



Berkhamsted
Castle

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Waleran Teutonicus

Servant of King John and Henry III, defender of
Berkhamsted castle

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King John and Henry III were notorious for their recruitment of alien soldiers, clerks and other servants who were adjudged by the English to have been over-rewarded for their service to the kings. Most of these alien *curiales* were from trans-channel Francophone lands, originating in lands which were, or had been, ruled by the English kings. Others came from areas from where royal brides had relatives such as Savoy. However, King John also recruited a number of Germans. They had no toponymic surname and in the earlier records are simply distinguished as 'Teutonicus', 'the German', and 'le Tyes' and variants were used.¹ There appears to have been at least six brothers or cousins.

Professor Fryde believed that the clan or family originated from Westphalia,² Hucker thought that they were introduced to the English court through the good offices of John's nephew, Otto of Saxony, who claimed to be King of Germany from 1198 and was the Holy Roman Emperor from 1209 until 1215 as Otto IV. Otto had grown up in England.³

Waleran was probably the most important member of the clan, achieving a national recognition and prominence. He was first noted in 1208/9.⁴ Waleran was unlikely to have been an English speaker on his arrival in England and any French that he acquired was a second language. Although living in England for nearly fifty years, Waleran continued to be known as 'The German'. As such, Waleran would have been very conspicuous and he might have found it more difficult to assimilate than the Francophone aliens. However, his German background made him useful when Richard of Cornwall, Henry III's brother, won the German crown.

For his services to John, Waleran received lands in Northamptonshire and Cornwall. The former, which he held in 1208/9, were, after John's death, returned to the Pinkeny family⁵ and the rich Hampshire manor of Ringwood, held by 1219, might have been intended as recompense for this loss.⁶ The eight Cornish manors that he received were Alverton in Madron parish (now the site of Penzance), Tybista in Creed, Braynel, Helston in Trigg and Penmayn, Tamerton, Rillaton and Moresk in St Clement.⁷ It is possible that some of the manors were royal demesne⁸ or they could have been in John's hands as part of the Earldom of Cornwall.⁹ Fulbeck and Leadenham in Lincolnshire were also obtained from John as *Terra Normanorum*.¹⁰

1 The name of Waleran has persuaded some writers that he was descended from the West Country Walerans who were flourishing as early as 1190. Cartae et Alia Munimentia quae ad Dominum de Glamorgancia 1196-1270 (Cardiff, 1910), 556.

2 Professor Natalie Fryde, personal discussion, 15 April 2000.

3 B.U.Hucker, Kaiser Otto IV, Monumenta Germaniae Historica Schriften band 34 (Hanover, 1990), 468-9. Hucker suggested that Waleran might have come from Limburg which now lies in Belgium.

J.Bridges, History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire, i, 250.

5 *ibid.*

6 The Book of Fees commonly called Testa de Nevill, (afterwards Book of Fees) 3 vols. (1920-31) 256.

7 Patent Rolls (afterwards PR) 1225-32, 133; Rotuli Litterarum Clausarum in Turri Londinensi asservati, ed. T.D.Hardy (1833-4) afterwards RLC, ii, 191b. Moresk was lost to Falkes de Bréauté for a month in 1224 when the government made a settlement with him, RLC, i, 595b and 601.

8 Moresk and Helston were such in 1399, B.P.Wolffe, Royal Demesne in English History (1971), 257.

9 G.E.C., The Complete Peerage, revised by V.Gibbs, H.E.Doubleday and Lord Howard de Walden (1910-57), iii, 429-30.

10 Book of Fees, 286; CR 1227-31, 14. The Terra Normanorum were lands forfeited by families which had held land in both England and Normandy. When the French King captured Normandy in 1204, these families had to decide which allegiance to choose and give up their lands in the

Berkhamsted castle

In 1214, King John granted the custody of the important honour and castle of Berkhamsted to Terricus Teutonicus.¹¹ Earlier in that year, the King had demonstrated his confidence in Terricus when he instructed him to take the pregnant queen to Gloucester for safekeeping¹² By 1216, Terricus's probable brother, Waleran was acting as the constable of Berkhamsted castle.¹³ In that year the forces of Louis, the son of Philip II of France, invaded England with the backing of the English barons following King John's reneging on the settlement reached at the granting of Magna Carta. King John died on the night of 19/20 October 1216 and was succeeded by the eight-year old Henry III. After John's death, Prince Louis successfully besieged Hertford Castle before attacking Berkhamsted on the following 6 December.

