Chapter 3
Reconstruction of the D volumes

The enterprise known to contemporaries as the 'Survey of the whole of England' produced a vast quantity – many thousands of leaves – of parchmentwork. Most has been lost; but happily three large batches of documentation, all written (so it seems safe to say) in 1086–7, survive in the original. I call them C, D and DB (Table 4). They exemplify three successive stages in the processing of the information collected during the fieldwork phase of the survey. As Galbraith (1942) was first to realize, the presumption is that the report for every county passed, or was at least intended to pass, through the same three stages.

In general appearance, C and D resemble another while DB stands apart. In DB the page-size is nearly twice as large as it is in C and D, and the text is laid out in two columns. Moreover, DB was written by a single scribe throughout,[1] whereas C and D were produced by teams of scribes. In the organization of the contents, on the other hand, it is D and DB which are similar and C which is different. In C the basic unit, normally comprising a booklet by itself, is the lands of an individual tenant, extending over as many as two or three counties;[2] in D and DB the unit is a single county. These facts are enough to indicate that D belongs between C and DB: in some respects it agrees with C against DB, in others with DB against C. To put it briefly, the D text is a rearrangement of the C text, and the DB text is an abridgement of the D text, put into a larger format.

In the previous chapter, I tried to open up a new perspective on the DB booklets by working out the order in which they were written.[3] For the purposes of the present chapter, the sequence does not need to be exactly known. If it can be agreed (as I hope it can) that the order in which the booklets were eventually bound up was very different from their original order, that will be enough. Why the order differs is one of the questions which I hope to answer in this chapter; but my first concern here is with the D booklets, the source from which the DB text was derived. From the evidence of the three surviving booklets, and from the proxy evidence of the C and DB booklets, I begin by trying to form some concrete idea of the size and shape of D. Once that objective has been achieved, with (as it seems to me) an adequate

degree of success, I go on to deal with some consequential questions. In particular, I try to get some grasp on the process by which D and DB evolved, over time, into something quite different from what was originally intended – something which, by around 1180, had begun to be referred to as (this is a joke) the 'Book of Judgment Day'. A sequence of diagrams (Fig. 8) may help the reader to visualize the four-stage model which I propose.[4] If anyone thinks of calling this the cuckoo theory, I shall not take offence.

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The three surviving D booklets cover one county each; and that, surely, must have been the regular policy. Its advantages would have been at least as obvious to the scribes concerned as they are to us. It meant that they could start the booklets in whichever order was most convenient, without worrying what the final order would be; it meant that they could work on two or more booklets in parallel, without having to finish one before the next could be started; and it meant that they could easily make additions, if the need arose, at the end of any booklet. (An example of this occurs in D-Ex, where some detailed information relating to the town of Colchester was added at the end.) I think we may safely assume, by and large, that each county occupied a booklet by itself. One exception to this rule, however, is fairly sure to have been made. It seems clear that Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire were treated as a unit at every stage – in the fieldwork phase, when a single meeting was held for both counties (DB-280va), in DB, where one booklet covers both, and presumably in all the intervening stages as well. In DB, some other pairs of counties share a booklet (YoLi, GlWo, ShCh, DnCo), but there is nothing to suggest that the linkage originated during the fieldwork phase, or at any stage prior to DB itself. My guess would be that these pairings were created by the DB scribe; it will do no harm (as far as I can see) to assume that this guess is right. On that view, D would consist of 32 booklets covering 33 counties – one county in each booklet except for D-NmDy.

The scribes who worked on D were presumably aware that these booklets were all intended to form parts of a single whole. If that can be taken for granted, it can also be assumed that some measure of uniformity was aimed for and

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[1] This statement is almost but not absolutely true (below, note 19).

[2] The organization of C is surprising and calls for some explanation; I deal with that question in chapters 4–5.

[3] I continue to ignore one gathering (fos. 373–82), the contents of which are anomalous (though the format is the same). It is not clear to me what larger purpose the scribe had in mind when he wrote these pages.

[4] It is wrong, no doubt, for the volumes to be shown standing upright: they ought to be flat on their backs. I claim artistic licence.

C   a collection of booklets covering Devon, Cornwall and Somerset (C-DnCoSo = Exeter Cathedral Library 3500, fos. 83–494), together with part of a similar collection covering Wiltshire and Dorset (C-WiDo = fos. 25–62)

D   three booklets covering one county each, Essex (D-Ex = PRO, E 31/1, fos. 1–108), Norfolk (D-Nk = fos. 109–280), and Suffolk (D-Sk = fos. 281–451)

DB   25 booklets covering one or two counties each, 30 counties in total (PRO, E 31/2, fos. 0–372)

Table 4. Surviving original records of the survey.

achieved. In the case of DB, though the basic design was fixed at the start and could not be altered afterwards, a great deal of experimentation occurred while the work was in progress. In many small and some quite large particulars, the scribe kept changing his plan as he went along. (This is what makes it possible to work out a seriation for the DB booklets.) In the case of D, experimentation of this kind is unlikely to have occurred to any significant extent. The surviving D booklets are generally so similar to the surviving C booklets that the scribes can hardly have found much room for variation, even if they thought of looking for it. To a large extent, the C-like design would have been fixed in advance. The size of the page, the ruling, the disposition of the text – features such as these are unlikely to have varied more than slightly between one county and another.

In one respect, however, the D booklets would have varied greatly. Because the quantity of information collected was very much greater for some counties than for others, some booklets must have been very much thicker than others. (Thickness I take to be measured by the number of leaves, or – less accurately but perhaps more palpably – by the number of gatherings.) Without doubt, the thickest booklets were several times as thick as the thinnest ones. Of the three surviving booklets, the thinnest is D-Ex, with 108 leaves, and the thickest (just) is D-Nk, with 172 leaves. The average, for these three, is 150 leaves. If we thought it fair to assume that this average would hold true for all 32 booklets, we might estimate that D as a whole comprised 4800 leaves, more or less. But that seems certain to be an overestimate, because the three survivors are not properly representative. There are many counties which are likely to have generated a thinner booklet than D-Ex, only a few which are likely to have generated a thicker booklet than D-Nk.

It is possible, I think, for thickness to be estimated rather more satisfactorily than that, for the individual booklets, and so for D as a whole. The basic idea is to try to arrive at some estimate of what I propose to call the compression factor – the number of leaves of D corresponding to one leaf of DB (or, equivalently, the number of pages of D corresponding to one page of DB).[5] The DB scribe would have understood this notion (or something equivalent to it). He had to know the current value of the compression factor in order to be able to estimate the sizes of the quires that he would need.

No direct comparison is possible: there is no overlap between D and DB, no county for which both D and DB survive. For three counties, however, we have the opportunity of comparing C and DB, and that offers us a point to start from. The collection of booklets which I call C-DnCoSo comprises 412 leaves: in DB the same three counties occupy 40 leaves, 14 for DB-So plus 26 for DB-DnCo.[6] That gives a compression factor, between C and DB, for these three counties, of 10.3, which, if we have any sense, we will round off without hesitation. Roughly speaking, one page of DB covers as much ground as ten pages of C.

This calculation is easily made, but does not tell us what we really want to know. There are two complications. First, C-DnCoSo is very wasteful of space.[7] There are 75 blank pages here (including 21 leaves which are blank on both sides). By analogy with D-Ex and its companions, it is probable that the D booklets for these three counties would have been less extravagant than C in their consumption of parchment; it is possible also that the number of lines per page would have been increased, from 20 (the usual number in C-DnCoSo) to 24 (the usual number in D-Ex). For these reasons, I would think it safe to assume that the text had already been compressed to a significant extent in passing from C to D, before being compressed again, much more drastically, in passing from D to DB. Correspondingly, the number we want to know, the compression factor between D and DB, would be less than the number we can calculate, the compression factor between C and DB – distinctly less than 10, perhaps as little as 8.

