ESTATE RECORDS OF THE HOTOT FAMILY

EDITED BY
EDMUND KING
INTRODUCTION

The first of the documents here edited has come to rest at the British Library, where it is Additional Manuscript 54228, after an interesting career. It was seen by the Northamptonshire historian John Bridges, when he was collecting material for his history of the county, between 1718 and his death in 1742. The Hotot family had continued in the male line until c 1400, when the heiress to the estate married Richard Dudley. It was his descendant, Sir Matthew Dudley (died 1721), who showed the Hotot records to John Bridges. There were then two books, the volume which survives, and a later volume, since lost and for which the only evidence survives in Bridges' transcripts.1 Extracts from both books, particularly the information on family history, were published when Bridges' history finally appeared in 1791.2 Bridges referred to the two manuscripts simply as MS A and MS B. These identifications have been retained. MS A is the surviving manuscript, which contains the earliest material: MS B survives only in part, in Bridges' transcripts.

The later history of MS A can be established as follows. It came into the possession of George Paton (1721-1807), a Scottish antiquary, and a man of great learning in English as well as Scottish topography.3 His manuscripts were dispersed in 1811, and the Hotot volume was picked up on an Edinburgh bookstall by John Caley, secretary to the first record commission between 1801 and 1834.4 The volume returned to Northamptonshire when Caley presented it to George Baker (1781-1851), whose own history of the county was published between 1822 and 1841.5 But only briefly, for in 1844 Baker sold his Northamptonshire collections to the legendary Sir Thomas Phillipps.6 The volume's history thereafter can be followed in one of the classics of modern bibliographical literature, A. N. L. Munby's Phillipps Studies. The individual manuscript though was lost to view. It was recorded as untraced in Or Davis's invaluable list of cartularies published in 1958.7 But then in one of the regular series of Phillipps sales, held on 28 November 1967, there appeared lot 91: Cartulary of the Hotot family of Clopton, Northants. 'This is a rare example of a family cartulary, similar in nature to the cartularies of the great monastic houses but briefer and more roughly put together.'8

1 Bodleian Library MS top. Northants c. 19, pp. 28-68; on these transcripts see F. Madan, Summary Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, iii (Oxford, 1895), pp. 642-51.
2 J. Bridges, The History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire (1791), ii. 367-72.
3 See DNB.
4 See DNB for information on Caley's important but far from distinguished career. For his acquisition of the Hotot volume see Catalogus Manuscriptorum in Bibliotheca Phillippica (1968 repr), p. 210, sub MS 12025.
6 A. N. L. Munby, Phillipps Studies, no 4: The Formation of the Phillipps Library from 1841 to 1872 (Cambridge, 1956), pp. 20-2; cf ibid., no 2, p. 36; no 3, p. 107n.
7 G. R. C. Davis, Medieval Cartularies of Great Britain (1958), no 1256.
Documents of this kind are indeed rare. Dr Davis’s list shows 1185 cartularies made by religious houses, but only 159 cartularies of secular provenance. Many of these secular cartularies are magnate records. The majority date from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The interest of the Hotot book is that it is early, from the thirteenth century, and that it contains the records of a knightly family. Northamptonshire is particularly rich in early records of lay estates. Two cartularies, one of which appeared in another Phillipps sale in 1976, show the acquisitions of the Braybrooke family.9 The Braybrookes are notable for their active trade in property that had been mortgaged to the Jews, and as such they have been studied by H. G. Richardson.10 There is a valuable file of Basset rolls, contemporary with the Hotot records and containing material of a similar kind. It includes a roll of charters, a feodary, and miscellaneous memoranda.11 They are particularly concerned to trace the holding of fees and their fragmentation; they re-count the descent of holdings in a manner reminiscent of pleadings in the contemporary royal court. The Bassets held a barony though, and the Braybrookes grew to a similar rank. Nearer in substance to Hotot was Henry de Bray, lord of Harlestone, who copied out his own estate book in 1322.12 This also is based on charters of the acquisition of land and the record of tenures. But it has a great deal of material which we would regard as miscellaneous but Henry de Bray did not. There are lists—of counties, of bishops, of kings, of weights and measures. And not least, as he wrote to instruct his son, there is the history of his family. The Hotot records also start with a family history.

The Clapton family

The estate book begins with the establishment of a knightly tenancy centred upon Clapton shortly after the Norman Conquest.13

Turold abbot of Peterborough gave Roger of Lovetot baron of Southoe a fee of two knights in Clapton, Polebrook and Catworth, to hold of the said abbot and his successors. Roger of Lovetot gave Alfred de Graunt-court his knight the whole fee which he had by gift of the abbot in Clapton, namely four hides as one knight’s fee. And Roger gave Alfred in the vill of Clapton one hide and one virgate for a quarter fee, and this was of Roger of Southoe’s own barony, not pertaining to Peterborough in any way, save only that it was in the liberty of the abbot.

