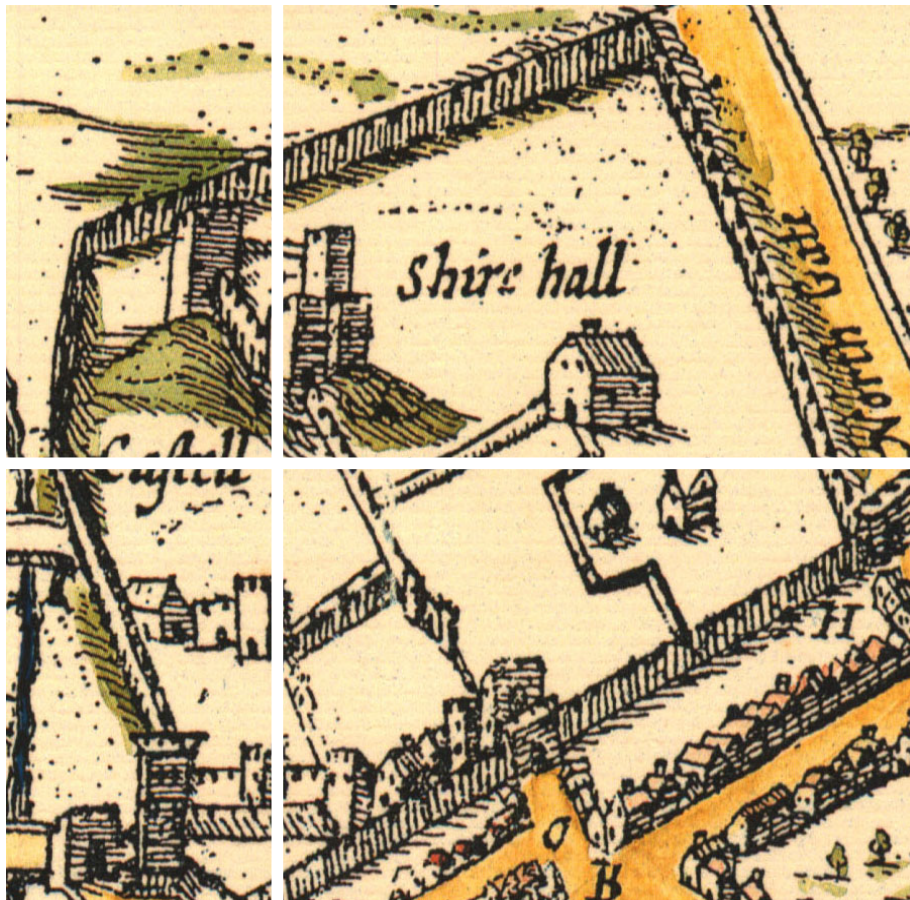


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and the Norman 'capital', c. 1199–c. 1204**

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King John and Rouen:

Royal itineration, kingship, and the Norman 'capital', c. 1199–c. 1204¹

On Sunday 25 April 1199, before he became king of England, John was acclaimed Duke of Normandy in Rouen Cathedral and invested with a coronet of golden roses.² *The Life of St Hugh of Lincoln*, written with the considerable benefit of hindsight later in the reign, claimed that John was 'little absorbed by the rite', adding that he carelessly dropped the ducal lance placed 'reverently in his hand' by the archbishop of Rouen, Walter of Coutances. Those present declared that 'this was a bad portent', later manifested in the loss of Normandy and other parts of John's continental inheritance, circumstances the author of the *Life* attributes to the king's lack of faith in God.³ This passage encapsulates the stereotypical view of John, portraying a ruler unconcerned with his duchy, and unimpressed by the ceremonial of inauguration in its foremost religious building, Rouen Cathedral, in the regional, indeed ducal, capital.⁴ Such views are undoubtedly what commentators on John's reign, down to the

1 I would like to thank Elma Brenner, Janet Webster, and Peter Webster for reading and commenting on versions of this article, and Peter Webster for his help in the preparation of the map. The paper was originally presented at the first of two sessions on the medieval city of Rouen, organised by Elma Brenner and Leonie Hicks, at the International Medieval Congress in Leeds, on 9 July 2007. I am grateful to the participants in these sessions – in particular the moderator, Daniel Power – for their many helpful suggestions and questions. I would also like to thank Fanny Madeline for sending me a copy of her paper.

2 W.L. Warren, *King John* (London: Book Club Associates by arrangement with Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1974), pp. 48–50.

3 D.L. Douie and H. Farmer (eds), *Magna Vita Sancti Hugonis – The Life of St Hugh of Lincoln*, 2 vols (London: Nelson's Medieval Texts, 1961–2), vol. 2, p. 144.

4 On the pros and cons of the use of the word 'capital' to describe Rouen in this period, see D. Bates, 'Rouen from 900 to 1204: From Scandinavian Settlement to Angevin "Capital"', in J. Stratford (ed.), *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Rouen* (Tring: British Archaeological Association, Conference Transactions 12, 1993 for 1986), p. 5; B. Gauthiez, 'Paris, un Rouen capétien? (Développements comparés de Rouen et Paris sous les règnes de Henri II et Philippe-Auguste)', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 16 (1993), pp. 119, 123, and 134–5;

present day, have consistently preferred to believe.⁵ This article will argue that the duke's relationship with Rouen calls such negativity into question.

In considering King John and Rouen, this study will take the reign of the last duke as the focal point for discussion of the importance of Rouen at the end of Angevin rule in Normandy. It will pose two questions. Firstly, how often was John *at* Rouen between his acclamation as duke and the fall of the city to King Philip Augustus of France on 24 June 1204, the event regarded as marking the so-called 'loss of Normandy'?⁶ To summarise the answer, of the regions of the Angevin Empire, John was usually to be found in Normandy, with Rouen occupying a place of paramount importance. Secondly, what did King John do *for* Rouen? Here, analysis of royal documents referring to the city and its inhabitants reveals that Rouen's office-holders and merchants were key figures in the implementation of government orders on the ground, an involvement that was not without reward. In addition, John demonstrated his awareness of the significance of the Norman ducal capital not only through his regular presence in the city, but also through his largesse to Rouen's churches and churchmen.

J.C. Holt, 'The End of the Anglo-Norman Realm', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 61 (1975), p. 244. In a paper presented at the International Medieval Congress in Leeds in July 2007, Fanny Madeline argued that Rouen did not meet all the functions of a capital in the second half of the twelfth century: F. Madeline, 'Rouen and its place in the building policy of the Angevin kings' (unpublished conference paper, International Medieval Congress, Leeds, 9 July 2007). I have applied the term to describe Rouen in the sense of the city as the principal urban centre of the duchy of Normandy, and as one of the most important locations in the so-called Angevin 'Empire'.

5 Sidney Packard, for example, writes that John 'set the key-note of his reign by scoffing at the ceremonies of his investiture': S.R. Packard, 'King John and the Norman Church', *Harvard Theological Review* 15 (1922), p. 20.

6 For a critique of this term, see L. Grant, 'Architectural Relationships between England and Normandy, 1100–1204', in D. Bates and A. Curry (eds), *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages* (London and Rio Grande: The Hambledon Press, 1994), p. 117.

The importance of Rouen on the royal itinerary, 1199–1204

In order to answer the question of how often King John was at Rouen, it is worthwhile to begin with a survey of the royal itinerary as a whole. Normandy emerges as the hub of the Angevin Empire. John Gillingham cites figures suggesting that Henry II based himself in his French territories for roughly 63% of his time, with just over two-thirds of this spent in Normandy. Similarly, after his return from crusade and captivity, Richard I passed a total of over three years in Normandy, one year in Anjou, eight months in Aquitaine, and less than two months in England.⁷ In the early years of John's reign, Normandy continued to be the axis around which Angevin itinerant rule was based, so much so that Gillingham, hardly John's greatest fan, concludes that 'so far as his itinerary is concerned', John 'was a typical Angevin ruler' who 'became an English king only by default and against his will'.⁸

However, Gillingham's statistics for John's reign only cover the period 1199–1202, and so cannot be used as evidence for the full extent of John's active rule in Normandy. In terms of the present investigation this is a problem, because Rouen dominates John's itinerary in 1203. The following analysis is based on T.D. Hardy's itinerary of King John, published in 1835 in the Record Commission edition of the Patent Rolls. This reveals the king's known whereabouts across his reign, and can be augmented, occasionally, by evidence derived from *Memoranda Roll 1 John, Liberate*

7 J. Gillingham, 'The Angevin Empire', in J. Gillingham, *Richard Coeur de Lion. Kingship, Chivalry and War in the Twelfth Century* (London and Rio Grande: The Hambledon Press, 1994), p. 56. For a counter-argument, that Normandy was the major loser from the creation of the Angevin Empire, see L. Musset, 'Quelques problèmes posés par l'annexion de la Normandie au domaine royal français', in R.H. Bautier (ed.), *La France de Philippe Auguste: le temps des mutations* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1982), pp. 292–4.