Second, the DB scribe increased the compression factor,

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[5] Stray remarks by Galbraith suggest that in his view the compression factor was something over 10 (Galbraith 1961, p. 32), perhaps as much as 15 (1961, p. 205). These seem to be just guesses, and I feel sure that they err on the high side. Assuming a compression factor of 15 is the same as assuming that D consisted of about 6000 leaves (373 times 15, for the booklets represented by DB, plus 451, for the booklets that survive). At that rate, D-Nk and D-Sk would each represent about one fortieth of the whole, D-Ex about one sixtieth. Since these fractions are plainly too small, the compression factor must have been less than 15 – considerably less, I would say.

[6] In two places, C-DnCoSo's text is interrupted by the loss of a leaf (after fo. 414 and after fo. 421). Collation with DB suggests that six paragraphs have been lost in the first place, one paragraph in the second; so perhaps we should add two or three to the number of leaves in C. It also turns out that there are four chapters in DB-DnCo for which no corresponding C booklet survives. These chapters add up to roughly one page of DB; so perhaps we should deduct half a leaf from the DB total to allow for their existence. (Dividing 415 by 39.5 would give a compression factor of 10.5.) But these adjustments are too small to matter. Above all we want to avoid succumbing to delusions of accuracy.

[7] The reason for that lies in the nature of the compilation process, a topic which I postpone to the following chapter.
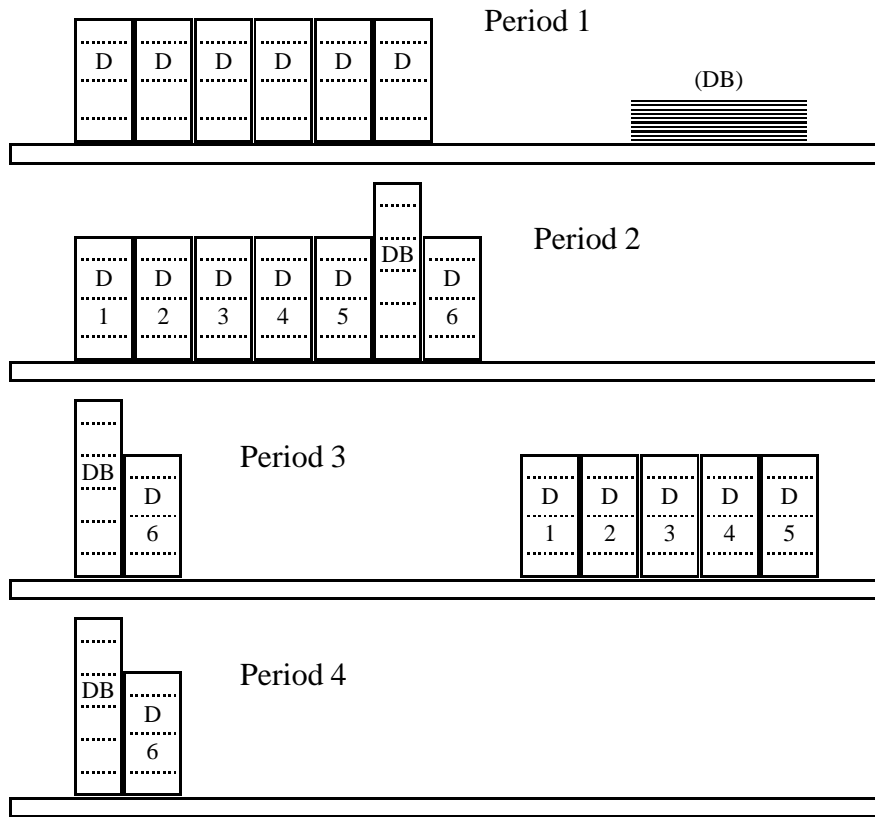
Figure 8. Changing perceptions of the documentation resulting from the survey.

quite deliberately, as his work advanced. That fact has been suspected by previous commentators; when the booklets are restored to the order in which they were written, it becomes instantly obvious. As it happens, the DB booklets which can be compared directly with C, DB-So and DB-DnCo, were the very last booklets to be written. (I doubt whether this is due to chance: there is probably some reason for it.) By this time, the text was being very tightly compressed, with more than 60 lines in each column. In the earliest booklets, by contrast, in DB-YoLi, DB-NmDy and DB-Hu, the text is much more generously spaced out. There are 44 lines per column (less than that, on the earliest leaves of all); blank lines and blank spaces occur quite frequently; the lines being further apart, the script is larger too, with the number of words per line much less than in DB-So and DB-DnCo.[8] All told, the quantity of text per page is barely half as much, in the earliest booklets, as it is in the latest ones; and that difference is (or seems to be) solely due to changes in procedure on the part of the DB scribe.

In consequence, we have to assume that the compression factor increased appreciably (and fairly steadily, it seems) during the compilation of DB. The increase in the number of lines per page, from fewer than 40 to more than 60, is the most obvious sign of this tendency, but not the only one. To measure the trend precisely would involve a vast amount of work, and no one should think of wasting their time on this until the text becomes available (unextended) in electronic form. Provisionally, it seems reasonable to assume a compression factor varying from something like 5 for the earliest booklets to something like 8 for the latest ones. On that basis I arrive at the results listed in Table 5; the three surviving booklets are included there, recognizable by the blanks in columns 3–4.[9] The estimated number of leaves (column 5) is the number of leaves in DB multiplied by the appropriate compression factor; the estimated number of gatherings (column 6) is the estimated number of leaves divided by 8.[10] The D booklets cannot be put into any order which is intrinsically correct, so I list them here alphabetically.

An independent calculation encourages me to think that these estimates, though crude, are not too far from the truth. Working on the records of the survey relating to Kent (which at one time I thought was the only county that I should be dealing with), I tried estimating the compression factor for DB-Ke by assuming that D-Ke bore a fairly

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[8] The degree of abbreviation might also be a factor; but this appears to be fairly uniform, except in the early part of DB-YoLi, where the scribe was still feeling his way.

[9] In setting the value of the compression factor (column 4), I use the same ad hoc classification as in the previous chapter (Table 2). The value is set at 5 for aspect 1, 6 for aspects 2–3, 7 for aspects 4–5, and 8 for aspect 6.

[10] In D-Ex and its companions, most of the gatherings are regular quires of eight, and the rest are larger in some cases, smaller in others. The upshot is that the average size of a gathering is very close to 8.

	booklets in D	leaves in DB	compression factor	leaves in D	quires in D
Bd	Bedfordshire	10	*6*	*60*	*8*
Be	Berkshire	8	*6*	*48*	*6*
Bu	Buckinghamshire	11	*6*	*66*	*8*
Ca	Cambridgeshire	14	*6*	*84*	*11*
Ch	Cheshire	10	*7*	*70*	*9*
Co	Cornwall	6	*8*	*48*	*6*
Dn	Devon	20	*8*	*160*	*20*
Do	Dorset	11	*7*	*77*	*10*
Ex	Essex			*108*	*14*
Gl	Gloucestershire	9	*7*	*63*	*8*
Ha	Hampshire	19	*6*	*114*	*14*
He	Herefordshire	10	*7*	*70*	*9*
Ht	Hertfordshire	11	*6*	*66*	*8*
Hu	Huntingdonshire	6	*5*	*30*	*4*
Ke	Kent	16	*6*	*96*	*12*
Le	Leicestershire	8	*7*	*56*	*7*
Li	Lincolnshire	37	*5*	*185*	*23*
Mx	Middlesex	6	*6*	*36*	*5*
Nk	Norfolk			*172*	*22*
Nn	Northamptonshire	11	*7*	*77*	*10*
NmDy	Nottinghamshire–Derbyshire	25	*5*	*125*	*16*
Ox	Oxfordshire	8	*7*	*56*	*7*
Sh	Shropshire	10	*7*	*70*	*9*
So	Somerset	14	*8*	*112*	*14*
St	Staffordshire	6	*7*	*42*	*5*
Sk	Suffolk			*171*	*21*
Sy	Surrey	7	*6*	*42*	*5*
Sx	Sussex	14	*6*	*84*	*11*
Wa	Warwickshire	8	*7*	*56*	*7*
Wi	Wiltshire	11	*7*	*77*	*10*
Wo	Worcestershire	8	*7*	*56*	*7*
Yo	Yorkshire	39	*5*	*195*	*24*
	totals	373		*2772*	*350*

Table 5. Estimated sizes of the D booklets. (In this and the subsequent tables, all estimated numbers are italicized.)

close resemblance to the surviving D booklets. Taking D-Ex as a proxy for D-Ke, and making myself a proxy for the DB scribe, I chose some specimen entries from the source text and rewrote them as the DB scribe would have done, omitting some categories of information and recasting the rest into the formulas which are normal for DB-Ke. Next I designed a template which, when a deformed copy of DB-Ke was fed into it, would divide the text automatically into columns and pages of roughly the right size; and then I fed the simulated entries into the same template, to see how much space they would take up here, in proportion to the amount of space they take up in D. The results are too subjective to be worth describing in detail, but the conclusion I came to was that rather more than 6 pages of D-Ke, edited and reformatted in this way, would be needed to generate one page of DB-Ke.

