

From the *Transactions* of the
Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society

**Aristocratic Poachers in the Forest of Dean: their methods, their
quarry and their companions**

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2001, Vol. 119, 147-154

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Aristocratic Poachers in the Forest of Dean: their methods, their quarry and their companions

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Among the many poachers active in the Forest of Dean in the second half of the 13th century were a small number of men of knightly or baronial status; their exploits are described in the records of the forest courts, and they give us a rare glimpse of aristocratic hunting, even if in rather special circumstances. We are told, at least in part, how and when these men hunted, whom they chose as their companions, and what they did with their booty. Hunting was one of the chief pursuits of men of this class, and a study of these incidents may shed light not only on their hunting practices but also on their lifestyle, their outlook and their contacts.

Dean was a royal forest, which meant that only the king or those with his warrant could enter it to hunt the four ‘beasts of the forest’, that is the red, fallow and roe deer and the wild boar.¹ Offences against ‘the king’s venison’ (the word was used for all four beasts) could only be terminated at a forest eyre, that is, at the main forest court. The procedure when poaching offences were discovered varied with the circumstances, but in general offenders were bailed to appear at the next eyre, when they were fined a cash sum. By the second half of the 13th century forest eyres were held at only infrequent intervals: the procedure was to fall into disuse early in the next century, when, in any case, the royal forests were much reduced in size. Just three eyres were held for the Forest of Dean during this period, in 1258, 1270 and 1282. The records of the last two eyres, in particular, devote many membranes to ‘venison offences’, the high-status poachers to be discussed here constituting only a minority of the offenders presented.²

These poachers included two earls, Roger Bigod and Humphrey de Bohun, a handful of minor barons and a slightly larger number of knights. It is difficult to tell how serious a matter poaching in the royal forest was for men such as these, just as it is difficult to know whether the offences described here were one-off events or only some of many similar activities. It is likely that a number of unauthorised aristocratic hunting expeditions in the royal forests went unrecorded. Some lords hunted in collusion with the foresters: the constable of St. Briavels Castle, it was reported at the 1282 eyre, had promised John Bigod, brother of Earl Roger Bigod IV, a hunt of a doe.³ Other lords no doubt hoped that the foresters would balk at tackling them: Sir John de Bohun, it was noted at the same eyre, ‘had been seen by the foresters [poaching in the forest in 1275] but they had been unable (*non potunt*) to arrest him’.⁴ There was no disgrace in being caught hunting in the royal forests, and for men such as these, the penalties for being caught were not too serious. Royal displeasure seems often to have been short-lived, and the fine, though it was higher for men of high rank and was determined by the status of the offender as much as the seriousness of the offence, rarely represented a crippling burden at this period. The cases of offenders of baronial status were customarily respited and settled by payment of a fine negotiated with the king at a later date. Most offenders of knightly status were required at these eyres to pay a fine of £5.⁵ For a man like Sir Walter of Huntley, whose taxable wealth was assessed in 1292 at £99, this was hardly a ruinous sum.⁶ Even so, encounters with forest law and

royal displeasure were better avoided, and it may well be that the barons and knights who resorted to poaching in the Forest of Dean were exceptionally keen hunters.

The eyre rolls suggest a range of different circumstances as background to their expeditions. The offence of Roger Bigod, earl of Norfolk and Suffolk, was to have pursued into Dean deer he had started in his own hunting preserve of Tidenham Chase.⁷ The Bigods had acquired the honor of Striguil in mid century and in particular Roger IV, who succeeded in 1270, often stayed at Chepstow; he made improvements to the castle and he hunted in the chase that went with the lordship and lay at the southern tip of the forest, between the two rivers of Severn and Wye. He seems to have adopted a generally cavalier attitude towards the royal forest that adjoined his lands; his own servants poached there, perhaps to supply the earl's larder, and the chase had a reputation for harbouring poachers.⁸ Roger IV's predecessor, too, it was said at the 1280 eyre, had poached in Dean when at Chepstow. This was a familiar situation; baronial chases frequently adjoined royal forests, from which they had often originally been appropriated, and the potential for trouble was obvious. Hunters in other chases adjoining Dean also strayed into the royal forest. It was when hunting in Penyard Chase, at the north-west tip of Dean, in August 1260, that a party led by John, son of the Herefordshire baron, Robert Tregoz, entered the forest in pursuit of a hart, and it was after starting a hart in Hadnock Chase, on the western edge of the forest, that William de Coleville of Monmouth entered Dean in May 1278.⁹ Tregoz and Coleville may have been hunting with the permission of the owners of the two chases, respectively the bishops of Hereford and the lords of Monmouth, but it is more likely that a poaching expedition begun in a 'private' forest had led on to one in the royal forest.

