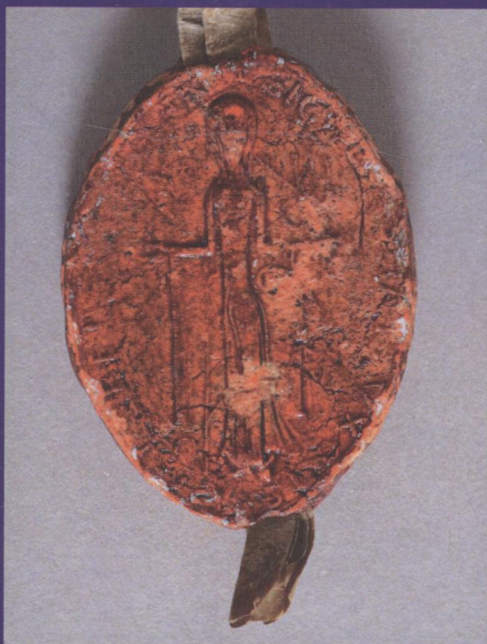


# High-Ranking Widows in Medieval Iceland and Yorkshire

*Property, Power, Marriage and Identity  
in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*



by  
Philadelphia Ricketts



BRILL

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LEIDEN • BOSTON

*Cover illustration:* The seal of Rohaise de Clare. © The British Library Board. Harl. Ch. 50.F.32.

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*Back cover illustration:* Western arch and doorway of Nun Monkton church, North Yorkshire.

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High-Ranking Widows in  
Medieval Iceland and Yorkshire

# The Northern World

North Europe and the Baltic c. 400–1700 A.D.  
Peoples, Economies and Cultures

*Editors*

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VOLUME 49

To my parents Bill and Ruby for their faith in me, and to my husband  
Mark for his constant encouragement and support, with all my love

## PREFACE

All medieval Icelandic personal names are spelled in standardized Old Icelandic in the nominative case, except where they are connected with other Old Icelandic words that require them to be inflected. Place names are spelled in modern Icelandic in the nominative. Old Icelandic nicknames are uncapitalized and italicized following Icelandic practice. Where they exist, the modern English equivalents of Latin personal names have been used. Thus, *'Aeliz'*, *'Alicia'* and *'Adeliza'* (among others) are all Alice. The one exception is Adeliza de Percy, whom I have chosen to refer to as Adeliza simply to add further differentiation to the large number of women in the book named Alice. When there is no common modern equivalent in English, as in the names Rohaise, Avise, Hawise and Juetta, I have chosen the form that is used most often in the secondary literature.

The Old Icelandic letters þ, ð and æ (capitalized Þ, Ð and Æ) have been retained, as have diacritical marks over vowels. The letter þ (thorn) is unvoiced and pronounced like 'th' in 'thing'. The letter ð (eth) is voiced and pronounced like 'th' in feather. Old Icelandic o and œ have been rendered as ö and æ following standard practice. For alphabetizing, the letter ð is found after d, but þ, æ and ö follow, in that order, z. Vowels with diacritical marks are intermingled with their unaccented counterparts when located in the middle of a word, but words which begin with these letters come after words beginning with their unaccented equivalent. Thus, Jochens, Jón, Jórunn, then Judith, but Agnes, Anna, then Álof.

Quotations are rendered in their original form, which has led to some discrepancies in spelling. Translations are my own unless otherwise stated. I have consulted and on the whole adopted the excellent translation of *Grágás* by A. Dennis, P. Foote and R. Perkins, eds. I have also referred to the translation of *Sturlunga saga* by J. McGrew and G. Thomas. However, I have rarely adopted this version because it is riddled with errors.

Scholars with hyphenated surnames are listed alphabetically in the bibliography by the first surname. Non-hyphenated surnames are under the final surname. Icelandic scholars are known by their first and second names in references, not by their patronymic (invariably

ending in -son or -dóttir). The only exception is when an Icelandic scholar has a hereditary surname, such as Guðrún Nordal. In these instances, the surname is used, and the usual referencing rules are followed. Their first names are, however, never abbreviated unless found in this format in articles published by them. All Icelandic scholars, regardless of surname, have been placed in the bibliography under their first name. This organization is in accordance with Icelandic practice.

References in footnotes are to page numbers unless otherwise stated.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to the kindness and generosity of many people and organizations. The Arts and Humanities Research Council awarded me a three-year studentship, making possible the doctoral thesis (University of Liverpool, 2005) that formed the basis of this book. Without their aid and compassionate consideration for my circumstances, there is little chance that I would have been able to undertake and complete such a project. I am also grateful to the American Historical Association for their generous contribution (in the form of the Bernadotte E. Schmitt grant) towards essential research. I must thank the University of Liverpool and the School of History for their ongoing support, both financially and academically, of my professional development. Finally, a one-year Economic History Society Eileen Power Postdoctoral Research Fellowship provided me with necessary funding, as well as an invigorating academic milieu at the Institute of Historical Research, in which to revise my thesis for publication.

