in return for his own acceptance as the ruler of Leinster. Rory was only willing to give Strongbow the three cities of Dublin, Waterford, and Wexford, and this offer Strongbow refused. The matter was settled militarily when the siege was broken by a surprise sally from the Dublin garrison which caught the Irish off guard and allowed the Anglo-Normans to rout Rory's army.¹⁸ Only the two victories at Dublin and a revolt by the O'Briens in Limerick, which drew pressure off of the Anglo-Normans in Leinster, resulted in the stabilization of the Anglo-Norman realm in Ireland.¹⁹ Although the Anglo-Normans had prevailed, luck and surprise,

¹⁷ Song of Dermot, 135. Strongbow used Laurence, the Irish archbishop of Dublin and Dermot MacMurrough's brother-in-law, and Maurice Prendergast as his messengers.

¹⁸ Ibid., 141. The Song of Dermot and Giraldus do not agree on the order of battle. See Giraldus, Expugnatio, 83, and the Song of Dermot, 139-41. It is interesting to note that according to the Song of Dermot, Domnall, the son of Dermot MacMurrough, O'Reilly of Tirbrun (Ua Rathallaigh of Ui Briuin Breifne, an enemy of Tiernan O'Roarke), and Auliffe O'Garvy (Ua Gairghidh) rallied to the aid of the foreigners and led three companies of Irishmen into battle alongside the Anglo-Normans.

¹⁹ Miles' victory over the Danes probably occurred in early May 1171, while Rory besieged Dublin later that summer.

as well as the strength of his allies, made Strongbow's victory possible.

The speeches Giraldus attributes to Raymond le Gros and Maurice FitzGerald also tell us something about the state of affairs in Ireland at this time. Maurice says that the Anglo-Normans in Ireland were English as far as the Irish were concerned, and Irish as far as the English were concerned.²⁰ This implied that no help was to be expected to come from England, nor were the Anglo-Normans to rely on the Irish for aid. Raymond adds that the Anglo-Normans should attack Rory's army first, because if he were defeated the other armies would be easily routed.²¹ Rory had, in fact, split his own army into several parts, one to besiege Dublin, and the others to loot the countryside. He was conducting warfare in the traditional Irish style. Rory's allied army quickly dissolved once he was beaten, and Giraldus' great Irish nationalist crusade evaporated as quickly as it had begun. Later, just before Henry's arrival in Ireland, Tiernan O'Roarke returned to attack Dublin.²² Strongbow was in southern Leinster and few men remained in Dublin. Nevertheless, Tiernan was defeated by Miles de Cogan and the threat to the Anglo-Normans from outside Leinster was over.

²⁰ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 81.

²¹ Ibid., 83.

²² Ibid., 91.

The third threat came from inside the Anglo-Norman lands, when the Irishmen of Leinster revolted and the men of Wexford besieged Robert FitzStephen at Carrick.²³ The Ostmen of Wexford revolted after FitzStephen sent nearly all his men to help Strongbow in Dublin. His own position was thus incredibly vulnerable when the men of Leinster revolted in support of Dermot's brother, Murchada Mac Murchad.²⁴ They were not part of Rory's plans, unless, for some unknown reason, Leinstermen had begun taking orders from the king of Connacht, something they had never been willing to do before. Robert was captured by trickery,²⁵ but, after Rory had been defeated, Strongbow marched south and defeated this army as well.²⁶ Although it is easy to see why contemporaries should have seen each of these three attacks as part of a concerted effort by the Irish to rid themselves of the Anglo-Normans, this was not the case.

Even in this period of intense danger, the Anglo-Normans were not entirely deserted by their Irish allies. Although they were few, several Irishmen remained allied to

²³ Song of Dermot, 131.

²⁴ Ibid., 135.

²⁵ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 85. The men of Wexford apparently persuaded several priests to tell Robert that Strongbow had been defeated and that they wanted Robert to surrender to them in return for safe conduct out of the country. Robert surrendered, in order to spare his men, but then learned of the Irishmen's treachery when they captured him and killed some of his men.

²⁶ Song of Dermot, 147. Giraldus, Expugnatio, 87. The Irishmen were defeated at the pass of Ui Drona.

the Anglo-Normans. Gilmohalmock's aid to Miles de Cogan, the loyalty of Domnall Kavanaugh,²⁷ and the speed with which the defeated armies evaporated, all point to the fact that these uprisings were just part of the traditional Irish revolts during a period of regional instability due the death of a powerful noble. Later, other Irish nobles would request and receive aid from the Anglo-Normans, much as Dermot had done in 1167.²⁸ Thus, this period is much like those Ireland had experienced before, during, and after the coming of the Anglo-Normans.²⁹ A period of danger this was, but a nationalistic uprising this was not, and, with the defeat of the men of Leinster, the period of danger to the existence of the Anglo-Norman realm from Irish sources was over.

Between the siege of Dublin and King Henry II's arrival in Ireland, Strongbow's political ambitions in

²⁷ Song of Dermot, 141. Giraldus, Expugnatio, 83. Due to his claim to Dermot's lands, Domnall Kavanaugh, Dermot's son, was presumably one of the Irishmen who would benefit the most from the defeat of the Anglo-Normans. Nevertheless, he remained completely loyal to Strongbow.

²⁸ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 165. Diarmait MacCarrthaig asked Raymond le Gros to help him recover his kingdom in 1175. Later, Rory's son Muirchertach guided the Anglo-Normans on an unsuccessful invasion of Connacht in 1177. (From the Annals of Tigernach, in Giraldus, Expugnatio, 335, n. 325.)

²⁹ The running feud between Domnall O'Brien of Limerick and Domnall Mac Gillpatrick of Osraige, and Rory's raids into Limerick were also a prime examples of this type of behavior among the Irish. (For examples of this type of behavior see Song of Dermot, 149; Giraldus, Expugnatio, 53, 163, 183, 308.)

Ireland can be determined from his actions. Richard de Clare wanted more than just to be an ally of the Geraldines or an independent Anglo-Norman marcher lord. Yet, although he wanted to replace Dermot as the ruler of Leinster, the dream of becoming the ard-ri of Ireland was Dermot's alone. In fact, to see Strongbow as a conquering invader is difficult given his actions in Ireland after Dermot's death.

Strongbow's actions after his victory at Dublin are those of a man consolidating his power, not a man seeking more. First he had to deal with the problem of his Irish allies.³⁰ He summoned Domnall O'Brien in order to have him join forces with the Anglo-Normans against Mac Gillpatrick. However, Mac Gillpatrick decided to submit to Strongbow instead of being destroyed.³¹ Next, Murchad O'Brien was pursued, captured and beheaded for his disloyalty.³² However, Strongbow then made peace with Dermot's brother, Murchada Mac Murchad, and confirmed him as the king of Ui Chenneslaig, at the same time giving an equivalent status to Dermot's son, Domnall, whom he appointed his "Irish

³⁰ None of these next three episodes is mentioned by Giraldus.

³¹ Song of Dermot, 149-59. Mac Gillpatrick said that he would talk to Strongbow only if Maurice Prendergast provided him with safe conduct. Maurice did so, but Domnall O'Brien argued that they should do away with him anyway. Strongbow allowed Mac Gillpatrick to go free, and on his way back home with Maurice they defeated men sent by O'Brien to pillage Osraige.

³² Ibid., 161.

seneschal" in Leinster.³³ What Strongbow was doing was co-opting his Irish relatives, and the earl thereby supplied himself with a base of power somewhat independent of his Anglo-Norman allies.³⁴ All of these actions point to the fact that before Henry's trip in 1172 Strongbow was attempting to set himself up as a local provincial king and not a foreign invader attempting to usurp the position of the ard-ri. Strongbow had to deal with his Irish subjects quickly, because now he had to deal with someone much more powerful than any one of them. Strongbow had to deal with King Henry II of England.

Among the many feudal relationships that evolved in Ireland, the most important ties were those that developed between Henry II, Richard de Clare, and the Geraldines. The Geraldines, while connected to Strongbow through their cultural and political ties, were not just his servants, they were his allies. Although Dermot had been able to use the Geraldines to restore his power, Strongbow did not immediately or entirely inherit their loyalty. This was in no small part due to the fact that the Geraldines also had very close ties to Henry II, the king of England, ties that

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ In fact, Strongbow's co-opting of the Irish may explain Giraldus's disregard of him. Strongbow had undermined the Geraldine's ties to the Irish through Dermot and secured a position for himself independent of their power.

Henry II would be quick to exploit upon his arrival in Ireland.

The Geraldines had some very close ties to Henry II, and none were closer than those of the first Anglo-Norman to join Dermot in 1169, Robert FitzStephen. Robert had saved Henry's life in 1157 in Wales,³⁵ was captured by Rhys while he defended Henry's castle at Cardigan (the event which led to his deal with Dermot), and when captured by the Irish at Carrick, it would be to Henry II that Robert would be released.³⁶ Robert was quickly restored to Henry's favor, if, indeed, he had ever been out of it, and was one of the men left in charge of the Dublin garrison when Henry left Ireland. After Strongbow's return to Henry's favor and to Ireland in 1173, Robert, along with several other Geraldines, would be sent to aid the King with the war in Normandy. Along the way, in England, Robert would be one of the Irish lords who defeated Henry's enemies at Fornham during the rebellion of 1173-74.³⁷ Later, after Strongbow's death, he would return to Ireland under orders from Henry and would be given large tracts of land in Cork.³⁸ These

³⁵ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 311, n. 148.

