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THE KINGDOM OF AQUITAINE
AND THE »DISSOLUTION OF THE CAROLINGIAN FISC«

Introduction¹

The political decline of the Carolingians who ruled the *regnum Francorum* in the eighth and ninth centuries has sometimes been attributed to their own alienation of the royal lands. In the dramatic phrase of the historian James Westfall Thompson their downfall was due to the »dissolution of the Carolingian fisc«². According to this explanation, it is held that after many years during which estates were abandoned to provide lavish endowments for both religious institutions and members of the secular aristocracy, the kings of this dynasty found »material ruin« staring them in the face. Indeed, it has even been persuasively argued by Jan Dhondt that, during the reign of Charles the Bald (840–77), in the western part of the Carolingians' territories the alienation of fiscal lands had already gone so far that Charles's sons and successors were virtually deprived of all economic support. Moreover, in Dhondt's opinion, these kings brought this dire fate upon themselves as the result of a foolish and extravagant fiscal policy which had been pursued without check since the death of Charles the Great in 814³.

In general terms, it needs to be said, such an explanation of political decline would only be possible for an economy in which land was of overwhelming importance; and it comes as no surprise to find that for Dhondt the »immense mass« of royal lands within the Carolingian empire should be regarded as forming the »bedrock« (»l'assise solide«) upon which Carolingian power was based⁴. Another essential feature of this

1 My thanks are due to Dr. Janet Nelson and the members of the seminar in early mediaeval history at the Institute of Historical Research (University of London) for their helpful comments when an earlier version of this paper was presented (and to Mr. Matthew Bennett for drawing my attention to the archaeological importance of Doué-la-Fontaine on that occasion); and also to Professor Karl Ferdinand Werner for his encouragement and suggestions. But any errors of fact or interpretation which remain are my own.

2 J. W. THOMPSON, *The Dissolution of the Carolingian Fisc*, Berkely California 1935 (University of California Publications in History, 22). The significance attached by this author to the lands of the fisc is also conveyed by his assertion that these lands »knit together« the Frankish realms, p. VI.

3 J. DHONDT, *Études sur la naissance des principautés territoriales en France (IX^e–X^e s.)*, Bruges 1948 (Rijksuniversiteit de Gent, Werken Witgeven door Fakulteit van de Wijsbegerte en Letteren, 102) p. 10–13, 26–9, and esp. p. 269–75 (Appendice I, *Le domaine royal en France depuis Pépin le Bref jusqu'à Hugues Capet*). The reference to »la ruine matérielle de la royauté carolingienne« occurs on p. 266. For the influence of DHONDT's work, below n. 12.

4 *Ibid.* p. 10: »Cette immense masse de terres constitue l'assise solide sur laquelle s'appuie la puissance carolingienne.« His views on the significance of the fisc seem to have been even more sweeping than

thesis is the contrast postulated between the attitudes displayed towards their landed resources by the Emperor Charles the Great and his successors and descendants; for the prudence shown by Charles in husbanding his fiscal resources is compared with the prodigality with which his successors squandered them by the lavish distribution of land. And particular responsibility for the dispersal of fiscal lands is often attributed to Louis the Pious (814–40) whose career as a despoiler of the fisc is even traced back the years before his father's death when, as *rex Aquitanorum*, he ruled only a part of the Carolingian territories.

According to an incident reported by the anonymous biographer of this ruler, in Aquitaine the young king was deprived by his *optimates* of the estates which had been set aside for his use (*villae quae eatenus usui servierant regio*): but the »public« lands in this kingdom were saved when Charles the Great sent two of his own administrative officials (one described as the *provisor* of the royal *villae*) to extract his son from his difficulties – and to ensure that he had sufficient lands to fulfil his duties as royal lord. Most of the detail connected with this incident is known only from the »Astronomer's« account of it; but it has generally been interpreted as though it painted the portrait of a youth who would in later life be psychologically inclined to dispose of his ancestral resources regardless of the consequences for himself or for his dynasty, as though the pattern for his later behaviour was set in the years of the late eighth century – in spite of the fact that the »Astronomer« also reports that Louis played an important part in the reorganisation of these royal lands after his father's officials had wrested them back from the magnates of Aquitaine⁵. However, because it has appeared that other information also supports this view of Louis the Pious as one of the chief despoilers of the fisc, the plausibility of the normal interpretation of the »Astronomer's« anecdote has not been seriously questioned. It is to this other information which it is now necessary to turn.

The great originality of Dhondt's work on the dispersal of Carolingian fiscal lands derived from the methods which were employed to substantiate his statements, and there can be little doubt that his conclusions in consequence have been regarded as far more convincing than any previously expressed by historians. These conclusions have been especially influential because, although it is often taken for granted that the Carolingians' subjects (and primarily the great aristocracy) preyed upon the royal lands in order to increase their own wealth and power, it is by no means easy to prove that the landed fortunes of the »territorial princes« were in practice put together from

those of Thompson, since he considered that the downfall of the Carolingians allows historians to conclude that »une économie essentiellement terrienne ne peut se concilier avec l'existence d'un grand état centralisé«, *ibid.* p. 13.

5 *Anonymi vita Hludowici Imperatoris*, ed. Reinhold RAU, *Quellen zur Karolingischen Reichsgeschichte*, Berlin, no date (a reprint of the nineteenth century MGH folio edition) p. 268. The whole passage is discussed at great length below, pp. 159–160. On the importance of this biography, see Donald BULLOUGH, *Europae pater: Charlemagne and his achievement in the light of recent scholarship*, in: *English Historical Review* 85 (1970) p. 61. The other biographer of this emperor also commented in a more general fashion on the fact that Louis gave *villas regias... fidelibus suis in possessionem sempiternam...*, *Thegani Vita Hludowici imperatoris*, ed. RAU, *ibid.* p. 228; cf. below. The weaknesses of Louis the Pious are castigated by DHONDT (see n. 3) p. 14–15; but for reservations see François GANSHOF, *Louis the Pious re-considered*, in: *The Carolingians and the Frankish Monarchy*, London 1971 (*Studies in Carolingian History*) p. 261–72.

the débris of the Carolingian fisc. Westfall Thompson, for instance, held views rather similar to those expressed some years later by Dhondt; but, as Thompson's assertions were based on an unsystematic and haphazard exploration of many types of evidence, these were treated by historians with considerable reserve⁶. Dhondt's conclusions, on the other hand, are based upon a systematic examination of the Carolingian royal diplomas and⁷ – in spite of a number of qualifications which he himself expressed⁸ – this examination is widely held to prove his case.

Privileges and concessions of widely differing character were bestowed by Carolingian kings and emperors on their subjects, but the historian interested in the alienation of the royal estates will be almost exclusively concerned with one group among these privileges, consisting of the grants of land made by successive rulers to their *fideles*. These land-grants formed the basis of Dhondt's investigation and provided him with the material for the conclusions which will now be briefly summarised. An analysis of the diplomas issued between the mid-eighth century and the year 987 yielded the following results:

1. In the western Frankish territories between 814 and 840 (the year of his own death), the Emperor Louis the Pious abandoned 50% more land than his father Charles the Great had alienated throughout the whole of his empire.
2. Between the year 840 (when Charles the Bald inherited these western lands from his father Louis) and his death in 877 the royal land-grants rose 400% above those made by Charles the Great⁹.
3. By the end of the ninth century the fiscal reserves were so seriously depleted that almost no new grants of land could be made, whether to buy off opponents or to reward followers who remained faithful to a particular ruler: only two donations of land were made during the last fifty years (936–87) when the western kingdom was still nominally governed by kings of the Carolingian line¹⁰. (This last stage of the process is not even expressed in terms of percentages.) Altogether, despite some slightly unfortunate omissions from the series of diplomas examined, the conclusion seems inescapable. Within the boundaries of the regions considered by Dhondt fiscal resources of land had been so diminished that no tenth century Carolingian king had anything left to give, for the spoliation of the mid-ninth

6 The lists appended to his study of the fisc were intended to establish places known to have formed part of the fisc during the Carolingian era rather than to count those which were abandoned by successive kings, but even so few royal estates are to be found among the places listed, since »the hundreds of insignificant places mentioned in the charters which it is impossible to identify or to locate« (!) are not included by Westfall THOMPSON (see n. 2) p. V. Criticisms of these methods have been most recently expressed by Carl-Richard BRÜHL, *Fodrum, Gistum, Servitium Regis* 2 vol., Cologne 1968, p. 11, n. 23; cf. DHONDT (see n. 3) p. 259–60. A further comment on Thompson's methods, inasmuch as these relate to the fisc in Aquitaine, will be found below, p. 175.

7 DHONDT (see n. 3) p. 270–6: »Tableau des donations foncières royales en France occidentale (760–965)«; but this was claimed to be only »une note provisoire« (p. 259).

8 Ibid. p. 266.

9 Ibid. The numbers of alienated *villae* which Dhondt cites are, however, relatively restricted in number. They consist of 28 for Louis the Pious and 72 for Charles the Bald, compared with 18 abandoned by Charles the Great throughout the whole empire.

10 Ibid. p. 275 and cf. p. 269.

century had been so spectacular that a hundred years later the flood of royal landgrants had dwindled to a mere trickle¹¹.

Since the publication in 1948 of »Études sur la formation des principautés territoriales en France« there has been little subsequent discussion either of the assertions outlined above, or of the methods on which Dhondt's conclusions were based and which have been largely accepted¹². Given the methods employed to demonstrate these conclusions, and the »official« character of the sources, this is scarcely surprising – even though some thought might still be given to eliminating interpolated or fabricated documents from the series of diplomas analysed¹³. On the other hand, in the years since the appearance of this highly influential work many other aspects of the administration and organisation of the Carolingians' royal lands have been subjected to searching criticism, or reassessed in the light of recent research; it seems possible to argue that Dhondt's work, too, needs to be reconsidered in the light of this research. For instance, the important works of Wolfgang Metz and Klaus Verhein have demonstrated the care with which *villae regiae* were administered in the late eighth and earlier ninth centuries¹⁴; Verhein in particular has emphasized the importance of the capitularies as sources of information for royal estate management and organisation of the fiscal lands. A lengthy document like the *Capitulare de villis* after all indicates that, as landlords, the earlier Carolingians designed their *villae* to be exploited so that these estates could reach the highest possible levels of agricultural production in order to meet the multifarious needs of a mediaeval ruler¹⁵ but it is also noteworthy that royal attitudes to these *villae* do not seem to have changed much during the course of the ninth century. Even in the last capitulary issued by Charles the Bald from Quierzy-sur-Oise the king was taking pains to ensure that no

11 Ibid. p. 269: »...les Carolingiens végéteront avec l'appui des maigres ressources de quelques *villae* situées au nord de la Seine.«

12 For instance by BRÜHL (see n. 6) 1, p. 50–53 and especially n. 189. Cf. Georges TESSIER, *Diplomatique royale française*, Paris 1962, p. 60–62; Jean-François LEMARIGNIER, *Le gouvernement royal aux premiers temps capétiens*, Paris 1965, p. 28–33. Although no specific reference is made to Dhondt's work on this topic, his views appear to be echoed in a discussion of »la conception du domaine« in Ferdinand LOT and Robert FAWTIER, *Institutions royales (les droits du roi exercés par le roi)*, Paris 1958 (*Histoire des institutions françaises au moyen âge*, 2) p. 100–101.

13 In spite of DHONDT's view (see n. 3, p. 270), that reliance on a few suspicious or fabricated documents would not substantially transform the picture of the dispersal of the Carolingian fisc, where the numbers of donations are relatively small (as is the present case) the historian's impressions may be affected by the failure to eliminate even one gross forgery (see below, n. 47).

14 W. METZ, *Das Karolingische Reichsgut, eine verfassungs- und verwaltungsgeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Berlin 1960, deals comprehensively with the terminology relating to the royal lands as well as with the administration of those retained by the Carolingians; while Kl. VERHEIN provided two extended studies of the most important surviving administrative sources for the early Carolingian period, *Studien zu den Quellen zum Reichsgut der Karolingerzeit*: (1) *Das Capitulare de villis*: (2) *Die Brevium exempla*, in: *Deutsches Archiv für Geschichte des Mittelalters* 10–11 (1954–5) p. 313–94 and 333–92. Cf. Eugen EWIG, *Descriptio Franciae*, in: *Karl der Große: Lebenswerk und Nachleben* (ed. H. BEUMANN), vol. I, *Persönlichkeit und Geschichte*, Düsseldorf 1965, pp. 155–67.

15 *Ut villae nostrae quae ad opus nostrum serviendi institutas habemus, sub integritate partibus nostris deserviant et non aliis hominibus*, *Capitulare de villis* c. 1, in: *Capitularia regum Francorum*, 2 vol., Berlin 1883–97 (MGH Legum sectio II) vol. 1, p. 271. An evaluation of the economic importance of the fiscal estates of the early Carolingians is provided by GANSHOF, *Frankish Institutions under Charlemagne*, Providence Rhode Island 1968 (transl. B and M. LYON), p. 34–41.

unauthorized person should obtain hospitality on the estates set aside for his own use (or for that matter on those allotted to his wife), and that all his hunting-rights should be preserved¹⁶. This seems remarkable given the political circumstances of the summer of 877, when Charles was much absorbed by the military preparations for his last Italian expedition. Moreover, as has often been demonstrated, this same capitulary deals also with matters of the gravest interest to all those involved in the government of Charles's territories¹⁷. Information provided by the capitularies, therefore, seems at first sight difficult to reconcile the evidence of the diplomas as presented by Dhondt, and if there is a plausible explanation for this discrepancy one has never been proposed.

Professor Carl-Richard Brühl's comprehensive study of the itineraries and the »Gastungspolitik« of the rulers of early medieval Europe has also drawn attention to the significance of the *villae regiae* under the Carolingian dynasty. Not only did these royal estates supply the material wherewithal for the exercise of kingship (as Dhondt of course implied in laying such strong emphasis on the damage done through their alienation), but as kingly residences the most favoured of the *villae regiae* additionally had an important role to play in the conduct of the Carolingians' government as long as the conduct of that government was centred on such rural lands¹⁸. It has been recently claimed by Pierre Riché, too, that in the court literature of the ninth century the palace »symbolises material and spiritual power« and as a symbol may even have been used to prefigure the delights of a palace in the heavens. At any rate, both in prose and in verse, the Carolingians' palaces were idealised as places of refuge and security for all those who enjoyed the royal favour¹⁹. Thus, for the historian of early medieval Europe the *villae regiae* of the Carolingians must be regarded as having a greater significance than can be represented simply by the sum total of the revenues or resources accruing to the ruler. Literary themes of the ninth century may not seem to have much to do with the fiscal policy of the Carolingian kings but, whatever the approaches adopted in recent studies, all seem to dwell on the value (whether literal or metaphorical) attached to the royal lands of which the Carolingian fisc was composed.

The present study, however, is concerned merely with a single region within those territories which made up the kingdom bequeathed by Louis the Pious to his youngest son Charles the Bald. It is concerned with the fate of the fiscal lands in Aquitaine. Such a regional study may be justified on a number of different grounds. In the first instance, because the diplomas issued by the »independent« *reges Aquitanorum* were not included in the survey made by Dhondt – or indeed in the material collected by Westfall Thompson²⁰. Even if these are not very numerous, this is a strange omission

16 *Nemo in villis nostris, vel in villis uxoris nostrae mansionaticum accipiat...*, Capit. Carisiacense, c. 20 (cf. cap. 32–33), *ibid.* 2, p. 360–61.

17 Louis HALPHEN, À propos du capitulaire de Quierzy-sur-Oise, in: À travers l'histoire du moyen âge, Paris 1950, p. 74–82; also IDEM, Charlemagne et l'empire carolingien, Paris 1949, p. 432–6 for the political problems then facing Charles the Bald.

18 BRÜHL (see n. 6) 1, p. 7–107 and 2, maps I–II (which illustrate the itineraries of the Carolingian rulers). For a further map of the Carolingians' stopping-places, EWIG (see n. 14) p. 176.

19 P. RICÉ, Les représentations du palais dans les textes littéraires du haut moyen âge, in: *Francia* 4 (1976) p. 168 and 171. Cf. below p. 155 and n. 139 for the palaces of the Carolingians in Aquitaine and for bibliographical references.

20 See n. 2, 6–7 above.

considering that the majority of these diplomas were the object of a magisterial edition by Léon Levillain as long ago as 1926²¹; even stranger in view of the emphasis placed by most historians on the career of Louis the Pious as a would-be despoiler of the *villae regiae* in Aquitaine. A second reason for paying close attention to the fate of the Carolingian fisc here is that Aquitaine came to be notorious for the especial fickleness of its aristocracy towards their legally constituted rulers, and for the difficulties experienced by the Carolingians in trying to govern the region²². It would seem, therefore, to present an especially interesting opportunity for testing the connection made by Dhondt between the loss of the royal lands and the decline of political authority. Originally, therefore, this investigation had two aims: firstly to remedy the omission which had excluded the diplomas of the *reges Aquitanorum* being discussed in the context of Carolingian political decline; and secondly to consider the possibility that the notorious weaknesses of the later Carolingian rulers in Aquitaine could be attributed to the loss of their principal economic resources, the *villae regiae*. Subsequently, however, it became apparent that the royal diplomas in fact provide a less satisfactory source of information for the alienation of the fisc than might be supposed, and that more general objections might be raised against the assumptions on which the investigation was based. In view of the importance of the topic it has seemed worthwhile to examine the problems arising out of these objections at some length.

I

The *regnum Aquitanorum* created by Charles the Great for his infant son Louis (c. 778) was composed of the Mediterranean region of *Septimania* and all *Aquitania* (that is the two Roman provinces whose metropolitan centres were Bourges and Bordeaux)²³. The kingdom also included an extensive area settled by the Gascons; but there – in the words of Léon Levillain – Carolingian control was undoubtedly »more nominal than real«²⁴. After Charles the Great's death when, as Emperor, Louis the Pious in his turn appointed one of his own sons as Pippin I, *rex Aquitanorum*, the kingdom was considerably reduced in size, and it was never again so extensive as it had been during the years before 814. But, even so, Pippin I was allotted a small part of Septimania together with a number of northern counties lying outside the frontiers of Aquitaine – according to the partition made in 817 this kingdom was to consist of *Aquitaniam et Wasconiam et marcham Tolosanam totam et insuper comitatus*

21 Recueil des actes de Pépin I^{er} et de Pépin II, rois d'Aquitaine (814–48), Paris 1926 (Chartes et diplômes relatifs à l'histoire de France publiés par les soins de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres). Material for Aquitaine seems often to have been strangely neglected – even Brühl's magnum opus does not contain a full survey of the Carolingians' »Itinerarorten« in that kingdom.

22 DHONDT (see n. 3) p. 169; Léonce AUZIAS, L'Aquitaine carolingienne, Paris/Toulouse 1937 (Bibliothèque méridionale, 2nd series 28) p. 8, 58, 135, emphasized the separatism of the inhabitants of the region. See further below, pp. 166–172.

23 Philippe WOLFF, L'Aquitaine et ses marges, in: Karl der Große 1 (see n. 14) p. 269–307, provides a convincing explanation of political conditions at the time when this solution was devised for the government of the region south of the River Loire; but he is not concerned with the years after the death of Charles the Great. The comments of Levillain are valuable for the organisation of the kingdom of Aquitaine after the year 814 (see n. 21), p. CCLXXI–CLXXV.

24 Ibid. p. CLXIX.

*quattuor, id est in Septimaniam Carcassonensem et in Burgundia Augustudensem, Avalensem et Nivernensem*²⁵. Further alterations were made to the composition of this kingdom – notably when the sons of Louis the Pious were in open rebellion against their father – so that both as a territorial and as a political unit the Carolingian kingdom of Aquitaine seems to have been a largely artificial entity whose size was altered and whose boundaries were adjusted to the changed circumstances of Carolingian dynastic requirements (such as the premature death of a son, or the exclusion of a nephew or grandson from the succession)²⁶. However, although this kingdom may have had little or no »natural« unity, both the Gothic province of *Septimania* and the whole of Aquitaine had undergone the experience of conquest by members of the Carolingian house during the course of the eighth century, so that both were peculiarly the »acquisitions« of the dynasty. Michel Rouche has recently reminded historians of the ruthlessness and cruelty of the Carolingian conquest of the Midi: it is difficult to believe that during the eighth and ninth centuries the indigenous populations of *Aquitania* or *Septimania* would have felt much affection for Charles Martel and his royal Carolingian successors²⁷. And, as Karl Ferdinand Werner has emphasized, it was the Carolingians' political and military force which allowed them to overcome existing regional powers; but subsequently their authority frequently depended upon »tout un système de compromis et d'arrangements avec les grands et les aristocraties régionales«²⁸.

The independence of Aquitaine as a kingdom was officially brought to an end with the death of King Pippin I in 838: at Verdun in 843 the surviving sons of Louis the Pious ratified their father's decision to add the territories south of the River Loire to the share awarded to the youngest of their number, Judith's son Charles. By this agreement they of course denied the claims of Pippin I's own son to participate in the division or to inherit his father's kingdom²⁹; nevertheless, however legal or constitu-

25 *Constitutio Imperii*, c. 1, in: *Capitularia regum Francorum* 1 (see n. 15) p. 271. On these arrangements, LEVILLAIN, *ibid.* p. CLXXII–LXX, for Aquitaine; and in a broader context, F. GANSHOF, *Some Observations on the Ordinatio Imperii of 817*, in: *The Carolingians* (see n. 5) p. 273–88.

26 The death of Pippin I in 838 two years before that of his father resulted in a crisis which enabled the Emperor Louis to intervene in the affairs of the kingdom; Aquitaine was then added to the territories destined for the youngest of Louis's sons, the future ruler Charles »the Bald«. Thus Pippin I's own son and namesake was excluded from the circle of Carolingians treated as eligible to participate in the division of the Empire and Aquitaine was absorbed into a larger political unit, even though the young Pippin II might be said to have had legitimate pretensions to his father's kingdom, Ferdinand LOT and HALPHEN, *Le règne de Charles le Chauve*, Paris 1909 (Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, 175) p. 10, 13–4.

27 M. ROUCHE, *L'Aquitaine des Wisigoths aux Arabes (418–781). Naissance d'une région*, Paris 1979, p. 111–32, for the events of the Carolingian conquest. This work provides a salutary contrast to the treatment of Aquitaine as a peripheral or insignificant part of the Frankish domains – Westfall THOMPSON went so far as to write of Louis the Pious's »toy kingdom of Aquitaine« (see n. 2) p. 18 n. 42.

28 K. F. WERNER, *Missus – Marchio – Comes, entre l'administration centrale et l'administration locale de l'Empire carolingien*, Munich 1980, p. 211 (Beihefte der Francia, 9).

29 The political struggles of the mid-ninth century have frequently been viewed solely from the viewpoint of northern Frankish interests without attention being paid to the legitimate interests of those who opposed the claims and the government of Charles the Bald, MARTINDALE, *Charles the Bald and the Government of the Kingdom of Aquitaine*, in: *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom*, London 1981 (ed. M. GIBSON and J. NELSON with D. GANZ, *British Archaeological Records*, 101) p. 109. On this

tional this partition may have been, it did not solve what might be described as the »Aquitainian problem«, and Pippin II continued intermittently to use the royal style and to exercise some kind of authority in part of the region formerly governed by his father³⁰. At a later date Charles the Bald in his turn had two of his sons successively consecrated as rulers of Aquitaine but, because neither of them (Charles the »Child« in 855 or Louis the »Stammerer« in 867) exercised any of the powers hitherto associated with the royal office, even the unfortunate Pippin II seems to have been less of a »roi fainéant« than the sons of Charles the Bald in Aquitaine³¹.

