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# ELEANOR DE MONTFORT

A Rebel Countess  
in Medieval  
England



LOUISE J. WILKINSON

Eleanor de Montfort



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*A Rebel Countess in Medieval England*

Louise J. Wilkinson



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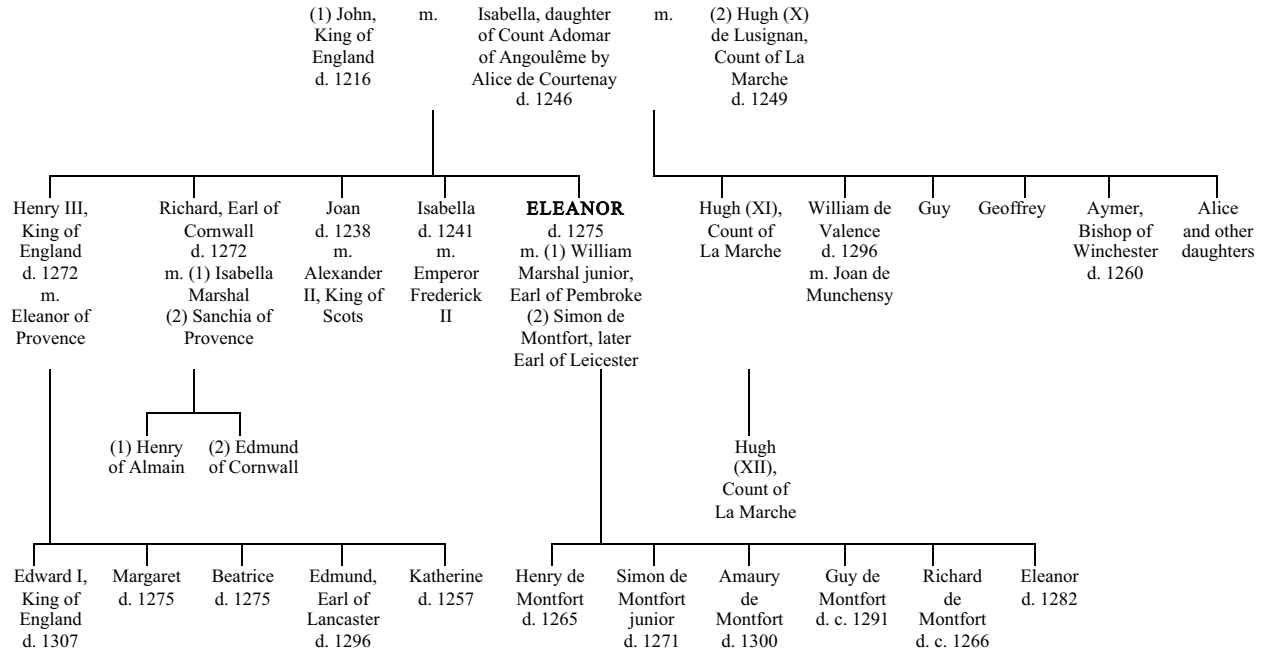


