

The Gascoigne Family, c. 1309-1592: Gentry and Identity

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## Abstract

This thesis is an examination of the family in the late medieval and Tudor period. It is intended to demonstrate the potential of gentry studies which adopt an interdisciplinary framework through a combination of history and archaeology. It is also an examination of gentry identity and its relationship to the family. A single family will be used for this examination: the Gascoigne family of Yorkshire. Multiple branches will be examined, including the branches of Gawthorpe, Lasingcroft, Cardington and Hunslet. This enables the assessment to include the variances in identities between each branch of the family. Ultimately, this investigation reveals the complexity of identity within a singular family and posits the consequences of this in the wider historiographical debate.

Chapter One of this thesis will introduce the Gascoigne Family. It will bring together evidence from a myriad of different sources to recreate, as far as possible, the Gascoigne family history. Chapter Two assesses the social networks of the family, and ultimately discerns that career-based networks tend to be short-lived in comparison with networks based upon kinship and location. Chapters Three and Four considers the involvement of the Gascoigne family in politics and the law. It examines office-holding and magnate affinities and proposes that the appointment of William Gascoigne I as Chief Justice of England was the culmination of a period of politicisation within the legal sphere. Chapter Five examines the family's relationship with the landscape, with specific focus on tomb monuments and manorial complexes. This thesis concludes by showing that the Gascoigne family as a single entity cannot be adequately defined, and that interdisciplinary frameworks offer an opportunity for a deeper understanding of the past.

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The subject of my thesis was remarkably well-known. The Gascoignes were familiar to every academic of the late medieval and Tudor period, and many had different insights to give and provided valuable expertise. Moreover, many happened upon the odd reference or could point me in the direction of a random Gascoigne occurrence, and for all of those I give my thanks. Without their help in piecing together the vast story of the Gascoigne family, some of the common misconceptions would undoubtedly still stand.

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### **Author's Declaration**

I declare that, except where explicit reference has been made to the contribution of others, this thesis is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of York or any other institution.

### **Author's Note**

For the purpose of clarity this thesis has assigned each member of the Gascoigne family with a unique number. These numbers are written in subscript and follow the identification of an individual in text, where relevant. Moreover, these numbers can be traced on each family tree used in this thesis.

## Introduction

Some men have no better way to make themselves the most conspicuous persons in their family than by destroying the monuments of their ancestors, and raising themselves trophies out of their ruins.<sup>1</sup>

In 1728, antiquarian and future Norroy King-at-Arms, William Oldys (1696-1761), found himself a guest of Sir Thomas Watson-Wentworth (1693-1750) after losing his wealth during the collapse of the South Sea Bubble.<sup>2</sup> Sir Thomas was in the process of being appointed to the Barony of Malton and the words above recalled Oldy's horror after he witnessed the actions of the future Baron (and later Earl) of Malton, who had stacked high in his courtyard a large number of chests filled with documents, loose letters, books and deeds relating to his family and others in Yorkshire, which he had then proceeded to burn. Much of the collection had belonged to the Gascoigne family and apparently dated back to the Norman Conquest. The reason for such a heinous act was the fear, exacerbated by advice from his lawyers, that Sir Thomas' claim to his hereditary estates would be weakened by a thorough examination of such documentation.<sup>3</sup>

Most of the life's work of the antiquary Richard Gascoigne (1579-1661) was lost in the fire including his family research, genealogies and likely the final manuscript of his family history.<sup>4</sup> It is evident, given its notation in his memoirs, that the episode resonated with Oldys and it provides a reason as to why much of the Gascoignes' history prior to the acquisition of Parlington in 1546 remains unstudied: that considerable evidence no longer exists. So great was Sir Thomas Watson-Wentworth's fear that he

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<sup>1</sup> W. Oldys, *The Memoir of William Oldys, Esq., Norroy King-At-Arms. Together with his Diary, Choice Notes from his Adversaria, and an Account of the London Libraries* (London, 1862), x. Norroy King-at-Arms was one of the most senior heraldic appointments of the Crown, whose responsibilities included the settling of all matters relating to coats of arms, organising the ceremonies of state, and the preservation of genealogical and heraldic documents. Norroy's jurisdiction only extended north of the River Trent. The area south of the River Trent was the responsibility of Clarenceux King at Arms and both were responsible to Garter Principal King at Arms.

<sup>2</sup> The South Sea Bubble is the term generally given to the collapse of the South Sea Company in the 1720s. The joint-stock company was founded in 1711 to monopolise trade in South America. Due to British involvement in the Spanish War of Succession, and the Spanish dominance of South America, no trade took place and the after engaging in the purchase and sale of government debt, it failed with many investors losing considerable amounts of capital.