Even this rapid survey of some of the more important territorial and constitutional changes to the kingdom of Aquitaine during the earlier ninth century indicates a number of the obstacles standing in the way of a closer investigation into the lands of the fisc in this region. In particular, it is difficult to determine the geographical boundaries for such an investigation because of the lack of territorial continuity between the mid-eighth and the later ninth centuries in the composition of the *regnum Aquitanorum*. Which of these rather different *regna* should be used as the framework for a study of the alienation of the royal lands within the kingdom? Is it possible to describe one of these *regna* as the »norm«? In some respects it seemed reasonable to restrict discussion to the two provinces of *Aquitania* which did after all form the core of the kingdom ruled by Pippin I, and which ultimately provided the foundations for one of the most important of the »territorial principalities« discussed by Dhondt³². Moreover, such a solution to the problem would restrict discussion to a unit which had some social and economic cohesion during the early Middle Ages: even the Carolingians were obliged to recognise a distinction between the once-Gothic *Septimania* and the more northerly provinces of *Aquitania*³³. But, on the other hand, it might also be misleading arbitrarily to exclude all lands outside Aquitaine, since the county of Carcassonne and parts of the Toulousain continued for some years to be attached to the kingdom even after most of the county of Toulouse and the bulk of

momentous partition, F. GANSHOF, On the Genesis and Significance of the Treaty of Verdun (843), in: *The Carolingians* (see n. 5) p. 287–302. However, a very different interpretation of the relationship between rulers of the Carolingian dynasty and their aristocracy – and one which is critical of Dhondt's views of the significance of the formation of »principalities« – is presented by K. F. WERNER, *Untersuchungen zur Frühzeit des französischen Fürstentums* (9.–10. Jh), in: *Die Welt als Geschichte* 18–19 (1958–60), especially 18, p. 261–2.

30 For evidence of Pippin II's activity as king in Aquitaine, below p. 142 and MARTINDALE (see previous note) p. 110–112, 115–116; cf. LOT and HALPHEN, (see n. 26) p. 148–51, on the agreement made by Charles the Bald with his nephew at St-Benoît-sur-Loire in 845.

31 MARTINDALE, *ibid.* p. 115 following the findings established by Levillain.

32 The political unit described as »le duché poitevin« in the general discussion of the emergence of »les principautés territoriales de l'Aquitaine«, DHONDT (see n. 2) p. 226 and at length p. 161–229. The powers wielded by these »territorial princes« were analysed by LEMARIGNIER, *La dislocation du »pagus« et le problème des »consuetudines«* (X^e–XI^e siècles), in: *Mélanges d'histoire du moyen âge dédiés à la mémoire de Louis Halphen*, Paris 1951, p. 401–402, 409–410.

33 *Ibid.* p. 169; WOLFF (see n. 23) p. 269; Reinhard WENSKUS, *Die deutschen Stämme im Reiche Karls des Großen*, in: *Karl der Große* (see n. 14) p. 201; MARTINDALE (see n. 30) p. 109–10. On the other hand, while acknowledging the existence of ethnic and linguistic divisions within this whole vast area, ROUCHE seems almost to postulate a metaphysical unity which ensured the survival of »la civilisation romaine d'Aquitaine«, (see n. 27) p. 461 and 445–46.

Septimania had been detached from it³⁴; it would be still more difficult to justify such an arbitrary distinction for the years after 840, when Charles the Bald bestowed privileges throughout Aquitaine and *Septimania* alike – and of course disposed of lands in both regions³⁵. It was eventually decided therefore, that the only satisfactory solution was to investigate the lands alienated within the *regnum Aquitanorum* when this was at its greatest extent, and to take into account wherever possible the considerable tenorial and social differences which existed within the region³⁶.

The diplomatic sources consulted during the course of this investigation thus include documents drawn up for the two *reges Aquitanorum*, Pippin I and Pippin II, together with a certain number issued by Charles the Great and Louis the Pious during those years when their sons ruled Aquitaine. Charles the Bald's diplomas are also of fundamental importance, both for the years when his authority was challenged by his nephew Pippin II and for the period after he had created his own sons *reges Aquitanorum*. Luckily for the historian there exist admirable editions of the diplomas of the majority of these rulers³⁷ – the absence of any critical *corpus* of the diplomas of Louis the Pious is a notable and especially unfortunate exception³⁸. And, since the initial purpose of this investigation was to augment the information provided by Dhondt relating to the alienation of fiscal lands, it has seemed necessary to follow as closely as possible his methods in listing and comparing the grants made by successive Carolingian rulers of Aquitaine. The table at the end of this paper is based on Dhondt's model, although it has been expanded to include rather more detail on such matters as the quantity of land alienated and the resources which might be attached to each of these grants (for example numbers of *mancipia* or *homines* who might form an integral part of the donation)³⁹. Also, in view of the modifications and additions to Dhondt's material, it has seemed necessary to precede any discussion of the substance of these land-grants with an analysis based on straightforwardly chronological principles.

34 Above p. 136 and for diplomas issued for these two regions, LEVILLAIN (see n. 21) p. CLXXXIX.

35 Below p. 142.

36 1 - Documents for the Burgundian counties of Autun, Avallon and Nevers which were at one stage added to the kingdom ruled by Pippin I (see p. 137 above) have however been excluded. 2 - Further problems were raised over the county of Anjou which for some years was also attached to Aquitaine, LEVILLAIN, *ibid.* p. CLXXII-V; but it was decided to exclude documents from this region – see below p. 163.

37 Apart from the edition of the *acta* of the »independent« kings of Aquitaine, Pippin I and Pippin II, which has already been frequently mentioned, the following editions have been principally employed. 1 - *Die Urkunden Pippins, Karlmanns und Karls des Großen*, ed. E. MÜHLBACHER and others, Berlin 1906 (MGH, *Diploma Karolorum* 1). 2 - *Recueil des actes de Charles II le Chauve, roi de France*, ed. G. TESSIER and others, 3 vols., Paris 1943–55 (*Chartes et diplômes*). There is also the useful collection of facsimiles published over many years: *Diplomata Karolorum, Recueil de reproductions en facsimilé des actes originaux des souverains carolingiens conservés dans les archives et bibliothèques de France*, sous la direction de F. LOT and Philippe LAUER, 8 vols., Paris 1936 onwards.

38 Unfortunately the material assembled for an edition by the editors of the MGH was destroyed towards the end of the Second World War, TESSIER (see n. 12) p. 59 n. 1. It has therefore been necessary to use editions of this ruler's diplomas which vary considerably in quality, and to pay rather more careful attention to the criticism of individual documents than is necessary in the case of the critical editions mentioned in the previous note.

39 Below nn. 82–83 and p. 146. A short list of rejected documents has also been included, with critical comments and justification of their exclusion.

Dhondt's table of lands abandoned by the early Carolingians records only one alienation made by Charles the Great within the kingdom of Aquitaine, although during the years when his son reigned there this ruler seems in practice to have granted land on four occasions within the region. All these grants relate to the province of *Septimania*⁴⁰. Considering the relatively small number of land-grants made by Charles, even so slight an error has some significance in comparison with diplomas issued by subsequent rulers. On the other hand, the single surviving land-grant allegedly issued by Louis during his reign as *rex Aquitanorum* has to be rejected because of its highly suspicious diplomatic features. It derives from the contaminated archive of the monks of *Gellona*⁴¹. Thus the surviving documentary sources indicate that at the beginning of the ninth century land lying in the *regnum Aquitanorum* was apparently only alienated by a Carolingian king on four occasions before 814. All these alienations were made on the authority of Charles the Great – a finding which is of some significance in view of the assertions which have been made about the activity of Louis as a despoiler of the fisc before his father's death. If a ruler's surviving diplomas are expected to provide the historian with some guide to the number of occasions on which he abandoned fiscal estates, then these might be expected to provide some traces of Louis the Pious's »dilapidation« of the fisc in Aquitaine. This ruler certainly seems to have been empowered to issue diplomas before 814⁴²; while some of the men who formed his writing-staff in Aquitaine may even have effected a reform of the Carolingian *scriptorium* after Louis succeeded his father in 814⁴³.

After the death of Charles the Great the evidence connected with the alienation of land is rather different in character, although it does also become more abundant. As Emperor, Louis the Pious made a number of grants of land within Aquitaine to various religious establishments: a *villa* in the Saintonge was bestowed on the canons of St-Seurin de Bordeaux; in 819 an extensive donation of a mixed type was recorded for the monks of Ste-Foi de Conques in the Rouergue; while the monks of St-Philibert (who were retreating from their island church after it had been attacked by Northmen) obtained a *villa* in Poitou from the same Emperor in 839⁴⁴. Lay *fideles* in Septimania

40 Table no. 1–4. It is difficult to make a rapid comparison with Dhondt's table since in his list the entries are unnumbered, but he did include the document listed no. 2 in this present study (*Die Urkunden*, 179). It is to be presumed that my no. 1 and 3–4 were excluded because these relate to waste lands, which Dhondt expressly excluded from his survey (see n. 2) p. 261; but if that was the case then no. 2 ought on the same grounds to be eliminated since it, too, consists of a grant of what is described as *villare eremum ad laborandum... et quantum ille... occupavit vel occupaverit vel de heremo traxerit...*

41 Table, suspect grants no. 2 (with references to the dossier on this diploma). This document has recently been accepted by C. BRÜHL, *Palatium und Civitas, Studien zur Profanographie spätantiker Civitates vom 3. bis zum 13. Jh.*, 1. Gallien, Cologne/Vienna 1975, p. 196, n. 190; but the strong reservations expressed by Tessier and Wolff surely need to be heeded.

42 In 794 a diploma of immunity in Louis's name was issued for the Poitevin monastery of Nouaillé, LEVILLAIN, *Les origines du monastère de Nouaillé*, in: *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes* 81 (1910) p. 287–90 (no. VI); and in 808 another diploma conveying immunity and various ecclesiastical privileges was issued for St-Hilaire de Poitiers, ed. Louis RÉDET, *Documents pour l'histoire de St-Hilaire de Poitiers*, 2 vol., Poitiers 1847, 52 (*Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest* 1st series 14, 15) no. 3.

43 See below, n. 143.

44 Table no. 5, 7, 112. The travels of the monks of St-Philibert from Noirmoutier to Burgundy during the course of the ninth century were remarked on by Marc BLOCH, *Feudal Society* (translated by

obtained land from Louis on four occasions between 814–40, while on another occasion the Emperor Lothair joined with his father in making a similar land-grant in that region⁴⁵. However, two of the examples of Louis's alienation of fiscal land which Dhondt recorded have had to be rejected – one because it in fact represents the restoration of secularized church land to the community from whose resources it had been removed at an earlier date⁴⁶, the other because it is a wholly unacceptable forgery of a much later period than the ninth century. The elimination of this second document is of considerable general significance as it allegedly consisted of a number of *villae* in the Gascon archbishopric of Auch; and it supposedly provided the only evidence that the Carolingian rulers ever disposed of land in this region bordering on the Pyrénées⁴⁷. Without this »evidence« it seems, indeed, as though their authority there was »more nominal than real«⁴⁸.

The grants made by Pippin I as *rex Aquitanorum* need also to be considered and added to the survey made by Dhondt. Like his father Louis, this ruler made a number of grants of land to religious establishments, in Poitou to the monks of St. Maixent and in the county of Auvergne to the monks of Manglieu⁴⁹. The monastery of Montolieu acquired *villae* from this king both *in territorio Carcassensi* and *in pago Tolosano* – thus providing interesting proof that Pippin did control the territory allotted him by the terms of the agreement made in 817⁵⁰. A Parisian religious house also obtained land within Aquitaine⁵¹; but the only diploma recording the grant of land by Pippin I to a *fidelis* in this region has disappeared, although its contents have survived in a précis considered trustworthy by Levillain⁵². After 840, throughout the whole of those regions which had made up the early Carolingian kingdom of Aquitaine, land was abandoned on a far more lavish scale than had previously been the case; but, because Charles the Bald's nephew Pippin II issued so few diplomas compared with his powerful uncle, the addition of his land-grants to the ones made by Charles during the same years scarcely affects the figures established by Dhondt. Three of Pippin II's donations relate to land in the county of Limoges (their beneficiaries were men of

L. MANYON), London 1961, p. 20. Cf. René POUPARDIN, *Monuments de l'histoire des abbayes de St-Philibert (Noirmoutier, Grandlieu, Tournus)*, Paris 1906 (Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire) p. XXV–XL, 109.

45 Table no. 6, 9, 10–11, and no. 13 for the Emperor Lothair.

46 This was secularised church land, returned to the bishopric of Maguelonne... *sicuti eam Rotbertus comes in beneficium habuit*, *Histoire générale de Languedoc* (ed. C. de VIC and J. VAISSÈTE), 2nd edition Toulouse 1876, vol. 2 preuves col. 125–6. This is simply referred to as: »819–1 villa – pagus de Maguelonne« in DHONDT's table (see n. 2) p. 271.

47 Table, suspect grants no. 3 and n. 26. No trustworthy document concerning land in Gascony was apparently issued by the Carolingians during the years 817–48, according to LEVILLAIN (see n. 21) p. CLXIX; and it seems highly unlikely that Louis the Pious disposed of any *villae* in that region either.

48 Above p. 136. Gascon independence of the Frankish political settlements had a long history, as ROUCHE (see n. 27) has shown p. 87–98 and 155–60 (a useful map on p. 157 shows the later linguistic frontier of Gascon influence).

49 Table no. 14, 17. A diploma by which privileges of a very extensive character were bestowed on Ste-Foi de Conques also includes a land-grant, Table no. 19.

50 Table no. 15, 18; cf. LEVILLAIN (see n. 21) p. 42, 85.

51 Table no. 16.

52 Table no. 21. However, one important grant made by Pippin I of land in the Burgundian county of Autun suggests a model for the lost diploma issued for Bertinus, LEVILLAIN, no. XXVIII (dated to about 836–8). Another lost grant for unnamed *Spani* was also issued by Pippin I, Table no. 20.

episcopal rank who were also important figures in this area)⁵³; a fourth (known merely from a later notice) apparently consisted of the grant to a layman of a *castrum situm in pago Tolosano*, acquired *ex munificentia domni et senioris mei serenissimi Pipini regis per cartulam*⁵⁴. In contrast, the vast *corpus* of Charles the Bald's diplomas includes twenty-nine separate grants of land for *Aquitania* and *Septimania*: a high proportion of the Septimanian donations consisting of land in the *pagus Narbonnensis*⁵⁵; while those relating to Aquitaine include lands in Poitou, the Limousin, Berry and Auvergne⁵⁶. Charles the Bald's alienations of fiscal land were thus far more widely distributed than his nephew's, as well as being seven times more numerous. Neither of Charles the Bald's sons made any recorded grants of land as *rex Aquitanorum*⁵⁷.

This analysis of the diplomatic evidence for the alienation of fiscal lands within Aquitaine between the late eighth century and Charles the Bald's death in 877 may be roughly summarised in the following way. Over half the references considered sufficiently trustworthy to be included consist of grants of land made by Charles the Bald between the years 840–77 – twenty-nine recorded grants out of a total of fifty-four (29/54)⁵⁸. By contrast during the period 814–40 only seventeen grants are recorded (eight attributed to the Emperor Louis, one to the Emperor Lothair, eight to Pippin I *rex Aquitanorum*)⁵⁹; Charles the Great's four grants of land in *Septimania* are matched by those of his infinitely less powerful great-grandson, Pippin II *rex Aquitanorum*⁶⁰.

Although some meaning may be attributed even to such a crude set of comparisons as this, a number of other observations need also to be made before considering the wider significance of these figures for the history of the royal lands in Aquitaine. In the first place, it seems to be relevant to Dhondt's thesis, both that less than half of these grants (26/54) were made to laymen⁶¹, and that few of these secular beneficiaries were members of the highest Carolingian aristocracy who may be otherwise identified from the narratives of contemporary historians or annalists⁶². (*Septimania* during the reign of Charles the Bald appears to provide an exception to this general rule)⁶³. Secondly, it

53 Table no. 22–4.

54 Table no. 25.

55 Grants of land in Septimania are to be found in Table no. 26–34, 37, 39–43, 46, 53, of which the following consist wholly or in part of land in the county of Narbonne, no. 28, 30–4, 37, 39, 41–42.

56 Table no. 35–6, 38, 54 are concerned primarily with land in Poitou; Table no. 44, 50–52 with land in the Limousin; Table no. 45 and 49 with land in Berry, Table no. 47–49 with land in the Auvergne.

57 Above n. 31.

58 Table no. 26–54.

59 Table no. 5–12 (Louis the Pious), 13 (Lothair), 14–21 (Pippin I).

60 Table no. 1–4 (Charles the Great), 22–25 (Pippin II).

61 Table no. 2 and 6 are for the same beneficiary, 9–11, 13 (possibly the same beneficiary as no. 11), 20 (unidentified *Spani*), 21–22, 25–28, 30, 32–35, 37, 41–43 (no. 42 is possibly for the same beneficiary as no. 32), 46, 52–53.

62 Only one man of comital rank obtained diplomas directly granting him land from the royal fisc (see next note), although the important ecclesiastic Rodulfus (who was soon to become Archbishop of Bourges) should certainly be regarded as a figure of »political« as well as religious significance, and he obtained a personal gift of lands from both Pippin II and Charles the Bald (below n. 91–4). On the other hand the texts of these diplomas occasionally reveal, indirectly as it were, that men of comital status were holding land in benefice (below pp. 148–50 for a discussion of this point).

63 Two diplomas issued by Charles the Bald in favour of Count Oliba/Ooliba are almost breathtaking in their liberality, Table no. 46 and 53 (July 870, June 877) – TESSIER (see n. 37) no. 341 and 428. The fact

is worth emphasizing that diplomatic evidence does not support the view that Louis the Pious was exceptionally extravagant with his fiscal reserves either before or after his father's death in 814, although his grants certainly amounted to more than Charles the Great's⁶⁴.

Another point of some importance to be borne in mind is that none of these Carolingian kings on average ever made more than one grant of land *per annum* in Aquitaine, even when exceptional political circumstances appear to have led to the production of a large group of diplomas on a single occasion – for instance during Charles the Bald's presence at the siege of Toulouse during the summer of 844⁶⁵. Nevertheless, during a reign of thirty-seven years Charles the Bald made only twenty-nine grants of lands in *Septimania* and Aquitaine; equally, in the twenty-six years between the death of his father Charles the Great and the succession of his son Charles the Bald in 840, Louis the Pious made only eight grants of lands in the same region⁶⁶. In both these cases the information connected with the *regnum Aquitanorum* provides only a partial impression of the way in which these rulers dealt with the lands of the fisc as a whole, as the major centres of their power were located outside the kingdom of Aquitaine. However, if political decline had really been the consequence of the alienation of fiscal estates, it might be expected that the evidence for alienation would have been especially abundant in Aquitaine – which was notorious for the turbulence of its aristocracy by the mid-ninth century. And yet before 814 Louis the Pious did not issue a single diploma conveying a grant of land⁶⁷; while, as *rex Aquitanorum*, his son Pippin I made grants of land on eighteen occasions during the course of a reign of about twenty-one years⁶⁸. Fiscal resources south of the Loire were undoubtedly less abundant than in the Carolingian »heartlands«, but it is perhaps a little curious that generosity on this relatively modest scale should be supposed to have brought about the »material ruin« and political collapse of a dynasty which only fifty years earlier had controlled the fortunes of most of western Europe⁶⁹.

that both these diplomas survive in original has made it possible to rebut the suspicions of forgery which had been raised against them.

64 Above n. 59–60. Whatever may be the force of the evidence provided by sources of a different type, it is surely impossible to argue that the royal diplomas prove that »devenu empereur Louis en usa au regard du fisc de tout l'Empire comme il l'avait fait de celui de l'Aquitaine, libéralité excessive qui se reflète dans de multiples actes de donation«, DHONDT (see n. 2) p. 13–14 and, with reference to the land-grants made by the Emperor, p. 271.

65 Table no. 29–31 were issued from Toulouse between May and June 844; but if these are compared with the diplomas of immunity and other privileges also drawn up at Toulouse during the same period, one gains an impression of exceptional activity on the part of the royal *scriptorium*, TESSIER (see n. 37) vol. 1, no. 35–56. Cf. LOT and HALPHEN (see n. 26) p. 97–121.

66 Above pp. 140–1. Therefore Louis on average made less than one grant of land every three years (in fact one every 3.25 years); his son just over one *per annum* (1.3) for the region south of the Loire.

67 As *rex Aquitanorum* the young Louis was not apparently debarred from issuing diplomas: two privileges dated 794 and 808 have survived (above n. 42).

68 Above n. 49–52 – still rather less than one grant *per annum*. Pippin II's output cannot really be calculated in the same way since so little is known of his actual government, or of the years during which his authority was effective or accepted in Aquitaine.

69 Heinrich FICHTENAU, *The Carolingian Empire* (transl. Peter MUNZ), Oxford 1957, p. 23, makes the point with considerable force for the reign of Charles the Great; although F. GANSHOF in particular has drawn attention to the weaknesses inherent in this extraordinary conglomeration of territories and to what he has called the »imperial mirage«: *The last period of Charlemagne's reign: a study in*

The findings just summarised have been based upon a survey of the royal diplomas embodying grants of land made within the *regnum Aquitanorum* between the late eighth century and the year of Charles the Bald's death. Whatever the region involved, this method of investigation has its limitations unless further refinements are added to this simple analysis which consists only of listing the number of occasions on which land-grants were made, for as a method it is essentially concerned with numbers of diplomas not with quantities of land. Dhondt of course recognised this as a problem; and his table of donations (like the one at the end of this paper) included some indication of the amount of land abandoned each time one of these diplomas was issued by individual Carolingian rulers⁷⁰. If the information contained in each diploma could be used to provide an accurate guide to the size and value of each land-grant, historians would be able to obtain a reasonable estimate of the economic losses sustained by the fisc in any given area; but, as any reader of these diplomatic sources will be aware, the details given are often of a conventional nature; and consequently the problems of how much land was alienated, and what its value was, often have to be approached in a rather oblique fashion⁷¹. What follows is based in part on methods similar to those employed by Dhondt; it then proceeds to consider some of the questions of importance raised by a more detailed investigation into the nature and condition of the lands abandoned by the Carolingian kings south of the River Loire.

In the first instance, it is necessary to compare (wherever possible) the size of the individual donations made throughout the period under consideration. Although no references are made to surface or other measurements, the diplomas do of course often allude to the numbers of *villae* – or parts of *villae* – which were being granted to the beneficiary of the royal *praeceptum*⁷². Comparison made on this basis yields one

decomposition, in: *The Carolingians* (see n. 5) p. 247; cf. his brief article, *Charlemagne's failure*, *ibid.* p. 256–60. But the practical realities facing the rulers of territories covering more than a million km² have been reconsidered and their achievements re-assessed in a more favourable light by WERNER (see n. 28) especially p. 191–194, 235–239.

70 DHONDT (see n. 2) p. 260–1 (claiming to exclude references to restitutions made to churches, »les mentions de terres hermes, forêts, etc.«). At any rate for documents relating to Aquitaine, lands granted by Carolingian kings are most frequently referred to as *villae* (see Table below). There are only three examples of *fiscum* being used as a term to describe a specific estate or group of lands, Table no. 24, 40, 46; cf. METZ (see n. 14) p. 19–21 for references to »die Inventarisierung der Krongüter als Werk der Zentrale«, and p. 239–41 where, among the Latin terms noted, *curtis* and *fiscus* predominate.

71 No royal diploma contains a detailed survey of the resources of an estate, or of the obligations owed by *coloni* or other members of the rural population, although the existence of *coloni* or *mancipia* and certain topographical features may be mentioned.