Bridges surmised that Roger of Lovetot’s grant was made ‘about the third year of William Rufus’.14 The establishment of Alfred at Clapton must, however, be looked for a little earlier, for he is recorded as the Domesday holder of the estate under Eustace the sheriff of Huntingdon.15 There can be little question as to the Norman origin of the family thus established on

11 BL Sloane MS 31 nos 3–7. The charter roll is no 4 (= Davis, no 1188A), and is to be edited by Prof. William T. Reedy for the Pipe Roll Society.
13 These are the opening words of MS A.
14 Bodleian Lib. MS top. Northants c. 19, p. 57; thence in Bridges, ii. 367.
15 *Domesday Book*, i, fo 228a.
the heavy claylands on the borders of Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire. 16

This is a small knightly estate, and for the century which followed its establishment the information on it is not great. In the Northamptonshire Survey, from some time in the reign of Henry I, the tenant is Walter. 17 According to the family history, Walter was Alfred's son, and succeeded to all his father's estates. It is likely the same Walter who appears as witness to a charter for St Neot's priory dated 1149. 18 Before 1155 he had been succeeded by William of Clapton, 19 who was the Lovetot tenant in 1166, 20 and whose later activities are well recorded. After the revolt of 1173-4 he owed 20s for forest pleas, and the more substantial sum of 40 marks as one of a group of Peterborough tenants purchasing the freedom of Jordan of Waterville. 21 Another indication of his connection with the local men of the honour is provided by his marriage. According to the later family history, William married twice. The first wife was Ivetta de Muskham; and there is a little story about her. It says that she was the sister of Geoffrey de Muskham, bishop of Chester, and was born in the neighbourhood of Newark. 22

After his marriage, returning home with his wife from the place of her birth, on the road beyond Wittering, at a distance William saw his mansion house of Clapton in flames; and on his arrival found it, with the preparations and provisions for celebrating the wedding-feast, destroyed by fire. This accident, our author says, was a judgement from heaven; as, in the reign of King Stephen, he had converted more than a third part of the churchyard to a profane use, and had cut down a noble grove of ash-trees which grew in it, for the purpose of building his said manor-house.

Geoffrey de Muskamp was bishop of Coventry and Litchfield (or Chester) between 1198 and 1208. 23 This passage allows him to be identified with Muskham near Newark on Trent. 24 The connection of this part of Nottinghamshire with Clapton in Northamptonshire is most obviously the existence of a Peterborough abbey fee in each place. 25 The honour can be seen here as a marriage-market, and something of the marriage customs glimpsed also.

The greater part of the surviving records for William of Clapton, as well as his secure place in the history of the Hotots, arise from his alienation of land. It was given, in smallish parcels, to the church; and in larger parcels

16 It is more difficult to identify the Norman town from which they originated. Loyd's survey shows a Grandcourt and a Graincourt: L. C. Loyd, The Origins of some Anglo-Norman Families (Harleian Soc. ciii, 1951), pp. 47-8.
17 VCH Northants, i. 366.
18 F. M. Stenton (ed.), Facsimiles of Early Charters from Northamptonshire Collections (NRS, iv, 1930), p. 62. Mells was in error in stating that William of Clapton occurs in 1146; the reference is to William of Lovetot: Pytchley, pp. 93-4nn.
20 Red Book of the Exchequer, i. 372.
21 Pipe Roll 22 Henry II, p. 52; Pipe Roll 23 Henry II, p. 95.
22 B 4 no 3; in the version of Bridges, ii. 368.
23 DNB, sub Geoffrey de Muschamp.
24 A. M. Oliver, 'The family of Muskamp, barons of Wooler', Arch. Aeliana, 4th ser. xiv (1937), pp. 243-4 suggests that both the Northumberland Muschamps and the Derbyshire Muschamps derived from Muskham. He further suggested that the two families were related, an idea seemingly discounted by C. J. Holdsworth in Rufford Charters, i (Thoroton Soc. xxix, 1973), pp. cii-cvi.
The grants to the church will be considered first of all. The largest grants went to Peterborough abbey. King John in 1199 confirmed to the almonry, 'of the gift of William of Clapton 27 acres of land, and the meadow of Sineswald, and a virgate of land; and besides this a large virgate of land'. The first of these gifts was confirmed to the abbey in an early fine made in 1190, in return for which William was given 10 marks and his wife Emma 12 bezants. Another virgate in Clapton had been granted to the Templars before 1185. He gave 24 acres of demesne land to the nuns of Chicksand, Bedfordshire. And when his daughter Emma entered the nunnery at Stamford, he gave them two virgates of land, one in villeinage and the other of demesne. When this is taken with the grant of the personatus of Clapton church to St Neot's priory, the range of ecclesiastical foundations which could make an appeal to men of this rank appears very clearly. It provides a further example of the range of his horizons.

