

Chapter 6

The geld accounts associated with the C text

Exeter Cathedral Library 3500 is a collection of booklets (Table 15), written in the spring and summer of 1086, which all relate, more or less closely, to the enterprise known as ‘the survey of the whole of England’. The bulk of the collection (batches 1–2) consists of booklets containing a version of the survey report – the C text, as I call it – more primitive than the versions represented by the surviving D booklets (PRO E 31/1) and the surviving DB booklets (PRO E 31/2). The C booklets have already been discussed, in chapters 4–5; here I aim to deal with two smaller batches of booklets which are found associated with them. These booklets contain accounts, for five counties in south-western England, of the land-tax known as geld. When Henry Ellis printed the text of this manuscript, one of the points which he stressed in his introduction was the tight connection between the survey and the particular levy of geld to which these accounts relate.¹ Ellis was vague about the date of the survey; he failed to see that the geld accounts are not typologically uniform; but his emphasis was in the right place. No one now doubts that the survey was carried out in the year 1086; no one should doubt – what was proved by Galbraith (1950) – that the geld accounts date from that same year.

All seven surviving accounts are organized cadastrally: a booklet for each county, a paragraph for each hundred. The larger batch (batch 3) comprises four booklets, one for each of four counties: Dorset, Devon, Cornwall, Somerset. They are the work of three scribes (though largely the work of just one, scribe alpha), exactly the same three scribes who were involved in the writing of the C booklets for all of the same four counties (above, p. 50). The geld accounts are important, in this respect, because they prove that these scribes were employed in the Treasury – permanently employed there, so it seems. To put it briefly (I discuss the evidence in more detail below), there is a statement in every paragraph summing up the proceeds of the tax. In the batch 3 accounts (the batch 4 accounts are different), this statement generally takes the following form: from a certain number of hides ‘the king has’ a certain number of pence.² From

entries where the scribe wants to be more explicit, we discover what this means: ‘the king has’ becomes ‘the king has in his treasury at Winchester’ (70v–1r, for example). Thus it is perfectly clear that these accounts were drawn up in the Treasury, after the arrival of the money.

I hasten to say that this is not an original conclusion. Round stated it first: ‘I am tempted to believe that these geld rolls in the form in which we now have them were compiled at Winchester after the close of Easter 1084, by the body which was the germ of the future Exchequer’ (Round 1888, p. 91). The year is wrong – but apart from that this statement seems sound to me (as long as it is restricted to batch 3). Galbraith agreed with Round. In the (1950) paper which established the date of these booklets, he began with some general remarks about their nature. Having said what they are not (the records of a ‘geld inquest’), he says what they are: ‘They are in fact accounts, some of which at least were drawn up in the treasury at Winchester’ (1950, p. 3).³ That is why, in his (1961) book, he goes so far as to speak of the geld accounts as ‘unique survivals of William I’s administration at work on the humdrum task of ordinary business’ (Galbraith 1961, p. 88). A few pages later, they have ceased to be quite so humdrum: now they are ‘the record of an exceptional administrative activity’ (1961, p. 92), ‘the record of some exceptional, even unprecedented, inquiry’ (1961, p. 96). But both descriptions may be valid, up to a point. These geld accounts are special; but perhaps they are not very different from the sort of records compiled by the Treasury as a matter of routine.

That Round and Galbraith agree is no proof that they are both right; but in this instance I am satisfied that they are. Indeed, nobody would ever have thought twice about it, were it not for the fact that the Exeter manuscript has been in Exeter for as long as it has any recorded history. Yet there is nothing to prove or make it probable that the manuscript originated in Exeter; and the batch 3 geld accounts are the proof that it did not. It originated in Winchester. How it got to Exeter is a question which needs to be asked, but I do not know that we can have much hope of answering it. The

¹ ‘Certain it is that the Record itself bears evidence that the tax was raised at the time of the Survey: that it was connected with it: and that, at least in the Western Counties, it was collected by the same Commissioners’ (Ellis 1816, p. xi = 1817, p. 6). The last statement is too strong. The commissioners were not involved in collecting the geld, only in collecting the arrears; and even that is not demonstrably true except for one county.

² The geld is assessed in hides, virgates and acres; payments are counted in pounds, shillings and pence. For simplicity, I state assessments in hides, payments in pence throughout. Rather than ‘ninety-three hides less half a

virgate’, I write 92.875 hides. Rather than ‘twenty-seven pounds, seventeen shillings and three pence’, I write 6687 pence.

³ The implied exception (some but perhaps not all) is for the Wiltshire accounts (batch 4), these being the ones ‘which are palaeographically most distinct from the rest of the book’ (1950, p. 6). Unlike Round, Galbraith had seen the manuscript: the dean and chapter of Exeter loaned it to the Bodleian Library for some period, so that Galbraith could work on it (1950, p. 1, note).

- 1 Part of a collection of booklets (C-WiDo) containing a transitional version of the survey text for two counties, Wiltshire and Dorset (fos. 25–62, 530–1)
- 2 A collection of similar booklets (C-DnCoSo), nearly complete, covering three counties, Devon, Cornwall and Somerset (fos. 83–494); also one related booklet (Capp-DnCoSo) containing short versions of some entries for the same three counties (fos. 495–525)
- 3 Four booklets containing geld accounts for Dorset (fos. 17–24), Devon (fos. 65–71), Cornwall (fos. 72–3) and Somerset (fos. 75–82) respectively
- 4 Three booklets each containing a different version of a geld account for Wiltshire (fos. 1–6 + 529, 7–12, 13–16)
- 5 Two small miscellaneous booklets (fos. 63–4, 526–8)

Table 15. Batches of booklets contained in Exeter Cathedral Library 3500.

fact remains that these geld accounts are – just as Galbraith said – the only surviving records of the eleventh-century Treasury, the oldest surviving records of any government department.⁴

The Wiltshire accounts (batch 4) are different. As Galbraith (1950, p. 6) was aware, these booklets – the first one especially, because of its abnormal format – stand apart from the main batch of geld accounts.⁵ For a start, there are three of them, and already that makes them peculiar. They differ, next, in that only one of the three major scribes (scribe mu) is represented here: he made numerous additions in the margins of the second booklet (very carefully marking the point of insertion for each) and added one whole paragraph at the end.⁶ These additions aside, the Wiltshire accounts are the work of four minor scribes, two of whom occur only here. In one crucial respect, moreover, the language differs too. These accounts do not tell us how much money has arrived in the Treasury; they tell us how much money has

⁴ There are, to my knowledge, no published reproductions which show any part of the batch 3 accounts, and that is to be regretted. But a page of the C text written entirely by scribe alpha was reproduced by Bond, Thompson and Warner (1884–94, pl. 70), and the geld accounts look fairly similar to that.

⁵ In the batch 3 booklets, as in the C booklets, the ruling is for 20 lines (Ker 1977, p. 806). The first Wiltshire booklet has much smaller leaves, ruled for 40 lines. The other two booklets resemble the batch 3 booklets in size and ruling; but the ruling is disregarded (except on 7r), and the number of written lines varies between 29 and 41.

