

**Richard II, 1377-99**

- 1377, Nov. 26 JOHN DE LA MARE, kt.  
Nunney. Completed the building of Nunney Castle, with a "license to crenellate", 1373. *M.P.S.* 58.
- 1378, Nov. 25 WILLIAM COGAN, kt.  
Huntspill; d. c. 1382. *Coll.* II, 390.
- 1379, Nov. 5 JOHN BURGHERSSH, kt.  
He had estates in Essex, Oxon. and other counties and an interest in Somerset through his wife, Ismania, d. of Simon Hanham and widow of sir John Raleigh of Nettlecombe; d. 1391. *M.P.S.* 61.
- 1380, Oct. 18 THEOBALD DE GORGES.  
He died in 1380, probably shortly after his appointment, and on 30 Nov. William Bonevyll, kt., was appointed. He did not act, possibly on account of being elected knight of the shire for Devon in the second Parliament of 1380, and on 13 Dec. a third appointment was made.
- 1380, Dec. 13 WILLIAM LATYMER.  
Accounts from Michaelmas, 1380. Probably the William Latymer who was sheriff in 1374.
- 1381, Nov. 1 WILLIAM BONEVYLL (Bonville), kt.  
Shute, Devon; d. 1408. Owner of large estates in Somerset, Dorset, Devon and Wilts., he is noted for the frequency with which he served as a knight of the shire. He was elected eight times for Somerset, 1366-99 and twelve times for Devon, 1371-1402. *M.P.S.* 55.
- 1382, Nov. 24 EDMUND FITZHERBERT.  
*see* 1375.
- 1383, Nov. 1 JOHN STRECHE, kt.  
Wambrook, Dorset; d. 1390. *Hutchins*, IV, 196.
- 1384, Nov. 11 JOHN DE BURGHERSSH.  
*see* 1379.
- 1385, Oct. 29 JOHN DE COPLESTON.  
Probably John Copleston of Hemington (*Coll.* II, 454) and North Petherton (*Coll.* III, 70), but *cp.* *Hutchins*, II, 283, Coplestone of Shipston Gorges.

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d. and h. of Richard, lord Lovel of Castle Cary, was summoned to Parliament as a baron in 1360, and d. 1361. *C.P.*

Edmund de Clyvedon was of Clevedon and d. 1375. *Proc. S.A.S.* 39, ii, 79.

- 1361, Apr. 7 THEOBALD DE GORGES.  
Wraxhall; d. 1380. He was third son of sir Theobald Russell, by his wife Eleanor, d. and coh. of Rafe, lord Gorges, and assumed the name and arms of Gorges on inheriting Gorges property in Somerset and Dorset. *Gorges*,<sup>21</sup> p. 35.
- 1361, Dec. 10 THOMAS DE BRIDEPORT.  
Purbeck; d. 1372. *M.P.S.* 49.
- 1362, Nov. 20 JOHN DE LA HALE (or atte Hale).  
A John de la Hale appears as of Tarrant Keynston in the Aid of 1346. *Feudal Aids*, II, 46. He represented Dorset in six Parliaments between 1358 and 1368.
- 1364, Nov. 10 JOHN DE LANCELOND.  
South Brent; 1380. *M.P.S.* 53.
- 1368, Nov. 27 EDMUND CHEYNEY.  
Poyntington; d. 1376. *M.P.S.* 56.

The regular yearly appointments begin from this date, as does the description "knight" in the P.R.O. lists. There is no regular use of "esquire" until 1450.

- 1370, Nov. 28 WILLIAM WYNTERBOURNE.  
Winterbourne Clenston. *Hutchins*, I, 185.
- 1371, Nov. 5 ROGER MANYNGFORD.
- 1372, Dec. 12 JOHN HAMELYN, kt.  
Wimborne St. Giles; d. 1398. *Hutchins*, III, 581.
- 1373, Nov. 7 HUGH DURBURGH, kt.  
Heathfield. *S.R.S.e.s.* 259.
- 1374, Dec. 12 WILLIAM LATYMER.  
Of the Latimer family of Duntish. *Hutchins*, III, 705.
- 1375, Oct. 4 EDMUND FITZHERBERT, kt.  
Midsomer Norton; d. c. 1386. *Coll.* II, 150.
- 1376, Oct. 26 HUGH DURBURGH, kt.  
*see* 1373.