The range is extended further when we come to consider William's relations, for William was a man who had a lot of relations. William's grant of land to the Templars was made jointly with (or at least warranted by) his brothers Robert and Richard. Robert seems to have controlled the Polebrook estate, while Richard had some land at Kingsthorpe. Another brother, Reginald, was priest of the family church (A3). And William had three sisters, two of whom have an important part to play in the story of the alienation of his land. Dionisia married Robert of Ufford, to whom no story attaches, but who is likely a member of a family holding of Peterborough abbey in the Soke. The elder sister was Alice, who married Robert Hotot.

The Hotot family

There is no family history to vouch for the eleventh century origins of the Hotot family. In 1162-3 Robert Hotot owed 6s 8d for a forest offence. In 1166 the return of knights fees made by William d'Aubigny showed Ralph Hotot owing half a knight's fee. In 1175-6 the heavy forest eyre showed Thomas Hotot owing 20s for a forest offence. According to the Clapton family history, Robert Hotot of Carlton married Alice the daughter of Walter de Grauntcourt, and their son and heir was Thomas Hotot. It can be established from this that the family came from East Carlton, near Rockingham Castle, and that they held of the barony of Belvoir. To establish a succession is more difficult. If Clapton seems to have too few twelfth century generations, the Hotots are in danger of having too many.

26 Stenton, Early Charters, p. 46.
29 B 4 no 7; cf A 2.
30 B 4 no 3.
31 Stenton, Early Charters, p. 68 (charter of 1182).
32 Lees, Records of Templars, p. 116.
33 Curia Regis Rolls, i. 117, 119-20.
37 Red Book of the Exchequer, i. 328.
38 Pipe Roll 22 Henry II, p. 51.
It would simplify the descent, and reconcile the generations, if the 1163 Robert was the husband of Alice, and their son succeeded shortly before 1175-6, and had an active career of nearly forty years.

For the latter part of that career the information is abundant. The early Curia Regis Rolls, from 1196 and up to 1211, show Thomas Hotot as an active and senior member of the gentry of northern Northamptonshire and adjacent parts of Rutland.39 The activity is proved by the range of grand assises on which he served, from Luffenham in Rutland to Barnack in the Soke of Peterborough, from Stanion in Corby hundred to Raunds in Higham Ferrers hundred. His seniority is suggested by the fact that in which ever part of the region he served, he was one of the first two or three knights named. A man of this rank needs to be seen in terms of lordship as well as of geography. In 1196 William d'Aubigny named Thomas Hotot or magister Albert as his attorneys in a plea of land in Rutland.40 If d'Aubigny lordship was important in this area so also was that of Mauduit, for East Carlton lay in the shadow of Rockingham Castle, which the Mauduits had controlled from the early twelfth century. The survival of a good range of Mauduit charters, both originals and cartulary copies, show this other side of Thomas's activity.41 These relate to the acquisitions of Robert II Mauduit in Luffenham, Rutland. In them Thomas Hotot is usually the first, and otherwise the second witness. The charters suggest a close contact with Mauduit lordship, and may reveal the holding of some administrative position from them.

The material examined so far shows that East Carlton remained the base of the Hotots until the end of Thomas Hotot's life. His death must have occurred shortly after 1212, and his son occurs in 1218.42 To show how this son's estate records, which are printed here, are the records of lordship in Clapton, Northamptonshire and Turvey, Bedfordshire reference needs to be made to the marriages of Robert Hotot and his son, William of Clapton, the uncle of Thomas Hotot, 'gave Thomas 60 acres of his demesne along with the virgate which Albricus the son of Quene used to hold and the virgate which Walter the archer used to hold'. The charter granting this land is preserved in the estate book (A 20), and it shows that the grant was substantial.43 Thomas Hotot married twice. To quote the family history again: 'Thomas begat Robert, Thomas and Reginald from Alice of Oleby, and from the second namely Alice of Eyri he begat William, Richard, Walter, Roger and Fulk. Thomas the father of these eight brothers gave Richard his son the whole tenement which he had of the gift of his uncle in Clapton, in the year in which King John mustered his army upon Barham Down.'44 The first wife was Alice of Welby, in the northern

---

39 Curia Regis Rolls, i. 16, 31; ii. 138, 220, 252; iii. 106, 159, 195, 227-8, 290-1, 322; iv. 83, 183, 298; v. 29, 112, 254; vi. 31, 59, 131; viii. 337.
41 Emma Mason (ed.), The Beauchamp Cartulary (Pipe Roll Soc. NS 43, 1980), pp. xxxv, lvii (map), nos 219-20, 222-3, 227-9, 231 (nos 227 and 229 are also printed in Stenton, Early Charters, pp. 34-5, 30-11).
42 He last appears in the pipe roll of 1211-12: Pipe Roll 14 John, p. 134; Excerpta e Rotulis Finium, i (Rec. Com. 1835), pp. 20-1.
43 The service owed was one-tenth of a knight's fee, and the sixty acres would seem to represent one-tenth of a five-hide holding. The parcels are given, however, and they total 113 acres.
tip of Leicestershire, an area which lay in the shadow of Belvoir Castle. On Thomas’s death his eldest son by Alice of Welby obtained the ancestral property at East Carlton, and it may be presumed that the younger sons of the same marriage were supported from it in some way. The sons of the second marriage obtained their father’s acquisitions. The eldest of these sons entered Peterborough abbey as a monk. And so it is as a second son of a second marriage, hardly the best start in life, that Richard Hotot enters the scene. A family acquisition of 120 acres was quite as much as he could expect. I believe though that he probably had more than this, and that to his grandfather’s acquisition he added the portion of his mother.