Figure 1 Eleanor de Montfort's Family

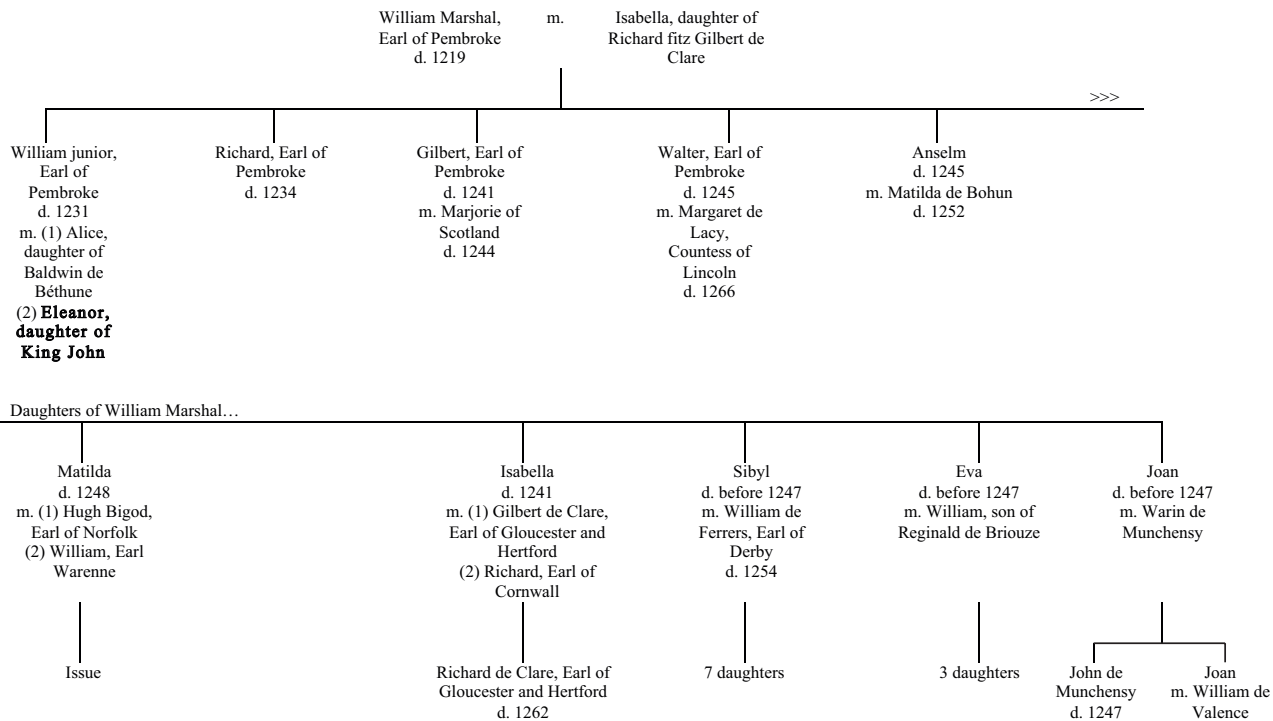


Figure 2 The Children of William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke (d. 1219)



Figure 3 Eleanor's Principal Marshal Manors in England. The castles of Kenilworth and Odiham which Eleanor received as gifts from Henry III are also shown.



## Preface

In his magisterial study *King Henry III and the Lord Edward* (1947), F. M. Powicke celebrated Eleanor de Montfort as ‘the most vigorous and passionate of the daughters of King John and Isabella of Angoulême, a greater force in affairs than her sisters the queen of Scots and the [Holy Roman] empress’.<sup>1</sup> Yet the life of this remarkable woman has long been overshadowed by the controversial career of her second husband, Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, and his death and mutilation at the battle of Evesham in August 1265. Earl Simon was one of the leading figures in a baronial movement to reform the government of the realm that emerged during the latter part of King Henry III’s reign and reduced the king to a mere cipher at the hands of his opponents. As one of the key architects of what is now regarded by many historians as England’s first political revolution and the man who effectively held the king captive for fifteen months after Henry’s defeat at the battle of Lewes in May 1264, Earl Simon’s life has, quite understandably, attracted the interest of a whole host of modern scholars. The most recent biography, that by John Maddicott (1994), offers a fascinating insight into Earl Simon’s political career in England and France, the financial insecurities that he faced in supporting his growing family throughout the 1240s and 1250s, and the strength of his religious beliefs. Yet, there has been no new, detailed biography of Eleanor, his wife, since that which M. A. E. Green published in her six-volume work, *Lives of the Princesses of England from the Norman Conquest* in the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup>