⁶ Some of the blank pages at the end of this booklet (11r–12v) were used by scribe beta for writing a section (or a draft of a section) of the C text for Dorset. It is possible, as Ker (1977, p. 804) observed, that this quire has been turned inside out: beta's contribution, now at the back, may originally have been at the front. There are complications here which it may not be safe to ignore, but I propose to take the risk.

been paid on the spot. The entries here tell us this: that from a certain number of hides 'there have been paid to the king' a certain number of pence.⁷ The Wiltshire accounts are the record of payments made locally – not just of payments made in the regular course of events, but also, in a few instances, of payments which were overdue but have now been 'recovered'.

Few though they are, the entries which refer to the recovery of overdue sums are of great interest, and I discuss them in detail below. Unfortunately, when Darlington (1955) edited the Wiltshire accounts, he misunderstood these entries, and in consequence misread the relationship between the three different versions. Establishing the sequence is a technical matter, and I deal with it in an appendix (below, p. 69). But I will say at once that the order imposed by Ellis (1816) is correct. There is no mystery about it: the mystery is how Darlington could get it wrong.⁸

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The batch 3 booklets – the ch accounts, as I propose to refer to them – are very largely the work of a single scribe, the scribe whom I call alpha (Table 16).⁹ A few lines in ch-Do are contributed by scribe mu, a few in ch-Dn by scribe beta. Only in ch-So does somebody other than alpha write a large portion of the text: rather more than a page at the end is beta's work. Even then, the Somerset account is incomplete.¹⁰ For this county alone, there also survives an assortment of memoranda relating to the geld account, written by scribe alpha in a separate booklet (526v–7r). It seems likely that memoranda such as these were intended to be thrown away, once the account had been finalized, and their survival, for just this one county, can be seen as another indication that ch-So was never fully finished.

The presumption is that the survival of these four booklets is fortuitous, and that originally a booklet of the same type existed for every county where the geld had been collected.

⁷ The first paragraph is exceptional: the formula here is the same as one found in the first half of the Dorset account, 'and for .. hides the king has .. pence'. From the second paragraph onwards, however, this alternative formula is used. (The only other exception is the paragraph added at the end of the second booklet by scribe mu, which, as might be expected, reverts to Treasury language.)

⁸ In fact, as historians of Wiltshire may know, the error did not originate with Darlington; but he made himself answerable for it.

⁹ This is the scribe whom Finn (1959) called clerk G, in token of the G which he sometimes uses as a shorthand notation for 'geld'.

¹⁰ Scribe beta began a new paragraph one line up from the bottom of 82v, which is the last page of a quire. He wrote two sentences – and then he stopped, with a quarter of the last line still vacant. At this point, presumably, he was about to make himself a new quire, so that he could continue and complete the text; but that did not happen. Some time later, a memorandum was scribbled in (probably by alpha) at the foot of this page, beginning in the space at the end of the last line and overflowing into the margin. (Below this again, something was apparently written and then erased.) By this time, it seems, events had moved on, and there was no longer any intention of completing the account.

	Batch 3	
ch-Do	17r1–24r6	alpha
	24r7–9	mu
	24r9–21	alpha
ch-Dn	65r1–9r20	alpha
	69v1–2	beta
	69v2–71r5	alpha
ch-Co	72r1–3r15	alpha
ch-So	75r1–82r16	alpha
	82r17–v20	beta
	Batch 4	
g2-Wi	1r1–v40	ksi
	2r1–8	tau
	2r8–3r8	ksi
	3r8–v3	tau
g3-Wi	7r1–20	rho
	7v1–31	sigma
	8r1–11	rho
	8r12–30	sigma
	8r30–41	tau
	8v1–41	rho
	9r1–6	tau
	9r7–v10	sigma
	9v11–24	mu
g4-Wi	13r1–14r20	sigma
	14r20–8	tau
	14r28–16r26	sigma

Table 16. Booklets and scribal stints in batches 3–4.

I would guess that all of them were alpha's work – but there is no way to prove it (or disprove it).¹¹ Apart from the four which still exist, some excerpts from a fifth were copied by scribe mu (more or less verbatim, it seems) into one of the batch 4 booklets (see below); the rest have all been lost.¹²

From the surviving ch booklets we can form a fairly clear idea how the system of taxation worked at the time.¹³ Ev-

¹¹ I suggested before (above, p. 50) that scribe mu may have been the Treasurer. Now I suggest that scribe alpha may have been the Treasurer's Clerk, the official in charge of the Receipt.

¹² With some reluctance, I list the ch booklets in the order which is right for the C text; but that order may be wrong here, and may be misleading too. I can see no satisfactory evidence for working out a seriation, only some doubtful indications that ch-Do may be the earliest of the batch and that ch-So may be the latest. But even if the sequence DoDnCoSo is right, there is nothing to prove that these booklets were written directly one after another. They could be the accidental survivors from a broken sequence ..Do..Dn..Co..So.. (where .. denotes some number of lost booklets). In other words, the fact that these four booklets survive may be due to the fact that these were the last four counties to be dealt with at a later stage by the scribes compiling the C text (below, p. 68); it need not imply that these were the last four counties dealt with at the time by scribe alpha.

¹³ The only other available evidence is a twelfth-century copy (ed. Robertson 1956, pp. 230–7) of some version of a geld account for Northampton-

ery hide which does not belong to the king himself is, in principle, required to pay geld. In a few cases, a manor belonging to a bishop or church may have been exempted altogether, through a gesture of extraordinary generosity on the part of some king; in a case like this it may not even be possible to say how many hides there are, because there are no geldable units to be counted. For fiscal purposes, a manor which enjoys this special status is treated as if it still belongs to the king. Apart from rare cases of that kind, there is only one exception which the Treasury will allow. If the man who holds a manor in domain holds it directly from the king, it is understood that he is entitled to retain a share of the tax proportional to the number of hides which he holds in domain.

Though the language is awkward,¹⁴ the meaning is simple enough. In order to claim this partial exemption, you have to satisfy two conditions. First, you have to be – at this moment – personally in possession of the manor. If you have given the manor in feod to one of your men, or if you have leased it to somebody, you lose the entitlement. Second, you have to hold this manor – this particular manor – directly from the king: in other words, you have to be the king's baron with respect to this manor.¹⁵ If you hold this manor from some third party, again you lose the entitlement. If both conditions are met, you are allowed to claim a deduction for as many hides as are reckoned to form the domain – not for the hides which are held by your villains, only for those which are yours in the narrowest sense. You cannot choose your own number, or vary it to suit yourself: some recognized number exists, and that is the number which you are entitled to claim.¹⁶ Suppose, for example, that you own a manor rated at three hides, and that one of these hides is reckoned to be domain. Your agent, the reeve of this manor, collects three hides' worth of geld (216 pence), passes on two-thirds of it (144 pence) to the tax-collectors, and keeps the rest (72 pence) for you.

If we look for a hundred in which everyone has followed the rules (and we have to look quite hard), the account that we find will record the facts something like this:¹⁷

shire, earlier than the ch booklets. Unlike them, it is written in English; it does all its sums in hides, never converting to pence.

¹⁴ In ch-Do the scribe seems to be trying to clarify matters by making a distinction between *dominium* and *dominicatus*, but these words are used interchangeably in the other accounts.