To sum up, it seems that we should visualize D, in its unbound state, as a collection of 32 booklets, varying greatly in size, amounting altogether to roughly 2800 leaves (or roughly 350 gatherings). These estimates do not pretend to be exact; but I think they give a fair idea of the relative sizes of the individual booklets, and of the overall size of the collection.[11] Reversing the argument, we can estimate how large DB would have been, if it had been completed (or had survived complete). If the scribe had written booklets for Ex, Nk and Sk, compressing the text of D to the same degree as he did for the adjoining counties (except Hu), our estimate is that these booklets would have consisted of 18, 29 and 29 leaves respectively, making 76 extra leaves. In its

[11] My guess would be that these estimates are on the low side. Increasing every compression factor by 0.5 would increase the total to 2964 leaves (369 gatherings), and possibly that may be closer to the mark. At least in round numbers, I think we would be safe in saying that D consisted of roughly 3000 leaves: it seems certain that 4000 would be an overestimate, since that would imply an average compression factor of 9.5, and more or less equally certain that 2000 would be an underestimate, since that would imply an average compression factor of 4.2.

finished state, therefore, DB would have had roughly 450 leaves.

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Three of the booklets belonging to the D collection were put together and bound up to make a book. We know this because the book survives, in the shape of D-ExNkSk. The survival of this volume is sure to be linked, somehow or other, with the fact that these three counties are absent from DB. Given these facts, the presumption is that the other booklets were also bound, at the same time, into volumes resembling D-ExNkSk, and that the failure of these volumes to survive is somehow linked with the fact that the counties they covered are present in DB.

Suppose for the sake of argument that this is true. The D booklets were divided up into batches of suitable size, and the batches were then each put into order and sent off to be bound. One of the resulting volumes survives; the rest have all been lost. Can we find, in DB, in the arrangement eventually imposed on this collection of booklets,[12] any trace of the existence of such volume-sized batches of D booklets? There is no particular reason why we ought to be able to do so, but we might be able to do so, if the circumstances were favourable.

The surviving volume, if it was represented in DB, would be represented by a sequence of booklets adding up to roughly 70–80 leaves (possibly more or less than that, depending on the compression factor); so the blocks that we are looking for are blocks of that sort of size.[13] One is instantly obvious: its beginning is marked by a jump from Cornwall to Middlesex, its end by a jump from Herefordshire to Cambridgeshire. This block consists of six booklets, starting with DB-Mx and finishing with DB-He, adding up to 63 leaves. The corresponding volume of D would (hypothetically) consist of 413 leaves, a little less than D-ExNkSk. To the south (so to speak) of this first block there are nine DB booklets covering ten counties. If we split them down the middle, between Berkshire and Wiltshire, we have blocks consisting of 64 leaves and 62 leaves respectively; the D volumes would not be so nearly equal, however, because the compression factor is greater for one than the other. To the north of the first block there are ten DB booklets covering 13 counties. They add up to 184 leaves, and the corresponding booklets of D add up to 1050 leaves; so it seems that we should be looking for

two rather large blocks.[14] A slight jump, from Cheshire to Nottinghamshire, can be taken to mark the dividing line between them. The blocks then consist of 83 and 101 leaves respectively; because the compression factor is relatively low, the D volume corresponding to the latter block would be rather the thinner of the two. That gives us a reconstruction of D bound in six volumes, as set out in Table 6. If it were our sole purpose to equalize the size of the volumes, regardless of which counties go with which, we could do a very much better job of it than this. If we want the arrangement to make some geographical sense, however, we have to be prepared to compromise; and that means that we have to let the volumes vary in size.

What we are doing here amounts to reenacting the decisions which had to be made by the man who prepared the D booklets for the binder. Before he started, he could see how large the entire collection was; he had a rough idea how large a volume could be before it became too large; and on that basis he set about sorting the booklets into a suitable number of stacks of suitable size, making it a rule that the counties which would share a volume should be geographically connected (i.e. that each should be contiguous with at least one of the others). By trial and error, he worked out a satisfactory arrangement – not necessarily the best possible arrangement (whatever that might mean), but one which seemed good enough to him – and the stacks of booklets were then sent off to be bound.[15] There is (as far as I can see) no more to it than that. The arrangement originated at this time, for this practical purpose; except accidentally, it did not coincide with any division that may have existed at an earlier stage.

Five of the six original volumes are lost, except to the extent that they have left their ghostly outlines in the arrangement of DB. (For this to be true, there must have been some reason for its being true. I return to this point in due course.) One survives, in the shape of D-ExNkSk, and there is no reason not to suppose that this volume was typical of the whole set. In each case, once the booklets had been assembled into their intended sequence, somebody added a colophon, written in red capitals, at the end of what was to be the final booklet. It consisted of one monumental sentence:

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[12] When they were bound, the DB booklets were frozen into the following sequence: Ke, Sx, Sy, Ha, Be, Wi, Do, So, DnCo, Mx, Ht, Bu, Ox, GlWo, He, Ca, Hu, Bd, Nn, Le, Wa, St, ShCh, Dy (= NmDy quire 3), Nm (= NmDy quires 1–2), YoLi.

[13] We cannot assume that the surviving volume was roughly of average size: for all we know, it may have been either the thickest or the thinnest of the set. Nevertheless, from the fact that the binder included all three of these booklets, not just two of them, it does seem fair to infer that a volume of around 300 leaves was thought to be too thin, and that a volume of around 450 leaves was not thought to be too thick.

[14] The only alternative would be to look for three rather small blocks. Yo and Li would form one; the remaining booklets would have to form two blocks, but we should have no clue (so far as I can see) where to make the split between them. Wherever we make it, however, the thinner volume will not have more than 307 leaves, and that, we may suspect, would not have been thought thick enough.

[15] If the binder had been asked for his advice, perhaps he might have suggested making eight volumes of about 350 leaves each. One volume would consist of Nk and Sk; Yo and Li would make a second, rather thicker, volume; Co, Dn and So would make a third, rather thinner, volume; without much trouble the remaining booklets could be arranged into five more volumes of similar size, each containing a group of contiguous counties. But that is not what happened. It was decided, we know, to include the Ex booklet in the same volume as Nk and Sk. It seems that the man in charge wanted the bound volumes to be as thick and heavy as the binder could make them: he wanted them to look impressive.

volumes of D	leaves in DB	booklets in D	leaves in D	quires in D
ExNkSk		*3*	*451*	*57*
MxHtBuOxGlWoHe	63	*7*	*413*	*52*
KeSxSyHaBe	64	*5*	*384*	*48*
WiDoSoDnCo	62	*5*	*474*	*60*
NmDyYoLi	101	*3*	*505*	*63*
CaHuBdNnLeWaStShCh	83	*9*	*545*	*70*
totals	373	*32*	*2772*	*350*

Table 6. The bound volumes of D reconstructed.