Other high-status poachers set out with the express intention of poaching in the Forest of Dean. One was Maurice of Berkeley, who returned with his party, and with the venison they had taken, to the Berkeley manor of Arlingham after an expedition into the forest in August 1269; Arlingham was conveniently situated just across the Severn from the forest, close to the crossing at Newnham.¹⁰ Similarly, Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford, set out from the Bohun manor of Wheatenhurst (Whitminster), also within reach of the Newnham crossing, to poach in Dean in August 1275; he spent the night at the Flaxley Abbey grange of Arldand, also conveniently situated for the Newnham passage, with or without the knowledge of the abbot, before returning to Wheatenhurst with his booty next day.¹¹ Another aristocratic poacher to cross the Severn to hunt in Dean, in the summer of 1275, was John de Bohun, who held a manor at Haresfield; he both entered and left the forest via the house of a notorious poacher of Alvington, who joined the party (and to whose role I will return).¹² It seems likely that it was also on his way to or from Haresfield, where he held land, that John fitz Reginald fitz Peter 'came through the forest' in January 1276, pausing long enough to take two deer which he carried away with him.¹³ High-status poachers entered Dean from every direction. John, son of Geoffrey d'Abitot, poached from his father's house at Redmarley D'Abitot, several miles north of the forest, in October 1270.¹⁴ Walter of Huntley had a much shorter return journey 'to his house near Monmouth' with the venison he had poached in November 1257.¹⁵ It is less clear how Hugh Lovel, a minor baron of Castle Cary (Somerset), came to be poaching in Dean in the summer of 1268, but he was clearly no stranger to the area, as he was received, 'with his men' (*cum hominibus suis*), at the house in Aluredestone (in Woolaston) of William of Derneford of Deerhurst.¹⁶ Whatever the connection between these two men, Lovel was by no means the only poacher William of Derneford received at this residence.¹⁷

Men such as these did not, of course, hunt alone, and their choice of hunting companions is revealing. Sometimes, the groups were family parties, knights and barons hunting with their brothers or their sons: Earl Roger Bigod hunted in Tidenham Chase and Dean in the company of his two brothers, Ralph and John; Walter de Caple, a Herefordshire knight, took his two

sons, John and Nicholas, with him when he poached in Dean in 1278.¹⁸ The wealthier poachers were accompanied by members of their *familia*, or household. Sir Walter de Beauchamp of Alcester had his squire with him when he poached in Dean in 1275; this was the future knight, active in Herefordshire, John de Sapy.¹⁹ Those accompanying Earl Humphrey de Bohun when he poached in 1275 included his fewterer, referred to only by what was probably a nickname, 'Blakeng'. To keep specialist hunting servants—a fewterer was responsible for the care and management of greyhounds—was, of course, expensive; such servants rarely appear in these records, and then only in connection with men of baronial status. Among those who employed huntsmen were the Bigod earls.²⁰ So were the Tregoz family. The young John Tregoz already had a huntsman, a certain Geoffrey Colfax, when he hunted in Dean in August 1260, that is, before succeeding to the barony on the death of his father at Evesham in 1265. His widowed mother, Juliana Tregoz, kept her own huntsman, Thomas, and also a fewterer, John Cricket; these two servants were presented for poaching in Dean in June 1278, together with Juliana's 'yeoman' (*valettus*), John Warin; they were clearly hunting on her behalf, as they returned with the venison to her house at Eaton Tregose and as she fined for them at the eyre.²¹