³⁶ Ibid., 93. The Song of Dermot states Henry railed at Robert for attempting to conquer Ireland, but that he did so because he wanted to make sure that Robert was safe from the wrath of the Wexfordmen. Although Robert had nothing to do with to whom he was released, this action nevertheless reinforced previous ties between the two men.

³⁷ Song of Dermot, 213-15.

³⁸ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 185.

are hardly the actions of a loyal servant of Strongbow, rather they are the actions of a servant of the crown. Therefore, in light of his later actions, it is hard to see Robert as just a servant of Strongbow engaged in carrying out an invasion of Ireland. Rather, he is more easily seen as an ambitious, young nobleman out for himself, his family, and his king.

Maurice FitzGerald is also generally seen as a close supporter of Strongbow. Although several of his actions seem to support this argument, his main concern was for himself and his family. First, after the capture of Waterford, Maurice accompanied Dermot when he went to meet with Strongbow. If Maurice was just a vassal of Strongbow why was he not sent for earlier? Second, Maurice returned from the court of Henry II with Raymond le Gros in 1171, where Raymond had been sent by Strongbow.³⁹ However, it is important to note that neither Giraldus nor the Song of Dermot mention that Maurice had been sent to negotiate for Strongbow. Indeed, Henry's edict was not very specific; it was directed to all Anglo-Normans, not just Strongbow.⁴⁰ Maurice was not mentioned as having left with Raymond, and therefore it is possible that Maurice left on his own and

³⁹ Ibid., 71.

⁴⁰ Ibid. Giraldus reports Henry's edict as saying that "in the future no ship should presume to carry anything to Ireland from any of the lands under his rule, and that all those who had gone there from his domains should return before the following Easter, or be completely disinherited and forever banished from his realm."

went to argue for himself, not Strongbow. Later, when Maurice returned to Ireland and was besieged in Dublin with Strongbow, his main concern was for Robert, then besieged at Carrick, not Richard de Clare. Even later Maurice had rather extensive ties with other Anglo-Norman lords beside the earl of Pembroke. For example, he saved Hugh de Lacy's life at the Hill of Tlachtgha.⁴¹ Although Maurice married his daughter to Hervey de Montmoureny, this was done to create close family ties between himself and Strongbow.⁴² Strongbow also summoned Maurice himself back from Wales and gave him the middle cantred of Ui Faelain and the castle of Wicklow.⁴³ If such close ties had already existed before, why did Strongbow or Maurice need to create them? What is more likely is that Maurice and Strongbow were enhancing a relationship that had developed in response to the unstable situations that had evolved in Ireland due to their actions and their ties to Dermot MacMurrough, Henry II, and the

⁴¹ Hugh de Lacy was one of the king's men that Henry had brought to Ireland in 1171. Hugh had been given Meath in fee for fifty knights. Ibid., 113. This hill was also called the Hill of O'Roarke and is now called the Hill of Ward. Tiernan was killed while he and Hugh de Lacy were engaging in peace talks. Apparently each side suspected the other of treachery, and, during the confusion, Tiernan was slain by a young knight named Griffon while mounting his horse. Griffon was a nephew of Maurice FitzGerald and Robert FitzStephen.

⁴² Ibid., 143. Strongbow married his daughter, Aline, to Maurice's oldest son, William, at this time as well.

⁴³ Ibid. Meiler FitzHenry was given the furthest of the three cantreds of Ui Faelain and the Hereford Brothers, Adam, John, and Richard received the cantred nearest Dublin.

Irish. In effect, Strongbow and Maurice were creating secure ties to each other because of their ordeals in Ireland, rather than just reaffirming already strong ties that had existed before their arrival there. Thus, although

extensive ties developed between Strongbow and Maurice FitzGerald it is incorrect to view Maurice as merely a servant of the earl of Pembroke.

In fact, even Strongbow's most steadfast Geraldine allies were not unswerving in their loyalty to him. Raymond le Gros was initially one of Strongbow's most trusted captains. He landed in Ireland first, and was conspicuous in the early battles for control of Leinster. Later, Raymond was drawn into the service of Henry II, although Raymond was sent back with Strongbow when Henry allowed the earl to return to Ireland in 1173. However, when Raymond made it known that he wanted to marry Strongbow's sister, Basilia, he was rebuffed. Perhaps Strongbow was wary of Raymond doing to him what he himself had done to Dermot, for Strongbow's heir was a young child, and Raymond could easily take control of Leinster away from Strongbow's heir. When Strongbow forbade Raymond from marrying his sister, Raymond left Ireland in a very evil humor.⁴⁴ Only when the troops stationed at Dublin threatened to leave Ireland, or revolt to the Irish unless Raymond returned, was Strongbow forced to call him back to Ireland.⁴⁵ Raymond may have been

⁴⁴ Song of Dermot, 209.

⁴⁵ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 135.

Strongbow's vassal, but he had his own power in Ireland. If Strongbow had planned the Anglo-Norman invasion, then he quickly discovered that he could not accomplish his goals without the support of allies, allies who might have had their own ideas and goals in Ireland.

While the Irish were trying to remove the Anglo-Normans from power in Ireland, Henry was threatening to do the same in England. Henry threatened to confiscate all their lands and possessions unless they returned home.⁴⁶ Henry's edict forced the various Anglo-Normans in Ireland to come to him in order to retain their other Angevin lands.⁴⁷ Only by placating Henry and submitting his lands in Leinster to the king of England did Strongbow gain the acceptance of his Irish conquests by Henry II.⁴⁸

Although Strongbow had mustered enough force to inherit Dermot's position as the lord of Leinster, in doing so he had gone one step too far for the liking of his liege,

⁴⁶ William of Newburgh, Chronicle, in David C. Douglas and George W. Greenaway, eds. English Historical Documents: 1042-1189, vol. 2, English Historical Documents, general ed. David C. Douglas (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), 341.

⁴⁷ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 89. Strongbow sent Hervey to talk with Henry, but Hervey returned saying that Strongbow himself had to go to see the king.

⁴⁸ Giraldus says that Strongbow found Henry at Newnham but, according to Goddard Henry Orpen, Ireland Under the Normans, 1169-1333 (Oxford: University Press, 1911-20; reprint, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), 1:294, n.1, Strongbow probably found Henry at Pembroke. The feudal host Henry was preparing for his trip to Ireland was being mustered at Newnham in Gloucestershire.

Henry II. It was only by convincing Henry of his loyalty that Strongbow was able to assert his claim to Leinster. However, Henry was unwilling to let Strongbow keep all of Leinster to himself. In fact, such a sizable conquest as Strongbow had just presented to Henry deserved to be looked into personally, and that was just what Henry II would do next.

During the period between Dermot's death and Henry's arrival the Anglo-Normans had closed their ranks, and presented a generally united front to the various Irish threats which they encountered. Strongbow had managed to retain control of Leinster, and had gained the alliance of the Geraldines. However, the Anglo-Normans in Ireland were not merely his servants. The Geraldines retained control of large tracts of land in their own right and still possessed considerable power on their own, power they were not above using to obtain their own goals.

By the time of Henry's arrival, the Anglo-Normans in general, and Strongbow in particular, had taken steps to co-opt the Irish inhabitants of Leinster. The Anglo-Normans were about as successful in doing so as any Irishmen of the period. Irish regionalism was still strong, and the Anglo-Normans had adapted to this as well. Slowly, the Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland were turning into settlements, settlements with Anglo-Normans and Irish living side-by-side. However, once Henry became involved in Ireland, the rules of Irish politics changed. One more player sat at the

game-table that Leinster had become, and the exact nature of the Anglo-Norman domains in Ireland had become uncertain to say the least.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ROYAL REACTION Ireland from 1172 to 1185

Due to Anglo-Normans military success in Ireland, Henry II could no longer ignore what had occurred there. Henry traveled to the island on the eighteenth of October 1171.¹ The results of Henry's visit to Ireland can only be understood by examining the complex relationships which developed between the Geraldines, Strongbow, Henry II, and the Irish leaders of Ireland.

Henry clearly went to Ireland in order to deal with the consequences of the actions of the Anglo-Normans who had ostensibly gone to Ireland to aid Dermot MacMurrough. Henry's primary concern was for the peace and stability of his realm as a whole, and he sought to find a way to integrate the Anglo-Norman lands in Ireland safely into the Angevin empire with as little strain on the rest of his empire as possible. Also, the possibility that some strong

¹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 93. Dermot states the date as the kalends of November, on St. Luke's Day. According to the Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi, (anonymous but attributed to Roger of Hovedon) ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols., (London: Rolls Service, 1867), 25, Henry actually landed at Crook, five miles from Waterford, on the seventeenth and entered the city the next day. The Song of Dermot, 189, says that Henry entered Ireland on All Hollow's Eve, before the feast of St. Martin.

Anglo-Norman noble, such as Strongbow, might be able to carve out a small kingdom for himself had to be eliminated,² and whatever other utility Ireland might have had to be determined as well.