¹⁵ Or, in the language of a later age, you have to be holding of the king in chief, as far as this manor is concerned.

¹⁶ This is not just a matter of probability, as Galbraith (1950, p. 5) seems to say. The geld accounts are the proof of it. In one of the Wiltshire hundreds, the abbess of Shaftesbury has claimed for 24 hides; but 'six of these hides were villains' land on the day when king Eadward was alive and dead' (2v). Therefore the allowance is reduced to 18 hides, and the abbess's reeve is charged with withholding the geld from the other six hides (15v). There are similar entries in the same hundred for the abbot of Glastonbury and the abbot of Winchester.

¹⁷ This is based on the account for one of the Dorset hundreds (ch-Do-22v–3r, ed. Williams 1968, p. 142). I have simplified it slightly and made sure that the arithmetic works out. The reader who wants to design a spreadsheet may like to take this for a model.

In Haselora hundred there are 64.25 hides.
From it the king has 2475 pence for 34.375 hides.
The king's barons own 29.875 hides of it in domain.
Of this domain:

Hugo's wife owns 3 hides
Walter de Clavilla, 3.625
Roger de Bello monte, 6.5
Durand the carpenter, 0.25
the abbess of Saint Edward, 1
the abbot of Cerne, 3.125
Alvuric the hunter, 0.5
Ascitil de Carisburgo, 2.375
Rotbert son of Radulf, 2
Rotbert son of Gerold, 5
Eddric the reeve, 1
the abbot of Saint-Wandrille, 1
the count of Mortain, 0.5

Thirteen people have claimed deductions here, and the allowances add up to 29.875 hides; the Treasury has received 2475 pence, a sum equivalent to 34.375 hides; the account thus covers a total of 64.25 hides. That is the number of geldable hides in this hundred. If no deductions were allowed, the geld would raise a total of 4626 pence; in fact, the king gets not much more than half of the amount due, as far as this hundred is concerned, and the rest is shared out among his barons.

In some hundreds, the king himself owns land. This makes a difference, but not very much of a difference, to the form of the geld account. The Treasury makes, or tries to make, a sharp distinction between two groups of manors. One group consists of the manors which belong to king Willelm because they used to belong to king Eadward – the manors which the king has inherited from his predecessor, just as king Eadward had inherited them from his, through becoming king.¹⁸ Any manor which falls under this heading is entirely exempt from geld. It has to make other payments, no doubt, but it does not have to pay geld. If the Treasury officials had been asked why this should be so, it is not clear what reply they would have given. But presumably some notion existed that it would be absurd for the king, as lord of the manor, to pay tax to himself, as king. He would merely be transferring money from one hand to the other. In any case, the upshot is that manors of this group do not appear in the geld accounts at all.

The second group consists of the manors which happen to have fallen into the king's hands for one reason or another – through confiscation, through the previous owner's death, or through any accident which has the same effect. At least in the Treasury's view of the case, these manors have to be treated differently from those which the king has inherited from his predecessor. They do not belong to the king as lord: they belong to him as overlord (for as long as he chooses to keep them). Because it used to belong, and in

the future may again belong, to one of the king's barons, such a manor should be made to pay its quota of geld, deducting only the normal allowance for whatever proportion of the land is held in domain. Manors which fall under this heading are regularly mentioned in the geld accounts: the king is listed among the barons claiming some deduction. Usually the phrase 'the king's barons' is replaced by 'the king and his barons'; usually the king is put at the top of the list. But these are mere niceties. In practice, the king is being treated as one of his own barons, as in the following passage:¹⁹

The king's barons own 7.375 hides of it in domain.

Of this domain:

Rainbold the priest owns 2 hides
Willelm de Braiosa, 2
Bolo the priest, 2.875
the king, of Herold's land, 0.5

Usually some note is added, as it is here, to explain why this land belongs to the king for the time being; where the note is missing, we can be sure that the scribe meant to include it but forgot.

In a perfect world, a world in which everything worked to the Treasury's satisfaction, the geld account for every hundred would look like the one for Haselora hundred quoted in full above. It would contain that information and no more (though the order of the statements might vary). But the real world is far from perfect. In almost every case, the paragraph continues with a string of entries explaining why, in the Treasury's opinion, the account is defective as it stands.²⁰ From our point of view, the geld accounts derive most of their interest from entries of this kind; but it needs to be realized that they are, quite often, difficult to interpret. They are briefly worded. The scribe who wrote them understood the system, and expected his readers to understand it too. Like a note saying 'Herold's land', these entries assume some nexus of background knowledge which we may or may not possess. We know who Herold was, and why his lands were now in the king's possession; but we are ignorant of many things which anyone reading these accounts was supposed to be aware of in advance.

¹⁹ Based on part of the account for Bochena hundred in Dorset (23v–4r, ed. Williams 1968, p. 146).

²⁰ In ch-So most paragraphs end with a statement of the sum outstanding. As in the other accounts, the scribe gives a list of entries telling us what has gone wrong; but then, in this county alone, he does the arithmetic for us. For example: 'For 1 hide which Osbern holds from the bishop of Coutances the king does not have the geld; for 2 hides which Ori holds from the bishop of Coutances the king does not have the geld; for 1.25 hides which Engeler holds from Arnulf de Hesdinc the king does not have the geld; for 5.3125 hides from which the gatherers acknowledge receiving the money the king does not have the geld. From this hundred there are still in arrears 688.5 pence which are owed to the king of his geld' (ch-So-75v). The scribe adds up four items and silently converts the total from hides to pence.

¹⁸ In the language of a later age, these are the manors which form the ancient domain of the crown.

From the glimpses that we get of it failing to work, the system seems to have been supposed to work like this. In each hundred, four men (or some such number) act as collectors of the tax. They are called by various names, but we shall probably not be misunderstood if we choose to call them the ‘gatherers’.²¹ In each county, two men (or some such number) act as the Treasury’s representatives. These men are called the ‘bearers’, because they are responsible for carrying the money to Winchester. The geld was collected, not all at once, but in two (presumably equal) instalments, at two set dates. Every penny which is paid, at either term, changes hands three times. The reeve of each manor delivers the money he owes to the local gatherers;²² the gatherers deliver the money from their hundred to the bearers; and the bearers deliver the money from their county to the Treasury. Some of these transactions, probably all of them, are recorded by means of tallies.²³ In addition, the bearers are expected to submit some form of written record, hiring a scribe for the purpose (at the king’s expense).²⁴

That all sounds fairly straightforward. The system has been tried and tested over many years. How can anything go wrong? The answer is, we discover, that things can and do go wrong, at almost every point. We are told, over and over again, that from a certain number of hides ‘the king has not had the geld’.²⁵ This is not the gatherers’ fault. They are there to receive the money, when it is handed to them: they are not expected actively to seek it out. The onus is on the man who possesses the land. If he fails to pay on time, he is guilty of withholding the geld; if he is found to own some undeclared assets, he is guilty of something worse. He is guilty of concealment: he has failed to inform the king of something which it was his duty to report. This seems to have happened very rarely. In all four accounts there is only one entry which makes an explicit accusation of concealment: ‘For half a hide which Godefrid holds from

Walter de Clavilla – this was concealed from the king – the king has not had the geld’ (ch-Dn-66v).²⁶ What the scribe is usually trying to tell us is that the rules governing the payment of geld have been misapplied. It is often hard to know exactly what he means,²⁷ but most of the time he seems to be harping on one of two themes: that someone has claimed a deduction for domain to which he is not entitled,²⁸ or that land which has lapsed to the king has been treated as if it were part of the king’s inheritance.