There is no mention of hunting servants or household in the case of the more modest knights, but we see hints of friendships and more business-based connections in their choice of companions. Sir Walter de Caple hunted with a man of similar status, a Gloucestershire knight with interests in Herefordshire, Richard de Solers. Walter also had connections with the Tregoz family, whose manor of Eaton Tregose adjoined How Caple. In 1278, when Juliana Tregoz was granted two roebucks in Dean by Roger de Clifford, she assigned Walter de Caple to take them, rather than her own servants; this was no doubt an exercise in patronage, by which Walter, clearly a keen hunter, received the favour of an opportunity to hunt legitimately in the forest.²² The Caple/Tregoz connection is further suggested by the fact that Walter's son, John, was with Juliana Tregoz's three servants when they were hunting in Dean on her behalf in June 1278. A different set of connections is suggested by the companion with whom the young John d'Abitot hunted in Dean in 1270; this was William le Frankeleyn of Cheltenham, who it is tempting to suspect was an ancestor of the William of Cheltenham who loomed large in Gloucestershire politics in the 14th century, and who, like the d'Abitots, served the baronial family of Berkeley.²³

Yet another type of contact is suggested by other hunting companions. As we have seen, Sir John de Bohun of Haresfield hunted in the Forest of Dean with a habitual poacher from Alvington, a certain Roger Russell, a man who makes frequent appearances in these records. It was probably Russell's familiarity with the forest and his hunting skills that caused John de Bohun to seek his company in 1275, when he employed him as a 'guide' (*ductor*). Russell is first heard of at the 1270 eyre, and seems to have enjoyed a poaching career lasting several years.²⁴ He must have acquired a certain reputation; when a forester from Braydon (Wilts.), William de la Hok, came to Dean in 1275 and poached there (the circumstances are not explained), he was received at Russell's house in Alvington.²⁵

There are frequent indications of contacts between habitual poachers and high-status hunters and ample evidence of a readiness on the part of the latter to make use of such men when it suited them. Some of these poachers came from the lower fringes of the gentry, but not all of them. William de Coleville hunted with a companion with the suggestive surname of 'le Sculkere'. Maurice of Berkeley frequently allowed his hounds to be used by a pair of notorious poachers, Walter of Blakeney and his son Philip, who were probably from a very minor gentry family; on one such occasion, when Walter, Philip and a certain Adam le Stille of Arlingham took a hart with Maurice's hounds, they carried the venison back to Arlingham, where they presented some of it to Maurice.²⁶ In October 1276, John fitz Reginald employed Walter of Blakeney and another habitual lesser gentry poacher, Walter de Okle of Newent, to poach two

deer he wanted for a special occasion, that is, for a banquet at the house of Philip of Matson; the two poachers delivered the venison to John's house at Haresfield, from where it was carried to Matson (just south of Gloucester). We are reminded of the special status of venison, a welcome component of any festive meal, here probably eaten fresh, and perhaps all the more enjoyable in the knowledge of its dubious origins.²⁷ The house of the Hereford dean and chapter at Lydney allegedly harboured poachers, who supplied then with venison, and when Master Thomas de Ingoldesthorp, a canon of the cathedral, was granted five deer by the king, it was to a regular poacher, John son of Isabel of the Lea, that he turned to get them caught. Thomas was unworried by John's previous offences; John took advantage of this opportunity to hunt legitimately to poach a couple of deer for himself.²⁸

It will have become apparent that these men showed little interest in poaching the wild boar that were still to be found in Dean. These animals were hunted at this period by the king's professional huntsmen, for the royal larder or as gifts for favoured individuals, but they seem not to have attracted high-status poachers.²⁹ The boar hunt, notoriously testing and dangerous for the hunter, continued to figure in literature, but not many hunters, in practice, can have had experience of boar hunting.³⁰ Boar were occasionally poached, but the handful of offenders presented at these eyres were men of lesser status.³¹ Nor did high-status poachers show much interest in the roe deer; this may have been because roe were small and carried little flesh, or because they were particularly elusive, posing unpalatable problems for the huntsman, or perhaps a combination of both.