<sup>3</sup> R. E. O. Pearson, 'Gascoigne, Richard (*bap.* 1579)', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10423](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10423), accessed 29/02/2016. See too, F. S. Colman, *A History of the Parish of Barwick-in-Elmet* (Leeds, 1908).

<sup>4</sup> It has generally been supported that Richard's manuscript did survive the fire, and that it was included in his final bequests to Jesus College, Cambridge, alongside his considerable library. After an extensive search, this appears to be inaccurate.

would lose his title and his property that he chose to destroy his past, yet such episodes fascinate the historian and can help identify a person. It is ironic that the episode which reveals Sir Thomas' character to later historians is the very episode that prevents historians from ever knowing the character of his ancestors. Unlike the families of Plumpton, Stonor and Paston, the surviving records of the Gascoigne family do not include the personal remarks and private thoughts which allow historians to view the private and mental worlds of the late medieval and Tudor family from the proverbial horse's mouth.<sup>5</sup> Nor, unlike the Townshends of Norfolk, do records survive to detail the activity of their estates.<sup>6</sup> Yet, the family are not unrecognisable to the historian. William Shakespeare immortalised Sir William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419), Chief Justice of the King's Bench, in the second part of *Henry IV*; the political and theological commentaries of Chancellor of Oxford Thomas Gascoigne<sub>28</sub> (d. 1458) still survive; and the poetic and linguistic experimentations of infamous rogue George Gascoigne<sub>160</sub> (d. 1577) feature prominently in the discourse of sixteenth-century English literature.<sup>7</sup>

Many of the 234 individuals discussed in this thesis are not as well-known. For the most part, they belonged to the gentry: the collection of families located between the yeomanry and the peerage who were often styled as knights, esquires and, from the early

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<sup>5</sup> C. Richmond, 'The Pastons and London', in S. R. Jones, R. Marks and A. J. Minnis (eds.), *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe* (York, 2000), 211-216; P. C. Maddern, 'Honour Among the Pastons: Gender and Integrity in Fifteenth Century English Provincial Society', *JMH*, 14:4 (1988), 357-371; H. Castor, *Blood and Roses: The Paston Family in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 2004); E. Noble, *The World of the Stonors: A Gentry Society* (Woodbridge, 2009); C. Carpenter, 'The Stonor Circle in the Fifteenth Century', in R. E. Archer and S. Walker (eds.), *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England* (London, 1995), 175-200; A. Ruddick, 'Local Politics and Ecclesiastical Patronage in Gentry Letters', B. Thompson and J. Watts (eds.), *Political Society in Later Medieval England* (Martlesham, 2015), 93-122; J. Kirby, *The Plumpton Letters and Papers* (Cambridge, 1992), are just some examples of the pervasiveness of gentry letter collections in the study of the gentry.

<sup>6</sup> C. E. Moreton, *The Townshends and their World: Gentry, Law and Land in Norfolk, c. 1450-1551* (Oxford, 1992).

<sup>7</sup> R. M. Ball, *Thomas Gascoigne, Libraries and Scholarship* (Cambridge, 2006); M. F. Vaughan, 'Personal Politics and Thomas Gascoigne's account of Chaucer's death', *Medium Aevum*, 75:1 (2006), 103-122; G. Alexander, 'The Sources of the Verse Examples in Gascoigne's *Certayne Notes of Instruction*', *Notes and Queries*, 52:1 (2015), 52-53; E. Goldring, 'Gascoigne and Kenilworth: The Production, Reception and Afterlife of *The Princely Pleasures*', *ELR*, 44:3 (2014), 363-387; L. Huston, 'The Evidential Plot: Shakespeare and Gascoigne at Gray's Inn', in J. E. Archer, E. Goldring and S. Knight (eds.), *The Intellectual and Cultural World of the Early Modern Inns of Court* (Manchester, 2011), 244-263; S. C. Staub, 'Dissembling his Art: Gascoigne's Gardnings', *Renaissance Studies*, 25:1 (2011), 95-110; C. Mauré, 'Spectacle, Myth and Power in *The Princely Pleasures of Kenilworth* by George Gascoigne', in P. Drouet (ed.) *The Spectacular in and around Shakespeare* (Newcastle, 2009), 41-62; G. Austen, *George Gascoigne* (Woodbridge, 2008), K. P. Laam, 'Aging the Lover: The Lyrics of George Gascoigne's *Posies*', in E. Campbell (ed.), *Growing Old in Early Modern Europe: Cultural Representations* (Aldershot, 2006), 75-94.

