

Select documents

XXIV EDWARD II AND THE REVENUES OF IRELAND IN 1311–12

Throughout the middle ages the lordship of Ireland was frequently brought within the scope of reforming legislation which was designed in the first instance for England. One such programme of reform was outlined in the famous Ordinances of 1311; but the extent to which they were made to apply in Ireland has so far not been investigated. We can hardly doubt, however, that some attempt was made to enforce this new legislation here. A letter from the king to John Wogan, the Irish justiciar, written in London on 9 October 1311, deals specifically with one clause of the Ordinances which condemned the alienation of royal revenues through gifts of land, castles, escheats and other sources of income.¹ Edward points out in his letter that the Ordainers ‘ordinaverunt quod omnes donaciones quas post dictam 16 Marcii [the day the Ordainers were appointed by letters patent] fecimus de castris, villis, terris, tenementis, ballivis, wardis, maritagiis, escaetis et commissionibus quibuscunque tam in Vasconia, Hibernia, Wallia et Scocia quam in Anglia revocentur’ and he therefore orders ‘quod omnes donaciones etc. de castris etc. ut super in Hibernia per brevia sub sigillo Hibernie sine dilacione revocari et omnes hujusmodi res per nos ibidem sic datas in manum nostram resumari faciatis’.² Another letter, written later in December, refers to a different clause which ordered the abolition of new customs and *maltotes* and extends it to Ireland.³ These can hardly be isolated examples and no doubt a thorough search of the available records would show how the Ordinances were extended to Ireland.

One clause in particular, however, had a special significance for Ireland. This was clause 8, which tried to make the exchequer once again the clearing-house for all the revenues of England. Previous to this, much of the money which the king drew from his

¹ Clause 3.

² P.R.O.I., Memoranda roll 5 Edward II, m. 22d (Record Commission’s calendar, vi. 155–6). See also the king’s letter of 16 March from York, *ibid.*, m. 31 (pp. 202–3).

³ *Ibid.*, m. 22d (pp. 155–6). This refers to clause 11 of the Ordinances.

Irish exchequer was paid directly into his wardrobe in England without passing through the exchequer there. Any attempt, therefore, to limit the foreign receipt of the wardrobe was bound to have an effect in Ireland, the source of part of that receipt. We should expect, then, that this change would be reflected in Ireland, and such indeed is the case. The letter printed below (Document III), addressed to the sheriffs and seneschals of Ireland, announces a new financial policy for the lordship which was to be little short of revolutionary. That this step was taken on the initiative of the king is such a remote possibility that it can safely be dismissed. Because the change came so soon after the reforms in England, was revolutionary in character and not best suited to the immediate needs of the king, and, above all, because it was so short-lived, it can best be seen as something which was not of the king's own making but was forced upon him. It is probable, then, that this new Irish policy must be connected in some way with the reforms of the Ordinances in England, though as we shall see it can also be shown to be derived from the exigencies of the Irish situation at that time.

The letter announcing this change of policy may be divided into two parts. The first part describes the use which had been made of the revenues of Ireland up to this time. In times past, it says, these revenues had been expended for the most part on the king's business in England and Scotland, both 'in divers victuals' provided and paid for in Ireland for the Scottish war and in other sums sent to him 'for our divers other business'. The result of this was that the residue of money left in Ireland was not sufficient to meet the cost of maintaining the peace there. Because of this 'default of money', the Irish rebels and felons day by day have caused burnings, murders, robberies and other innumerable and intolerable transgressions to the great damage of the king and his faithful of Ireland. The second part of the letter announces his change of policy. Henceforth the revenues of Ireland are to be expended within the lordship 'for the preservation of the peace of the same land' and in the other 'arduous affairs' of the king there. And it tells us that he had already more fully explained his policy to both the justiciar and the treasurer in letters patent, as well as giving the treasurer more complete orders by word of mouth. In conclusion the sheriffs are ordered to levy all the money due to the king and to have it at the exchequer at the beginning of the next easter term.

To appreciate the revolutionary character of the policy proposed by Edward II in this letter, it is necessary to know something of

the manner in which the financial resources of Ireland were disposed of before 1311.⁴ The king himself emphasises that the greater part of the money received at the Dublin exchequer was devoted to the wars in Scotland and to the king's business outside Ireland. An examination of the relevant financial records reveals that this statement of Edward II is true. From the very beginning of the thirteenth century the kings of England, as lords of Ireland, were accustomed to utilising the treasure of Ireland to meet their needs whenever the occasion demanded. Throughout this period a multitude of writs was sent to Ireland by the king, seeking sums 'de exitibus Hibernie' or 'de thesauro nostro', writs of *liberate* to pay the king's debts, rewards or gifts, or of *allocate* for such payments already made, writs seeking aids or subsidies, or looking for loans. It is a noteworthy fact that down to 1311 nearly £90,000 in hard cash was sent to the king in England, the bulk of this being paid into his wardrobe.⁵ This does not represent the full amount of money received from Ireland, but merely what is recorded on the very imperfect sources at our disposal. There can be no doubt that were the records of the Irish administration complete the above figure would have to be substantially increased. In addition the various sums which went to pay the king's debts would have to be included — such as the money from Ireland received by the Genoese merchant, Antonio de Passaigne, as part payment of the large sums he lent Edward II.⁶

⁴ For an account of the use made by English kings of the resources of their Irish lordship see my unpublished Ph.D. thesis, 'Ireland and the military enterprises of English kings in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries' (University of London, 1955).

⁵ See the list of sums sent to the king in England, which is printed below pp. 53-7.

