

= Siward Barn =

Siward Barn (Old English : Sigeweard Bearn) was an 11th @-@ century English thegn and landowner @-@ warrior . He appears in the extant sources in the period following the Norman Conquest of England , joining the northern resistance to William the Conqueror by the end of the 1060s . Siward 's resistance continued until his capture on the Isle of Ely alongside Æthelwine , Bishop of Durham , Earl Morcar , and Hereward (" the Wake ") as cited in the Anglo @-@ Saxon Chronicle . Siward and his confiscated properties in central and northern England were mentioned in Domesday Book , and from this it is clear that he was one of the main antecessors of Henry de Ferrers , father of Robert de Ferrers , the first Earl of Derby .

Following his capture in 1071 , he was imprisoned . This incarceration lasted until 1087 , when a guilt @-@ ridden King William , in expectation of his own death , ordered Siward 's release . Firm evidence of Siward 's later life is non @-@ existent , but some historians have argued that he took up a career in the Varangian Guard at Constantinople , in the service of the Emperor Alexios I Komnenos . The sources upon which this theory is based also allege that Siward led a party of English colonists to the Black Sea , who renamed their conquered territory New England .

= = Origins = =

Identifying Siward 's origin is difficult for historians because of the large number of Siwards in England in the mid @-@ 11th century . Other notable Siwards include Siward of Maldon and Siward Grossus , both men of substance with landholdings larger or comparable to Siward Barn 's . The Anglo @-@ Norman writer Orderic Vitalis , when describing William the Conqueror 's stay at Barking , says that Morcar , formerly Earl of Northumbria , and Edwine , Earl of Mercia , came and submitted to King William , followed by Copsi , Earl of Northumbria , along with Thurkil of Limis , Eadric the Wild , and " Ealdred and Siward , the sons of Æthelgar , grandsons [or grand @-@ nephews] (pronepotes) of King Edward " .

Edward Augustus Freeman and other historians have thought that this Siward was Siward Barn , arguing that Siward must have been a descendant of Uhtred the Bold , Earl of Northumbria , and Ælfgifu , daughter of King Æthelred the Unready , King Edward 's father . Historian and translator of Orderic , Marjorie Chibnall , pointed out that this Siward is mentioned later in his Ecclesiastical History as a Shropshire landowner , in connection with the foundation of Shrewsbury Abbey . Ann Williams likewise rejected this identification , identifying this Siward firmly with the Shropshire thegn Siward Grossus . According to Williams ' reconstruction , Siward Grossus and his brother Ealdred were the sons of Æthelgar by a daughter of Eadric Streona , Ealdorman of Mercia and Eadgyth , another daughter of King Æthelred , explaining the relationship Orderic believed they had with Edward the Confessor .

Another historian , Forrest Scott , guessed that Siward was a member of the family of Northumbrian earls , presumably connected in some way to Siward , Earl of Northumbria . Margaret Faull and Marie Stinson , the editors of the Phillimore Domesday Book for Yorkshire , believed that Siward was " a senior member of the house of Bamburgh and possibly a brother or half @-@ brother of Earl Gospatric " . Another historian , Geoffrey Barrow , pointed out that Faull and Stinson gave no evidence for this assertion , and doubted the hypothesis because of Siward 's Danish name .

= = From York to Ely = =

In 1068 , there was a revolt in the north of England against the rule of King William , few details of which are recorded . It was serious enough to worry King William , who marched north and began the construction of castles at Warwick , Nottingham , York , Lincoln , Huntingdon and Cambridge . Earl Gospatric apparently fled to Scotland and in the beginning of 1069 King William appointed the Picard Robert de Comines as the new earl of Northumbria .

During the winter the English murdered Earl William and Robert fitz Richard , the custodian of the new castle at York , and trapped William Malet , the first Norman sheriff of York , in the castle . King

William went north in the spring or summer of 1069 , relieved the siege of Malet , and restored the castle , placing William fitz Osbern in charge . The leaders of the revolt were Edgar the Ætheling (claimant to the English throne) , Gospatric of Northumbria , and , among others , Mærle @-@ Sveinn , former sheriff of Lincoln , and many senior Northumbria nobles .

In the autumn of 1069 , a fleet under the Danish king Sweyn Estridsson and his brother Earl Osbjorn arrived off the coast of England . It is from this point that Siward 's involvement in the revolt is documented . Orderic Vitalis related that :

The Ætheling , Waltheof , Siward , and the other English leaders had joined the Danes ... The Danes reached York , and a general rising of the inhabitants swelled their ranks . Waltheof , Gospatric (Gaius Patricius) , Mærle @-@ Sveinn (Marius Suenus) , Elnoc , Arnketil , and the four sons of Karle were in the advance guard and led the Danish and Norwegian forces .

What followed was William 's most devastating punitive expedition , the so @-@ called " Harrying of the North " , conducted during the winter of 1069 / 70 . After two minor engagements disadvantageous to the Danes , King William came to an agreement with Earl Osbjorn that neutralised them . William held Christmas court at the ruined city of York , and brought Waltheof and Gospatric back into his peace at the River Tees .