fifteenth century, gentlemen. How the late medieval and Tudor gentry were defined has generated much discussion among historians. Deborah Youngs has noted that part of the gentry's identity was collective, and that it was based in social difference: to be judged a gentleman meant the acceptance of social equals and the deference of those below.<sup>8</sup> The gentry numbered approximately 6,000 families by the end of the fifteenth century, and this social group was fundamental to the governance of the realm and the localities, as numerous studies during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have revealed.<sup>9</sup>

This leads on to why the Gascoigne family are worth of study, and gives an opportunity to discuss the genesis of the project. This thesis was commissioned by the Arts and Humanities Research Council in 2013 as a part of a collaborative award with Lotherton Hall, a county house and museum based in West Yorkshire which was once the ancestral home of the post-medieval Gascoigne family. Initially this interdisciplinary project aimed to research the early Gascoigne family, their relationship with the surrounding landscape, local power structures, and what this meant for a gentry family, as well as the role of Gascoigne manorial complexes in relation to the family's identity. Through collaboration with the curator and staff at Lotherton Hall the evidence uncovered was substantial, yet manorial accounts and other documents relating to the Gascoigne family's landholdings were relatively sparse. Therefore, this thesis naturally evolved into one focused more on the identity of the family rather than the juxtaposition of family, place and power though to some degree those themes remain. As a final note, the findings of this thesis will be incorporated into exhibitions at Lotherton Hall.

The collaborative nature of this project is not the only reason why the Gascoigne family is worthy of study. Despite the destruction of part of the Gascoigne archive by Sir Thomas Watson Wentworth, evidence does survive in other archives and collections to detail the lives of the family. Secondly, the late medieval period saw a significant decline in the number of gentry families.<sup>10</sup> Some died out from disease or war, whilst others

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<sup>8</sup> D. Youngs, *Humphrey Newton*, 3. See too, C. Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility in the Later Middle Ages: The Fourteenth-Century Political Community* (London, 1987), ix; P. R. Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry* (Cambridge, 2003), 9-11.

<sup>9</sup> C. Given-Wilson, *English Nobility*, 69; T. B. Pugh, 'The Magnates, Knights and Gentry', in S. B. Chrimes, C. D. Ross and R. A. Griffiths (eds.), *Fifteenth-Century England: 1399-1509* (Manchester, 1972), 97-98; R. H. Britnell, *The Closing of the Middle Ages? England, 1471-1529* (Oxford, 1997), 190.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, P. Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry* (Cambridge, 2003), 91; C. Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1987), 70-71; P. Maddern, 'Social Mobility', in R. Horrox and W. M. Ormrod (eds.), *A Social History of England, 1200-1500*

failed in the male line. The Gascoignes were remarkably fortunate. Whilst the line of Lasingcroft was the only branch to survive in the male line until the twentieth century, the other family branches were generally long-lived, and therefore the family provides a plethora of individuals for study. The range of careers, experiences, social associations and wealth within this single family is exceptional. As Charles Moreton noted, the study of a single family can help balance the study of the gentry as a social group, which too often focuses on county or regional assessments of the gentry.<sup>11</sup> Thirdly, the study of the medieval and early modern gentry has often been restricted to those families for whom large archives survive. These archives often have a collection of letters, diaries and account books which make it possible to reconstruct the private aspects of their lives and the management of their estates. For the Gascoignes this ability to consider their private lives is not always possible and therefore an interdisciplinary approach has to be taken. The approach taken utilises historical and material evidence, and draws on archaeological perspectives, with specific relation to the material construction of identity. Their personal lives are restricted to a handful of letters exchanged with the Plumpton family during the late fifteenth century, a brief exchange between William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> of Cardington and Thomas Cromwell in the 1520s, and their scant appearances at the Consistory Court of York. However, combining the traditional historiographical approach with material evidence makes it possible for a study such as this to mitigate the absence of personal papers. Moreover, a combination of disciplines allows for a deeper, more nuanced, understanding of the past as it makes available source material that has otherwise been ignored by historians. This is especially the case for the Gascoigne family's identity, as material evidence survives from a number of their manorial estates and their funerary investments.