<sup>21</sup> *Gorges* — R. Gorges, *Eleven Centuries of Family History*.

- list) "and again in the following year." It is not clear if this refers to 1336 or to the next date given to him, 20 Feb. 1340.
- 1340, Feb. 17 JOHN DE DURBURGH.  
Probably did not act.
- 1340, Feb. 20 WALTER DE RODNEY.
- 1340, Nov. 3 JOHN DE DURBURGH.  
Heathfield; d. 1352. *S.R.S.e.s.* 257.
- 1341, Nov. 19 HUGH TYREL.  
Sturminster Marshal; also a landowner in Hereford and Shropshire; d. in Brittany, 1344. *Hutchins*, III, 350; *Cal. I.P.M.* VIII, 297.
- 1343, Mar. 24 EDWARD DE STRADLYNG.  
Combe Hay. Accounts from Christmas, 1342. *Coll.* III, 335.
- 1343, Nov. 22 THOMAS CARY.  
Died *c.* 1356. He held a number of scattered properties in Somerset, Dorset and Wilts. *Cal. I.P.M.* X, 61, 260, 327; *Proc. S.A.S.* 103, 69, Cary of Kingsdon Cary.
- No further appointment is recorded for ten years.
- 1353, Feb. 14 JOHN DE PALTON.  
Paulton. *Coll.* II, 152.
- 1355, Apr. 14 JOHN DE SANCTO LAUDO (St. Loe).  
Newton St. Loe; d. 1375. *M.P.S.* 39.
- 1356, Nov. 25 RICHARD DE TURBERVILL.  
Bere Regis; d. *c.* 1362. *Hutchins*, I, 137—but *Hutchins* appears to be in error in giving *John* de Turberville as sheriff and M.P.
- 1358, Nov. 13 ROBERT MARTYN.  
"Seemingly did not act." (P.R.O. list). But there is no other appointment for six months. He was probably of the Martyn of Athelhampton family. *Hutchins*, II, 582.
- 1359, June 30 JOHN DE RALEGH.  
Nettlecombe; d. 1372. *M.P.S.* 53.
- 1360, Nov. 21 NICHOLAS DE ST. MAUR.
- 1360, Dec. 13 EDMUND DE CLYVEDON.  
Nicholas de St. Maur does not seem to have acted, unless Clyvedon was his under-sheriff. This may have been because St. Maur, who had married Muriel,

- 1320, Jan. 4 THOMAS DE MARLBERGE.  
Ille Brewers; d. 1329. He remained sheriff for five and a half years during the period of Edward II's "personal rule" and the Despencer supremacy, and in 1322 had orders to arrest his predecessor, John de Kingston, then a rebel against Despencer. *M.P.S.* 22.
- 1325, June 18 JOHN DE ERLE (Erleigh).  
Somerton Erleigh; d. 1337. *M.P.S.* 31.
- 1326, Oct. 15 THOMAS DE MARLEBERGE was appointed, but apparently did not act, probably owing to the rebellion of Roger Mortimer and queen Isabella.

**Edward III, 1327-77**

- 1327, Feb. 4 WILLIAM DE WHITEFIELD.  
He was appointed after the abdication of Edward II, but accounts from Michaelmas, 1326, and remained sheriff for nearly four years. He was of Frome Whitefield, Dorset, and married John de Kingston's widow, Constance. *Hutchins*, II, 410.
- 1330, Dec. 5 HUGH DE LANGLOND.  
South Brent, d. 1334. *M.P.S.* 28.
- 1332, Jan. 28 JOHN DE WROXHALL.  
The name of John de Wroxhall occurs at Wraxhall, Wilts. 1316; North Maperton, Dorset, 1346; and Toller Porcorum, 1340. *Feudal Aids*,<sup>20</sup> II, 60; V, 208; *Hutchins*, II, 711.
- 1333, Nov. 7 HILDEBRAND DE LONDON.  
Haydon, Dorset; of the Athelhampton family of London or de Londres. *Hutchins*, II, 581; IV, 187. Possibly also of Aldrington, Wilts, for which county he was M.P. four times, 1329-44. *Feudal Aids*, V, 253.
- 1335, Sept. 17 WALTER DE RODNEY.  
Rodney Stoke. *Coll.* III, 603.
- 1336, Dec. 14 HILDEBRAND DE LONDON.  
*see* 1333.
- 1338, Sept. 10 WALTER DE RODNEY.  
*see* 1335. He was elected in the county Court (P.R.O.)