72 If it could be assumed that every *villa* forming part of the royal fisc was of considerable size and with ample resources, it would be easier to generalise about the significance of the royal alienations in Aquitaine – or elsewhere for that matter. It has, for instance, been stated that »le fisc royal à l'époque franque correspond pour la superficie non à une ferme, même »une grosse ferme« mais à un village moderne«, F. LOT, *La grandeur des fiscs à l'époque carolingienne*, reprinted in: *Recueil des travaux historiques de Ferdinand Lot*, vol. 3, Geneva/Paris 1973, p. 697; and there are of course examples of Carolingian fiscs ranging in size from 1100–1400 hectares as is shown by GANSHOF (see n. 15) p. 37 n. 271 (with extensive bibliographical references). However, it is now more widely acknowledged that *villae* might vary considerably in size and economic value, Robert LATOUCHE, *The Birth of Western Economy. Economic Aspects of the Dark Ages*, (transl. E. M. WILKINSON) London 1971, p. 176–80, as was asserted by Benjamin GUÉRARD many years ago, *Polyptyque de l'Abbé Irminon, ou dénombrement des manses, des serfs et des revenus de l'abbaye de St-Germain-des-Prés sous le règne de*

conclusion of general importance: the size of individual grants increased after 840. Whereas before the death of Louis the Pious it is extremely rare to find a diploma in which the king disposes of more than one *villa* on a single occasion⁷³, after this date the pattern of royal generosity in Aquitaine seems to have been quite radically changed. For instance, once the forged diploma of Louis the Pious with its alleged grant of five *villae* is excluded from the analysis, it appears that only once before 840 did any ruler transfer more than one *villa* at a time into other hands (a grant by Pippin I to the monastery of Montolieu in 828 consists of two *villae*)⁷⁴; but in contrast to this over half of Charles the Bald's donations involve the grant of more than one *villa* on a single occasion⁷⁵. Indeed, even Pippin II's donations are larger in size than those of his father Pippin I whose power as *rex Aquitanorum* was far stronger than that of his »disinherited« son⁷⁶. Moreover, some of Charles the Bald's donations are extremely extensive, culminating in the endowment of Count Oliba on two separate occasions (870 and 877) with lands *in variis comitatibus Gotiae consistentibus* – lands specifically stated to have formed part of »our fisc«⁷⁷. These two grants are quite exceptional however, and are not matched by any similar donations within the provinces of Aquitaine.

Surviving surveys of Carolingian *villae*, like the famous polyptych of Abbot Irmino of St-Germain-des-Prés, list many of the resources of each estate: for instance, the number of *mansi* attached to the *villa*, the legal condition of each tenant family dwelling on a *mansus*, together with the labour services and other dues owed to the demesne; and such comprehensive information enables the historian to obtain, not only a fairly clear impression of the relative size of different *villae* as agricultural units, but also the economic resources of each *villa* and the fashion in which it was exploited by its landlord⁷⁸. A royal diploma of the late eighth or ninth century, on the contrary, does not always even list the *mansi* attached to each *villa* (in fact only a small proportion of the diplomas analysed for this study contain this information)⁷⁹; while

Charlemagne, 3 vol., Paris 1844, 1, p. 408–41 (with especial reference to fiscal *villae*). See also M. ROUCHE, Géographie rurale du royaume de Charles le Chauve, in: Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom (see n. 29) p. 193–211.

73 Table no. 1–5, 8–14, 18 all involve grants of one *villa* or less; no. 16–17 concern parcels of land situated in more than one *villa*, but almost certainly consisting of less than a *villa* in entirety.

74 Table no. 15; but cf. no. 19 which consists of an elaborate privilege for Ste-Foi-de-Conques. Above n. 47 for the fabricated grant of land supposedly issued by Louis the Pious (and accepted by Dhondt).

75 Table no. 26–27, 34, 38–39, 41–43 (although the wording of no. 43 is by no means clear), 46, 49, 51–54.

76 Table no. 23–4 consist of grants of two *villae*; no. 22 consists of land in more than one *villa*.

77 The text of the diploma of 870 repeatedly describes the land given by the king as *fiscum nostrum* or *nostrum indominicatum*; whereas in 877 the lands are specifically described as confiscated *alodes* which *in ius et dominationem nostram legaliter devenerunt* – as the result of the *infidelitas* of Count Miro, Table no. 46, 53 (and above n. 63).

78 The »classic« model presented in the polyptych of St-Germain-des-Prés enumerates the number of *mansi* attached to each *villa*, names and conditions of the inhabitants, together with services owed to the demesne and the dues etc. paid by tenants, e. g. the famous example of the fisc of Palaiseau (see n. 72) vol. 2, p. 6–23.

79 Table no. 19, 28, 35, 38, 50; no. 36 consists of a grant of *factos quatuor*. The references to the grant of *villare(s)* Table no. 2, 6, 26, 33–34, 39, 42 should not necessarily be regarded as denoting a diminutive, according to F. LOT, De l'origine et de la signification des noms de lieu en -ville et en -court (see n. 72) p. 394–5; cf. H. DUBLED, Quelques observations sur le sens du mot *villa*, in: le Moyen âge 59 (1953) p. 2. On the value of the *mansus* F. LOT, Le jugum, le manse et les exploitations agricoles de la France

the resources attached to the land being abandoned are too often only indicated through the use of a phrase stating that the beneficiary is to hold his new acquisition *cum omnibus appenditiis suis* – or some equivalent term⁸⁰. The vagueness of these phrases is particularly tantalising for the historian of the *regnum Aquitanorum*, since it is obvious that the »appendices« or »appurtenances« of an estate must have varied very considerably according to its location. These would not have been the same in the essentially Mediterranean counties of *Septimania*, the plains of Poitou, the far ruder climate of the counties of the *massif central*, or those of the Atlantic seaboard⁸¹.

One resource essential to the ninth century landlord seems, however, to have been frequently mentioned separately in these documents: that is the human labour-force without which no land could be cultivated or rendered productive. When Louis the Pious gave the monks of St-Philibert the *villa* called Scobrit he made it over *cum omnibus ad se pertinentibus vel aspicientibus et cum mancipiis utriusque sexus vel aetatis*⁸², and other royal diplomas throughout this period make similar provisions in a way which confirms the assertion of Renée Doehaerd that at this time »seule la terre équipée de travailleurs... peut nourrir et offrir la sécurité«⁸³. So, even though there is insufficient evidence to prove that these fiscal *villae* in Aquitaine were the equivalent in size or value to the »grandes propriétés« held by the Frankish kings north of the Loire, it is at least possible to assert that some of them were transferred fully equipped and productive by the Carolingians to their new holders. And, if it is permissible to make a comparison with the statements made by the Emperor Louis's anonymous biographer (who obviously assumed that a royal *villa* in Aquitaine as elsewhere should be able to support the whole royal court for many months at a time), it may be plausibly argued that some of the fiscal *villae* in Aquitaine were of considerable size and value⁸⁴.

There was one class of land which, however, seems to have involved the fisc in minimal economic losses in the early ninth century. This consists of the *aprisiones* or *adprisiones* which (despite what has been said to the contrary) appear to be unique to

moderne (see n. 72) p. 806–7; but for a recent survey of a number of problems associated with the *mansus*, Renée DOEHAERD, *Le haut moyen âge occidental: Économies et sociétés*, Paris 1971, p. 68–73; cf. also LATOUCHE (see n. 72) p. 73–90; Robert BOUTRUCHE, *Seigneurie et féodalité: Le premier âge des liens d'homme à homme*, Paris 1959, p. 78–84; Georges DUBY, *L'Économie rurale et la vie des campagnes dans l'occident médiéval*, 2 vol., Paris 1962, 1, p. 97–8, 113–29. Great regional variations even in the structure of the southern *villa* have been emphasized by Elisabeth MAGNOU-NORTIER, *La terre, la rente et le pouvoir dans les pays de Languedoc pendant le haut moyen âge*, in: *Francia* 9 (1981) p. 79–114. The heritable character of the *mansus* has also been insisted on by David HERLIHY, *The Carolingian mansus*, in: *Economic History Review*, 2nd series 13 (1960–61) p. 89.

80 See Table no. 5, 9, 15, 22, 24, 31, 34, 48.

81 MAGNOU-NORTIER (see n. 79) p. 79–94 – although a considerable number of these regions of the Languedoc did not form part of the *regnum Aquitanorum*, attention is drawn to the Bas-Limousin and Rouergue; ROUCHE (see n. 72) p. 194 comments on the scarcity of »ouvrages de synthèse régionale« but on p. 199–200 makes some interesting comments on the character of the manse in Aquitaine.

82 Table no. 12. The majority of references of this type are even less precise: *cum... omnibus hominibus*, no. 14; *cum omnibus... mancipiis*, no. 19; *cum familia utriusque sexus*, no. 36, 44, 45, 51.

83 Renée DOEHAERD (see n. 79) p. 66 and cf. p. 168. A balanced discussion of whether or not judicial powers were likely to be vested in the »landlord« who acquired a *villa* with its familia is to be found in R. BOUTRUCHE, *Seigneurie et féodalité*, 2 vol., Paris 1959/1970, 1, p. 115–126, 145–146.

84 See below pp. 160–61.

the regions settled by the Goths⁸⁵; these lands were almost certainly untenanted – and probably also wholly uncultivated – before they were attached to the fisc. The beneficiary of such a grant seems often to have been a layman of relatively humble origins (and possibly a refugee from beyond the Pyrénées), who would receive the »wasted« land to bring it into cultivation *ex deserti squalore*⁸⁶. Far from demonstrating that the Carolingians recklessly abandoned their resources grants of this type have often been interpreted by historians in such a way as to show that these rulers were conscious of the ravages caused by war and depopulation in *Septimania*, and that they tried to devise sensible methods to ensure the region's recolonisation and to increase its prosperity⁸⁷. However, from the standpoint of this particular investigation the chief significance of these *aprisiones* seems to be two-fold. In the first place, they indicate that, before generalisations are based merely on the basis of the *villae* or other lands abandoned, some attention needs to be given to the actual condition of these lands which were being abandoned by the Carolingian kings; and more importantly they also indicate that there could be considerable variation in the economic value of different *villae* granted by these Carolingian kings. Whereas an estate abandoned with its full complement of *homines* or *mancipia* would represent a very considerable loss to the fisc, an *aprisio* might well have yielded nothing whatever to the fisc since the time of the Carolingians' acquisition of *Septimania* in the late eighth century, so that as an asset it would scarcely be comparable to a *villa* of the classic northern type.

Another topic of considerable importance relates to the tenorial condition of fiscal land at the time when it was abandoned by a Carolingian king either to a layman or to an ecclesiastical establishment. Unfortunately this condition is by no means always clear, although a considerable number of the diplomas studied refer to land being transferred *in proprietario iure* or, less precisely, *in proprio* or *ad proprium*⁸⁸. Logically, therefore, it seems reasonable to suppose that the ruler must have abandoned all the economic benefits which he had formerly obtained from an estate when he abandoned it to a new »proprietor« – even if there may be doubts over what exactly was conveyed

85 The work and conclusions of Imbart de LA TOUR have not really been superseded, *Les colonies agricoles et l'occupation des terres désertes à l'époque carolingienne*, in: *Questions d'histoire sociale et religieuse. Époque féodale*, Paris 1907, p. 31–69; but for a discussion of the regional distribution of this type of colonisation see André DUPONT, *L'aprision et le régime aprisionnaire dans le Midi de la France*, in: *le Moyen Âge 71–72* (1965–66) p. 179–214 and p. 375–399 (with a valuable map on p. 202). However, it has been asserted that *aprisiones* prevailed throughout the whole of Aquitaine, although there does not seem to be any documentary evidence to support this point of view, METZ, *Die Agrarwirtschaft im karolingischen Reiche*, in: *Karl der Große* (see n. 14) p. 498; on the other hand this form of tenure is apparently also characteristic of the Catalonian counties south of the Pyrenees, Roger COLLINS, *Charles the Bald and Wilfred the Hairy*, in: *Charles the Bald* (see n. 29) p. 179–81; cf. GANSHOF, *Feudalism* (transl. by Philip GRIERSON) London 1964, p. 39.

86 TESSIER (see no. 37) no. 40: ... *ex deserti squalore habitabiles frugumque uberes proprio labore fecerunt*. Table no. 19. Cf. Table no. 2–4, 6, 20, 29–30, 32–33 and Suspect diplomas no. 1.

87 Imbart de LA TOUR (see n. 85) p. 67–68; LATOUCHE (see n. 72) p. 207–208; DOEHAERD (see n. 83) p. 103–109, on the importance of assarting in the Carolingian era; GANSHOF (see n. 15) p. 35 n. 235 regarded all deserted lands as coming under royal control and, therefore, as forming part of the resources of the fisc. It seems significant that one of the waste places mentioned by Charles the Great (*loca aliqua erema infra fiscum nostrum*) should have been renamed *Nova Cella*, although previously (*antiquo vocabulo*) called *Fons Agricole*, Table no. 3, MÜHLBACHER (see n. 37) no. 188.

88 Table no. 8–9, 11, 13, 22–23, 26 (*res... liberam et firmissimam... potestatem faciendi voluerint*), 27 (*in hereditate*), 28–29, 31–37, 39, 43, 46, 49.

by *proprietas* in the ninth century. A careful reading of a number of the royal diplomas suggests, however, that as far as the economic resources of the fisc were concerned the position might be more complicated than it appears to be at first sight. In particular, the actual possession of an estate or *villa* could have been abandoned before it was alienated *in proprio* – in which case it would need to be accepted that the royal diploma did not necessarily provide a guide to the stage when the king lost the material benefits associated with »ownership« (for instance revenue, produce in kind, and possibly some of the advantages listed by the author of the *Capitulare de villis* in association with the management of a royal *curtis*)⁸⁹. The implications of this tenurial complication for the dispersal of the fiscal estates need to be considered at rather greater length, and are perhaps best explored through the medium of a number of specific examples.

The *villa* of Tizay in Poitou presents the historian with a fairly straightforward case. This *villa* was given in 825 by King Pippin I to the monks of St-Maixent, and the diploma appears to record the simple transfer of the *villa* from royal control (*de iure nostro*) to the *ius* and *dominatio* of the monks; but in fact the grant was made at the request of a Count Bernard, who not only solicited the king to give the *villa* to St-Maixent, but was also holding Tizay as a *beneficium* from him at the moment when the document was drafted. Thus, although it is correct in legal terms to regard Tizay as forming part of the fisc's resources when the Poitevin religious house acquired it from Pippin I, it also has to be acknowledged that in economic terms the *villa* could scarcely have been worth much to the king or his officials when the diploma was issued in 825, since Count Bernard was then enjoying whatever it produced *cum omnibus rebus et hominibus*⁹⁰.

Chameyrac in the county of Limoges provides evidence for the existence of a similar situation, although this *villa* underwent a far more complicated series of tenurial changes than Tizay. In 864 this place was given by Charles the Bald to the monks of a house which had been recently founded by Archbishop Rodulfus of Bourges – and is still today known by the description »Beaulieu« given to it by its founder. The land was henceforth to be held in perpetuity (*perhenniter* is the term used), and at the moment when the royal diploma was issued, the *villa* was in the hands of Archbishop Rodulfus, who requested the grant to Beaulieu from Charles⁹¹. Like Count Bernard in the case of Tizay, the Archbishop held Chameyrac *iure beneficiario* and, as with that earlier example, the *villa* was provided with its own labour force (the term *familia* is used in the 864 diploma⁹²). However, in the case of Chameyrac another royal diploma

89 Such as the opportunity to hunt, or to breed horses, or enjoy whatever was associated with the *dignitas* of holding such an estate during the late eighth and earlier ninth centuries, see below pp. 160–62.

90 Table no. 14 = LEVILLAIN (see n. 21) no. V.

91 Table no. 44 = TESSIER (see n. 37) no. 275: ...*sanctissimus et valde nobis dilectissimus archiepiscopus sancte Bituricensium matris aeccliesie Rodulfus ad nostram accedens serenitatem peciit et sua pontificali auctoritate exhortatus est quatenus... quandam nostri iuris villam quam ipse haecenus iure beneficiario per nostram largicionem obtinuisse visus est, que etiam in pago Lemovicense sita est et vocatur Camairacus, fratribus qui sub monastico ordine in cellula a se constructa vocabulo Bello loco... nostra munifica liberalitate regiaque auctoritate largiri...*

92 Ibid.: ...*per quod prefatam villam ad supplendos dumtaxat eorum necessarios usus in integro cum familia utriusque sexus desuper commanente vel ad eandem legalitent pertinente... delegamus perhenniter servituram et iure legitimo largimur atque contradimus coeternaliter possidendam et de nostro iure [in ius] ac dominacionem ipsius aeccliesie sollempniter transfundimus...*

survives to prove just how complicated the history of a fiscal *villa* might be in the ninth century, for this second (but earlier) document proves that the ill-fated King Pippin II had previously given this *villa* to his »faithful« and »venerable« Rodulfus; but on that earlier occasion in 848 the king gave it in full ownership (*ad proprium*) rather than as a benefice⁹³. Presumably after Pippin had failed to maintain any authority in Aquitaine his *praecepta* were treated as void by the officials of his more successful uncle, although Pippin's diploma must have been kept to make up a dossier of documents on these lands in the Limousin; however, from the present standpoint the most interesting questions relate to the fate of Chameyrac during the sixteen years intervening between 848 and 864. Did royal officials for instance ever take possession of this *villa* again, or did Rodulfus continue to enjoy its revenues undisturbed by whether or not the royal chancery considered that he held these *beneficiario* rather than *propriario iure*? There is after all no evidence to suggest that Rodulfus did ever give up the possession of Chameyrac and, if that were the case, it would seem as though in practice a distinction between *beneficium* and *proprietas* might often have been virtually meaningless by the mid-ninth century, since it is quite possible that the royal fisc gained no economic or material benefits from Chameyrac for at least sixteen years before Charles the Bald bestowed it on the monks of Beaulieu⁹⁴.

The two cases just outlined indicate that the royal alienation of land might take place in two stages. In the first place a fiscal *villa* (or for that matter a unit of greater or lesser value than a *villa*) might be given in benefice either to a layman or an ecclesiastic: in theory this land would then continue to form part of the reserves of the fisc – to employ a slightly anachronistic phrase it would still form part of the »landed capital« of the dynasty⁹⁵. In principle it was only if this benefice were converted into a grant *in proprio iure* (either for the original beneficiary or for some other party) that it should be regarded by historians as lying outside the ruler's control and irretrievably lost to the fisc, for this represented the second, and from a legal point of view an infinitely more important, stage of alienation. On the other hand, considered from the standpoint of the actual resources available for the king's use or support in a region, the significance of these two stages might be reversed because as an economic asset the

93 Table no. 23 = LEVILLAIN no. LVI. In fact Chameyrac (called *Cambairaco* in Pippin II's diploma) was one of two *villae* given to Rodulfus in January 848 by the *rex Aquitanorum*. Did he retain the other for the benefit of himself or his relatives? (I hope to return to the family and fortune of Archbishop Rodulfus elsewhere.)

94 It seems reasonable to suppose that, when Pippin II made his grant, the *villae* in question were being exploited for the benefit of the fisc; but the absence of administrative records makes it impossible to say what in practice happened to these lands when Charles the Bald succeeded in re-imposing his authority. In law, as it has been put by TESSIER vol. 2, p. 118, »la chancellerie n'a sans doute pas voulu considérer comme acquis le droit concédé par Pépin II«. The semantic and legal problems connected at this time with the contrasting terms *proprium/beneficium* were discussed by Émile LESNE, *Les diverses acceptions du terme »beneficium« du VIII^e au XI^e siècle: Contribution à l'étude des origines du bénéfice ecclésiastique*, in: *Revue historique de droit français et étranger*, 4th series 3 (1924) p. 1–26 (and 13 n. 2 for reference to the contrast between royal *villae* held *in proprio* and *iure beneficiario*).

95 »La terre constitue, et constituait pour les rois francs un capital... un capital foncier formidable«, DHONDT (see n. 2) p. 11; cf. DOEHAERD (see n. 79) p. 153, on the role of »la grande propriété« in the early mediaeval economy.

loss of a *villa* would be felt from the moment when it was abandoned, no matter what rights the king reserved in terms of tenure. Moreover, where political authority was otherwise also weak there was the additional danger that the king as the rightful »proprietor« would not in any case be able to exercise his »rights« or to recall the benefice in case of need⁹⁶. At this point in the argument discussion begins to touch on a series of problems of a more general nature which have often been investigated by historians of the ninth century; but they are also central to an understanding of the alienation of the lands of the fisc, although in a rather different guise from the way they have been interpreted by writers on the emergence of a feudal society⁹⁷.

It is widely recognised that any evaluation of the way in which the Carolingians' political power declined needs to take into account the large amounts of land which were abandoned by these kings in benefice and which, for reasons that have been endlessly debated, came gradually to elude the control of the members of this dynasty. Even though it has to be admitted that the abandonment of lands *in proprietario iure* was in the long term more serious than the grant of benefices, it might be assumed by a modern historian that a survey of royal lands abandoned over a long period of time would also provide a considerable amount of information on the numbers of estates abandoned *in beneficiario iure*. But in fact this is not the case and this *lacuna* reveals yet another difficulty facing historians who attempt to trace the »dissolution of the fisc« through the medium of the royal diplomas. References to tenure in benefice do occur in the series of diplomas discussed in relation to the *regnum Aquitanorum* – two examples have just been cited – but they occur, as it were, incidentally and are normally mentioned only as part of a chain of events whose culmination was the grant of land in perpetuity⁹⁸. For instance, if Count Bernard had not wished to endow the monks of St. Maixent it would not now be known that the *villa* of Tizay had once belonged to the fisc in the *regnum Aquitanorum* – or indeed that this *villa* was held by one of the counts of Poitou appointed by the Carolingians during the early part of the ninth century⁹⁹. The position with regard to the *villa* of Chameyrac is not quite so dramatic from the historian's standpoint, since more than one diploma relating to this estate has survived; but nevertheless without Charles the Bald's diploma its tenurial vicissitudes would be unknown, and it could not now be suspected that a *villa* once granted *ad proprium* was later to be treated as though it were merely held on a

96 An interesting example of a beneficiary's treating land as though it were his »allod«, is discussed below, pp. 168–9.

97 The general problem of whether royal authority was wholly undermined by the fashion in which a king's vassals or *fideles* treated their *beneficia* or *honores* has of course been much discussed. Cf. HALPHEN (see n. 17) p. 486–495; GANSHOF (see n. 85) p. 60–61; Karl BOSL, *Die Grundlagen der modernen Gesellschaft im Mittelalter*, Stuttgart 1972, 2 vol. (Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters, 4/I) vol. 1, p. 133–136.

98 In addition to the examples considered at length above see Table no. 16, 38 and 47 (although this last document does not use the term *beneficium*, it seems probable that the lands formerly held by Charles's *fidelis vassallus Desiderius* made up his benefice before they were given to the monks of St. Philibert); LESNE (see n. 94) p. 26, 54.

99 The number of important political figures named Bernard has always produced problems for historians, as is shown by DHONDT's appendix IV, *ibid.* p. 293–313 (»Le problème des Bernards«); but at least it can be asserted with certainty that this Bernard held comital power in Poitou during the early years of Pippin I's rule.

precarious form of tenure¹⁰⁰. It is surely necessary to take into account the fact that references to this type of tenure – so important in the Carolingians' rise to power – should for the most part appear so obliquely in the royal diplomas.

