

aspects Giraldus's career depended to a considerable degree on both his Welsh and his English connections.

Thus it was as the legate of the archbishop of Canterbury that Giraldus began his career in the diocese of St David's, collecting tithes, and it was the archbishop who ordered Bishop David of St David's to appoint Giraldus as archdeacon of Brecon after the deposition of his married predecessor, Jordan—although the bishop was doubtless happy to advance his nephew's career in this way.³³ Indeed, Giraldus's family connections made the diocese of St David's the obvious place to demonstrate his credentials as an ecclesiastical reformer trying to put into practice the ideals he had absorbed so enthusiastically in the Paris of Peter the Chanter.³⁴ Politically, it was those family connections which made Giraldus so potentially valuable to the Angevin court: it can be no accident that he was employed at precisely the time, in 1184, when Henry II was trying to repair the *détente* with the Lord Rhys established in 1171-2, a *détente* which had been threatened by a recent rebellion by Rhys's nephew, Morgan ap Caradog, lord of upland Glamorgan, with the active support of Rhys himself.³⁵ Yet those connections also made Giraldus vulnerable, as he discovered when, after Henry's death in July 1189, he failed in his missions to restore the peace in Wales in the face of much more serious attacks on royal and Marcher lands and castles by Rhys and his sons. A Cistercian abbot, William Wibert, who accompanied Giraldus on three of these missions, allegedly accused his companion of betraying the royal cause by siding with his Welsh kinsmen.³⁶ Later, however, Giraldus was blamed by the Welsh for having the Lord Rhys and his sons excommunicated by the bishop of St David's; and had one of his prebends plundered as a result.³⁷

One question which arises from an examination of Giraldus's career is how he saw himself in relation to England and Wales: did he identify with one country more than the other? This question can be approached from two directions. First, we can examine Giraldus's statements regarding his identity. These have attracted considerable scholarly attention. Very briefly, the tendency of much work over the last three decades has been to minimize the significance of Giraldus's Welsh ancestry and associations, in an understandable reaction against interpretations of him as an early Welsh nationalist, interpretations based excessively on the autobiographical writings

³³ Giraldus, Opera 1 pp. 24, 27. For Jordan, see most recently Julia Barrow (ed.), *St Davids Episcopal Acta 1085-1280* (South Wales Record Society), Cardiff 1998. I am very grateful to Dr Barrow for providing me with a copy of this work in advance of publication.

³⁴ Bartlett, Gerald (as n. 6) pp. 27-33.

³⁵ Cf. Lloyd (as n. 3) 2 p. 561; J. Beverley Smith, *The Kingdom of Morgannwg and the Norman Conquest of Glamorgan*, in: T. B. Pugh (ed.), *Glamorgan County History*, Vol. 3, *The Middle Ages*, Cardiff 1971, pp. 37-9; John Gillingham, *Henry II, Richard I and the Lord Rhys*, in: *Peritia* 10 (1996) pp. 229-31.

³⁶ Giraldus, Opera 1 pp. 203-13. Cf. Gillingham, *Henry II* (as n. 35) pp. 234-5 and n. 57. Giraldus also claimed later that he had been accused by Prince John of emptying Wales of its defenders on account of his success in recruiting troops for the Third Crusade in 1188, thereby handing it over to his Welsh kinsmen: Giraldus, Opera 1 p. 76.

³⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 321, 332.