<sup>20</sup> *Feudal Aids* (Public Record Office).

and spent some years there in later life. He was active in local administration in Somerset and Devon. *M.P.S.* 16.

- 1299, Oct. 2 MASTER JOHN GERBERGE.  
Possibly of the family of Gerberd of Odstock, Wilts. The title "Master" seems to have been applied to the sheriffs who were not knights. *Hoare*, Cawden, 21.
- 1301, Oct. 10 JOHN DE LA LEE.
- 1302, Oct. 3 MASTER JOHN GERBERGE.  
*see* 1299.
- 1304, Jan. 24 MATTHEW DE FURNEAUX.  
Kilve; d. 1319. *S.R.S.e.s.* 317.
- 1305, Apr. 19 JOHN DE MONTE ACUTO.
- 1306, June 7 NICHOLAS DE LANGLONDE.  
Brent; d. 1314. *M.P.S.* 28.

#### Edward II, 1307-27

- 1307, Oct. 3 NICHOLAS DE CHEYNEY.  
*see* 1298.
- 1308, Mar. 17 WALTER DE SKYDEMOR (Scudamore).  
Upton Scudamore. Wilts; d. *c.* 1318. *Hoare*, Warminster, 57.
- 1309, Dec. 2 RICHARD DE CHESILDEN.
- 1311, May 21 WALTER DE ESCUDAMOR.  
*see* 1308.
- 1313, Jan. 14 JOHN DE CHIDEOCK.  
Probably John Gervase *alias* Chideock, who heads the pedigree of Chideock in *Hutchins*, II, 256. As sheriff he had custody of the forfeited lands of the Knights Templars.
- 1314, Nov. 20 JOHN DE ERLEGHE (Erle).  
Somerton Erleigh; d. 1324. *Cal. I.P.M.* VII, 297.
- 1315, Oct. 20 MATTHEW DE FURNEAUX.  
*see* 1304.
- 1316, June 12 JOHN DE KYNGESTON.  
Foxcote, near Wellow, and Sutton Magna, Wilts; d. 1334. *Hoare*, Warminster, 106; *M.P.S.* 22.
- 1318, Dec. 1 NICHOLAS DE CHEYNEY.  
*see* 1298.

- 1267, June 4    ANDREW WAKE (Vesk).  
Belonged to the Wake family who gave their name to Dowlish Wake; knights of the shire, 1275. According to the Fine Roll, he was not appointed until Nov. 1267, but he accounted at Michaelmas. *M.P.S.* 7. *P.R.O.*
- 1269, Oct. 28    THOMAS DE SANCTO VIGORE.  
Stratton-on-the-Fosse; d. c. 1295. *Cal. I.P.M.* III, 148. Sometime before the middle of 1270, prince Edward, Henry III's eldest son, and the practical head of the government, took over the duties of sheriff, and on 28 May 1270 appointed Alan de Plokenet of Haselbury Plucknet to act for him, but neither the prince nor de Plokenet account at the Exchequer, the acting under-sheriff being John de Sancto Valerico (St. Valery) who accounts from Easter 1271, by which date prince Edward had left on a crusade. He was still abroad when his father died in 1272 and did not return till 1274, but a sheriff was appointed in 1273. There are no under-sheriffs in the *P.R.O.* list after this date. Resident sheriffs were more regularly appointed.

**Edward I, 1272-1307**

- 1273, May 6    JOHN DE SANCTO VALERICO.  
1274, Nov. 7    RICHARD DE COLLESHULL.  
1278, Oct. 25    JOHN DE CORNAYLLES (Coremailles).  
1283, Jan. 12    JOHN DE SANCTO LAUDO (St. Loe).  
                    Newton St. Loe; d. 1314. *M.P.S.* 10.

No further appointment is given in the *P.R.O.* list until 1289, and probably St. Loe remained in office, but from the *Cal. Pat. Rolls* (Ed. I 1281-92) there appears to have been a period c. 1285, when the official sheriff was Queen Eleanor, and St. Loe was the deputy.