⁶ Between November 1312 and November 1314 he received £1,202 5s. from the 'issues de la terre Dirlaunde' and £866 13s. 4d. from the ecclesiastical tenth which was current in Ireland during the same period (P.R.O., E. 159/88, m. 136 — K.R. Mem. roll 8 Edward II). Walter of Istelep, the Irish treasurer, records on his audited account for the period 8-14 Edward II that between 23 February and 29 September 1314, £256 was paid 'per breve Regis' to 'Antonio de Passaigne de Janua, mercatori Regis, in parte solucionis quarumdam pecunie summarum in quibus Rex eidem Antonio tenetur de diversis causis' (P.R.O., E. 372/166, m. 26 — Pipe roll 14 Edward II). The Genoese had previously undertaken to supply 'homines ad arma et alios bellatores' for the king's service in Ireland, and had contracted with Jordan de Insula, on payment of £500, for 200 men at arms and 2,000 foot for this service (P.R.O., E. 159/93, m. 76 — K.R. Mem. roll 13 Edward II).

At present it is impossible to calculate what such sums amounted to, but it would not be an exaggeration to say that they represented a considerable portion of the money accounted for at the Dublin exchequer.

Much of this expenditure of money by the Irish treasurer on the king's behalf was the result of financial embarrassment caused the kings by their wars in France, Wales and Scotland.⁷ But the lordship of Ireland was expected to make a contribution of a different kind to these same wars by providing soldiers, naval forces and, most important of all, a constant stream of military supplies of all sorts for the armies in the field. It would be impossible here to give even an estimate of the total expenditure this entailed during the thirteenth and early fourteenth century. Comprehensive figures for this are available only for the reigns of the first two Edwards, and these, at best, are of a very tentative nature.⁸ On an average nearly one half of the total recorded expenditure of the Irish exchequer during the period of the Scottish wars went on those same wars. Thus we find from the final audited account of the Irish treasurers, enrolled on the English pipe rolls, that during the years 1305–1308 expenditure on Scotland amounted to £5,258 15s. 6d. (out of a total expenditure of £12,173 15s. 6d.),⁹ and between 1308 and 1314 it came to £9,995 13s. 0½d. (out of £20,819 15s. 9d.).¹⁰ Nor do these figures give us a true picture of the scale of expenditure on those wars, for during the period they cover no large-scale military force left Ireland for Scotland, so that the greater part of the expenditure involved was concerned with the king's purveyance in Ireland. To give some idea of what an expeditionary force to Scotland cost the Irish government it is sufficient to draw attention to the expedition of 1296, which cost the Irish exchequer more than £5,500.¹¹ This figure does not, of course, include what was spent on supplies for Scotland in Ireland in that year.

⁷ It can be seen from the table on pp. 53–7 below that the periods of greatest receipt from Ireland coincided with war years in England.

⁸ These figures, which are taken from the final audited accounts of the Irish treasurers, are not fully comprehensive since they do not include all local expenditure by sheriffs and other officers of the Crown.

⁹ P.R.O., E. 372/153, m. 35 (Pipe roll 1 Edward II).

¹⁰ P.R.O., E. 372/171, mm. 31–32d (Pipe roll 19 Edward II).

¹¹ J. F. Lydon, 'An Irish army in Scotland, 1296', in *The Irish Sword*, v, no. 20, p. 188 (summer 1962). The total recorded receipt of the Irish exchequer in this year was £6,400 (*Cal. doc. Ire., 1293–1301*, no. 346).

It is clear, then, that there is no exaggeration in Edward II's description of the manner in which Irish revenue was disposed of before 1311. Nor does he go astray in his conclusion that this was responsible for the increase in lawlessness and disorder throughout the colony. The simple fact is that by withdrawing large sums of money from Ireland in this way the king left the Irish administration without the financial means necessary for good government in Ireland. There were other factors which contributed to the gradual collapse of the king's authority in Ireland, but there can be no doubt that the continued use of Irish revenues for purposes which were far removed from the best interests of the colony in Ireland was at least partly responsible for the eventual breakdown of law and order within the bounds of that colony as it existed at the beginning of the fourteenth century.

It is not, however, my purpose to argue this question here, but rather to establish the financial background to Edward's proposed reform in the financial administration of the lordship. We have shown that there was a constant drain of money from Ireland, that this money was normally paid into the king's wardrobe in England and that the king (or his advisers in England) believed that this policy adversely affected a dangerous situation in Ireland. Thus a new policy was called for, a complete reversal of the old one and therefore revolutionary in nature, whereby the whole of the Irish revenues would in future be devoted to Irish affairs. In this way the Dublin administration would have the financial means of checking the process of disintegration in the colony.

The financial problems of the Dublin administration had at last, therefore, been faced squarely by the king. As I suggested earlier we should probably see the influence of the Ordainers in this. But the Irish government was also partly responsible. For some time before this the council in Ireland had been seriously perturbed by the worsening condition of the country and by their inability to cope through lack of financial resources.¹² And Edward himself,

¹² H. G. Richardson and G. O. Sayles, in 'Irish revenue, 1278-1384', in *R.I.A. Proc.*, sect. C, lxii, 93ff. (1962), draw attention to a decline in revenues in the fourteenth century. But it is not quite clear from the figures they present that the decline begins in the first year of Edward II's reign. Between 1278 and 1299 the annual average was about £6,300 (p. 93). In the last year of Edward I (rather less than a year, 30 September 1306-29 July 1307) the total receipt was just over £5,700 (P.R.O., E. 101/234/16 — Irish receipt roll). In 1 Edward II

in the early years of his reign, because of the demands of the Scottish war upon his limited resources in England was eager to draw upon Ireland for as much help as he could get and was therefore insistent that revenues there should be increased in every possible way. One of the first things he set himself to do, therefore, was to collect the outstanding debts due to the Crown in Ireland.¹³ Thus in 1308 and 1309 William of Thornbury, the Irish chancellor, made a tour of the country inquiring into these debts.¹⁴ What his findings were we do not know, but during the next few years a determined effort was made to collect these sums.¹⁵ Like his father before him Edward II was actuated in this matter primarily by his own needs, and especially by the demands of the war in Scotland. On 31 August 1310 he wrote to John Wogan, the Irish justiciar, and explaining that he would 'greatly need' money for the expedition to Scotland he ordered him to hold a conference with the magnates about the matter. In due course a *parliamentum* was held at Cashel with the justiciar, the chancellor and others of the king's council present.¹⁶ It was probably as a result of this meeting that mandates were sent out from Dublin that same year to all the sheriffs and seneschals of Ireland to the effect that all debts should be levied from the goods of the king's debtors 'for the Scottish war'.¹⁷ When these mandates produced little or no result, further instructions were dispatched that they were to be carried into effect with the utmost speed and the money procured be sent to the exchequer 'within fifteen days of easter'.¹⁸ And shortly afterwards the English council in a special ordinance empowered a number of clerks to go to Ireland and urge