Then again, there may be hiccups in the collection process. Payments may be late. We are told, for instance, that 144 pence ‘which ought to have been paid at the first term were not paid until the last’ (ch-Do-17r), or that certain sums were paid ‘after the appointed terms’ or ‘after Easter’.²⁹ Payments may be made on time but in the wrong place. In Dorset especially this is a common problem. For example, we are told twice that Hugo de Portu has paid geld in the wrong hundred: the sum is deducted from one account (24r) and added onto another (20r). It does not appear that any action is going to be taken against Hugo and others who have made the same mistake:³⁰ the Treasury just wants to get the facts straight. But some of the gatherers are certainly in trouble, in part because they have accepted payments which they ought not to have accepted.

In three of the Somerset hundreds, small sums received by the gatherers have gone astray, and the gatherers have not been able to justify the deficit.³¹ In many Devon hundreds,

²¹ In Devon and Somerset they are usually called the *fegadri*, a feebly latinized form of their vernacular name, which also occurs in translation as *congregatores huius pecunie* (ch-Do-17v, 18r, 22v). The English word, not otherwise attested, would be **feohgadrere*.

²² It is assumed, of course, that the reeve will recoup himself by collecting the individual contributions – three pence here, six pence there – which go to make up the total; but that is his business, and does not concern the Treasury.

²³ The word for tally is *dica*. Twice the scribe writes *in dicis*, running the words together; Williams (1968, pp. 126, 127) reads *indicis*, but that does not make sense. The same word recurs in a text describing the organization of the king’s household in the 1130s: the marshal, we are told, *debet habere dicas de donis et liberationibus que fiunt de Thesouro regis* (ed. Johnson 1950, p. 134).

²⁴ The Northamptonshire account (above, note 13) should probably be read as the report drawn up by the bearers. On this view, the most striking formula – *ne com nan peni of*, ‘there came not a penny from’ – will be the approved way of notifying the Treasury that a problem has arisen. As far as the bearers are aware, there is no reason why the geld should not be paid; but the man who owns the land has refused to hand over the money.

²⁵ In the Dorset account the scribe tries to distinguish between land from which the king has ‘not’ or ‘never’ had geld. By ‘not’ he means ‘not this year’: he says so in the first two paragraphs (17r–v) but does not bother to repeat it after that. By ‘never’ he means that ‘king Willelm has never’ had the geld (17r), i.e. that payment has lapsed since the time of king Eadward.

²⁶ In C and DB the word ‘concealed’ occurs more frequently, but still in only a very small proportion of cases. (The word ‘discovered’ carries the same meaning: we do not know that a hide has been concealed until we have discovered it.)

²⁷ To make sense of these entries, one has to try to match them up with corresponding entries in C (or in DB, where C is missing). Because there are hardly any place-names in ch and no hundred headings in C, that proves to be very difficult. How much progress can be made varies from county to county. The reader who wants to pursue this line of enquiry should probably start with Dorset, where the evidence was analyzed very thoroughly by Williams (1968).

²⁸ An example which might be quoted here is an entry in the Somerset account: ‘For 5.75 hides which Sanson holds from the bishop of Bayeux the king has not had the geld’ (ch-So-80v). The men of the bishop of Bayeux are in a peculiar position, because the bishop himself has been held in prison for the last few years. Even so, ‘the land of the bishop of Bayeux’ is still theoretically the bishop’s, not the king’s. His barons have not become the king’s barons. What has happened here is this. The manor in question is assessed at 8 hides (C-So-467r, DB-So-87vb). Sanson has claimed a deduction for that part which is counted as domain: the Treasury scribe is saying that Sanson’s claim is invalid, and that he should be made to hand over the money which he has kept. Sanson’s case has attracted some discussion, most of which neglected a crucial fact knowable only to someone consulting C-So in the original (Thorn and Thorn 1980, p. 314, Chaplais 1987, p. 69).

²⁹ The total given at the end of ch-Do (24r), 99705.5 pence, does not include these late payments; nor does it include 180 pence which Rotbert de Oilleio ‘withheld till after Easter’, and which, as is noted above the line, ‘the king still does not have’ (19v).

³⁰ In the Dorset account as a whole there are fifteen entries of this kind. They do not all pair off as neatly as these two.

³¹ In Abediccha hundred a sum of about 7 pence is missing, and ‘the gatherers could not give us an explanation’ (*de quibus fegadri non poterant*

the gatherers have quite deliberately kept a small share of the proceeds (usually one hide's worth) for themselves: we are told repeatedly that the king does not have this money because 'the gatherers claim that by custom they ought to have it'. The language here seems neutral – but sometimes there is a clear hint of disapproval. The gatherers have 'withheld' the money; the custom is only a custom 'according to what they say' (69r). In two Dorset hundreds, the gatherers are in surplus, not just because they have 'received money which they ought not to have received' (i.e. which ought to have been paid in some other hundred), but also because the number of pence recorded on their tallies is 'in excess of the number of hides' (17v, 18r). We should not take this to mean that the gatherers are being accused of extortion. The point seems rather to be that if these gatherers, on this occasion, have collected more money than expected, something must have gone wrong on a previous occasion, and some retrospective inquiry should be made.

The bearers are not just responsible for seeing that the money is safely transported to Winchester. They are expected to make sure that the gatherers have done their job properly; if they come across any problems, they are expected to report them to the Treasury.³² This means that they have to check the gatherers' counter-tallies, verifying that the total is the same as the number of pence which the gatherers have handed over. But that is not all. The bearers already know, or think that they know, the number of geldable hides in any hundred. By subtracting from this the number of hides that do not need to pay, and the number that have failed to pay, they can calculate the number of hides which ought to have paid their quota, and therefore the number of pence which ought to have passed through the gatherers' hands. If the sums do not agree, they insist on knowing why. The bearers, it seems certain, arrive with a written list – a list which gives the name of each hundred and the number of geldable hides believed to be there. That list, I take it, was supplied to them by the Treasury, and was based on the accounts for the geld preceding this one.³³

One of the memoranda relating to the Somerset account gives us our only glimpse of the bearers arriving in Winchester and settling up with the Treasury. The 'bearers of the

reddere nobis rationem, ch-So-81v). The word 'us' might be taken to imply that the gatherers have been interrogated by the Treasury; I think it means that the Treasury scribe is quoting from the bearers' account.

³² In the Devon account, the last paragraph ends with a note about the geld from 3.3125 hides which has somehow gone astray. 'The gatherers say that they received the money and handed it over to Willelm the usher and Radulf de Pomario, who were supposed to carry the geld to the king's treasury in Winchester' (ch-Dn-71r). It is not their fault, the gatherers are saying, that the money has failed to arrive. This passage thus gives us the names of the bearers for Devon; it seems also to imply the existence of some line of communication which does not pass through them. In this one instance, the gatherers have been given a chance to speak for themselves. Either they have been ordered up to Winchester; or somebody has been asked to make enquiries on the spot.