- 1289, Oct. 25    RICHARD DE BURGHUNTE.  
1291, May 13    WALTER DE LUVENY.  
1293, Jan. 14    WALTER DE GLOUCESTRIA.  
1298, Oct. 25    NICHOLAS DE CHEYNEY (Cheny, Chedny).  
                    Poyntington; d. 1325, in Guernsey. He was custodian of the Channel Islands, previously to being sheriff,



one of the Somerset knights of the shire in the parliament of 1258, which made many provisions for the reform of the sheriff's office. The first sheriffs appointed after this parliament were chosen by the Baronial Council (*Morris*, 170).

- 1259, Mich. PHILIP DE CERNE.  
Humphrey de Chael and William de Lecumb, described as sir William Everard's clerks, appear to have acted as under-sheriffs for both Everard and de Cerne, who probably belonged to the family of that name of Draycote in Wiltshire.
- 1261, July 9 PHILIP BASSET.  
Justiciar; d. 1271, *D.N.B.* Most of the sheriffs of this year were appointed directly by Henry III and not by the Baronial Council. Henry de Aultone, under-sheriff.
- 1263, Nov. 23 HENRY, SON OF THE KING OF ALMAYN.  
d. 1271. *D.N.B.*  
"The king of Almayn" was Henry III's brother Richard, earl of Cornwall, who was crowned king of the Romans at Aachen in 1257. His son, Henry, who had been a supporter of Simon de Montfort, changed sides in 1263 and this appointment as sheriff was a mark of reconciliation with his uncle. Prince Henry does not seem to have spent much time in Somerset and his shrievalty ended when he was taken prisoner at the battle of Lewes in June, 1264. He was assassinated in Italy by Guy de Montfort in 1271.
- 1264, June 27 WILLIAM DE STAUNTON.  
A baronial appointment after the battle of Lewes (*Morris*, 173).  
Roger de la Brech, under-sheriff.
- 1265, Mich. RALPH RUSSEL.  
Peter de Bruges, under-sheriff.
- 1266-7 PHILIP BASSET.  
According to the *D.N.B.* article on Basset by J. H. Round, quoting the *Pipe Rolls*, 52 Henry III, he was sheriff of Somerset and Dorset again in 1267, but the exact dates of his shrievalty are not given.

conferred for life on Peter de Rievaux who fortunately held them but a very brief term.' *Morris*, 169.

- 1232, Mich. THOMAS DE CYRENCESTRIA.  
see 1228.
- 1233, Apr. 19 HENRY FILIUS NICOLAI.
- 1234, May 2 THOMAS DE CYRENCESTRIA.
- 1237, Dec. 18 RICHARD DE LANGFORD.
- 1238, Christmas HERBERT FILIUS MATHEI.  
Probably the Herbert fitz Matthew of Huntisbeare and elsewhere in Devon, 1242. *Book of Fees*, 762.
- 1239, M'sum. JORDAN OLIVER.
- 1240, Mich. HUGH DE VIVONIA.  
He married Mabel, d. and coh. of William Malet, sheriff in 1209, and held Shepton Mallet and other estates in her right. There is no further appointment of a sheriff in the P.R.O. list for nine years, but in *S.R.S.* XI, p. 135, there is a reference to Joel de Valletort as sheriff in 1242-3. He may have been joint or under-sheriff.
- 1249, Apr. 28 GODFREY DE SCHIDEMOR.  
Upton Scudamore, Wilts. *Hoare*, Warminster, 56.
- 1249, Nov. 26 BARTHOLOMEW PETCH.
- 1250, May 26 HENRY DE ERLEIGH (Erleg, Ernlega, Dernlega).  
Beckington. *Coll.* II, 198.
- 1251, Oct. 21 ELIAS DE RABAYN.  
Held land in Dorset, Edmondsham and elsewhere, in right of his wife, Maud de Baiocis, d. c. 1285. *Cal. I.P.M.*<sup>18</sup> II, 336.  
Walter de Burges, under-sheriff, 1254.
- 1254, July 7 JOHN DE AURE.  
Aller, d. c. 1272. One of the four Somerset representatives in the first parliament, 1258. *M.P.S.*<sup>19</sup> 3.
- 1254, Oct. 27 STEPHEN DE ASHTON (Hassetone).
- 1257, Oct. 5 WALTER DE BURGES.
- 1258, Oct. 23 WILLIAM EVERARD.  
Stewley in Ashill, d. 1279. *M.P.S.* 5. Everard was also

<sup>18</sup> *Cal. I.P.M.*— *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem* (Public Record Office).