The actual creation of a benefice is, however, recorded in one of the diplomas analysed during the course of this investigation. This is a document dating from the last year of Charles the Bald's reign: it forms one of a group issued from the palace of Ponthion in July 876, all of which relate to the county of Limoges. It consists of a grant by Charles to a *fidelis* called Hildebert of two *villae* to be held *usufructuario et iure beneficiario omnibus diebus vitae suae et filio suo post eum*¹⁰¹. In historical or legal terms there may not seem to be any cause for surprise in an example of what is in fact a well-known type of tenure granted for a limited term, which of course reserved the »proprietor's« rights in the land he was temporarily abandoning¹⁰². Diplomatically, however, it is another matter, since this is the only document recording the creation of a benefice within the Carolingian *regnum Aquitanorum*; while, as Tessier pointed out in his great edition of Charles the Bald's diplomas, even the confirmation of a benefice seems only to have been issued by this ruler's chancery »in exceptional circumstances«¹⁰³. If (as seems highly probable) the practices of Charles the Bald's *scriptorium* were based on the highly organised imperial chancery of his father Louis the Pious, then this observation is presumably also applicable to the years before 840¹⁰⁴; certainly it is significant that none of the surviving formularies of the Carolingian era apparently provide any model for a scribe who might wish to draw up a document recording a royal grant *iure beneficiario*. It cannot be accidental that the most influential of these collections – known as the *Formulae Imperiales* – does not include a single transcript for a *beneficium* among its numerous *praecepta* and other privileges; although this does provide the model for a *Praeceptum super rebus redditis*, whereby a defendant accused of abstracting land from the fisc (*fiscum nostrum*) was unable to prove that he had even obtained or held the land in question as a *beneficium*¹⁰⁵. In principle it seems logically to follow that, throughout the years when most of western Europe was governed by members of the Carolingian dynasty, the most solemn written instrument at their disposal was not considered appropriate for the recording of grants of land to be held by a limited and revocable form of tenure. The historical implications of such a conclusion are considerable: in particular, this suggests that the royal diplomas may well only provide information of a rather specialised and limited nature

100 For an example of a benefice being restricted to two lives by Charles the Bald, see next note.

101 Table no. 52 = TESSIER (see n. 37) no. 411 (dated 17 July); cf. Table no. 50 and 51 (of 13 and 16 July respectively).

102 By contrast the emphatic wording in which a grant in perpetuity was couched ought to be noted, e. g. the citation above n. 92.

103 TESSIER vol. 3, p. 3–4, 203–204; and cf. the same author's *Diplomatique royale française* (see n. 12) chap. III and especially p. 58–63.

104 TESSIER p. 61 and 65, 82–83 with especial reference to »la rénovation des formules« and the general improvement in »latinité« during the time of Louis the Pious.

105 *Formulae Imperiales*, in: *Formulae Merovingici et Karolini Aevi* (ed. K. ZEUMER), Hannover 1886 (MGH, Legum sectio V) p. 322; TESSIER p. 61–71, cites numerous examples of models for different types of *praecepta* which were taken from the *Formulae Imperiales*. Since the compilers of that work were concerned to include so many varieties of document, there can be little doubt that a model for a grant of land in benefice would be found in this collection, had one been required or been in current use.

for a history of the »dissolution of the fisc« – perhaps even the »tip of an iceberg« whose true size can scarcely be estimated.

The decline of royal power in the ninth century has been especially associated with an increase in the number of benefactions made by kings to their secular *fideles*, so that it is of some importance to establish whether the documents examined provide support for this view¹⁰⁶. The royal diplomas for the kingdom of Aquitaine do admittedly show an increase overall in actual numbers of grants made to laymen for, whereas six diplomas were issued in favour of laymen between the years 814–40, fifteen were issued by Charles the Bald between 840–877. This amounts to fifteen donations during a reign of thirty-seven years rather than six made in twenty-six years – an average of one grant of land to a layman every four years throughout the period that Louis was emperor after his father's death¹⁰⁷. However, even in relation to this relatively small group of examples, a number of comments need to be made which seem slightly to modify the nature of the conclusion. In the first instance, the texts of these diplomas reveal that a number of these later »grants« to laymen consist in practice either of partial confirmations of donations which had been made at an earlier date but for which no record exists, or of *aprisiones* which (as has already been suggested) should not be treated as representing any very great economic loss to the fisc¹⁰⁸. Secondly, it becomes apparent also that these land-grants show few signs of the Carolingians »ruining themselves in favour of their vassals«, because few of the diplomas concern lands given to members of the great aristocracy or to men whose descendants might be regarded as »territorial princes«. Admittedly the *fidelis* Hildebert, to whom Charles the Bald gave the benefice of two *villae* in 876, was the ancestor of the viscounts of Limoges who remained in power for centuries¹⁰⁹; the family of Archbishop Rodulfus of Bourges, too, was of considerable importance in the region of the Limousin and Quercy¹¹⁰; but, otherwise (with the single significant exception of the Gothic Count Oliba whose huge endowment by Charles the Bald has already been mentioned)¹¹¹, these royal diplomas provide no examples of royal

106 See the assertion made by DHONDT, *ibid.* p. 260.

107 Table no. 6, 9, 10–11, 13, 21 relate to the years 814–40 (grants made by both Pippin I and his father); Charles the Bald's grants to laymen are represented by Table no. 26–30, 32–35, 37, 41–43, 46, 52–53. Cf. Table no. 2 (Charles the Great), 25 (Pippin II).

108 Table no. 6, 9 (the confirmation of part of an *aprisio* granted by Charles the Great), 29–30 (of which the first apparently purports to »grant« an *aprisio* previously conceded verbally by Charles the Great), 32–33.

109 Above n. 101 for reference to the diploma. The beneficiary is simply described as *fidelis noster nomine Hildebertus*. He has nevertheless normally been described as *vicecomes*, because in the early tenth century his son styled him so, R. DE LASTEYRIE, *Étude sur les comtes et vicomtes de Limoges antérieur à l'an 1000*, Paris 1874, p. 58–59.

110 On Rodulfus AUZIAS (see n. 22) p. 217, 219; MARTINDALE (see n. 29) p. 116; and for his position as an ecclesiastical reformer, Rosamund MCKITTERICK, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reform (789–895)*, London 1977 (Royal Historical Studies in History) p. 59–61; and J. DEVISSE, *Hincmar Archevêque de Reims (845–82)*, 3 vol., Geneva 1975–76, p. 156, 382. His kin-group has been described as »la maison de Turenne«, supposedly holding comital office in Limoges according to de LASTEYRIE (see n. 109) p. 27–28. Cf. G. Tenant de LA TOUR, *L'Homme et la terre de Charlemagne à St-Louis: essai sur les origines et les caractères d'une féodalité*, Paris 1942, p. 45; but the secular position of this family seems to be in need of re-examination.

111 The family connections of Oliba and the political importance of Charles the Bald's grant to him are discussed by COLLINS (see n. 85) p. 172, 176–178.

generosity to laymen on a scale which might be supposed to cause the ruler serious political embarrassment, or even to deplete his available reserves of land to any very considerable extent.

In spite of these doubts which have been raised in relation to the value of Carolingian diplomas as the major source upon which to base a history of the »dissolution of the fisc«, it still needs to be emphasized that these diplomas provide much invaluable evidence for this process. A careful examination of the diplomas issued for the provinces of *Aquitania* and *Septimania* has suggested that a significant rise in the size of individual land-grants took place around the middle of the ninth century; and it seems, too, that this was a more important change than a simple rise in the number of diplomas issued by successive kings before Charles the Bald's death in 877. It is also necessary to stress that these documents provide a considerable amount of information relating to the resources of different fiscal *villae* and lands – even though this information is circumscribed by contemporary conventions on the matter appropriate to a royal diploma. In particular, the diplomas enable the historian to perceive how different might be the economic condition of lands abandoned by the Carolingians *in proprietario iure*, that far from all being valuable *villae* on the classic pattern, some were waste or of little economic value until the grantee had rendered them productive. On the other hand, the direct evidence for grants of land contained within these diplomas is almost wholly restricted to land abandoned »in full ownership«; and this makes it essential to comment also on the problems connected with lands granted out by the king on a less permanent tenure, but normally only mentioned in royal diplomas when such an allusion is relevant to the history of a *villa* then being alienated completely from the fiscal reserves. Because officials of the royal *scriptoria* were not apparently expected to draw up a document each time that a king granted land *in beneficiario iure*, this means that today historians can often only obtain glimpses of benefices held from the king from diplomas which record the moment when such *villae* were escaping forever from royal control. It has therefore to be emphasized that as a class Carolingian diplomas are far from providing the complete source of information which has been claimed on the alienation of royal lands¹¹².

The absence of documents recording royal gifts of land in benefice has to be interpreted in the light of the contemporary administrative and governmental practices of Carolingian rulers for, although »the written word« was extremely important from the first in the conduct of Carolingian government¹¹³, it was probably not obligatory for the transaction of affairs among laymen at any time. Moreover, from the earliest years when this dynasty began to acquire power, benefices had been created *verbo regis* without written authentication or confirmation – and it seems improbable that *homines seculares* would ever have objected to accepting lands granted in such a manner from the king¹¹⁴. The diploma should thus be recognised as

112 Above pp. 133–4.

113 F. GANSHOF, *The Use of the Written Word in Charlemagne's administration*, in: *The Carolingians* (see no. 5) p. 125–142; but WERNER has shown how a Carolingian count might, as part of his office, be expected to communicate verbally royal decisions which had been previously written down (see n. 28) p. 199–200.

114 In 779 it seems to have been taken for granted that the normal way for *homines seculares* to obtain a benefice from the king was »by word of mouth«, *Capitularia* (see n. 15) 1, p. 50: *per verbo domni regis*

an exceptionally solemn instrument, costly to produce, and employed by a ruler for exceptional privileges or gifts¹¹⁵. In this setting, the diploma of 876 creating a benefice for one of Charles the Bald's *fideles* acquires an important additional interest, because it suggests that the methods employed in the west Frankish chancery might have been altered if Charles the Bald had lived longer, or if his successors' authority had not declined so disastrously and so speedily.

II

The Carolingian rulers frequently commanded lists and surveys of their landed property to be made, distinguishing between their *villae regiae* or *fisci* and the *beneficia* in the possession of counts, vassals or ecclesiastics; but very few of the returns compiled – if they were ever compiled – have survived to the present day¹¹⁶. It is therefore out of the question to compile a list of all the landed resources of the Carolingian fisc, or to gain even a rough estimate of the size or value of most of those *villae regiae* which were not abandoned, but reserved either for the royal use or to provide the king with revenue¹¹⁷. Nevertheless, Brühl's investigations have shown how much may be learned from an intensive study of royal itineraries, constructed from every type of material available to the historian¹¹⁸; and it no longer seems justifiable to consider problems connected with the dispersal of fiscal lands without also discussing what is known of the royal estates reserved for the ruler himself (the *villas regias ad opus nostrum serviendi institutas*, as they were termed in the *Capitulare de villis*)¹¹⁹. Since discussions of the royal fisc in Aquitaine have often been virtually restricted to a commentary on the famous passage of the anonymous »Astronomer's« biography of Louis the Pious it now becomes essential to consider the fiscal resources of the *regnum Aquitanorum* at somewhat greater length.

During the long drawn out conquest of Aquitaine in the eighth century, the *villae publicae* of the native *duces* were destroyed by the Carolingians, vineyards were uprooted, and cities were many times besieged¹²⁰. Archaeological evidence when

precarias de verbo nostro factas (Capit. Haristal, *forma langobardica* and *forma communis* respectively); for the dating F. GANSHOF, *Recherches sur les capitulaires*, Paris 1958, p. 4, 109.

115 The methods of authentication alone (tyronian notes, sealing etc.) would have been time-consuming, while the great size of some of the documents together with their elaborate calligraphy would have been both time-consuming and expensive, TESSIER, *Diplomatique royale* (see n. 12) p. 72–102 for a succinct description of external characteristics of the diploma. It is interesting that Louis the Pious's biographer Thegan stresses the formalities in which the ruler was involved when he made a grant of land in perpetuity: *praecepta constituit, et anuli sui impressione cum consubscriptione manu propria roboravit* (see n. 5), p. 228.

116 GANSHOF, *Frankish Institutions* (see n. 15) p. 34–9; IDEM, *The use of the written word* (see n. 113) p. 130–131; and cf. VERHEIN (see n. 14) on the *Brevium exempla*.

117 »A numerical estimate from our actual state of knowledge would risk creating a false impression«, *ibid.* p. 37; note also LOT's pessimistic comments on the problems of determining the total resources of the royal demesne, in: *Recueil des travaux* (see n. 79) p. 221–31.

118 BRÜHL (see n. 6) p. 2–3, 7–8.

119 Cited n. 15 above.

120 Widespread devastation was recorded during an expedition of c. 763: *Ligere transacto Aquitania pergens usque ad Lemodicas accessit, totam regionem illam vastans, villas publicas quas dictione Waiofario erant totas igne cremare praecepit.* (Vineyards were also laid waste, and monasteries

placed alongside contemporary written sources suggests that, as soon as the Carolingians effectively established their authority in these regions they took over their opponents' urban palaces – the evidence for Bourges and Poitiers is especially convincing¹²¹. Very probably the estates which had been described as *villae publicae* under the Merovingians also passed into the hands of Charles Martel, Pippin, and Charles the Great as soon as these men consolidated their conquests; but, although there are soon references in the Carolingian annals to *villae regiae* in Aquitaine, it is difficult to assert with complete certainty that these were the same as the *villae publicae* of the previous régime.

For instance, when Charles the Great crossed the River Loire in the year 777 and entered Aquitaine, he stayed near the city of Poitiers at a *villa regia* called Chasseneuil; and it was here that his son Louis was born during his father's absence in Spain¹²². Charles the Great is also known to have stayed at the *villae* of Mornac and Angeac in the county of Angoulême¹²³; and very probably he already had at his disposal the *villa* of Doué, situated very close to the boundary of Aquitaine not far from the River Loire. Doué had provided the meeting place for *dux Waiofarius* and the first Carolingian king in 760 and, if it could be established in whose possession this *villa* then was, historians would be in a better position to decide whether or not the Carolingians took over their predecessors' estates¹²⁴. But in any case, after Louis was created *rex Aquitanorum* three of the *villae* which have just been mentioned – Chasseneuil, Doué and Angeac – come to be described as »palaces«; and afterwards seem to have been the favourite residences of Louis and his son Pippin I¹²⁵. According

»depopulated«, The Fourth Book of the Chronicle of Fredegar with its Continuations (ed. J. M. WALLACE-HADRILL), London 1960, (Mediaeval Classics) p. 115; *ibid.* p. 93–95, 98, 110, 111–115 for other campaigns in Aquitania and Gothia between 737–63; and cf. *Annales Mettenses priores* (ed. B. DE SIMSON), Hannover 1905 (MGH in usu scholarum) p. 29, 43–44, 66. This campaign has been placed in the setting of wider Carolingian political ambitions by ROUCHE (see n. 27) p. 123–5 (with map).

121 In 767 Pippin had a palace built in Bourges and left his queen, Bertrada, there while he was campaigning in the region, Fredegar *ibid.* p. 117. According to BRÜHL, *Palatium und Civitas* (see n. 41) p. 166–167 (plan on p. 164), this was simply constructed on (or refurbished from) the former palace of the Aquitanian *duces*; cf. also evidence cited for Poitiers and Toulouse, *ibid.* pp. 174, 198–200. (The case of Toulouse perhaps seems less convincing.)

122 *Et celebravit... pascha in Aquitania in villa Cassiogilo*, *Annales regni Francorum* (ed. F. KURZE) Hannover 1895 (MGH in usu scholarum), p. 50; cf. *Ann. Mettenses priores*, *ibid.* p. 66. The anonymous biographer of Louis the Pious also describes this as *villa regia*, *Anonymi vita* p. 260. The clearest evidence for the siting of Chasseneuil is provided by an original diploma of Pippin I *rex Aquitanorum* recording a judgement made in 828 at *Casanogilo villa palatio nostro in pago Pictavo secus alveum Clinno*, LEVILLAIN (see n. 21) no. XII, p. 46. I have not, therefore, discussed the identification (which has often been advocated in the past) of *Casanogilum* with Casseuil in the Bordelais.

123 Ed. MÜHLBACHER (see n. 37) no. 58–59 (May/July 769); MARTINDALE (see n. 29) p. 132. The presence of Charles the Great in Aquitaine in the summer of 769 should be associated with his campaign against Hunald, then leader of the Aquitanian »resistance«, ROUCHE (see n. 27) p. 129.

124 A place called *Teodad* mentioned under the year 760 by the Frankish annalist is presumably the same as the *Teodadum villa... in Aquitania* mentioned again in the year 814; although on the first occasion the editor identified it as an unknown place *in pago Arvernico*, on the second with Doué-la-Fontaine, *Annales regni Francorum* (see n. 122) p. 18–19, 140.

125 *Anonymi vita* (see n. 5), p. 268; for the diploma evidence for royal residence at these places, MARTINDALE (see n. 29) p. 130–131.

to the »Astronomer«, two other sites in this kingdom were also dignified with the epithet *palatium*, and provided these kings with residences in the eastern part of the region. One of the palaces is Ébreuil in the Auvergne (about which little otherwise is known)¹²⁶, while the second, *Iucundiacum in territorio Lemovico situm*, has been identified with a site now significantly called »Le Palais«, not far from the city of Limoges¹²⁷.

Although the *villae* and rural palaces just mentioned were certainly the most important of the »public« *villae* exploited for the king's use in Aquitaine, it would be misleading to suppose that he had no other lands at his disposal, apart from the ones which made up the group of lands alienated between the late eighth and the mid-ninth centuries, which have just been discussed. On the contrary, the dating clauses of the royal diplomas show that there was also a group of *villae* scattered quite widely throughout Aquitaine where its ruler could stay if he needed to. These *villae* were situated as far south as the Toulousain and Périgord, and are also found in the counties of Poitou, Limoges, Bourges, Auvergne and Angoulême. Altogether fifteen further names may be added from the diplomas of the period to those just mentioned, so that it is probable that a minimum of twenty rural estates which formed part of the fiscal resources in this kingdom were available for royal use¹²⁸. Additionally, there might well have been lands attached to the fortified sites where these rulers occasionally stayed¹²⁹; Pippin I's diplomas also provide historians with a brief glimpse of the forests which were organised by the *reges Aquitanorum* in the coastal and mountainous regions of their kingdom to satisfy the love of hunting which characterised their dynasty¹³⁰. Altogether, even if the resources of the fisc were not so extensive or so

126 Ibid. None of the diplomas of the *reges Aquitanorum* was ever dated from this site, but it may well have served as a royal residence if the conjecture is correct that Bishop Claud of Turin had earlier worked there for three years, B. SIMSON, *Jahrbücher des fränkischen Reichs unter Ludwig dem Frommen*, 2 vol., Leipzig 1874/76, 2, p. 245–6.

127 Anonymi vita p. 340. This was not included by this author in his list of the four palaces which are specifically named as providing the *rex Aquitanorum* with the sites for his regular winter residences. However, a diploma shows that as early as 794 Louis resided at this palace, MARTINDALE, p. 132.

128 MARTINDALE, *ibid.*, Appendix, no. 6 (possibly Chauppes, dép. Vienne); 11–12 *ad illa Warda/in villa Warda*, dép. Charente); 17 (*Vodevogilo* unidentified, cf. no. 31); 18 (*in Aviziaci villa*, unidentified); 23 (Néris, dep. Allier); 24 (*in Palaciolo* – a significant name, possible Palissous, dép. Dordogne); 26 (possibly Charentais, dép. Indre-et-Loire); 27 (Chassenon, dép. Charente); 33 (St-Florent-sur-Cher, dép. Cher); 34 (poss. Ferry, dép. Puy-de-Dôme); 36 (Orgnac, either dép. Hte. Vienne or Corrèze); 44 (Avens, dép. Tarn); 45 (Castelferrus, dép. Tarn-et-Garonne), cf. no. 46; 63 (*in villa Mariscarias* – unidentified in Auvergne); 65 (*in villa Puteata*, unidentified in Auvergne). LEVILLAIN (see n. 21) p. CLXIV, expressed doubts over whether such places belonged to the fisc but, given the tendency of these rulers to dwell on their own rural estates, the presumption that these were fiscal *villae* – however unimportant – seems strong; cf. BRÜHL's assumptions (see n. 6) p. 19–20, 24, 62 onwards. Buzançais (in the present département of the Indre), where Charles the Bald's son Charles »the Child« died as *rex Aquitanorum* was very probably also a fiscal *villa*, as is claimed by Guy DEVAILLY, *Le Berry du X^e siècle au milieu du XIII^e, étude politique, religieuse, sociale et économique*, Paris 1973, p. 82, 102, 128–129, 171–172.

129 The dating-clauses of royal diplomas show that in 818 Pippin I was at Castillon-sur-Dordogne, as Charles the Bald was in 842; in 827 Pippin I was in *Ausone castro* (Alzonne), Martindale, *ibid.* Appendix no. 8, 13, 42.

130 These forests seem only to be named in the royal diplomas: *in foreste quae dicitur Molarias / Alberide foreste / in Guanapii foreste / Cervario foreste*, LEVILLAIN (see n. 21) no. III–VI, XXXII, XXXV. These were identified by Levillain with regions in the modern départements of the Vienne, Hte. Vienne

valuable in this region as in the northern territories of the *regnum Francorum*, the *reges Aquitanorum* could certainly draw for material support on more than the four »Tafelgüter« with which they have sometimes been credited¹³¹.

In spite of the existence of a number of urban residences and palaces the earlier Carolingian kings of Aquitaine dwelt almost exclusively on their rural estates. The dating clauses of Pippin I's diplomas even give the impression (which may well be correct) that, with the exception of a couple of visits to religious houses situated in towns, he may never have officially resided within any of the cities of his kingdom¹³². On the other hand two of his best known rural *villae* were established only a few miles from a city – Chasseneuil lies close to Poitiers, as Le Palais does to Limoges¹³³; but in any case during the years when Louis the Pious and Pippin I ruled as *reges Aquitanorum* the great clergy and secular aristocracy, together with litigants of all classes would have been attracted to these country palaces. Only towards the mid-ninth century, apparently, did urban residences regain popularity with the Carolingians; although whether this was because of the internal conflicts within the region or as a result of Norman raids, it is impossible to tell¹³⁴.

Historical narratives and the court literature of these years also bring out the great significance attached to their *villae regiae* by the early Carolingians in Aquitaine. The elaborate poems addressed by Ermold »the Black« to both Louis and his son Pippin, contain elaborate descriptions of two palaces situated within the kingdom of Aquitaine – Doué and, almost certainly, Angeac; both are evoked in a setting of pastoral tranquillity¹³⁵. The lives of Carolingian kings may not have been so idyllic as Ermold would have his readers believe, and his vocabulary was certainly second-hand; but does this necessarily mean that, just because his literary inspiration was weak, the settings and contents of his poems are necessarily historically unreliable¹³⁶?

and Vendée = MARTINDALE, appendix no. 8, 13, 42. BRÜHL (see n. 6) p. 32–33, 86, emphasizes the importance of hunting and of »Jagdpfalzen« to the Carolingians (the name *Cervario* must be especially significant in this respect). On the legal significance of the term *forestis* at this time, GANSHOF, Frankish Institutions (see n. 15) p. 38; and cf. WERNER (see n. 28) p. 233. On the more general importance of wild or wooded areas in the early mediaeval economy, DOEHAERD (see n. 99) p. 94 onwards.

131 METZ (see n. 85) p. 498; AUZIAS (see n. 22) p. 16 – from an unrevised part of this posthumous work; WOLFF (see n. 23) p. 294 cites the four *villae* named by the »Astronomer«. Cf. also Michel DE BOUARD, *De l'aula au donjon, les fouilles de la motte de la Chapelle à Doué-la-Fontaine (X^e–XI^e siècle)*, in: *Archéologie médiévale* 3–4 (1973–74) p. 9.

132 Only two of the thirty-two diplomas with a dating clause issued before 840 refer to royal residence in a town – the city of Poitiers; additionally one was issued from the monastery of St. Hilaire de Poitiers and another from St. Martial de Limoges, MARTINDALE (see n. 29) Appendix no. 1, 7, 15, 25.

133 Chasseneuil lies about 10 km to the north of the city of Poitiers, Gaston DEZ, *Histoire de Poitiers, Poitiers 1969* (Mémoires de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest 4th series, 10) p. 29 n. 47. Le Palais is sited to the north-east of Limoges on the River Vienne; but Angeac-Charente is considerably further from the *civitas* to the west of the city of Angoulême.

134 See below, no. 178, 179.

135 Ermold le Noir, *Poème sur Louis le Pieux et Épîtres au Roi Pépin* (ed. Edmond FARAL), Paris 2nd ed. 1964 (Les classiques de l'histoire de France au moyen âge) p. 202 l. 11–13 (for a palace on the River Charente) and p. 58 l. 744–49 (*Thedwat* = Doué).

