

Giraldus was also drawn into political affairs in England. As a curial clerk this was arguably inevitable, but it can be argued that he was imprudent in the degree to which he advertised his political allegiances.<sup>69</sup> In his autobiography, *De Rebus a Se Gestis*, Giraldus is reticent about his reasons for leaving the court, maintaining that his departure was due to his realizing the incompatibility between the courtier's and the scholar's life.<sup>70</sup> As we have seen, he had fallen victim to malicious rumours of disloyalty spread by William Wibert, who asserted that Giraldus conspired with his Welsh kinsmen in Deheubarth against the crown. Giraldus attributed his difficulties at court to Wibert, but the crucial reason for his departure may well have been that he was caught on the wrong side of the constitutional crisis which blew up during Richard I's absence on crusade and subsequent imprisonment in Germany.<sup>71</sup> During that absence Giraldus appears to have become associated with Richard's younger brother, Prince John, whom he had accompanied to Ireland in 1185; John apparently offered Giraldus the bishopric of Llandaff, which lay within the lordship of Glamorgan (held by John at that time), an offer which was refused.<sup>72</sup> By October 1191 John had succeeded in engineering the expulsion of his brother's chief justiciar, William Longchamp, and had taken over as regent in his place.<sup>73</sup> In c. 1193 Giraldus wrote a life of Geoffrey, archbishop of York, an illegitimate son of Henry II, which was extremely hostile to Longchamp (to whom, two years earlier, Giraldus had dedicated his *Itinerarium Cambriae*) as well as to Hubert Walter, thereby revealing his allegiance to John's party.<sup>74</sup> The following year, however, Richard was released from his German captivity, Longchamp was restored, and John was compelled to submit to his brother's authority. Despite the further volte-face represented by the dedication of the *Descriptio Cambriae* to Hubert Walter, it is very likely that Richard's return ended Giraldus's curial career.<sup>75</sup> There then developed a growing disenchantment with the Angevin dynasty, which reached its apogee in 1216-17, when Giraldus wrote a poem welcoming Prince Louis of France on the latter's invasion of England at the request of a baronial faction hostile to John.<sup>76</sup> Giraldus's connections and preoccupation with Wales did not prevent him, then, from engaging with political events in England.

What attracted Giraldus to Hereford and Lincoln were their libraries and the presence of other scholars. For Giraldus the scholar, England possessed intellectual as well as

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<sup>69</sup> Richter, Giraldus (as n. 6) p. 86.

<sup>70</sup> Giraldus, Opera 1 p. 89. This dichotomy had previously been emphasized by John of Salisbury in his *Policraticus* of 1159: Nederman, *Policraticus* (as n. 19) p. 4.

<sup>71</sup> Richter, Giraldus (as n. 6) pp. 84-7; Michael Richter, Gerald of Wales, in: *Traditio* 29 (1973) pp. 383-4; Gillingham, Henry II (as n. 35) p. 235 n. 57.

<sup>72</sup> Giraldus, Opera 1 pp. 61, 87.

<sup>73</sup> J. T. Appleby, *England without Richard 1189-1199*, London 1965, Chap. 3.

<sup>74</sup> Giraldus, Opera 4 pp. 355-431.

<sup>75</sup> Bartlett, Gerald (as n. 6) pp. 64-5. Dimock dated the completion of the *Descriptio*, and hence its dedication to Hubert, to the beginning of 1194: Giraldus, Opera 6 p. xxxiv.

<sup>76</sup> Bartlett, Gerald (as n. 6) pp. 91-9.