There are several individuals whose guidance has proved invaluable. My doctoral supervisor, Professor Pauline Stafford, has been an enormous inspiration and motivator. She has provided assistance over and above that which is required, and she has always taken an active interest in my growth, both academic and personal. Her door has always been open when I needed to talk, and she has offered excellent guidance, encouragement, critical comments and advice. I appreciate her hard work and effort, and I am extremely fortunate to have found such an exemplary mentor.

Nic Percivall's friendship and academic interest in this book have never faltered. She has read far more drafts of my work than anyone should ever have to, and for that alone I have every reason to thank her. But she has also never refused to help me resolve a crisis, to lend an ear when I was baffled or discouraged, to help me thrash out an argument, or even to listen to me think aloud and clarify my thoughts. Our discussions have enhanced my understanding of medieval society and reinvigorated me when my enthusiasm was flagging, while her insights have greatly added to the refinement my arguments. I cannot express how much her conversation and friendship have helped me, and I am forever grateful.

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There are many more people who have helped me achieve my goal of completing this book, and I cannot name you all here. Be assured that I appreciate all the little kindnesses and help you have given me since I embarked on my studies.

I owe many thanks to the librarians, archivists and staff at the University of Liverpool Library in Liverpool; the British Library and the Public Record Office in London; St. Johns College Library and the Bodleian Library in Oxford; the Cumbria Record Office in Whitehaven; and Durham Cathedral archives. I am also grateful to the Duke of Northumberland for access to the Percy cartulary, and to the very helpful archivists at Alnwick castle, Northumbria.

The cover image shows the seal of Rohaise de Clare, Harl. Ch. 50.F.32, reproduced by permission of the British Library.

Finally, I cannot end without thanking my family for their tremendous support and good will. My parents have encouraged and supported me in all my endeavours without faltering, and they have always believed in my ability to complete this book. My husband

has assisted me in every way, doing more than his fair share of the mundane household tasks and proofreading. He has also encouraged, cajoled, pushed, consoled and bribed, all the while tolerating much without complaint. My sons have been a source of comfort and joy when I felt as if I could not keep going. I cannot express how much your love has sustained me. Thank you.

## ABBREVIATIONS

<i>Abstracts</i>	<i>Abstracts of the Charters and other Documents contained in the Chartulary of the Cistercian Abbey of Fountains</i> , ed. W.T. Lancaster, 2 vols. (Leeds, 1915).
<i>Fountains cart.</i>	
ANS	<i>Anglo-Norman Studies</i>
BL	British Library
<i>Book of Fees</i>	<i>Liber Feodorum: The Book of Fees Commonly Called Testa de Nevill, reformed from the earliest MSS by the Deputy Keeper of the Records</i> , HMSO, 3 vols (London, 1920–31).
CC	Coronation Charter of Henry I, in <i>Select Charters and Other Illustrations of English Constitutional History from the Earliest Times to the Reign of Edward the First</i> , ed. W. Stubbs, 9th edn (Oxford, 1913), 116–9.
II Cnut	II Cnut, in <i>English Historical Documents, c. 500–1042</i> , ed. and trans. D. Whitelock, 2nd edn (London, 1955), vol. 1, 455–67.
CP	Cokayne, G.E., <i>The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom</i> , revised edn, eds V. Gibbs, et al., 13 vols in 14 (London, 1910–59).
CRR	<i>Curia Regis Rolls of the Reigns of Richard I, John and Henry III, preserved in the Public Record Office, printed under the superintendence of the Deputy Keeper of the Records</i> , HMSO, 18 vols (London, 1922–79).
DB	<i>Domesday Book</i> , general ed. J. Morris, 38 vols (Chichester, 1986).
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
EYC	<i>Early Yorkshire Charters</i> , vols i–iii, ed. W. Farrer (Edinburgh, 1914–16), vols iv–xii and index to i–iii, ed. C.T. Clay, YAS Rec. Ser., extra series 1–10 (Wakefield, 1935–65).
<i>Fines, PRO</i>	<i>Feet of Fines in the Public Record Office of the Reign of Henry II and of the First Seven Years of Richard I, A.D. 1182–1196</i> , PRS, xvii (London, 1894).