136 FARAL, introduction p. XVI–XXVIII: Ermold is condemned as »ce naïf artisan des lettres«. However, Faral's criticisms apply chiefly to the poet's misunderstanding or misuse of the classical poetic vocabulary; a naive historian cannot help noting that there is considerable variety in the way in which Ermold worked up the settings for his »epic« verse – e. g. the descriptions of the two Aquitanian

Certainly, if his flattering verses were the only survivals from the early ninth century historians would need to be cautious in accepting his statements literally; but, when Ermold's verses recount the arrival at Doué of messengers with news of Charles the Great's death¹³⁷, or the ceremonial of courtiers clustered round Pippin I and his queen at Angeac¹³⁸, his descriptions are borne out by other sources of a more soberly »historical« type; and when these verses include a description of Louis consulting with his *ministros* »ruling« from such palaces, Ermold's poetic account probably reflects historical reality¹³⁹. For documents, too, prove that Pippin I sat in justice at Chasseneuil or summoned his *nobiles* to Le Palais¹⁴⁰; while, if the dating clauses of the royal diplomas are taken seriously, historians need also to imagine a stream of suitors flocking to beg privileges or land grants from the king at these *villae regiae* – or even following him to the royal forests¹⁴¹.

Since much of the essential business of early medieval kingship – as well as much of its ceremonial – was conducted at these rural residences, it seems likely that at least some of these *villae regiae* in Aquitaine were intended to accommodate royal *ministri* and officials (perhaps even the *regalis multitudo* deplored elsewhere by contemporaries)¹⁴². What little can be discovered about the individual officials attached to the court of the *reges Aquitanorum* suggests that in material terms the problems of accommodation and supply would not have been light ones – as indeed is implied by

palaces are distinctly different from that of the palace of Ingelheim, *ibid.* p. 156–66. Ermold's remarks are treated more seriously by RICHÉ who notes the contrast made with the Breton ruler's »hovels«: *Les représentations du palais* (see n. 19) p. 163.

137 FARAL, p. 58–60 and esp. lines 750–57. At least one of the individuals mentioned on this occasion (Rampho) is also referred to in an account of the events after Charles the Great's death in the *Anonymi Vita* (see n. 5) p. 288.

138 FARAL, p. 202–204, lines 15–38 (but it has to be admitted that this is an imaginary description, conjured up by an exile to plead for his return); however, cf. RICHÉ (see n. 19) p. 165–68.

139 ... *Inter cunctantes concurrat Bigo ministros / Suetus erat dominum visere mane suum...* FARAL (see n. 135) p. 60, lines 756–57. Cf. a phrase like *cum pietate regens...*, *ibid.* line 751. On the general significance of the »palace« for the government of early mediaeval kings, see E. EWIG, *Résidence et capitale pendant le haut moyen âge*, in: *Revue Historique* 230 (1963) p. 25–72; C. BRÜHL, *Remarques sur les notions de »capitale« et de résidence au haut moyen âge*, in: *Journal des Savants* (1967) p. 193–215; cf. WERNER (see n. 28) p. 231–232. Although the work of Pierre HÉLIOT has been ostensibly concerned with the post-Carolingian era, it often contains observations of value on secular building and archaeology for the Carolingian period also, *Sur les résidences princières bâties en France du X^e au XII^e siècle*, in: *Le Moyen Âge* 61 (1955) p. 27–61 and 291–377; *IDEM*, *Nouvelles remarques sur les palais épiscopaux et princières de l'époque romane en France*, in: *Francia* 4 (1976) p. 193–212.

140 LEVILLAIN (see n. 21) no. XII. As *rex Aquitanorum*, Louis is alleged to have spent three days each week attending to judicial affairs, *Anonymi Vita* (see n. 5) p. 286. Cf. MARTINDALE (see n. 29) p. 113 for the meeting of *nobiles*.

141 TESSIER (see n. 12) p. 104–14, provides an admirable survey of the subtleties of diplomatic criticism which have been expended on the problems of whether (1) a »judicial act« preceded the drafting, and then the validation of the actual diploma, or whether (2) the dating clause (through the employment of two distinct terms *datum* and *actum*) refers to two separate moments in the creation of the written record. In Tessier's judgement »on peut se servir avec sécurité des données fournies par les diplômes pour établir l'itinéraire des souverains...«.

142 BRÜHL (see n. 6) p. 71, refers to the crowds of »hangers-on« attracted to any royal gathering. Louis the Pious disapproved of the *coetum... femineum – qui permaximus erat*, which before 814 had been attached to his father's palace at Aachen, *Anonymi Vita* p. 292. Presumably therefore the Aquitanian palaces at least were not burdened with the expense of too many women...

the »Astronomer« in his account of the arrangements made for the winter palaces of Louis the Pious¹⁴³. The clerical *palatini* whose stars rose so high after Louis succeeded his father in 814, must have earlier worked and lived in the royal *villae* of Chasseneuil and Doué, or at other royal residences in Aquitaine where some of them served in the chapel or *scriptorium* of their royal lord¹⁴⁴. Important laymen, too, as well as a permanent complement of armed men and domestic staff must always have surrounded the king¹⁴⁵, so that references to the personnel of a Carolingian *palatium* are not so irrelevant to the problems of fiscal reserves as they might appear to be. Unfortunately, however, it is impossible to tell whether in Aquitaine a palace site would normally have contained separate quarters for laity and clergy, a great royal hall, or a church separated from the rest of the buildings. (The last two features are to be found in Ermold's descriptions of Doué and Angeac.) Certainly nothing survives to prove whether or not any of these palaces included an elaborate scheme of decoration, similar to Ermold's description of the imperial palace of Ingelheim¹⁴⁶. Unfortunately the only palace site to have been excavated in Aquitaine has yielded little of importance for the early Carolingian years¹⁴⁷.

As estates the main purpose of the royal *villae* was still to furnish their lord with the basic necessities of existence; and, although the exact details may not be elaborated, that is the overriding impression given by the »Astronomer« when he describes the re-arrangement of Louis the Pious's itinerary after his father had rescued him from an impoverished condition¹⁴⁸. According to this author, the young king's chief concern

143 Below n. 148–50.

144 Helisachar, the first imperial arch-chancellor after 814, had earlier played a similar role in the *regnum Aquitanorum*, according to TESSIER p. 43–4. The ex-serf Ebo (later Archbishop of Reims) also began his upward career in Louis' household as the young King's *bibliothecarius*, J. FLECKENSTEIN, *Die Hofkapelle der Deutschen Könige, 1: Grundlegung. Die karolingische Hofkapelle*, Stuttgart 1959, p. 66, 87. The Spaniard Claudius (later appointed Bishop of Turin) was also a member of the court of Louis before 814, SIMSON (see n. 126) 2, p. 245–6; but Reginpert, chaplain to Louis, had already been appointed Bishop of Limoges before 814, *ibid.* p. 251. Much of the biographical information for Louis' early years came from the king's own *coaevus et connutritus*, Adhemar; while the anonymous biographer was himself a *palatinus*, *Anonymi Vita* p. 260. For members of the *scriptorium* of Pippin I and II see LEVILLAIN's edition of their *acta* (see n. 21) p. XL–XLVIII; probably the poet Ermold himself formed one of Pippin I's circle, although he was not termed a *palatinus*, ed. FARAL (see n. 135) p. VI–X. On the *nutriti* of the royal palace in general, RICÉ (see n. 19) p. 162.

145 The *ministr(os) tutelae congru(os) puerili* whom Charles the Great appointed for his son are named by the Anonymous, *ibid.* p. 264, 270 (and for Gericus, Louis' chief falconer, *ibid.* p. 278); cf. WOLFF (see n. 23) p. 293; and von SIMSON p. 240–41. The Bego mentioned by Ermold is referred to by von SIMSON, *ibid.* 1, p. 76–77 and FICHTENAU (see n. 69) p. 116. Secular *ministri* of Pippin I are less well-known, but this king's *comes palatii* was called John, LEVILLAIN no. XII. RICÉ, p. 162, n. 9 cites a passage in which Notker of St-Gall refers to the royal *milites* with their own *servitores* having *habitacula* at the royal palace together with the *proceres*.

146 Ermold (see n. 135) p. 163–167, lines 2126–2167: the majority of the subjects were taken from Orosius's history, although the exploits of Charles Martel, Pippin the Short and Charles the Great were allegedly also commemorated.

147 The excavation of La Motte de la Chapelle carried out under the direction of Michel de BOÛARD provided »aucun vestige visible« of the Carolingian palace of Doué, although a fascinating hall of a somewhat later date emerged (see n. 131) p. 9 and 50–55 especially.

148 The passage, which needs to be cited in full, recounts how Charles the Great – *rex pater* – suspected that all was not well in his son's kingdom of Aquitaine: *Magnopere enim curabat rex pater, ne regem filium aut nutrimenta honesta laterent, aut externa inhaerescencia in aliquo debonestarent. Qui cum primo*

was to arrange a programme which would allow sufficient stocks to be accumulated at each of the *villae* chosen for the regular fulfilment of the *regium servitium*: the system of rotation which was devised implies that the four named palaces – Doué, Chasseneuil, Angeac and Ébreuil – must have been capable of providing hospitality for a large train of courtiers, since otherwise it is unimaginable that three years' interval would have had to elapse between each royal visit¹⁴⁹. It is possible that the »Astronomer« exaggerates the direct contribution made by Louis to the working-out of this plan; but this passage is still one of capital importance, both for the history of the fiscal lands in Aquitaine, and for the understanding of the attitudes of an early medieval ruler towards his problems of »Gastungspolitik«, or his landed resources. In particular, it shows that a man of clerical status and education like Louis's biographer was well aware of the importance which kings needed to attach to the down-to-earth business of estate management; certainly there is no suggestion that such concerns were considered in any way as being derogatory to the royal office¹⁵⁰. Moreover, in the same passage an exceptionally interesting connection is made between a king's »lordship« and the control exercised over the estates set aside for his own use, because the »Astronomer« asserts categorically that, unless a king disposed of sufficient landed resources to maintain him in the state expected by his contemporaries, he would remain »lord only in name«¹⁵¹.

A document drawn up at about the same time as the incident described by the »Astronomer« elaborates in great detail on almost every aspect of the economy and administration of a great estate at the end of the eighth century; for the *Capitulare de villis* (the most famous of all the sets of instructions issued during the Carolingian régime to deal with the affairs of a great estate) provides a vivid picture of all the resources which a Carolingian ruler might expect to see exploited for his benefit when a villa was set aside *ad opus nostrum serviendi*. Even though all the instructions

vere a patre dimitteretur, interrogatus ab eo est, cur rex cum foret, tantae tenuitatis esset in re familiari, ut nec benedictionem quidem nisi ex postulato sibi offerre posset; didicitque ab illo, quia privatis studens quisque primorum, negligens autem publicorum, perversa vice, dum publica vertuntur in privata, nomine tenus dominus, factus sit pene omnium indigus. Volens autem huic obviare necessitati, sed cavens ne filii dilectio apud optimates aliquam pateretur iacturam, si illis aliquid per prudentiam demeret quod per inscientiam contulerat, misit illi missos suos, Willebertum scilicet Rotomagae postea urbis archiepiscopum, et Richardum comitem villarum suarum provisorem, praecipiens ut villae quae eatenus usui servierant regio, obsequio restituerentur publico; quod et factum est. Anonymi Vita, ibid. p. 269. The incident is not dated, but is normally attributed by historians to the years 794–795 when Louis would have been about sixteen, WOLFF (see n. 23) p. 294 n. 105.

149 Ibid.: *Quibus receptis, rex et prudentiae suae monstravit continuo documentum, et misericordiae quae sibi genuina probatur, patefecit affectum. Nam ordinavit qualiter in quatuor locis hiberna transigeret ut tribus annis exactis, quarto demum anno hiematurum se quisque eorum susciperet locus, Theotvadum scilicet palatium, Cassinogilum, Andiacum et Eurogilum. Quae loca, quando quartum redigebatur ad annum, sufficientem regio servitio exhibebant expensam. Quibus prudentissime ordinatis, inhibuit a plebeis ulterius annonas militares, quas vulgo foderum vocant, dari.*

150 WOLFF *ibid.*, drew attention to the fact that his biographer thought that Louis was personally responsible for the re-organisation of the royal itinerary in Aquitaine; but DHONDT (see n. 2) p. 13–14, ignored this reference and criticised Louis for »sa négligence et ses largesses inconsidérées«, which reduced royal demesne in the region »à néant« – a policy which Louis was supposed to revive »au regard du fisc de tout l'Empire« after 814.

151 Above n. 148. The whole of this passage is of the highest importance for an understanding of both »lordship« and »kingship« under the Carolingians.

included in this capitulary may not refer specifically to the kingdom of Aquitaine under Louis the Pious (as some scholars have supposed they did)¹⁵²; nevertheless, the regulations laid down in the *Capitulare de villis* suggest very similar attitudes to those displayed by the anonymous biographer of Louis the Pious in the passage describing the re-organisation of the royal *villae* south of the Loire. Both these sources, for instance, indicate that from the landlord's point of view the main difficulty in running a rural estate during these years must have revolved around the problem of how to build up an agricultural surplus which would allow the same *villa* to act both as a centre of production and of consumption¹⁵³. This problem is of course approached in a rather different fashion in sources whose purpose was in other ways completely different: the »Astronomer« was almost entirely concerned with the fact that it might take three years to build up large enough supplies to provision the court of the *rex Aquitanorum*¹⁵⁴, whereas the author of this capitulary goes into the minutest detail on many aspects of estate management. The clauses of the *Capitulare de villis* deal with the arrangements to be made in the management of stock (the separation of animals for breeding or butchery)¹⁵⁵; the organisation of a stud¹⁵⁶; the disposal of a farm's perishable produce¹⁵⁷; but above all with the dilemma of how to ensure adequate supplies of grain to satisfy both the immediate demand for bread and the need for seed for the next season's sowing¹⁵⁸. It seems likely that it was practical problems such as

152 For the most accessible edition of the *Capitulare de villis*, above n. 15. A translation into French of the complete document is to be found in TESSIER, *Charlemagne*, Paris 1967 (*Le mémorial des siècles, Les hommes*) p. 313–27. The Aquitanian provenance and unity of this Capitulary were argued with vigour by Alfons DOPSCH, *Die Wirtschaftsentwicklung der Karolingerzeit – vornehmlich in Deutschland*, 2 vol., Weimar 1921, 1, p. 28–73; and IDEM, *Social and Economic Foundations of European Civilization* (transl. M. BEARD and N. MARSHALL), London 1937, p. 28; for a bibliographical review of the historical literature, Theodor MAYER, *Das Capitulare De Villis*, in: *Zs. der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte, Germ. Abt.* 79 (1962) p. 2–20. The views of VERHEIN (see n. 14) 1, p. 363–94 and METZ (see n. 14) p. 26 are that in the light of more recent research neither date nor localisation to the southern kingdom are justified; although Bloch had already denied that the contents of the Capitulary should necessarily be regarded as »southern« in character, or exclusively appropriate to the *regnum Aquitanorum*, *L'Origine et la date du Capitulaire de villis*, in: *Revue Historique* 163 (1923) p. 44–50. GANSHOF was categorical both that this document was applicable »throughout all of the *regnum Francorum*« and that it was issued »by Charlemagne between 771 and 800, although probably a little before 800« (see n. 15) p. 35 and n. 259; cf. LATOUCHE (see n. 79) p. 180–181. On the other hand, neither HALPHEN (see n. 17) p. 181–182, nor to a lesser extent TESSIER p. 70–72, seems wholly convinced that it is possible to attribute this capitulary to Charlemagne »avec une certitude absolue«. MAYER argued against the unity of this famous capitulary, and postulated a composite origin and application for the surviving exemplar, *ibid.* p. 23–31 (with date of 794 for the re-organisation of estates in Aquitaine – p. 23).

153 »La faiblesse de la production et la rareté« as »les données essentielles de la vie économique du haut moyen âge« have been stressed by DOEHAERD (see n. 79) p. 66; the extraordinarily low yields from the arable by DUBY (*ibid.*) p. 84.

154 See n. 149 above.

155 *Capit. de villis*, c. 23, 35, 62 (these clauses also show that allowance needed to be made for animals to plough and cart), *Capitularia* (see n. 15) p. 85–6, 89–9.

156 *Capit. de villis*, c. 13–15, *ibid.* p. 84.

157 *Capit. de villis*, c. 34–35, 39, 44, 65, (*ibid.*) p. 85–87, 89.

158 *Capit. de villis*, c. 32–33, 51, (*ibid.*) p. 86, 88; cf. the care with which the grain for sowing (or already sown) was noted in the surveys known as the *Brevium exempla*, *Capitularia* (*ibid.*) 1, p. 250–58; cf. DUBY (see n. 79) p. 80–87, 280–281 (translation of the survey of the royal fisc of Anappes).

these (although they are not directly mentioned in the »Astronomer's« biography of Louis the Pious) which do much to explain the three-year interval established by that king or his advisers between the journeys which the court should pay to the same *villa*. Commentators on the *Capitulare de villis* have occasionally been struck by the apparent incongruity of some of its clauses compared with those which show a more »serious« attitude to the business of agricultural production¹⁵⁹, but such a distinction may in its own way betray a somewhat anachronistic attitude towards the character of kingship in the late eighth and ninth centuries; and historians seem recently to have adopted a more pragmatic approach to the economic problems of the Carolingians¹⁶⁰. But, even though this capitulary can do no more than indicate some of the details which the »Astronomer« might have mentioned if these had been considered appropriate to a royal and imperial biography in the early ninth century, as a documentary source this still seems sufficiently close to the attitudes displayed by the »Astronomer« to demonstrate that the chief aim of those who provided for the royal »service« in Aquitaine was the same as elsewhere in the territories ruled by the Carolingians. As long as that was the case, the main concern of the king and his officials must have been to ensure that the *villae regiae* were fully exploited for the king's benefit¹⁶¹. Such an attitude scarcely seems compatible with the judgement by historians that successive Carolingian rulers did not comprehend the value of their *villae* as economic assets, or with the general impression that they would have deliberately embarked upon a ruinous course of alienation of the most valuable of their *villae regiae* – those set aside for their own use and for the use of their successors.

To return to the »dissolution of the fisc« in Aquitaine. In order to grasp the dimension of this problem it has become apparent that, in methodological terms, historians need to extend their investigations so as to include a discussion of the fate of the royal lands reserved *servitio regis*, wherever these lands do not appear in the lists of *villae* abandoned by the Carolingians through the medium of a royal diploma. It seems reasonable to suppose that the palaces and *villae regiae* where Louis the Pious and Pippin I once resided did in fact constitute the most important and productive parts of their fisc; therefore it seems also to follow that the eventual destiny of these places may be even more important for an understanding of the decline of Carolingian royal power than a survey of those places which were abandoned, such as is contained in the first part of this paper. In any case it is certainly necessary to ask the question whether the royal diplomas surveyed earlier do include these *palatia* and *villae* among the lands

159 The descent »aux détails les plus infimes« struck TESSIER (see n. 152) p. 70 and BLOCH (see n. 152) p. 52–54. It has also been considered that some of the material (e. g. the list of botanical species) was based on antique models, METZ (see n. 14) p. 78; but cf. MAYER (see n. 152) p. 18–19, 31.

160 As is demonstrated by the care with which Doehaerd considers the economic setting of »la grande propriété« during this period without attempting to force her findings into an ideological framework; the research of BRÜHL, too (see n. 6) has been concentrated of the actual use to which the Carolingians and their successors put their rural estates. The distinction made by WERNER (see n. 28) p. 193 between »lieux de passage« and »lieux de séjour« is also of significance.

161 See the conclusions of MAYER p. 31. METZ p. 17 comments on the rôle of Charles the Great's *villarum regiarum provisor* (for the reference above n. 148), the importance of whose office is underlined by the fact that this was held by a man of comital status. Cf. also n. 148–150 above.

abandoned by successive rulers¹⁶². Unfortunately, as far as Aquitaine is concerned, the majority of places where Louis and Pippin chose to live when they were not engaged on military expeditions or in visits outside their kingdom often simply disappear from view; it is rarely possible to trace their history continuously after the years when royal authority was exercised from the lands north of the River Loire. Indeed, one royal diploma alone provides any information suggesting that a Carolingian ruler was prepared to alienate a unit of the fisc which had been reserved for the king's use within the *regnum Aquitanorum*: this relates to the one-time palace of Doué, to the very north of the kingdom¹⁶³.

The case of Doué is interesting, but also difficult to interpret in a historical context. What can be asserted is that quite early in his reign in 847 Charles the Bald issued a diploma in favour of the monks of St-Philibert, endowing them with lands which would enable them to retreat from their establishments on the island of Noirmoutier and at Grandlieu near the coast because those places had become too dangerous because of the increasing frequency of Norman attacks¹⁶⁴. Included among these lands was a place described as *Doadum... in pago Andegavensi*. In spite of certain difficulties associated with the identification of this site, there can be little doubt that the traditional identification with Doué-la-Fontaine is correct¹⁶⁵, so that it seems as though Dhondt's hypothesis that the royal diplomas provide the key to the dispersal of the fisc may in fact be substantiated – even if this example is a slightly awkward one for the present thesis, as Doué appears no longer to have been included within the boundaries of Aquitaine by the mid-ninth century¹⁶⁶. However, the case of Doué is awkward in more ways than one because the diploma in question also reveals that, when the document was drafted, in 847, Doué in fact formed part of a benefice held by Charles the Bald's vassal, Aimeri¹⁶⁷. As with the examples of Tizay and Chameyrac considered earlier, it seems that the evidence of this royal diploma has a double significance which by no means wholly confirms the assumptions made by Dhondt

162 DHONDT (see n. 3) p. 29 »même pour obtenir l'appui de l'église le roi doit faire abandon de ses domaines«, p. 74–75, 255–256.

163 See above n. 124.

164 TESSIER (see n. 37) vol. 1, no. 91 (p. 246) – the donation was made *ob infestationem crudelium Normannorum...*

165 TESSIER (and see the indices to vol. 3 of his edition); POUPARDIN (see n. 44) p. 101, 110; LEVILLAIN (see n. 21) p. CLXIII, CLXXI–V.

166 This place had certainly been regarded as being sited *in Aquitania* at the time of the Carolingian conquest (see above n. 124), but it lay on the northern frontier of the *pagus Pictavus* and remained within the diocese of Poitiers, even if there is doubt over whether in secular terms it was regarded as forming part of Anjou, LEVILLAIN; Célestin PORT, *Dictionnaire historique, géographique et biographique de Maine-et-Loire*, 3 vol., Angers 1874–78, 2, p. 549. De BOUARD (see n. 131) p. 103 has argued, however, that the place given by Charles the Bald to his vassal »pouvait fort bien être formé de terres situées à quelque distance du palais, vers le nord, au voisinage du site de l'actuelle agglomération principale de Doué-la-Fontaine« and that the site of the *villa*-palace remained in the hands of members of the Carolingian house. Nevertheless, subsequently the monks of St-Philibert were apparently conscious that they did not obtain possession of the place fortified by the counts of Anjou and Blois (which is also considered to have been on the site of the Carolingian palace) so that it seems probable to me that Aimeri's benefice had included the former Carolingian royal site, *ibid.* p. 104–10.

167 TESSIER, *ibid.*: *placuit magnificentie nostre... res... concedere, hoc est beneficium Aimerici vasalli nostri...*

about the part played by the royal diplomas in determining the fate of the Carolingians' »landed capital«. While it is certainly true that this document shows that Charles the Bald had no compunction in abandoning one of his father's most favoured palace sites, it also provides a reminder of the limitations of these diplomas for historians attempting to trace the destiny of all those lands known to have formed part of the fisc during the first half of the ninth century. For there is of course no diploma recording the first stage of Charles the Bald's alienation of Doué – its grant as a *beneficium* to the vassal Aimeri – although as has been stressed above it seems probable that both in economic and political terms his first stage was as important as the eventual alienation to the monks of St-Philibert. Nevertheless, as the sole recorded example from the *regnum Aquitanorum* of a former royal residence being abandoned by a member of the dynasty which created that kingdom, the fate of Doué needs to be taken seriously. In particular it is worth asking to what extent the known history of Doué, as a royal palace, is of relevance to the fate of the other sites within the region where the Carolingian rulers once resided.