Henry II arrived in Ireland on October 18, 1171 with an army of around 500 knights and numerous men-at-arms, mounted archers, foot archers, and mercenaries.³ With this considerable force, Henry was able to command the respect and submission of both the Anglo-Normans and the Irish without the need for much bloodshed.⁴ Because of the difficulty in determining Henry's attitudes about Ireland during his trip, care must be taken in examining Henry's actions while he was in Ireland.

Henry's initial attitude towards the Anglo-Normans in Ireland can be determined first by looking into the

² Warren, Henry II, 199. Warren says Henry was more than willing to accept Ireland as an outlet for younger sons and feudal pressures, but not as an independent power, especially one belonging to a disgraced earl.

³ The Song of Dermot, 189, says that Henry had 400 knights and an army of 4000 men total. Giraldus, Expugnatio, 93, says that Henry had 500 knights and many mounted and foot archers. See the H. S. Sweetman, ed. Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland (London: Longman & Co., Trubner & Co., 1875), 1-6, for various details on the equipment, produce, clothing, and other baggage that either went with or was sent to the expedition.

⁴ William of Newburgh, Chronicle, in David C. Douglas and George W. Greenaway, eds. English Historical Documents: 1042-1189, vol. 2, English Historical Documents, general ed. David C. Douglas (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953), 342. See also the Song of Dermot, 93, and Giraldus, Expugnatio, 189. Warren, Henry II, 200, says that Henry went to Ireland to make sure that Ireland was held directly or indirectly of the Crown.

relationships that he cultivated with the Anglo-Normans and the Irish once he landed in Ireland. It has already been seen that Henry had extensive ties to several of the Anglo-Norman leaders of the early expeditions to Ireland. Henry further cultivated these ties after his arrival in Ireland, although, even while he was doing so Henry made sure to assert his control of the Irish Anglo-Norman domains.

Even before his arrival Henry sought to isolate and reduce the influence of Strongbow in Ireland, and he continued to do so after he had landed. Henry's first move after landing in Ireland was to deprive Strongbow of his control of Waterford.⁵ Next, Henry rescued Robert FitzStephen from the clutches of the Ostmen of Wexford, although he stripped Robert of the control of the town of Wexford.⁶ This move was an adept one, for since Strongbow had already surrendered Dublin to Henry's control, this gave Henry control of all three major port cities in eastern Ireland.⁷ This move allowed Henry to control the Anglo-

⁵ Song of Dermot, 191. Warren, Henry II, 200, points out that Henry had two reasons for not depriving Strongbow of his lands. First, Ireland was already seen as an opportunity for ambitious Anglo-Normans and the problem of various nobles overrunning Ireland would only be delayed not prevented. The second, and more important reason is that Anglo-Norman tradition allowed a noble to retain any land he had conquered by force of arms--William the Conqueror and England being a prime example of this type of incident--and, therefore, depriving Strongbow of his lands would set an unfortunate precedent for the rest of Henry's empire.

⁶ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 95.

⁷ Ibid., 89-95. Henry first moved from Waterford to Lismore, Cashel, and Tibberaghny before returning to

Norman supply routes to England, and the fate of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland. However, Robert remained in Henry's good graces, for, just prior to Henry's departure for England and the continent, Henry made Robert the commander of the garrison of Dublin.⁸ In order to further strengthen his hand in Ireland, Henry also managed to acquire the services of many of those noblemen who had already participated in the expeditions to Ireland, notably Raymond le Gros and Miles de Cogan.⁹ These two men had been two of Strongbow's chief supporters and their loss severely limited Strongbow's ability to oppose the king's plans or move against the Irish directly.

It is important to note that Henry did not entirely strip Strongbow of his Irish possessions. Henry left Strongbow in control of a large portion of Leinster.¹⁰ This was a shrewd move for, by doing so, Henry retained the services of Strongbow's truncated power base, complete with its ties to the Irish. These ties might have been lost if

Waterford. It was on this trip that the Irish kings of southern Ireland rushed to submit to him. Henry then ventured north through Osraige and into Dublin where the Irish of that region did the same, while Henry secured control of his Anglo-Normans possessions as well. The Song of Dermot, says that Henry sent men to Dublin in order to take control of the town, and Richard de Clare surrendered it to him.

⁸ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 105; Song of Dermot, 199.

⁹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 103.

¹⁰ Ibid., 105. Song of Dermot, 197. Strongbow spent much of Henry's trip in Kildare.

Strongbow had been removed entirely, which would probably have resulted in war in Ireland and political chaos.¹¹ Just as the earl of Pembroke's removal might have caused the Irish to revolt, it would also have destroyed Strongbow's loyalty and any further usefulness that Strongbow still had in England and on the continent.¹² However, Henry did more than just move to usurp the loyalty of the Anglo-Normans already in Ireland and restrain the power of Strongbow. Henry also brought over and introduced many of his own men into the Irish political and military landscape.

Henry took care to make sure that he made Ireland a stable part of his empire by several methods. First, he placed several of his own trusted men in positions of power in Ireland. Chief among these was Hugh de Lacy.¹³ Henry gave Lacy the right to subinfeudate Meath for the service of

¹¹ Warren, Henry II, 199. It would have been impolitic for Henry to remove Strongbow if he had any other course of action available to him. Strongbow, Warren notes, was quick to give Henry an option when he offered him his Irish lands.

¹² Song of Dermot, 209. Strongbow was not without usefulness there either, as Henry would find out during the War of 1173-74. During that war Henry summoned Strongbow to his aid in order to guard Gisors. Strongbow did so well that Henry allowed him to return to Ireland, which was not without effect on the course of Anglo-Norman Irish history, as shall be seen.

¹³ Ibid., 195. Henry was obviously setting Hugh de Lacy up as a opposing force to Strongbow. Warren, Henry II, 201, reveals that Hugh de Lacy was the leader of the Herefordshire branch of the powerful Lacy family, a major baron in the Welsh Marches, and as intimately familiar with Strongbow as he was with Celtic custom.

fifty knights.¹⁴ He gave control of Waterford to Humphrey de Bohun, Robert FitzBernard, and Hugh de Gundeville for the services of forty knights.¹⁵ Wexford was given to William FitzAldelin, Philip de Hastings, and Philip de Breuse for thirty knights.¹⁶ Dublin also went to Hugh de Lacy for the service of twenty knights, as well as Maurice FitzGerald, and Robert FitzStephen with a further twenty.¹⁷ The men that Henry left in Ireland were not just young knights looking for land and loot. Instead, they were trusted and valued members of his court.¹⁸ Henry was taking no chances with the control of Anglo-Norman Ireland, he was clearly setting these men up as counters to Strongbow and any others that remained in Ireland.

Henry's plan makes a great deal of sense. If Henry had attempted to remove the Anglo-Normans who were already there entirely he would have destroyed the stability and power structures they had already set up in Ireland. However, without a counter force to balance out the Anglo-Norman realms in Ireland, Henry could not be sure of the continued loyalty of the tightly-knit family group that had

¹⁴ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 105.

¹⁵ Song of Dermot, 191.

¹⁶ Ibid., 199.

¹⁷ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 105.

¹⁸ Ibid., see notes 186-94 for details on the relations of each man to Henry II and their careers in his service.

taken over Leinster in the first place. Henry also planned on building castles in order to solidify his control over Ireland, but he put this plan off for unknown reasons.¹⁹ Thus, Henry set Ireland up with a series of feudal balances by playing the various Anglo-Normans off against each other as well as the Irish.

Upon Henry's arrival the Irish kings of southern Ireland wholeheartedly threw themselves into Henry's service.²⁰ The first to do so was Diarmait MacCarrthaig, the king of Desmond.²¹ He was quickly followed by Domnall O'Brien of Limerick,²² and Domnall Mac Gillpatrick and Maelsechnaill Ua Faelain²³ as well as a whole host of lesser kings of southern and eastern Ireland.²⁴ Only Rory O'Conner and the kings of northern Ireland remained aloof from this

¹⁹ Song of Dermot, 195.

²⁰ Warren, Henry II, 201. Warren argues that the Irish lords swore oaths of fealty, not homage to Henry. Since fealty implies personal service while homage refers to holding lands from someone, this assessment is probably quite accurate. The Irish would be quick to offer their service to Henry, but they would loath to offer up their lands to this powerful, but foreign, king.

²¹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 93.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 85.