³³ Probably the geld, at a variable rate, was collected every year. The phrase 'this year' (above, note 25) is suggestive; but in the absence of any contrasting phrase like 'last year' it cannot be thought conclusive.

geld' started out with 123371 pence, but some of the money has disappeared along the way, and only 122160 pence have actually arrived.³⁴ There is a discrepancy of 1211 pence. In part, the bearers can explain this to the Treasury's satisfaction. They claim a round sum of 480 pence for their subsistence; they claim 116 pence for incidental expenses – hiring pack-horses and a scribe, buying packing-cases and wax. The Treasury allows these deductions. But that still leaves a deficit of 615 pence. Of this money 'the king has not had a penny', and the bearers 'have not been able to render an account'.³⁵ Before they can depart from Winchester, the bearers have to pledge 'that they will pay this money to the king's commissioners' (526v–7r). It is clear that this memorandum was not drawn up till after the money had been delivered to the Treasury. The man who wrote it, scribe alpha, must have been a Treasury scribe.

Yet how can a Treasury scribe, sitting at his desk in Winchester, possibly know all this? By interrogating the bearers, he can discover lapses in the collection process. But how can he know that half a hide in Devon has been concealed, or that a man in Somerset has falsely claimed a deduction with respect to domain, or that some land in Dorset has been mistakenly treated as part of the king's inheritance? How can he have knowledge of things which apparently could only be discovered on the spot?

Up to a point, the answer is obvious. As Galbraith (1950) realized, the geld accounts incorporate new information resulting from the survey. Working through some preexisting accounts (of the kind which would have been drawn up regularly whenever geld was paid), scribe alpha checks them against some version of the survey report, in search of any discrepancies; and the accounts that survive, the ch booklets, are the record of what he finds. In the majority of hundreds, he discovers that some money is still due. That money will need to be collected; those people who are guilty of misconduct will have to answer for it. Scribe alpha compiled these accounts so that they could be made available (presumably in the form of fair copies) to those agents of the king who would be chasing up arrears and punishing defaulters.³⁶ We know who those agents were: when the bearers of the geld from Somerset were found to be in deficit, they were not allowed to go home until they had pledged that they would pay the money to the 'king's com-

³⁴ Presumably these numbers would come from the bearers' tallies. At this stage, I suppose, the bearers would have a bundle of counter-tallies recording the payments made by the gatherers to them, and also a single tally recording the payment made by them to the Treasury.

³⁵ The language here seems to echo the Northamptonshire geld account (above, note 13) as well as anticipating the twelfth-century Exchequer rolls.

³⁶ My guess would be that in the case of Somerset the fair copy (ch2) had to be begun before the draft (ch1) could be completed (above, note 10). For lack of time, ch1 was cut short, and the remaining paragraphs were entered directly into ch2. After that, the flow was reversed, and scribe beta copied a stretch of text from ch2 into ch1.

missioners' – that is, the commissioners who would shortly be carrying out the survey of Somerset.

But we seem to have stumbled into a contradiction. At first we were saying that the *ch* accounts were not drawn up till after the results of the survey became available; now we are saying that the survey was not carried out till after the *ch* accounts had been compiled. There is no contradiction. From a contemporary description of the workings of the survey, written not by some humble cloister-bound chronicler but by the bishop of Hereford (Stevenson 1907), we know that the survey was a two-stage operation. In stage one a team of local men (this is implied) put together a preliminary version of the survey report (of the *B* text, as I call it) for their county. In stage two a team of outsiders (this is stated explicitly) made sure that the local men had done their job honestly and approved the final version of the survey report. The *B* text would thus have existed in two forms: a provisional version *B1* and a final version *B2*.³⁷ Here we have the solution: *ch* is later than *B1* but earlier than *B2*. Information can flow from *B* into *ch*; from *ch* it can flow back into *B*.

More precisely, the process that I envisage would work like this. The scribe who compiles the *ch* text for each county is working with two source texts: the provisional version of the survey report, *B1*, and a version of the *geld* account, *g1*. In any normal year, *g1* would be regarded as the final version; but this is not a normal year. An opportunity exists such as never existed before to work out exactly how much money is being lost to the king, and scribe alpha makes the most of it. For each hundred in turn, he can, if he wishes, compile from *B1* an ideal *geld* account. He can find the total number of *geldable* hides (if it is not given) by adding up all the assessments recorded here. He can make a list of the manors which are held in domain directly from the king, noting for each the name of the baron and the number of hides in domain. By adding up those numbers, he can find the number of hides for which deductions are allowed. Then, by subtraction, he can find the number of hides which have to pay, and so, by multiplication, the number of pence which this hundred owes to the king. Though I do not say that he actually bothers to do this, in principle that is what is happening: the scribe is comparing *g1* with an imaginary *geld* account derived from *B1*. Thus, when he finds a deduction allowed in *g1* which is proved by *B1* to be unjustified, he omits from *ch* the entry that he found in *g1* and replaces it with an entry of his own at the end of the paragraph, saying that 'the king has not had the *geld*' from the land in question.³⁸ Because *B1* is organized cadastrally, it is

³⁷ Whether *B2* was a new manuscript or the old manuscript with an added layer of annotation is a question which had probably better not be asked, because there seems to be no hope of answering it. ((But I disregard my advice and come back to this question later (below, pp. 122–3).))

³⁸ Suppose, for example, that he finds in *g1-So*, among the deductions claimed in Meleborna hundred, 'Sanson 5.75 hides'. Consulting *B1-So*, he discovers that the only manor in this hundred held by Sanson is not held directly from the king; so he disallows the deduction, and replaces *g1*'s entry with this: 'From 5.75 hides which Sanson holds from the bishop

relatively easy for him to identify the corresponding entries (much easier than it is for us, working with *ch* on one side, *C* or *DB* on the other); but some guesswork, it seems, must also be involved.

From the *geld* accounts, we can fill in some parts of the story which bishop Rotbert did not think worth mentioning. The draft version of the survey report was sent up to the Treasury when finished, not just for safekeeping, but so that it could be worked over in detail (and in a great hurry, one would guess) by the Treasury officials. When the second team of commissioners were ready to start their work, they were given the *B1* text which they had to verify; and they were also given a copy of the corresponding *ch* text, so that they would know what action was expected from them by the Treasury. And thus we can understand why bishop Rotbert ends his description of the survey by deploring the outbreaks of violence which ensued, 'arising from the collection of the king's money'. After Easter, usually, the *geld* was over and done with; but that was not the case this year. Across the country, in hundred after hundred, people found out that more money was demanded from them. Not everyone took the news calmly.