Finally, concepts of identity have significantly changed since the zenith of gentry studies in the 1980s and 1990s. Academically, in the early 1990s there was a considerable move away from binary definitions of identity towards multiple domains characterised by a spectrum of possibilities. This can be typified by the development of Queer Theory in Judith Butler's seminal work, *Gender Trouble*, published in 1990.<sup>12</sup> The gentry studies of the 1980s were published at a time when concepts of identity were relatively restrictive and were characterised as either normative or subversive. Since then concepts of identity have significantly changed, as can be seen by the surge in

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(Cambridge, 2006), 113-114; Carpenter, *Locality and Polity* 82-86; Payling, *Political Society*, 74-77; PS, 61; Mackman, 'Lincolnshire Gentry', 52-53.

<sup>11</sup> Moreton, *The Townshends*, 3.

<sup>12</sup> J. Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York, 1990).

revisionism concerning the role of women (and their considerable agency) in the late medieval and Tudor period.<sup>13</sup> Thus, although these studies provided the foundation of gentry research, it is important that the gentry are revisited (through the medium of large-scale studies) to re-examine the conclusions of those studies, as well as the gentry themselves, now concepts of identity have been revised.

The section above has situated the medieval Gascoigne family in their social group, as well as provided reasons as to why the Gascoignes are worthy of further study. The next section will briefly detail the earlier studies of the Gascoigne family, with particular focus on the antiquarian commentaries which perpetuated myths of the family's origins.

### The Gascoigne Family and Antiquarians

Of the Gascoigne Collection at the West Yorkshire Archive Service in Morley, most of the medieval and Tudor documents relate to the antiquary Richard Gascoigne. As far as it can be discerned, he spent much of his life researching his family and making copies of primary documents, some of which do not survive to today in any other form. Richard was born c. 1579, the son of George Gascoigne<sup>174</sup> and Mary Stokeley<sup>175</sup>. He studied at Jesus College, Cambridge and spent much of his life in the West Riding of Yorkshire.<sup>14</sup> He appears to have been impoverished, with some time spent in debtor's prison. In his biography of Richard Gascoigne, R. E. O. Pearson noted that Richard was a pedigree maker for members of the Yorkshire gentry, as his will claims he never received

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<sup>13</sup> See, for example, J. Burton and K. Stober (eds.), *Women in the Medieval Monastic World* (Turnhout, 2015); S. Broomhall (ed.), *Authority, Gender and Emotions in Late Medieval and Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 2015); B. Harris, 'Defining Themselves: English Aristocratic Women, 1450-1550', *Journal of British Studies*, 49:4 (2010), 734-752; C. Beattie, *Medieval Single Women: The Politics of Social Classification in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 2007); P. J. P. Goldberg, 'Gender and Matrimonial Litigation in the Church Courts in the Later Middle Ages: The Evidence', *Gender & History*, 19:1 (2007), 43-59; B. A. Hanawalt, *The Wealth of Wives: Women, Law and the Economy in Late Medieval London* (Oxford, 2007); M. C. Erler and M. Kowaleski (ed.), *Gendering the Master Narrative: Women and Power in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 2003); G. Walker, *Crime, Gender and Social Order in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2003); B. A. Hanawalt, *'Of Good and Ill Repute': Gender and Social Control in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1998); W. M. Ormrod, 'Queenship, Death and Agency: The Commemorations of Isabella of France and Philippa of Hainault', in C. M. Barron and C. Burgess (eds.), *Memory and Commemoration in Medieval England: Proceedings of the 2008 Harlaxton Symposium* (Donnington, 2010); W. M. Ormrod, 'The Sexualities of Edward II', in G. Dodd and A. Musson (eds.), *The Reign of Edward II: New Perspectives* (Woodbridge, 2006).

<sup>14</sup> Most the evidence I have been able to find regarding his life stems from: R. E. O. Pearson, 'Gascoigne, Richard (bap. 1579)', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10423](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10423), accessed 29/02/2016. See too, F. S. Colman, *A History of the Parish of Barwick-in-Elmet* (Leeds, 1908).

the £100 payment from Sir Thomas Darby for such services.<sup>15</sup> On his death in 1661, Richard split his possessions between Jesus College, Cambridge and his distant kin. The former received a rather generous bequest of books. The latter bequest appears to be the explanation as to how the family documents ended up in the possession of the Watson-Wentworths. I have been unable to find anything about his life, other than what Pearson and F. S. Colman recorded – the latter of which, it should be added, is notoriously unreliable in places. Amongst the collection at West Yorkshire Archive Service are some of Richard's notes which record the legends, myths and traditions surrounding the Gascoigne family, some of which will be outlined below.