The contemporary chronicler, Roger of Wendover, who was based at St Albans abbey, only a dozen miles from Berkhamsted, described the siege as follows. "*After reducing the castle of Hertford, Louis marched on St Nicholas's day (6 December) to the castle of Berkhamsted and surrounded it with his engines of war. Whilst the English barons, after pitching their tents, were employed in setting them in order, the knights and soldiers of the garrison made a sally, seized the baggage and conveyances of the barons and gained possession of the standard of William de Mandeville, with which they returned to the castle, regretting that they could do no further injury to them. On the same day, whilst the barons were sitting at table, the knights and soldiers of the garrison again made a sally, and, in order to put the barons in confusion, they carried before them the standard which they had taken a short time before, and thought to come on them unawares, but the latter were forewarned of this, and drove them back to the castle. When the following day dawned, Louis ordered the petrarie (stone-throwing machines) and other engines of war to be erected around the city, which being done, they kept up a destructive shower of stones: but Waleran, a German, well tried in warfare, made a brave resistance against them and caused great slaughter amongst the excommunicated French. However, at last the aforesaid Waleran, after a protracted siege, by command of the King, surrendered the castle to Louis saving their horses and arms on the 20 December*".¹⁴ The order to surrender must have come from the King's guardian, William Marshal, rather than the boy King. It is possible that there was a general truce in the war agreed by Marshal, and the surrender of Berkhamsted was a concession made to Prince Louis in return for this.¹⁵

As far as is known, Waleran never returned to Berkhamsted and it was not disturbed by further conflict. During Henry III's minority, which lasted from 1216 until 1228, Waleran was well-regarded and travelled widely. He maintained connections with the Queen Dowager, Isabella, witnessing one of her charters.¹⁶ He went to Angoulême with the widowed Queen when she returned to her ancestral county after her husband's death.¹⁷

realm that they did not select. Notionally, these lands were regarded as temporary holdings as, one day, Normandy would return to the Plantagenet kings.

¹¹ RLP, 105; N.Vincent, "Isabella of Angoulême, John's Jezebel" in *King John, New Interpretations*, 199.

¹² *Rotuli litterarum patentium in Turri Londinensi asservati*, (afterwards RLP) (1835), 124 and 143; S.Painter, *The Reign of King John* (Baltimore, 1949), 236.

¹³ It has been suggested that he held the castle as Terricus's deputy, Vincent, *Isabella of Angoulême*, 199.

¹⁴ J.Giles, *Roger of Wendover's Flowers of History, formerly ascribed to Matthew Paris, 1215 to 1235 AD* vol.2, part two (1849), 382.

¹⁵ D.A.Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III* (1990), 25.

¹⁶ *Calendar of the Charter Rolls* (afterwards CChR) 1300-26, 400.

¹⁷ Vincent, *Isabella of Angoulême*, 199.

In a letter to Henry III in 1219, she wrote seeking help and saying that she was sending Geoffrey de Boteville and Waleran to him as it appeared that war with France seemed imminent.¹⁸ In 1221, it was ordered that Waleran and the Abbot of Battle be given twenty marks for their expenses in travelling to Aachen on the King's business.¹⁹ In the same year, Waleran was granted the custody of the stannaries and the die of Devon. This gave him the control of the tin industry and the striking of tin ingots. He held this profitable post for 200 marks per annum.²⁰ In 1224, he was also noted as in charge of the Cornish stannary.²¹ Eight years later, he still held the stannaries and his payments for these, as well as wardship (100 marks) and the stock of the manor of Croxton, were reduced to a mere 20 marks a year.²²