The chief targets of the aristocratic poachers were the red and fallow deer. The hart was traditionally the most prestigious hunting quarry, thanks to its size and strength and its ability to run long distances, so providing good sport. There are indications of this capacity in the accounts of some of these offences, with harts frequently started in one part of the forest and only eventually killed some distance away; it was a hart that was started in Penyard Chase by John Tregoz and pursued into Dean in 1260; and it was a hart started in Hadnock Chase in 1278 by William de Coleville that ran into the forest, despite being hit by an arrow while still in the chase. Juliana Tregoz's servants, in June 1278, started a hart in the bailiwick of the Lea, in the far north of the forest, where they shot it with an arrow, but it was nevertheless able to run south-west into Bishop's Wood, on the county boundary, fairly close to the river Wye, before they could take it.³² However, fallow deer were probably already in a majority in the forest of Dean by this period, and most of the deer taken by these poachers were bucks or does.³³

Some light is thrown on hunting methods by the descriptions of offences in the court records, which often include details such as references to weapons or dogs. We must treat the records with a degree of caution, of course, but there seems no reason, as a general rule, to doubt the veracity of the details that are included; the brief accounts of the incidents are notably free of formula, the information falls into consistent patterns and much of the incidental detail, for example, that relating to the behaviour of the hunted deer, carries conviction; harts run long distances, fallow deer congregate in herds.

As we have seen, these parties were frequently armed with bows and arrows. A striking example is that of John de Bohun, who, in July 1275, left the house at Alvington of Roger Russell, his *ductor*, 'at night' and remained in the forest all next day, 'shooting until nightfall' (*bersantes usque infra noctem*). Bows and arrows were probably usually used in combination with dogs. The record is almost always specific about the type of dog, and most common by far were greyhounds (*leporariis*). Greyhounds hunted by sight, as opposed to scent; they were speedy and willing to seize and pull down their quarry as soon as they reached it, though a strong animal might shake them off and escape by outrunning them.³⁴ The number of greyhounds employed

seems generally not to have been large. Robert de Chandos took a hart in January 1250 in the company of five men 'on foot', armed with bows and arrows and just four greyhounds.³⁵ Walter of Huntley, poaching with a larger company ('many others unknown', says the eyre roll), took two bucks with bows and arrows and eight hounds in November 1257. Perhaps, in these cases, the deer were driven by the hounds past the waiting archers. Often, greyhounds alone are mentioned, as when Walter de Beauchamp, with John de Sapy and others of his household, took two deer in June 1275, or when Humphrey de Bohun took two does with his fewerer and others of his household in August 1275, or when John fitz Reginald took a buck and a doe in January 1276. When John Bigod was assigned by his brother Earl Roger to take two bucks he had been granted by the king in 1279, he, too, used greyhounds, which he 'set at' (*fecit amessare*) a herd of fallow deer; they took a buck and a doe. These parties may have been coursing or hunting with hounds but no other weapons than their knives, but it is also possible that they had bows and arrows which the record omits to mention.

The only other dogs mentioned in connection with these aristocratic hunters are running dogs (*canes currentes*). Running dogs were burlier and stronger than greyhounds, though slower, and they hunted by scent. Their virtues primarily suited them to the longer chases of stag hunting, and they were the basis of the most prestigious hunting of all, which has coloured so many descriptions of medieval hunting, *par force de chiens*, in which a single hart was pursued by men and running dogs alone. It was quite possible, however, as we have seen, to take a hart with greyhounds alone. References to running dogs are infrequent, and it is presumably significant that, though a couple of these hunting parties included fewerers, no berners, the servants responsible for the management of running dogs, are mentioned. Among those who owned running dogs was Juliana Tregoz; they were used by her servants when they were hunting a hart on her behalf, in combination with bows and arrows; perhaps running dogs were employed by John Tregoz when hunting a hart in the incident already described, in August 1260, but this is a case where details of neither dogs nor weapons are recorded. Perhaps surprisingly, the combination of running dogs and greyhounds, together with bows and arrows, is recorded only in the case of a minor lord with land in Worcestershire, Gregory de Caldwell; he was hunting in summer, so presumably seeking either a hart or a buck, but whether he was successful is not recorded.³⁶