According to the tradition laid down in the notes of Richard Gascoigne, the family arrived in England in 1066 as companions of William the Conqueror.<sup>16</sup> They originated, as etymologically indicated, from Gascony, where the family was already one of note. The family name was apparently recorded in the Battle Abbey roll following the church's completion in 1094.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, their service to William the Conqueror resulted in landed gains in the West Riding of Yorkshire, near to Harewood, which they would later come to own. I have examined this account of the family's origin and have found no evidence of it. There is no evidence to indicate that any Gascoigne was among the Conqueror's companions, and it is arguable that their appearance on some copies of the Battle Abbey roll was a result of greasy palms and a desire to create a false, yet prestigious, lineage.

Moreover, this was not the only false narrative Richard Gascoigne would propagate. A notation by Richard regarding the family heraldry concerned a trip he made to Lombard Street, London. He met a goldsmith there named Lawrence, who apparently shared his heraldry with the Gascoigne family. Lawrence regaled Gascoigne with a tale that upon arrival to England with the Conqueror three knights were granted heraldic devices for service to their lord, and each took part of their lord's device. The lord's device was a Lucie fish, and one knight adopted the head, whilst the other two adopted the tail and body.<sup>18</sup> He claimed, therefore, that those who had a similar fish head as their

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<sup>15</sup> R. E. O. Pearson, 'Gascoigne, Richard (*bap.* 1579)', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10423](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10423), accessed 29/02/2016.

<sup>16</sup> WYL GC/F5/1 f. 100a.

<sup>17</sup> The Battle Abbey Rolls, have been disputed by Camden and Dugdale; Also, see D. C. Douglas, 'Companions of the Conqueror', *History*, 28, 108 (1943), 129-147; B. Burke, *The Roll of Battle Abbey, Annotated* (London, 1848), 9.

<sup>18</sup> WYL GC/F5/1 f. 100a; This anecdote may also be the reason as to why some antiquarians and family historians believe there to be a connection between the Gascoigne family in Yorkshire and those in Southern England (there were two branches, one in Somerset and one in Sussex - both independent families) and I have been unable to discern any connection between them and the

heraldic device were all distantly related. Whilst this is theoretically possible, no evidence of Gascoigne heraldry survives before c. 1415 when it was employed by William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (c. 1350 - 1419), Chief Justice of the King's Bench.<sup>19</sup>

The most remarkable account from the writings of Richard Gascoigne regards the acquisition of the main Gascoigne estate of Gawthorpe. According to tradition, he noted, at some point during the thirteenth century a William Gascoigne married Matilda de Gawthorpe, the only daughter of John de Gawthorpe of Gawthorpe, after a precarious first encounter. Richard's narrative told of how Gawthorpe called for assistance after his daughter became submersed in the local pond during an angling party. Gascoigne, in heroic fashion, rescued Matilda from the pond by unceremoniously pulling her out by her hair. For this act, Matilda, an heiress, was bestowed upon Gascoigne with all the lands, fortune, and manor of Gawthorpe.<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, this again is fallacious. As will be noted in the following chapters, evidence appears to indicate that Gawthorpe Hall was founded in 1363 by William Gascoigne Senior<sub>1</sub> (c. 1309 - 1378) and his wife Agnes<sub>2</sub>.<sup>21</sup>

It would be wrong to assume that it was only Richard Gascoigne who propagated myths about the Gascoigne family. Pervasive amongst antiquarians was a tradition that the Gascoignes descended from Anglo-Saxons. Both William Smith and Ralph Thoresby observed that among the Gascoigne ancestors could be included Ailrichus, a rebel who fought against the Conqueror, and Aethelric, Bishop of Durham (d. 1072).<sup>22</sup> No evidence survives for the Gascoigne family before c.1300 and thus it cannot be verified.

Similarly contemporaries to the family, including Bridgettine monk Clement Maidstone (c. 1389 - 1456), Chancellor Thomas Gascoigne<sub>28</sub> (1404 - 1458), and playwright William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616), all played a part in the propagation of the Gascoigne legend as a whole - particularly the role of Chief Justice William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419) against Henry IV and his son, the young Henry V.<sup>23</sup> In these instances

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Yorkshire branch. Whilst the Gascoignes in Yorkshire spent time in Southern England (particularly the Home Counties) on occasion, there is nothing to indicate that Gascoigne branches were founded there.

<sup>19</sup> There is a seal at the National Archives, dated c. 1415 (See, DL 25/336).

<sup>20</sup> WYL GC/F5/1, f. 100a.

<sup>21</sup> CPR 1361-64, 325.