8 Gillingham, 'Angevin Empire', p. 56, and see also the statistics presented at p. 54.

Roll 2 John, and the printed *Cartae Antiquae Rolls*.⁹ The itinerary was surveyed in terms of the locations John visited and the number of occasions he is recorded at each between his inauguration as duke in April 1199 and the fall of Rouen in June 1204. In this period his whereabouts are known for almost exactly two-thirds of the time.¹⁰

John visited 245 locations in the Angevin Empire during the period under discussion.¹¹ Of these, 121 were in the Angevin lands of modern-day France, and 124 were in England. This apparently even distribution is, however, misleading. When the statistics are examined on a regional basis, Normandy emerges as the most important, not only in comparison with the French regions, but also in comparison with England. John visited 76 locations in Normandy, 68 in southern England, 45 in his French lands outside Normandy, 31 in the Midlands and eastern counties of England, and 25 locations north of the Mersey and Humber rivers. More significant, however, are the number of *occasions* John is to be found at each location. This shows how much time he spent in each region, and clearly reinforces the view that the French lands were of particular significance, especially Normandy. The 124 locations

9 T.D. Hardy, 'Itinerary of King John, &c.', in T.D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium In Turri Londinensi asservati. Vol. 1, Pt. 1, 1199–1216* (London: Record Commission, 1835); *The Memoranda Roll for the Michaelmas Term of the First Year of the Reign of King John, together with Fragments of the Originalia Roll of the Seventh Year of King Richard I (1195–6), the Liberate Roll of the Second Year of King John (1200–1), and the Norman Roll of the Fifth Year of King John (1203)*, with an introduction by H.G. Richardson (London: Pipe Roll Society, 59, new series 21, 1943). The additions to the royal itinerary are summarised in the introduction to this volume. L. Landon (ed.), *The Cartae Antiquae Rolls 1–10* (London: Pipe Roll Society, 55, new series 17, 1939); J.C. Davies (ed.), *The Cartae Antiquae Rolls 11–20* (London: Pipe Roll Society, 71, new series 33, 1960). For April 1199, information was taken from Warren, *King John*, pp. 48–50. These sources form the basis of the calculations in the following discussion.

10 I.e. on 1249 days out of a total of 1888, or 66.2%. Although not included in the calculations that follow, of the 639 days on which John's whereabouts are unknown, it seems that he was somewhere in his French territories on 465 and somewhere in England on 138. It is unclear whether he was in his French lands or in England on only 36 days during the period.

11 He also visited one location outside the Angevin lands: Paris.

in England account for only 436 occasions between 1199 and 1204, whereas the 121 places in the French lands account for 1030 visits. The Norman statistics dominate the latter figure, accounting for 804 examples of John's presence, almost twice as many individual visits as are evidenced in England. The Normandy total represents 78% of the king's appearances in his French lands, and nearly 55% of the combined figure for his itineration in England and France.¹² So, contrary to the remarks of the *Life of St Hugh of Lincoln*, Normandy was of central importance to John.

Interestingly, John's focus on Normandy after 1199 seems to have been a new development. It has been argued previously that 'John took an active interest in his Norman county' of Mortain (which he was granted in 1189) during the period before he became duke.¹³ However, Nicholas Vincent's recent examination of the surviving charters (or evidence of charters) of John issued before 1199 calls this view into question. Vincent argues that, even though the future king was resident in the duchy for much, if not all, of the period between 1193 and 1199, the documentary evidence for his activity reveals a marked preoccupation with his affairs in England and Ireland. He does not appear to have felt at home in Normandy, nor to have considered himself to be a Norman, and showed no interest at all in the Angevin lands south of the duchy. Moreover, in 1194, as he tried to safeguard the position he had established during Richard I's absence, he showed that he was prepared to grant away important

12 Of the figures for England, John is to be found in Wiltshire (58 instances on the royal itinerary) and Hampshire (81 times) on 139 occasions, or 31% of the English total. He therefore gives the impression of spending almost a third of his time in England as close as possible to the Norman duchy.

13 D. Power, 'King John and the Norman Aristocracy', in S.D. Church (ed.), *King John. New Interpretations* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1999), pp. 122–3.

frontier regions to Philip Augustus.¹⁴ So, his 'reputation with most Norman lords cannot have been particularly high' in 1199.¹⁵ Nevertheless, he was able to secure enough support to succeed Richard as duke and king, and when he did so his itineration suggests a desire to learn about his inheritance as quickly as possible. In the extensive travels of the early years of his reign, he revealed an appreciation (which perhaps only dawned on him when Richard died) of how, amongst the continental lands of the Angevin Empire, and even of the Empire as a whole, 'the real centre lay in Normandy'.¹⁶

But what of Rouen, and the evidence for John's presence in the city after he became duke? The city's importance had been underlined in 1199, when Richard I, on his deathbed, instructed William Marshal to secure the city's keep and the royal treasure.¹⁷ Between 1199 and 1204, analysis covering the whole of the Angevin Empire reveals the Norman capital as the place where John was by far most frequently to be found, thereby maintaining the status accorded to the city by his predecessors.¹⁸

14 N. Vincent, 'Jean, comte de Mortain: le futur roi et ses domaines en Normandie. 1183–1199', in A.-M. Flambard Héricher and V. Gazeau (eds), *1204. La Normandie entre Plantagenêts et Capétiens* (Caen: Publications du CRAHM, 2007), pp. 37–59. John finally granted away these regions in 1200, under the terms of the treaty of Le Goulet. There is, however, no indication that he ever considered abandoning Rouen or the lands of central Normandy.

15 Power, 'King John and the Norman Aristocracy', p. 123.

16 Holt, 'End of the Anglo-Norman Realm', p. 243.

17 F.M. Powicke, *The Loss of Normandy 1189–1204. Studies in the History of the Angevin Empire* (2nd edn, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1960; 1st published 1913, reprinted 1999), p. 130.

18 See the discussion in Bates, 'Rouen from 900 to 1204', pp. 4–5; D. Bates, 'The Rise and Fall of Normandy', in D. Bates and A. Curry (eds), *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages* (London and Rio Grande: The Hambledon Press, 1994), pp. 31–2. Musset is more sceptical, pointing out that William the Conqueror favoured Caen, that Henry II visited Rouen increasingly infrequently, and that the citizens saw Richard I as, '*un souverain absent qui leur coûtait cher*'. – L. Musset, 'Rouen au temps des Francs et sous les ducs (Ve siècle–1204)', in M. Mollat (ed.), *Histoire de Rouen* (Toulouse: Edouard Privat, 1979), pp. 44–6. Madeline argues that Henry II's patronage of Rouen, and his use of the city as a royal

Although the itinerary does not record his presence in Rouen in 1200, nonetheless he was present in the city 156 times during the period under study.¹⁹ This is three times more than anywhere else in Normandy, the nearest comparisons being Roche-Orival (where John was present 51 times) and Roche-Andely (46 times). It is also substantially more than anywhere outside the duchy, where only six locations total more than 20 visits, with the highest figure that for Chinon (with 63 instances of John's presence).²⁰ The relative significance of Rouen and Chinon is one that is open to debate. The latter certainly appears to have been a useful centre of operations and one of the major treasuries of the Angevin Empire, and, indeed, John spent more time there prior to 1203 than he did at Rouen, where he is recorded 48 times up to the end of 1202. It would seem, therefore, that, between 1199 and 1202, Rouen was one among a series of important centres of power of a king with a wide-ranging itinerary. However, John's last full year as Duke of Normandy (1203) deserves special attention, on account of the unprecedented amount of time he spent in the Norman capital.

Why was Rouen the main centre of John's operations in 1203? In part, this was due to necessity. The revolt at Alençon in January 1203 blocked the king's route south, cutting him off from Chinon and the fortresses of Anjou and the Touraine from which 'it was as easy to direct affairs in the heart of Aquitaine as in the heart of

residence ceased after 1174, and that Richard I constructed the Château-Gaillard complex as a new centre of royal power for the duchy. Madeline, 'Rouen'. If so, these policies were reversed by John, especially in 1203.