<i>Fines, Richard</i>	<i>Feet of Fines of the Ninth Year of the Reign of King Richard I, 1197–1198</i> , PRS, xxiii (London, 1898).
<i>Fines, Warwickshire</i>	<i>Warwickshire Feet of Fines</i> , eds. E. Stokes and F.C. Wellstood (London, 1932).
<i>Fines, Yorkshire</i>	<i>Feet of Fines for the County of York</i> , ed. J. Parker, YAS Rec. Ser., lxii (from 1218 to 1231), lxxvii (from 1232 to 1246) (Wakefield, 1921, 1925).
<i>Glanvill</i>	<i>The Treatise on the Laws and Customs of the Realm of England Commonly called Glanvill</i> , edited with introduction, notes and translation by G.D.G. Hall, with a guide to further reading by M.T. Clanchy (Oxford, 1993).
<i>Grágás, Ia</i>	<i>Grágás. Islændernes Lovbog i Fristatens Tid, udgivet efter det kongelige Bibliotheks Haandskrift</i> , 2 parts, ed. Vilhjálmur Finsen (Copenhagen, 1852–70; reprinted Odense, 1974), part 1.
<i>Grágás, Ib</i>	<i>Grágás. Islændernes Lovbog i Fristatens Tid, udgivet efter det kongelige Bibliotheks Haandskrift</i> , 2 parts, ed. Vilhjálmur Finsen (Copenhagen, 1852–70; reprinted Odense, 1974), part 2.
<i>Grágás, II</i>	<i>Grágás. efter det Arnamagnæanske Haandskrift Nr. 334 fol., Staðarhólsbók</i> , ed. Vilhjálmur Finsen (Copenhagen, 1879; reprinted Odense, 1974).
<i>HKF</i>	Farrer, William, <i>Honors and Knights' Fees</i> , 3 vols (London and Manchester, 1923–5).
<i>HMSO</i>	His/Her Majesty's Stationery Office
<i>HSJ</i>	<i>Haskins Society Journal</i>
<i>Islandske Annaler</i>	<i>Islandske Annaler indtil 1578</i> , ed. G. Storm (Oslo, 1888).
<i>Leges</i>	<i>Leges Henrici Primi</i> , edited with translation and commentary by L.J. Downer (Oxford, 1972).
<i>Mon. Angl.</i>	Dugdale, William, <i>Monasticon Anglicanum</i> , eds. J. Caley, H. Ellis and B. Bandinel, 6 vols in 8 (London, 1817–30).
<i>Mowbray Charters</i>	<i>Charters of the Honour of Mowbray</i> , ed. D.E. Greenway, Records of Social and Economic History, new series i (London, 1972).
<i>P&amp;M</i>	Pollock, Frederick and Frederic William Maitland, <i>The History of English Law Before the Time</i>

- of Edward I*, reprinted with an introduction by S.F.C. Milsom, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1968).
- Percy cart.* *The Percy Chartulary*, ed. M.T. Martin, Surtees Society, cxvii (Durham, 1911).
- PR* *Pipe Rolls* of the reigns of Henry II, Richard I and John, eds. D.M. Stenton, et al., Publications of the PRS (London, 1883–1964).
- PRS* Pipe Roll Society
- Rec. Ser.* Record Series
- Red Book* *Red Book of the Exchequer*, ed. H. Hall, RS, xcix, 3 vols (London, 1896).
- RD* *Rotuli de dominabus et pueris et puellis de XII Comitatus*, ed. J.H. Round, PRS, xxxv (London, 1913).
- Rot. Chart.* *Rotuli Chartarum in Turri Londinensi asservati, (1199–1216)*, ed. T.D. Hardy, Public Record Commission, xxv (London, 1837).
- Rotuli Curiae Regis* *Rotuli Curiae Regis*, ed. F. Palgrave for the Public Record Commission, 2 vols (London, 1835).
- Rot. de Fin.* *Rotuli de Oblatis et Finibus in Turri Londinensi asservati, tempore Regis Johannis*, ed. T.D. Hardy, Public Record Commission, xx (London, 1835).
- RS* Rolls Series
- Seals BM* Birch, W. de G., *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum*, 6 vols (London, 1887–1900).
- Seals PRO* Ellis, Roger H., *Catalogue of Seals in the Public Record Office: Personal Seals*, 2 vols (London, 1978, 1981).
- SS* *Sturlunga saga*, eds Jón Jóhannesson et al., 2 vols (Reykjavík, 1946).
- St. Bees* *Register of the Priory of St. Bees*, ed. J. Wilson, Surtees Society, cxxvi (Durham and London, 1915).
- Topographer* Nichols, J.G., ed., *The Topographer and Genealogist*, 2 vols (London, 1846–53).
- TRHS* *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
- Whitby Cart.* *Cartularium Abbathiae de Whiteby*, ed. J.C. Atkinson, Surtees Society, lxix (Durham, London and Edinburgh, 1879).

- Wifmannes* *Be Wifmannes Bewedding*, in *English Historical Documents, c. 500–1042*, ed. and trans. D. Whitelock, 2nd edn (London, 1979), vol. 1, 467–8.
- YAS Yorkshire Archaeological Society

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