The estate book shows the acquisitions of Richard Hotot in Clapton, but it also shows his activity in the land market of Turvey, Bedfordshire. His interest in this village, eighteen miles away from Clapton, in a different county and in a different area of lordship, is hard to explain, unless he started with some property there. According to the Hundred Rolls, the prior of St Neot’s possessed the advowson of the church of Turvey, ‘of the gift of William le Heyr in the time of King Richard’. There are three charters of William le Heyr or le Heir noted in the index to the twelfth century Turvey charters in the St Neot’s cartulary, but this section of the cartulary is missing, so their texts do not survive. There is no mention of later members of the Eyr family in later charters from Turvey, which, as will be seen, are abundant. It seems likely that Alice of Eyri was a member of this family, possibly the daughter and the heiress of William. The Eyr family seem to have been the tenants of the Belvoir holding in Turvey, and so this marriage also is to be explained in terms of lordship.

These two acquisitions provided the base upon which Richard Hotot built. For build he did very vigorously, as his estate records show. I will examine first his acquisitions in Clapton, and then those in Turvey. In Clapton the story must be taken back to another of the daughters of Waiter of Clapton. This was Dionisia, a formidable lady.

Of Dionisia the second daughter of Walter de Grauntcourt it is recorded that when a maiden, clad in a tunic, with a hat upon her head and armed only with a hollow shield, about the seventeenth year of King Stephen she attacked a certain knight, with one blow of her spear bringing him to the ground, and carried off his horse.

45 Alice was the daughter of Gilbert of Welby. This was a Basset fee: Book of Fees, p. 949. In the Basset memoranda there is a note that Gilbert gave the homage and service from a carucate in Harby, Leics, to Thomas of Hotot with his daughter in free marriage: BL Sloane MS 31 no 7, rot. 12r. This Gilbert occurs in a charter for Garendon Abbey in the Belvoir muniments, which Round dated 1162 x 1170. The witness list concludes: ‘... Gilleberto de Alebi et Thoma fratre eius et omni comitatu Legrecestrie.’ HMC Rutland, iv (1905), p. 5.

46 William Hotot, abbot of Peterborough 1246 x 1249, was born at Carlton. He built a new chapel and a new hall at the neighbouring abbey manor of Cottingham, the only substantial building of his pontificate; and when he was forced to resign office in 1249 he was granted for a time the manor of Cottingham for his support: BL Add. MS 39758, fos 84v–86r; Matthaei Parisiensis Chronica Majora, ed. H. R. Luard, v (Rolls Ser. 57, 1874), pp. 84–5. J. Sparke’s edn of Whittlesey’s chronicle, Historiae Anglicanae Scriptores Varii (1723), p. 128, has Colingham as the manor; this was the original reading of the MS, but it was amended, surely correctly, to show William of Hotot returning to live in state amongst his relations.

47 Rotuli Hundredorum, ii. 332.

48 BL Cotton MS Faust. A iv, fo 32r. A group of charters that was acquired in the 1230s contained two issued by W. le Eyr: ibid., fos 117v, 118r.

49 It was his manor which the Hotots were to hold; VCH Bedfordshire, iii. 112.

50 B 4 no 1, in the translation of Bridges, ii. 368.
Dionisia's daughter was Emma, and she was given a second and more substantial portion of the Clapton estate on her marriage with William Dacus. According to the estate book this comprised 120 acres of demesne land, the service of freeholders and villein tenants, along with a quarter of a knight's fee in Thurning. Richard Hotot was able to purchase this other Clapton estate, though not, inevitably, without a certain amount of incident along the way. William Dacus had two daughters, Isabella and Maud, and he divided his estate between them. Isabella married twice. Her first husband was Richard of Haselbergh, "who was found in a wood barbarously murdered, with his head cut off". This perhaps cured her from any further affection for men of the west country, and her second husband was Hugh of Ringstone in Lincolnshire. According to the family history the lands were conveyed to Ralph of Ringstone. Ralph then went to the Holy Land and sold the land to Hugh his brother for 100 marks. Richard Hotot then bought the property for 170 marks (A 2; B 4 no 1). The final parcel was that of seven virgates of villeinage given by William Dacus to his daughter Maud on her marriage to Robert Grimbaud, and given by them in turn to their daughter Isabella on her marriage to Richard Pauncefot. This land was bought by Richard Hotot in 1248, for 160 marks (A 11), and with this transaction the twelfth century estate which Richard's great-uncle had alienated was in effect reconstituted in his hands. Richard occurs on 25 July 1250 (A 11), and must have died shortly thereafter.