19 In 1200, he could have visited the city without his presence being evidenced by the government rolls. He may have been present on 5 October, when the city suffered its second fire of the year: A. Chéruef, *Histoire de Rouen pendant l'époque communale 1150–1382*, 2 vols (Rouen: Nicétas Périaux, 1843), vol. 1, pp. 79–80. However, the royal itinerary does not corroborate this, suggesting that on 6 October, John was at Freemantle in Hampshire.

20 The other five locations were Saumur, Le Mans, Winchester, Westminster, and Marlborough.

Normandy'.²¹ There then began a process in which the duke's authority in the duchy was gradually eroded, by the attacks of Philip Augustus along the eastern frontier, and by the rebellious Bretons and their allies in the west and south-west. During the period following the Alençon revolt, John's itinerary shows him criss-crossing his remaining territory in central Normandy, covering an area to the south-west of Rouen and the western Seine valley, extending to the south to Falaise, Argentan, and Verneuil. Occasionally, he made brief forays outside this 'comfort zone', to the north or west. The king was clearly highly active, even though he apparently achieved very little. However, the striking fact about this itinerary is the frequency with which John returned to Rouen and spent time there, even after Philip had begun his siege of Château-Gaillard, 'the bar to Rouen', in late August.²² He clearly saw the city as his stronghold and power base, and after the events of January 1203 he transferred his most important political prisoner, Arthur of Brittany, to the city's keep (where it appears that he was murdered, shortly before Easter, almost certainly by John or on his orders).²³ These are not the actions of a ruler who believed his territories to be lost: had he done so, a far earlier retreat to England would surely have been in order. When he did leave Normandy, in early December 1203, the combination of time spent in Rouen and itineration around the duchy would have provided him with a

21 Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 9 and 10–11. Warren writes of the river (the Loire) and the road between Angers and Tours as the 'strategic hub of the Angevin Empire'. – Warren, *King John*, p. 51; see also pp. 80–1 and 84 for some of the problems created by John in his southern lands. For a recent assessment of the revolt at Alençon and its significance, see D. Power, 'The end of Angevin Normandy: the revolt at Alençon (1203)', *Historical Research* 74 (2001), pp. 444–64.

22 Warren, *King John*, p. 86.

23 On the fate of Arthur of Brittany, see Warren, *King John*, pp. 82–3; Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 157 and 309–28. Holt argues that Arthur's claim, and the treatment of the Breton prince, are key to an understanding the events of John's reign. – J.C. Holt, 'King John and Arthur of Brittany', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 44 (2000), pp. 82–103.

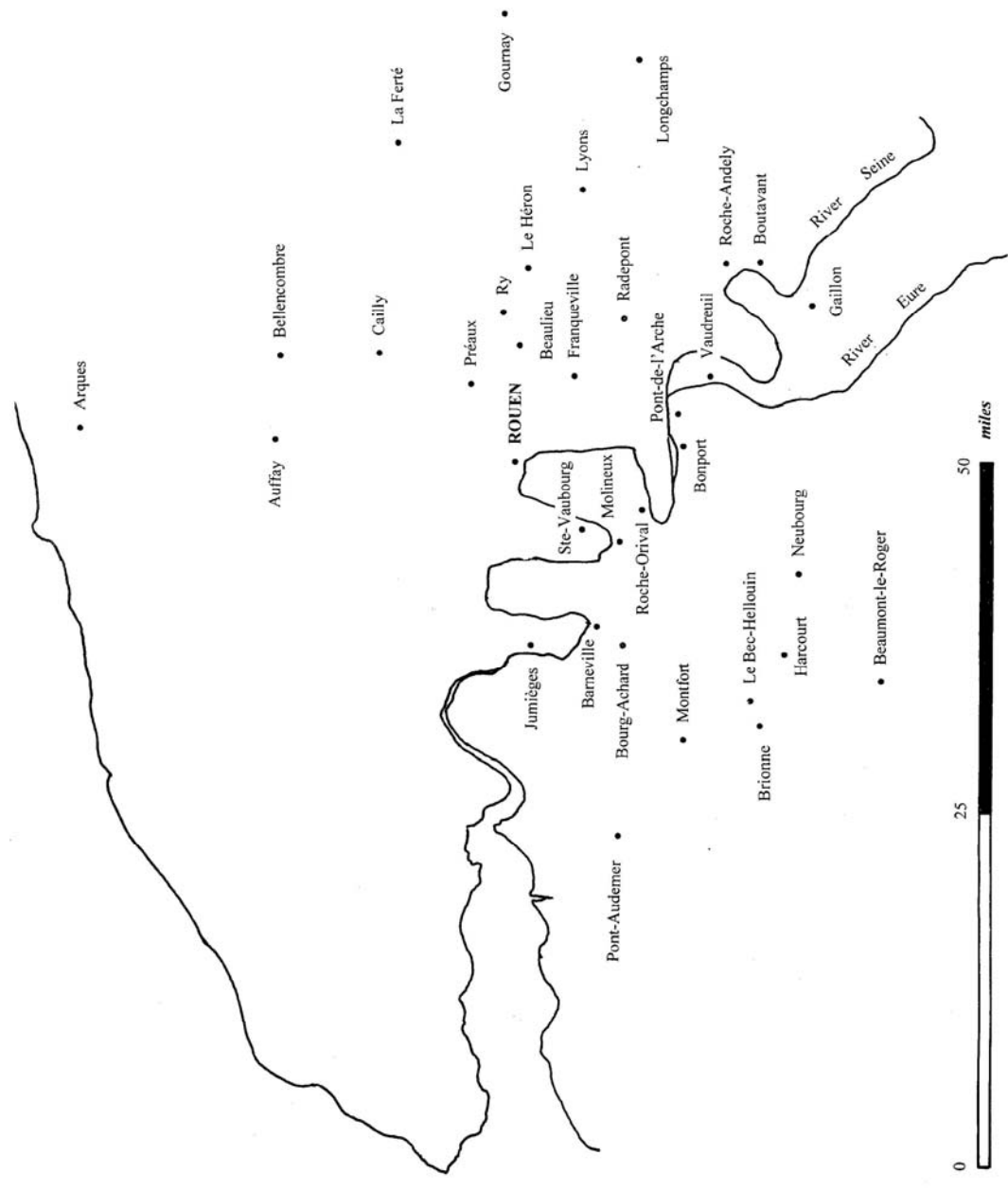
keen sense of what was needed to regain the upper-hand. The events of the early months of 1204 suggest that John was preparing an army to lead to Normandy, but that he was thwarted by the momentum of Philip's successful military campaign.²⁴ However, his limited achievements in 1203, his repeated failure to make a meaningful response to setbacks, and the manner of his departure, created the impression of flight, and of abandoning the duchy to its fate.²⁵

Between John's accession in 1199 and his departure from the duchy in 1203, the importance of Rouen can also be seen in how often John spent time *near* the Norman ducal capital. The Norman locations on the itinerary can be mapped to show the frequency with which John was within a comfortable day's ride of Rouen (see map). In terms of royal government, this primarily shows that if petitioners arrived in Rouen and found the king absent, they would not have had to travel far to find the court. Such mapping suggests a revision to John Gillingham's argument 'that there was something approaching a capital on the 20-mile highway between Rouen and Andely'.²⁶ Here, the term 'highway' is perhaps misleading. John certainly frequented Rouen and Roche-Andely, but a route 'as the crow flies' between them reveals only two sites that received royal visits, Franqueville and Radepont, accounting for the royal presence only three times between 1199 and the end of 1203. The River Seine provides a more promising means of analysis. The winding path of the river between Rouen and Andely takes in four locations regularly visited by the duke: Roche-Orival, Bonport, Pont-de-l'Arche, and Vaudreuil, accounting for a combined total of 103 visits.