ANNO MILLESIMO OCTOGESIMO SEXTO AB INCAR-
NATIONE DOMINI, VIGESIMO VERO REGNI WILLELMI,
FACTA EST ISTA DESCRIPTIO, NON SOLVM PER HOS
… COMITATVS SED ETIAM PER ALIOS.

Presumably this was the very last thing that was done be-
fore the batch of booklets in question was delivered to the
binder. In the case of D-ExNkSk, the colophon appears at
the end of the Sk booklet: the scribe who wrote it (not one
of the scribes who had participated in the writing of these
booklets) supplied the number of counties appropriate to
this volume, which is TRES (in the other volumes it would
vary from QVATTVOR to NOVEM). The man who com-
posed this sentence, and who wrote it or had it written into
every volume of D, was addressing himself to posterity.[16]
He assumed that D would be kept for all time.

In that light, it seems fairly certain that these words were
written while the king was still alive. If the scribe had been
writing after September 1087, he would (we may think)
have wanted to make it clear to future generations that the
king of whom he spoke was Willelm I, not Willelm II; his
silence suggests that it had not yet became necessary for
that distinction to be made. For that reason, and in the ab-
sence of any evidence to the contrary, I think we may as-
sume that the six volumes were put together and bound dur-
ing the lifetime of Willelm I. (It is highly unlikely that the
king ever saw them, however.) They had already become
a book (there was nothing unfamiliar about the notion that
a single book might consist of multiple volumes); the word
liber was already appropriate, if anyone chose to use it.

There was no particular reason, during period 1 (which be-
gins when D is bound), for the volumes to be kept in any
definite sequence. The few people who ever had access to
them would have learnt to recognize them by their individ-
ual properties – by small differences in size and shape or
colour and texture, and by other accidental features. It was
necessary for them to know which counties were in which
volume, and to be able to tell at a glance which volume was
which; but that is all. Up to a point, the shelved volumes
would keep themselves in order. When a volume was bor-

rowed, it would leave a space on the shelf; when a volume
was returned, it would be put into a space on the shelf; and
normally that space would be the same space. But acciden-
tal transpositions could easily occur – would be quite likely
to occur, for instance, if two volumes had been borrowed at
the same time.[17] Furthermore, even if the sequence stayed
the same, the sense of it would be ambiguous, depending
on whether one ran one's eye along the shelf from left to
right or from right to left. What looked like the first volume
to one person might look like the last volume to somebody
else, and vice versa.[18] At this stage, there was no right order
– no order which was uniquely better than any alternative
order, no order which would need to be restored if it ever
got disrupted. There was only the order existing at a given
moment, objective so far as it was represented by the se-
quence of volumes on the shelf, subjective so far as one had
to choose which end of the sequence to start from. Eventu-
ally (as will appear) it did become necessary for the order
of the volumes to be settled, but that was not true at first.

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Having followed the history of the D booklets through to
the moment when they were bound and shelved, we need to
track back. Perhaps as soon as the first finished D booklets
began coming off the assembly line, somebody set about
composing an edited and somewhat shortened version of
the survey, using a format which would allow the whole text
to be contained in a single volume. His work survives in
the shape of the DB booklets, which each correspond with
one or two D booklets. The entire manuscript, every line
of it, was written by this one man.[19] His intention was (so

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[16] ((But posterity has sometimes managed to misunderstand him. Perhaps
he ought to have said HAEC instead of ISTA and CAETEROS instead of
ALIOS. Nevertheless, his meaning is plain enough.))

[17] Unless the volumes were chained in place; and I am not suggesting that.

[18] In fact, it does seem possible that the order got reversed. The DB scribe,
we may guess, would have regarded D-NmDyYoLi as the first volume, not
the last, and D-WiDoSoDnCo as the last volume, not the second.

[19] Except for one four-line entry, almost but not quite at the end of DB-Be
(63vb42–5), sandwiched between entries written by the DB scribe. The
fact that this entry was written by somebody else was first pointed out by
Gullick (1987, p. 103). There is, I think, no doubt but that Gullick was
right: compare *rege* here with *rege* three lines above and four lines below;
note also the *F*, the sign for *-us* after *b*, and the 7-shaped sign for *et*. The
wording is incongruous too. For instance, where this scribe has written *Ibi
i car' in d'nio*, the DB scribe would have written *In d'nio e' i car'*. This
entry proves the existence of a second scribe, active while the DB scribe

I suppose) that the finished volume, suitably bound, should be presented to the king. The purpose of his task, as he understood it, was to put the results of the survey into a portable form, so that the king and his household officials could consult them, whenever they needed to do so.

That intention failed to be achieved. The collection of DB booklets shows some obvious signs of not having been completed to the scribe's satisfaction. In DB-Do the last entry breaks off unfinished (85ra), perhaps because the scribe was unhappy with what he had written and intended to erase some part of it before trying again. In several booklets, entries inserted as afterthoughts were left unrubricated. In DB-Mx there is no description of London, though there is blank space which looks as if it may have been reserved for that purpose; the same is true for DB-Ha, which lacks a description of Winchester but has the space for it.[20] From indications such as these, it seems clear that the scribe, for one reason or another, ceased work before reaching his objective. These facts are well known, and it is, I think, fairly generally agreed what explanation is the likeliest – that the work was interrupted by the death of the king (more precisely, by the arrival of the news of his death). But that is not the only possibility. The scribe may have been promoted; he may have been dismissed; or perhaps it was he who died.

In any case, it is not enough to explain why the work stopped; we need also to explain why it never started again. Even if the original scribe was no longer available, the task could have been finished by somebody else. At any stage, if the incentive had existed, DB could have been continued and brought to completion. (The missing rubrication could be added tomorrow, if this was thought to be a sensible idea.) Given time to familiarize himself with the DB scribe's way of working, as it was exemplified by the existing booklets, a good scribe could have done the job well; a mediocre scribe could have done it after a fashion.[21] If the new king had ordered the job to be done, somebody could have done it. But nobody ever did. Perhaps the new king was never asked whether he wanted DB to be completed; perhaps he was asked and said no. Nevertheless, the booklets were kept, because there was no particular reason for throwing them away. The DB scribe's friends and colleagues – and anyone who could appreciate how much work had been invested in them – would feel reluctant to discard them; besides, the king might possibly change his mind. So inertia prevailed, and the DB booklets survived.

Perhaps there was never a time when they were neglected.[22] In Gullick's view, hundreds of alterations have been made in DB which are not the work of the DB scribe himself. Almost all of them (but not the two mentioned in the following paragraph) are thought by him to have been made by a single corrector. I am not sure how far to rely on that. There are only thirteen places where the corrections amount to six words or more (Gullick 1987, p. 103), and of these only two where they amount to two lines or more. (There is also a four-line entry in column 63vb (above, note 19), integral with the text, which Gullick is inclined to attribute to the same scribe.) Whether there is enough evidence here to characterize an individual hand seems (to me) doubtful;[23] but I do not think it intrinsically unlikely that the work was nearly all done by just one man. The presumption is that at any given moment only one or two people would have been in a position to make corrections and additions in DB; and in these circumstances a single hard-working or long-lived clerk might make the sort of impression on the text which Gullick believes his correcting scribe to have made.

However many scribes are involved, the importance of these corrections lies in the fact that they imply the existence of some parallel record which was considered to be more reliable than DB. This is not true for every single one of them. In column 37vb, for instance, somebody has erased and rewritten three names in the index of tenants for Hampshire;[24] but that alteration could have been made, and probably was made, to bring the index into line with the main text. The scribe concerned did not need to refer to any other source, only to DB itself. In column 121ra, on the other hand, where somebody (somebody else) has erased and rewritten half a line of text – *Ibi est una hida quę nunquam geld'* (DB-Co-121ra) – he must have got his information from somewhere; and he must have thought that it was more to be trusted than whatever the DB scribe had written here.[25] (He must also have thought that it served some useful purpose to make corrections in DB.) We can be sure that there was a time when the clerks who had access to DB had access to D as well; we can be sure that there was a

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was active; but I do not think it can be said to prove that the two of them were working in partnership. On the contrary, it was obviously the DB scribe's intention that he should write the whole manuscript himself; and I would guess that he was extremely annoyed when he discovered (as he did) that somebody else had added an entry while his back was turned.