Clapton was to remain the main base of the Hotots, but at Turvey also they had a substantial holding, the records of which play a prominent part in the estate book. It has been suggested that the family's interest here grew from land bought to Thomas Hotot by his second wife. It is beyond question that Richard Hotot was active in acquiring land here. 'First Richard of Hotot bought in Turvey from John de Lega the parson of Carlton the whole tenement which John had in the village, namely in demesnes and in rents owing to him, apart from the Boulogne fee' (A 7). The land cost 182 marks. That a younger son in orders had property of this value to alienate suggests he was a member of a family of some importance. And so he was. The de Legas held 10 fees of the barony of Wahull, and other land in chief of the crown; the ramifications of the family have been worked out by G. Herbert Fowler. The land market in

51 They were married by 1199, when they had to defend their right to this property against Rose of Polebrook, another of William of Clapton's nieces: Curia Regis Rolls, i. 117, 119-20, 295. William's base was in Somerset; for his assertion of this see Curia Regis Rolls, iii. 129-30 (cf J. C. Holt, Magna Curia (Cambridge, 1963), pp. 56-7), and for the evidence see his place in the public records, from 1194 (Rotuli Curie Regis, i. 85) to 1218-19 (Pipe Roll 3 Henry III, pp. 173, 181).
52 B 4 no 1, in the translation of Bridges, ii. 368. William son of William held a small tenancy in chief in Haselbury Plucknett, Somerset in 1166: Red Book of the Exchequer, i. 229. Richard son of William of Haselbury occurs between 1202-3 (Pipe Roll 5 John, p. 159), and 1218-19 (Pipe Roll 3 Henry III, pp. 178, 181). Between Michaelmas 1219 and Trinity 1222 Isabella was claiming dower lands in Somerset as the widow of Richard: Curia Regis Rolls, viii. 69 and passim to x. 317; and the resultant fines, E. Green (ed.), Pedes Finium ... for the County of Somerset, 1196-1307 (Somerset Rec. Soc. vi, 1892), pp. 38, 40-1.
53 Whom she had married by Hilary 1224, Curia Regis Rolls, xi, no 1818, and to whom she was still married in 1258, Somerset Fines, p. 181. Ringstone is in Aveland wapentake, Lincoln, where Hugh held by knight-service of the Bishopric of Lincoln and of the honour of Belvoir: C. W. Foster (ed.), Registrum Antiquissimum, i (LRS, 27, 1931), p. 173, and ii (LRS, 28, 1933), p. 85.
54 See B 4 no 1 at note 179.
Turvey in the second quarter of the twelfth century was clearly very active. Richard Hotot also spent 20 marks on buying a virgate from Richard de Ardres, his name still recording the famous castle-town in Normandy from which his ancestors had come. In addition to this there were 37 smaller acquisitions of land, all but two of them sales, representing the outlay of a further £33 6s 8d (A 7). He was not the only man active in the Turvey land market in the mid-century. St Neot’s priory was building upon the twelfth century grants to it.57 And in the later thirteenth century there is continuing evidence for an active land market here.58 The reason for all this activity may be found in returning to Domesday Book. Turvey was a village of 12 hides. This land was divided between eight different lords. Only one of these estates, the four hides held by the bishop of Coutances, was described as being a manor. The Victoria County History has traced with great skill the numerous tenancies which resulted from the further fragmentation of this fragmented village.59 The Hotot tenancy was 1½ hides, held of the barony of Belvoir. In 1278/9 only 20 acres of this estate remained in demesne;60 by this time Thomas Hotot had been succeeded by his son William. From this small base, William Hotot was able to play as active a part in Bedfordshire politics as he did in those of Northamptonshire.61

The Hotot Estate Records

MS A is a volume which needs to be seen to be appreciated. It is written in a considerable variety of hands, with marginal additions, and several complex series of foot-notes. Four plates have been chosen to illustrate the variety of the material, and to help fill the place of a full description of it. The careful binding by the British Library confirms the accuracy of the foliation established by the Sotheby catalogue: ‘gatherings of 8 + 4 + 4 + 2 (the second a stub) + 7 leaves’. The size of the first 17 leaves is 280 x 175 mm, and of the last 7 leaves 220 x 115 mm. The earliest dated entry in the main text is from 1248–9 (A 6). Much of the material added refers to the years 1249 and 1250 (A 5, 10, 11, 15). It seems likely from this that the earliest text dates from the 1240s, the final decade of Richard Hotot’s life, and the one which saw the majority of his acquisitions. The survey at the head of the final gathering is dated 1272–3 (A 41), and so the volume cannot have been bound in its present form until after that time.