24 Warren, *King John*, pp. 94–9; Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 251–60.

25 See the comments in Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 166–7.

26 Gillingham, 'Angevin Empire', p. 56.



Map of locations on King John's itinerary within a comfortable day's travel of Rouen, 1199-1203

However, a wider analysis is required, taking a radius of approximately 25 miles around the city to show how often the duke was within a day's travel of the Norman capital (see map). In 1199, he was in Rouen on 17 occasions (for instance in August, when he received the homage of Count Baldwin of Flanders), but within a day of the city a further 33 times, a pattern to some extent repeated in 1201.²⁷ Meanwhile, although not recorded in Rouen in 1200, 26 examples can be found of him being no more than a day away, and this in a year when John was engaged in a wide-ranging tour of his continental lands.²⁸ Most strikingly, in 1202 John was in Rouen on 26 occasions, but his Norman itinerary was focused around the capital, both north and south of the Seine, accounting for 109 recorded examples. Combined with the figures for Rouen, this is approximate to a third of the year, and to slightly more than half of the 265 days on which the royal location can be established in 1202. Finally, in 1203, the figures are dominated by the 108 occasions when John was in Rouen. When he ventured outside the capital he was no more than a day away on a further 74 occasions, making a combined total of over half the days for which his whereabouts in 1203 are known.

To summarise, of the many regional centres of power of the Angevin Empire under John, Rouen occupies a pre-eminent position. Between his accession as duke in April 1199 and his final departure from the duchy in December 1203, the city was the single location in which John was most frequently to be found. Even when he was not present there, he was often no more than a day's travel away.

²⁷ For the homage of Baldwin of Flanders see Warren, *King John*, p. 53.

²⁸ In addition to the royal itinerary (Hardy, 'Itinerary of King John'), see Warren, *King John*, pp. 64–5 and 70. John conducted a similar tour of England in 1201.

John's relationship with Rouen: leading citizens as instruments of government

Having thus established the importance of Rouen to John, it is necessary to turn to the second question under discussion: what did King John do *for* Rouen? Later writers, such as Roger of Wendover, claimed that Richard I acknowledged the 'incomparable fidelity' of the city's inhabitants when he bequeathed his heart to the cathedral.²⁹ Was John's relationship with the citizens as close? What follows is based on a survey of the royal archive for letters and charters issued by John whilst he was at Rouen, and those concerning Rouen. The office-holders, leading citizens, and merchants of the city emerge as key players in the enforcement of orders indicating the royal will. The evidence for their role is crucial in highlighting the day-to-day mechanics of Angevin government, and their service was not without its rewards. Here, the primary purpose is to explore the bond between the duke and the ducal capital, but the evidence has wider implications relating to the conduct of John's government as a whole.

The civic officials of Rouen were regularly required to play their part in the enactment of John's orders. They were no doubt happy to do so, in the expectation that the extensive rights and privileges granted by the king's predecessors, across the Angevin lands, would be continued and enhanced.³⁰ John did not disappoint them,

29 H.G. Hewlett (ed.), *Rogeri de Wendover liber qui dicitur Flores Historiarum ab anno domini MCLIV. annoque Henrici Anglorum Regis Secundi primo*, 3 vols (London: Rolls Series, 1886), vol. 1, p. 283.

30 On the rights and trading privileges enjoyed by the citizens of Rouen during the period of Angevin rule, see Chéruef, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, pp. 15–17, 30–1, and 38–9; S. Deck, 'Les marchands de Rouen sous les Ducs', *Annales de Normandie* 3–4 (1956), p. 249; A. Sadourny, 'Les marchands normands en Angleterre au lendemain de la conquête de 1204', *Cahiers d'études médiévales* 1 (1979), p. 133; A. Sadourny, 'Les grandes familles rouennaises au XIIIe siècle et leur rôle dans la cité', in P. Bouet and F. Neveux (eds), *Les villes normandes au Moyen Âge, renaissance, essor, crise* (Caen: Office Universitaire d'Études Normandes, Presses Universitaires de Caen, 2006), pp. 268–9.

and shortly after his accession as duke he confirmed and augmented the rights enjoyed by the Rouennais, in detailed terms.³¹ Nicholas Vincent sees this as acknowledgement of their support for John's accession, but in addition he expected ongoing support for his rule.³² The mayor, in particular, was a regular recipient of royal letters. He was ordered to perform a diverse range of tasks. For instance, in May 1200 he was instructed to pay the expenses of a clerk who had been forced to prolong his stay in Rouen due to illness, to make payments from the revenues of the city to the wife and son of one Domingo de Stella, and to send four tuns of wine to Valognes.³³ These three examples indicate the sort of business in which the office-holders of Rouen were engaged. Presumably this was essential when revenues from the city were involved, for instance when sums from one of the fairs of Rouen were given to Peter de Préaux in 1200, or when John's grants involved houses or plots of lands in the city.³⁴ The involvement of officials might also be expedient, or practical, when the business in hand concerned locations close to Rouen, for instance the nearby Cister-

31 Vincent, 'Jean, comte de Mortain', p. 54. See also Chéruef, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, pp. 57–8 and 250–55.

32 Vincent, 'Jean, comte de Mortain', p. 54.

33 T.D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae in Turri Londinensi asservati: Johanne et Henrico Quinto, Angliae Regibus. Vol. 1. 1200–1205, necnon de anno 1417* (London: Record Commission, 1835), p. 23.

34 T.D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Chartarum In Turri Londinensi asservati, Vol. 1, pt. 1, 1199–1216* (London: Record Commission, 1837), pp. 33b and 70b–71a; Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, pp. 45, 49. On the grant of lordship of the Channel Islands to Peter de Préaux, to which the allocation of revenues in Rouen is connected, see J.A. Everard and J.C. Holt, *Jersey 1204. The forging of an island community* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004), pp. 76–7; D. Power, 'Les dernières années du régime angevin en Normandie', in M. Aurell and N.-Y. Tonnerre (eds), *Plantagenêts et Capétiens: confrontations et héritages* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2006), p. 179. It is unclear which of Rouen's fairs is referred to in the grant to Peter de Préaux, but the most important, that of St Romain (or du Pardon, which lasted for one month), might tentatively be suggested. On this fair, see N. Périaux, *Dictionnaire indicateur et historique des rues et places de Rouen; revue des ses monuments et de ses établissements publics* (Rouen: A. le Brument, 1870), pp. 113–14 and 129. I am grateful to Elma Brenner for drawing this reference to my attention.

cian monastery of Bonport: in May 1202 the mayor and sheriff of Rouen received letters concerning lands and dues of a widow who resided at the abbey at the wish of Richard I.³⁵ In other cases, the wealth of the city or its officials may have lain behind requests such as that made to the mayor to lend money to Roger Mortimer, and to the sheriff to make payments to Reginald de Bois from the *prévôté* of Rouen.³⁶ The civic officials were drawn from the city commune's leading merchant families, and this status presumably underpinned orders for them to provide provisions on behalf of the king.³⁷ A number of examples may be cited. In September 1200, the mayor was ordered to provide horse-harnesses and baskets for the royal chapel, and to send them to Valognes, whilst in February 1202 the sheriff was required to send corn, wine, and herrings to the monks of Grandmont.³⁸ Meanwhile, an undated grant from the fourth regnal year ordered arms, armour, and other military provisions to be sent to the castle of Radepont by the sheriff of Rouen.³⁹

All this has an air of administrative routine. Nonetheless it provides crucial evidence of how John's government operated. He was dependent on men such as the mayor and sheriff of Rouen for the enforcement of orders issued in his name. It was doubtless desirable for local officials to deal with local business, and if they proved dependable they could in all probability also be called upon to deal with matters relating to the surrounding area. When it came to requirements such as provisioning castles, the status of Rouen as a major market centre on the Seine was no doubt also

35 T.D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 10a.

36 *Ibid.*, pp. 14a and 15a.

37 For a summary of the early history and organisation of the commune of Rouen (granted to the city by Henry II), see Musset, 'Rouen au temps des Francs', pp. 61–4.

38 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, pp. 30 and 79.

39 *Ibid.*, p. 55. Radepont fell to Philip Augustus in September 1203: Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 164.

significant. Overall, the execution of the royal will was dependent on the existence of willing and able enforcers on the ground, who could be relied upon to act for the king both when he was present, and more importantly when he was in other parts of the Angevin Empire.

In considering John's dealings with the civic officials of Rouen, it is not simply the case of bald orders being issued to unnamed officials. In 1199, reference to Geoffrey Le Changeur can be found, when he was granted revenues from the city's market in exchange for forest rights given to him by Richard I.⁴⁰ Geoffrey, a member of the Val Richer family (who provided mayors of Rouen at various times from the 1230s onwards), had been an important royal agent in Richard's reign, closely involved with the payment of the king's ransom and the building of Château-Gaillard.⁴¹ Under John, Geoffrey's appearance in 1199 is followed in 1202 by a payment of 100 silver marks and a received a sum of 100 *livres Angevin*.⁴² Meanwhile, John de Préaux (who later defected to the French crown, and helped negotiate the surrender of Norman castles in 1204) is named as bailiff in 1200, with Laurence Du Donjon, who will be considered below, referred to as Rouen's sheriff, and Richard de Beauchamp as the constable of the city's keep, both at the end of 1203.⁴³ Before Richard became castellan, Robert de Vieuxpont seems to have held the role (in

40 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Chartarum*, p. 5a.