Admittedly, a surviving account roll from Eleanor’s household for 1265, the year of Evesham, has awakened the interest of a number of scholars. A printed edition of this roll in the original Latin was published by T. H. Turner in *Manners and Household Expenses of England in the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (1841), and I am now preparing a separate English translation of Eleanor’s roll for publication by the Pipe Roll Society with a view to making this remarkable source accessible to as wide an audience as possible. William H. Blaauw devoted a chapter of his seminal work *The Barons’ War including the Battles of Lewes and Evesham* (first published 1844, second edition with

additions by Charles H. Pearson 1871) to 'Eleanor de Montfort and her sons'. Blaauw used the roll to discuss the provisioning of Eleanor's household during this critical period in the Montfort family's fortunes, the countess's itinerary, the garrisoning of the castles at which she stayed, the visitors to whom she offered hospitality and the Montfortian allies with whom she corresponded. It was, however, Margaret Labarge, who, having examined Earl Simon and Countess Eleanor's 'personal quarrels' with Henry III for a University of Oxford B.Litt thesis in 1939, made the most extensive study of the roll to date. Her analysis of Eleanor's household roll formed the basis for a study of thirteenth-century baronial lifestyles, first published in 1965 as *A Baronial Household of the Thirteenth Century* and reprinted in 2003 as *Mistress, Maids and Men: Baronial Life in the Thirteenth Century*. Although Labarge readily acknowledged the impact of the civil war on the household, observing that 'Even the sober items of ... [Eleanor's] account show how much political initiative ... [this noblewoman] displayed',<sup>3</sup> her work was primarily concerned with the practicalities of running a great household, focusing on the domestic concerns of the countess as its lady and the internal organization of her establishment. It therefore included chapters on 'The Castle as a Home', 'The Lady of the House', 'The Daily Fare', 'The Spice Account', 'Wine and Beer', 'Cooking and Serving of Meals', 'Cloths and Clothes', 'Travel and Transport' and 'The Amusements of a Baronial Household'. By comparison, relatively little was said about Eleanor's political career and her personal role in the Barons' War of 1263–5. A valuable step towards remedying this omission was made in 2010, when, in a piece that readily acknowledged its debt to Labarge, the Japanese scholar Keizo Asaji devoted a chapter of *The Angevin Empire and the Community of the Realm in England* to a fresh appraisal of Eleanor's account roll, with a view to examining 'the importance of the baronial household against the background of thirteenth-century English political society'.<sup>4</sup> Somewhat intriguingly, Asaji compared Eleanor's role in gathering and disseminating information for her husband and sons to that of a modern 'relay station'.<sup>5</sup> More recently, in an article published in the *Journal of Medieval History* in 2011, Lars Kjær analysed the use made of food, drink and hospitality in the countess's account, creating a persuasive case for treating them as 'ritualised' forms of 'communication' that were intended to bolster Eleanor's and the Montfortians' standing in the localities in which she resided in 1265.<sup>6</sup> This biography also makes use of Eleanor's household roll in a way that is grounded, first and foremost, in examining Eleanor's political activities and in considering the extensive networks of family and friends that she nurtured and maintained at this critical period in English history.

This present work is, then, the first detailed account of Countess Eleanor's life for more than 150 years. It fills an important gap within the existing literature and serves as a timely companion volume to other biographical works on medieval women, such as Margaret Howell's splendid study, *Eleanor of Provence: Queenship in Thirteenth-Century England* (1998). This book draws on the wealth of information from chronicles, letters, charters, public records, household accounts and the remains of the Montfort family archives to reconstruct the narrative of Eleanor's life. In doing so, it provides an intimate portrait not only of Eleanor as a wife, mother and politician, but also of her changing relationships with her eldest brother, King Henry III, and with her nephew the Lord Edward, the future King Edward I, before, during and after the period of baronial reform and rebellion in England (1258–67). This biography also sheds significant new light on the countess's experiences as a young bride during her marriage to her first husband, William Marshal junior, Earl of Pembroke, and as a widow after his untimely death in 1231. In particular, it challenges the motives traditionally ascribed by historians to her decision to take a vow of perpetual chastity during her first period of widowhood, arguing that Eleanor's actions need to be considered against the political background of the settlement of England in the aftermath of the rebellion by her brother-in-law, Richard Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, in 1233–4.