<sup>22</sup> W. Smith, *Old Yorkshire (1890)*, 162; *Ducatus Leodiensis; or the Topography of the antient and populous Town and Parish of Leedes and parts adjacent in the West Riding of the County of York (1715)*, 175-178.

<sup>23</sup> For example, see T. Maude, *Verbeia; Or, Wharfdale, a Poem, Descriptive and Didactic: With Historical Remarks (1782)*, 37; T. Shaw, *The History of Wharfdale (1830)*, 162; C. Maidstone, *The Loyal Martyr; or, the life of... Richard Scroop, Archbishop of York, cruelly put to death by King Henry IV for adhering to his rightful sovereign* (ed.) T. Payne (1722); J. C. B. Campbell, *The Lives of the Chief Justices of England (1858)*, 125; W. Shakespeare, *Henry IV pt. 2, Act 5, Scene 2*.

however, evidence does survive to indicate that some of the events took place, yet it is still likely that the stories featured considerable embellishment.

The creation and propagation of myths and false lineages in the later medieval and Tudor period was not uncommon. Whilst a majority of Gascoigne 'legends' from the fifteenth century centred on William Gascoigne I and his career, the sixteenth and seventeenth century saw an attempt to replace their humble origins with an almost aristocratic heritage. It is unclear whether these were the product of Richard Gascoigne, or whether he merely reported the stories he heard. In some instances - such as in the case of the Gawthorpe foundation - Richard's marginal notations to his research on the Gascoigne family indicate that his disdain for such falsities was just being kept in check. As will be made clear in subsequent chapters, the sixteenth century marked a period when the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe attempted to claim an aristocratic title. The efforts of William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> (d. 1551) are particularly noteworthy in this regard. It could be speculated that the creation of these myths was an attempt, much like the actions of Sir Thomas Watson-Wentworth, to alter the family's past and to create false identity intertwining the family's 'noble blood' and their long-standing possession of the Gawthorpe landscape.

### The County vs the Family

The next section of this introduction will consider aspects of methodology. Specifically, it will briefly highlight the benefits of a family-based study compared to a county-based approach. Moreover, it will emphasise the parameters of analysis, define key terminology and will tackle the challenges of periodisation.

Traditionally, studies which examined the gentry have done so from the perspective of the county unit. This has meant that historians have discussed the gentry from the perspective of a single county, or in rare cases multiple counties, wherein they develop a sample from those members of the gentry elite who dominated office-holding in the area over a relatively short period of time.<sup>24</sup> The academic popularity of this frame

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<sup>24</sup> E. Acheson, *A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century, c. 1422 - c. 1485* (Cambridge, 1992); M. J. Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism: Cheshire and Lancashire in the Age of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Cambridge, 1983); C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: a Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401 - 1499* (Cambridge, 1992); G. E. Mingay, *The Gentry: The Rise and Fall of a Ruling Class* (London, 1976); S. J. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England: The Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1991); A. J. Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community of Gentry during the Wars of the Roses', in C. D. Ross (ed.), *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Late Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1979), 37 - 59; Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry*; N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: the Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981); N.

of study can be traced back to the historiographical debates between R. H. Tawney, Lawrence Stone and H. Trevor-Roper, among others, between 1941 and 1951, which argued, ultimately, that the gentry of the early modern period were more influential in political society than had initially been believed.<sup>25</sup> In 1953, K. B. McFarlane's Ford Lectures inspired a similar vein of discussion amongst the late medieval historical community, and his influence peaked following the posthumous publication of his lectures in 1973.<sup>26</sup> Although McFarlane was primarily interested in studying the nobility, he set the agenda for gentry studies by investigating the nature of permanent retainers, and how the men who served as stewards, councillors and lawyers, and who served in positions of local government, could benefit from such service.<sup>27</sup> Since then many academic studies have been published studying the gentry from the perspective of the county.<sup>28</sup> These studies have immeasurably influenced the debate surrounding the late medieval and Tudor gentry, considering their concerns, identities and associations. Christine Carpenter's study on the Warwickshire gentry determined that the primary concern of c. 900 individuals was the protection of their landed estates.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, she suggested that the formation and preservation of social bonds with magnates were more influential to the development of identity than horizontal ties with other gentry families.

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Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life: Knightly Families in Sussex, 1280 - 1400* (Oxford, 1986); P. W. Fleming, 'The Character and Private Concerns of the Gentry of Kent' (University of Wales PhD Thesis, 1985); J. Mackman, 'The Lincolnshire Gentry and the Wars of the Roses' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2000).