²⁴ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 95. The list includes Mac Faelain Ui Faelain, MacDalwi, Ua Tuaithail, Mac Gill Mo-Cholmoc, Ua Cathasaigh, Ua Cerbaill of Airgilla, and Tiernan O'Roarke of Meath. The Song of Dermot is not very helpful in regards to Henry's visit as a whole, and most unsatisfactory regarding his dealing with the Irish in particular.

feudal parade, probably due to the distance from their realms to where Henry was and their lack of concern with appeasing so distant a monarch.²⁵ The Irish kings who did submit to Henry must have had just cause for doing so. The army Henry brought with him certainly had a great deal to do with this. Additionally, they probably hoped that by submitting to Henry, they might be able to persuade him to limit the expansion of the Anglo-Normans already in Ireland.²⁶ Clearly the men of Wexford thought to do so when they presented Henry with Robert FitzStephen.²⁷ The Irish told Henry that they were doing him a favor by presenting him with the first man who came to Ireland without his permission. Although the idea of using Henry as a shield to ward off the depredations of the Anglo-Norman nobles that had come to Ireland was not without merit, the Irish were to

²⁵ Giraldus, Expugnatio 95 and 312, n. 157 Rory is said to have met with the royal emissaries but whether he did or did not submit to Henry is vague at best. Several of the English chroniclers say that Rory did not submit at all. See Gervase of Canterbury, Chronica, ed. W. Stubbs (London: Rolls Service, 1879), i, 235; and the Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi, and Roger of Hovedon, Chronica Rogeri de Houedene, 4 vols, ed W. Stubbs (London: Rolls Service, 1868-71), ii, 30. According to the Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi, Henry had planned to lead an expedition into Connacht in order to make Rory submit, but had to abandon the plan when trouble broke out on the continent. Henry certainly had a large enough army to do so if he desired to go on such a campaign.

²⁶ Warren, Henry II, 194. He argues that Henry was invited by the Irish in the hopes that he would limit the expansion of the Anglo-Normans.

²⁷ Giraldus, Expugnatio 93; Song of Dermot, 185.

be disappointed in the support they would receive from the Angevin king.

Although Henry certainly did want to limit the power of the Anglo-Normans, he certainly did not care too much about the power relationships among the Irish themselves. Neither did the Irish care too much for Henry, for while they might submit to him they apparently provided him with no provisions during his stay.²⁸ Fortunately, for the Irish, Henry could not let any of the Anglo-Normans get strong enough to start considering themselves independent. Therefore, the Irish would be at least somewhat protected by Henry's presence in Irish politics. However, as important as they might be, feudal relationships were not the only ones that Henry took care to develop while he was in Ireland.

In 1171 Henry was also in trouble with the Church. A rash remark he had made resulted in the murder of Thomas Becket, the archbishop of Canterbury.²⁹ When he left England for Ireland Henry must have known that it was only a matter of time before he had to deal with this situation. However, Ireland was not without importance in Henry's relationship with the Pope. Back in 1155 Henry had acquired

²⁸ Song of Dermot, 195. The long list of extra supplies that Henry had sent to Ireland detailed in the Calendar of Documents Relating to Ireland also point this need out, as does the importance of English supplies in sustaining Anglo-Norman expansion in Ireland.

²⁹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 73. Giraldus took time out of his documentary on Ireland in order to record this event.

a papal Bull, Laudabiliter, in order to receive the Church's blessing for an invasion of Ireland.³⁰ Although Laudabiliter was not acted upon at the time, its existence allowed Henry to use it now in order to appease the Church. Since Ireland was known for not following traditional continental practices in several ways, his trip to Ireland provided Henry with a chance to do something for the Pope which might partially relieve him of the guilt that had resulted due to his role in the murder of Becket. Thus, after his arrival, Henry called the Council of Cashel,³¹ which was intended to eliminate some of the excesses of the Irish Church and put their practices more in line with normal Catholic procedures.³² However, as beneficial as this may have been it could only provide Henry with modest pressure to use in his dealings with the Church. Although

³⁰ Warren, Henry II, 196. Warren says that the text of the document is in reality a suggestion to a reluctant monarch about a possible course of action rather than just mere approval of Henry's suggestion for an invasion of Ireland. Warren also suggests that whole idea was clerically inspired. See Appendix C for the text of this document.

³¹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 99; Ibid. 314, n.166-67. This event is not mentioned in the Song of Dermot. See J. A. Watt, The Church and the Two Nations in Medieval Ireland (Cambridge: University Press, 1970), 38-39. Giraldus says that he is relating the original phrasing of the documents but, in fact, he is re-phrasing it.

³² Warren, Henry II, 530. Warren notes that while Henry might have taken steps to put Irish practices more in line with continental ideas, Henry did not disrupt the ecclesiastic structure of Ireland. Doing so would have generated far more chaos than he would have wanted in his latest acquisition.

Henry had apparently intended to spend the summer of 1172 in Ireland; when he heard that two papal legates were on the continent and had threatened to lay an interdict on England unless he met with them shortly, he had to leave Ireland prematurely.³³ The fact that his eldest son, also named Henry, was apparently plotting against him as well did much to cause his premature return from Ireland.³⁴

In Henry's treatment of the Anglo-Normans of Ireland during his trip there in 1171-72 his policy in regards to Ireland first becomes visible. Henry set up a series of feudal checks and balances that he clearly wished to use in order to make sure that no independent Anglo-Norman realm sprang up in Ireland. He co-opted the Geraldines and placed several of his own men as counters to Strongbow and the other Anglo-Normans, just as Strongbow had co-opted the Irish as a substitute for Anglo-Norman allies. However, Henry also wanted Ireland to provide him with a reliable source of manpower that he could call on in case of trouble in the rest of his realm. Detailed accounts of who he left in control in Ireland and the men they were to provide for him point to this. Unfortunately, balancing these two goals along with the desire for peace and stability in Ireland proved to be nearly impossible.

³³ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 103-5. The two legates were sent by the Pope Alexander III and their names were Albert and Theodinus. See also Ibid., 316, n. 182-83, and the Song of Dermot, 197.

³⁴ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 105.

After Henry's departure from Ireland, the island returned to the regional in-fighting typical of Irish politics before the Anglo-Normans arrived. The ruler of Leinster plundered Offaly, and other nearby states,³⁵ while various families fought it out for the control of Meath.³⁶ However, this time around the ruler of Leinster was an Anglo-Norman, as was one of the contenders in Meath. But otherwise politics appear to be similar to what they had been before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans. However, conditions in Ireland were now inextricably linked to those in the Angevin empire, and as conditions changed there, so did conditions in Ireland.

The Angevin civil war of 1173-74³⁷ was a turning point for the Anglo-Normans in Ireland. Strongbow was called to the continent in order to aid Henry II.³⁸ He took his knights with him but left his sergeants and archers in

³⁵ Song of Dermot, 203.

³⁶ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 115. Except for this incident Giraldus skips over the events of 1173-74 until Strongbow's return.

³⁷ Warren, Henry II, 108-136. Warren discusses this war in detail. Suffice it to say for our purposes that at the conclusion of the war Henry was willing to return to a status quo ante bellum in regards to most of his opponents. Henry's sons revolted, as his eldest son, Henry, almost did a year earlier. This earlier threat was one of the events that had recalled Henry II back from Ireland in 1172. This time the younger Henry, along with his brothers and several major nobles from both England and the continent, revolted. They were aided and inspired by King Louis of France.

³⁸ Song of Dermot, 209.

Ireland to prevent the Irish from revolting.³⁹ However, he did so well at the task that Henry assigned him--guarding the town of Gisors--that Henry allowed him to return to Ireland as its governor.⁴⁰ Strongbow was given Wexford, Waterford, and Dublin, and allowed to have Raymond le Gros as his deputy.⁴¹ When Strongbow returned, he quickly sent most of Henry's men to the continent in order to aid Henry. The men the earl sent included Robert FitzBernard, Robert FitzStephen, and Maurice of Ossory (Maurice Prendergast), but not Hugh de Lacy.⁴² Hugh remained behind in order to "plant his lands," and counter-balance Strongbow.⁴³ The men Strongbow dispatched from Ireland went to England on their way to the continent where they met up with some English forces under Richard de Lucy. The allied army then defeated the army of the rebellious earl Robert de Beaumont of

³⁹ Ibid., 211.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 213. Giraldus does not cover Strongbow's departure, but he does inform us of the earl's return. (Giraldus, Expugnatio, 135.) Giraldus is the one who calls Strongbow a governor.

⁴¹ Raymond had left Ireland before Strongbow's departure to the continent because of Strongbow's refusal to let him marry Basilia, the earl's sister. (Song of Dermot, 207). Raymond was in Wales at this time, and returned only when Strongbow allowed him to marry Basilia. (Song of Dermot, 219.) Giraldus ignores this episode and only informs us that the troops from Dublin had threatened to leave Ireland or revolt and serve the Irish unless Raymond were reinstated as their commander. (Giraldus, Expugnatio, 135-37.)

⁴² Song of Dermot, 213-15. Giraldus also ignores this episode.

⁴³ Ibid., 215.

Leicester and his army of Flemings outside of Bury St. Edmunds on 17 October 1173.⁴⁴ Henry's Irish vassals served him well in the war of 1173-74, and they would not go unrewarded. His policy of using Ireland as a source of manpower seemed to have worked. However, only time would tell the price Henry would have to pay in Ireland for his victories in 1173-74.

While the Anglo-Normans were away in foreign lands, the Irish revolted. Giraldus says that when the Irish heard of trouble across the sea they revolted.⁴⁵ Donnall O'Brien of Limerick attacked and defeated the men of Dublin, who were on an expedition into Osraige.⁴⁶ Meiler FitzHenry was nearly killed when the men of Waterford ambushed him.⁴⁷ After Raymond's return, the Song of Dermot relates that Strongbow and Raymond had to fight their way to Wexford and reinstate Anglo-Norman rule there.⁴⁸ Rory O'Conner overran Meath, and finding its castles empty, he burned them, and overran the territory as far as Dublin.⁴⁹ This suggests

⁴⁴ Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond, ed. Alexander Mcring (London: The De La More Press, 1903), 222. See also Jordan Fantosme's Chronicle, trans. and ed. R. C. Johnston (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), 77. Robert FitzBernard is said to do well in battle. See the Song of Dermot, 217.