If Eleanor's close kinship with the English king and her subsequent remarriage to a court favourite, and later reformer and rebel, Simon de Montfort, make her an exceptional woman in many respects, then her career still raises wider questions about the nature of, and potential for, women's political agency in this period. As the sister of King Henry III, an aunt of the Lord Edward and the wife of Earl Simon, Eleanor straddled the bloody conflict between Henry III and the barons who wished to reform his government in the 1250s and 1260s. Yet she remained resolutely wedded to the cause of her second husband, sharing his political ambitions, energy and fiery nature. She stood firm in her opposition to the English crown during the mid 1260s and defended Dover Castle for the Montfortian cause during the summer of 1265 as her family's enemies closed in around her.

I first encountered Eleanor as a doctoral student in the late 1990s, when I researched the life and political allegiances of another prominent thirteenth-century lady, Margaret de Lacy, Countess of Lincoln and Pembroke (d. 1266), who corresponded with Eleanor in 1265. It was not until 2006, when heavily pregnant with my first daughter, that I began to undertake more extensive research into Eleanor herself, and the idea for a biography gradually began to evolve from two papers that I wrote on Eleanor's political involvement in

the Barons' War for the International Medieval Congress at the University of Leeds in 2006 and for a conference at The National Archives (UK) at Kew in 2007. In developing, researching and writing this study, I have, therefore, incurred a number of long-standing personal debts. Dr Adrian Jobson, Dr Liz Oakley-Brown, Dr Michael Ray and Dr Jennifer Ward have all kindly given me the benefit of their particular areas of expertise and have all read parts of this work. Any errors that remain are my own. I have also benefitted from the encouragement and friendship of Professor David Carpenter, Professor Michael Clanchy, Dr David Crook and Dr Paul Dryburgh at various stages of this project. Chapters 7 and 8 of this book are based upon earlier papers that I gave at Leeds, Kew, Oxford and Canterbury between 2006 and 2008; the people who attended these events made numerous valuable suggestions that I have tried to incorporate. The record copying department at the Bibliothèque nationale de France has been extremely helpful in providing me with images of MS Clairambault 1188 (the remains of the Montfort family's archive) and MS Clairambault 1021 (the Montfort confraternity letters from St Albans Abbey in Hertfordshire), while the staff at the British Library furnished me with a copy of Eleanor de Montfort's household roll (BL, MS Add. 8877). My thanks go to the staff of the reading rooms at the British Library, the Hampshire Record Office and The National Archives, who have provided valuable assistance during the course of my research. My colleagues and students at Canterbury Christ Church University have offered friendship and encouragement throughout the whole process. I am also particularly grateful to Michael Greenwood and all the staff at Continuum for their enduring patience and guidance. My greatest debt, though, is to my husband, Lee, for his love and support, and to our daughters, Emma and Katie, who were both born during the years when this book was first conceived.

### A NOTE ON MONEY

In the thirteenth century, £1 was equivalent to 20 shillings, and 1 shilling was made up of 12 pence. A mark was a unit of account worth 13s. 4d.