On the fall of Falkes de Bréauté in 1224, Waleran was given the keeping of his lands on the Isle of Wight and made Constable of Carisbrooke. These lands were in the hands of Bréauté as he controlled the inheritance of his stepson, the young Earl of Devon and Lord of Wight.²³ One of the manors belonging to the lordship of Wight was Crowell (Oxfordshire) and, about the same time, Waleran was granted it at the King's pleasure.²⁴ Waleran played a full part in the life of the Wight community, witnessing charters in favour of Quarr Abbey.²⁵

The wardenship of Wight ended effectively in 1226 when Waleran went overseas in the service of the King²⁶ and he was replaced in 1227.²⁷ Having lost his income from the Isle of Wight, Waleran was then granted the corn and oxen from the manors of Wike and Frampton (Dorset).²⁸ Waleran gained Clatford (Hampshire), being regarded as *Terra Normanorum*,²⁹ but lost it after a year³⁰ before regaining it when the King acknowledged that he had acted illegally. Although he had obtained Fincham (Norfolk) as an escheat,³¹ Waleran was disseised by the King '*per voluntatem nostram*' in 1236 but he recovered it by 1245.³² Whilst Waleran had retained his lands throughout the Minority,³³ Alverton was later seized by Richard of Cornwall. When the King ordered it be restored, Richard

¹⁸ *Royal and other Historical Letters illustrative of the Reign of Henry III 1216-1235*, (afterwards *Royal Letters*) ed. W.W.Shirley (1862), 23.

¹⁹ *Receipt Rolls for the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth years of the reign of King Henry III*, ed. N.Barratt, Pipe Roll Society, xc, new series lii (2003), no.2059.

²⁰ *CFR 1220-21*, no.86; *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Fifth Year of the Reign of King Henry III*, ed. D.Crook (PRS, 1990), 72-3.

²¹ *Receipt Rolls for the Seventh and Eighth years of the reign of King Henry III*, ed. N.Barratt, Pipe Roll Society, xciii, new series lv (2007), no.3952.

²² *CFR 1235-36*, no.80.

²³ *Royal Letters*, i, 514; *CFR 1223-4*, no.91.

²⁴ *CFR 1223-24*, no.101.

²⁵ *The Charters of Quarr Abbey*, ed. S.F.Hockey, (Isle of Wight, 1991), 108-9.

²⁶ *PR 1225-32*, 22; *RLC*, ii, 100.

²⁷ *PR 1225-32*, 129.

²⁸ *Calendar of Fine Rolls* (afterwards *CFR*) 1226-27, no. 386.

²⁹ *CR 1227-31*, 490; N.Vincent, *Peter des Roches; An alien in English Politics 1205-1238* (Cambridge, 1996), 320; *Book of Fees*, 1419.

³⁰ *CR 1227-31*, 523 and 1231-4, 170.

³¹ *Book of Fees*, 908.

³² *CR 1242-7*, 304 and 317; *CPR 1232-47*, 452. Others who suffered included Engelard de Cigogné and Walter de Goderville, R.C.Stacey, *Politics, Policy and Finance under Henry III 1216-1245* (Oxford, 1987), 103.

³³ The Cornish manors were enrolled in 1227, *Calendar of the Patent Rolls* (afterwards *CPR*) 1225-32, 133. Fulbeck was noted in 1226/8; *Book of Fees*, 359.

sought the support of the nobles to the fury of the King³⁴ but the manor was restored to Waleran.³⁵ The King's defiance of his brother shows his regard for Waleran. The Ringwood tenure lasted until 1227.³⁶ He regained it for one day in 1233 but was then given the Burgh manor of Croxton (Leicestershire) instead,³⁷ possibly to replace his money fee. The King's intended to endow Waleran with hereditary land as shown in 1235 when his £30 money fee was extended to his heirs.³⁸ His landed interests in Middlesex are demonstrated by the suit that he and the Prior of Ruislip brought in 1237.³⁹

Witnessing his first royal charter in September 1229,⁴⁰ Waleran received his fourth castellany in 1231, that of Windsor. However, he was replaced quickly⁴¹ because, on the death of William Marshal the younger, he was ordered to travel to Ireland to keep the extensive Marshal lands and their nine castles.⁴² Later in that year when William's heir, Richard, rebelled against the King, Richard's constables refused to deliver the Marshal castles to Waleran.⁴³

Waleran's significance as a German had come to the fore in 1226 when he testified on behalf of German merchants and sailors.⁴⁴ The August 1231 payment of expenses for a journey to the Duke of Brunswick by Waleran⁴⁵ indicates the usefulness of German-speaking knights and that his Irish service had ended.