⁴⁵ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 135.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 139. Hervey Montmoureny was in command of the Dublin garrison at this time.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 137.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 141.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 139. The Song of Dermot tells how Rory became enraged when he heard of a fortified castle being

that even Hugh de Lacy had returned to aid Henry. Although Giraldus attributes the revolt of the Irish to Raymond's departure, and their eventual defeat to Raymond's return,⁵⁰ the fact is that the Irish probably revolted because a great deal many more Anglo-Normans than just Raymond had departed Ireland in order to aid Henry II. The rest of the Anglo-Normans returned shortly after Raymond, and it was the restored strength of the Anglo-Normans that allowed them to defeat the Irish. If this period had really been the general uprising against Strongbow that Giraldus makes it out to be then one would expect it to have lasted longer. The Irish were merely raiding a distracted enemy, not overthrowing a hated invader.

After the war of 1173-74 Ireland experienced a second period of Anglo-Norman expansion. The men who returned from the war began to thrust outwards into Irish lands. Raymond le Gros, after he arrived at Waterford and helped to reestablish Strongbow's position, led a drive into Ui Faelain.⁵¹ Next, he led a raid into Cork, and returned with

built in Meath and he got together an army of Connachtmen and northerners and descended on Meath. Hugh de Lacy had left Hugh Tyrell in control of the castle of Trim while Lacy went overseas, and Tyrell was forced to retreat by Rory's advance and he burned the castle rather than let Rory have it.

⁵⁰ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 137-41.

⁵¹ Ibid., 141. The Irishmen of Ui Faelain were never very loyal to Strongbow and this expedition was probably to re-establish Anglo-Norman rule. The attack on Lismore has no such justification.

much loot to Lismore.⁵² While the fleet which was to carry this loot back to Waterford was at anchor waiting for a favorable wind in order to sail back to Waterford, they were attacked by a fleet from Cork led by Gilbert MacTurger.⁵³ Meanwhile, Domnall O'Brien of Desmond led an army to Lismore in support of the men of Cork. The Irish fleet was defeated by Adam de Hereford,⁵⁴ while Domnall was driven out of Lismore by Raymond, who returned to attack the Irish with twenty knights and sixty archers.⁵⁵ Next, Raymond proceeded to Dublin and forced Rory to withdraw from that territory. The security of the Anglo-Norman position in Ireland had been reestablished.

After the Anglo-Normans had reestablished their control over Leinster, they went on the offensive. Strongbow sent Raymond to attack Limerick with a force of 120 knights, 300 mounted archers and 400 foot archers in 1175.⁵⁶ On this expedition they were guided to the city by Domnall Mac Gillpatrick.⁵⁷ They captured the city, but,

⁵² Ibid., 137.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid. Gilbert was killed by a young knight named Philip of Wales.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 149. Song of Dermot, 245-49. This is the last episode in the Song of Dermot.

⁵⁷ Song of Dermot 247; Giraldus, Expugnatio, 149. This is when Domnall makes his offer of aiding the Anglo-Normans if they win, and aiding their enemies if they lose.

after Raymond had left with his booty, Domnall himself besieged the garrison that had been left there.⁵⁸ The Anglo-Normans mounted a relief effort, and they succeeded in getting to the city and reinforcing the garrison.⁵⁹ However, upon hearing of the death of Strongbow, Raymond had to give it back to Domnall, who, as soon as the Anglo-Normans were outside the gates, reneged on his oath and burned the city along with the Anglo-Norman's supplies.⁶⁰ Regardless of this setback, such Anglo-Norman pushes into Gaelic Ireland were not without success and were not to go unnoticed by Henry II.

After the first expedition of Anglo-Normans had taken Limerick, Henry sent four envoys to look into accusations that Strongbow and Raymond were trying to establish an independent kingdom.⁶¹ Although the envoys were distracted when news of Domnall's attack on the garrison arrived, and they allowed Raymond to reinforce it, they were mainly interested in the loyalty of the Anglo-Normans to Henry II.

⁵⁸ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 161.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 159. The garrison consisted of 50 knights, 200 mounted archers, and 200 foot archers. The relief effort consisted of 80 knights, 200 mounted archers, and 300 foot archers, as well as Domnall Mac Gillpatrick's men.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 167. Raymond tried to find someone who would be willing to defend the city, but could find no one willing to do so.

⁶¹ Ibid., 161. Giraldus blames the arrival of the envoys to the suspicion of Hervey. Their names were Robert Poer, Osbert de Herlotera, William de Bendings, and Adam de Dernemes.

Henry said that although the attack and relief of Limerick had been daringly conceived and well executed, only by leaving the city did the Anglo-Normans show any wisdom.⁶² Thus Strongbow's death must have come as a great relief to Henry II. The most powerful Anglo-Norman leader of Ireland was out of the picture and the envoys, and Henry II, reacted to take advantage of his demise and the resulting power vacuum in Ireland. The trend that developed under Strongbow would continue under the various governors that Henry placed in Ireland. That is to say that considerable leeway would be given to the governors in their control over Ireland, but the crown would continually keep check on their loyalty by the use of envoys and occasional recalls.

The men that most concerned Henry II were the two most powerful men of Anglo-Norman Ireland, Strongbow and Hugh de Lacy. After Strongbow's return to Ireland both he and Hugh de Lacy set about subinfeudating their lands.⁶³ However, Hugh first had to gain control of Meath as Tiernan O'Roarke was still an active enemy of the Anglo-Normans. However, while he and Hugh were engaged in peace talks Tiernan was slain by a young knight named Griffon.⁶⁴

⁶² Ibid., 167.

⁶³ Song of Dermot, 225-29. Warren, Henry II, 204-6, mentions that Henry's mistrust of the men he left in Ireland contributed to the instability of the situation and the continuing partition of Ireland into two parts, one Anglo-Norman, one Irish.

⁶⁴ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 113.

Tiernan's death allowed Hugh to gain control of most of Meath, which he took control of by building a series of castles and fortifications.⁶⁵ Meanwhile, Strongbow also subinfeudated his lands while also retaining a large number of his Irish relatives in his service.⁶⁶ Even after the earl's death the Irish who had served under Strongbow remained in service to the new lord of Leinster, William FitzAldelin. William's men were even said to have allowed the Irish to destroy some of the castles of the Geraldines.⁶⁷ Giraldus complained that under William, the Dublin garrison grew lax and did not engage in the profitable loot gathering raids that characterized earlier periods in Anglo-Norman Irish history.⁶⁸ New trends were developing in Ireland, trends of administration and peace.

Anglo-Norman Ireland was slowly becoming an administrative state, not a place for unlimited military expansion. Hugh de Lacy was given control of Leinster after William was recalled, and he settled the turbulent Irish landscape and concentrated on castle building, restoring the

⁶⁵ Ibid., 185; Song of Dermot, 233.

⁶⁶ Song of Dermot, 233-35. The list of men subinfeudated and the lands they were given is very detailed.

⁶⁷ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 173.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 175. Later, Giraldus, Expugnatio, 195, proclaimed that William and Robert Poer were excellent marcher lords and complimented them on their martial prowess. This indicates that while open warfare might have diminished there were still many chances for young men to earn glory and honor in combat.

countryside to its rightful owners, and winning the support of the Irish.⁶⁹ Although violence and martial glory were not entirely banished,⁷⁰ conditions in the east were generally peaceful over the course of the next several years. Leinster and Meath had settled down and administration took the place of open warfare. This indicates that more congenial contacts between the Anglo-Normans and the Irish in Leinster developed due to royal scrutiny, not in spite of it.

Even though the Anglo-Normans of Leinster continued their attacks on Gaelic Ireland in the west and north, their expansion was not an unrestricted attempt at conquest. The Anglo-Norman pushes into Ireland were more along the lines of traditional regional Irish warfare. How else can we explain the aid Raymond le Gros gave the Irish king Diarmait MacCarrthaig in recovering his lands in 1175.⁷¹ Similarly, Raymond met with and renewed loyalties with Rory O'Conner later that year.⁷² Rory had been raiding Thomond as well, and would soon force Domnall O'Brien out of his kingdom and into Ormond. Not one year earlier he had been raiding

⁶⁹ Ibid., 191.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 193. Giraldus says that Robert FitzHenry, Meiler's brother gained great glory before his untimely death. Gerald FitzMaurice, Roger Poer, William Poer, Raymond de Barry, Raymond of Kantitun, and Raymond FitzHugh also distinguished themselves.

⁷¹ Ibid., 165.

⁷² Ibid., 163.

Anglo-Norman Meath and had attacked Dublin.⁷³ John de Courcy most probably had Irish help in capturing the town of Down in 1177.⁷⁴ He also married the daughter of Godfred of Man.⁷⁵ John, like Strongbow, had married into the local nobility reinforcing his ties to Ireland. Rory's son Muirchertach even helped guide the Anglo-Normans on their attack on Connacht in 1177.⁷⁶ However, before conditions in Ireland could stabilize fully, the position of the Irish within the Anglo-Norman realms in Ireland had to be determined.