A partial description of MS B can be given from Bridges’ transcripts.63 His transcripts from the two books which he saw are in three parts: (i) pp. 15–25, notes from the Northamptonshire sections of MS A, up to and including no 13; (ii) pp. 28–56, the inquisition of 1255–6 from MS B; (iii)
pp. 57–68, miscellaneous notes from both manuscripts. Parts (i) and (ii) of this list are either printed or calendared in this edition. The value of part (iii), though it represents only jottings, is that it gives page references to both manuscripts. The pagination was supplied by Bridges himself. References to MS B, taken along with Bridges’ other proprietary annotations to MS A (see plates 1 and 3), allow an outline at least of the contents of the missing manuscripts to be established.

MS B started with the text of the inquisition of 1255–6, which occupied pages 2 to 14. Pages 15 and 16 may originally have been blank, for they contain headings of enquiry to the manor court (in French), and an agreement between lord and villagers on the one hand and the parson on the other regarding tithes of livestock and dated 1285. There follows material which also was in MS A and likely was copied from it (A 8, 9, 12 and possibly one other item), on pages 17 to 20. What was on the next four pages cannot be established. Pages 25 and 26 contained the record of a recovery of a villein dated to 1376. A 26 is noted as being on page 71 of MS B. And finally a note on forinsec service (A 18, and there in Thomas Hotot’s own hand) is stated to have been on page 87 of MS B. It is thus clear that MS B was a good deal longer than MS A. Of the bulk of its contents, however, from around page 30 to around page 70, there is no record, other than Bridges’ description of the volume as containing ‘a register of charters relating to the manors of Clapton, Turvey and other manors and lands of the Hotot family’. The two volumes are clearly closely related. It was only when the charters had been organised that it was possible to annotate rentals in the way A 7 and 16 are annotated.

It is more difficult to establish who was responsible for the composition of the two registers. The concern with tithes, and the complexities of title to them in a village with a vigorous land market, is a distinctive feature of the 1255–6 inquisition in MS B. It adds force to Bridges’ supposition that Martin of St Ives, the parson of the church, was responsible for the register. If, however, Bridges thought that only the priest would have been able to write a document of this kind, he would have been mistaken. The evidence of the latter part of MS A, which since it related to Bedfordshire Bridges did not study, shows that Thomas Hotot wrote some of that volume in his own hand. The first of the entries which demonstrates this are A 19, which refers to rents ‘due to us’ (debitos apud nos) in Turvey, and A 18 which refers to ‘my house’ (mansio mea) in the same village. And in

---

64 Bridges, ii. 369.
65 ibid., ii. 372.
66 ‘Cuius autor ut conjicitur fuit Martinus de Sancto Ivone’, Bodleian Lib. MS top. Northants c. 19, p. 28; thence Bridges, ii. 372.
A 32, a list of meadowland in Turvey, there is reference to land ‘which my father bought’ (quam pater meus emit). Each of these entries was written by Thomas Hotot. He may have written more. It would seem quite possible that he wrote much of MS A from A 18 onwards, and that A 43 represents his writing in the later years of his life. It would seem possible also that the same hand wrote some of the glosses. They were not the work of Richard Hotot, nor probably made in his time. According to Bridges, MS A was the the estate book of Richard Hotot, but this is a limited view. It was Thomas Hotot who was responsible for MS A in its final shape, and it would appear for the shape of MS B also. Richard Hotot was the builder. His son, Thomas Hotot, was the organiser.

The title-page of MS B, preserved by Bridges, gives a brief statement of why organisation was required.

This is the Register of Thomas of Hotot, of all the charters and final concords and exchanges wherever they were made and the acquisitions, made by Thomas of Hotot the grandfather of the said Thomas and by Richard of Hotot his son and by Thomas son of the said Richard, to provide evidence without sight of the original charters for all lawsuits that arise or for all unjust demands for forinsec service or rent and for giving reliefs according to the provisions of the charters.

The description would serve just as well for MS A, as an examination of some of the contents of the two volumes will show.

The main grants of land gave Richard Hotot a demesne and the service of dependent tenants to work it. B 6 is a complete terrier of the demesne of the Peterborough abbey fee, which amounted to about 470 acres. This was the only demesne of any size in the village, for all but 24 acres of the Lovetot fee was divided among tenants (B 8). The demesne comprised a number of small closes, and parcels scattered through the four main fields:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parcel</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>next the village</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tornhilfeld</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hulkefeld</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medwefeld</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westfield</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>469</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The entry in the terrier adds that Westfield was attached to (sociatur ad) Meadowfield. It may be that it was attached to it for the purposes of cropping, but far from certain, for it is known that at this time the unit of cropping was the furlong. It can be established from elsewhere in MS B, however, thanks to its concern about tithes, that in the 1250s the demesne was sown on a three-course rotation. A passage distinguishes between ‘land in the fields which lies almost sterile each third year and land in the messuages and crofts which bears fruit annually’ (B 8). The church was most concerned to get its tithes from the fertile peasant gardens.