Siward was at Wearmouth in the summer of 1070 , with Edgar and Mærle @-@ Sveinn , while William marched to the River Tyne with his marauding army . Although William burnt down the church of Jarrow , he left Edgar 's party undisturbed . Siward must have gone to Scotland in this year , for the Historia Regum reports that in 1071 Morcar (previously earl of Northumbria) and Hereward went by ship to the Isle of Ely , and that " Æthelwine , bishop of Durham , and Siward , nicknamed Barn , sailing back from Scotland " arrived there too . This is also related by the Anglo @-@ Saxon Chronicle , which confirms that :

Bishop Æthelwine and Siward Bearn came to Ely and many hundred men with them " .

It was at Ely that Siward and all the other notables , save Hereward , were captured by King William

= = Confiscation and release = =

By 1086 , perhaps soon before or after his capture , many of Siward 's lands were given to the Norman warrior Henry de Ferrers , though other successors included Geoffrey de La Guerche and William d 'Ecouis . According to the Domesday Book , in " the time of Edward " (TRE) , or rather on the day of the death of Edward the Confessor , Siward held twenty @-@ one manors in eight different English counties .

In Berkshire , Greenham (£ 8) , Lockinge (£ 10) and Stanford in the Vale (£ 30 ; now in Oxfordshire) ; in Gloucestershire , Lechlade (£ 20) ; in Warwickshire , Grendon (£ 2) , Burton Hastings (£ 4) and Harbury (£ 2) ; in Derbyshire , Brassington (£ 6) , Croxhall (£ 3) , Catton (£ 3) , Cubley (£ 5) , Norbury and Roston (£ 5) , Duffield (£ 9) , Breadhall (£ 4) , " Wormhill " (waste) and Moreley (waste) ; in Nottinghamshire , Leake (£ 6) and Bonnington (s . 6) ; in Yorkshire Adlingfleet (£ 4) ; in Lincolnshire , Whitton (£ 10) and Haxey (5) ; and in Norfolk Sheringham (£ 4) and Salthouse (£ 2) . Ann Williams doubted that the estates in Berkshire belonged to Siward Barn , noting the possibility that these estates belonged to Siward of Maldon .

The total value of his holdings is put at 142 libra (" pounds ") and 6 solidi (" shillings ") . Siward Barn ranks 21st out of all the English landowners in the time of King Edward below the rank of earl .

Nothing more is heard of Siward until 1087 , the year of the death of William the Conqueror . The Chronicle of John of Worcester relates that :

On his [King William 's] return [from France] fierce intestinal pains afflicted him , and he got worse from day to day . When , as his illness worsened , he felt the day of his death approaching , he set free his brother , Odo , bishop of Bayeux , earls Morkar and Roger , Siward called Barn , and Wulfnoth , King Harold 's brother (whom he had kept in custody since childhood) , as well as all he had kept imprisoned either in England or Normandy . Then he handed the English kingdom over to William [Rufus] , and granted the Norman duchy to Robert [Curthose] , who was then exiled in France . In this way , fortified by the holy viaticum , he abandoned both life and kingdom on

Thursday , 9 September , after ruling the English kingdom for twenty years , ten months , and twenty @-@ eight days .

A similar account is in the Anglo @-@ Saxon Chronicle , recension E , though specific names are omitted . This unfortunately is also the last notice of Siward in any near @-@ contemporary , reliable source .

= = Varangian and colonist ? = =

Two modern historians , however , have argued that Siward subsequently became a mercenary in the service of the Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos . A 13th @-@ century French chronicle known as the *Chronicon Laudunensis* (or *Chronicon universale anonymi Laudunensis* , " the anonymous universal chronicle of Laon ") and the 14th century Icelandic text , the *Játvarðar Saga* , a short saga devoted to the life of Edward the Confessor , both relate a story about English warriors who sail to Constantinople to escape the dominion of the Normans , and found a colony in the Black Sea called New England . The *Játvarðar Saga* says that the leader of this expedition was one " Siward earl of Gloucester " (*Sigurð jarl af Glocestr*) .

Siward and his force were said to have rescued Constantinople from a siege by " heathens " , after which the emperor Alexios offered Siward and his men positions in the Varangian Guard . According to both sources , Siward and some of the English expressed their desire to have a territory of their own , and so Alexios told them of a land over the sea that had formerly been part of the empire , but was now occupied by heathens . The emperor subsequently granted this land to the English , and a party led by Earl Siward sailed onwards to take control of it . The land , the sources allege , lay " 6 days north and north @-@ east of Constantinople " , a distance and direction that puts the territory somewhere in or around the Crimea and Sea of Azov . Earl Siward , after many battles , defeated and drove away the heathens . The *Chronicon Laudunensis* says that this territory was renamed " New England " , while the *Játvarðar Saga* claims that the towns of the land were named after English towns , including London and York . The *Chronicon* alleges that , later , the English rebelled against Byzantine authority and became pirates .

The theory that this Siward is Siward Barn was advocated by Jonathan Shepard and Christine Fell . Shepard pointed out , although never called " Earl of Gloucester " , Siward had holdings in Gloucestershire ? the only substantial Siward in Domesday Book with property in that county ? and was indeed a participant in resistance to the Normans . Shepard argued that the narrative in question referred not , as the *Chronicon Laudunensis* had asserted , to the 1070s , but to the 1090s , after Siward 's release from prison . Fell , while acknowledging that there were two Siwards participating in resistance to William the Conqueror , Siward Barn and Siward of Maldon , pointed out that Siward Barn is more prominent in the literary sources and , unlike Siward of Maldon , had property in Gloucestershire . Two other historians who have since commented on the point , John Godfrey and Ann Williams , accepted that the identification is tenuous and remained neutral .