Also surprisingly, since they are not usually associated with aristocratic hunters, we find some of these lords using nets. Walter de Caple and Richard Solers employed them, apparently regularly, in combination with bows and arrows. They were also used by Roger Bigod, whose methods are described in some detail: he and his party, that is, his brothers and members of his household, first set their nets in 'a place called Barnage', described as two thirds of a furlong into the forest, next positioned greyhounds in the 'field of Rowley', a little deeper into the forest, about a furlong (220 yards) from the border of the chase, and then began their hunt in the chase. On one occasion described, of eight deer pursued out of the chase, one (a hart) was taken in the nets, while three bucks were taken by the greyhounds at a point some two furlongs into the forest. Given the aristocratic prejudice against hunting nets, it may be significant that it was noted at the 1280 eyre that Earl Roger's father, who had also poached in Dean when hunting with greyhounds in his chase, had not been in the habit of using nets.

Such detail is rare. Usually, we have only a sketchy indication of methods, and information about other aspects of the hunt is often lacking. We are told very little, for example, about how these hunters dealt with the carcass once the animal had been killed, beyond that they carried 'the venison' away with them. Was the carcass 'broken' or cut up in the forest? How were the hounds rewarded? Sadly, we are not told. When John d'Abitot returned to Redmarley after a successful expedition in 1270, he and his companions 'carried the venison with them on a horse',

one of the rare occasions when we are told how a carcass was transported. This is also one of the few references to horses. The extent to which horses were used during the course of the hunt is not at all clear; at any rate, their role signally failed to interest the court officials (just as it failed to interest the authors of medieval hunting treatises). Robert de Chandos, lord of Brockworth, was probably mounted at some stage when he took a hart in the forest in 1250, as five men with him are described as 'on foot', but his horse is not directly mentioned.

These records remind us that it was far from easy to catch deer in a forest with only bows and arrows and medieval hunting dogs, and we find what can only be described as a modest degree of success. Even with his nets and his carefully positioned greyhounds, and hunting on familiar territory in the company of his brothers and household, Roger Bigod let four out of seven bucks escape. It was difficult enough to hit a running deer with an arrow, and even more so to kill one outright; wounded deer often ran on and, if they were not pursued and found, were likely to die later in the forest. A buck shot and mortally wounded by Walter de Caple and Richard Solers eluded its pursuers, and its carcass was left to rot in a wood. Such carelessness or casualness on the part of high-status hunters was not confined to poaching expeditions. Both Edmund of Lancaster and William de Valence seem to have hunted fairly freely in the Forest of Dean in the 1270s, without warrant but confident of incurring no serious punishment. Both seem to have hunted profligately. When Edmund was hunting in the forest at Easter 1273 with a party including members of his household, they abandoned five wounded deer; their carcasses were later found half-eaten—no doubt by foxes or other vermin—in the forest. Similarly, later that year, William de Valence and his party wounded and abandoned in the forest nine deer, 'many of which died'; the blame, in this case, was put firmly at the door of the young men (*juvenes*) of the Valence household, perhaps less experienced or less disciplined hunters.³⁷

Whether from choice or necessity, the bags taken by these poachers were usually small. To take four bucks on one expedition, as Maurice of Berkeley did in August 1269, was unusual. Even after hunting all day in the company of Roger Russell, an experienced local poacher, armed with bows and arrows and with the assistance of greyhounds, John de Bohun took only a single doe in July 1275. This, it should be noted, was in the middle of summer; this was the season for hunting males, when they were building up fat for the rut and when their venison was at its best; the time for hunting females was winter. John de Bohun was not alone among these high-status hunters in ignoring the hunting seasons: Humphrey de Bohun took two does in August 1275; Walter de Beauchamp and John de Sapy took a doe in June 1275; conversely, John fitz Reginald took a buck as well as a doe in January 1276, when females were in season. Nor were these men averse to taking the occasional young animal, supposedly not yet fit to be hunted: Walter de Beauchamp took a soar, a young fallow deer in its third or fourth year, as well as a doe in June 1275. This was not the exceptional act of a careless poacher. No less a person than Edmund of Lancaster, hunting with at least tacit royal permission, took prickets as well as adult deer in Dean and, on one occasion, hunting from Monmouth, a fawn, that is a deer in its first year; one of Edmund's knights, Peter of Malmesbury, took a soar when hunting on his master's behalf.³⁸ In real life, hunting was a more rough and ready and less scrupulous activity than in the ideal world of the treatises.