2

With the Wiltshire accounts I propose to deal as briefly as possible, concentrating on the features in which they differ from the *ch* accounts. Reproductions have been published in some number (Table 17).³⁹ The sequence was worked out correctly by Ellis (1816); anyone doubtful of that should consult the appendix (below, p. 69) before reading further. For reasons which will appear, I refer to these booklets as *g2-Wi*, *g3-Wi* and *g4-Wi*. Not counting scribe mu (who made some important additions in *g3*), four scribes are represented here (Table 16). Two of them, rho and sigma,⁴⁰ occur nowhere else in this manuscript; the other two, tau and ksi, wrote portions of the *C* text for Dorset.⁴¹ It seems fair to say, without pressing the distinction too far, that booklets *g2* and *g4* are fair copies, each largely the work of one

of Bayeux the king has not had the *geld*' (*ch-So-80v*). In due course, the second team of commissioners investigate the matter. They confirm that the manor is held by Sanson from the bishop of Bayeux, not directly from the king; they also report that there are 5 hides in domain here (and 0.75 hides elsewhere, in a small manor added to the large one). These are the facts reported in *B2-So* (and ultimately in *DB-So*). In the circumstances, the second fact is immaterial – but the commissioners record it anyway, because the question has come up.

³⁹ ((I have added the sample reproduced by Thorn and Thorn (2001).))

⁴⁰ Sigma is the scribe whose hand has been recognized by Ker (1976, 1977) and Webber (1989, 1992) in several manuscripts from Salisbury.

⁴¹ To scribe tau I assign two stints here and two stints in *C-Do* (37v3–8r7, 51r17–v6) which I previously left unattributed. Having looked at the evidence again, I feel fairly sure (though still not quite as confident as I should like) that these stints are tau's work. In that I come round to agreeing with Webber (1989); but I still hold to the view that the scribe whom I call theta (occurring only in *C-So*) is a different individual from tau. As for scribe ksi, there are several stints in *C* which I attribute to him (38r7–17, 42r1–8, 47r1–8r3, 48v1–9r12, 50r16–v3, 50v10–1r17, 58r12–18); they include the sole surviving entry for Wiltshire (47r1–11).

scribe, while booklet g3 is a working draft, a collaborative effort by a team of scribes. In g3 we see g2's text being put into a new shape, ready to be copied out again as g4. Again the presumption is (I do not flinch from this) that a similar set of booklets existed for every county where the geld had been collected. That this particular set is the only one to survive is a fact for which we shall have to seek some explanation.

Booklet g2-Wi. Before it became the starting-point for the compilation process which resulted in g4, g2 was the culmination of an earlier compilation process. Before we look forward, we have to try looking back. In the small size of the leaves and the closely ruled lines, g2 is very obviously different, not just from g3 and g4, but from all the rest of the collection. At first sight, it is a quire of 6. But Ker (1977, p. 804) pointed out that a blank leaf which ought to follow these became separated from them when the manuscript was rebound in 1816. So it seems rather to be a quire of 8, the first leaf of which has been cut away and lost. (I suggest below that this missing leaf may not have been blank.)

The text, by and large, is similar to what we would have expected to find in ch-Wi, if ch-Wi had survived. It is organized in the same way, hundred by hundred; the information that is given here is mostly the same that is given in the ch booklets. For a hundred where no complications have arisen, the account will look something like this:

In Thornegrava hundred there are 113 hides.
The barons own 46.875 hides of it in domain.
 Willelm de Ou, 5 hides
 the abbot of Glastonbury, 32
 Hernolf, 4.875
 Hunfrid de Insula, 5

For 66.125 hides there have been paid to the king 4761 pence (2v).

One difference between this and the ch accounts has already been noted: the sum which has been 'paid to the king' is the sum paid to the gatherers on the spot, not the sum eventually paid into the Treasury. That becomes clear from an entry like this one:

For 83 hides there have been paid to the king 5976 pence. Of this sum, those who collected the geld have withheld 324 pence till now (2v-3r).

In this hundred the gatherers have received payment for 83 hides, but the sum that they have forwarded is only 5652 pence. (This is the sum which ch-Wi would tell us 'the king has' in his treasury.) A special code in the margin, equivalent to 'N.B.', draws attention to this entry.⁴²

The same entry goes on to say that of the sum withheld by the gatherers 'Walter and his colleagues have recovered

⁴² In fact the code is *d.m.*, to be construed as *dignum memoria*, 'something worth remembering' (Ker 1976, p. 26). It occurs frequently in g2 (32 instances), occasionally in g3 (3 instances).

72 pence' (3r). In the Wiltshire accounts we catch occasional glimpses like this of two teams of investigators, both in pursuit of geld which for one reason or another has failed to reach the Treasury. Several times we hear of 'Walter and his colleagues'. Twice we hear of 'the bishop and his colleagues' (2r), 'bishop Willelm and his colleagues' (1v).⁴³ In one hundred, both teams have been active:⁴⁴

From those who collected the geld, Walter and his colleagues recovered 63 pence, not counting 105 pence which the bishop and his colleagues have found (2r).

From Ellis onwards, historians have identified these investigators as the commissioners carrying out the survey of Wiltshire; but it was only after the publication of bishop Rotbert's description of the survey that the significance of the entries could be fully understood. Bishop Rotbert speaks of two successive teams of commissioners: here, in one county, we see them both in action. The point to be stressed, however, is the fact that we find no entries resembling these in any of the ch accounts.

In g2, conversely, we find no entries of the kind which in ch appear to have originated with scribe alpha – those entries in which he points out cases where 'the king has not had the geld' which apparently he ought to have had. If we look more closely, however, we discover that questions of the kind which were raised by scribe alpha are being answered here. In Selchelai hundred, for example, there is a long list of the deductions claimed by the king's barons. Three of these entries are flagged by codes in the margin:

Rotbert 2 hides which he holds from Willelm de Braiosa, ...
Gislebert Gibart 2.625 hides which he holds from the abbot of Glastonbury, ...
Edward the sheriff 0.5 hides which ::::: his predecessor holds at rent (2r).

These are not idle remarks. They are the answers to questions posed in ch-Wi. The meaning is: 'Yes, you are right, these deductions should not have been allowed – in the first two cases because the man who has claimed the deduction does not hold directly from the king, in the third case be-

⁴³ There were two bishops named Willelm at the time, the bishops of Durham and Elmham. In the light of other evidence, it is tolerably certain that the man in question here is the bishop of Durham. But in either case bishop Willelm is an outsider, holding no land in Wiltshire.

⁴⁴ In this paragraph, atypically, the sum said to have been paid to the king 'at the appointed terms', 6519 pence, is the sum which the Treasury acknowledges receiving on time; the two sums recovered later bring the total to 6687 pence, exactly right for 92.875 hides. The corresponding entry in g3 is: 'and the collectors of the geld withheld 168 pence' (8r). In g4 the scribe miscopies the number of hides as 93.125 (he writes *dim' uirg'* instead of *dim' uirg' minus*) and is then confounded by his own error. Checking the arithmetic, he decides that the account is short by 18 pence more than g3 says – and promptly assumes that the gatherers are to blame. So the entry turns into this: 'The four collectors of the geld withheld 186 pence' (14v). (Later, the missing word *minus* was inserted above the line, but the misbegotten calculation was not put right. One hopes that the gatherers were not forced to pay for scribe sigma's clerical error.) Just from comparing the different versions of this entry, it is clear that Ellis's ordering must be right.