The Clapton demesne was cultivated, at least in part, by the services of dependent tenants. If the records of those services do not bulk large in the Hotots' archives, it is likely because those services were not extensive. By

---

67 He thought that Richard died c 1268, BL Add. MS 54228, p. iv, and his error was followed by the Sotheby catalogue, as cited in note 8, p. 33.
68 Entries elsewhere in the Hotot records might have seemed to hint at a two-course rotation. Thus the reference to land, ‘ex utraque parte adiacentibus’ in A 2 (William Hay).
the 1240s the standard holding of the villein tenants was a half-virgate (A 12). Each tenant owed rent of 4s 3d a year, and in addition eight labour services in the autumn, a spring and a winter ploughing service, and work carrying hay from the fields and reeds from the marshes. They might keep their sheep in their own sheep-folds, though the sheep of those with less than a half-virgate had to lie in the lord’s fold. These are light obligations, and it may be that they were bought out, for in 1272-3 the thirty-four villein half-virgaters owed 11s a year rent (A 41). At the same time the le Moine tenants in Barnwell owed 6s 8d a year rent, but heavier services.70 Only a few miles away from each of these manors, villeins with similar holdings on the manors of Peterborough and Ramsey abbeys owed heavy and regular week-work and continued to do so until well into the next century.71 Such light services are a characteristic of the small lay estate, and must indicate that the demesne was cultivated almost exclusively by the permanent farm staff (the famuli) or by hired labour.72

In many ways the resident villein tenants seem to have been the least of the Hotots’ worries. What did worry them can be seen from a reading of what they were concerned to write down. In MS A they can be seen first of all keeping a track of their rents, and of any other services owed to them. They owed services in their turn, rents to neighbours for land purchased, and in some cases homage if the land was held by military tenure. The Hotots needed to keep on top of their charters, and the careful annotation of the lists which forms so attractive a part of MS A was made for this utilitarian purpose. Most of the charters themselves do not survive; these were the routine bits of MS B, which Bridges did not transcribe. The inquisition made in the 1250s shows in more detail the Hotots’ concerns. Chapters 13 to 21 of B deal with ‘forinsec services’, those owed to the royal government, ‘unjust demands’ of which the register was designed to prevent. Scutage was the first of these. Scutage was levied on the knight’s fee. Divided lordship in Clapton made for problems, and it can be seen that to distinguish the fees was important both for the lord and the rector of the church. Entries regarding forinsec services in Turvey are in Thomas of Hotot’s own hand. Thus when parcels of different fees were exchanged, different tithing arrangements might become confused (A 7). Other forinsec services were for sheriff’s aid, for the repair of Northampton town walls, the murdrum fine and responsibilities to criminal justice. Quot and quantum are the words that recur in the inquisition; the Hotots needed to quantify. Some of the services though fell on the village community as a whole; there is more than one reference to the villatus (B 20) or the communitas villae (B 16, 17, 18), organised to meet its obligations.

Edward I’s land legislation was concerned to protect lordship.73 ‘Because of the machinations of their tenants lords were losing customs and services that properly pertained to the defence of the realm.’ There is not much in the Hotot book about the defence of the realm, only a few pence owed for castle-guard at Belvoir and at Rockingham (A 35; B 16).

70 Cart. Ramsey, i. 49–50: an interesting survey, probably made c 1275, when the manor was acquired by Ramsey Abbey.

71 At Elton, Hunts, a manor of Ramsey Abbey, holders of a full virgate c 1250 owed three days’ work a week and a variety of customary services.


73 T. F. T. Plucknett, Legislation of Edward I (Oxford, 1949); the quotation which follows is from the preamble of the statute Quia Emptores (1290).
But there is a revealing passage under the heading, ‘these men are owed homage in Northamptonshire’ (A 27). It lists eight individuals and then continues: ‘there are others to whom it is owed, but through the passage of time by purchase we have their homage and service freely from their chief lords, by which the said homage is no longer to be done, for the chief member of the homage does only the service owed’. It was the passage of time that was so insidious, and the fragmentation of holdings that went with it. These small lords were lords. They maintained what trappings of lordship they could. They held courts in their halls, and hoped that their neighbours would attend. Thomas Hotot was distrained for services at the courts of Simon de Borhard at Clifton and Simon de Beauchamp at Dilwyk; and in each case established by a fine that the mesne tenant owed the service. In 1268 though he did do homage to Isabella Pauncefort ‘in her hall at Blisworth’. And in 1254 he had done homage to Hugh of Ringstone not in Lincolnshire or Northamptonshire but ‘in London, in the house of the abbot of Peterborough at St Sepulchre’ (A 43). This is a nice reminder that lordship retained its social function. The houses of their lords in London provided for the local gentry somewhere to hang their hat, or rest their feet after a hard day’s shopping.