The position of the *villa*-palace of Chasseneuil near Poitiers raises problems of a rather different type from those connected with Doué. Chasseneuil does re-appear in documentary sources, but only after nearly two centuries of total obscurity; and there are no direct references to its fate in the later Carolingian period. However, the terms of an eleventh century private charter do allow the historian to speculate about its destiny in the centuries intervening between Pippin I's death and its reappearance, because, at some time (probably in the first decades of the eleventh century) Chasseneuil was held by Duke William of Aquitaine, the descendant of one of the »territorial princes« whose rise to power is the main topic of Dhondt's book. In fact, Duke William's possession of this *villam quae Cassanolium dicitur* is known from the transcript of an act by which he gave the villa (described as his *alodium*) to his friend the Count of Angoulême¹⁶⁸; so, although the history of Chasseneuil is extremely obscure between the 830's and about 1028, it does nevertheless seem possible to attach considerable significance to the fact that when this charter was drafted Duke William described the *villa* as being part of his »alod«. By this date the term normally tended to mean, not only that the holder regarded allodial land as being free from the exactions of a lord, but also that it was land inherited from the holder's ancestors or relatives¹⁶⁹.

168 *Ego in Dei nomine Guillelmus dux Aquitaniae, concedo de alodio meo Guillelmo comiti Engolismensis civitatis, dilecto meo villam quae dicitur Cassanolium...*, ed. A. DEBORD, Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Saint-Amant-de-Boixe, Poitiers 1982 (Société Archéologique et Historique de la Charente) no. 118 and 323, dated 1087–1120. (I should like to thank Dr. Rowan Watson for drawing my attention to the recent publication of this extremely interesting cartulary.) Debord expresses some doubt over the dating of this charter, which seems to fit more appropriately into the early part of the eleventh century when the relations between the Duke and Count were exceptionally good, as was stressed by Adémar de Chabannes, *Chronique*, ed. Jules CHAVANON, Paris 1897 (Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire) p. 192; and R. WATSON has in fact attributed a date of c. 995–1028 to the Duke's donation (unpublished Ph. D. thesis of the University of East Anglia, p. 251 – catalogue of the documents of the counts of Angoulême, no. 32). However the church of St-Clement *quae est sita super ripam fluvii Clennis in villa quae dicitur Cassanolium* was not given to the monks of St-Amant-de-Boixe until 1099 (by the Bishop of Poitiers in whose diocese it lay), DEBORD no. 119.

169 The latter meaning had originally been the dominant one in the Frankish period; but the term had then been used in a wider sense because of the difficulty of finding a word which would convey, »la vraie

Therefore, even if this hypothesis may seem to be based upon tenuous and circumstantial evidence, it may still be argued that, as Chasseneuil had been for a number of generations in the hands of a family whose ancestor was the Count Ramnulfus of Poitiers (a faithful supporter of Charles the Bald), it was probably acquired from the Carolingian dynasty¹⁷⁰. But, on the other hand, it would seem to be unwise to go one step further and to assert categorically that, like the vassal Aimeri, Count Ramnulfus in the ninth century must have received Chasseneuil as a benefice from his royal master, for any investigation into the loss of the fiscal lands which goes beyond the documentary sources indicates that these royal *villae* might find their way into the hands of laymen in a number of ways apart from the written donation *in proprium* or from the grant of a benefice *verbo regis*¹⁷¹. In order to grasp the nature of these possibilities it is necessary to return briefly once more to the role played by the estates of the fisc in the conduct of early Carolingian government.

Under the first Carolingian rulers of Aquitaine (it has been argued during the course of this study) the royal *villae* set aside for the king's use were intended to fulfil a role which, although it may have been primarily economic, also went far beyond the provision of supplies for king and court or a contribution to the royal revenues. Some at least of these places also acted as a focus for the king's government within the region, and regional government was bound up with the ruler's own appearances in that region¹⁷². This is not to say that either Louis before 814 or Pippin I before 838 spent all their time in Aquitaine, for the Carolingian rulers and their subjects throughout these years were expected to spend much of the summer campaigning in distant parts¹⁷³, and kings of this house also were obliged to pay frequent visits to the courts of the most senior member of their dynasty¹⁷⁴. Even so, the contemporary pattern of kingship did depend upon the king's presence within the region allotted for him to rule, and within that region he circulated between a number of the rural sites which the Carolingians

propriété», according to Émile CHÉNON, *Étude sur l'histoire de alleux en France*, Paris 1888, p. 1–8, 25–26.

170 On the position of Count Ramnulfus I as a supporter of Charles the Bald, AUZIAS (see n. 22) p. 149, 226; cf. MARTINDALE (see n. 29) p. 116 n. 77–79 on Charles the Bald's political intervention in the county of Poitou after 866. The acquisition of Poitevin *abbatiae* by members of this dynasty is recounted by LESNE, *Histoire de la propriété ecclésiastique en France*, vol. 2: *La propriété ecclésiastique et les droits régaliens à l'époque carolingienne*, fasc. 3, *La dispersion des droits régaliens à la fin de l'époque carolingienne*, Lille 1928, p. 30, 33, 60–61, 76–78 (The important *abbatia* of St-Hilaire de Poitiers, the lands of Nouaillé and the *abbatia* of St-Maixent in Poitou were all acquired, although not all retained).

171 Above p. 153.

172 Above pp. 158–9. The significance of the separate *regna* within the framework of the carolingian territories has been discussed by WERNER (see n. 28) p. 206–210.

173 During the reign of Charles the Great a Frankish army engaged annually in a major campaign except for the years 790 and 804, J. L. VERBRUGGEN, *L'Armée et la stratégie de Charlemagne*, in: *Karl der Große* (see n. 14) p. 420; cf. WOLFF, *ibid.* p. 277–82 for the suggestion that Charles the Great designed the Frankish aristocracy and vassals settled in Aquitaine to counter the advances of the Spanish Muslims. WERNER, *ibid.* p. 208, stresses that each of the Carolingian *regna* was in itself »une unité d'organisation militaire«.

174 MARTINDALE, *ibid.* p. 113 and notes (for Aquitaine). As WERNER has remarked, *ibid.* p. 194, n. 7, »Sous un régime carolingien en pleine vigueur, ce n'était pas le roi qui devait aller voir ses sujets, c'étaient eux qui devaient se rendre à la cour« – and the same remark may be applied to the relations between members of the royal dynasty.

seem to have preferred to the available urban ones¹⁷⁵. The significance of this pattern for the government of Aquitaine is well illustrated by the frequently cited passage of the »Astronomer's« biography of Louis the Pious with its emphasis on the need for the king to possess considerable numbers of *villae*, and its assumption that these should be carefully organised so as to provide him with enough »winter palaces« where his subjects might attend him at regular intervals, and where he could fulfil his role both as »lord« and as king¹⁷⁶.

This type of kingship could surely only be preserved as long as there was a considerable measure of internal peace, and as long as the ruler could maintain a high degree of order within the region which he governed. In Aquitaine this pattern may well have been destroyed at quite an early date in the ninth century, since here the dynastic disputes between Charles the Bald and Pippin II were exceptionally bitter and lasted for many years after the former's succession to his father in 840¹⁷⁷; and moreover the region seems also to have been especially vulnerable to the repeated attacks of the Northern pirates¹⁷⁸. Against this background of political conflict and insecurity it is scarcely surprising to find that the Carolingians' rural estates were deserted for the safety of urban residences, or even for the shelter of walled religious houses; while since the formulation of Brühl's views it must become apparent that alterations in the pattern of the ruler's itinerary within the frontiers of Aquitaine almost certainly also signalled the transformation of his »Gastungspolitik«; in its turn this must inevitably have entailed considerable differences in the way in which fiscal *villae* or other landed resources were exploited and administered¹⁷⁹. But additionally – as far as the *regnum Aquitanorum* is concerned – it needs to be stressed that both the known changes in the royal itinerary and the hypothetical transformation of the royal »Gastungspolitik« are symptomatic of far more significant changes in the pattern of government within the region. These changes have been less frequently remarked. For, although after 855 Charles the Bald reversed his policy of treating Aquitaine as if it were no more than the southern appendage to the *regnum Francorum* bequeathed him by his father, after he set up his own sons as king in this year and in the following

175 Above p. 135.

176 Twice Louis's biographer stresses that the re-arrangement of the royal itinerary was intended to provide the king with what might be called »board and lodging« for the winter season – *hiematurum/hiberna transigeret* – see passage cited above n. 149. BRÜHL (see n. 6) 1, p. 74–76 and EWIG (see n. 139) p. 57–58 refer to the importance of »winter-palaces«.

177 AUZIAS (see n. 22) p. 124–359 provides a lengthy narrative of events connected with the struggles to control Aquitaine.

178 As was also the whole Loire region; and two articles by LOT remain especially valuable for the extent of Norse attacks and their repercussions on the politics of Aquitaine, La Loire, l'Aquitaine et la Seine de 862 à 866: Robert le Fort, in: Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes 76 (1915) p. 473–510, and, Une année du règne de Charles le Chauve. Année 866, in: le Moyen Âge 15 (1902) p. 393–438. Cf. also Marcel GARAUD, Les incursions des Normands en Poitou et leurs conséquences, in: Revue Historique 180 (1937) p. 241–267.

179 BRÜHL, p. 42–43 noted the transformation of Charles the Bald's itinerary in his territories north of the Loire; for this ruler's itinerary in Aquitaine and Septimania, MARTINDALE (see n. 29) p. 114 and p. 133–134 for the diploma evidence. Between 848 and 854 Charles resided in the cities of Poitiers, Narbonne, Albi, Bourges, Angoulême and Clermont, but only one of his diplomas was dated from a rural *villa* in the region; cf. above n. 132 for the evidence of the diplomas of the *reges Aquitanorum* before 840.

decade, he did not restore to them the authority which had previously been associated with the royal title in the *regnum Aquitanorum*. In these circumstances Charles's own failure to appear during the last twenty years of his life in the kingdom which it had originally cost him so much trouble to wrest from his nephew Pippin II seems to imply far more than a series of adjustments made to the pattern of royal residence and hospitality. From the year 855 onwards the exercise of royal authority over the king's subjects in Aquitaine was divorced from the appearance of the ruler within that region, because neither Charles the »Child« nor Louis the »Stammerer« was empowered to issue documents in his own name, nor to perform the royal duties once fulfilled by Louis or Pippin I¹⁸⁰. It is essential to bear in mind all these changes when speculating on the fate of *villae regiae* in Aquitaine.

It seems possible to formulate a number of hypotheses to account for the eventual »dissolution« of the group of Carolingian fiscal lands in Aquitaine. In the first place, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that for some years the estates enumerated in the second part of this study continued to function unaffected by alterations in the royal itinerary. Agricultural produce could have been collected and sent to some central point (say to Poitiers in the case of Chasseneuil, Limoges or Angoulême for Le Palais or Angeac) even if the rural residences were not considered sufficiently secure for a king to reside in them; equally this produce could have been sold – a procedure envisaged even in the *Capitulare de villis* – and money despatched instead to some more distant place in the kingdom¹⁸¹. Both these hypotheses of course presuppose that the routines of agriculture continued regardless of damage which might be caused either by Northmen or by the passage of other marauding armies¹⁸²; it is quite probable, on the other hand, that cultivation was in fact interrupted and supplies to the king interrupted through difficulties of transport and communication. There is no proof either that the *villae regiae* in Aquitaine were not subjected to the same kind of treatment as the earliest Carolingians had meted out to the estates of Duke Waiofarius in the eighth century¹⁸³; and, if the *villae regiae* in the mid-ninth century were plundered repeatedly, as economic assets such lands would presumably soon have been reduced almost to nothing with little hope of building up stocks until the general level of violence died down. The first hypothesis presupposes that the significance of the rôle allotted to once royal palaces was considerably diminished, but that estates continued to fulfil the economic functions designed for them; in stark contrast is the possibility that an estate's resources might be entirely destroyed by the passage of a hostile army, or by the ravages of the Northmen. In the latter case land would have

180 MARTINDALE, p. 114–115.

181 *Capitulare de villis* (see n. 15) c. 28, 39, 65 – for the sale of produce judged surplus to the needs of the estate; and for instructions which envisaged the despatch of horses and material for the army *ad palatium* c. 15, 64, 68. Other instructions also seem to imply that food or perishable supplies might be sent for some distance, c. 44, 61. But the practical problems of communication and transport would surely have been crucial during years of civil conflict and unpredictable Norse attacks.

182 The terms of a diploma of Charles the Bald are extremely suggestive. In 869 this king placed special protection on *villae* held by the canons of St-Martin in the Auvergne and Berry because *saepissime a non recte volentibus invaderentur ad tamquam sub hostili militia mansiones ibidem acciperentur et nimia crudelitate... depraedarentur*, TESSIER (see n. 37) no. 319, and note the comments of his introduction, vol. 3, p. 247.

183 See above n. 120.

been scarcely worth troubling about for many years; but if an estate continued to be productive, it would still have some value, still be worth the trouble of exploitation and administration on the king's behalf.

However, in a region like Aquitaine where the ruling king was seen less and less often¹⁸⁴, the administration of rural estates and the management of royal revenues might also have escaped from royal control and, although it is possible to accept as a hypothesis Dhondt's view that all *villae regiae* were abandoned by desperate kings in search of immediate (but ultimately transient) political support, it seems equally probable that – at any rate in certain cases – the actual measures envisaged for the administration of the Carolingians' fiscal lands may provide the key to their loss. For even during the early part of the ninth century, when royal control is held to have been far stronger than it was at a later date, the capitularies open up an extraordinary world of peculation and maladministration. Two practices which were especially condemned were the removal of the annual produce of an estate and the bodily transfer of the men who cultivated it to other lands¹⁸⁵; in both cases the economic consequences for a landlord would have been serious, although if the second abuse were not remedied fairly rapidly it is not unreasonable to suppose that the land in question might have become waste, or be reduced to the »squalor of a desert«. Another class of abuse is quite specifically associated with the greatest of the king's subjects and indicates that royal officials needed to be alert to many types of duplicity: a count or other magnate might, for instance, claim untruthfully to hold a *villa regia* as a *beneficium*: more boldly if the land did quite legally form part of an individual's benefice, he might assert that it was in fact part of his alod or patrimony¹⁸⁶. Furthermore, according to a capitulary issued at Nimègue in 806, it can be seen that some men were even suspected of going to the lengths of giving land which they held in benefice to a third party *in proprietatem*; no sooner had this transaction been made than the land was bought back *in alodem*, and so the fiscal origins of the land could be obscured¹⁸⁷. The exhortation *Quod omnino cavendum est* scarcely provides an adequate remedy for collusive practices of this character and, although there is no direct evidence to show that such methods were employed by regional magnates in Aquitaine, it seems worthwhile to

184 After 854 Charles the Bald only seems to have visited Aquitaine when his authority was flouted in the bitter conflict over the appointment of a count for Bourges and its region, MARTINDALE p. 117 and notes.

185 In 806 a capitulary issued at Nimègue forbade such procedures on lands granted out in benefice, *Capitulare missorum datum Niumagae*, in: *Capitularia* (see n. 15) p. 131, c. 6–7; cf. also *ibid.* p. 265, 296–297. If supervision of *villae* not retained for the king's own use was lax, such abuses could also presumably have been committed against those lands retained for royal use.

186 On these and similar offences, Auguste DUMAS, *Quelques observations sur la grande et la petite propriété à l'époque carolingienne*, in: *Revue historique de droit français et étranger*, 4th series 5–6 (1926–7) 1, p. 262–265; cf. LESNE, (see n. 94) p. 25–26.

187 *Audivimus quod aliqui reddunt beneficium nostrum ad alios homines in proprietatem, et in ipso placito dato pretio comparant ipsas res iterum sibi in alodem: quod omnino cavendum est*, *Capitularia* p. 131. The possible scale of offences even under Charles the Great is perhaps best revealed by an extraordinary judicial document of the late eighth century from Septimania in which a Count Milo (of Narbonne) claimed to hold about forty *villae* which *senior meus Karolus michi... dedit ad beneficium*, although these actually rightfully belonged to the lands of the archbishopric of Narbonne. Milo could not produce as proof *conditiones aut recogniciones aut iudicium aut testes*, *Histoire générale de Languedoc* (see n. 46) 2 preuves col. 47–50.

draw attention to the apparent prevalence of these abuses even before the death of Charles the Great. All these offences relate to the administration of lands attached more or less directly to the fisc: they also demonstrate how lands could be abstracted from the fisc without ever being the subject of a royal diploma – perhaps even without being conveyed in benefice *verbo regis*¹⁸⁸.

A single specific example seems to throw some light – even if a trifle obliquely – on how the resources of the fisc might be diminished, and royal rights eroded by means other than those considered by Dhondt. This involves the donation of lands (which has already been mentioned in another context) made in 876 by Charles the Bald to his *fidelis* Hildebert: two *villae* were granted *in beneficiario iure* and restricted to a tenure for two lives: remarkably the royal *scriptorium* drew up a diploma to record the grant¹⁸⁹. Interesting though this diploma is in itself, it becomes of capital significance for the main theme of this study when Charles the Bald's diploma is placed alongside a later private document. This takes the history of one of the two *villae* given by Charles the Bald to Hildebert into the first decades of the tenth century; it was then given by Hildebert's son Hildegarius to the canons of the cathedral of Limoges. The most important point is that in this charter the *villa* is described as the donor's allod¹⁹⁰; but since the diploma of Charles the Bald apparently entered the cathedral archives at the same time, it would not have taken an educated man long to discover that Hildegarius's title to dispose of the land was in legal terms inadequate – if in practice this had mattered any longer in the early years of the tenth century. But in any case it seems worth remarking that in 914 Hildegarius was indulging in one of the practices condemned in Charles the Great's capitularies at the beginning of the ninth century; a century later it took only one generation to »convert« a royal benefice to the holder's »allod«. This rapid (and presumably unauthorised) conversion does not, however, seem remarkable when placed against the political background of Aquitaine in the late ninth century, when the Carolingian ruler no longer appeared in the region and local administration had ceased to be exercised on the king's behalf. Although there is no direct information to support such a hypothesis, a similar fate might at any stage have overtaken any of the royal *villae* which the Carolingians had not formally alienated; such, for instance, might have been the way in which the former palace of Chasseneuil entered the possession of the counts of Poitou.

Ultimately, in spite of all the doubts which must continue to surround the history of the »dissolution of the fisc« in the Carolingian kingdom of Aquitaine, it seems as though one of the major points to emerge from this sometimes rather tortuous enquiry is the difficulty of separating a discussion of the alienation of royal lands from the more general problems associated with the conduct of government under the Carolingians. Within the kingdom of Aquitaine, it has been argued, control over the estates set aside to support the king was almost certainly to a considerable degree related to the

188 The example of Milo's spoliation – of church rather than fiscal land admittedly – was however probably the product of the years immediately following the Carolingian conquest of the region, see above pp. 136–7.

189 Above p. 152 and n. 109.

190 ... *Alodum meum que mihi iustissime de parentibus meis obvenit itaque iuris mei*... The grant is dated May 914, ed. de LASTEYRIE (see n. 109) p. 108–111, from a transcript of the lost cartulary of St. Étienne de Limoges in which Charles the Bald's grant was also preserved.

effective exercise of royal authority in the region, as seems to be proved by the episode recounted by the »Astronomer«. In that instance in the late eighth century the position when lands were lost was remedied, both by the despatch of two qualified officials to Aquitaine, and by the subsequent organisation of a number of *villae regiae* so that these would provide economic support for Louis the Pious and act as a focus for his regional government¹⁹¹. It may also be argued that, had the administrative practices of these kings been more advanced, their descendants might not have lost control over the lands which they enjoyed in the first half of the ninth century. If there had existed those lists of *fisci* and *beneficia* which Carolingian rulers repeatedly demanded¹⁹², it would not have been possible for a regional magnate to claim untruthfully that his benefice was in fact an alod; and it would always have been possible – at least in theory – for royal officials to resume lands which had been illegally abstracted from the fisc. However, even where documents existed these did not necessarily guarantee the royal rights in the ninth century, as the case of Hildebert's benefice must remind historians. For, although unusually this grant was recorded in a royal diploma, a few years later Hildebert's son had no compunction in asserting that this was *alodum meum quem mihi iustissime de parentibus meis obvenit itaque iuris mei...* The effective exercise of royal authority in Limoges might have enabled the king to resume this (or many another) benefice: the mere existence of a document was not enough; but by the early tenth century it was too late for the effective exercise of royal power in Aquitaine. Indeed, it seems very probable that when in the 890's King Odo attempted to re-establish control over the lands set aside for the king's use in the region, he was unsuccessful¹⁹³; there are no signs that later Carolingian kings like Louis IV or Lothair were able to reside in the former rural palaces of the *reges Aquitanorum* when they crossed the River Loire¹⁹⁴.

Throughout the territories ruled by the Carolingians the imposition of royal authority and the maintenance of royal rights during a king's absence obviously depended upon a body of regional officials ranging from the greatest ecclesiastical and

191 Above p. 160.

192 Above p. 154. TESSIER (see n. 37) no. 318 has drawn attention to the command made by Charles the Bald in 869 that *breves de honoribus* should be brought to Cosne-sur-Loire by ecclesiastics, *vassalli dominici* and *comites*; and WERNER (see n. 28) p. 130, has stressed the significance of the instruction that counts should assess (*inbreviare*) the *beneficia* of the *vassalli dominici* and vice versa.

193 BRÜHL (see n. 6) p. 70, n. 268, draws on northern annals suggesting that this ruler should travel to Aquitaine *hiemandi gratia, ut Francia quae tot annis afflictata erat, aliquatenus recuperare posset*, *Annales Xantenses et Annales Vedastini*, ed. B. VON SIMSON, Hannover 1909 (MGH in usu scholarum), p. 72; but there are no royal diplomas dated from Aquitaine for the appropriate period which might confirm the annalist's suggestion that King Odo »wintered« in Aquitaine in the fashion of the early Carolingians, *Recueil des actes d'Eudes, Roi de France (888–898)*, ed. R.-H. BAUTIER, Paris 1967 (*Chartes et Diplômes*) pp. XXII–V, CLVI, 132–134.

194 When Louis IV visited Poitiers in January 942 two royal diplomas were dated from that city, *Recueil des actes de Louis IV, Roi de France (936–954)*, ed. P. LAUER, Paris 1914 (*Chartes et diplômes*) no. 18–19; but there are no other traces of royal residence in the county outside the city. But when Hugh Capet approached Poitiers with the child king Lothair in the mid-tenth century, they were not granted admission and (according to the annalist Flodoard) were eventually obliged to withdraw entirely, *Annales*, ed. Philippe LAUER, Paris 1905 (*Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire*) p. 139–41. It seems highly unlikely that either of these two kings exercised any authority over the former resources of the fisc in Aquitaine.

secular magnates to the *iudices* of the royal estates; the performance of these regional officials might at any time be corrected by the *missi dominici*, sent by the king himself (in the way that Charles the Great sent his *provisor villarum regiarum* to Aquitaine). In practice, as Werner has recently emphasized, even under the earlier Carolingian rulers this system of government and administration made almost impossible demands on the manpower available¹⁹⁵; while the weaknesses underlying Charles the Great's extraordinary military and political achievements have been frequently stressed. Lack of personnel, indifference, or downright hostility, probably often undermined royal government in a region like Aquitaine; opportunities for encroachment were considerable if the established king was a child, or if little effort were made to supervise the activities of local counts and other officials. In general the dangers can be observed in the comments made after the death of Charles the Great: it took his son Louis a long time (according to Thegan) to right the abuses and oppressions committed by his father's subordinates during the last years of the Emperor's reign¹⁹⁶. Naturally enough, administration of fiscal lands was only one of the many tasks facing royal officials within any of the Carolingian kingdoms, and the abuses mentioned by Thegan related to many areas of government; but nevertheless problems associated with the administration and loss of the *villae regiae* in Aquitaine need to be considered within the wide context of the deficiencies and limitations of the Carolingian system of government.

