

Coldinghamshire was a survival from pre-feudal times - as, in their way, were the perhaps rather superficially feudalized lordships of Lauderdale, Liddesdale, Eskdale and Annandale³³. In both England and Scotland royal government established a system of shrieval control, with sheriffs of Bamburgh, Newcastle and Carlisle appearing early in the twelfth century south of the border³⁴, and sheriffs of Berwick and Roxburgh about a generation later³⁵. The fact that in at least the cases of Bamburgh and Roxburgh the royal sheriff or *vicecomes* seems to have simply evolved from the older pre-feudal *scir-gerefa* or officer in charge of a multiple estate only serves to emphasize the conservatism and continuity of Northumbria whether English or Scots³⁶. No doubt from the beginning the sheriffs convened and presided over courts of county or sheriffdom which maintained discipline over, and dispensed justice to, the communities of feudal barons and the ministerial lesser nobility of thanes and drengs which formed the topmost layer of freemen in both countries. Only with higher judicial administration do we see any significant differentiation by the second half of the twelfth century. In Scotland the officer intermediate between king and sheriff was the justiciar³⁷. From the 1160s, if not before, the office was territorialised. The justiciar of Lothian was responsible for the general oversight of royal government, including the holding of courts superior to the sheriff courts, throughout Scotland south of Forth and Clyde. The maintenance of law and order along the frontier with England was primarily the responsibility of the justiciar of Lothian, although he would normally be assisted by the sheriffs of Berwick, Roxburgh and Dumfries³⁸. In England the sheriffs of Cumberland and Northumberland - together with the officers who administered Northamptonshire and Islandshire on behalf of the bishops of Durham - undertook the day-to-day duties of government³⁹. From the later 1160s higher royal justice was administered by teams (normally pairs) of itinerant judges, the well known 'justices in eyre', restored by Henry II in place of territorial justiciars retained in the more

³³ Barrow, *Kingdom of the Scots*, 31-2; Barrow, G.W.S., "The pattern of lordship and feudal settlement in Cumbria", in: *Journal of Medieval History* 1 (1975), 117-38, especially 130-2.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 132; for sheriffs of Newcastle and Carlisle see Johnson, C. and Cronne, H.A. (ed.), *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, II (Oxford, 1956), *passim*.

³⁵ Dickinson, W.C., *The Sheriff Court Book of Fife* (Edinburgh, Scottish History Society, 1928), 349.

³⁶ Bartlett and Mackay, *Medieval Frontier Societies*, 15.

³⁷ Barrow, *Kingdom of the Scots*, 83-138.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 117-8; *The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*, ed. Stuart, J. and Burnett, G. (Edinburgh, 1878), 9-10, 16-17, 21-3, 27-30, 35-6, 43-6; *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland*, ed. Bain, J., I (1881), no. 2680.

³⁹ E.g., Stones, E.L.G., *Anglo-Scottish Relations, 1174-1328; some selected documents* (Oxford, 1970), no. 8. The activity of northern English sheriffs is well illustrated in Bain, *Calendar of Documents I and II* (1884), *passim*, and in the series of Pipe Rolls, for details of which see Mullins, E.L.C., *Texts and Calendars: An Analytical Guide to Serial Publications* (Royal Historical Society, 1958), 7, 10, 232-8; *idem*, *Texts and Calendars II: an analytical guide to serial publications* (Roy. Hist. Soc., 1983), 83-7.