The London of 1254 was an active centre of political debate, and the abbot of Peterborough’s house was a good place to keep in touch with it. That men like the Hotots did keep in touch is a safe assumption. They had amongst their muniments copies of ‘The Charters’, i.e. of Magna Carta and the Charter of the Forest (A 21, 22). When these texts are seen in monastic cartularies they can easily be taken for granted. But when, seemingly copied out at a monastic house, they are found amongst the records of a minor knightly family, their central position in the political life of the thirteenth century comes over very clearly. What impression is to be gained from the inclusion here of the two letters by which King John made his peace with the papacy in 1213 is less clear (A 23, 24). For Matthew Paris, Richard Hotot’s contemporary (and Richard’s elder brother was abbot of a Benedictine house), this was a charter ‘detested by the whole lay estate’, which showed the humiliation of King John. The Hotots may have asked for them as important historical records; alternatively they may have come in as a make-weight. The relaxation of the Interdict which followed in 1214 was a date no less memorable than that of Magna Carta (A 10). This was a family that liked its history. The stories about the Anglo-Saxons and the list of the kings of France are concluding jottings no less appropriate than the family history which starts off the work (A 44, 46).

\[\text{As an example of this from the Basset records: the Brampton fee was divided between}
\]five parceners. Two only of the five appeared to do homage; the parcels of the other three were taken in hand. BL Sloane MS 31 no 7 rot. 9r.

\[\text{Bedfordshire Fines, nos 564–5.}
\]

\[\text{John of Caux, the abbot at this date, served as an itinerant justice in the 1250s and}
\]became Treasurer in 1260. He was criticised by Matthew Paris as a bad monk, and charac-
\[\text{terised by Professor Tout as insignificant. But the activities which called for such comment}
\]will have made his house an excellent centre for the Hotots and their kind. For references see

\[\text{King, Peterborough Abbey, p. 95 and note 6; The Roll of the Shropshire Eyre of 1256, ed. A.}
\]Harding (Selden Soc. xcvi, 1981), pp. xii–xiii.

\[\text{Chronica Majora, ii (1874), pp. 135, 146; and see C. R. Cheney, Pope Innocent III and}
\]England (Päpste und Papstum, 9; Stuttgart, 1976), pp. 333–5. It may be noted that the
\[\text{reconciliation with the papacy came just after the mustering of John’s army on Barham}
\]Down (A 1 at note 86). ‘The well-informed and vivid author who wrote the “Coventry”
\]chronicle gives an account of the state of tension and expectancy in England’: Cheney, p. 331.
Note on editorial method

MS A was a working document. It was heavily annotated in the 1250s and 1260s, and John Bridges in his turn left his mark on it. The annotations are of different kinds. The first logically are the foot-notes, which were added as the family archive was put in order (and later copied into MS B). These notes, which can be foot-notes or head-notes or marginal notes, but in each case are intended as a commentary on the text, have been printed in italic. There follow changes to the text, particularly in lists of names and rents, which were intended to bring it up to date. Brackets have been used for this material, and distinguish between later additions to the text (shown in round brackets), and deletions in the text (shown in angle brackets, with the original matter shown within the brackets if it is still legible). Thus:

( ) additions to the text
< > deletions in the text

The further emendations to the text are editorial. Matter supplied by the editor is added in square brackets, as is normal practice. Square brackets have been used for Bridges’ headings to MS A, supplied from MS B where the original heading had faded. Bridges’ other annotations, though they have been used above to help establish the text of MS B, have not been printed. The one exception to this stern rule is the pagination, supplied by Bridges in a bold hand which so dwarfs the British Library’s recent foliation of the volume that the editor has reluctantly retained it.

[ editorial matter

A consideration of John Bridges’ treatment of MS A leads to a consideration of his transcription of MS B. What is printed below from MS B is his fair copy of the 1250s enquiry, and not the notes which he made from other parts of the manuscript. Bridges deserves great credit for seeing the importance and interest of the enquiry. But his text is not immaculate. A comparison of the text of MS A with his transcriptions reveals little fault in material such as lists of names and rents. But the enquiry is in parts a more literary text, and it is the more literary parts of the text that cause the difficulty. The stories about members of the Hotot family are material of this kind; they were reproduced in Bridges’ history of the county, and some of them have been quoted in the introduction to this volume. The statement that the passages are quoted ‘in Bridges’ translation’ is made advisedly. A comparison of text and translation in these cases will show that the translation is free, and at times inaccurate. It is clear that Bridges did not always understand his text. There are passages in the text which make no clear sense. The editor has made some obvious emendations, and has indicated a few of the more difficult passages. But he has not harried John Bridges, if only because he is conscious that later historians will be no less aware of his own imperfections.

*See above at notes 22, 50 and 52.*