The activities of the high-status poachers discussed here accounted for only a tiny proportion of all the hunting taking place in the forest at this period. There were numerous poachers of lower social status, many of them habitual offenders. Such men may well have loved hunting, but it was probably a desire for venison, either to eat themselves or to sell, that primarily motivated them to engage in this risky activity. The scale of their activities is difficult to judge but we know that their methods were often very different from those described above.³⁹ Also,

large numbers of deer, often tens or even scores at a time, were being hunted on the king's orders, often with some urgency, either to supply the needs of the royal household or to serve as gifts.⁴⁰ This was a task largely performed by royal officials such as the constable of St. Briavels Castle or the king's own full-time itinerant huntsmen; their methods, too, inevitably differed from those of the barons and knights discussed here. The barons and knights who became poachers in the forest were probably men addicted to the pleasures of the chase. Many had their own hunting preserves and their own sources of supply of venison. Some of them enjoyed occasional opportunities to hunt legally in the royal forest: Maurice of Berkeley was granted a buck by Sir Roger de Clifford, justice of the forest, in 1279, and hunted it himself; in the same year, Walter of Huntley took a score of deer—a hart, sixteen bucks and three roe—on behalf of Edmund of Lancaster, the king's brother.⁴¹ If men such as these also poached in the Forest of Dean, it must have been because the opportunities provided by occasional instances of patronage were too few and far between, and their own chases and deer parks too restricted, to satisfy their passion for hunting.

Notes

1. For the Forest of Dean, see M.L. Bazeley, 'The Forest of Dean in its Relations with the Crown during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* **33** (1910); C.E. Hart, *Royal Forest. A History of Dean's Woods as Producers of Timber* (Oxford, 1966) especially pp. 41–2. For the royal forests and forest law, see *Select pleas of the forest*, ed. G.J. Turner (Selden Soc. **13**, 1899); C.R. Young, *The Royal Forests of Medieval England* (Leicester, 1979). For the extent of the royal forest at this period, see M.L. Bazeley, 'The Extent of the English Forest in the Thirteenth Century', *Trans. Royal Historical Soc.* 4th series **4** (1921).
2. The eyres are Public Record Office (P.R.O.), E 32/28–30.
3. P.R.O., E32/30, m. 16.
4. *Ibid.* m. 14.
5. One, Walter de Caple, paid only five marks (£3 6s. 8d.: *ibid.* m. 10).
6. For Walter of Huntley, see R.R. Davies, *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales 1282–1400* (Oxford, 1978), p. 401.
7. P.R.O., E 32/30, m. 14d. For Tidenham Chase, see *Victoria History of the County of Gloucestershire (V.C.H. Glos.)* **10**, pp. 50ff.
8. P.R.O., E 32/29, m. 4 (see also E 32/30, m. 15d); E 32/30, m. 8d. For William de Coleville, see Davies, *Lordship and Society*, p. 95.
9. P.R.O., E 32/29, m. 17d.; E 32/30, mm. 12–14.
10. *Ibid.* E 32/29, m. 5d. For the Berkeleys, see W.J. Smith, 'The Rise of the Berkeleys: An Account of the Berkeleys of Berkeley Castle', *Trans. B.G.A.S.* **70** (1951). For the crossing, see *V.C.H. Glos.* **10**, p. 29.
11. P.R.O., E 32/30, m. 14. Ardland occupied the site of the later St. White's Farm: *V.C.H. Glos.* **5**, p. 140.
12. P.R.O., E 32/30, m. 14.
13. *Ibid.* m. 7d. For the holding in Haresfield, see *V.C.H. Glos.* **10**, p. 192.
14. P.R.O., E 32/29, m. 5d.
15. *Ibid.* m. 4. He committed a further offence in August 1259.
16. *Ibid.* E 32/30, m. 15d.
17. *Ibid.* E 32/29, m. 4d.
18. *Ibid.* E 32/30, m. 10. No women appear in these hunting parties, but Reginald fitz Peter's wife may have hunted in the forest: in 1253, the constable of St. Briavels Castle was instructed to allow her one hunt (*cursum*) when crossing the forest: *Close Rolls 1251–3*, p. 345.
19. Sapy had been knighted by the time of the 1282 eyre: P.R.O., E 32/30, m. 14.