it fell to less than £3,000 (P.R.O., E. 101/235/11 — Irish receipt roll). In 2 Edward II it was just short of £3,500 (P.R.O., E. 101/235/18 — Irish receipt roll). A summary of receipts while Biknor was treasurer shows that the fall continued: 3 Edward II — £2,900; 4 Edward II — £3,000; 5 Edward II — £2,800 (P.R.O., E. 101/235/14).

¹³ The O'Connors, for example, owed £15,600 arrears of the farm of three cantreds in Connaught (*P.R.I. rep. D.K.* 39, p. 27 — Pipe roll 3 Edward II).

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 32.

¹⁵ See Mem. rolls 3–6 Edward II, *passim*.

¹⁶ P.R.O.I., Mem. roll 4 Edward II, m. 13d (Rec. comm. cal., v 279–80).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, m. 16d. (pp. 328–9).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, m. 31 (pp. 482–3). The matter was so urgent that the money was to be sent direct to the English exchequer and not to Dublin as would normally have been the practice.

on the collections in every way.¹⁹ Such efforts were baulked, however, by the prevalence of local disturbances which made the collection of money difficult and in many cases impossible.²⁰

An examination of the *recepta* of both the wardrobe and the exchequer in England reveals that the only sum of any considerable size received by the king in England from Ireland during these years was £500 delivered on 4 January 1311.²¹ Nor is this surprising, for it seems clear that despite all efforts to raise money in Ireland the income of the exchequer there was not substantially increased.²² Furthermore the needs of the Irish administration had already begun to impinge upon the king and he was now coupling them with his own requirements for Scotland. 'The peace of our land of Ireland' and 'the safety of our land of Ireland' are phrases which began to recur in official correspondence. The Irish royal officials were faced with the terrible problem of trying to supply the needs of the king while attempting to cope with a domestic situation which was threatening to get out of hand. Eventually the state of Ireland became too serious to be ignored. By the summer of 1311 the Irish council was debating how best to deal with the problem. In August it decided that all the revenue from customs, which had previously been assigned to the Friscobaldi, should be paid instead into the Dublin exchequer and be applied 'ad salvacionem Hibernie'.²³ The use of that last phrase is significant—the very safety of Ireland was now at stake. On 9 October the king wrote from London to Wogan and Biknor, the treasurer. He ordered that all debts were to be levied 'cum omni festinacione' and the money thus procured and all other revenues were to be applied 'in reformacionem status terre illius et salvacionem ejusdem'.²⁴ An extraordinary procedure, the result of an ordinance

¹⁹ See below p. 50.

²⁰ On 29 October 1311, for example, Andrew Gerard, 'custos' of the customs in Ireland, paid into the exchequer 40 marks of issues of the customs of Galway for the previous year and explained that it was much less than usual for that port 'because of the war recently developed between Richard de Burgh and Richard de Clare in the parts of Thomond'—P.R.O.I., Mem. roll 5 Edward II, m. 8d (Rec. comm. cal., vi. 57-8).

²¹ P.R.O., E. 101/374/6, fol. 2 (Wardrobe Book—'Liber recepte thesauri de anno quinto').

²² Ibid., fol. 12.

²³ P.R.O.I., Mem. roll 5 Edward II, m. 2 (Rec. comm. cal., vi. 14-15).

²⁴ Ibid., m. 22 (p. 154).

of the English council, was now adopted to levy outstanding debts. In late summer and early autumn, 1311, special agents were commissioned for each county, liberty and the major towns to conduct an investigation into old debts. With the help of sheriffs, seneschals, mayors and receivers they were to assess what debts were outstanding, what could be levied, and they were ordered to levy them with all speed.²⁵ We can take two clerks, Henry of Holeford and Thomas fitz Reginald, as typical examples of how these agents carried out their work. They were assigned to work in counties Tipperary, Waterford and Cork and from the returns which they made to the exchequer, and which were enrolled on the memoranda rolls, we can follow their work closely.²⁶ On 29 August they held an inquest at Cashel before a jury of six men from each of the nine cantreds in the county. The result of the inquest showed that a total of £611 18s. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. could be levied in that county. In Waterford city, on 2 September, another similar inquest gave a similar total of £125 10s. 10d. For county Cork, where the inquest was held on 14 September, the total was much larger at £1,151 5s. 7d., while for Cork city it came to only £33 3s. 4d. Waterford county yielded a total of something in the region of £40.

It is quite clear from all this activity that the ordinary machinery for levying old debts through the sheriffs and other local officials had either collapsed altogether or was insufficient. Only through extraordinary measures could such revenue be collected. That such an attempt was made is an indication of the serious view the English council, acting no doubt on the advice of the Irish officials, took of the state of Ireland. Hitherto old debts were commonplace and no serious attempt had been made to collect them. But how successful were the efforts of these agents acting on the instructions of the English council? Was there an increase in the Irish revenues as a result of their activity? Only a thorough and detailed analysis of each entry on the relevant Irish receipt rolls will supply an answer. But a general examination of these rolls reveals that there was no great increase in the number of individual sums for which tallies were struck at the Irish exchequer or in the amounts of money paid

²⁵ See below, Document I, for the ordinance and appointment of agents.