<sup>25</sup> R. H. Tawney, 'The Rise of the Gentry, 1558 - 1640', *Economic History Review* (1941) 11:1, 1-38; L. Stone, 'The Anatomy of the Elizabethan Aristocracy', *Economic History Review* (1948) 18:1, 1-53; H. R. Trevor-Roper, 'The Elizabethan Aristocracy: An Anatomy Anatomised', *Economic History Review* (1951) 3:3, 279-298.

<sup>26</sup> K. B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973).

<sup>27</sup> K. B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century*, ix, xxvi-xxvii. See too, C. Richmond, 'After McFarlane', *History*, 68, 222 (1983), 46-60.

<sup>28</sup> E. Acheson, *A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century, c. 1422 - c. 1485* (Cambridge, 1992); M. J. Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism: Cheshire and Lancashire in the Age of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Cambridge, 1983); C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: a Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401 - 1499* (Cambridge, 1992); G. E. Mingay, *The Gentry: The Rise and Fall of a Ruling Class* (London, 1976); S. J. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England: The Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1991); A. J. Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community of Gentry during the Wars of the Roses', in C. D. Ross (ed.), *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Late Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1979) 37 - 59; Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry*; N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: the Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981); N. Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life: Knightly Families in Sussex, 1280 - 1400* (Oxford, 1986); P. W. Fleming, 'The Character and Private Concerns of the Gentry of Kent' (University of Wales PhD Thesis, 1985); J. Mackman, 'The Lincolnshire Gentry and the Wars of the Roses' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2000).

<sup>29</sup> Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, 25-30.

Conversely, Michael Bennett's work on the gentry of Cheshire and Lancashire determined that the geographical and administrative boundaries played a vital part in the development and maintenance of horizontal social bonds: kinship and neighbourliness were significantly more important than magnate influence.<sup>30</sup> This divergence in outcome is representative of a significant debate in gentry historiography, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three of this thesis. Here, it serves to highlight some of the issues surrounding the use of the county as a framework of study.

The studies above detail just one of the methodological problems of adopting a county-based approach: the difference between counties. The first and most obvious point is that no two counties in England during the late medieval and Tudor period were identical. They ranged in size, population, density, fertility and environment, but also in terms of factors such as transportation and communication networks, natural resources and whether the county had a resident magnate or senior ecclesiastic. All these had a demonstrable impact upon the ways in which the gentry acted. Yet a majority of the county-based studies are single-discipline and focus only upon the easily quantifiable, relegating such matters as environmental and topographical factors to passive elements of the study. Secondly, the use of administrative boundaries either implies that the social and cultural interests of the gentry can fit nicely into such borders or ignores them altogether. That the chief focus of county-based studies has been upon political and economic influences on identity may be related to this in some way, as the fluidity, breadth and significance of socio-cultural networks is indefinable through these divisions. It is unclear whether political and economic influences were chosen because administrative boundaries highlight such influences more discernibly, or whether the county was selected as a convenient parameter for study, which unintentionally fostered a prejudice towards political and economic factors.

This is not to say that the family as a unit of study is not without its own methodological issues. Akin to county-based studies, familial approaches could imply that the experiences of each family member or branch are similar enough to draw meaningful conclusions. Of the 234 Gascoigne family members examined in this thesis, a majority have been provided with as extensive a biography as possible, which later chapters use as case studies to extrapolate meaningful conclusions regarding identity. Whilst, for this thesis, every effort is made to ensure that the activities and identities of a single individual are not used to define the whole family's identity, this is not always

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<sup>30</sup> Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism*, 1-25.

the case. Furthermore, it is imperative that a family study, such as this one, does not seek to provide answers for the gentry as a social unit.

By utilising the family unit over a prolonged time-period, this thesis attempts to circumvent many of the aforementioned issues. Socio-cultural, political and legal influences on identity are considered, and where possible multiple case studies are utilised to demonstrate that a particular influence on identity might reappear in successive or multiple generations or, by contrast, represent a fleeting and individual experience. Moreover, family-based studies allow for a greater focus – and therefore detail – than many county-based approaches. Examining a family over a prolonged period allows for a balance to be struck, as not only does it provide a large enough sample size to be of use, but it also avoids the pitfalls of predefining the gentry by limiting such discussion to those of a specific status, rank or office. By seeking to avoid pre-definition, it is necessary to outline this thesis' consideration of the term gentry, but also how this thesis considers identity.