41 Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 239–40; Sadourny, 'Les grandes familles rouennaises', p. 271; M. Mollat (ed.), *Histoire de Rouen* (Toulouse: Edouard Privat, 1979), liste des maires; Deck, 'Les marchands de Rouen', p. 252.

42 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, p. 49; Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 15b.

43 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, pp. 27, 107, 108, and 115; Power, 'King John and the Norman Aristocracy', p. 135 and n. 114; D. Power, 'Angevin Normandy', in C. Harper-Bill and E. van Houts (eds), *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2003), pp. 77–8. On Laurence Du Donjon, see A. Sadourny, 'Une famille rouennaise à la fin de la période ducale: les Du Donjon', in P. Lardin and J.-L. Roch (eds), *La Ville Médiévale en deça et au delà de ses murs. Mélanges Jean-Pierre Leguay* (Rouen: Publications de l'Université de Rouen, 2000), p. 186.

addition to serving as bailiff in 1203).⁴⁴ Meanwhile, two of the city's mayors are referred to by name. In May 1200, Matthew le Gros was reimbursed the sum of 62s. Angevin spent in providing a cart and harness for transporting the royal kitchen.⁴⁵ One of Matthew's successors as mayor, Ralph de Cailly, is named in a letter issued in July 1202.⁴⁶

The evidence for Ralph's career seems indicative of the potential rewards and risks of royal service. He was clearly among the first rank of Rouen's citizens, credited with the gift to the city of the premises considered to be the first town hall.⁴⁷ In 1203, having ceased to hold office, Ralph was granted exemption from the *maltolt* for one of his ships, indicating his status as one of the city's merchants, and suggestive of the benefits of enforcing the royal will.⁴⁸ In doing so he may well have made enemies. A letter from later the same year to the seneschal of Normandy and the mayor of Rouen (not named) stated that until the king returned to the duchy, Ralph was not to be prosecuted. In the wider context of the political situation, this letter suggests that John's departure from the duchy three weeks later (when he left Normandy for the final time) was in fact planned, rather than representing a

44 Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 69–70; see also p. 357.

45 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, p. 22. This grant is also evidence of the requirements of regularly transporting the royal court around the Angevin Empire. Matthew le Gros had previously served as mayor in 1195 (Chéruef, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, p. 360); or 1195 and 1199 (F. Farin, *Histoire de la ville de Rouen*, 2 vols [3rd edn, Rouen: Louis de Souillet, 1731, published anonymously, 1st published 1668 under the author's name], vol. 1, pp. 102–3); or 1195, 1198, and 1199 (Mollat, *Histoire de Rouen*, liste des maires; Deck, 'Les marchands de Rouen', p. 251). Deck notes that Matthew's prestige did not pass to his immediate descendants. See also Sadourny, 'Une famille rouennaise', p. 183, n. 3, for comments on the various lists of mayors.

46 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 15b. Chéruef's list of mayors suggests that Ralph de Cailly held the office in 1198, with Ralph Groignet serving in 1202: Chéruef, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, pp. 360–1.

47 Sadourny, 'Une famille rouennaise', p. 184.

48 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 24b.

disorderly retreat. Powicke argues that the duke was trying 'to make people in Normandy believe that he would soon be among them again', when many believed that the fall of the duchy was only a matter of time.⁴⁹ This may be so, but the evidence suggests that John would have been amongst the last to accept that the sentiments he expressed in his letter would remain unfulfilled.⁵⁰ Meanwhile, the grant of immunity from prosecution suggests that somebody felt they had a case against Ralph, and that John preferred business relating to a servant of the crown to be reserved for the royal court.

Consideration of government business relating to two men of Rouen, Jean Luce and Laurence Du Donjon, further demonstrates the roles required of leading citizens by the crown, and the potential rewards.⁵¹ The latter first appears in the records in 1200, but it is in 1202 and 1203 that the two men are particularly prominent.⁵² Both were important merchants in the city, and were involved in supporting royal revenues, whether by making loans to the duke, or in the outlay of money on his behalf. For instance, in March 1203, Jean Luce was repaid a loan of 100 *livres Angevin*. Other repayments to him followed: in April, to cover money paid to Reginald de Bois; in August, to reimburse expenditure in the carriage of wine; in November, to account for 53 *livres Angevin* spent by the king's order.⁵³ Meanwhile,

49 Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 167 and n. 241.

50 For John's preparations in 1204 to mount an attack to counter Philip Augustus see pp. 8–9.

51 On the Du Donjon family, see Sadourny, 'Une famille rouennaise', pp. 183–8. For further discussion of the careers of these men, see Sadourny, 'Les grandes familles rouennaises', p. 269; A. Sadourny, 'Rouen face à Philippe Auguste', in A.-M. Flambard Héricher and V. Gazeau (eds), 1204. *La Normandie entre Plantagenêts et Capétiens* (Caen: Publications du CRAHM, 2007), p. 282, and the references there collected.

52 For 1200, see Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, p. 25.

53 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 26b; Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, pp. 91, 103, and 111.

Laurence, whose family had provided Rouen's mayor (Lucas Du Donjon) in 1189 and 1194, was one of Rouen's office-holders, recorded as *prévôt* and sheriff in 1203, receiving royal orders, and being made responsible for the fortification of the city.⁵⁴ His family's role as financiers was probably crucial in explaining their status in the city, and Laurence made substantial loans to the king, which were repaid in February and June of the same year.⁵⁵ Laurence was also responsible for royal business including acts of piety such as feeding the poor, and for the purchase of garments for John's queen, Isabella of Angoulême.⁵⁶ Both men were involved in supplying provisions, both for the royal household – for instance when Laurence was ordered to provide baskets for the royal chapel in June 1202 – and for royal residences, castles, and religious houses, seen in a series of orders issued in 1202 and 1203.⁵⁷

Evidence for the careers of Jean Luce and Laurence Du Donjon extends to the rewards they reaped from royal service. In July 1202 Jean Luce, Laurence Du Donjon, and Ralph de Cailly all received payments of 100 *livres Angevin*, and in August, Jean and Laurence were awarded the first boats of wine and salt to arrive in Rouen from

54 Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 70, 240 and footnotes; Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 25a; Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, pp. 107 and 108. See also Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 10b for further evidence of fortification work. For Lucas Du Donjon as mayor of Rouen, see Deck, 'Les marchands de Rouen', p. 251; Sadourny, 'Une famille rouennaise', p. 183.

55 Sadourny, 'Une famille rouennaise', p. 186; Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 240 and footnotes; Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 25a; T.D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli de Liberate ac de Misis et Praestitis regnante Johanne* (London: Record Commission, 1844), p. 40. See also W.L. Warren's comment that in his last months as duke, John 'was borrowing from anyone who had money to lend': Warren, *King John*, pp. 91–2.

56 Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 241 and n. 181; Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli de Liberate*, p. 51; Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, pp. 107 and 108. On feeding the poor, see also P. Webster, 'King John's Piety, c. 1199–c. 1216' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 2007), pp. 129–43, although the coincidence is not noted here. On Isabella, see also N. Vincent, 'Isabella of Angoulême: John's Jezebel', in S.D. Church (ed.), *King John. New Interpretations* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1999), pp. 165–219.

57 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, pp. 48, 49, 50, 59, and 85.

France.⁵⁸ In February 1203, Jean Luce was granted quittance of the *maltolt* applying to twenty tuns of wine.⁵⁹ In the summer, Laurence was granted the right to burn charcoal and take timber in the lands of the city of Rouen, in return for rendering the king a pair of gilded spurs.⁶⁰ In addition, in November 1203, Jean was granted the right of 'pennyweight' in the shrievalty of Rouen, for which he was to pay a render in fruit: 500 pears for the city's keep.⁶¹ Finally, it is worth noting that interaction between Laurence and King John extended beyond the loss of Normandy: safe-conducts were issued in 1205, 1208, and 1213 for Laurence to go to and from England with his wine and merchandise.⁶² These safe-conducts were no empty gesture. In 1205 his wines were seized in London despite the protection he had been granted, and John had to step in to ensure that the seizures were restored.⁶³ The merchants of Rouen were no different from other Norman traders in seeing their privileges in England ended by the events of 1204. Thereafter, they were frequently subjected to seizures of their goods or imprisonment at the English ports, although the kings often intervened to safeguard their interests, both during John's reign and under Henry III.⁶⁴ That said, John may have felt it useful to maintain contacts in the duchy after its fall to Philip Augustus, a role that a leading Norman merchant with established trading links with England would have been well placed to fulfil.⁶⁵ Interestingly, the careers of Laurence Du Donjon and Jean Luce seem to have taken divergent paths after Philip's

58 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, pp. 15b and 16b.