20. See, for example, *ibid.* E 32/28, m. 3d.
21. *Ibid.* E 32/30, m. 10: Juliana fined fifteen marks (£10) at the eyre.
22. *Ibid.* mm. 10, 16d.
23. For William of Cheltenham, see N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 64–5. William le Frankeleyn fined five marks at the eyre, quite a high sum; Geoffrey d’Abitot fined for his son in Worcestershire.
24. P.R.O., E 32/29, m. 4d. He was bailed from imprisonment at St. Briavels Castle in October 1274: *Calendar of Close Rolls 1272–9*, p. 106; P.R.O., E 32/30, mm. 5d., 14, 25.
25. *Ibid.* E 32/30, m. 14.
26. *Ibid.* m. 10. Adam fined two marks. For the many venison offences of Walter and Philip of Blakeney, see *ibid.* mm. 7, 8, 10d., 13d., 14 and 15; see also *Calendar of Close Rolls 1279–88*, p. 79.
27. Philip of Matson fined 40s.: P.R.O., E 32/30, m. 8.
28. *Ibid.* E 32/29, mm. 5, 6.
29. O. Rackham, *Trees and woodland in the British landscape* (London, 1976, revised edn. London, 1990), p. 169. For some late boar hunts in Dean (1279 and 1281), see *Calendar of Close Rolls 1272–9*, p. 528; *1279–88*, p. 75; *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1272–81*, p. 371.
30. Anne Rooney, *Hunting in Middle English Literature* (Boydell, 1993), especially pp. 52, 78–85.
31. Among those who poached boars in Dean at this period (in October 1260) were three men associated with the de Grey establishment at Wilton (Herefordshire): P.R.O., E 32/29, m. 4d. Walter of Huntley, when hunting for Edmund of Lancaster in the summer of 1279, took a boar as well as several deer: *ibid.* E 32/30, m. 16.
32. A hart started in Tidenham Chase by Roger Bigod’s huntsman in October 1250 ran as far as Cone Pill, on the banks of the Severn, before it was taken and carried back to Chepstow: *ibid.* E 32/28, m. 3d.
33. Bazeley, ‘Forest of Dean in its Relations with the Crown’, especially p. 165; see also O. Rackham, *Ancient Woodland* (London, 1980), pp. 182–3.
34. J. Cummins, *The Hound and the Hawk. The Art of Medieval Hunting* (London, 1988), p. 13.
35. P.R.O., E 32/28, m. 3.
36. *Ibid.* E 32/29, m. 4. For Gregory, see *Calendar of Close Rolls 1272–9*, p. 311; *V.C.H. Worcestershire 3*, p. 458.
37. P.R.O., E 32/30, m. 16 and d.
38. *Ibid.* m. 16.
39. J. Birrell, ‘Peasant deer poachers in the medieval forest’, in *Progress and Problems in Medieval England*, ed. R. Britnell and J. Hatcher (Cambridge, 1996).
40. In August 1278, for example, orders were given for a hundred bucks to be caught in Dean and sent to Westminster by Michaelmas (29 September): *Calendar of Close Rolls 1272–9*, p. 474.
41. P.R.O., E 32/30, m. 16 and d.; see *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1272–81*, p. 371.