²⁶ The return for county Tipperary is printed below, Document II. Other returns will be found in P.R.O.I., Mem. roll 5 Edward II, m. 1d (Rec. comm. cal., vi. 5-9).

in by those who accounted there.²⁷ This may not be a true indication of the financial situation, however, for it is possible that there was an increase in the incidence of assignments and in the volume of local expenditure which did not figure on the receipt rolls. It is a well known fact that in England, during periods of financial strain, the government was usually driven to practice assignment on a great scale.²⁸ There is no reason to suppose that Ireland was any different in this respect; indeed there is evidence on the memoranda rolls that during this emergency period there was an increase in assignments in Ireland. But it was not really substantial enough to greatly affect the totals enrolled on the receipt rolls or to hide an increase in revenues which might otherwise be reflected in these rolls.

There is clear evidence, too, that in most cases the sheriffs, for one reason or another, proved as delinquent as ever. In counties Cork, Waterford and Tipperary, for example, the sheriffs did nothing about levying the sums listed by the special inquests conducted under the auspices of Holeford and fitz Reginald.²⁹ In Meath the sheriff said he was so busy trying to levy new debts that he could not find time to levy old ones.³⁰ In Dublin, when goods and chattels were seized on account of old debts, no buyers could be found for them.³¹ So that as a way of augmenting revenue the new and dynamic efforts of the king and his exchequer officials in Ireland proved a failure. The needs of the Dublin administration remained as great as ever and the situation it faced as grave as it had been. Indeed it worsened with the years until it was finally responsible for the near-collapse of the government during the years of the Bruce invasion.

It is against this background of reform in England and financial embarrassment in Ireland that Edward II's proposed reform in Irish fiscal policy must be seen. Designed probably to satisfy the demands of the Ordainers, it was a way of solving a pressing problem

²⁷ P.R.O., E. 101/235/22, 25; 236/1, 4 (Receipt rolls for 3, 4, 5, 6 Edward II).

²⁸ A. Steel, *The receipt of the exchequer*, p. xxxiv.

²⁹ P.R.O.I., Mem. roll 5 Edward II, mm. 8, 10 (Rec. comm. cal., vi. 59-60, 73, 82).

³⁰ *Ibid.*, m. 9 (pp. 64-5). He asked for a special receiver to be appointed to levy old debts, but the new man in turn reported that they were difficult to levy because of the war with the Irish (*ibid.* pp. 67-8).

³¹ *Ibid.*, m. 49 (pp. 288-90).

in Ireland. But it was completely ineffective, not because by failing to provide the government there with more money, it did not produce any tangible results in Ireland, but because it was never really given the chance to work. For before long the king was once again stressing his requirements for the war in Scotland and associating them (as of equal importance) with the needs of Ireland.³² And soon he was allowing his own needs outside Ireland to override those of the lordship to the same extent as he (and his father) had done before. On 24 April 1314, when seeking military assistance for the campaign which preceded Bannockburn, he ordered the Irish treasurer to hand over to Alexander le Convers, whom he sent to Ireland to raise men for Scotland, *all* the money then in the exchequer and all the money received up to the following 1 August.³³ Even more immediately than this, however, was the policy of conserving the revenues of Ireland for use in the lordship abandoned by the king, when he made them over entirely to the Genoese merchant, Antonio de Passaigne, as part payment of his debts.³⁴ But even earlier, though not so drastically, this policy was forgotten when the Dublin administration was called upon to supply provisions for the war in Scotland. On 16 March and 12 June 1312, for example, wheat, oats and wine were ordered to be provided 'out of the issues of Ireland' for the castles which stood in imminent danger from Bruce.³⁵ From that time onwards the king made full use of his Irish resources in aid of his war in Scotland and any hope of repairing the financial losses of the Irish administration vanished in the northern war. The fact is that Scotland was never allowed to take second place to the

³² See his letters of 6 August 1312, addressed to the sheriffs, seneschals and mayors of Ireland, which begin: 'Quia tam pro conservacione pacis Hibernie quam pro expedicione guerre nostre Scocie . . . diversis pecunie summis ad presentem nos indigemus'—P.R.O.I., Mem. roll 5 Edward II, m. 54d (Rec. comm. cal., vi. 317).

³³ P.R.O.I., Mem. roll 7 Edward II, (Rec. comm. cal. ix. 460–61); *Rotuli Scocie*, i. 124.

³⁴ See Edward's letter of 20 October 1313 to Andrew Gerard, 'custos et receptor custumarum' in Ireland, in which he says that he has assigned 'omnes exitus de terra nostra predicta' (i.e. Ireland) to Passaigne and orders him to hand over all the issues of the customs to Passaigne's clerk, John de Mougell—P.R.O.I., Mem. roll 7 Edward II, m. 8d (Rec. comm. cal., ix. 57–8). For Passaigne's receipts from Ireland see above p. 41.

³⁵ *Cal. close roll, 1307–13*, pp. 412–3; *Hist. & mun. doc. Ire.*, pp. 320–21.

needs of the Irish administration, even while the king was supposedly pursuing a new policy here. Whatever Edward II may have said, it is quite clear from the records of the Irish exchequer that purveyance for Scotland was a regular feature of the years 1310-1312.³⁶

And so a promising reform, at a time when it was desperately needed in Ireland, came to nothing. It needed the shock of the Bruce invasion in 1315 and the disasters which followed to fully expose the financial weakness of the king's administration in Ireland and the urgent necessity for an answer to the problem. In the event no solution was found other than making Ireland financially dependent upon England. For the rest of the middle ages the Irish lordship was a liability, a financial embarrassment to the English crown,³⁷ and for this the failure of the proposals of 1311 must be held at least partly responsible.

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³⁶ See especially P.R.O., E. 101/238/24 — a summary account of purveyance in Ireland during Alexander Bicknor's tenure of the treasurership.