<sup>19</sup> *M.P.S.*— S. W. Bates Harbin, *Members of Parliament for Somerset* (1939).

- earl of Salisbury who was sheriff in 1194; d. 1226. *D.N.B., C.P.*
- 1217, Mich. PETER DE MAULAY.  
*see* 1216.
- 1221, Nov. 20 ROGER DE LA FORDE.  
He was re-appointed at Michaelmas 1222, but died soon after.  
Ranulph Clericus appears as under-sheriff in 1221 and Ralph Russell at Christmas 1222. *S.R.S.* XI, 62, records a case brought before de la Forde. He and Thomas de Cirencestria in 1235 were examples of elected sheriffs. (*Morris*, 183). The privilege of electing sheriffs proved an expensive one.
- 1223, Feb. 1 JOHN RUSSELL. (Somerset only).  
Though not apparently sheriff of Dorset this year, he had been governor of Corfe Castle, 1221, and is probably the John Russell d. c. 1224 who heads the Russell of Kingston Russell pedigree in *Hutchins*, II, 189.
- 1223, Dec. 30 JOSCELIN, BISHOP OF BATH. (Somerset only).  
Bishop, first of Bath and then of Bath and Wells, 1206 till his death in 1242. *D.N.B.* The only episcopal sheriff in Somerset.  
Under-sheriffs, Luke Russel, Christmas 1223, and William de Sorewell (formerly sheriff of Hants, and a justice in Eyre) Easter 1225.
- 1226, June 26 WILLIAM FITZHENRY.  
Kentecomb, Dorset; another example of an elected sheriff *Cal. Pat. Rolls*,<sup>16</sup> II, 45; *Book of Fees*, 94.<sup>17</sup>
- 1228, Nov. 10 THOMAS DE CIRENCESTRIA.  
With two short intervals, Thomas de Cirencestria and his under-sheriff, Henry de Campo-Florido (Champ-flower) held office for the next nine years.
- 1232, July 11 PETER DE RIVALLIS (Rievaulx).  
*D.N.B.* 'The downfall in 1232 of Hubert de Burgh [the justiciar] . . . was accompanied by a general change of sheriffs . . . twenty-one counties were

<sup>15</sup> *Cal. Pat. Rolls* — *Calendar of Patent Rolls* (Public Record Office).

<sup>16</sup> *The Book of Fees* (Public Record Office).

- 1204-7 WILLIAM DE MONTACUTE.  
OSBERT DE STOK.
- 1207-9 WILLIAM DE BREWER.  
Ralph de Bray, under-sheriff.  
For de Brewer's career, see *D.N.B.* He was one of the signatories of Magna Carta and founder of Torr Abbey; d. 1226.
- 1209-12 WILLIAM MALET.  
Baron of Curry Mallet and Shepton Mallet; signed Magna Carta; d. c. 1215. *D.N.B.*
- 1212-14 MASTER RICHARD DE MARISCO.  
Roger de Pealton, under-sheriff.  
Richard de Marisco, archdeacon of Northumberland and later bishop of Durham, was probably a native of Somerset; d. 1226. *D.N.B.*
- 1214, Jan. 24 WILLIAM DE HARECOURT (Harcourt).  
Stanton Harcourt. *Burke's Peerage; Collins's Peerage*, 1779, V. 263<sup>15</sup>.  
Under-sheriffs, Richard Pipard and Richard de Harecourt — probably son of William.
- 1215, Apr. 27 RALPH DE BRAY.  
Constable of Normandy. *Morris*, 104.
- 1216, June 26 PETER DE MAULAY.  
*D.N.B.*, *C.P.* Like his predecessor, de Maulay was a Norman who had prospered in the king's service. In the last two years of John's reign, a number of genuine "foreigners" were appointed sheriffs, but de Maulay's re-appointment soon after the king's death suggests that the barons, who had opposed John and acted as regents for Henry III, found him a satisfactory colleague.