An association of over twenty years with the Welsh March began in 1233⁴⁶ and, a year later, Waleran was appointed to keep and fortify the Three Castles (Grosmont, Skenfrith and White) once held by the King's chief minister, Hubert de Burgh.⁴⁷ In his new rôle he was involved in negotiations with Llywelyn Fawr, Prince of Wales,⁴⁸ but Waleran lost the castles when Burgh was restored to favour in 1234.⁴⁹ Leaving Wales for a while, Waleran was retained in the royal service being summoned for military service⁵⁰ and he and Hamo de Crevecoeur were given custody of the Cinque Ports with orders to guard the South Coast from Hastings to Poole in 1235.⁵¹ Another example of his usefulness as

³⁴ *Roger de Wendover*, iv, 141-4; N. Denholm-Young, *Richard of Cornwall* (Oxford, 1947), 10-11.

³⁵ *RLC*, ii, 191b.

³⁶ *VCH Hampshire*, iv, 607.

³⁷ *CR 1231-4*, 339-40.

³⁸ *CPR*, 102-3.

³⁹ *Curia Regis Rolls of the reign of Henry III*, (afterwards *CRR*) vol. xvi. 1237-1242, ed. L.C. Hector, (1979), no. 1802.

⁴⁰ *TNA:PRO C53/21.m3*.

⁴¹ *CR 1227-31*, 468; *VCH Berkshire*, iii, ed. W. Page and Ditchfield (1912), 24.

⁴² *PR 1225-32*, 429 and 436; *Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland 1171-1307* (afterwards *CDI*) (1875-1896), 1171-1251, nos. 1872, 1876, 1880, and 1892; *CFR 1230-31*, no. 138.

⁴³ *CR 1227-31*, 496.

⁴⁴ *PR 1225-32*, 46.

⁴⁵ *CR 1227-31*, 545.

⁴⁶ *CR 1231-4*, 339.

⁴⁷ *CPR 1232-47*, 58; *Royal Letters*, i, 446; *CR 1231-4*, 472.

⁴⁸ *Royal Letters*, i, 454.

⁴⁹ *CR 1234-7*, 2.

⁵⁰ *CR 1231-4*, 559.

⁵¹ *CPR 1232-47*, 91-2 and 123.

a German was the payment to him of expenses for going to Germany in 1235 with the King's sister, Isabel, who was going to marry the Emperor Frederick II.⁵²

There is a gap in the records referring to Waleran from March 1237 until October 1238.⁵³ At some time in Waleran's career, possibly during this period, he must have served in Gascony; in 1252, when the Gascons complained about the harsh governance of Simon de Montfort, they contrasted him with the seneschal, Henry de Turberville and '*dominus Waleran Theuto vir quidem discretus et circumspectus tolaverunt benigne*'.⁵⁴

Following the eclipse of Hubert de Burgh, Waleran returned to the March as Keeper of the Three Castles being paid 60 marks a year.⁵⁵ In 1242, he witnessed his only other royal charter. This is surprising as he was so often used by the King but perhaps it reflects the fact that much of his service was away from court in Wales and Ireland and possibly Gascony.⁵⁶ Important political tasks were entrusted to him; in 1244 he and three others were empowered to make a truce with Dafydd ap Llywelyn.⁵⁷ During his service in the Marches he also kept, at times, Chepstow, Usk, Caerleon, Goodrich, Builth, Bwlch-y-Dinas and Penrhos castles⁵⁸ and he was Seneschal of Netherwent⁵⁹ and Sheriff of Herefordshire in 1245-49.⁶⁰ His long service in the March was curtailed when the Lord Edward, the future Edward I, was given a large stake in the governance of Wales in 1254. Waleran was replaced as Keeper of the Three Castles and Builth⁶¹ but he was still used in a judicial capacity⁶² and as Escheator.⁶³

By June 1257 Waleran 'who will be praised for a long time by the King' was dead.⁶⁴ Waleran and his wife, Sybilla de Huntingfield, were married before 1223 when they made a land grant to Chertsey Abbey. This charter shows that she was the widow of Richard de Barentyn.⁶⁵ In 1239/40, Waleran and Sybilla presented a priest to the church of Chellington (Bedfordshire).⁶⁶ Chellington was part of the Trailly lands which Waleran held in 1242/3⁶⁷ as the husband of Walter de Trailly's widow, Sybilla.⁶⁸ She had a child

⁵² *Calendar of the Liberate Rolls* (afterwards *CLR*) 1267-72, sic, no.2196.