³⁷ See, for example, T. F. Tout and D. M. Broome, 'A national balance for 1362-3', in *E.H.R.*, xxxix (1924), pp. 413-4, 416, 419, J. L. Kirby, 'The issues of the Lancastrian exchequer and Lord Cromwell's estimates of 1433', in *Inst. Hist. Research Bull.*, xxiv (1951), pp. 132-5, 144.

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Ordinance of the king and English council concerning the levying of debts in the counties and liberties, and memorandum of the appointment of two special agents for counties Waterford, Cork and Tipperary, August 1311¹

Memorandum quod per locum tenentem facta fuit quedam commissio pro Henrico de Haleford clerico et Thoma Reginaldi in forma que sequitur: Edwardus Rex omnibus etc. Quia tam pro diversis arduis

¹The extracts printed here are all taken from the Record Commissioners' calendar of the memoranda rolls in P.R.O.I. All abbreviations have been silently extended and I have substituted arabic for Roman numerals. I have also corrected the more obvious errors in the calendar, but otherwise I have printed the transcripts as they stand. They are printed by permission of the deputy keeper of the public records in Ireland. I am grateful to Miss Otway-Ruthven of Trinity College, Dublin, who read through the documents and suggested some useful corrections, and to Mr Hugh Shields, also of Trinity College, who was particularly helpful with the French text.

negociis nostris pacem terre nostre Hibernie tangentibus quam pro expeditione guerre nostre Scocie diversis pecunie summis ad presentem indigemus, assignavimus dilectos clericos nostros Henricum de Haleford et Thomam Renaud ad supervidendam festinationem et diligenciam quas Vicecomites nostri Waterford', Cork', et Tipperary, Servientes nostri eorundem Comitatum et receptores denariorum nostrorum ibidem, temporibus retroactis apposuerunt et de cetero apponent circa levacionem quarumcumque debitorum nostrorum in eisdem Comitatibus nobis aretro existencias et ad onerandos ipsos vicecomites et servientes nostros de quibuscunque debitis nostris que per sacramentum proborum et legalium hominum clara esse comperiri poterunt, ita quod ipsi Vicecomites, servientes et receptores nostri eadem debita nostra de die in diem levare possint et nobis sine dilacione ad scaccarium nostrum Dublin' solvere pro expeditione negociorum nostrorum predictorum, juxta formam ordinacionis eisdem Henrico et Thoma sub sigillo scaccarii nostri predicti inde liberate. Et ideo vobis mandamus quod predictis Henrico et Thoma ad premissis faciendis intendentes sitis etc.

Ordinacio predicta patet in sequenti: Ordene est par le Rey et par son conseil Dengleterre qe celui qi deit aller² en divers comitez par les dettes le Rey hastyvement lever, face venir a certeyn jour a luy, devant le Viscounte du Countee et toutz les baillifs ausi bien dedenz franchise come dehors de meisme le Countee, a chascun hundred et centref, 6 les plus probes homes et plus loiaux et plus suffisauntz del hundred et du cauntref, et illuesq[ues] face le Viscounte, Baillifs, souzbaillifs et les homes avaunt ditz jurer qe³ loiaument presenteront et verite dirront et feront de quanque home lour chargera de par le Rey. Et apres face demaunder les somounes le Viscounte et totes les autres estretes et briefs des dettes le Rei, a luy lyvereez, et celes somounes et estretes et brefs ensemblement oue les estretes q'il portera oue⁴ luy le Eschequer, face lire, et apposer par ordre de noun en noun et les nouns qu sunt a affoerer⁵ face⁶ affoerer. Et par lour serment, et dautres bons et loiaux homes solounc⁷ ceo qil verra q'myeux seit affere par le Rey, enquoerge de chescun quy dette au Rey, ou il ad terres et chateux, et en queles viles, et dedenz quel hundred et Cantref ausi bien dedenz franchise come dehors, et meintenaunt livre⁸ estrete a les avaunt ditz baillifs de meisme le hundred ou Cantref de totes les dettes dues, en lour hundred ou Cantref et les charge et emoy que de par le Rey⁹ sur forfeiture de terres, tenements, biens, chateux et de vie et de membre qi hastyvement et loialement¹⁰ saunz avoir regard a nuly personne facent lever les dettes de chescun home¹¹ quy les devera, quy qil seit, et les face assigner brief jour du payment fere au Viscounte at au receyvour le Rey du Countee essait qe luy, et les Viscounte eyent les deniers au dit Eschequer, au jour qe lour serra assigne au plus tard.¹² Et si celuy quy est ensi¹³ assigner de part le Rey, troefs,¹⁴

¹ MS 'a leer'.

² MS 'affoerers'.

³ MS 'luyre'.

⁴ MS 'nome'.

⁵ MS *sic*.

⁶ MS 'et'.

⁷ MS 'fate'.

⁸ MS 'Reis'.

⁹ MS 'tart'.

¹⁰ MS 'one'.

¹¹ MS 'soloubt'.

¹² MS 'loiairement'.

¹³ MS 'eusi'.

Viscounte, baillifs, souzbaillifs denz franchise ou dehors, soient de fee ou autrement, ou nul autre qil chargera de ceste bosoigne negligent, lasche, ou feynt en la execucioum fere meintaenaut fact prendre terres et tenementz, biens et chateux et quanqil ad en¹⁵ la mayn le Rey, et son corps face envoyer hastyvement en Chastel de¹⁶ Dyvelyn, et demorer illuesques et a receyvre, ceo qe le Rey en vodra ordoner.