### Henry III, 1216-72

- 1217, Mar. 14 WILLIAM, EARL OF SALISBURY. (Somerset only).  
William Longespée, natural son of Henry II, earl of Salisbury in right of his wife, Ela, d. and h. of the

<sup>15</sup> *Burke's Peerage* (1952);  
*Collins's Peerage* (1779) (cited as *Collins*).

brother John, then earl of Mortain, as sheriff of seven counties; four, including Somerset and Dorset, in the west, and three in the midlands and north. John retained his position until his brother's return in 1194, and during this period the seven counties made no return to the Exchequer. On king Richard's return in 1194, John had already left the country.

- 1194, Feb. 23 WILLIAM, EARL OF SALISBURY.  
William de Salisbury, second earl of Salisbury, d. 1196. *D.N.B.*; *C.P.*<sup>13</sup>
- 1194, Apr. 17- WILLIAM DE CAHAIGNES, "son of Ralph de Cahaignes"  
1197, Mich. Walter Giffard accounted for him at Mich. 1194.
- 1197, Easter PETER DE SCUDIMOR.  
Probably of the Scudamore family of Upton Scudamore, Wilts. *Hoare*, Warminster, p. 55.<sup>14</sup>
- 1199, Easter ROBERT BELET.  
Broomfield and West Quantockshead. *S.R.S.e.s.* p. 281.  
Henry de Stokes, under-sheriff.

### John, 1199-1216

- 1200, Mich.- HUBERT DE BURGH.  
1204 Hubert de Burgh (d. 1243), the king's chamberlain and later chief justiciar (*D.N.B.*), must often have been absent from his counties and the work would have been done by his deputy, Alan de Whitton. The "almost proverbial" misgovernment of king John's sheriffs is discussed at length by Morris, who concludes that it was due in part to a "vicious fiscal system" and was at its worst in the last years of the reign. In William Brewer, Somerset was to have as sheriff one of the most unpopular of the notable figures of the reign, but it is not without interest that the men of Somerset could protest against having Alan de Whitton as a "foreigner" set over them, and could bargain with the king for the removal of William Brewer "the oppressor" and his aids.

<sup>13</sup> *C.P.* — *The Complete Peerage* (1910-40).

<sup>14</sup> *Hoare* — Sir R. C. Hoare, *History of Modern Wiltshire* (Hundred of Warminster).

Somerset and Dorset were usually held by the same sheriff. He was often reappointed for several years in succession, and the apparent gaps in the P.R.O. list can be shown from the pipe rolls to be due to these reappointments. The appointments of the sheriffs from 1158 to 1171 can be traced in Vols. I - XVI of the Pipe Roll Society.<sup>11</sup>

- 1155, Easter- RICHARD DE MONTE ALTO. (Somerset only).  
Michaelmas
- 1155, Mich. RICHARD DE RADDONA.  
The first sheriff to hold Somerset and Dorset together.
- 1157, Mich. WARNER DE LISORIIS.
- 1158-60 RICHARD DE RADDONA.  
*P.R.S.* II, 57.
- 1160-2 WARNER DE LISORIIS.  
*P.R.S.* IV, 48; V, 21.  
The various forms Warner de Lisoriis (*P.R.O.*) Warine de Lisures (*Coll.*) and Walter de Lisores (*Morris*) probably conceal the same individual.
- 1162-3 ROBERT DE BELLO CAMPO (Beauchamp).  
*P.R.O.* gives the date of his appointment as Michaelmas 1161 and the Pipe Roll as 1162.
- 1163-6 GERBERT DE PERCY.  
*S.R.S.e.s.* 279.<sup>12</sup> During 1165 Robert de Raddona also occurs, either as joint or deputy sheriff. *P.R.S.* VIII, 63.
- 1167-9 ROBERT PUCHEREL.
- 1169-75 ALURED DE LINCOLNIA.
- 1175-82 ROBERT DE BELLO CAMPO.
- 1182-4 WILLIAM DE BENDENG.  
A judge. *D.N.B.*
- 1184-7 ROBERT FILIUS PAGANI (Fitzpayne).
- 1188, Mich. HUGH BARDULF.  
Justiciar of the Curia Regis; d. 1203. *D.N.B.*

### Richard I, 1189-99

Richard I succeeded to the throne in July 1189, and in or about December 1189, before leaving for the Crusade, he appointed his

<sup>11</sup> Cited as *P.R.S.*

<sup>12</sup> *S.R.S.e.s.* — Somerset Record Society, extra series (1931) Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes of Some Somerset Manors.*

of Exeter, sheriff of Devon at about this date, and Edward of Salisbury, sheriff of Wiltshire in 1080. The terms of a writ of King William to William de Corcello (*Wells MSS*, I, 17; *Morris*, 62) suggest that he was then sheriff of Somerset, but no confirmation of this has been found, and Mr. Vivian-Neal's notes contain the comment 'very doubtful'.