[20] The suggestion that space was left for accounts of London and Winchester – which, however, failed to be supplied – seems first to have been made by Maitland (1897, p. 178).

[21] As is proved by the evidence cited in note 19. It cannot be said that the main scribe was 'irreplaceable' (Chaplais 1987, p. 77), only that in the event he was not replaced.

[22] ((I have rearranged and revised the following paragraphs in the light of some detailed comments from Caroline Thorn (for which I am very grateful), and also in the light of my reading of Thorn and Thorn (2001). But the gist remains the same.))

[23] ((Caroline Thorn assures me that the hand is very distinctive and instantly recognizable in the original. (She asks me to point out that the passage reproduced as Thorn and Thorn (2001, ill. 22) is the work of the main scribe: it is not the passage which she was intending to show here.) Though I am willing to be convinced, I am not sure of anything yet except that the passages in question are not the DB scribe's work. It is not obvious to me that the hand which wrote the intrusive paragraph in DB-Be (Gullick 1987, fig. 14.11 (b)) is the same as the hand which made some additions in DB-Ca (Thorn and Thorn 2001, ill. 23, Gullick 1987, fig. 14.11 (c)) or as the hand or hands which inserted words and phrases between the lines in DB-Ke (Thorn and Thorn 2001, ill. 28), DB-Wi (ill. 25) and elsewhere.))

[24] ((This correction is reproduced by Thorn and Thorn (2001, ill. 12).))

[25] As was noted by Thorn and Thorn (1979), this fact is not reported in C-DnCoSo; so we can rule out the possibility that it might have come from there. That the hand is not the DB scribe's was pointed out by Gullick (1987, p. 104). ((This correction too is reproduced by Thorn and Thorn (2001, ill. 13).))

time when D was considered more authoritative than DB; so we have a ready-made explanation for these corrections. They are the work of scribes who were altering DB to bring it into line with D.

The evidence is hard to interpret, however, because we cannot repeat the comparison for ourselves. Nowhere is it possible for us to draw up a list of the discrepancies between D and DB, checking to see how many were put right (by the DB scribe or by a subsequent corrector) and how many were left uncorrected. In counties where some independent evidence exists (i.e. evidence which is approximately contemporary with but not derived from DB), we may be able to identify some defects in the DB text – in Kent, for instance, an important manor belonging to the archbishop is missing[26] – but we cannot be sure whose fault they were: they may have been inherited by DB from D (and possibly by D from C).

To some extent, perhaps to a large extent, we are dealing with spot corrections.[27] The scribe concerned was not looking for mistakes: he just happened to come across one. For some reason of his own, he found himself comparing an entry in D with the corresponding entry in DB. Doing this, he noticed a discrepancy; having noticed it, he decided to put it right. In these circumstances, a conscientious scribe might think that he ought to look of some of the surrounding entries, to see whether similar discrepancies existed there; and thus he might be led into making a series of corrections, until he stopped finding mistakes or lost interest. Small spurts of activity, each prompted by the accidental discovery of some error in DB, might add up over time to produce the observable result.

At least it is clear that there ensued some period of time, after the departure of the DB scribe, during which D and DB continued being compared with one another. Sometimes it happened that somebody had both of them in front of him, each open to the same entry. Sometimes a discrepancy was noticed; and sometimes (perhaps not every time) a correction was made in DB – in DB, not in D, because D was assumed to be right. But what would be the point of making sporadic corrections in a manuscript which had never even been finished?

The explanation is, I think, that an unintended use had been discovered for the DB booklets. Those clerks who had access to the volumes of D and were sometimes required to consult them began to use DB as a finding aid. It is obvious enough why this would be a good idea. First, the DB text is more compact: by scanning a single page of DB, one saves oneself the trouble of turning over several leaves in

D. Second, the DB scribe had done his best to make things easier for his readers, using capital letters and red ink to accentuate the key words. He had put a great deal of thought and effort into this. The clerks who discovered this new use for DB were not the readers whom he had been expecting to have – but they were the ones who benefited. From time to time, they were told to find out what D might have to say about some topic; and what they did was to search for the information in DB first, where it would be relatively easy to find, and then turn to the corresponding section of D. If there was some discrepancy, the clerk concerned might see it; and then he might think of making the appropriate adjustment in DB, so that the error did not cause confusion in the future. In short, he would have both the opportunity and the motive for making a correction in DB.

Once it began to be a habit for D and DB to be used together in this way, it would become important for the sequence of counties to be made the same and kept the same in both. Whatever order the volumes of D were arranged in at this moment became the permanent order. It is not likely that the volumes were actually numbered; but we are now free to number them ourselves, if we wish, without anachronism (Table 7).[28] From this moment onwards, that order had to be preserved. As much as before, it was constantly at risk of becoming disrupted. If that happened now, however, somebody would notice, click his teeth, and put things right again. Correspondingly, this is when the DB booklets acquired their present order. As I understand it, the order was dictated by the preexisting order of the D booklets: within each volume, the order that had become fixed when the D booklets were bound; between volumes, the accidental order into which by this time the D volumes had got themselves arranged. On that basis the DB booklets were sorted into order and then sent off to be bound.[29] When DB came back from the bindery, it was put on the shelf in some convenient place, so that it could be used alongside D. Period 2 begins at this moment.[30]

That was the plan; but the plan was not executed fully. One of the D volumes – the one that we have called D6 – was not included in the scheme. In the long run, the consequence was that this volume survived while the other five did not,

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[26] The manor in question is Teynham, described in a contemporary account of the archbishop's lands (below, p. 111).

[27] ((Two more spot corrections are reproduced by Thorn and Thorn (2001, ills. 14–15), each, they think, the work of a scribe who occurs only once. I am not sure that the second (DB-Le-235ra) might not be by the same hand which made some additions in DB-Ca (above, note 23), but the first (DB-Co-121rb) is very distinctive.))

[28] The numbering is arbitrary, however, in one respect. Rather than putting D-ExNkSk at the end, we might put it at the beginning.

[29] With regard to D-NmDy, it is possible that the beginning of the Dy text coincided with the beginning of a new quire in D, as it does in DB. In other words, it is possible that the transposition of these two counties (above, note 12) originated with the man who arranged the D booklets for the binder, not with the man who did the same for the DB booklets. He, on this view, would have had no choice but to perpetuate the error (short of having the D volume taken apart and rebound). I see no way of deciding whether this was so or not.

[30] For this argument to hold, it has to be permissible to think that the first-ever binding of DB occurred at a different and somewhat later date than the first-ever binding of D-ExNkSk. Traces of the original bindings are slight (Gullick 1987, pp. 107, 111), but it seems fair to say that there are some technical differences, as well as some similarities. The crucial fact is the obvious one – the absence from DB of a colophon matching the one that occurs at the end of D-ExNkSk.

	volumes	booklets	leaves	quires
D1	KeSxSyHaBe	*5*	*384*	*48*
D2	WiDoSoDnCo	*5*	*474*	*60*
D3	MxHtBuOxGlWoHe	*7*	*413*	*52*
D4	CaHuBdNnLeWaStShCh	*9*	*545*	*70*
D5	NmDyYoLi	*3*	*505*	*63*
D6	ExNkSk	3	451	57
	totals	*32*	*2772*	*350*

Table 7. The bound volumes of D put into the sequence which determined the binding sequence for the DB booklets.

and we have to be thankful for that. But we still have to ask how it came about that D6 began to be treated as a special case, and there is no easy answer to that question.