59 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, p. 79.

60 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Chartarum*, p. 106a-b.

61 *Ibid.*, p. 113a.

62 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, pp. 86a and 105b; Sadourny, 'Une famille rouennaise', pp. 185–6.

63 Sadourny, 'Une famille rouennaise', pp. 185–6; 'Rouen face à Philippe Auguste', p. 286.

64 Sadourny, 'Les marchands normands', pp. 134–6.

65 See Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 269, for evidence of suspicion on the part of the French crown of Rouennais churchmen pursuing their affairs in England.

takeover of Rouen. The Du Donjon family continued to live in the city and traces of their activity can be found until the 1230s, but, like many friends of the Angevin rulers, they no longer occupied positions of power.⁶⁶ In contrast Jean Luce was mayor of Rouen eight times between the city's capture and Philip Augustus' death.⁶⁷ He was amongst those who obtained possession of the site of the former ducal castle, pulled down by Philip upon his capture of the city.⁶⁸

Although John supported Rouen's merchants, he also took advantage of their trading privileges, for instance in 1200 when he claimed the right to two barrels of wine from every Rouennais ship docking in London.⁶⁹ But in general he was keen to promote the city's traders in their business within and outside the city. An undated letter, probably from December 1202, requested Marie, Countess of Flanders, to return money taken from two Rouen merchants: Geoffrey Trentegerons and Roger fitz Agnes.⁷⁰ In addition, several letters referred to boats on the River Seine coming to Rouen, principally those bringing food and wine.⁷¹ It seems likely that these reflect

66 Sadourny, 'Une famille rouennaise', pp. 183–8 gives a complete summary of their activity. Farin, *Histoire de la ville de Rouen*, vol. 1, pp. 102–3 gives Luc Du Donjon as mayor in 1223, but this is not corroborated elsewhere. See also Deck, 'Les marchands de Rouen', p. 251; Sadourny, 'Les marchands normands', pp. 137 and 140.

67 Sadourny, 'Rouen face à Philippe Auguste', p. 282; A. Sadourny, 'L'époque communale (1204–début XIVe siècle)', in M. Mollat, *Histoire de Rouen* (Toulouse: Edouard Privat, 1979), p. 84. See also Chéruef, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, pp. 361–2.

68 Musset, 'Quelques problèmes', p. 299.

69 Bates, 'Rouen from 900 to 1204', p. 7. The citizens of Rouen enjoyed long-standing rights relating to their trade in London. They lost their pre-eminence in the sale of wine as a result of the events of 1204: Musset, 'Rouen au temps des Francs', p. 70.

70 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 21b. Geoffrey would go on to serve as Rouen's mayor in 1219: Chéruef, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, p. 362; Deck, 'Les marchands de Rouen', p. 251. Geoffrey was presumably descended from the William Trentegerons who had administered the farms of Rouen and Southampton in the 1150s: Musset, 'Rouen au temps des Francs', p. 60; L. Musset, 'Y eut-il une aristocratie d'affaires commune aux grandes villes de Normandie et d'Angleterre entre 1066 et 1204?', *Etudes Normandes* 35 (1986), pp. 10–11.

71 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, pp. 8a, 13b, 16b, 25b (two letters), 26b, and 30b.

concern that the conflict with Philip Augustus would deter merchants from trading in the Norman capital. Certainly John was keen to ensure that the castle and keep of Rouen (where he may have witnessed the damage caused by the fire of October 1200) were adequately provisioned.⁷² In August 1203 Thomas le Feutrer was paid £8.15s. for 50 pork carcasses for provisioning Rouen castle.⁷³ Likewise, in November, a land grant required 40 chickens to be rendered at the keep, and the king also took the time to repay money spent repairing the houses, walls, and bridge of Rouen castle and for providing timber for the keep.⁷⁴ Such concerns continued after John's departure from the duchy. In February 1204, 50 measures of cheese were sent to Rouen castle, and in February or March safe-conducts were issued for those taking food to Rouen, specifically mentioning food to provision the castle.⁷⁵ Preparations were clearly underway for a potential siege by King Philip.⁷⁶

The evidence for John's relationship with Rouen shows that the king drew on the wealth of the city and its merchants to fulfil and serve his own governmental ends. In turn, the leading citizens were prepared to serve the crown, presumably on account of the potential rewards, and they might hope for royal protection if the risks they ran created enemies. John's interaction with Rouen would therefore appear to provide insight into the way in which Angevin government worked on the ground. In the case of a ruler who was regularly present in the city, and who, in John's case, sought to stave off the hostile advances of the French king, the system seems to have worked well. However, it is equally clear that it was a system of government which

72 On the fire of October 1200, see Chéruef, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, pp. 79–80.

73 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli de Liberate*, p. 56.

74 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Chartarum*, p. 113b; *Rotuli Normanniae*, p. 111.

75 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli de Liberate*, p. 85; *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 39b.

76 See also the summary of John's preparations in Warren, *King John*, pp. 93–4.

depended on the king being able to command the loyalty of the leading citizens. Where this broke down, as it seems clear that it did in large parts of the continental lands of the Angevin Empire, there were likely to be problems.⁷⁷ Even in the case of Rouen, once John had departed from the city it was only a matter of a few months before the townsmen surrendered to Philip Augustus, and this despite the efforts the last Angevin duke had made for the city to withstand a siege.⁷⁸ When it came to the crunch, the need to preserve civic rights and immunities through co-operation with Philip proved greater than loyalty to a duke who was no longer present, and whose chances of providing relief, let alone of sustaining the rights the citizens had hitherto enjoyed, had largely evaporated. The preservation of these rights was the key. When the Duke of Normandy could guarantee this, he received the support of the Rouennais, as Henry II and Richard I found when the citizens repelled the sieges of 1174 and 1194. When the duke's authority was on the wane, the merchants and civic officials looked elsewhere. Just as this helps to account for the success of Geoffrey of Anjou in taking the city in 1144, it explains how Rouen was lost to John sixty years later.⁷⁹

77 See, for instance, Daniel Power's argument that, 'John's decisive failures were in central Normandy', where his reliance on hired mercenaries destroyed any chance of his maintaining the loyalty and support of his Norman subjects. Power, 'King John and the Norman Aristocracy', p. 136.

78 For discussion of the capitulation of Rouen to Philip Augustus, see Power, 'King John and the Norman Aristocracy', pp. 134–5; Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 261–3; Sadourny, 'L'époque communale', pp. 75–6; Sadourny, 'Rouen face à Philippe Auguste', pp. 278–80; Warren, *King John*, pp. 97–9. Many of the leading citizens were involved: Sadourny, 'Les grandes familles rouennaises', pp. 267–8.

79 On the various sieges and Rouennais loyalties, see Chéruef, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, pp. 15, 23–30, 45–6, and 86–93; Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 96–8.

John's relationship with Rouen: royal support for the church

One final aspect of John's interaction with Rouen remains to be considered: his grants to the city's churches and churchmen. Here, it may be argued that the king sought to use his largesse to strengthen his bond with the city in which he had been inaugurated as duke. This, in turn, is likely to have encouraged the goodwill of the leading churchmen and citizens, demonstrating the interrelationship between Angevin government and royal piety.

