

Early days.

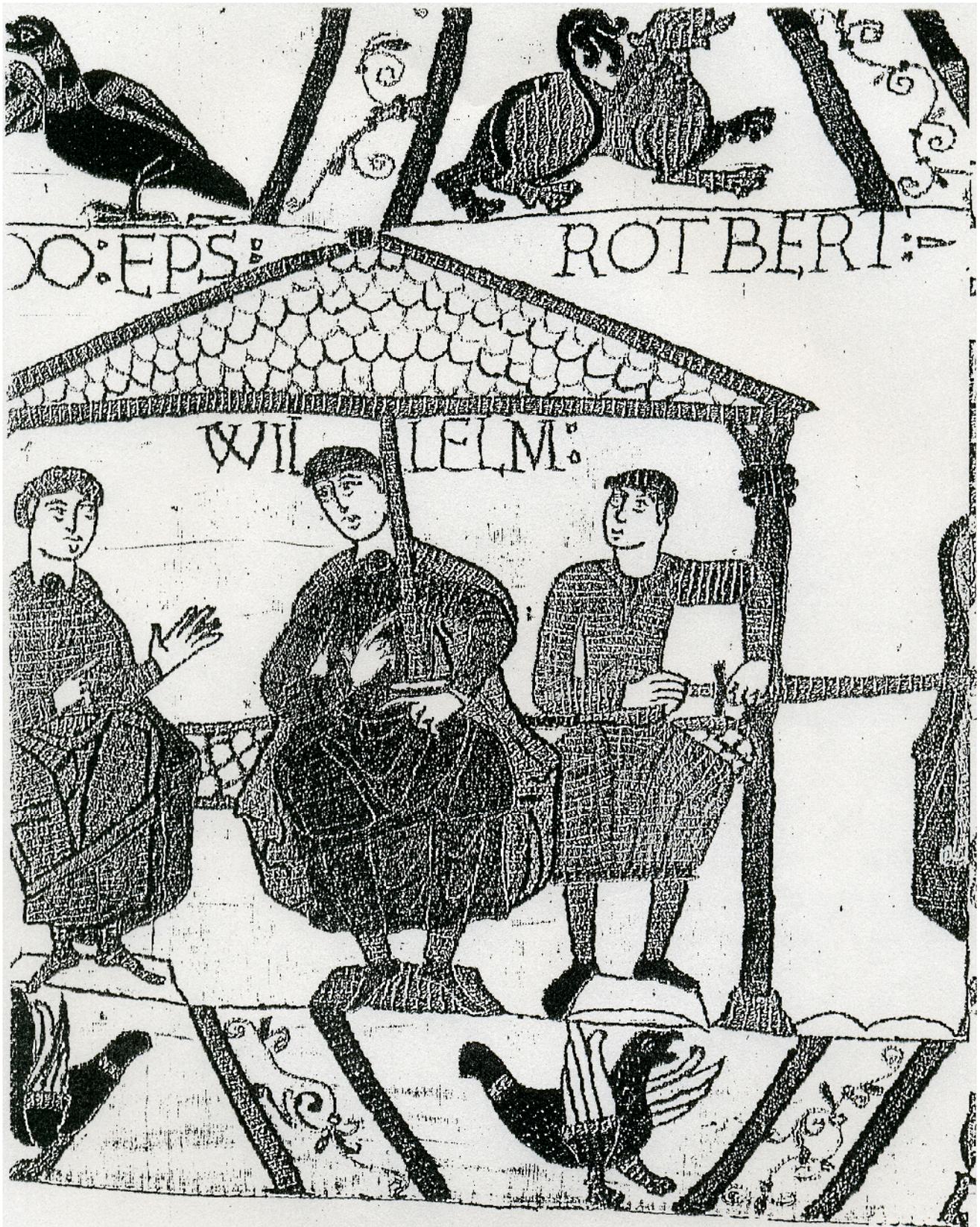
Headley Hall lies in the parish of Bramham in the Vale of York. At about the time of the Conquest Ligulf was the largest land-holder in the area., and it seems probable that the modern parish developed from his estates which were centred on Bramham. and Clifford, (The Lumley family trace their origin to Ligulf.) A. powerful and popular Saxon nobleman, he was murdered by a group of Norman knights in 1030.

William the Conqueror gave Ligulf's lands to his Closest followers, the manor of Branham going to half-brother) Robert Count of Murtain. William and. Robert are prominently portrayed on the Bayeux Tapestry and the Count himself sent in the Domesday returns for Bramham. 'there is the site of a mill there, a church and 6 priest. Wood. Pasture two miles long' and half a. mile broad... to this manor belongs the sake of Ronechetone (Monkton) one carucate, Foglesture (Toulston) one carucate, Ogiestrop (Oglethorp) one carucate and in Niweton (Newton) one carucate to be taxed. This 'Noakton' may or not be Headley; some sources claim it to be Munk Hay Stile, now in Branham Park, but as slakes were often several miles outside a parish it may refer to Moor Monkton, Headley is certainly a reasonable possibility given its proximity to the other named. settlements. [A Sake was a form of land-holding only found in the Danelaw counties of northern England; the farmers owned their

land but were bound to the lord of the manor by ties of homage and some service but they seem to have been exempt from actually labouring on the lord's demesne].

Even assuming that this Monechetone was indeed Headley, it would probably have been a very small settlement of only a few huts under the leadership of a sokeman who was responsible for the community's duties being carried out. The area was given as one carucate, which was possibly a fiscal rather than an agricultural measurement, In theory, it was the area **of** land which a single ox in the plough team could be assumed to have ploughed and in Yorkshire this seems to have been anything from about 64 to 120 acres. However, given the difficulties of interpreting Domesday, it would be unwise to rely too much on this measurement.

At the Domesday survey, most of Bramham and its sake were let to Nigel Fossard, a Norman knight and Count Robert's right-hand man in the north. But after Mortain was banished for alleged conspiracy in 1088, his estates were forfeited, Most of his Yorkshire manors then fell into the hands of this Nigel, who had previously been the Count's loyal vassal but managed to avoid any accusations of collusion with his former master, Instead of being a sub-tenant, he now became a tenant-in-chief which meant that he held his lands directly from the king in return for specified military service and total loyalty. It was a powerful position, a reward mainly reserved for those knights who had supported William in his great venture to conquer England



From the Bayeux Tapestry: Robert of Mortain (rt) with his half-brothers, the Conqueror (centre) and Odo (left).