Aiulph the chamberlain was sheriff of Dorset, *c.* 1082-6, and of Somerset before 1091. How long he held office is not known, but it seems to have been well into the reign of Henry I. He was a tenant in chief in Dorset and Wiltshire and 'probably at Court a deputy to Robert Malet,' chamberlain to the king. (*Morris*, 47, 52; *S.R.S.* XIV, 120).

Under Henry I sheriffs held office for long periods, especially when as in Somerset, they were court officials, or when, as in Devon, the office became semi-hereditary in one family. Such an hereditary claim never developed in Somerset and only survived in a few counties after 1215. *Morris's* researches showed that Warin, who was probably an Exchequer official, succeeded Aiulph in Dorset before 1118 and in Somerset before 1123, and that he held both counties till about 1130.

Very few names of sheriffs are known for Stephen's reign and none are given for Somerset in either the P.R.O. list or *Morris*. Many writs were not addressed to the sheriffs by name and the period was one of disorganization and subsequent loss of records. While it is possible that in time research may discover further names, it does not now seem very likely.

#### THE SHERIFFS OF SOMERSET, FROM 1154

##### **Henry II, 1154-89**

'From the time when Henry II restored sheriffs in regions where they had disappeared during the feudal anarchy, the activity of the office is again written large in administrative and constitutional history'. Its functions include 'the administration of justice, the levy of taxation, the collection of revenue, the enforcement of feudal military service, and the summoning of local representatives to meet the justices of the King. It was an integral portion of a centralized governmental organization which constitutes the permanent groundwork of the English constitution'. (*Morris* p. 111). After 1155, except for a short period at the beginning of Henry III's reign,

J. M. Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus aevi Saxonici*, English Historical Society, 1839. Nos. 834, 835, 836, 838'. Short abstracts of these documents appear in the *Calendar of the MSS of the Dean and Chapter of Wells*,<sup>5</sup> printed by the Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1907, Vol. I, pp. 12, 16, 213. They are charters addressed by Edward the Confessor to Harold the Earl, Aynod the Abbot and Godwine the Sheriff, relating to the conferring of the Bishopric of Wells on Giso, c. 1060. Soon after this, the *Wells MSS* contain references to Tovid or Tovi the Sheriff (*ibid.*, pp. 12, 16, 57). *Morris* (p. 43) cites Tovid or Tofig of Somerset and Edric of Wiltshire as among the Saxon Sheriffs who, not having taken any active part in resisting the Norman invasion, were retained for a short time in office. Tovid occurs in 1067 in a writ printed in *S.R.S.* VII, 36,<sup>6</sup> and in 1068 in a charter of King William restoring Banwell to the Church of Wells (*Proc. S.A.S.*<sup>7</sup> 13, ii, 54). His estates are described in the *Victoria County History of Somerset*,<sup>8</sup> I, 419, in the Introduction to Domesday.

From about five years after the Battle of Hastings, 'the government of England was fully assumed by Norman officials . . . this was the golden age of the baronial shrievalty.' (*Morris*, p. 41). In Somerset the new Norman baronage was represented by William de Mohun of Dunster, who is known to have been sheriff in 1083-4 and 1086, and probably held the office for a much longer period. 'A great land-owner and founder of a well known house' (*ibid.*, p. 48), his career is recorded in the *Dictionary of National Biography*<sup>9</sup> and in H. Maxwell-Lyte's *History of Dunster*,<sup>10</sup> I, 1-5. William is addressed as sheriff in a writ (*Wells MSS*, I, 66) of Queen Matilda, which must have been issued before the end of 1083, as she died in November of that year.

The Somerset Domesday also makes mention of two other sheriffs, Baldwin and Edward, but there seems some doubt both as to who they were and where they held office. They may be Baldwin

<sup>5</sup> Cited as *Wells MSS*.

<sup>6</sup> *S.R.S.* — Somerset Record Society.

See also *English Historical Documents*, II, 430.