## Abbreviations

- Ann. mon.* *Annales monastici*, ed. H. R. Luard (1864–9). London: Longman, Rolls Series, 5 vols.
- BL British Library.
- BnFr Bibliothèque nationale de France.
- Cal. Docs. Ireland* *Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland, 1171–1307*, ed. H. S. Sweetman (1875–86). London: Longman, 5 vols.
- CChR* *Calendar of the Charter Rolls* (1916–). London: HMSO.
- CCLR* *Calendar of the Close Rolls* (1892–). London: HMSO.
- CFR* *Calendar of the Fine Rolls of the Reign of Henry III* (2007–2011), available online at <http://www.frh3.org.uk/home.html>.
- Chronica majora* *Matthaei Parisiensis, monachi Sancti Albani, chronica majora*, ed. H. R. Luard (1872–83). London: Longman, Rolls Series, 7 vols.
- CIM* *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous, Volume I, 1219–1307* (1916). London: HMSO.
- CLR* *Calendar of the Liberate Rolls* (1916–). London: HMSO.
- CPR* *Calendar of the Patent Rolls* (1906–). London: HMSO.
- CR* *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III* (1902–75). London: HMSO, 13 vols.
- CRR* *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reigns of Richard I, John and Henry III* (1922–). London: HMSO.
- DBM* *Documents of the Baronial Movement of Reform and Rebellion, 1258–1267*, ed. R. F. Treharne and I. J. Sanders (1973). Oxford: Clarendon Press.

- Diplomatic Documents* *Diplomatic Documents, Volume I, 1101–1272*, ed. P. Chaplais (1964). London: HMSO.
- EHR* *The English Historical Review*.
- Flores historiarum* *Flores historiarum*, ed. H. R. Luard (1890). London: Longman, Rolls Series, 3 vols.
- Foedera* *Foedera, conventiones, litterae et cujuscunque generis acta publica*, ed. T. Rymer (searchable text edition, 2006). Burlington, Ontario: TannerRitchie.
- GEC* G. E. Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage*, ed. V. Gibbs et al. (1910–59). n.p.
- Historia anglorum* *Matthae Parisiensis, monachi Sancti Albani, historia anglorum*, ed. F. Madden (1872–83). London: Longman, Rolls Series, 3 vols.
- HRO* Hampshire Record Office.
- Manners* *Manners and Household Expenses of England in the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, ed. T. H. Turner (1841). London: Roxburghe Club.
- Monasticon anglicanum* W. Dugdale, *Monasticon anglicanum*, eds R. Dodsworth, J. Stevens, J. Caley, H. Ellis, B. Bandinel and R. C. Taylor (1817–30). London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 6 vols in 8.
- ODNB* *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004–11, available online at <http://www.oxforddnb.com>.
- Pipe Roll 16 John* *The Great Roll of the Pipe for the Sixteenth Year of the Reign of King John*, ed. P. M. Barnes (1962). London: The Pipe Roll Society, new series, vol. 35.
- PR* *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III* (1901–3). London: HMSO, 2 vols.
- PRO* Public Record Office.
- RLCI* *Rotuli litterarum clausarum in Turri Londoniensi asservati*, ed. T. D. Hardy (1833–4). London: Record Commission.
- RLP* *Rotuli litterarum patentium in Turri Londoniensi asservati*, ed. T. D. Hardy (1835). London: Record Commission.
- Royal Letters* *Royal and Other Historical Letters illustrative of the Reign of Henry III*, ed. W. W. Shirley (1862–6). London: Longman, Rolls Series, 2 vols.

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| SCLA                | Shakespeare Centre Library and Archive.   |
| TNA                 | The National Archives.  |
| <i>Treaty Rolls</i> | <i>Treaty Rolls, Volume I, 1234–1325</i> (1955). London: HMSO.  |
| <i>Wendover</i>     | <i>The Flowers of History by Roger of Wendover</i> , ed. H. G. Hewlett (1886–9). London: Longman, Rolls Series, 3 vols. |