In 1175 Rory O'Conner had accepted Henry II as his liege and sealed the Treaty of Windsor, confirming him as a subordinate king in the Angevin empire.⁷⁷ This treaty affirmed Rory's rights to all the land outside of Anglo-Norman control. However, it also specifically stated that

⁷³ Song of Dermot, 235-37.

⁷⁴ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 175, 332 n. 297. Gesta Henrici, i, 137.

⁷⁵ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 181.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 183, 335 n. 325. Miles had 40 knights 200 mounted archers and 300 foot archers with him. The occupied Tuam but were forced to withdraw when they ran short of supplies. The Irish had conducted a scorched earth policy towards this end. The Annals of Tigernach, ed. Whitley Stokes, Revue Celtique 16-18 (1895-97), give an exceptionally long entry on this episode and reveal Muirchertach's help.

⁷⁷ Warren, Henry II, 201-2. It seems that this treaty specifically avoided using the standard terms of a feudal contract. Rory owed Henry service and tribute, but held his lands as he did before the treaty was signed, with his rights as ard-ri intact. For the text of this document see Appendix D.

if Irish lords had people living under them that had previously lived in lands held by the Anglo-Normans then they were compelled to return them.⁷⁸ This meant that although Henry was trying to stabilize Ireland by formally bringing the Irish into the feudal structure of the Angevin empire, he nevertheless put the importance and economic stability of the Anglo-Norman realms ahead of any Irish concerns. Rory's inability to deal with the Irish and the Anglo-Normans by himself doomed this treaty to failure.⁷⁹ The Anglo-Normans of Ireland were free to encroach on Irish lands, as they were only constrained by interference from the crown, whose primary concern was for continued Anglo-Norman stability, not Irish survival.

Henry's desire to prevent any one man from becoming too powerful did prevent a unified Anglo-Norman realm in Ireland, but his lack of action in preventing the Irish from being taken over by local attacks did not save the Irish

⁷⁸ Edmund Curtis and R. B. McDowell, eds., Irish Historical Documents 1172-1922 (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1943; reprint, New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968), 23. The text states that the Irish lords shall return these peasants so that "they shall dwell there in peace."

⁷⁹ Warren, Henry II, 189-91. Celtic culture and society worked against Rory's attempts to control Gaelic Ireland. This lack of political maturity, as Warren calls it, doomed the treaty. For a modern in-depth analysis of Rory and his dealings with his Irish subjects and the Anglo-Normans during this period see Robin Frame, Colonial Ireland (Dublin: Helicon Limited, 1981), Michael Dolley, Anglo-Norman Ireland: c 1100-1318 (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1972), and F. J. Byrne's and F. X. Martin's articles in Art Cosgrove's, ed., A New History of Ireland II: Medieval Ireland 1169-1534 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

from Anglo-Norman depredations. Miles de Cogan's expedition into Connacht,⁸⁰ Raymond's moves into Limerick,⁸¹ and John de Courcy's capture of Down during his invasion of Ulster⁸² all point to continued expansion on the frontiers of Anglo-Norman Ireland. This led Henry to consider alternatives to allowing uncontrolled attacks on Irish lands, and an alternative he would develop, one that did not require any assistance from the Irish or Rory O'Conner.

In 1177 William FitzAldelin, Robert FitzStephen and Miles de Cogan were recalled, and, at the Council of Oxford, Henry II introduced a new policy with regard to Irish politics.⁸³ He declared his minor son, John, to be the new lord of Ireland and would subsequently name a variety of men as his representative, or justiciar, in Ireland until John's maturity.⁸⁴ Henry then granted large tracts of unconquered

⁸⁰ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 183.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 149 and 165.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 175.

⁸³ Warren, Henry II, 203. Rory's inability to control the expansion of the Anglo-Normans, and, specifically, his withdrawal from Munster meant that Henry had to step in and find a way to control the situation there.

⁸⁴ See Goddard Henry Orpen, Ireland Under the Normans (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968) and W. L. Warren, Henry II (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1973.) See also Roger de Hovedon, Chronica, ii, 134, and Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi, i, 163, 172, 173. Prince John was declared Dominus Hiberniae and a whole host of feudal grants were declared. While these lands were not direct crown lands Henry made sure that those who were to occupy them knew that they did so at his pleasure. Among these FitzAldelin was appointed as governor of Wexford, Robert and Miles received their grants and Philip was given northern

Irish land to various Anglo-Norman lords.⁸⁵ These grants allowed these men to keep these lands if they could take them from their current, Irish, occupants.⁸⁶ In fact this "new" land policy was the same sort of deal he had given to Hugh de Lacy in 1172 when Henry gave Meath in fee for fifty knights. It had worked then, as Meath had soon been reduced to peaceful conditions. Since the Irish had failed to limit the expansion of the Anglo-Normans, Henry decided to use a policy of controlled expansion in order to create a stable feudal structure in Ireland. If he had allowed the Anglo-Norman expansion to go on unchecked then one Anglo-Norman noble might have been able to gain control of vast amounts of land, a situation Henry decidedly wanted to avoid. This policy allowed him to control the expansion of Anglo-Norman Ireland, that it did so at the expense of the Irish themselves was of secondary importance to the Angevin king. Robert FitzStephen and Miles de Cogan were given permission to take southern Munster.⁸⁷ Philip de Breuse was given northern Munster, but he returned home without even

Munster after a trio of knights renounced it since the territory had not yet been conquered.

⁸⁵ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 185. Hugh de Lacy was appointed as Henry's deputy in Ireland and given Robert Poer to act as his governor of both Waterford and Wexford.

⁸⁶ Warren, Henry II, 200.

⁸⁷ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 185. The Annals of Inisfallen, ed. S. Mac Airt (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1951), under 1177, go on to say that when the Anglo-Normans attacked Munster they were aided by Muirchertach MacCarrthaig, the son of Diarmait MacCarrthaig. Raymond had helped Diarmait regain his throne in 1175.

attempting to gain control of "his" lands.⁸⁸ Once Robert and Miles had taken control of their lands Ireland seems to have settled down.⁸⁹ Not that Ireland was entirely peaceful by any means; the continual raids of John de Courcy in Ulster⁹⁰ and an occasional foray by the Irish or Anglo-Normans into each other's lands seems to have kept things active. However, it was not until well after Henry II's death that large tracts of land would be exchanged from the hands of the Irish to those of the Anglo-Normans.

The founding of the justiciarship resulted in the increase of stability in the Anglo-Norman realms in Ireland. The justiciarship meant that Henry could pick and chose who he wanted to lead Ireland, while being able to recall them if they gained too much power there. Henry appointed William FitzAldelin as his governor in Ireland after the death of Strongbow.⁹¹ However, the conditions that had developed between the Anglo-Normans and the Irish were not to be seriously disturbed by William's arrival. The Anglo-Normans still raided into Irish lands and instability was

⁸⁸ Ibid., 179, 185-87.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 187. Giraldus's account of the Anglo-Norman expedition becomes much more sparing in its details after this point. His statements become quite generalized, and, without another source for comparison, his usefulness as a source on Anglo-Norman Irish history is greatly reduced.

⁹⁰ Annals of Ulster, trans. and ed. B. MacCarthy (Dublin: The Queen's Printing Office, Alex. Thom and Co., 1893), 185.

⁹¹ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 169. William arrived in Ireland, and is said to have taken an immediate dislike to the Geraldines.

the result.⁹² He was recalled in 1177 and replaced by Hugh de Lacy.⁹³ Hugh de Lacy was then made the governor, or justiciar, as it would henceforth be called. Hugh also had to withstand the rumors of his increasing power and ideas of independence. He was recalled in 1181 and in 1184, he apparently fell out of favor with Henry due to his marriage to Rory O'Conner's daughter, Rose.⁹⁴ Hugh's death, when it came, was greeted with joy by Henry II.⁹⁵ Afterwards, Henry was said to exercise more cautious control over Ireland.⁹⁶ Thus, warfare subsided in Leinster and Meath with the arrival of tighter royal control.

The last event that occurred in Anglo-Norman Irish history during Henry II's reign was John's trip to Ireland.⁹⁷ John was sent over to Ireland in order to take control of it from the justiciars, who would presumably no longer be needed since John had reached his maturity. However, John's trip was a disaster. John, having no

⁹² This was the period in which Miles' raid into Connacht and John de Courcy's invasion of Ulster took place.

⁹³ Ibid., 185. Miles de Cogan and Robert FitzStephen were recalled as well. However, these two men were soon returned to Ireland. They had not fallen from Henry's favor and had been given the right to rule southern Munster and Cork.

⁹⁴ William of Newburg, Historia, 364.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 364. Hugh was murdered on 25 July, 1186 with an ax by Ua Miadhaigh, one of his Irish allies. (Annals of Ulster, 209).

⁹⁶ William of Newburgh, Historia, 364.

