



Appendix 3

*Simon de Montfort's Grievances*

*In 1262, the quarrel between Simon de Montfort and Henry III went to arbitration before Queen Margaret of France. Montfort's grievances survive in the family archives at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Clairambault 1188, f. 80. Translation by Ian Short.*

In view of the fact that there have been a large number of claims [made], both the king of England, the earl of Leicester and the countess his wife have submitted themselves to the judgement of the queen of France [and agreed] to comply in every way with what she decides. And because the king on one side will present what he wishes to say, so the earl and the countess on the other side will state their case and their grievances.

Our lord the king declares in the first place that he did me a great kindness when he received my homage, as if I had not been [my father's] eldest son. And so that people can see what sort of kindness it was, my brother count Amaury de Montfort ceded to me all the rights he had to our father's inheritance in England if I was able to secure them, in exchange for which I ceded to him the inheritance that I had in France. So I went to England and asked my lord the king if he were willing to restore my father's inheritance to me, to which he replied that he could not do so because he had granted it all by charter to the earl of Chester and his heirs. Whereupon, not having found favour, I returned [to France]. The following year my lord the king made the crossing to Brittany accompanied by

the earl of Chester who had possession of my inheritance. I went to see the earl at a castle of his at Saint-James-de-Beuvron. There I asked him if I might find favour with him if I were to take possession of my inheritance, to which he kindly agreed. The following August he took me with him to England and requested the king to receive my homage in respect of my father's inheritance. As he himself said, I had more right to this than he had, and he relinquished his claim to the whole of the gift that the king had made him on such terms that he would receive my homage. Thus it came about that my lord the king received my homage, and my land was restored to me.

Much of the woodland, however, had been destroyed, and there was also other significant damage on account of several different people to whom the king had granted it before giving it to the earl of Chester. The fact is that his father, king John, had confiscated it from my father not as a result of any legal judgement and without his having done any wrong to the king; John did so simply because that was what he wanted to do. I mention these points so that people know exactly what sort of kindness it was that king [Henry] did to me in this regard. From that day forward and right up to the present the king has kept for himself the advowson of Leicester abbey, founded by my forefathers who held the advowson. He also retains for himself a number of rights of stewardships, and on many occasions I have requested him to do right by me, but up until now he has done nothing.

Subsequently it pleased him graciously to give me his sister in marriage, but soon afterwards I incurred his wrath on account of a debt of two thousand marks that lord Thomas count of Flanders claimed by bringing an action against me by papal letters. The king wished me to pay by whatever means possible, to which I replied that I would be happy to repay the debt if I were legally obliged to do so, provided that he were willing to allow me to defend myself by [secular] law;

[in doing so], he would be doing me no greater service than he should do for the poorest man in his land. This he denied me, and then harangued me using extremely coarse and shameful language which I find it difficult to place on record. On the same night that we answered his summons to come to celebrate the churching of my lady the queen, he ordered me to be taken prisoner and led off to the Tower of London, and that the community of London be summoned to arrest me at the house where I was staying. But the king of Germany, who was present, would not allow this to happen on that night. When I saw how angry [king Henry] was and that he was unwilling to see reason, I left the country, thereby defusing the anger he felt towards me and the countess. The king wished at all costs for this money to be repaid, and was not willing to allow me to make out any case that could be of advantage to me. Once he had regained his composure and this happened long after our leaving England he declared that he would pay five hundred marks, and this he was kind enough to do. He had the outstanding one thousand five hundred marks raised from my own lands on harsh terms, and the haste with which this was done was much to my detriment, since I had taken the cross and was very close to leaving for overseas. I was obliged, because of these adverse circumstances, to sell my land and part of my forest much to my disadvantage at the time and still now.

Three years after this, I was in Burgundy, having returned from overseas, and acting on the king's orders I went to meet him in Poitou. He requested me to stay with him, and to this I replied that I had only just returned from overseas and that it was not convenient for me to stay on account of a number of problems I had had, the majority of which originated with him. He replied to me that he would give me as much money as he had made me pay to count Thomas from my own lands if I were to stay with him, plus another one hundred marks which could be regarded as compensation for any wrong or damage he

might have caused me. This is what he proposed. But as far as the damage was concerned that I had suffered by reason of this money having been raised from the sale of my land with such haste, I received no compensation. This damage was so great because my departure overseas was so imminent that I had to sell a large part of my land and of my forest disadvantageously and for far less than it was worth.

Then, soon after he had returned from Poitou where I had been with him as he had instructed, my lady Beatrice countess of Provence, the mother of [Henry's] wife, my lady the queen, came to England. She learned that the king had never given his sister any marriage portion or any movable property. She requested the king, if it so pleased him, to make a gesture of kindness to his sister to whom he had given nothing, neither land nor movable property, whereas he gave so much to so many people to whom he owed no obligation, unlike his sister. It was clearly his duty to think of her. As a result of the request from countess Beatrice, he granted to me and to her five hundred marks of annual income on the understanding that the money should belong to us and to our heirs, which money he was to allocate to us in land in preference to all other people saving the present king of Germany and that [both of us should have it] for life. Because certain members of the king's household imply, in order to discredit the countess, that this income of five hundred marks was granted as compensation for the damages she suffered to her dowry in Ireland, [the countess] declares publicly that this was in no way the case. This could most clearly be seen in the charter which she has from the king, and the king has not been released from this obligation by her. What is clear is that the king then made her bring an action to obtain the entirety of her dowry from the heirs of her lord when he had failed her, in the way recounted above, at the time he should have made the decision. And this dispute took place the last time my lady the countess of Provence was in England after

the death of her husband. The grant of five hundred marks that the king made me as a result of my lady the countess's intercession took place a full four years previously on the first visit she made to England.

One further point: my lord the king is asking me for the service of sixty knight's-fees whereas my ancestors, who held the land as a single unit, were only ever under the obligation to provide him with the service of one knight's-fee. They do not owe any more than one, as several of the people of the land in question are well aware.