Page	Reproduction	Scribes represented
1v	Darlington 1955, opp. p. 180	ksi
8r	Darlington 1955, opp. p. 181	rho (1–11), sigma (12–30), tau (30–41), mu (margin)
8v1–9	Thorn and Thorn 2001, ill. 27	rho
9r1–6	Webber 1989, pl. 3	tau
9r5–18	Ker 1976, pl. III (a)	tau (5–6), sigma (7–18)
9r7–12	Webber 1989, pl. 1	sigma
14r	Darlington 1955, opp. p. 216	sigma (1–20), tau (20–8), sigma (28–9)
15r	Ha11am 1986, pl. 7	sigma

Table 17. Published reproductions of sample scripts from the batch 4 booklets.

cause he does not hold in domain.⁴⁵ Accordingly, if we follow these entries forward into g4, we find that they are removed from the list of deductions, put at the end of the paragraph, and transformed into outright accusations:

Rodbert de Braiosa has withheld the geld of 2 hides, Gislebert Gibard has withheld the geld of 2.625 hides, a certain thegn of Edward the sheriff's has withheld the geld of 0.5 hides (15r).

Thus booklet g2-Wi belongs to a later stage in the proceedings than the ch booklets. Scribe alpha, when he wrote those booklets, was looking ahead to the time when the second team of commissioners would do its work: that work has now been done. What we have here, I suppose, is a copy taken from the original geld account, g1-Wi, incorporating all the corrections, additions and annotations which had accrued to it by this time. In a manner of speaking (but not a manner of speaking which I would recommend), this booklet seems to be the sole surviving specimen of the 'original returns' – the documentation submitted to the Treasury at the conclusion of the fieldwork phase of the survey. On that view, the scribe who wrote most of it, ksi, was one of the scribes who accompanied the second team of commissioners – bishop Willelm and his colleagues – during their visit to Wiltshire.

Booklets g3-Wi and g4-Wi. Starting with g2, three scribes set about constructing a new version of the text. Booklet g3-Wi is their working draft. Though simplified and rearranged to some extent, the text is mostly derived from g2. But it includes a number of entries, all relating to the king's land, which are not to be found in the source text. It seems a likely guess (but only a guess) that these entries were derived from a separate list of the king's land on g2's missing first leaf. Next, the draft is checked by scribe mu, who inserts in the margins a series of entries, again all relating to the king's land, which he wants to have included in the text. He also adds one whole paragraph at the end. The wording of this final paragraph agrees in every respect with that of the ch booklets, and we can feel fairly sure that mu's additions were all derived from the lost ch booklet for

Wiltshire. Finally the draft is corrected by scribe tau, who makes many small alterations and additions (perhaps also derived from ch-Wi, though I do not insist on that). In the fair copy, g4-Wi, the scribe does some editing as he goes along (especially when he reaches the paragraph added by mu), but in general does not diverge very far from the draft. The last paragraph, apparently left till last because it was problematic, shows a few substantive corrections. They are the work of scribe tau, who, in all three of these booklets, seems to have been responsible for finishing off the text.

By the time that scribe mu intervenes, g3 is certainly in the Treasury; probably it has been there since its inception. Booklet g4, we may infer, was written in the Treasury too. But why, for what purpose, was it written? If we try following the evolution of individual entries, the overall trend is clear. The application of the rules becomes increasingly strict, and the language becomes increasingly explicit. Any geld not paid on time is said to have been 'withheld', and some particular person is accused of having withheld it. This booklet thus becomes something more than a geld account: it is also a bill of indictment. In drawing up this text, the Treasury anticipates a further visitation of the county, by a team of emissaries who will be empowered not just to investigate but to do justice. That was the plan; but the fact that g4 still survives, and still keeps company with g2 and g3, is a fairly strong hint that the plan was not followed through with, at least as far as Wiltshire is concerned.

3

Why some of the ch booklets survive is an easy question, provided that we are content with an easy answer. They survive for the same reason (the same concatenation of reasons) that some of the C booklets survive. Like the C text, the ch booklets were part of the contribution made by the Treasury scribes to the compilation process. When the C booklets were sorted into stacks (above, p. 53), the ch booklets were sorted too: with respect to the stacks which survive in fossilized form, ch-So is at the top of stack 2, ch-Do at the bottom of stack 3, ch-Co at the top and ch-Dn just below the top of stack 4. This is all more or less as it should be. If the C text does not survive (as is true for all counties up to and including Wiltshire), the ch booklet does not

⁴⁵ In this last instance the man who used to own the land remains in possession of it, but now he is Edward's tenant. (His name has been erased in g2; in DB he is called Azor (DB-Wi-69vb).) It is he, not Edward, who in g4 is accused of withholding the geld.

survive either. If the C text does survive (as is true for all counties from Dorset onwards, though for Dorset only in a qualified sense), the ch booklet survives too.

Why the Wiltshire booklets survive is a harder question, not to be answered all at once. We should probably start by asking why it is that not just one but three different versions survive. To that the best answer will be, I suggest, that some checking process was intended for which all three would be needed.⁴⁶ This explanation will only work if we are willing to accept that the intention was not fulfilled: once the checking had been done, it would no longer have been necessary for all three versions to be kept together (or for the first two versions to be kept at all, as far as one can tell). But I see no difficulty here. The survival of all three versions can be seen as another sign – like the fossilized stacks of C booklets – that the compilation process was brought to an unexpected halt before it had quite been completed.

This theory will explain why the survival of one version might entail the survival of all three; but it does not explain why any one of them does actually survive. To that the answer is obvious, up to a point. There is some complementarity at work here. These Wiltshire accounts survive because the Treasury's own account does not: they survive because they were substituted for it. So the question to ask is why ch-Wi does not survive. Again the answer is obvious, up to a point: for the same reason that the C text for Wiltshire does not survive. Shortly before the work was interrupted, all the C booklets relating to Wiltshire were separated out and removed, to be used for some purpose which was clear enough at the time, even if we find it hard to see the sense of it now. At the same time, with the same purpose in view, the ch booklet for Wiltshire was removed; and this parallel batch of accounts was put in its place, for the time being. They became, temporarily, part of stack 3, i.e. the stack of C-Wido booklets not currently in use. (The Treasury, it seems, would need to have some sort of record available, in case any queries arose.) There was (I assume) nothing new about this: the same thing would have happened repeatedly before, for every county that preceded Wiltshire in the sequence. But then, while Wiltshire was being dealt with, the work suddenly stopped, and the temporary arrangements existing at that moment achieved an unintended permanence; in fact they still exist.

Appendix Sequencing the Wiltshire accounts

Exclusively within this appendix, I will refer to the three Wiltshire accounts as A, B and C, the notation used by Darlington (1955). The sequence that I aim to establish is $A > B > C$, where the $>$ signs denote that B was copied from A

⁴⁶ In normal circumstances, after making a copy, one checks it against the exemplar. But if one plans to make a copy of the copy, it is more sensible to delay the checking until one can check this third manuscript against the first one.

and that C was copied from B. To a large extent in B, to a lesser extent in A and C, it is necessary to distinguish (as far as this can be done) between the initial and the final state of the text. In such a case I write $A^+ > B$, meaning that B was copied from A, but not until after A had been altered to A^+ .