⁵³ *CR* 1237-42, 110.

⁵⁴ *Chronica Majora*, v, 295. Translated as the Gascons 'were treated in a similar kindly way by Waleran the German, a discreet and prudent man', J.Giles, *Matthew Paris's English History From the Year 1235 to 1273*, vol.2, (1853), 492.

⁵⁵ *CLR* 1226-40, 438.

⁵⁶ *The Royal Charter Witness Lists of Henry III (1226-1272)* edited with an introduction by Marc Morris, List and Index Society, nos. 291 and 292 (2001).

⁵⁷ *CPR* 1232-47, 447; TNA:PRO SC1 11/54; *Catalogue of Ancient Correspondence concerning Wales*, ed. J.G.Edwards (Cardiff, 1935), 49-50.

⁵⁸ *CPR* 1232-47, 481, 468 and 489; *CR* 1242-7, 265, 268, 397 and 450; *CPR* 1247-58, 17-18 and 97; *CR* 1247-51, 540.

⁵⁹ *CR* 1242-7, 405; *The Wardrobe Accounts of Henry III*, ed. B.L.Wild, Pipe Roll Society, xcvi, ns.lviii (2012), 45.

⁶⁰ *CPR* 1247-58, 41; *List of Sheriffs for England and Wales from the Earliest Times to AD 1831* (1892-1936), 59.

⁶¹ *CPR* 1247-58, 272 and 365.

⁶² *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous (Chancery)*, i-iii (1916-37) (afterwards *CIM*,) i, no.198.

⁶³ *CR* 1254-6, 361-2.

⁶⁴ *CR* 1256-9, 62.

⁶⁵ *The Chertsey Cartularies*, part ii, Surrey Record Society, xxvii, (1928), nos. 147-8.

⁶⁶ *Rotuli Roberti Grosseteste Episcopi Lincolniensis 1235-1253*, ed. F.N.Davies, Canterbury and York Society, (1913), 311.

⁶⁷ *Book of Fees*, 884.

by Trailly.⁶⁹ As a twice-widowed woman, it is no surprise that she had no known children by Waleran and, unlike his brothers, he did not found a line. Sybil died in 1251 when her lands passed to her grandson, John de Trailly.⁷⁰

Whilst Waleran and Sybilla benefited greatly from royal service,⁷¹ he never played a significant rôle in the local communities where he held land probably because of his continued absence on royal duties. With a reputation as a brave, but not always successful soldier, Waleran was valued for his reliability as demonstrated by his frequent appointment as constable of important castles and his administrative roles on the Isle of Wight, Ireland, the Welsh March and possibly Gascony.

Footnote

In April 2007, Dr Ben Wild drew my attention to a possible caricature of Waleran in the margin of the Fine Roll for the fifth year of the reign of Henry III (1220-21). Below is the image.⁷²



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⁶⁸ <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/bucks/vol4/pp68-73#h3-0002> and see *CFR 1250-1*, no.358.

⁶⁹ *RLC*, ii, 64.

⁷⁰ <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/bucks/vol4/pp68-73#h3-0002> and see *CFR 1250-1*, no.358.

⁷¹ They received timber, wine, deer and money gifts, *CR 1227-31*, 145, 497 and 540; *CR 1231-4*, 34, 92 and 217; *CR 1234-7*, 15, 128 and 276; *CR 1237-42*, 110 and 391; *CR 1242-7*, 228, 265 and 497; *CR 1247-51*, 91; *CLR 1245-51*, 218.

⁷² TNA:PRO C 60/15 m.8.