At the moment when the DB booklets were being prepared for the binder, it was, apparently, impossible to include a sequence of booklets corresponding with D6. It would have been done if it could have been done, we can feel sure enough of that; so the fact that it was not done implies that it could not be done. Beyond that point, we find ourselves lost in a forest of possibilities, with no means of deciding whether one possibility is likelier than another. At one extreme, it is possible that the three missing booklets never existed: we know that the DB scribe fell short of his target, and the absence of booklets for these three counties may be one more sign of that. Perhaps he desisted, when he did, without having started any one of these booklets. At the opposite extreme, it is possible that the booklets were written, as completely as any of the others, but that later these three became separated from the rest (circumstances in which that might have happened are easy enough to imagine) and could not be retrieved when they were needed. Those are the extremes. A middling possibility might look something like this: the DB scribe wrote a complete booklet for Norfolk, half of a booklet for Suffolk (this being the point at which he stopped work), nothing at all for Essex. Then, when the time for binding the booklets arrived, the man responsible decided to restrict himself to the first five volumes of D and leave D6 alone: unable to deal with it completely, he preferred not to deal with it at all. And so we might go on, thinking of new possibilities, yet never knowing whether we are getting closer to the truth or not. The danger is that we may latch onto one explanation, assume it to be the right one (in spite of there being any number of alternative explanations which would fit the facts equally well), and build larger conclusions on top of it. In the end, it is hard to be sure of anything, except that D6 did begin to be treated differently from the other volumes, and that this happened no later than the time when the DB booklets (those that survive) were bound.

Sooner or later, D ceased to be consulted. The clerks were allowed, or allowed themselves, to simplify the process. With the passage of time (and perhaps with a turnover of personnel), it came to be understood that the information wanted could always be found in DB, if it could be found at all, and that the information which was only to be found in D (because it had been omitted by the DB scribe) no longer had any value. So the clerks started using DB by itself, not as a guide to D but as a primary source; and this was the beginning of period 3. Figuratively at least, we may think of the five redundant volumes as having been pushed to the far end of the shelf. By this stage they had practically ceased to exist; but some further length of time may have had to elapse before (so to speak) they fell off the end of the shelf, and were finally discarded or destroyed. Period 4 began at that moment.[31]

Once DB and D6 became mutually juxtaposed and separated from the other volumes of D, a new book came into existence, consisting of an oddly mismatched pair of volumes. Seen in this new setting, DB looks much the more impressive of the two. It is bigger; it is better-looking; and it covers thirty counties while the small volume covers only three. By now, DB is the authoritative text. Five D volumes have been ousted, and the sixth has been reduced to the status of an appendix. The cuckoo has taken charge.

4

In outline, I think, this scenario is evidently right. The only question which seems doubtful to me is what time-scale ought to be envisaged.[32] Was the whole sequence of events completed in a matter of months, as conceivably it might have been? Or was it drawn out over several decades, as I am inclined to suppose?

The only large block of text inserted into DB by a later hand (an early twelfth-century hand) is a list of certain lands in Yorkshire. It carries the title: 'Here is the feod of Rotbert de Bruis, which was given after the book of Winchester was

[31] And lasted until 1985. A new period began in 1986, when DB and D6 were rebound respectively as two and three volumes.

[32] Unexpectedly, a few remarks by Galbraith hint at a protracted time-scale. Even after the compilation of DB, 'it was only slowly that men forgot the local returns [the D texts], and that the summary in Vol. I [DB] … acquired its later prestige' (Galbraith 1961, p. 185). It is not certain when the D texts ceased to exist, only probable that they had disappeared 'by the end of the twelfth century' (p. 210).

written'.[33] Among historians, this has traditionally been read as a reference to DB itself, but nobody reading the sentence for the first time would read it in that way: it sounds like a reference to some other book. If the man who wrote these words had meant this book (the book which you are holding at this moment), he would presumably have said precisely that – *hic liber* or *iste liber*. By naming it, he seems to imply that he is speaking of some other book; and that suggests that the 'Winchester book' was D, not DB. But that conclusion could easily be argued away. It is possible, for instance, that this block of text originated as a separate schedule, and was only afterwards copied into DB; and in that case the 'Winchester book' might be DB, though it also still might be D. Since the name did not become current, there seems to be little point in arguing over the significance of one ambiguous item of evidence. The crucial question is whether a copy of the same text was included in D5 as well; since we have no hope of answering that question, we do best to say as little as possible.

Outside DB, two lines of investigation are open to us. There are, first, a few well-known allusions to D or DB in documents dating from the time of Willelm II and Henric I. From the abbey of Abingdon, for instance, a copy survives of a notification by queen Mathildis, addressed to the bishop of Lincoln and the sheriff and barons of Oxfordshire, reporting the judgment arrived at in a case concerning the abbey's manor of Lewknor.[34] The assembly which tried the case was what would later have been described as the court of the Exchequer, but that word is not used here. As the queen describes it, the case was heard 'at Winchester in the treasury' (*apud Wintoniam in thesauro*); in the absence of the king overseas (not stated but certainly implied), the court is 'my lord's and mine' (*curia domini mei et mea*). The abbot, she says, has proved his claim by appealing to 'the book of the treasury' (*per librum de thesauro*) – by that means alone, apparently. This evidence seems sufficient to prove that there was a book available in Winchester which a litigant might ask to have consulted, in the expectation that any information found in the book would be accepted by the court as decisive. But a casual allusion like this one cannot be expected to answer the question which for present purposes is crucial: was the book D3 or DB?[35]

The second line of investigation concerns the numerous derivative texts which were made for the use of one particular church.[36] At Canterbury, for instance, some edited extracts from DB occur at a very early date, in a manuscript compiled (I think) from a batch of documents which had come into the monks' possession after the death of archbishop Lanfranc in May 1089.[37] There are four of these extracts; I print the last and longest of them (Table 8), so that readers can make the comparison. It is tolerably certain that the extracts came from DB and not from D, because the same passages appear in a longer and less well-organized form in the text which I call xAug – the excerpts made for the monks of Saint Augustine's.[38] Thus we can see how the wording was altered by the DB scribe, and then altered further by the scribe who copied these passages for the archbishop. (He was not particularly interested in Saint Augustine's affairs, still less in Saint Martin's of Dover's.) This evidence seems to prove that it was possible for an outsider, if he had the right connections, to gain access to some of the records kept in Winchester, and to copy out the excerpts that he needed. Without knowing the circumstances, however, we cannot say how it was decided – by whom and for what reason – that the archbishop's scribe should be given DB to work with, rather than D1.

As these examples indicate, neither line of investigation is sure to lead to any firm conclusions. There are too many unknown variables. In favourable circumstances, by close analysis, it may be possible to detect some useful indication – some hint how far DB had advanced along the shelf, at the moment captured by some dated document, or by some collection of excerpts made for an outsider. But I cannot say that I am sanguine about our prospects. Moreover, we run a risk – the risk of becoming distracted from the main issue by peripheral doubts which we cannot hope to resolve.

5

One other well-known item of evidence leads to a more definite conclusion. The tract 'Concerning the proper procedure of the Exchequer' supplies a detailed account of the financial business for which this institution was responsible. (References throughout this section are to Johnson's (1950) edition.) Written by somebody who had participated in the Exchequer's proceedings over many years, the tract takes the form of a dialogue between two dummy interlocutors, Master and Pupil. The authorship is attributed (reliably, it seems) to the man who served as treasurer during almost the whole of the reign of Henric II, Ricard the son of bishop Nigel of Ely.[39] Invaluable though it is, this

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[33] *Hic est feudum Rotberti de Bruis quod fuit datum postquam liber de Wintonia scriptus fuit* (DB-332va).

[34] *Historia monasterii de Abingdon,* ed. Stevenson 1858, vol. 2, pp. 116–17. The chronicler supplies some explanatory remarks (pp. 115–16), but these may largely have been deduced from the document.

[35] There may even be a third possibility. If the information needed on this occasion was (as I suppose it was) the number of hides for which Lewknor ought to answer, an epitome of D or DB might have sufficed. Sooner or later, such epitomes were certainly made. The question is: how soon?