Quia per predictum locum tenentem pro celeri expedicione negociorum Regis in comitatibus predictis ipsum Regem tangentium, Henricus de Haleford clericus et Thomas Renaud mittuntur ad partes comitatum predictorum pro eisdem negociis ibidem expediendis prout in litteris patentibus eos inde confectis plenius continetur, mandatum est singulis vicecomitibus et receptoribus Comitatum predictorum, predicto septimo die Augusti anno predicto, quod ipsi una cum servientibus eorundem comitatum prefatis Henrico et Thoma diligentur intendant. Et quod dicti vicecomites venire faciant coram eis ad certos dies et loca tot et tales etc. ad certificandos ipsos Henricum et Thomam super quibusdam articulis Regem tangentibus ab eis requirendis. Et quod habeant ibi tunc nomina juratorum etc. Et mandatum est singulis vicecomitibus et receptoribus predictorum comitatum quod de denariis Regis de exitibus dictionum comitatum provenientibus et in custodia sua existentibus sine dilacione habere faciant in quolibet predictorum comitatum predictis Henrico et Thoma 41s. qui eis concessi sunt pro expensis suis circa expedicionem negociorum predictorum recipientes litteras suas etc. Et pecunia illa etc.¹⁷

II

Proceedings at Cashel before the royal agents inquiring into debts in co. Tipperary, August 1311

Henricus de Haleford et Thomas filius Reginaldi clerici assignati ad levacionem debitorum Regis in comitatibus Typer', Waterford' et Cork supervidendam et festinendam protulerunt quasdam dividendas dictum negocium tangentes inter ipsos et vicecomites comitatum predictorum et eciam majores et ballivos civitatis Cork et Waterford' inde confectis in forma que sequitur :

Typerary

Die dominica in festo docollacionis sancti Johannis Baptiste (29 August) anno regni regis Edwardi 5 (1311) compertum est per inquisitionem captam apud Cassell coram Henrico de Haleford et Thoma Renaud

¹⁵ MS 'eu'.

¹⁶ MS 'le'.

¹⁷ P.R.O.I., Mem. roll 4 Edward II, m. 57 d. (Rec. Comm. cal., vi. 709-13). Although no date is given for the commission, we learn from the memorandum at the end that it was issued on 7 August 1311. For the appointment of other agents see *ibid.*, m. 57d (p. 714); Mem. roll 5 Edward II, m. 9 (Rec. Comm. cal., vi. 64-5, 67-8); m. 15 (p. 108); m. 25 (p. 170); m. 44 (pp. 223-4).

clericis Regis ad debita Regis in comitatu Typerar' supervidenda assignatis per 6 probos et legales [homines] de quolibet cantredo Cassel', Moyen, Sleff, Moitalyn, Iffnogen, Offath, Muscri, Oktiv et Elyogr' quod levare possunt de claro in predictis cantredis £580 os. 17 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. absque eo quod Ricardus le Poer vicecomes ejusdem comitatus levare potest prout testatum est per inquisitionem predictam de diversis debitoribus de quibus inquisicio predicta nullam fecit mencionem. Et preter summam recepte existentis in deposito in manu Willelmi de Monte receptoris denariorum Regis in eodem comitatu a mense Pashe anno ejusdem quarto usque ad festum decollacionis sancti Johannis Baptiste anno 5 prout in dividendis inde factis inter predictos vicecomitem et receptorem plenius continetur et extendit se predicta summa recepte ad £31 16s. 11d.

Et sic est summa totalis £611 18s. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.¹⁸

III

Letter to the sheriff of Cork ordering debts to be levied and outlining a new financial policy for Ireland, 1311 or early 1312

Cum retroactis temporibus denarios nostros de exitibus terre nostre Hibernie pervenientes pro majori parte in usus negociorum nostrorum Anglie et Scocie converti fecimus et expendi tam in diversis victualibus pro expeditione guerre nostre Scocie in Hibernia inde emptis et provis et ad nos in Scociam transmissis quam in pecunia numerata nobis missa pro aliis diversis negociis nostris proficiendis et exequendis, ita quod residui denarii nostri de exitibus terre nostre Hibernie pervenientes ad conservacionem pacis ibidem a diu est sufficere non potuerunt, per quod diversi Hibernici terre nostre Hibernie felones nostri et rebelles tam ob hujusmodi pecunie defectum quam consuete expugnacionis et debite refrenacionis tepidum rigorem in tantum creverunt ut de gentis sue numero et valitudine presumentes incendia, homicidia, roberias et alias transgressiones innumeras et intollerabiles de die in diem perpetrando, jactas et dampna nobis et quampluribus [fidelibus] nostris ibidem inferunt, prout ex insinuacione Justiciarii nostri Hibernie et consilli nostri ibidem nobis constat, Nos de consilio nostro Anglie concessimus quod omnes denarii de exitibus dicte terre pervenientes de cetero expendantur in eadem terra circa conservacionem pacis ejusdem terre et in aliis arduis negociis ibidem expediendis prout in litteris patentibus Johanni Wogani Justiciario nostro Hibernie et Alexandro de Bikenore Thesaurario nostro ibidem inde directas plenius continetur et prout eidem Thesaurario plenius per nos injunctum est viva voce, ideo tibi precipimus sub omni forisfactura quod totam pecuniam nobis in balliva tua debitam cum omni festinacione levare facias ita quod

¹⁸ Ibid., m. 1d (pp. 4-5).

totam hujusmodi pecuniam nobis tu ipse in persona habeas ad Scaccarium Dublin' in crastino clausi Pasche¹⁹ super compositum tuum pro expedicione predicta nobis inde solvenda. Et super hoc mandamus capitali servienti comitatus predicti quod ipse in persona una cum omnibus suis sub-servientibus ibidem diligenter assistat in auxilium predicti vicecomitis ad debita regis levanda in forma predicta.²⁰

¹⁹ The Monday after Low Sunday or the Octave of Easter. If the letter is assigned to 1312, then this day would be 3 April 1312.

²⁰ P.R.O.I., Mem. roll 5 Edward II, m. 26 (Rec. Comm. cal., vi. 187-9). Similar letters were sent to the sheriffs of Kerry, Limerick, Waterford, Tipperary, Carlow, Kildare, Dublin, Meath, Uriel, Connaught and Roscommon; the seneschals of Kilkenny and Trim; the mayors and bailiffs of Dublin, Cork, both Droghedas, Waterford and Limerick. The letter is not dated, but it was enrolled under the caption 'Brevia pro rege' in Hilary Term. It was probably issued, therefore, from the Irish exchequer early in 1312. The original letter from the king has not survived — at least a thorough search of the English and Irish Records has failed to supply it. But it can be assigned to the second half of 1311. Nor have the letters patent to Wogan and Biknor, mentioned in the text, survived.