Amongst the churchmen of Rouen, the archbishop, Walter of Coutances – described by Musset as the archetypal Anglo-Norman prelate – was a regular witness to royal charters in 1199 and 1200, and received many royal letters and charters between 1199 and 1203.⁸⁰ Given the length of Walter's archiepiscopate (1184–1207), it is unsurprising that a number of documents concerned the events of previous reigns, for instance the disputed exchange of the manor of Andely with Richard I, so that that king could build Château-Gaillard. A charter issued in June 1200 shows that the archbishop received, amongst other lands, a mill and fishpond at Rouen, both potentially lucrative sources of income.⁸¹ He may also have been involved in arrangements

80 A number of these documents are discussed below. See also Musset, 'Rouen au temps des Francs', p. 52.

81 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Chartarum*, p. 70a. In March 1220, Pope Innocent III had authorised the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishops of Lincoln and Ely, to hear the case between John and the archbishop of Rouen: C.R. Cheney and M.G. Cheney (eds), *The Letters of Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) concerning England and Wales. A calendar with an appendix of texts* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967), p. 36 (no. 209). See also the undated documents enrolled on the Norman Rolls: Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, pp. 1–3. On the exchange and the profit the archbishop made from it, see D. Power, 'The Norman Church and the Angevin and Capetian Kings', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 56 (2005), pp. 212–13, and p. 217, where Power argues that, 'if Philip Augustus had truly been out to woo the Norman Church, one might have expected him to tempt the archbishop of Rouen with promises of a more favourable settlement over Les Andelys'. See also Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 113–16; F.M. Powicke, 'King Philip Augustus and the Archbishop of Rouen (1196)', *English Historical Review* 27 (1912), pp. 106–17.

for the city's defence in 1203–4.⁸² Archbishop Walter of Coutance's involvement with the royal court naturally extended beyond matters relating to the seat of his see. For instance, he was the regular recipient of papal letters relating to John's affairs. These covered subjects ranging from the efforts to enforce the payment of the dowry of Richard I's widow, Berengaria, to enquiries as to whether those who had sworn to go on crusade were so integral to the conduct of John's government that their vows should be commuted.⁸³ Letters to the archbishop also indicate papal support for John in his conflict with Philip Augustus. In May 1202, Walter of Coutances was ordered to impose ecclesiastical sanctions on those who had rebelled against John in Normandy or his other continental lands.⁸⁴ In addition, Archbishop Walter played a role in one of the major ecclesiastical disputes of the early years of John's reign: the contested election to the bishopric of Sées. Both John and the canons of Sées supported successive candidates of their own choosing. The archbishop of Rouen appears to have adopted a position of neutrality, until Silvester, the ultimately successful choice of the canons, sought consecration at the hands of the archbishop of Sens, thereby threatening a right traditionally held by Rouen's archbishop.⁸⁵

Throughout the period, John provided support for the churches of Rouen and its environs. In September 1199 he confirmed his father's grant to the Grandmontine

82 Power, 'Angevin Normandy', p. 80; 'The Norman Church', p. 214.

83 Cheney and Cheney (eds), *Letters of Pope Innocent III*, pp. 37 (no. 219) and 58 (no. 356).

84 C.R. Cheney and W.H. Semple (ed. and trans.), *Selected Letters of Pope Innocent III concerning England (1198–1216)* (London: Nelson's Medieval Texts, 1953), p. 40 (no. 14); Cheney and Cheney (eds), *Letters of Pope Innocent III*, p. 66 (no. 409), and see also p. 173 (no. 1039), a letter to Archbishop Walter's successor, Robert, probably dating to December 1215. Although the text no longer survives, the letter is likely to have been on the subject of not providing aid to John's opponents.

85 For John's letters in relation to the dispute, see Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, pp. 16a-b, 22a-b, and 33b. For a full account of the dispute, see Packard, 'King John and the Norman Church', pp. 20–4, with clarifications to Packard's argument in Power, 'The Norman Church', pp. 214–15.

monks, made in 'his lordship next to Rouen' and probably referring to the Grandmontine foundation of Nôtre-Dame-du-Parc, attributed to Henry II. The grant provided revenue from Rouen to pay for food for the monks.⁸⁶ Later, in the fourth regnal year, the dependable Jean Luce and Laurence Du Donjon were ordered to provide the monks with two measures of good wheat.⁸⁷ Another house just outside the city, the leper-hospital of Mont-aux-Malades, re-founded by Henry II, was granted a charter stating that the church and the lepers who lived there were under the king's protection, and, in confirmation of letters patent of John's father, were only to be prosecuted in the royal court or that of the king's justiciar.⁸⁸ In the grants to both houses, John displayed an important element of his piety: a desire to associate himself with the religious grants of his predecessors, and to accrue good-will and prayers for his own salvation and that of his relatives.⁸⁹

Turning to churches within Rouen, John issued a number of documents to the abbot and monks of the monastery of Saint-Ouen. In an undated letter of about April 1203 the house was taken into the king's protection, and two months later, in a rather cryptically worded grant, the abbot was repaid 100 marks that he had loaned to the king 'for our great business'.⁹⁰ However, the abbot and monks of Saint-Ouen were clearly already wary of John's prospects of retaining control of Normandy, and of the potential impact of its loss on the monastery's ability to maintain control over its

86 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Chartarum*, p. 21b. For discussion of the complex documentary evidence relating to the foundation of this house, see E.M. Hallam, 'Henry II, Richard I and the order of Grandmont', *Journal of Medieval History* 1 (1975), pp. 179–80.

87 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, p. 59.

88 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Chartarum*, p. 76a.

89 John's piety forms one of the principal themes of my research. See Webster, 'King John's Piety'.

90 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, pp. 27b and 30b. I have been unable to identify the 'great business' to which the second letter refers.

lands in England. In July 1202, the abbey agreed to lease its English possessions to the bishop of London, and in May 1205, when John's loss of Normandy had moved from possibility to reality, the lease was renegotiated and enrolled on the Charter Roll.⁹¹ Powicke describes the latter document in terms of a necessary precaution taken by the Norman clergy to avert the confiscation of their English lands.⁹² Nevertheless, the agreement's origins also indicate that there were those in the duchy of Normandy, and in Rouen, the city John favoured most, who sought to pre-empt the potential consequences of the duke losing his inheritance to the French king. John may have commanded the loyalty of the residents of Rouen, but this did not prevent them from taking steps to look after themselves.

Finally, let us return to Rouen Cathedral, where John was acclaimed as duke in 1199. Roger of Howden's account of the ceremony, probably written in the months that followed, in a period in which the author 'liked what he saw of John', suggests none of the levity ascribed to the new duke by the *Life of St Hugh of Lincoln*.⁹³ Indeed, Howden emphasises the solemn oath sworn by John, 'in the presence of the clergy and the people, upon the relics of the saints and the Holy Evangelists, that he would preserve the Holy Church and its dignitaries inviolate, with good faith and without

91 D. Power, *The Norman frontier in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 327; Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Chartarum*, p. 151b. Power cites Archives Départementales de la Seine-Maritime 14H910. I have been unable to consult these records *in situ*, but am grateful to Professor Power for drawing the sequence of documents to my attention.

92 Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 290 and n. 53.

93 W. Stubbs (ed.), *Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, 4 vols (London: Rolls Series, 1868–71), vol. 4, pp. 87–8; J. Gillingham, 'Historians Without Hindsight: Coggeshall, Diceto and Howden on the Early Years of John's Reign', in S.D. Church (ed.), *King John. New Interpretations* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1999), pp. 12–13. Luard notes that the sword and standard were conferred on John at Rouen, with no suggestion of any improper conduct by the new duke. – H.R. Luard (ed.), 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia (A.D. 1–1297)' in H.R. Luard (ed.), *Annales Monastici*, 3 (London: Rolls Series, 1866), p. 27.

evil intent, and would exercise strict justice, and destroy unjust laws, and establish good ones'.⁹⁴ John was clearly aware of the significance of this inauguration and of the church in which it had been carried out. In 1200, in granting the archbishop of Rouen the right to hold pleas of the sword (traditionally a ducal privilege), John's charter stated that, 'we ought to venerate the church of Rouen above all other churches of Normandy, and to love and keep it as the mother of all the churches of Normandy and as the one from which we and our predecessors received the honour of our dukedom'.⁹⁵ He supported this church throughout the period. In a charter issued on 25 September 1200, he responded to a petition made by his mother, Eleanor of Aquitaine, and confirmed a series of churches to 'God and the Blessed Mary of Rouen', that is to the city's cathedral, and to the archbishop and his successors, and to the 'canons serving God' there. The charter was made for John's salvation, and for the souls of his father and ancestors, in pure and perpetual alms. It noted that the church was the burial place of John's brother, Henry the Young King.⁹⁶ This is not the place to debate John's piety, but these forms of pious wording are typical of his largesse to religious houses, and indicate a desire for prayers on behalf of the king

94 Stubbs (ed.), *Rogeri de Houedene*, vol. 4, pp. 87–8. For the translation, see H.T. Riley (trans.), *The Annals of Roger de Hoveden comprising the History of England and of Other Countries of Europe* (London: Bohn's Antiquarian Library, 1853. Reprinted Felinfach: Llanerch Publishers, 1994–7), vol. 2, pt. 2, pp. 456–7. A similar account is included in Hewlett (ed.), *Rogeri de Wendover*, vol. 1, pp. 286–7.