[36] ((This paragraph has been revised. At the time when I wrote it, I was assuming, provisionally, that xAug was derived from D-Ke. But that is not true. Having gained some useful experience in dealing with the Ely texts (chapters 8–9), I now think it possible to prove that the source text for xAug was B-Ke. Nevertheless, it can still be argued that the extracts under discussion came from DB, not from D, if we are willing to assume that the passages were copied more or less verbatim from B into C into D, and not edited drastically except by the DB scribe. This seems to me a fair assumption to make, as long as one is frank about it.))

[37] Canterbury Cathedral Library Lit. E 28, published in facsimile by Douglas (1944). I have more to say about this manuscript later (below, p. 111).

[38] PRO, E 164/27, fos. 17r–25r, printed by Ballard (1920). I have more to say about xAug later too (below, p. 123).

[39] Bishop Nigel (who died in 1169) had served as treasurer under Henric I.

xAug / PRO E 164/27, fo. 18v	DB-Ke-2ra	Lit. E 28, fo. 5va
Et si extranei mercatores ueniebant in ciuitate et accipiebant hospicium in terra sc'e trinitatis uel sc'i augustini tunc habebant … sui prepositi. Sed fuit quidem prepositus nomine Brimannus qui per totam terram ciuitatis accepit omnes consuetudines et teloneum iniuste de quo fecerunt monachi clamorem regi Will'o qui precepit ut inde fuisset … ante ep'm baiocens' et ante Hugonem de mundfort et comitem ow et ricardum filium giseiberti qui eum iurare fecerunt ut de hac re uerum diceret quibus post iusiurandum dixit quod uerum toloneum habebat acceptum per totam ciuitatem sed iniuste de terra Sc'e trinitatis uel Sc'i augustini …	Quidam prepositus Brumannus nomine T.R.E. cepit consuetudines de extraneis mercatoribus in terra S' TRINITATIS et S' Augustini. Qui postea T.R.W. ante archiep'm Lanfranc' et ep'm baiocensem recognouit se iniuste accepisse, et sacramento facto iurauit quod ipsę eccl'ę suas consuetudines quietas habuer' R.E. tempore. Et exinde utreque eccl'ę in sua terra habuer' consuetud' suas, iudicio baronum regis qui placitum tenuer'.	Quidam prępositus bruman nomine, tempore E. regis cępit consuetudines de extraneis mercatoribus in terra sc'ę trinitatis. Qui postea tempore regis W. ante L. archiep'm et ep'm baiocensem recognouit se iniuste eas accepisse, et sacramento iurauit, quod ipsa ęcclesia suas consuetudines quietas habere debeat a diebus antiquis. Et exinde in terra sua quietas habet ipsa ęccl'ia consuetudines suas iudicio baronum regis, qui placitum tenuerunt.

Table 8. Three versions of a passage from the survey of Kent. (The ellipses in the first column denote places where at least one word has apparently been omitted.)

tract is in many ways a puzzling piece of work. We do not know why or when exactly it was written; I do not think we understand what motive Ricard had for placing this imaginary conversation in a particular year – the twenty-third year (1177) of the reign of Henric II. Despite these uncertainties, it seems that Ricard is giving us a straightforward description of the Exchequer machinery as it existed in the late 1170s, by and large ignoring any changes (there were certainly some) which happened after that date.[40]

To understand the system of administration within which the records of the survey found a niche, we need to start by looking at the work of the king's treasury in Winchester – more particularly at the work of the Receipt, the Treasury's front office. Ricard's dialogue, when it gets down to detail, begins by explaining what this office did (pp. 8–13). The Receipt was open for business all year round, but most of the time its function was to issue money, not receive it. On this subject Ricard has little to say, but the basic procedure is clear. Somebody possessing the right sort of voucher – a writ of *Liberate*, properly worded and sealed with the king's seal – presented himself at the Receipt, gained admission from the Usher, and delivered his writ to the officials who had day-to-day charge of the department, the Treasurer's Clerk and the two Deputy Chamberlains. All being well, one of the Tellers would be instructed to count out the sum of money specified in the writ. The payee departed with his cash, tipping the Usher two pence on his way out (the only employee he would not have had a chance to meet was the Nightwatchman); and the writ was retained by the Receipt,

to be produced when the Treasury was audited.[41]

Twice a year, however, at Easter and Michaelmas, when the Exchequer met, the Receipt performed the function from which it derived its name. These were the occasions when cash was paid into the Treasury, by sheriffs and other people who had been summoned to appear before the Barons of the Exchequer, and the Receipt was the downstairs office where these payments had to be made. (In the Exchequer itself no money ever changed hands: that would have been utterly improper.) All the same staff were present (including the Nightwatchman). The Usher kept the door, admitting one sheriff (or his agent) at a time. A sample of the money which this sheriff had brought with him was weighed, to make sure that it was of acceptable quality;[42] then the Tellers (of whom on these occasions there were four) counted it, penny by penny. When the count had been completed to their satisfaction, the Deputy Chamberlains had a tally cut. They gave half of it to the sheriff, as his proof that the payment had been made, and retained the countertally (which would be sent upstairs to the Exchequer and reunited with the tally a few days later). At the same time the Treasurer's Clerk recorded the amount in writing (in a roll which would likewise be sent upstairs and consulted a few days later); he also inscribed the corresponding tally. While the Exchequer was in session, the Receipt might have to issue cash as well, against writs of *Liberate* authorized by the Justiciar (p. 32); but its chief function, during these periods, was to supply the Exchequer with the information that it needed to audit incoming payments.[43]

Ricard took office no later than 1160; he was promoted to the bishopric of London in 1189 and died in 1198, retaining the treasurership till within a few months of his death (Richardson 1928, pp. 162–4).

[40] At one point (pp. 51–2), the author forgets (or lets himself forget) that this conversation is supposed to be taking place in 1177 and makes Master tell Pupil about something which happened in the following year; so the tract must be later than 1178. The prologue, where the author speaks in his own persona, is addressed to Henric II (who died in 1189).

[41] Very little is known about these general audits of the Treasury, which did not fall within the scope of Ricard's tract. He refers to them twice incidentally (pp. 24–5, 32).

[42] In some circumstances it was also necessary for a sample to be assayed; but that need not concern us here.

[43] The officials in charge of the Receipt were entitled to pay themselves a daily bonus for as long as the Exchequer was in session – five pence for the Treasurer's Clerk, eight pence each for the Deputy Chamberlains

The Exchequer had no continuous existence; it maintained no archive of its own. Any records that needed to be kept (kept for all time) were kept in the Treasury, and some of them had to be available, during the Michaelmas session of the Exchequer, wherever that took place. In theory at least, the Exchequer might meet anywhere – in any town where suitable accommodation could be found – at the Barons' discretion. Wherever the Exchequer decided to meet, the Receipt had to be there too. Each year, the Exchequer's proceedings were distilled into a new Great Roll. Some rolls survived, probably the whole series, from the reign of Henric I (p. 42), but there cannot have been much occasion for consulting them (except for somebody like Ricard, interested in the history of his department).[44] The more recent rolls, however, would certainly be required. Large parts of the text of each new roll were copied exactly, or with some appropriate adjustment, from the roll of the previous year. The Treasurer and his scribe had to have that roll in front of them while the Exchequer was in session; the officers of the Receipt had to make sure that it was there. Another document which the Treasurer needed to consult repeatedly was something called the Record of Farms: this is where he looked up the total due from each sheriff for the farm of his county (p. 125). Again, it was the Treasurer's Clerk and his colleagues who were responsible for looking after this book (or roll), and for making sure that it was available on the occasions when it was needed.

By the 1170s, in short, the officers of the Receipt had in their custody a large collection of documents and other paraphernalia which needed to be kept secure, and which sometimes needed to be transported around the country (pp. 61–2). Some of the objects in question were extremely valuable. To ensure their safety, the Treasury had equipped itself with a number of strongboxes. Each of these strongboxes had two locks, the keys to which were held by the Deputy Chamberlains; each key was unique. For greater security, the boxes were strapped up, after being locked, and sealed by the Treasurer's Clerk, so that none could be opened without the consent of all three responsible officials (p. 9).