APPENDIX

CALENDAR OF SUMS OF IRISH TREASURE RECEIVED BY THE KING

JOHN

Date received	Amount	References
16 Oct. 1203	400 marks of silver 200 ozs. of gold ¹	<i>Rot. liberate</i> , p. 70.
Aug. 1204	1,000 marks	<i>Rot. litt. claus.</i> , p. 12.
Oct. 1204	40 marks	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 10.
Oct. 1204	1,000 marks	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 13.
June 1205	300 marks	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 36; <i>Pipe roll 8 John</i> , p. 17.

¹ Another entry on the same roll equates 15 marks of silver with 15 ozs. of gold (*Rot. liberate*, p. 71), while on another roll 20 ozs. of gold are equated with 198 marks 6s. 9d. (*Rot. oblatas*, p. 66). On the basis of these figures the two sums listed under 16 October 1203 would amount to very nearly 6,000 marks.

Date received	Amount	References
11 Mar. 1206	64 marks, 7 ozs. 9 pence of gold 5 ozs. 1 penny of gold 'in plata' 356 marks of gold 'in plata' 51 marks 10s. 1d. £40 ²	<i>Rot. litt. claus.</i> , p. 71.
25 Dec. 1206	300 marks	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 75.
17 Feb. 1207	272 marks of silver 100 ozs. of gold ³	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 78.
19 Mar. 1207	128 marks	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 80.
30 Oct. 1207	1,500 marks	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 96.
1210-11	1,272 marks 10s. 4d.	<i>Cal. doc. Ire.</i> , 1171-1251, nos 421, 423.
1212	6,000 marks £60 9s. 5d.	<i>Rot. litt. claus.</i> , p. 123.
1213	572 marks	<i>Cal. doc. Ire.</i> , 1171-1251, no. 449.

HENRY III

July 1218	£493 2s. 10d.	<i>Pat. rolls</i> , 1216-25, p. 160.
July 1221	£1,693 2s. 8d.	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 296.
Mar. 1230	2,000 marks	<i>Cal. pat. rolls</i> , 1226-32, p. 329; <i>Cal. lib. rolls</i> , 1226-40, p. 167.
Mar. 1230	500 marks	<i>Cal. pat. rolls</i> , 1225-32, p. 330.
Sept. 1230	2,000 marks	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 412; <i>Close rolls</i> , 1227-31, pp. 434, 435.
1231	£500	P.R.O., E. 372/75, m. 15 (Pipe roll 15 Henry III); <i>Cal. pat. rolls</i> , 1225-32, p. 419.
July 1232	1,200 marks	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 493; <i>Close rolls</i> , 1231-4, p. 82.
Oct. 1236	£551 (?)	<i>Close rolls</i> , 1234-7, pp. 365, 510-11.
Sept. 1237	3,000 marks	P.R.O., E. 372/81, m. 13 (Pipe roll 21 Henry III), <i>Call. pat. rolls</i> , 1232-7, p. 196.

² Approximately 3,700 marks.³ Approximately 3,700 marks.

Date received	Amount	References
July 1238	2,000 marks	<i>Close rolls, 1237-42</i> , p. 75; M. H. Mills & I. Stewart-Brown (ed.), <i>Cheshire in the pipe rolls</i> , p. 45.
July 1239	£1,000	<i>Cal. doc. Ire.</i> , 1171-1251, no. 2473; <i>Cal. lib. rolls, 1226-40</i> , p. 402.
Sept. 1241	1,000 marks	P.R.O., E. 401/14 (Receipt roll); <i>Cal. doc. Ire.</i> , 1171-1251, no. 2501; <i>Cal. pat. rolls, 1232-47</i> , p. 259.
July 1242	2,500 marks	<i>Rôles Gascons</i> , i, no. 351.
July 1243	2,000 marks	<i>Cal. pat. rolls, 1232-47</i> , p. 384.
June 1244	1,900 marks	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 429; P.R.O., E. 372/88, m. 14 (Pipe roll 28 Henry III).
Oct. 1245	£396 10s. 6d.	<i>Cal. pat. rolls, 1232-47</i> , p. 461.
May 1247	£1,329 11s. 8d.	<i>Close rolls, 1242-47</i> , p. 512.
June 1247	1,000 marks	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 503; <i>Cal. lib. rolls, 1245-51</i> , p. 128.
Sept. 1248	1,200 marks	<i>Cal. pat. rolls, 1247-58</i> , p. 27.
July 1249	1,200 marks ⁴	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 44.
Aug. 1250	700 marks	B.M., Royal MSS, 18 C XIV, fol. 233v (Irish treasurer's account); <i>Cal. pat. rolls, 1247-58</i> , p. 72.
Aug. 1251	2,000 marks	B.M., Royal MSS, 18 C XIV, fo. 233v; <i>Cal. pat. rolls, 1247-58</i> , p. 105; <i>Close rolls, 1247-51</i> , p. 500.
Nov. 1251	£1,000	<i>Cal. lib. rolls, 1251-60</i> , p. 6; <i>Close rolls, 1251-3</i> , p. 8.
Apr. 1252	£52 8s. 5d.	P.R.O., E. 352/45, m. 20d (Chancellor's Roll, 36 Henry III). <i>Cal. pat. rolls, 1247-58</i> , p. 136.
May 1252	£1,685 16s. 8d.	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 216.
Nov. 1252	£983 4s. 9d.	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 220.
July 1253	£2,449 5s. 3½d.	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 216.