<sup>7</sup> *Proc. S.A.S.* — *Proceedings* of the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society.

<sup>8</sup> Cited as *V.C.H.*

<sup>9</sup> Cited as *D.N.B.*

<sup>10</sup> Cited as *Dunster*.



work. This would have been a valuable piece of research, but not one to be combined with the checking of a complete list extending over nine centuries. The editor has ventured only to indicate by brief notes some points of general interest for each period.

The duties of the High Sheriff, as he had come to be known by the beginning of the 17th century, have changed greatly since William de Mohun held office in Somerset in the year when Domesday Book was being compiled. Shorn of most of its responsibilities, by the eighteenth century the shrievalty seems to have become rather a burden to be endured than an honour to be sought after. None the less, instead of being extinguished as an anachronism, it continues to flourish and, acquiring increasing social prestige, to occupy a definite and well-marked place in county life and administration.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE: THE EARLY SHERIFFS

Edward the Confessor	1042-66	Harold	.....	1066
William I	.....	1066-87	William II	.....
Henry I	.....	1100-35	Stephen	.....
				1135-54

(The small number of sheriffs whose names are recorded for the eleventh and early twelfth centuries have been grouped together in this introductory note, as the dates at which they held office are known only approximately. From the accession of Henry II, the list is divided by reigns).

The P.R.O. list of the sheriffs of Somerset begins with William de Mohun, recorded as sheriff in Domesday Book in 1086. The names of Baldwin and Edward then follow, marked with queries, and that of Warin for 1129. The detailed list begins in 1155, in the reign of Henry II, with Richard de Monte Alto who held office from Easter to Michaelmas in that year.

The office of sheriff was a Saxon one, and although not included in the P.R.O. list, the names of two of the pre-Conquest sheriffs are known from other sources. In 1927 W. A. Morris published as No. 46 of the Manchester University Historical Series *The Medieval English Sheriff*,<sup>4</sup> describing in detail the development and work of the shrievalty from the earliest times to 1300. A footnote on p. 35 refers to Godwine 'who was sheriff [of Somerset] as late as 1061.

<sup>4</sup> Cited as *Morris*.

## THE SHERIFFS OF SOMERSET FROM THE ELEVENTH TO THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

(Based on the biographical notes added by the late A. W. Vivian-Neal, M.C., D.L., M.A., F.S.A., to the list issued by the Public Record Office, and now edited, with additional notes, by Sophia W. Rawlins, F.S.A.)

Although there is in existence printed information giving the names of many of the holders of the office of sheriff of Somerset, it is not difficult to justify the publication of a revised list which can take account of the improvement in research facilities in this century. A list of the sheriffs of England and Wales 'from the earliest times to A.D. 1831' was published in the Public Record Office *Lists and Indexes*,<sup>1</sup> Volume IX, as long ago as 1898. This volume is now out of print, and available only in certain reference libraries. The list of 'Sheriffs of this County' printed in the Introduction to Collinson's *History of Somerset*<sup>2</sup> (Vol. I, p. xxxiii) is incomplete and not always reliable. For the period 1154 to 1566, when Dorset was associated with Somerset in one sheriffwick, the best list of the early sheriffs of Somerset can be found in Hutchins's *History of Dorset*<sup>3</sup> (Vol. I, p. xxxvi). *A Chronological History of Somerset*, compiled by W. G. Willis Watson and published in 1925, includes the names of sheriffs, based presumably on Collinson's list for the period up to 1790, and continues them to the date of publication.

For many years Mr. Vivian-Neal had been considering the desirability of re-publishing a list of sheriffs of the County, which would include new names discovered since the publication of the Public Record Office List and provide brief biographical information. Because of the increasing cost of printing, no decision was reached as to how this could best be done, but Mr. Vivian-Neal's notes continued to accumulate, and he encouraged the present editor to do further biographical research. The general lay-out of the revised list and notes had been seen and approved by him, but for the completed form in which they now appear Mrs. Rawlins as editor is responsible.

It had been also Mr. Vivian-Neal's hope that this record of the sheriffs of Somerset, brought up-to-date and made as accurate as possible, would form the basis of a detailed study of their lives and

<sup>1</sup> Cited as P.R.O. list or *P.R.O.*

<sup>2</sup> Cited as *Coll.*

<sup>3</sup> Cited as *Hutchins.*