⁹⁷ Giraldus, Expugnatio, 227.

personal contacts in Ireland, managed to alienate both the Anglo-Normans and the Irish.⁹⁸ He returned home with little to show for his effort. Giraldus says that the loyal Irishmen who had served the Anglo-Normans faithfully for years made common cause with their enemies and rose up in a conspiracy designed to overthrow Anglo-Norman rule.⁹⁹ In this Giraldus seems to be overstating the traditional Irish capacity for treachery. Although several major Anglo-Norman leaders were slain by the Irish, either before this time or after no great Irish conspiracy seems to have materialized. The only real threat to royal control in Ireland was the extensive loyalty and control that Hugh de Lacy and the other Anglo-Normans had won in Ireland. However, Giraldus even overstates this as Hugh de Lacy, Robert FitzStephen's sons, and Miles de Cogan were killed by treacherous Irishmen.¹⁰⁰ With the death of Hugh de Lacy in 1186 the first era of Anglo-Norman involvement in Ireland was over. By 1185 the Anglo-Normans of Ireland had settled into their control of Leinster, Meath, and Munster. Only Limerick and Ulster still experienced extended periods of conflicts. The Anglo-Normans had settled into Ireland and adapted to it.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 237. Warren, Henry II, 204, relates that John spurned the Anglo-Normans, insulted the Irish, granted large tracts of land to his cronies without heed and generally let his power go to his head. Upon his return to England John proceeded to blame them one and all, especially Hugh de Lacy, for his failure.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 241.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 235.

Future conflict there would be, but such conflicts would include the Anglo-Normans as part of the Irish landscape, not separate from it.

The Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland had begun as an enterprise to aid a displaced Irish king. The relationships that developed between those who participated in these expeditions were complex and subject to change. The Geraldines had first been allies of Dermot MacMurrough and then became the allies of his successor Strongbow. Under him, and his successors to power in Ireland, William FitzAldelin and Hugh de Lacy, accommodation was made between the Irish and the Anglo-Normans. The Anglo-Normans adapted to conditions in Ireland and the Irish adapted to conditions imposed by the Anglo-Normans. Henry II's policy of balanced control meant that whoever controlled Ireland had considerable leeway there, but was subject to royal control.¹⁰¹ That was the heart of his policy in Ireland. The justiciarship gave Henry the right to remove and replace anyone he disapproved of in Ireland, while his ties to the Irish could be used as an excuse for doing so if anyone tried to expand their lands without his permission.

The founding of the justiciarship and Henry's desire for stability in Ireland led to the conditions which

¹⁰¹ Warren, Henry II, 206, argues that Henry failed to invest sufficient resources and time to fully settle conditions in Ireland. He says that Henry thus allowed Ireland to remain divided and unstable, a condition none of his successors choose to correct either.

developed in Ireland with Irish nobles serving Anglo-Norman lords. Border conflict, which could hardly be prevented between feudal nobles without more interest and concern than Henry was willing to devote towards Ireland, was controlled by royal decree. When all such nobles had been granted land conditions quieted down. Only new interest in Ireland would generate new expansion. In general such expansion stopped after 1177 and by 1185 administration took precedent over military affairs. One half of Ireland had become part of the Angevin empire of Henry II, and its future was tied to needs and desires of foreign rulers who lived far from its blue skies, green fields, and trembling sod.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The Anglo-Norman involvement in Ireland can hardly be described as an organized invasion. The various Anglo-Normans that went to Ireland differed greatly in their outlooks, goals, and actions. Dermot MacMurrough, not a militant and aggressive Anglo-Norman nobility, was the driving force behind the first two Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland. It was only after his death that the Anglo-Normans came close to becoming a unified force in Ireland, and that unity was quickly shattered by the intervention of the Angevin emperor, Henry II.

Henry had his own ends in mind when he went to Ireland and the stability of the relationship between the Anglo-Normans and the Irishmen was not his main goal. Making sure that none of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland became powerful enough to unite the Anglo-Norman Irish lands under his control was Henry II's chief concern. This was a goal he was barely able to accomplish given his other main concern for Ireland, governing the island with as little direct effort as possible.

The Anglo-Norman "invasion" of Ireland had three main divisions: the period before Dermot MacMurrough's death, the

period from Dermot's death to the arrival of Henry II, and the period after Henry II's arrival. From the time of Dermot's expulsion in 1167 until his death in 1171 he was the driving force in Anglo-Norman Irish politics. He made two separate deals for Anglo-Norman aid; one with the Geraldines, and one with Strongbow. Dermot used the Geraldines as his enforcers in Ireland, although, in reality, the Geraldines were his allies, not just his servants. They had their own goals in Ireland, but up until his death they were fitted into the Irish political structure, rather than adapting it to suit themselves. The Anglo-Normans were fighting for land and power, but for their own personal land and power. Strongbow's arrival, and his actions prior to Dermot's death point to the fact that he had his own ambitions in Ireland irrespective of Dermot's chance to become the high-king. Exactly how Strongbow's and Dermot's goals differed will never be known since Dermot died just as he was, in all likelihood, about to achieve his ultimate goal, the high-kingship of Ireland.

After Dermot's death the Anglo-Normans, and their Irish allies were thrown together in order to fend off the attacks of various Irishmen. Rather than a great, nationalistic Irish uprising it is much easier to see the revolts after Dermot's demise as a continuation of traditional Irish regional warfare. Rory's great army was composed of virtually the same alliance that had resulted in Dermot's initial expulsion. Strongbow managed to defeat

three separate Irish armies and retain control of Leinster. He renounced Dermot's plans for becoming the high-king, and even offered to become a vassal of Rory O'Conner, the current Irish high-king. These are not the actions of an invader bent on conquering the whole island. Neither was Richard de Clare's inclusion of prominent Irishmen in his feudal entourage in Leinster the act of a foreign invader intent on subduing the whole island to alien rule.

Strongbow had co-opted the Irish in order to provide himself with a source of support independent of the other Anglo-Normans in Ireland at the time, an astute act in light of the next major event to occur in Ireland, the arrival of Henry II.

Henry's arrival marks the last turning point in the early history of Anglo-Norman Ireland. He secured control of all three prominent cities of southern Ireland, Waterford, Wexford, and Dublin, and he then forced the submission of both the Anglo-Normans and the Irish kings of southern and eastern Ireland. Henry then proceeded to secure control over Ireland by two methods. First, he placed some of his own men, Hugh de Lacy being chief among these men, in Ireland as a counter balance to Strongbow. Second, Henry co-opted many of the Geraldines who had come over to Ireland before Strongbow's arrival. Robert FitzStephen and Raymond le Gros were two of the more prominent men he recruited. Henry then left Ireland in

order to take care of more pressing problems elsewhere in his Empire, never to return.

Although Henry II never returned to Ireland, his hand guided Anglo-Norman Irish politics from then on. He allowed Strongbow to return to power in Ireland only after he had proven himself trustworthy in the war in France. Similarly other Anglo-Normans of Ireland were to win fame by defeating Henry's enemies at the Battle of Fornham in England.

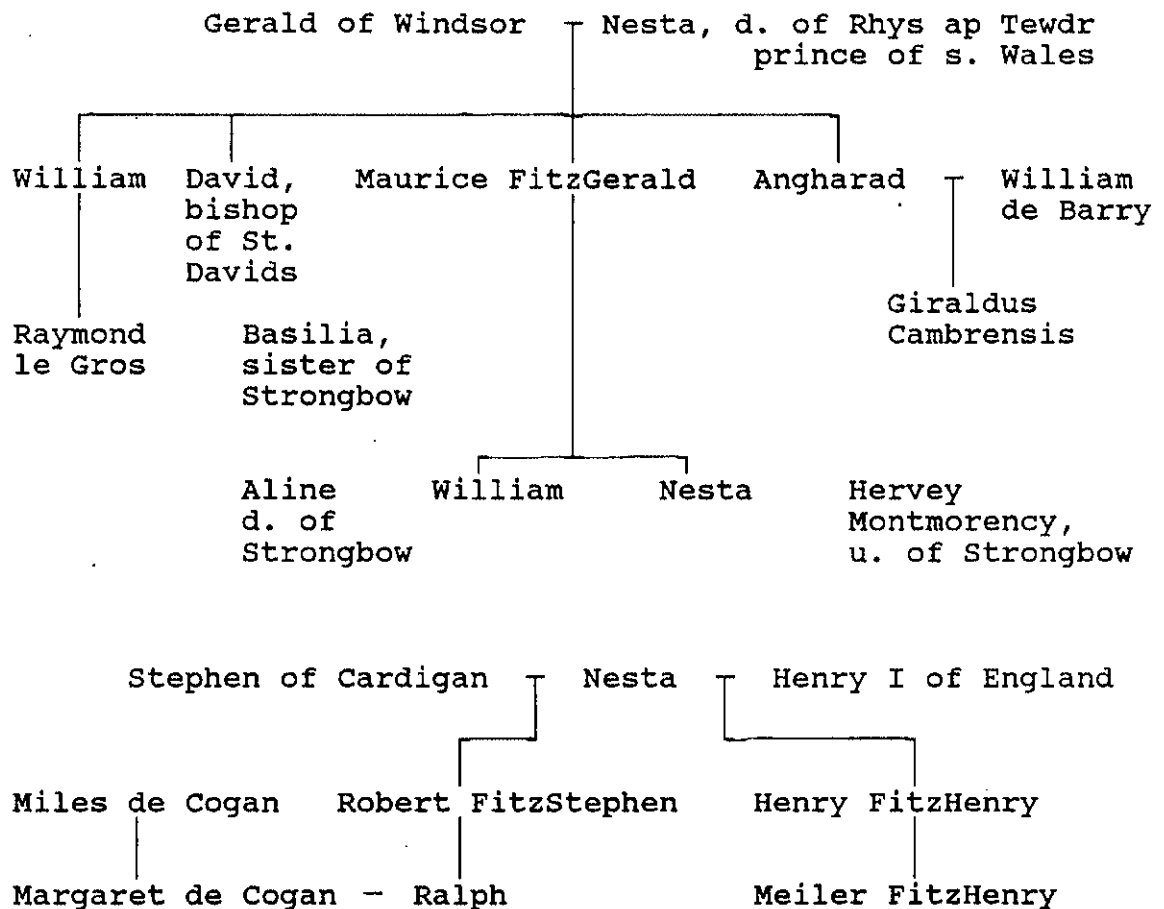
Although Henry tried to include the Irish in his Empire more completely with the Treaty of Windsor in 1175, he was unable to prevent further Anglo-Norman expansion into Irish lands without contributing more time and money than he was wont to do. After the death of Strongbow, the royal justiciars were able to return Ireland to a semblance of peace and stability, but Henry always faced the possibility that his justiciars would become too powerful and try to dominate Ireland on his own, thus their frequent recalls and replacements. The patchwork of Anglo-Norman and Irish lands, and the lack of complete royal control that resulted from this system of government was less than ideal, but it was the best that could be hoped for while the Angevin kings were more concerned with their other domains. Henry's designs resulted in an Ireland that was both a pressure valve for the Empire's more adventurous elements and a source of occasional manpower to aid in his wars outside of Ireland. Ireland was thus a political tightrope that Henry II walked--one that he walked very well. Henry left Ireland