⁴In the account of the keeper of the wardrobe for 1244-9, £2,658 19s. 4d. is the receipt recorded from Ireland — P.R.O., E. 372/95, m. 7 (Pipe roll 35 Henry III).

Date received	Amount	References
Nov. 1253	1,000 marks	P.R.O., E. 401/28 (Receipt roll); <i>Cal. pat. rolls, 1247-58</i> , p. 361; <i>Cal. lib. rolls, 1251-60</i> , p. 152.
Aug. 1254	£1,533 6s. 8d.	<i>Cal. pat. rolls, 1247-58</i> , p. 317.
Feb. 1255	44 marks 10s.	<i>Rôles Gascons</i> , i (2), no. 4379.
July 1255 1257	600 marks of silver £2,086 10s.	<i>Ibid.</i> , no. 4518. N.L.I., Harris Collectanea, i. fol. 211 (from an Irish receipt roll).
1264-8	£66 13s. 4d.	P.R.O., E. 372/115, m. 1 (Pipe roll 55 Henry III); E. 372/113, m. 2 (Pipe roll 53 Henry III) <i>Cal. doc. Ire., 1252-84</i> , no. 803.
July 1270	£20	<i>Cal. pat. rolls, 1266-72</i> , p. 437.

EDWARD I

1276-7	£100	P.R.O., E. 372/122, m. 23 (Pipe roll 5 Edward I).
1278-85	9,300 marks ⁵	P.R.O., E. 372/136, m. 35 (Pipe roll 19 Edward I).
1285-91	£12,333 6s. 8d. ⁶	P.R.O., E. 372/139, m. 9d (Pipe roll 22 Edward I).
1292-3	£5 14s. 9d.	P.R.O., E. 372/138, m. 26 (Pipe roll 21 Edward I).
1292-4	£13,323 11s. 3¼d.	P.R.O., E. 372/139, m. 5d (Pipe roll 22 Edward I).
1296	£1,000	P.R.O., E. 372/144, mm. 20, 25d (Pipe roll 27 Edward I); E. 101/624/5, fol. 17 (Receipta garderobe).
1297	£7,096 7s. 5d. ⁷	P.R.O., E. 372/144, m. 25d (Pipe roll 27 Edward I).

⁵William de Luda, keeper of the wardrobe, accounted for £7,005 16s. 8d. of the issues of Ireland, £666 13s. 4d. of a subsidy for the war, £233 6s. 8d. from the issues of the vacant archbishopric of Dublin, and £73 6s. 8d. fine by Alexander de Luka, which he received from Ireland between November 1283 and November 1284 — P.R.O., E. 372/130, m. 5 (Pipe roll 13 Edward I).

⁶There is an additional sum of £8,395 18s. 6d. paid 'ad opus Regis' (probably for Wales) to the merchants of the Ricardi company of Lucca which is allowed to Nicholas of Clare, the Irish treasurer, on this audited account.

⁷On 10 July, £3,026 6s. 2½d. received in the exchequer was transferred to the wardrobe — P.R.O. E. 401/141 (Receipt roll).

Date received	Amount	References
1298	£333 6s. 8d.	P.R.O., E. 372/144, m. 25d. (Pipe roll 27 Edward I).
1299	£248 2s. 10½d.	P.R.O., E. 401/144, 147. (Receipt rolls).
1300	£415 3s. 6½d. ⁸	P.R.O., E. 401/147 (Receipt roll).
1301	£57 18s. 3d.	P.R.O., E. 101/359/5, fols. lv, 2, 5 (Recepta garderobe).
1302	£115 6s. 8d.	<i>Cal. doc. Ire.</i> , 1302-7, no. 23.
1305	£11,267 4s. 5d. ⁹	P.R.O., E. 401/160 (Receipt roll); E. 403/129 (Issue roll).
	£45	
1306	£280	P.R.O., E. 101/368/7, (fol. 18v (Recepta garderobe)).

EDWARD II

1309	£143 6s. 8d.	P.R.O., E. 101/235/20 (Irish issue roll).
1311	£500 ¹⁰	P.R.O., E. 101/376/6, fol. 2 (Recepta garderobe).

⁸ On his audited account for 1299-1300 the Irish treasurer, William of Estdene, is allowed £1,184 os. 6½d. which he paid to the Friscobaldi merchants as part payment of the king's debts—P.R.O., E. 352/93, m. 36 (Chancellor's roll 28 Edward I).

⁹ This large sum was not received all at once, but is the amount of one single tally struck to cover receipts 1303-5. See P.R.O., E. 101/365/6, fols. 19v, 21v, 32v (Recepta garderobe), where full details of the receipts are to be found. In his audited account for 1300-5 the Irish treasurer, Richard of Bereford, is allowed £2,802 7s. 0½d. which he paid to the Friscobaldi on behalf of the king—P.R.O., E. 372/150, m. 40d (Pipe roll 33 Edward I).

¹⁰ There are the payments made to the Genoese merchant, Anthony de Passaigne, which might be noted here—see above p. 41. But apart from a few examples which I have noted above, no attempt has been made to include in these lists sums of money which were paid out by the Irish treasurer, or other Irish officials, in repayment of the king's debts outside Ireland. These sums were often substantial—1,000 marks to the citizens of Bordeaux in 1250 (B.M., Royal MSS, 18 C, XIV, fol. 234), 1,470 marks to the same by the Irish escheator (*Cal. pat. rolls*, 1266-72, p. 288), £393 to Chester (*Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1252-84, no. 891). Nor are receipts from such taxes as papal tenths included. These, if they could be ascertained fully, would have substantially increased the sums listed—for example the receipt from the tenth in 1258 amounted to 3,055 marks (*Close rolls*, 1254-9, pp. 465-6). What I have tried to list is the amount of money from the Irish exchequer derived for the most part from the ordinary revenues, which was received in the exchequer and wardrobe, or by Edward while he was lord of Ireland. But the accounts are so fragmentary for the period before Edward I's reign that it is impossible to attempt a comprehensive table.