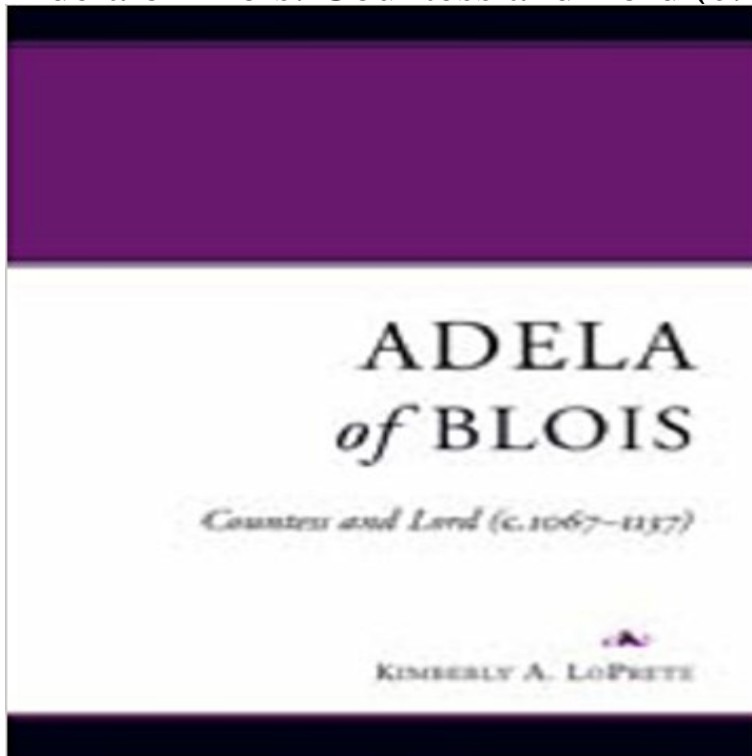


Adela of Blois: Countess and Lord (c.1067-1137)



Based on a comprehensive re-evaluation of unpublished and published charters, letters, poems, and narrative sources, this is the first scholarly volume devoted to the life and political career of Adela, the youngest daughter of William the Conqueror (c.1067-1137), who ruled as countess of Blois, Chartres and Meaux for over twenty years. Well-known to literary historians for generations, Adela, in this study, emerges as an active and able lord who used her status, literacy, wealth, familial and feudal networks and authoritative comital powers to intervene decisively in the turbulent powerE?politics of her day. Careful contextualisation of the sources shows that she was involved in both well- and littleknownE?events in ways hitherto unsuspected, while at the same time a re-analysis of the familial political alignments pertaining at the time of her marriage results in a positive reevaluation of the position of the Thibaudian counts of Blois, Chartres, Meaux and Troyes after their loss of Tours yet prior to their forging a county of Champagne. Thus, not only does this book provide a model for analysing the diverse fragmentary sources concerning powerful women, but it shows how accounting for womens recorded deeds results in a revised socio-political narrative of the period.

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