## *Childhood*

‘descended from a race of kings’<sup>1</sup>

In 1917, a French scholar, Max Prinnet, published a detailed description of a tomb housed within the church of the Abbey Royal of St-Antoine-des-Champs, a medieval nunnery on the outskirts of Paris. The tomb, which depicted a woman wearing a religious habit, was heavily decorated with armorial bearings typical of those employed in the thirteenth century. It bore no inscription that immediately identified its owner, but an analysis of its heraldic devices suggested that this was none other than the funerary monument constructed to house the heart of Eleanor (d. 1275), Countess of Leicester, the daughter of King John of England and the widow of William Marshal (d. 1231), Earl of Pembroke, and Simon de Montfort (d. 1265), Earl of Leicester. The arms depicted on the tomb included two emperors, those of the Holy Roman and Latin Empires, four kings, those of England, France, Sicily, and Castile-León, and those of the Montfort family, which an earlier French heraldist, Claude-François Ménéstrier, had identified with Eleanor’s sons by her second marriage. This evidence, coupled with that from an ancient inventory of the abbey’s goods referring to a cloth placed ‘on the heart of the countess of Leicester’ on feast days and at Lent, confirmed that Eleanor’s heart was probably housed within this tomb or that, at the very least, there had later emerged a strong local tradition that this was so.<sup>2</sup>

Whether or not this monument contained the heart of the youngest daughter of King John of England, Eleanor was certainly a remarkable woman who could claim close kinship with the most powerful ruling dynasties of Western Europe and the Latin East in the thirteenth century. This point was not lost on her contemporaries. Eleanor’s impeccable connections, and those of her sisters – Joan Queen of Scots and Isabella, the Holy Roman Empress – were detailed in an elaborate genealogy compiled to celebrate the latter’s marriage in 1235 to Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen. On their father’s side, these women claimed descent from the kings of England, dukes of Aquitaine and Normandy, and counts of Anjou, Maine and Touraine. Through the marriages of their aunts

in the paternal line, they were associated with the kings of Castile and Sicily, the dukes of Saxony and the counts of Toulouse.<sup>3</sup> As members of the European political elite, Eleanor's and her sisters' lives were, therefore, played out on an international stage. This was, after all, an era in which the language, life and culture of the English royal family and high aristocracy were closely integrated with Europe and especially with France.

These continental connections were especially important for Eleanor, the only English royal sister not to acquire a crown through marriage. Like her grandmother and namesake, the formidably talented Eleanor (d. 1204), Duchess of Aquitaine, who had been the wife of King Louis VII of France and King Henry II of England in turn, the key events in the younger Eleanor's life took place on both sides of the English Channel. The political capital invested by the younger Eleanor, her two husbands and, ultimately, her children in *her* lineage and *her* natal family ties offers a window onto female agency and the opportunities that existed for medieval noblewomen, primarily through the mediums of marriage, motherhood and lordship, to foster their own interests and those of their closest kin. It was, after all, precisely these ties that located the younger Eleanor at the very heart of the conflict for control of English government that emerged between her brother, King Henry III, and his barons. The years 1258 to 1267 – a period of baronial reform and rebellion – were of tremendous significance in English history. They saw the king reduced to a cipher and a baronial council, led by Eleanor's second husband, Simon de Montfort, pushing through legal and administrative reforms far more radical and wide ranging than those envisaged in Magna Carta in 1215. This book, therefore, considers the life and career of Eleanor, the youngest daughter of King John, against the turbulent background of thirteenth-century English politics and Anglo-French relations, and considers her transformation from the king's beloved youngest sister into his bitter political enemy.

## BEGINNINGS

The earliest years of Eleanor's life, in common with those of other medieval English princesses, remain clouded in obscurity, with few hints of what was to come.<sup>4</sup> No English chronicler saw fit to record the birth of Eleanor to King John and his wife, Isabella of Angoulême, in or around 1215.<sup>5</sup> The arrival of the couple's fifth surviving child and third surviving daughter went unremarked by contemporary chroniclers in an age of high rates of infant mortality and at a time when the Angevin dynasty faced a grave political crisis – civil war in

