

List of knight's fees in Kent : 1284-5 : Extracts from the report submitted by Roger de Northwode and others : Introduction

The accompanying text is thought to be a partial description of the state of affairs existing in Kent in 1284-5. It was derived, as the title states, from the rolls reporting the investigations carried out by a team of commissioners -- Roger de Northwode and others -- appointed by the king. Those rolls do not survive.

These excerpts from them were presumably made by somebody in the Exchequer, who keeps complaining that they lack some relevant facts ("but no mention is made in the said reports ...", *sed non fit mencio in predictis inquisitionibus ...*). There are only 124 entries, about a quarter of the number that might be expected. It is not clear why the man making the excerpts thought that these entries were more worth noting than the others; but presumably he did have his reasons.

Of the roll containing the excerpts made by this man, only one small scrap survives (E 179/240/251, fo 18).* By my numbering, the entries represented here are 30-43 on one side (fo 18r) and 77-93 on the other (fo 18v). They add up to less than one quarter of the total. The text preserved by this fragment was printed by Greenstreet (1877).

* For documents in this class it is no use consulting the main catalogue. One needs to go to the "E 179 Database" at www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/e179/default.asp.

The full text survives only in a much later copy (E 164/3), obviously not very accurate. From this manuscript it was printed in *Feudal aids*, vol 3, pp 1-9, with some variant readings from the E 179 fragment quoted in the footnotes.

Despite its incompleteness, despite all its defects, this text does have some value. Small mistakes abound; but there is only one place where the copy becomes nonsensical ("Willelm de Leyburne holds one fee in Ashford from Willelm de Leyburne"), and luckily that blunder can be corrected with the help of the fragment (91-2). My translation is based on *Feudal aids*, but I give preference to readings from the fragment, where there is a choice.

References

Feudal aids = Inquisitions and assessments relating to feudal aids, 6 vols (HMSO for PRO, 1899-1920).

J. Greenstreet, 'Fragment of the Kent portion of Kirkby's Inquest temp. Edward I', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 11 (1877), 365-9.

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