In Table 18, I print four versions of the text for one small hundred.⁴⁷ If readers wish to experiment with different sequences, of course they are welcome to do so. (The only constraint is that B must be placed somewhere before B^+ .) But it seems fairly obvious to me that the sequence is right as it stands. There are two corrections in A^+ : a few words have been erased in one place, two words inserted in another. Both corrections are carried forward into B. The differences appearing in B are the omission of the number of hides in domain and the inclusion of an entry for 4 hides of the king's land.⁴⁸ Probably the number of hides in the hundred was increased by 4 accordingly, but the text is indistinct at this point. In B^+ three corrections are made: the number of hides in domain is recalculated and inserted (by scribe tau),⁴⁹ an entry is inserted (by scribe mu) for 5 hides of Herold's land which has not paid its quota, and the total number of hides in the hundred is adjusted upwards (probably by scribe tau).⁵⁰ These corrections are carried forward into C.⁵¹ The only important difference appearing in C affects the entry for 2 hides of land belonging to a man named Gunter. Already in A we are told that Gunter has been allowed a deduction for these 2 hides,⁵² but that he is not entitled to it: Tuold gave these hides to his niece (Gunter's wife, by implication), so Gunter holds from Tuold, not from the king. In C, finally, this meaning is made explicit: 'From two hides Gunter has withheld the geld.'

In a few places, two or more entries have been added together and turned into a single entry. As evidence for $A > B$, we can find two entries in A:

Ricardus de terra Alberici ii hid' & dim', De terra eiusdem A. iii hid' & dim', ... (2r),

corresponding with one entry in B:

⁴⁷ The reader who would like to see another example will find three versions of the account for Calne hundred printed in parallel by Birch (1887, p. 58). He understood the relationships between them correctly (p. 57).

⁴⁸ For this addition we have to find some explanation (or else we shall have to reverse the sequence, assuming that the entry was omitted from A rather than added in B). It is one of a series of similar additions in B, all derived, I suggest, from a lost section of the A text (a section which occupied the missing leaf at the front of this booklet), entries from which were woven into the B text.

⁴⁹ He includes the king's 4 hides, but does not count Gunter's 2 hides.

⁵⁰ The new total, 60 hides, includes the 4 hides which first appear in B and the 5 hides which first appear in B^+ .

⁵¹ Instead of a shorthand note, 'Barons 22.5 hides', C has a properly worded sentence; but a copyist with any sense could construct this sentence for himself, modelling it on the parallel statement in one of the other paragraphs.

⁵² But in fact 12 pence has been paid: hence the extra third of a half of a hide and the extra shilling appearing in the last sentence.

A+: In hund' de Wrde s't l & i hid'. De his h'nt barones in d'nio xx hid' & dim' :::: :::: :::: :::: Inde h't Tuoldus vi hid' (& dim'), & Gunterus duas hid' quas tuoldus dedit nepti suę, de his ii hid' redditi s't xii d', Rotbertus filius Rolui vii hid', Grimboldus v hid', & pro xxx hid' & dim' & tercia parte dim' hid' reddite s't regi ix li' & iiiii sol'.

B: In hund' de Worda s't hid'. De his **h't rex iiiii hid' in d'nio**, Tuoldus vi hid' 7 dim', Gunterus ii hid' quas Tuoldus dedit nepti suę, de his ii hid' redditi s't **regi** xii den', Rodbertus filius Roulf vii hid', Grimboldus v hid', 7 pro xxx hid' 7 dim' 7 tercia parte dimidię hid' reddite s't regi ix lib' 7 iiiii sol'.

B+: In hund' de Worda s't (**ix**) hid'. (**Barones xxii h' 7 dim'.**) De his h't rex iiiii hid' in d'nio, Tuoldus vi hid' 7 dim', Gunterus ii hid' quas Tuoldus dedit nepti suę, de his ii hid' redditi s't regi xii den', Rodbertus filius Roulf vii hid', Grimboldus v hid', 7 pro xxx hid' 7 dim' 7 tercia parte dimidię hid' reddite s't regi ix lib' 7 iiiii sol', (**& pro v hid' quas uill' tenent de terra heroldi n' h't rex ghildum.**)

C: In hund' de Worda s't lx hid'. **De his h'nt** Baron' xxii hid' 7 dim' **in d'nio**. Inde h't Rex iiiii hid' in d'nio, Tuoldus vi hid' 7 dim', Rodbertus f' Roulf vii hid', Grimbaldus v hid', 7 pro xxx hid' 7 dim' 7 tercia parte dim' hide redite s't regi ix lib' 7 iiiii sol'. De v hid' quas ten' uillani de terra haroldi n' h't rex geldum. **De ii hid' retinuit Gunterus geldum preter xii d'.**

Table 18. Four versions of the text for one Wiltshire hundred (A from 3r, B and B+ from 9r, C from 15v).

Ricardus de terra Alberici vi hid', ... (8r).

Similarly, as evidence for B > C, we can find six entries in B:

E. uicecomes vi hid' 7 i uirga, Osbernus gifard iiiii hid', ... Eduuardus uic' viii hid' dim' uirga minus, ... Eduardus uic' iii hid', ... Osbernus gifard i hid', ... Eduuardus uic' d' hid', ... (8r),

corresponding with two entries in C:

E. uicecomes xvii hid' 7 dim' 7 dim' uirg', Osbernus gifard v hid', ... (14r).

This is very strong evidence. It is easy to see, in the second case, how C could derive from B, by way of a little arithmetic (which we can check) on the part of the copyist; it is impossible to see how B could derive from C – impossible, that is, unless we are willing to suppose that B also had access to some lost source, more detailed than C. There are times, it is true, when one finds oneself obliged to resort to some ad hoc explanation of this kind.⁵³ I am not sure

that textual evidence is ever absolutely conclusive; very often some awkward facts turn up which have to be explained away. But here we have good evidence in favour of the sequence A > B > C, and we are not going to abandon that conclusion unless it clashes with some countervailing evidence of even greater cogency. That is not the case. There is other evidence – changes in the order of the paragraphs, for instance – which tends towards the same conclusion as this. There is, as far as I can see, no evidence which points unequivocally in the opposite direction.

How, then, did Darlington (1955) arrive at a different result? He was vague about B's position in the scheme of things, but sure that C was earlier than A. That was implied, he thought, by a pair of entries like these:

C: The collectors withheld one penny (13r).

A: Those who collected the geld have now paid one penny which was left over (1r).

or these:

C: The collectors withheld 120 pence (15r).

A: Those who collected the geld withheld 120 pence, and now this sum has been paid (2v).

In C we are told that a certain sum has been withheld; in A we are told that this sum has been paid; therefore A is describing a later state of affairs than C. That is Darlington's argument – the beginning and the end of it, as far as I can see.

But that is not the only way in which this evidence can be read. As I read it, the fact that the money has been paid does not alter the fact that the money was withheld in the first place – not paid when it should have been paid. Now that it has the money, the Treasury can cease to concern itself with the details; but somebody has committed an offence, and that cannot be forgotten.

⁵³ I just did so myself (above, note 48), to account for the presence of an entry in B which is not to be found in A.