It has already been suggested that the political disorders of the midninth century in Aquitaine fostered conditions unfavourable to the routines of agriculture, and that even if individual *villae* remained productive it was possible that they were no longer managed for the benefit of an increasingly absentee landlord. At the same time, if it is in fact correct to suppose that in the last decade of the ninth century King Odo was unable to vindicate his »right« to take possession of the Carolingian fiscal estates in Aquitaine, it seems likely that this also reflects a total breakdown of the administrative system within the region – or perhaps what might be better described as a perversion of the aims of that administrative system. If Dhondt's assumption – that many royal estates were directly alienated by successive rulers – is not accepted then it must follow that the process occurred in a more devious and indirect fashion. In particular, the loss of royal estates within the region south of the River Loire may very well be associated with the changes which took place in the nature of royal government in the region and which have already been mentioned; for it is difficult to escape coming to the conclusion that control over the *villae regiae* in the *regnum Aquitanorum* depended upon the royal presence. Once the ruler ceased to visit his estates, or his absences from an area were prolonged (like those of Charles the Bald from Aquitaine), it seems likely that the »integrity« of these estates could be threatened without fear of correction; whereas if a king circulated at regular intervals through his lands *hiemandi gratia* offences would not have been committed with impunity. And even if provisions were made for the administration of these lands during the ruler's absences their »integrity« can scarcely have been safeguarded by a system which had come to allow the local

195 WERNER (see n. 28) p. 191–2 and throughout.

196 Thegan (see n. 5) p. 224; cf. WERNER, p. 238.

count to have charge of the *villae regiae*¹⁹⁷. This does not necessarily mean that every local official was simply waiting to usurp the king's rights and resources, although many fraudulent acts were undoubtedly deliberately committed; it is possible to imagine also that the royal resources were more gradually eroded, and that the Carolingians' control was undermined in a fashion more varied and less dramatic than was assumed by Dhondt. Certainly it seems unlikely that any count or local official would have taken much care with the upkeep or repair of a »splendid palace« which was no longer visited¹⁹⁸; while food supplies would not have been of much use to a landlord who was no longer expected. And, although it is important not to oversimplify these connections, it is perhaps not too fanciful to assert that, in the general setting of early mediaeval kingship, a ruler's withdrawal from a palace or *domus* which had once been the centre and focus of his government signifies more than a change in the royal itinerary, or in his policy of »Gastungspolitik«. It may even come to symbolise the withdrawal of effective royal government.

To conclude. An investigation into the alienation of royal lands in Carolingian Aquitaine has proved to be more complicated than was originally anticipated, and has involved reaching a number of conclusions which are critical of some current historical idées reçues on this important topic.

1. For instance, it has been widely held that an analysis of the Carolingian diplomas – the most solemn of royal documents – will allow historians both to calculate the numbers of royal lands alienated, and to formulate a number of generalisations on the most significant changes taking place in Carolingian fiscal policy. On the basis of such analysis a contrast has been drawn between the parsimonious attitude displayed by Charles the Great towards his fisc and his successors' failure to husband these resources. A careful survey of diplomas surviving for the *regnum Aquitanorum* has to some extent confirmed the conclusions reached by Dhondt on this matter: grants of land did increase between the reign of Charles the Great and the death of his grandson Charles the Bald: furthermore, it can be shown that the size of individual donations tended also to rise during the same period. But, on the other hand, these royal diplomas do not confirm the view that Louis the Pious was especially generous with the *villae regiae* in Aquitaine, or the view that as a class the great aristocracy were the most important recipients of royal lands. The royal diplomas do not provide support for the assertion that the Carolingian vassals »took over everything« and were thus responsible for the decline of royal authority throughout the territories governed by this dynasty¹⁹⁹.

197 In Provence there are specific examples of land *ex fisco regali* becoming attached *ad ius comitis*, POUPARDIN, *Le royaume de Provence sous les Carolingians (855–933)*, Paris 1901, p. 372 onwards; but there is no similar reference for Aquitaine. According to Lesne, the local count was allowed to oversee the running of the *villae regiae* before the death of Charles the Great (see n. 170), fasc. 2 (II), *Le droit du roi sur les églises et les biens d'église (VII^e–X^e s.)* p. 71 n. 1–3; DUMAS (see n. 186) p. 271; cf. also WERNER (see n. 28) p. 197, 229.

198 Even while it was still in constant use the royal palace at Aachen fell into decay, according to the »Astronomer«, *Anonymi vita* (see n. 5) p. 296.

199 The comment made by Thegan (see n. 5) p. 228, that Louis was *in tantum largus* that he made over to his *fideles* royal *villae quae erant patris sui et avi et tritavi* is not confirmed by the documentary

2. In this paper it has been argued that, although a number of quite important conclusions about the alienation of fiscal lands in Aquitaine may be based upon a study of the royal diplomas, by their very nature these documents will only provide historians with information of a partial and limited kind. Because it was apparently the normal rule that, during the years under consideration, a document was only drafted when a king was prevailed upon to make a grant of land *in proprietate*, it follows that historians have to resign themselves to the fact that it is impossible to estimate exactly what proportions of the fiscal reserves were abandoned as benefices, theoretically held on a conditional form of tenure. Paradoxically, some benefices are alluded to in the texts of the Carolingians' diplomas, but generally these allusions occur only when the land so held was to be separated forever from the fiscal reserves. It has to be acknowledged that many lands were held from the ruler by means of an oral command as effective as a written *praeceptum* – after all, as the Carolingian clergy knew well, a great weight of authority lay behind the *verbum regis*. Consequently, it may still be possible to assert that royal lands were despoiled by the great laity, as Dhondt and many other historians have supposed; but it is impossible to gain any idea of the scale of spoliation from the contemporary royal diplomas, and misleading to suppose that these documents as a class would ever yield the proofs for such activity.

3. In order to account for the »material ruin« of the Carolingian kings in Aquitaine it is necessary to go outside the confines of a small group of »official« documents and to consider the part played by the whole body of fiscal lands in the general setting of the Carolingians' government of the region – and it seems probable that this observation applies also to other territories ruled by members of this dynasty. Losses to the fisc might take place in a wide variety of ways, many of which seem to have been the consequence of royal weakness rather than their cause. During the ninth century in particular it became difficult to enforce a distinction between lands held *in beneficiario iure* and those which had been legally granted away »perennially«; while at every stage the administration of lands reserved for the king's own use would provide opportunities for encroachments whose perpetrators were extremely unlikely to provide a record of their activities. Altogether the failure of the Carolingians in this region to control their fiscal lands was the outcome of a process far more complicated than has sometimes been supposed. Because the most damaging inroads on the fisc during the course of the ninth century were probably never recorded in writing, it is impossible to estimate exactly what these were; however both royal prodigality and feudal rapacity seem over-simple as explanations of the process.

4. The methods applied by Dhondt to the problem of tracing the alienation of royal lands have been frequently criticised during the course of this study, but there can be no doubt that he was correct in asserting that land formed the basis upon which Carolingian power rested, and in making the assumption that royal authority would decline when and where there was widespread abandonment of land. These assump-

evidence available for Aquitaine, for instance. Admittedly, this was a region where the Carolingians had only been established through conquest; but it seems possible that it would be worthwhile also further to investigate the alienation of the *villae regiae* outside Aquitaine also, rather than simply to take Thegan's statement at its face value.

tions are borne out by the enquiry into the role played by the *villae regiae* in the government of the *reges Aquitanorum*.

Indeed, it may be claimed that these *villae regiae* had an even greater significance than used to be attributed to them, since their central importance in the conduct of early mediaeval government and administration has been brought out in recent historical studies. Modern historians would not express their views in the same terms as a ninth century writer, but in many ways they seem to echo the attitudes of Louis the Pious's anonymous biographer. The »Astronomer« was not blind to the economic importance of the *villae regiae* to a king, and he apparently understood the administrative problems connected with these estates; but he also held that land was associated with lordship, and seems to have thought that a king who was in command of his territories should reside on his estates, which would provide a focus for his subjects. Every effort also needed to be made to ensure that a ruler had enough lands to maintain a »royal« and »lordly« estate, and a king who lost control of his lands became »lord only in name«²⁰⁰. That was eventually the Carolingians' fate in the kingdom of Aquitaine which had been created in the late eighth century by Charles the Great.

200 ... *nomine tenus dominus, factus sit pene omnium indigus* (see n. 148 above).

TABLE

The purpose of this table (see p. 139 above) has determined the information included. It would have been impossible to compile without the great editions of Carolingian diplomas already referred to – and without the long tradition among French and German scholars of critical studies in diplomatic. But this catalogue is concerned only to extract and summarise the following information which seemed essential to an appreciation of the case being presented.

1 Date (given in modern form) and place of issue or, where a diploma was undated, the presumed date established by the editor. Where an original document survives this is indicated.

2 The identity of the recipient of the diploma i. e. *fidelis*, religious institution etc.

3 A brief notice of (I) the nature of the grant as recorded in the diploma – i. e. *villa*, *aprisio*, *mansi* etc. together with any details of especial interest about its tenorial condition or economic assets – e. g. if already held in benefice, or provided with *mancipia* or other tenants. (II) The location is noted with, wherever possible, the modern identification. For these place-names I have relied heavily on the excellent indices of the relevant editions. (It is to be hoped that detailed regional studies will eventually enable historians further to locate places at present unidentified.)

4 It has, however, been necessary to add some notes both (I) to draw attention to problems of authenticity, or to doubts which are relevant to the topic of this paper (e. g. the suspicion that the ruler was in possession of secularised church land) and (II) to indicate the grounds on which individual documents have been rejected as suspect or fabricated.

NB. It was originally intended to provide some indication of whether these grants were noted in the works of Westfall Thompson or in Dhondt's appendix; but the bases of comparison were so dissimilar that this idea was rejected. For instance, over sixty of the places named in the table below do not figure at all in Westfall Thompson's lists; while Dhondt was not concerned to include grants of fiscal land in Aquitaine. It, therefore, seemed pointless to do more than draw attention to these omissions.

Table to illustrate Royal Land-grants in Aquitania and Septimania

	Date	Beneficiary	Nature of Grant
Charles »the Great«			
1	794, 20 July Palace of Frankfurt	Abbot Anianus and the monastery of Caunes	One <i>villa</i> , <i>cum omnibus appendiciis suis</i> ¹
2	(?795), March Palace of Aachen	John, <i>fidelis noster</i>	(i) <i>villare eremum ad la- borandum</i> (ii) what his men occupy and have culti- vated <i>de heremo</i>
3	799, July Palace of Aachen	Abbot Benedict and the monastery of Aniane	<i>loca aliqua erema infra fis- cum nostrum</i>
*4	(?799), June	Abbot Nimifred and his monks	<i>infra aeremum</i> ²
Louis »the Pious«			
5	814, 11 July Aachen	the monastery of St. Seurin near Bordeaux	one <i>villa</i> , <i>cum omnibus ap- penditiis suis</i>
6	815, 1 Jan Palace of Aachen	John, <i>fidelis noster</i>	<i>aprisio</i>
7	819, 8 April	Abbot Medraldus and the monks of Conques	eleven churches and land <i>de rebus nostris</i> ⁴
8	826, 1 August Palace of Quierzy ⁵	Abbot Durandus and his monks	<i>villa...in proprio...libera- litate munificentiae nostrae</i>

1 The form of this diploma (by which King Charles also took this monastery under his protection) makes it difficult to tell exactly what had been the condition of the *villa Caonas* before this document was drawn up. The king asserts: ... *concessimus ei villa (!) Caonas sicuti Milo ad suum monasterium per suas litteras delegavit*, *ibid.* no. 178 (p. 240); while in a lawsuit of 791 it was alleged that Count Milo had destroyed the boundaries of this place *quam ab antiquo dicebatur Bufintis*. It was then conceded by the king to the religious house, ed. de VIC and VAISSÈTE, *Histoire générale de Languedoc* (see n. 46) vol. 2, *preuves* col. 57–58. It seems a reasonable assumption that the *villa* had previously been fiscal, although it is unlikely that the Carolingian rulers obtained much economic benefit from it, if it had been in the hands of Count Milo.

from the late eighth century to the death of Charles the Bald

Location	Reference
<i>villa Caonas</i> (Caunes, dép. Aude, arr. Carcassonne)	Ed. MÜHLBACHER, <i>Die Urkunden Pip-pins, Karlmanns und Karls des Großen</i> (see n. 36), no. 178
(i) <i>in pago Narbonense... Fontes</i> (ii) <i>in villa Fonteion-cosa</i> (i) Fontcouverte, dép. Aude, arr. Narbonne; (ii) Fontjonconse, dép. Aude, arr. Narbonne).	Ibid. no. 179
<i>nuncupante Iuviniacum-antiquo vero vocabulo voca-tur Fonte Agricolae, nunc. autem Nova Cella</i> (Juvignac, dép. Hérault, arr. Montpellier)	Ibid. no. 188
<i>in territorio Narbonense, super fluvium Orobionem in loco nuncupante Novalitio</i> (La Grasse, dép. Aude, arr. Carcassonne)	Ibid. no. 189 = *Facsimile, in: <i>Diplomata Karolinorum</i> (see n. 36) vol. I, plate XXXII (Arch. Dép. de l'Aude H 11)
<i>Miscaria in pago, Santonico super fluvium Garumnam</i> (Meschers, dép. Charente-Maritime, arr. Saintes)	Ed. M. BOUQUET and others, <i>Recueil des historiens de la Gaule et de la France</i> , Paris 1749, vol. 6, p. 458–459
<i>in pago Narbonense villare Fontes & villari Cellocar-boniles... & in villa Fontejoncasa</i> ³ . (Cf. Table no. 2)	Ed. de VIC and VAISSÈTE, <i>Histoire générale de Languedoc</i> (see n. 46), 2 preuves col. 100–101
... <i>cum curte de Gamaleria</i> (? Gamèle, dép. Aveyron)	Ed. Gustave DESJARDINS, <i>Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Conques en Rouergue</i> , Paris 1879 (Documents historiques publiés par la Société de l'École des Chartes) no. 580
<i>in Septimania, in pago Narbonensi... Vernodubrus</i> (St-Chinian, dép. Hérault, arr. St-Pons)	Ed. de VIC and VAISSÈTE (see n. 46) col. 160–62

2 The text implies that the diploma in this case was retrospective for buildings had been erected *novo opere*, and vineyards and fields were already under cultivation, *ibid.* p. 254.

3 In 834 the possession of these *villae* gave rise to a lawsuit, de VIC and VAISSÈTE, *ibid.* col. 185–186. According to TESSIER, *Recueil des actes de Charles II le Chauve, roi de France* (see n. 36) vol. 1, p. 119–120, a number of pieces relating to these *aprisiones* had been »plus or moins altérées«, but none of them was totally rejected.

4 In spite of certain diplomatic peculiarities, this document appears to be acceptable, according to the extended discussion of LEVILLAIN, *Recueil des actes de Pépin I^{er} et de Pépin II, rois d'Aquitaine* (814–48), (see n. 21) p. 133–147, on the foundation and endowments of the monastery of Conques.

5 Lothair is associated with his father as co-Emperor.

	Date	Beneficiary	Nature of Grant
*9	829, 14 October Palace of Tribur	<i>fideli nostro Sunicfredo</i> ⁶	<i>villam iuris nostri cum omni integritate sua... ad proprium</i>
*10	832, 4 October <i>Juveniaco palacio regio</i> ⁷	<i>cuidam fideli vassallo nostro Adalberto</i>	<i>villam iuris nostri</i>
11	833, 29 December Palace of Aachen	<i>Wimar vassallus noster</i> and his brother Rado	one villa... <i>proprietario iure... in hereditate perennis... temporibus</i> ⁸
12	839, 27 November Poitiers	the monastery of St-Philibert and Abbot Hilbod	one villa... <i>iuris nostri cum omnibus ad se pertinentibus vel aspicientibus et cum mancipiis utriusque sexus vel aetatis</i>
Emperor Lothair			
13	834, 18 December » <i>Gardina palatio regio</i> «	<i>Wimar vassallus noster</i> his brother Radoni	one villa... <i>proprietario iure</i>
Pippin I Rex Aquitanorum			
14	825, 22 December » <i>Ad illa Warda</i> «, near Angeac	the monastery of St-Maixent and Abbot Reinardus	one villa <i>de nostro iure</i> ⁹ (held in benefice by Count Bernard)... <i>cum omnibus rebus et hominibus</i>
15	828, 6 June Monastery of St-Martial	Abbot Wilafredus and the monastery of Montolieu	two villae <i>cum omni integritate</i>
*16	829, 5 March Palace of Aachen	Abbot Benedict of the monastery of St. Peter at Fossés	(I) one <i>beneficium</i> in a villa and (II) the <i>quartam partem</i> of another, formerly held by Carissimus. (V sol. <i>in censu</i> to be paid to King)
17	833, 6 October Pierrefitte	Abbot Aymo and the monastery of Manlieu	<i>res</i> in two villae

6 Charles the Great had previously endowed Sunicfred's father Borrellus, *ibid.* col. 173, with this villa, but there is no reference to show whether the earlier ruler had issued a document on that occasion.

7 The editors of the facsimile series of *Diplomata Karolorum* identify *Juveniaco* with Le Palais in the Limousin (see above pp. 176–7, although more normal ninth-century forms of this name appear to have been *Jogundiago/Joguntiaco* – see LEVILLAIN (cited in n. 4 to this Table) p. 326. However, the

Location	Reference
<i>in pago Narbonense... Fons-Cooperta</i> (Fontcouverte, Cf. Table no. 2)	Ibid. col. 173–174 = *Facsimile, in: <i>Diplomata Karolinorum</i> , II (2), pl. XLII (Arch. Dép. de l'Aude, H. 11)
<i>in pago Tolosano... Fontanas</i>	Ibid. col. 179–180 = *Facsimile, in: <i>Diplomata Karolinorum</i> , II (1), pl. XVII (Bib. Nat. ms. lat. 8837, fo. 21v)
<i>in Septimania... Vicus Sirisidum... in Valle Asperi</i> (in Valespir – otherwise unidentified)	Ibid. col. 183–4
<i>Scobrit, quae est in pago Pictavo, in vicaria Racinse</i> (Le Mont-Scobrit, dép. Loire-Maritime, arr. Paimbœuf)	Ed. BOUQUET, <i>Recueil des historiens de la Gaule et de la France</i> , vol. 6, p. 628
<i>quae vocatur Villanova... in Septimania... in Rossilione</i> (ident. as Villeneuve de la Raho, arr. Perpignan, dép. Pyrénées-Orientales)	Ed. de VIC and VAISSÈTE, <i>ibid.</i> col. 188–9
<i>Titiacus... in pago Pictavensi</i> (Tizay, dép. Deux-Sevres, con. St-Maixent)	Ed. LEVILLAIN, <i>Recueil des actes de Pépin I^{er} et de Pépin II, rois d'Aquitaine (814–48)</i> (see n. 21) no. V.
<i>villa Sigarii et villa Addarii</i> (unidentified)	Ed. LEVILLAIN, <i>ibid.</i> no. XI
(I) <i>in villa... Mediana Gorcia</i> (II) <i>de Ponpeiaci villa</i> both <i>aspicientes ad Sangeram... curtem nostram</i> (possibly Saint-Germain, dép. Lot-et-Garonne, con. Tonneins)	Ibid. no. XIII = *Facsimile, in: <i>Diplomata Karolinorum</i> , VIII pl. XVIII (Arch. Nat. K. 9, no. 3) ² .
<i>in praedicto pago i. e. Arvernico... (i) Dendaus et (ii) Buxogilo</i> (i) unident. (ii) Busséol, dép. Puy-de-Dôme, con. Vic-le-Comte	Ibid. no. XVIII

Emperor's itinerary in this year of political crisis certainly took him in the late summer to Aquitaine and to Le Palais, von SIMSON (see n. 126) vol. 2, p. 24–25.

8 ...*res quas genitor eorum per concessionem patris nostri Caroli praestantissimi imperatoris ab eremo in Septimania trahens ad villam construxit...*, *ibid.* col. 184.

9 Cf. above pp. 148–9 for a discussion of the legal and economic implications of Count Bernard's tenure of this in benefice.

	Date	Beneficiary	Nature of Grant
18	835, 1 November Palace of Doué	Abbot Viliafredus and the monastery of Montolieu	one <i>villa</i> ... <i>unacum terminis et adiacentiis suis sicut terminatum est a Godoildo misso Wilelmo comite</i>
*19	838, 23 August Forest of La Garnache	Abbot Helias and the monastery of Conques	(i) one <i>villa cum omnibus rebus et mancipiis</i> (ii) 5 <i>villae</i> and <i>mansi</i> (iii) <i>mansi</i> in other <i>villae</i>
20	(817–38)	›Spaniards‹ (<i>Spani</i>)	<i>quod ex eremo quem adpensionem vocant...</i>
21	(817–38)	Bertinus	<i>quantum habuit in... villa</i>
Pippin II Rex Aquitanorum			
22	840, 29 July	<i>fideli nostro, Rodulfum nomine</i>	<i>quasdam res iuris nostri... terras... cum omni integritate... ad proprium</i>
23	848, 11 January Bourges	<i>Rodulfus, venerabilis Bituricensis archiepiscopus</i> (also described <i>ad fideli nostro</i>)	<i>de quibusdam rebus nostrae proprietatis... ad proprium</i>
24	(845–48), 18 January Villa of Orgnac	Bishop Stodilo and the church of Limoges	(i) <i>fiscum nostrum</i> (ii) <i>villa cum omnium rerum summa plenitudine</i>
25	(838–48)	Austoricus	<i>ex munificentia domni et senioris mei serenissimi Pippini regis per cartulam</i>

10 In spite of »une légère inquiétude« over the authenticity of this diploma, Levillain eventually pronounced in its favour, see the reference at note 4 to this Table.

11 A long diploma issued for the abbey of la Grasse referred to a now lost *preceptum* endowing these *Spani*, *ibid.*

12 Pippin II's diploma for the church of Limoges (= LEVILLAIN, no. LVII) alludes to his father's lost grant; but the wording does not state categorically that this grant was associated with a written instrument.

Location	Reference
<i>Villa Magnianacus qui est situs in pago Tolosano super fluvium Fiscavum</i> (? Magnanac, dép. Haute-Garonne, con. Villemur-sur-Tran).	Ibid. no. XXIII
(i) <i>Fiscella</i> (ii) <i>Galliacus cum mancipiis</i> ... (iii) <i>Burnago, Guriago et Buliago</i> (iv) <i>Flaginiagum</i> (i) unident. (ii) & (iii) Gaillac, Bournac, Cussac, Bouillac, Flagnac – all in dép. Aveyron	Ibid. no. XXXII ¹⁰ = *Facsimile, in: <i>Diplomata Karolinorum</i> , VIII (Arch. de la Société des Lettres, Sciences et Arts de l'Avéyron)
no location given	Ibid. no. XXXIII–IV ¹¹
<i>in eodem pago... villam quae vocatur Orzil</i> (unidentified <i>villa</i> in the Limousin; cf. infra no. 24)	Ibid. no. XXXIX and LVII ¹²
(i) <i>mansum unum in orbe Lemovicense in pago Asenacense, in Telido villa</i> , (ii) <i>in Genesto et in Aviciaco villa</i> . (i) Teillet, dép. Corrèze (ii) La Géneste and unidentified <i>villa</i>	Ibid. no. L
<i>in comitatu Lemovicino, villas... Camberiacum sive Daviliolas in vicariis Navensium sive Usercensium</i> (Chameyrac, and Villières?, dép. Corrèze, con. Tulle)	Ibid. no. LVI
(i) <i>in pago Lemovicino... Oziacus</i> (ii) <i>villam... Orzil</i> . (i) Auzat, dép. Corrèze, con. Beaulieu (ii) cf. supra no. 21	Ibid. no. LVII
<i>castrum quod Cerrucium dicitur situm in pago Tolsano</i> (Levillain rejects the identification with Castelsarrasin or Castel-ferrus)	Ibid. no. LX ¹³

13 This grant, too, is known only from the later charter by which Austoricus endowed the abbey of Moissac, LEVILLAIN (see n. 4), and IDEM, *Sur deux documents carolingiens de l'abbaye de Moissac*, in: *Le Moyen Âge* 27 (1914) p. 20–35.