95 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, pp. 2–3, translated in Power, *Norman frontier*, p. 62. For a summary of the privileges traditionally held by the dukes in Rouen, see Chéruef, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, p. 8; Bates, 'Rouen from 900 to 1204', p. 5.

96 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Chartarum*, pp. 75b–76a. In discussion of this paper following its presentation at the International Medieval Congress at Leeds in July 2007, it was suggested to me that the reference to Henry the Young King may be linked to the twelfth-century cult of lineage. I propose to research this area more fully in the future, but it should be noted that family piety was certainly an important element of King John's piety: see Webster, 'King John's Piety', pp. 48–61. For references to the death and burial of the Young King see Power, *Norman frontier*, p. 328, n. 148.

and the relatives named.⁹⁷ In terms of the duke's relationship with the city, Rouen Cathedral, as burial-place of the Young King's body and Richard I's heart, had some claim to rank alongside Fontevraud as a ducal mausoleum. In this context, it is interesting that in 1199 John's sister Joan came to Rouen to die, after which her body was taken to Fontevraud for burial.⁹⁸

John's largesse was clearly inspired by the fortunes of Rouen Cathedral. Roger of Howden relates that on Easter Day 1200, 'nearly the whole of the city of Rouen was destroyed by fire, together with the church of the archiepiscopal see, and many other churches besides'.⁹⁹ In fact, there appear to have been two fires in the city in 1200, at Easter and in October, with the duke perhaps present in the latter instance.¹⁰⁰ Lindy Grant argues that it is unlikely that the cathedral was totally destroyed,¹⁰¹ but it certainly seems to have sustained sufficient damage to inspire a generous response from John. The charter of 25 September was granted the day after the king ordered 2,000 *livres Angevin* to be given to the church of Rouen for repairs,

97 Webster, 'King John's Piety', pp. 31–48.

98 Stubbs (ed.), *Rogeri de Houedene*, vol. 4, p. 96. See also D.D.R. Owen, *Eleanor of Aquitaine. Queen and Legend* (Oxford, U.K. and Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), p. 96, where it is suggested that Joan was admitted into the Fontevraudine order on her deathbed.

99 Stubbs (ed.), *Rogeri de Houedene*, vol. 4, p. 116. For the translation, see Riley (trans.), *Annals of Roger de Hoveden*, vol. 2, pt. 2, p. 481. Chérueil notes the cathedral chronicle's account of the destruction of the bells, books, and ornaments of its treasury. Chérueil, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, p. 79. See also Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 262 and n. 72; Webster, 'King John's Piety', pp. 107–8.

100 Chérueil, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, pp. 79–80. The date of 5 October does not tally with Hardy's Itinerary, which suggests that John had returned to England, but nonetheless the Rouen chronicler (quoted by Chérueil) might reasonably be expected to know whether or not the duke was present when the city burned.

101 L. Grant, 'Rouen Cathedral, 1200–1237', in J. Stratford (ed.), *Medieval Art, Architecture and Archaeology at Rouen* (Tring: British Archaeological Association, Conference Transactions 12, 1993 for 1986), p. 60.

to be paid in four instalments.¹⁰² Having set this example, in January 1201 John issued letters of protection (to last two years) to the cathedral's envoys, stating that they were to be well received, and that alms were to be given for the repair of their church, mentioning its dedication to the Blessed Virgin Mary, his own devotion, and the cathedral's status as 'mother church of Normandy'.¹⁰³ Similar letters were issued in October 1202, to run for two years from the feast of the Purification of the Virgin in the fourth regnal year (2 February 1203), suggesting that this constituted a renewal and extension of the 1201 grant.¹⁰⁴ In April 1203, the king ordered that the remaining 460 *livres Angevin* of his grant for the fabric of the church be paid.¹⁰⁵ Further monies followed after John left the duchy: in 1204 the king made a payment of 75 *livres* of the 300 *livres Angevin* that was promised for the use (or works) of the church of Rouen.¹⁰⁶

John's largesse was not confined to support for restoration work. In the early stages of his career as count of Mortain, he granted Rouen Cathedral the collegial chapel of Blyth with its associated chapels and churches. This was to be used to provide two prebends in the cathedral, and to fund anniversary masses after John's death. Nicholas Vincent has shown that this grant was a confirmation of an earlier grant by Henry II to Walter of Coutances, made before the latter became archbishop of Rouen in 1184. Vincent argues that John was taking the opportunity to buy Walter's political support.¹⁰⁷ This may be so, but the grant also provides important early evidence for John's piety, and indicates the potential origins of his long-standing re-

102 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, p. 33.

103 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Chartarum*, p. 100b.

104 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 19a.

105 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae*, p. 86.

106 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli de Liberate*, p. 80.

107 Vincent, 'Jean, comte de Mortain', pp. 43–4; John's grants to Norman religious establishments before 1199 are discussed in full.

relationship with Rouen Cathedral. After 1199, Rouen and its cathedral can also be associated with John's interest in the cult of the saints. In September 1203, in an apparent attempt to draw Philip Augustus away from the Seine valley, John launched an attack on the Breton town of Dol. The cathedral there was sacked and burned, and the relics of St Samson and St Magloire rescued from the hands of the attackers and given to Rouen Cathedral.¹⁰⁸

Overall, John was keen to support one of the principal churches of Normandy: the seat of the archbishopric, the site of his inauguration as duke, the burial place of his brother Henry's body and his brother Richard's heart, *and* a possible centre of John's Marian devotions. In the latter context, John often spent major feast days in Rouen, and in 1199 he was there on the feast of the city's patron, St Ouen.¹⁰⁹ Even in relation to the cathedral, however, evidence can be found of the fear that John could inspire in his subjects. In July 1203, an agreement was drawn up between the king and Master Ivo the crossbowman, who had incurred John's anger and fled to the sanctuary of Rouen Cathedral. He was restored to royal service through the mediation of the archbishop.¹¹⁰ It was precisely the sort of mistrust that lay behind this arrangement that contributed to John's failure to defend his inheritance.

This study opened with Adam of Eynsham's portrayal of John as a ruler indifferent to the ceremonial of inauguration as Duke of Normandy, suggestive of a

108 Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 165–6. Powicke's source is a charter by which the archbishop of Rouen restored the relics in 1223. The two saints had been at the forefront of bringing Christianity to Brittany in the sixth century: D.H. Farmer, *The Oxford Dictionary of Saints* (4th edn, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 322 and 437–8.

109 Webster, 'King John's Piety', p. 84.

110 Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 31b; Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 226.

king whose lack of concern contributed to the tribulations he later faced. However, the evidence for John's presence in Rouen, his interaction with the city, its officials and its citizens, and his largesse to its churches, suggest a conclusion in stark contrast to this judgement. The royal itinerary shows John to have been committed to the duchy of Normandy. As ducal capital, Rouen played a central part in John's governance of the Angevin Empire prior to 1204. He was a regular visitor to the city and its environs, and when his inheritance came under threat, it was the Norman capital which he used as his base for the defence of the duchy. His dealings with the city reveal the mechanics of Angevin rule. John expected the civic officers and churchmen to play a role in the administration of government, but this was not without its rewards, seen in grants of revenues and rights within Rouen, and through royal concern to safeguard trade and the provision of food in the city. In addition, John reinforced his bond with Rouen through his support for its churches, both within and without the city. This was especially true of the cathedral, where his investiture had heralded the beginning of his rule as duke in 1199, and which he provided for throughout his active reign in the duchy. He may well have hoped that his patronage of the city's traders and churchmen would continue. He ordered the guardians of the English ports not to molest the merchants of Rouen, or to impose major taxes on them, and in a letter of June 1216 granted safe-conduct to the archbishop's servants, who sought the right to collect the dues of the dean and chapter throughout England.¹¹¹ Even as he faced the consequences of his thwarted aims, therefore, John

111 On the English ports, see Chéruef, *Histoire de Rouen*, vol. 1, pp. 113–14. On the archbishop's servants, see Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 185b.

apparently attempted to respond to the needs of Normandy and the church and citizens of the ducal capital.

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