Of the objects kept in the Treasury, the most important was the great seal – the duplicate royal seal used only during sessions of the Exchequer, and only for Exchequer business (p. 19). The official responsible to the king for the safety of this seal was the Chancellor. When the Exchequer was not in session (i.e. nearly all the time), the seal was kept in a purse sealed with the Chancellor's seal; and the purse was kept in one of the strongboxes (the strongest of all, no doubt) looked after by the officers of the Receipt. As Easter or Michaelmas approached, the strongbox was moved to

wherever the meeting was scheduled to take place. (That decision had been made at the end of the previous session, before the summonses were sent out.) When the moment arrived, the box was opened, and the purse was removed, taken upstairs, and handed over to the Chancellor (or to whoever was deputizing for him). In full view, the Chancellor broke open the sealed purse and took out the seal. At the end of the session, the procedure was reversed: the seal went back into its purse, the purse went back into its box, and the box was taken charge of again by the Receipt officials.

The seal had an 'inseparable companion' in the shape of a book (pp. 62–3). Ricard indulges himself, as he often does, by inventing a Latin name for it: he calls it the *Liber iudiciarius*. But the name under which it was commonly known, he tells us, was *Domesdei*, 'Judgment Day' (p. 64).[45] As Master describes it to Pupil, this book contains 'a survey of the whole kingdom', reporting the value of every manor in the time of king Edward as well as in the time of king Willelm, during whose reign it was compiled (p. 14). From what he says later about the scope and organization of this book (pp. 63–4), there cannot be any doubt but that he is talking about DB (though we have to assume that he is simplifying matters, for Pupil's benefit, by omitting to mention D6). It is certain, therefore, that in the 1170s DB was kept in the Treasury, subject to the same security measures which applied to the royal seal. Most of the time, DB would have been locked up in a strongbox. No one could get at it until the box had been opened; and for that to happen all three Receipt officials had to be present. The Treasurer's Clerk had to break the seal on the strap, and the Deputy Chamberlains had each to open one of the locks.

Like the seal, this book was regularly required to be available while the Exchequer was in session. As long as the Barons were dealing with the routine financial transactions which are the subject of Ricard's tract, there would not have been any occasion for DB to be consulted. But the Exchequer also functioned as a court of law, presided over by the Justiciar. Ricard had some thought of writing a sequel, a dialogue discussing the judicial aspect of the Exchequer's business (pp. 126–7), but he did not act on this idea, as far as we know. In the tract which he did write, there is only one passage which conveys some sense of the significance attached to DB at the time. What Master tells Pupil – passing on what he says he was told by bishop Henric of Winchester (who died in 1171) – is that the information collected by king Willelm's commissioners was recorded in a book 'so that everybody should be content with his own property and not get away with usurping anybody else's', *ut uidelicet quilibet iure suo contentus alienum non usurpet impune* (p. 63). As a statement of the purpose of the survey

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[44] But Ricard does mention one departmental crisis during which one of these rolls was produced in evidence (p. 58).

(p. 13). The Usher got nothing (Ricard was not sure why), but the Tellers got three pence each, the Nightwatchman got one penny, and a halfpenny was allowed for a nightlight. (If the Exchequer met in Winchester, however, the Tellers got only two pence, 'because that is where they are usually recruited from'.)

[45] The allusion is obscure, and Master has some difficulty explaining to Pupil why the name is suitable. Books are mentioned frequently in Revelations, but none of the references seems particularly apposite. There is a line in Daniel 7:10 which might perhaps have been quoted by a judge who fancied himself a wit: *Iudicium sedit, et libri aperti sunt*, 'the judgment was set, and the books were opened'.

that will not do; but it may be a fair description of the use to which DB was being put in the reign of Henric II. Especially in the early years of the reign, there must have been many conflicting claims, arising out of the confusion of the civil war, which demanded adjudication. Ideally, no doubt, what the Justiciar and his colleagues would have liked to have at their disposal was a detailed record of who held what on the day when the first king Henric was alive and dead; in the absence of that, DB had to serve as a substitute. Nobody was allowed to suggest that DB had got things wrong: whatever DB said was assumed to be true, and both parties were required to argue from that premise.[46] This, it seems, was the origin of the legal fiction that DB was infallible, and the reason why the book began to be kept, like the royal seal, under the tightest security that the Treasury could devise.

Even on occasions when DB was out of its box, the clerks who handled it no longer thought of making corrections or additions of any kind. By this time it would have seemed absurd to do so. Given that DB was infallible, how could it possibly stand in need of correction? On the contrary, it needed to be kept exactly as it was; and the rule established itself that no one should ever be permitted to make an alteration in the text, not even a mark in the margin. The rule was applied so strictly (until Arthur Agarde broke it) that nobody even dared to number the leaves.

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Once DB had been fetishized by the king's lawyers, once it had begun to be kept under lock and key, the fate of the six D volumes was more or less determined. One of them, because it supplied the main deficiency of DB, the absence of three whole counties, had to be kept with DB; the other five became redundant. Worse, one can see that they might become an embarrassment, because their continued existence would seem to cast a shadow on the status of DB. How could anyone be expected to accept the evidence of a copy – an imperfect copy, omitting much information – if it was known that the original existed too? This does not have to mean that the five unwanted volumes were discarded straight away; but it does suggest that they would have been kept out of sight and no longer made available to outsiders. Their future, or their lack of a future, became a matter which could be decided within the department. Sooner or later, they all ceased to exist; but we are unlikely ever to discover when that happened.[47]

From the 1170s onwards, if historians see some benefit in using the name 'Domesday Book', there cannot be any strong objection to their doing so. The name did exist by then, though only as a nickname (it does not begin to occur in formal records till another hundred years later). Further back than that, nothing is clear. We do not know when the name was invented; we do not know when DB and D6 began to be regarded in such a way that the name, once somebody had thought of it, seemed apt. For some length of time (period 2), the D volumes must still have been regarded as a set and still valued more highly than DB. The problem is that we do not know how long this period lasted. One day, perhaps, we shall know. The alterations and additions made in DB by other hands, so far as it is fair to assume that they derive from D, may possibly supply some clue; there are other lines of investigation which may possibly be worth pursuing. Meanwhile, for historians to use the name 'Domesday Book' in speaking of any period before the 1170s is to invite misunderstanding at every turn, because it assumes the existence of something which may not (not yet) have existed.[48] Until DB and D6 had been paired together and separated from the other D volumes (at the beginning of period 3), there was no such thing as 'Domesday Book', no entity to which the name could be applied; and we cannot be sure that this stage had been reached before some time in the reign of Henric II, three generations later than the date of the survey itself.

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[46] At the very end of the century, two cases are recorded in which one of the litigants 'puts himself on the Roll of Winchester', *ponit se super rotulum Wintonie*. In one of these cases, a dispute over land in Lincolnshire, the man who appeals to this evidence expects it to prove that the land in question has belonged 'since the conquest' to the feod which he holds of the king (*Curia regis rolls*, vol. 1, p. 263); the relevant entry is in DB-366va. The other recorded case originated in Suffolk; so by luck we can be sure that this unapt name was applied to both volumes, D6 as well as DB.

[47] One possibly relevant fact is the Treasury's removal from Winchester to Westminster. That move happened in the early 1180s (Brown 1957), perhaps precisely in 1181. (It must, of course, have happened at some definite moment – the moment, say, when the Usher's wife and children, with their furniture loaded into the cart behind them, arrived at their new home.) Perhaps DB and D6 were taken to London, the other D volumes left behind. But the Record of Farms, which also ceased to exist, survived at least until the 1190s (when it was made redundant by a change in Exchequer procedure).

[48] Worse still is 'Exchequer Domesday'. Historians should surely break the habit of using this name when they are talking about the eleventh century.