	Date	Beneficiary	Nature of Grant
	Charles »the Bald«		
26	842, 24 December Palace of Quierzy	<i>Miloni fideli nostri...</i>	<i>res... villares liberam et firmissimam... potestatem faciendi quicquid voluerit...</i>
27	844, 29 April Castel-ferrus (<i>Ferrucius villa</i>)	Ato and Epsarius, brothers & sisters, the <i>fili Arion</i> , & <i>Regnopolus filius Brace-ronis</i>	<i>res iure beneficiario... in hereditate</i> ¹⁴
*28	844, 30 April Castel-ferrus (<i>Ferrucius villa</i>)	<i>fidelem nostrum Hild-ricum</i>	<i>ad proprium... 1 mansum cum capellam</i>
29	844, 19 May Monastery of St. Sernin during the siege of Toulouse	<i>quidam Hispani in comitatu Biterrensi consistentes</i> (named)	<i>aprisiones</i> to be held <i>proprietario iure</i> (originally granted by Charles the Great)
30	844, 5 June Monastery of St. Sernin <i>prope Tolosa</i>	<i>vassus noster... Teodtfredus</i> (<i>quidam fidelium nostrorum regni Septimaniae</i>)	confirmation of <i>aprisio</i> , and future reclamations
31	844, 12 June Monastery of St. Sernin <i>iuxta Tolosam</i>	The church of Narbonne	one <i>villa... cum suis omnibus finibus vel terminis... liberam et firmissimam</i>
32	847, 27 May Palace of Attigny	<i>fideles nostros... Adefonsum et nepotes suos Gome-sindum et Durannum</i>	<i>aprisiones</i> of their <i>genitores</i> to be held <i>ad proprietatem</i>
33	849, 11 October City of Narbonne	<i>fideli nostri Teuefredo</i>	<i>ad proprium... what had been held per apprisionem</i>
34	849, 18 October City of Albi	<i>fidelem nostrum Stephano nomine</i>	one <i>villa</i> , two <i>villare cum omni integritate... iure proprietario</i>
35	850, 14 January City of Bourges	<i>Gauzbertus fidelis noster</i>	Church with one <i>mansum</i> , <i>ex suo proprio, quod ei in alodem dedimus</i> ¹⁶

14 TESSIER, p. 92, drew attention to the fact that the text had been »légèrement altérée par la tradition manuscrite«. The recipients of Charles the Bald's diploma showed *auctoritatem avi nostri Karoli qua continebatur qualiter eorum avis... concessisset quasdam res... in ius beneficiarium*. (That grant was also confirmed by Louis the Pious.) Neither of these earlier grants, which Tessier assumes were embodied in diplomas, has survived.

Location	Reference
(i) <i>Buziniacum, Palaerago, Cordarias, Menerbules seu Cubiziano atque Mansiones – in pago Petrepertuse</i> (ii) <i>villares Petraficta, Monedarias, Amariolas, Folietes, Librarium – in pago Fenuleto</i> , (i) Boussac, Palairac, Cardières Cozuize, Maisons in dép. de l'Aude. (ii) unidentified except for Llèbres, dép. Pyr.-Orientales	Ed. TESSIER, Recueil des actes de Charles II le Chauve, roi de France (see n. 36) no. 15
<i>in pago Agathense... (i) Castrum... de Mesoae et (ii) castrum Turrems</i> (i) Mèze, (ii) la Tourde Valernan, dép. Hérault, arr. Montpellier	Ed. TESSIER, <i>ibid.</i> no. 34
<i>in pago Menerbense in suburbio Narbonense in villa... Censeradas</i> (Cesseroas, dép. Hérault, arr. Béziers)	Ibid. no. 35 = *Facsimile, in: <i>Diplomata Karolinorum</i> , III, pl. X (Bib. Nat. ms. Lat 8837, fo. 32)
<i>villas... (i) Aspirinianus et (ii) Albinianus</i> (i) Aspiran, dép. Hérault, arr. Lodève (ii) Albinian, dép. Hérault, arr. Béziers	Ibid. no. 40
(i) <i>villa Fontes... (ii) in villa Fontejoncosa</i> (cf. Table no. 2) ¹⁵	Ibid. no. 43
<i>in comitatu Narbonense... villam... Censeradam</i> (identified as a different <i>villa</i> from that of TESSIER no. 35, <i>id.</i> iii, p. 288)	Ibid. no. 48
<i>in pago Narbonensi in locis... Liciniano, Cabimonte, et Sancta Candida</i> (Lézignan, Caumont, Sainte-Candille, dép. Aude, arr. Narbonne)	Ibid. no. 94
<i>in pago Narbonense, villare Fontes and in Fontejoncosa</i>	Ibid. no. 118
<i>in pago Narbonense, villa Rubia, villare Vitiliano et villare Ancherano</i> (Villeroige, Védillan, dép. Aude – see TESSIER <i>loc. cit.</i> and iii, p. 414)	Ibid. no. 120
<i>in pago Pictavo, in vicaria Lauzdunense... Miron</i> (Miron, dép. Vienne, arr. Châtellerauld)	Ibid. no. 123

15 Cf. the comments of note 3 to this Table.

16 The reference to Charles the Bald's grant to Gauzbert is to be found in a diploma authorising the exchange of lands between Gauzbert and Abbot Dido of St-Florent.

	Date	Beneficiary	Nature of Grant
*36	850, 15 August Villa of Chambellay	Monastery of St. Maur	<i>factos quatuor res... nostrae proprietatis... cum familia utriusque sexus...</i>
37	(847–52 – before 25 February)	<i>fideli nostro Adroario</i>	<i>ad proprium... res... nostre proprietatis</i> (except for lands held <i>in aprisione</i>)
38	854, 19 January City of Orléans	Abbot Hilbod and the monks of St-Philibert	The <i>villae</i> and parts of <i>villae</i> held formerly by Otbertus
39	857, 15 February Palace of Quierzy	Archbishop Fredoldus and the church of Narbonne	<i>res nostrae proprietatis... in ius ac potestatem ecclesiasticam...</i>
40	(859, May?) (Palace of Ponthion?)	Monastery of St. Thibery	one <i>fiscum</i> ¹⁹
*41	859, 20 June Palace of Attigny	<i>fidelem nostrum Isembertum</i>	two <i>villae de rebus nostrae proprietatis</i>
42	859? 30 June Palace of Attigny	<i>fidelem nostrum... Gome-sindum</i>	two <i>villares de rebus nostrae proprietatis</i>

17 Although this land together with other lands in Anjou, is described as the king's *proprietatis*, it in fact seems to have formed part of a group of secularised church estates, once held by a Count of Anjou *ex rebus Sancti Veterini*. It is impossible to tell whether in 850 these lands were being exploited for the benefit of Charles the Bald.

18 An interpolated version of this diploma was preserved at Tournus – both increasing the number of *villae*

Location	Reference
<i>in villa Bornomo, in pago Pictavo</i> (Bournand, dép. Vienne, arr. Châtelleraut) ¹⁷	Ibid. no. 134 = *Facsimile, in: <i>Diplomata Karolinorum</i> , III, pl. XXXI (Arch. Nat. K. 12, no. 12)
<i>in comitatu Narbonensi... villa Floriano</i> (unidentified for difficulties see TESSIER, i, p. 363)	Ibid. no. 145
<i>sita sunt in comitatu Pictavorum sive Toarcensium sive Herbadilici incolarum</i> (i) <i>Mesciacum, cum capella in qua sunt mansa septem</i> (ii) <i>Apciacum cum duobus ecclesiis et mansis undecim quartaque tres</i> (iii) <i>in villa Massimiaco mansos tres ac medium et preterea mansa octo</i> (iv) <i>villam Asneras</i> (v) <i>villamque Prisciaccum mediam</i> (i) Messais, dép. Vienne, arr. Châtelleraut, (ii) either Azay-le-Brûlé or Azay-sur-Thouet, dép. Deux-Sèvres; (iii) Messemé, dép. Vienne, arr. Châtelleraut (iv) Asnières, dép. Deux-Sèvres, arr. Niort: (v) Prinçay, dép. Vienne, arr. Châtelleraut	Ibid. no. 159 ¹⁸
<i>infra Narbonense pagum...</i> (i) <i>prope Narbona civitate villares duos... Casoles... Alancianus</i> (ii) <i>insula... Mandriacus</i> (iii) <i>et infra insula Lici villarem... Sancta Agatha</i> (iv) <i>villarem... Curcuciacus</i> (i) Both probably in arr. Narbonne, dép. Aude (ii) Mandriac, dép. Aude (iii) ancienne île de la Clape, dép. Aude (iv) possibly Quinsa, dép. Aude	Ibid. no. 193
<i>Homegianus/Homeianus</i> (Villemagne, dép. Hérault, arr. Béziers)	Ibid. no. 203
<i>in pago Narbonense super fluvium Urbionem...</i> (i) <i>villa Ripa alta... in integro</i> (ii) <i>villa... Zebezan similiter</i> (i) Ribaute, dép. Aude, arr. Carcassonne (ii) Cébazan, dép. Hérault, arr. Béziers	Ibid. no. 208 = *Facsimile, in: <i>Diplomata Karolinorum</i> , IV, pl. IX (Bib. Nat. coll. Baluze vol. 390 no. 48)
<i>in pago Narbonense</i> (i) <i>villare... Donnas</i> (ii) <i>Catorinos similiter</i> (i) Donos, dép. Aude arr. Narbonne (ii) possibly Cadorque in the same dép.	Ibid. no. 210 (from an interpolated grant)

which the king was alleged to have granted to St-Filibert, and rather incorrectly adding that these were to be held *in libero alodio et immuni ab omni servitio* as they had been by Vivian, TESSIER (especially notes to p. 418).

19 Another grant recorded in a later notice of a lawsuit (of June 870) TESSIER (especially p. 418).

	Date	Beneficiary	Nature of Grant
43	(859, June) Attigny	<i>fidelem nostrum, vassallum Apollonii carissimi nobis comitis, nomine Deo-datum</i>	<i>de nostre rebus... proprietatis... in ius ac dominationem illius...</i>
44	864, 19 October Palace of Quierzy	the monks of Beaulieu	one <i>villa nostri iuris</i> , held by Archbishop Rodulfus <i>iure beneficiario cum familia utriusque sexus</i>
45	866, 16 January City of Senlis	Abot Hacfridus and the monks of St. Florent	<i>cellam...²⁰ cum omnibus sibi pertinentibus rebus... cum familia utriusque sexus</i>
*46	870, 20 July Palace of Ponthion	<i>Olibam dilectum nostrum comitem</i>	numerous lands described as <i>fiscus</i> or <i>indominicatum... ad ius proprium</i>
47	870, 24 November Vienne	Abbot Geilo and the monks of St-Philibert	<i>res...²¹ held by fidelis vassallus noster... Desiderius</i>
48	871, 30 October Champlitte	Abbot Geilo and the monks of St-Philibert	<i>abbatiam... cum omnibus ad se pertinentibus... sicut ad nostrum habere visisumus</i>
49	875, 16 March Monastery of St-Denis	Abbot Arnulf and the canons of St-Martin (at Autun)	two <i>villae... perpetuo iure habendas²²</i>

20 Should this grant in fact be included in this list of landgrants? The description makes it apparent that, even if the *cella* was attached to the royal fisc when first given by Charles the Bald to the monks of St-Florent, it must at some stage have consisted of church land which had been secularised, see TESSIER on the diplomatic form.

21 As with no. 45 of this Table it is difficult to tell whether Charles the Bald was making a grant of fiscal land (held by a *fidelis vassallus*) to St. Philibert, or whether he was in fact permitting that vassal to divert land which had once been in ecclesiastical hands back to another religious establishment. The diploma refers

Date	Beneficiary	Nature of Grant
(i) <i>in pago Agathense in villa que dicitur Nasimiano</i> (ii) <i>in pago Substantionense in villulis Aquaviva et Mansionone</i> (i) Nézigian – l'Évêque, dép. Hérault, arr. Béziers (ii) Aigues-vives, dép. Hérault, and unidentified		Ibid. no. 211
<i>in pago Lemovicence... Camairacus</i> (Chameyrac cf. Table no. 23)		Ibid. no. 275
<i>secus fluvium Ligerim in pago Biturico... Nobiliacus</i> (St-Gondron-sur-Loire, dép. Loiret, arr. Gien)		Ibid. no. 287
(i) <i>in pago Carchasensi... Fraxinum fiscum nostrum</i> , land and churches and all that the king held <i>in Basara fisco</i> and in eight other places including the <i>valle Aquitanie</i> , (ii) <i>in vicaria Ausonensi churches, Insulam longam, Resciacum</i> (iii) <i>in comitatu Ratensi in nine places</i> . (V. TESSIER ii, p. 260) (all in the dép. Aude)		Ibid. no. 341 = *Facsimile, in: <i>Diplomata Karolinorum V</i> , pl. IV (Bib. Nat. ms. lat. 8037, no. 44)
(i) <i>in pago Vallavensi... loco Godit with Cabannellas, Turtuniaco Fontanas... Spinatio, Illafar a vallem ubi Adalgarius manet Mercieriaco... Teciliaco, Leromitto cum Bamantinisca</i> (and others unreadable in seventeenth cent.) (ii) <i>in comitatu Vivarensi vineyards and fields near Fontebullunensis</i> (i) Goudet, dép. Haute-Loire, arr. Le Puy (ii) St-Etienne de Fontbellon dép. Ardèche, arr. Privas		Ibid. no. 344
<i>abbatiam Sancti Porciani in pago Arvernensi</i> (St-Pourçain-sur-Sioule, dép. Allier, arr. Gaunat)		Ibid. no. 353
<i>in pago Bituricensi... (i) villam Porcariorum</i> (ii) <i>Columbarium villam</i> (i) prob. Moulin-Porcher, dép. Cher, (ii) prob. Colombier dép. Cher, arr. St-Amand-Mond-Rond		Ibid. no. 377

at one point to Desiderius's tenure of lands which belonged to the *res... Sanctae Mariae*: the cathedral of Le Puy was dedicated to the Virgin which suggests that Desiderius's benefice had perhaps been abstracted from its endowments, D. de Ste-Marthe and others, *Gallia Christiana in provincias ecclesiasticas distributas*, Paris 1720, vol. 2, p. 685.

22 This formed part of a lavish endowment with lands in Burgundy and in the counties of Troyes and Orleans, *ibid.*

	Date	Beneficiary	Nature of Grant
50	876, 13 July Palace of Ponthion	Abbot Gairulf and the monks of Beaulieu	one <i>villa de... nostrae proprietatis rebus</i> , consisting of <i>X mansi et mancipiis</i>
*51	876? 16 July Palace of Ponthion	Bernard Abbot of Solignac	two <i>villae... cum familia utriusque sexus</i>
52	876, 17 July Palace of Ponthion	<i>fidelis noster... Hildebertus</i>	two <i>villae... usufructuario et iure beneficiario omnibus diebus vitae suae et filio suo post eum</i>
*53	877, 11 June Palace of Quierzy	<i>fidelem regni nostri ... Ooliba</i> (also described as Count of Carcassonne)	<i>omnes alodes qui fuerunt olim Mirone infideli nostro, and of other infideles... de iure nostro...</i>
54	(840–77)	the nuns of Ste-Croix of Poitiers, and the canons of Ste-Radegonde	four <i>villae</i> ²⁴

Suspect

Charles »the Great«

1	Undated	Abbot Nampius (of St. Hilaire de Carcassonne)	<i>terras heremas... absque ullo censu aut inquietudine...</i>
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Louis »the Pious«

2	807, 28 December <i>Tolosae publice</i>	the monastery of Gellone <i>in pago Lutovense</i>	<i>fiscum</i> with three <i>villae</i> ; another <i>locum</i> and the honor of Count William
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23 For a discussion of the trustworthiness of this diploma, TESSIER and especially p. 416.

24 On 4 July 878 *praecepta* of Louis the Pious and Charles the Bald were offered to Louis »le Bègue« for confirmation, TESSIER.

25 Although there is disagreement over the date of this fabrication, neither the editors of the diplomas of Charles the Great nor Levillain doubted that it was a forgery. For MÜHLBACHER, p. 457, its purpose was to secure title to vacant lands (here allegedly granted by Charles the Great) and its confection was dated to the »earlier« Middle Ages; but in Levillain's view it was composed to rebuff claims put forward by the abbey of Lagrasse during the period of the Albigensian crusades, (see n. 4 to this Table) p. 175–176.

26 Reference has already been made to the rejection of this diploma by a number of authorities, above

Location	Reference
<i>villa... Orbaciacus... in comitatu Lemovicino, in valle Exandonense (Le Saillant, dép. Corrèze)</i>	Ibid. no. 409 ²³
(i) <i>una... Vosias</i> (ii) <i>altera vera Ladiniacus</i> (i) unidentified. (ii) Ladignac-le-Long, dép. Haute-Vienne, arr. Limoges	Ibid. no. 410 = *Facsimile, in: <i>Diplomata Karolinorum</i> , V, pl. XVII (Bib. Nat. ms. nouv. acq. lat. 2404)
<i>Que appellantur Cavaliacus... et item Cavaliacus... in comitatu Lemovicense</i> (one of these identified as St-Just, dép. Hte-Vienne, arr. Limoges)	Ibid. no. 411
<i>in Gotia... in variis comitatibus Gotiae consistentibus... and in Carcasinse</i>	Ibid. no. 428 = *Facsimile, in: <i>Diplomata Karolinorum</i> , V, pl. XXI (Bib. Nat. ms. lat. 8837, fo. 55)
(i) <i>Denzacum</i> , (ii) <i>Novam villam</i> , (iii) <i>Bertronem</i> , (iv) <i>Mermanterum</i> (i) Dangé, arr. Châtelleraut, (ii) Ville-neuve, arr. Poitiers (iii) ?la Croix-Berton (iv) Marmande arr. Châtelleraut – all dép. Vienne	Ibid. no. 448
Grants	
<i>contiguae dicti monasterii</i>	Ed. MÜHLBACHER, <i>Die Urkunden</i> (see n. 36) no. 305 ²⁵
(i) <i>in pago Biterense... Miliacus... villa Sancti Paragorri... Miliciano villa atque Campaniano</i> , (ii) <i>in pago Ludovense Locum Gastrias... villa Magarantiatis</i>	Ed. de VIC and VAISSÈTE, <i>Histoire Générale du Languedoc</i> (see n. 46) vol. 2, col. 70–72 ²⁶

p. 140. In its present form the document is quite unacceptable because (I) the attribution of the title *Ludovicus divina ordinante providentia rex serenissimus Aquitaniae* is without parallel; while (II) the reference to the *honor* (!) of Count William *qui in aula genitoris nostri karoli augusti extitit clarissimus* is highly suspicious. (This is the »St. Guilhem« of legend and epic.). Moreover, (III) the form of the dating clause is not appropriate to a royal diploma of the Carolingian era. Altogether, of course, suspicion is aroused by any piece coming from an archive relating to the disputes between Aniane and Gellona; but although it may be correct to agree with TESSIER, *ibid.* vol. 1, p. 408–409, that »un jugement définitif ne saurait être porté qu'après une révision attentive de tout le dossier de la querelle«, for the moment the document seems so untrustworthy that it must be wholly discarded.

	Date	Beneficiary	Nature of Grant
3	817, 28 April Palace of Aachen	Abbot Bertrand and the monastery of Sorèze ²⁷	5 <i>villae</i> , one mill, and pos- sessions in two other <i>vil- lae... perpetualiter... ad eleemosymas faciendas</i> , etc.
Pippin I Rex Aquitanorum			
4	838 » <i>Pons Ugonis</i> «	Benedict, abbot of Joncels	<i>villis</i> (without precision)
Pippin II Rex Aquitanorum			
5	847–48 (?) » <i>Avernis civitate publice</i> «	Abbot Lantfridus of Mozac	two <i>villae transtulimus pro beneficio</i>
Charles »the Bald«			
6	847, 4 August Attigny	Abbot Autarius and the monks of St. Germain of Paris	one <i>villa perpetuo ha- bendam</i>
7	856 or 861, 23 May Palace of Compiègne	<i>fidelem Ardroarium</i>	<i>res... iuris nostri villae</i> and two places described as be- longing <i>ipso fisco</i>
8	864, 2 February	the church of Rodez	church with <i>mansi in spon- salitium</i>

27 See above p. 136 for the political condition of the Gascon region under the Carolingians. In LEVILLAIN'S view, *ibid.* p. 270–74, a dossier of documents for the monastery of Sorèze was fabricated in order to ward off the claims of an early twelfth century viscount of Foix to dispose of the establishment (see especially p. 272 with notes).

28 According to Levillain *ibid.*, a partly genuine document issued in the name of a Pippin *rex Aquitanorum* was transformed by a forger into a diploma dated 762 which could thus be attributed to the first Carolingian king, Pippin the Short. At the same time a privilege designed to convey royal protection had interpolated into it a grant of land *de fonte Pallagii usque ad terram nigram* etc. (a type of boundary clause uncommon in a genuine Carolingian diploma).

29 The interdependence of the different versions of the translations of the relics of St-Austremoine and the

Location	Reference
(i) <i>in pago Ausciensi... villam de Blizentia cum territoriis de Peyrault... villam Montlieu villam Exartigas... Villam Vaccaria... villam Marcillanum</i> ; (ii) <i>in pago Dagni in villa... Alamanni & ... Moddingo</i>	Ibid. col. 114–15
<i>aliquid...</i> (there follows an interpolated boundary clause) ²⁸	LEVILLAIN, Recueil des actes de Pépin I ^{er} et de Pépin II, rois d'Aquitaine (see n. 21)
<i>In comitatu Arvernico... in Brivatensi... Flagiacus... in Rigomensi... Primiliacus</i>	Ibid. no. LVIII ²⁹
<i>Nantriacus in pago Pictavensi</i> (Naintré) ³⁰	Ed. TESSIER, Recueil des actes de Charles II le Chauve, roi de France (see n. 36) no. 469
<i>in pago Narbonense, Villa Mairolas with silvas & mons in villare Pereto ipso fisco, et in villa Caciacasbello ipso fisco</i>	Ibid no. 483 (from pseudooriginal) ³¹
<i>Colnago in pago Ruthenico super flumen Tarnis</i> (with details of the <i>mansi</i>)	Ibid. no. 487 ³² .

Mozac documents is discussed by LEVILLAIN who rejects the present diploma as being drawn up in a form more appropriate to a private document, *ibid.* and especially p. 236.

30 »Un faux grossier«, TESSIER, especially p. 553. In fact the *villa* of Naintré in Poitou had been restored to St-Germain by Charles the Bald in 868 but was subsequently lost to the monks, who may have produced this document in order to ward off the pretensions of a Poitevin religious house, St-Cyprien de Poitiers.

31 A forgery of the tenth century (the pseudo-original still survives), TESSIER p. 606–7.

32 TESSIER, *ibid.* p. 617: »Il est tout à fait inutile d'insister sur le caractère fantaisiste de cette notice«. Neither invocation nor final protocol bear any resemblance to a genuine product of the *scriptorium* of Charles the Bald, while the text with its references to the king's return *ab citeriore Hispania* is wholly unacceptable.