England between Eleanor's father and his barons.<sup>6</sup> King John, the youngest son of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, had seized the English throne in 1199 on the death of his elder brother, Richard. The loss of Normandy to the French king, Philip Augustus, in 1204 seriously dented the prestige of the English crown, so much so that John devoted the remainder of his reign to raising money to help secure its recovery. John's plans, though, came to nought, thanks, in large part, to the disastrous defeat of his allies at the battle of Bouvines on 27 July 1214. Defeat at Bouvines left the English crown financially embarrassed and critically exposed to its enemies at home, to the barons, knights and free men who bore financial and other grievances against John, and who resented the intrusive and rapacious system of government over which John and his predecessors had presided.<sup>7</sup> The outpouring of these grievances culminated in civil war, in the issue of Magna Carta in June 1215, in its failure as a peace treaty and in the renewal of hostilities between the warring parties in August 1215. Thoroughly disenchanted with John, the rebel barons invited Philip Augustus's eldest son, Louis (the future King Louis VIII of France), to take the English throne; Louis's arrival in England in May 1216 posed a serious threat not only to John but also to his wife, his sons and his daughters.<sup>8</sup>

John's wife and the younger Eleanor's mother, Isabella of Angoulême, was none other than the daughter and heiress of Adomar, Count of Angoulême, the lord of a strategically important territory in south-western France, situated between Poitou and Gascony.<sup>9</sup> Eleanor's maternal grandmother, Alice de Courtenay, was the daughter of the French lord of Montargis and Châteaurenard, and a cousin of Philip Augustus. Through her Courtenay connections, Isabella also enjoyed kinship with the kings of Jerusalem, and was a half-sister to Peter, Count of Joigny, the child of one of her mother's earlier marriages.<sup>10</sup> Isabella's marriage to John in August 1200 accorded well with Angevin interests south of the River Loire, promising increased stability across the border regions of Poitou and Gascony. In marrying Isabella, John also decisively stepped in to prevent her union with another powerful Poitevin neighbour, Hugh (IX) de Lusignan, Lord of Lusignan and Count of La Marche, a union that threatened John's dominance within Aquitaine.<sup>11</sup> It was unfortunate, to say the least, for John that the offence he caused Hugh (IX) led to this count's rebellion and an appeal to Philip Augustus's court. These events, in their turn, resulted in the French king declaring John's continental territories forfeit, thereby helping to trigger the ultimately successful Capetian invasion of Normandy, Maine, Anjou and Touraine, along with a significant slice of Poitou.<sup>12</sup>

Isabella of Angoulême did not enjoy anything like the level of personal wealth or political influence enjoyed by some of her twelfth-century predecessors as

queens of England.<sup>13</sup> In short, John deliberately denied his queen consort access to material resources that might have allowed her sufficient independence to act as a patron and thereby make a significant mark on court politics, possibly by forging her own faction.<sup>14</sup> Isabella was unable to avail herself of the full revenues from her inheritance or her dower (those lands set aside to provide for her in the event of her husband's death) during John's lifetime. It is also probable that she did not receive, as Eleanor of Aquitaine had done, any income from Queen's Gold, a surcharge on voluntary offerings, Jewish amercements and sums owed by moneyers that was traditionally levied by the crown.<sup>15</sup> In this way, John ensured that his queen remained dependent upon his continued generosity and goodwill for her day-to-day maintenance. Furthermore, the presence of royal mistresses and, until her marriage to the Earl of Essex in 1214, of Isabella of Gloucester, John's former wife, at royal residences in the south and south west of England (Winchester, Sherborne and Bristol) potentially posed a more direct threat to Isabella of Angoulême's personal relationship with her husband.<sup>16</sup> In spite of this, though, John and Isabella of Angoulême remained on sufficiently intimate terms for this Isabella to give birth to five surviving children between 1207 and 1215, and for the king and one of his most trusted aides, Peter des Roches, Bishop of Winchester, to bestow occasional gifts upon the queen as her household moved from one royal residence to another.<sup>17</sup> Fourteen years after their marriage, John still spent time in his wife's company, especially when it was politic to do so. In 1214, John used Isabella's position as countess of Angoulême to his advantage in his dealings with the Poitevin nobles, when she accompanied him overseas.<sup>18</sup> During this trip the couple's eldest daughter, Joan, was betrothed to Hugh, the eldest son and namesake of the lord of Lusignan and count of La Marche to whom Isabella had previously been betrothed before her marriage to John.<sup>19</sup> Later that year, after the king and queen's return to England and a brief sojourn together at Exeter, John placed Isabella under the armed protection of one of his most trusted servants, Terric the Teuton. This was probably for the queen's personal safety as the political situation in England deteriorated, rather than for more sinister reasons.<sup>20</sup> In November 1214, Terric, the constable of the royal castle at Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire, escorted the queen when she visited Berkhamsted, a castle earmarked as part of Isabella's future dower.<sup>21</sup> When, during the following month, the king visited the great fortress at Corfe in Dorset, he instructed Terric to convey the 'lady queen' to Gloucester Castle. Once at Gloucester, Isabella was installed in the chamber where, John recalled with a surprising eye for fatherly detail, their eldest daughter, Joan, had been nursed.<sup>22</sup> During the early months of 1215, under Terric's watchful supervision, the queen and her household visited Berkhamsted again and later Winchester