secure but not stable, its final disposition within the Angevin empire undetermined. Thus, the final settlement of the Irish question was a task he left for future rulers to take up. Even if Ireland was not completely stable, it never became an independent threat. Whether or not that was enough of a solution for Ireland was a question Henry left to the future.

APPENDIX A

THE CHILDREN OF NESTA

This is a partial genealogy of the children of Nesta, otherwise known as the Geraldines. Only those relationships between the descendants of Nesta that were important to the various Anglo-Norman expeditions to Ireland have been incorporated into these charts.



[Source: Giraldus, Expugnatio.]

APPENDIX B
THE LETTER OF DERMOT

Dairmait Mac Murchada prince of Leinster, greets earl Richard lord of Strigoil, son of earl Gilbert. "If you were to reckon aright the days which we in our need are counting, then you would realize that our complaint does not come before its time." We have watched the storks and the swallows. The summer migrants have come and, having come, have now returned with the west wind. But neither the east wind nor the west wind has brought us your presence, which we have so long awaited and desired. So make good your delay by successfully performing what you have promised and, ensure that your word appears "false only in point of time." Already the whole of Leinster has returned to our allegiance. If you come in good time and with strong military support, the other four parts of Ireland will easily be added to the fifth. So your arrival will be welcome, if it is expeditious; it will bring you renown, if it is swift; it will be felicitous, if it is speedy. A renewed display of affection draws a protecting scab over a friendship that has been wounded in some part by neglect. For a friendship is quickly healed by a kindness rendered,

and a service graciously performed makes it grow even stronger and more perfect.

[Source: Giraldus, Expugnatio, 55.]

APPENDIX C

THE BULL LAUDABILITER
Pope Adrian IV's grant of Ireland to Henry II

ADRIAN, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our well-beloved son in Christ the illustrious king of the English, greeting and apostolic benediction.

Laudably and profitably does your majesty contemplate spreading the glory of your name on earth and laying up for yourself the reward of eternal happiness in heaven, in that, as becomes a catholic prince, you propose to enlarge the boundaries of the Church, to proclaim the truths of the Christian religion to a rude and ignorant people, and to root out the growths of vice from the field of the Lord; and the better to accomplish this purpose you seek the counsel and goodwill of the apostolic see. In pursuing your object, the loftier your aim and the greater your digression, the more prosperous, we are assured, with God's assistance, will be the progress you make: for undertakings commenced in the zeal of faith and the love of religion, are ever wont to attain to a good end and issue. Verily, as your excellency doth acknowledge, there is no doubt that Ireland and all the islands on which Christ the sun of righteousness has shone, and which have accepted the doctrines of the Christian faith, belong to the jurisdiction of the blessed Peter and

the holy Roman Church; wherefore the more pleased are we to plant in them the seed of faith acceptable to God, inasmuch as our conscience warns us that in their case a stricter account will hereafter be required of us.

Whereas then, well-beloved son in Christ, you have expressed to us your desire to enter the island of Ireland in order to subject its people to law and to root out from them the weeds of vice, and your willingness to pay an annual tribute to the blessed Peter of one penny from every house, and to maintain the rights of the churches on that land whole and inviolate: We therefore, meeting your pious and laudable desire with due favor and according a gracious assent to your petition, do hereby declare our will and pleasure that, with a view to enlarging the boundaries of the Church, restraining the downward course of vice, and for the increase of the Christian religion, you shall enter that island and execute whatsoever may tend to the honour of God and the welfare of the land; and also that the people of that land shall receive you with honour and revere you as their lord: provided always that the rights of the churches remain whole and inviolate, and saving to the blessed Peter and the Holy Roman Church the annual tribute of one penny from every house. If then you should carry your project into effect, let it be your care to instruct that people in the good ways of life, and so act, both in person and by agents whom you have found in the faith, in word, and in deed fitted to the task, that the Church there may be

adorned, that the Christian religion may take root and grow, and that all things may be so ordered that you may deserve at God's hands the fullness of an everlasting reward, and may obtain on earth a name renown throughout the ages.

[The original latin text of this document is found in Giraldus Cambrensis, Expugnatio Hibernica, Bk. II, chap. vi, 144. It was granted early in Henry II's career when Henry sought an apanage for his youngest brother William.]

APPENDIX D

THE TREATY OF WINDSOR
The treaty between Henry II and Rory O'Conner, 1175

This is the agreement which was made at Windsor in the octaves of Michaelmas [October 6] in the year of Our Lord 1175, between Henry, king of England, and Roderic [Rory], king of Connaught, by Catholicus, archbishop of Tuam, Cantordis, abbot of Clonfert, and Master Laurence, chancellor of the king of Connaught, namely:

The king of England has granted to Roderic [Rory], his liegeman, king of Connaught, as long as he shall faithfully serve him, that he shall be king under him, ready to his service, as his man. And he shall hold his lands as fully and as peacefully as he had held it before the lord king entered Ireland, rendering him tribute. And that he shall have all the rest of the land and its inhabitants under him and shall bring them to account [justiciet eos], so that they shall pay their full tribute to the king of England through him, and so that they shall maintain their rights. And those who are now in possession of their lands and rights shall hold them in peace as long as they remain in the fealty of the king of England, and continue to pay him faithfully and fully his tribute and the other rights which they owe to him, by the hand of the king of Connaught,

saving in all things the right and honour of the king of England and of Roderic. And if any of them shall be rebels to the king of England and to Roderic and shall refuse to pay the tribute and other rights of the king of England by his hand, and shall withdraw from the fealty of the king of England, he, Roderic, shall judge them and remove them. And if he cannot answer for them by himself, the constable of the King of England in that land [Ireland] shall, when called upon by him, aid him to do what is necessary.

And for this agreement the said king of Connaught shall render to the king of England tribute every year, namely, out of every ten animals slaughtered, one hide, acceptable to the merchants both in his lands and in the rest; save that he shall not meddle with those lands which the lord king has retained in his lordship and in the lordship of his barons; that is to say Dublin with all its appurtenances; Meath with all its appurtenances, even as Murchat Ua Mailethlachlin [Murchadh O'Melaghlin] held it fully and freely [melius et plenius] or as others held it of him; Wexford with all of its appurtenances, that is to say, the whole of Leinster; and Waterford with its whole territory from Waterford to Dungarvan, including Dungarvan with all its appurtenances.

And if the Irish who have fled wish to return to the land of the barons of the king of England they may do so in peace, paying the said tribute as others pay it, or by doing to the English the services which they were wont to do for

their lands, which shall be decided by the judgement and the will of their lords. And if any of them are unwilling to return and their lords have called upon the king of Connaught, he shall compel them to return to their land, so that they shall dwell there in peace.

And the king of Connaught shall accept hostages from all whom the lord king of England has committed to him, and he shall himself give hostages at the will of the king.

The witnesses are Robert, bishop of Winchester; Geoffrey, bishop of Ely; Laurence, archbishop of Dublin, Geoffrey Nicholas and Roger, the king's chaplains; William, Earl of Essex; Richard de Luci; Geoffrey de Purtico, and Reginald de Courtenea.

[From Edmund Curtis and R. B. McDowell, Irish Historical Documents 1172-1922 (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1943; reprint, New York: Barnes & Noble, 1968).]

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