in Hampshire, where she enjoyed the company of her eldest son, Henry.<sup>23</sup> Mother and son then travelled on together to Marlborough Castle in Wiltshire in May 1215.<sup>24</sup> With the resumption of civil war between the king and his rebel barons later that summer, when the king refused to be bound by the terms of Magna Carta, Isabella and Henry moved, yet again, on John's orders so that they might enjoy the greater protection offered by Corfe.<sup>25</sup>

It was against this immediate political backdrop that Isabella of Angoulême gave birth to Eleanor, her third daughter to survive infancy. The chroniclers' failure to note Eleanor's entry into the world was also, in part, a reflection of the patriarchal values to which the noble landholding elite of thirteenth-century England subscribed. These values were firmly underpinned by church teachings on gender roles and scientific beliefs about gender difference inherited from the ancient world. Women were regarded as weak and irrational creatures, who were inferior to men, and who therefore ought to be subject to male authority.<sup>26</sup> The male-dominated military society into which Eleanor was born favoured patrilineal primogeniture, the descent of lands through the eldest male child.<sup>27</sup> Sons were typically preferred to daughters as a means of securing the succession, stabilizing the future of the bloodline and exercising effective lordship.<sup>28</sup> Thirteenth-century chroniclers noted the births in 1207 and 1209 of Henry, the heir to the throne, and of Richard, King John's younger son, as well as that in 1210 of the royal couple's eldest daughter, Joan, but not apparently those of the younger Isabella or Eleanor.<sup>29</sup> In order to establish the dates of birth of John's youngest daughters, we are reduced to conjecture. If the statement of the St Albans chronicler, Roger of Wendover, is accurate and Isabella was twenty-one at the time of her marriage to the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick II of Hohenstaufen, in 1235, then she was probably born in 1214.<sup>30</sup> Other, circumstantial evidence indicates that 1214 was, indeed, the year of Isabella's birth. Isabella was not a name that had previously been used within the Angevin ruling dynasty. In naming his second daughter Isabella, John therefore introduced a new woman's name into his lineage. If, as seems likely, the younger Isabella was born when her parents were in Poitou, then this might explain their decision to name her after the queen, who was, after all, heiress to the county of Angoulême. It might be seen, in part, as a move that was designed to curry favour with her mother's vassals by acknowledging the older Isabella's presence on the Poitevin expedition and thereby reminding them of her position as their liege lady.

If the younger Isabella was born in 1214, presumably Eleanor as her younger sister was born in 1215 or perhaps 1216.<sup>31</sup> The practice among the nobility of handing over babies to wet nurses soon after birth allowed noblewomen to