### Identifying the Gentry

The gentry as a group have received considerable attention from historians. Although their lives, relationships and motivations have been the subject of substantive debate, a matter of contention remains: an adequate definition for the collective term 'gentry'. Nevertheless, a study that examines this social group must provide at least some discussion of what is meant by the term 'gentry'.

One approach to identifying the gentry has been to examine contemporary considerations of status. Nigel Saul has suggested, on the basis of late-medieval vocabulary, that there was no clear contemporary concept of the gentry.<sup>31</sup> Instead, the term 'gentry' is a modern conception of the social strata which contained those who claimed 'gentility'. Historians have employed the term 'gentry' as a catch-all for the variety of status terms in use at the time, to indicate those who occupied the social stratum below the peerage and above the yeomanry such as *miles*, *vallettus*, *generosus*, *armiger* in Latin; *chivaler*, *gentil homme*, *esquire* in Anglo-French; and knight, esquire and gentleman in English. While the term is useful, Elizabeth Noble has warned that to use 'gentry' to mean all the middling landowners in late medieval England fails to recognise the degree of diversity between each status term.<sup>32</sup> This is because no other status

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<sup>31</sup> Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, 6-20.

<sup>32</sup> E. Noble, *The World of the Stonors*, (Cambridge, 2009), 17.

descriptor of medieval society had such a variance in its meaning. The term 'peerage', for example, referred almost exclusively to those who received summonses to Parliament by right of their title and tenure. Knights and esquires were, in theory, members of a distinct armigerous social order; but the decline in active military participation by this group during the later Middle Ages meant that the bearing of arms took on a looser symbolism to which a range of other social groups, especially among the wealthy bourgeoisie, could also aspire. The term 'gentleman' was the most difficult, since it could represent both the people at the bottom end of the gentry – above yeomen but below esquires – and those claiming 'gentility' in higher social echelons.<sup>33</sup>

Ostensibly rather more straightforward is the economic basis of status. Christopher Dyer and Rosemary Horrox have both emphasised the importance of landed incomes for the rural and urban gentry respectively, with the former going so far as to say that landed income was the gentry's 'defining feature.'<sup>34</sup> It was commonly recognised, for example, that £40 per annum was the minimum income from landholdings necessary to support the rank of knight; an amount also used as the statutory level of distraint for knighthood.<sup>35</sup> The incomes of esquires varied, but were often between that of £20 and £39 per annum.<sup>36</sup> For those at the lower end of the social spectrum, the numbers are not so clear. Simon Payling argues that the gentry should be considered 'all lay, non-baronial landowners with a minimum income of £5 per annum or more from freehold property', whilst A. J. Pollard argues that an annual landed income of between 10 marks and £10 was sufficient to maintain the social standard of a gentleman.<sup>37</sup> This relationship between status terms and landed income has been proffered as a means of identifying possible gentry. Moreover, landed income was also tied to involvement in local politics and office-holding. Parliamentary representatives required a theoretical qualification of £40 per annum, whilst the local offices of sheriff, escheator and justice of the peace had a prerequisite income of £20 a year.<sup>38</sup> It should be noted, however, that a 1445 statute specified that knights of the shire were not limited

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<sup>33</sup> P. Maddern, 'Gentility', in R. Radulescu and A. Truelove (eds.), *Gentry Culture in Late Medieval England* (Manchester, 2005), 18-19.

<sup>34</sup> C. Dyer, *Making a Living in the Middle Ages: The People of Medieval Britain, 850-1520* (London, 2002), 341; R. Horrox, 'The Urban Gentry in the Fifteenth Century', in J. A. F. Thomson (ed.), *Towns and Townspeople in the Fifteenth Century* (Gloucester, 1988), 22-44.

<sup>35</sup> *PC*, 50.

<sup>36</sup> H. L. Gray, 'Incomes from Land in England in 1436', *EHR*, 49:196 (1934), 627.

<sup>37</sup> S. J. Payling, *Political Society*, 3; Pollard, *North-Eastern England*, 86.

<sup>38</sup> *WR*, 215 - 216; *Stat. Realm*, II, 170, 340; J. S. Roskell, 'Sir James Strangeways of West Harsley and Whorlton: Speaker in the Parliament of 1461', *Yorkshire Archaeological Society*, 39 (1958), 455 - 482.

by status terms and could include all gentry, with the provision that they had an income equivalent to that of a knight.<sup>39</sup> Contemporary legislation also provides evidence of diversity amongst those classified as gentry. The 1379 poll tax, for example, considered those that achieved the rank of esquire through virtue of service to be socially distinct from the knights and esquires who had landed estates.<sup>40</sup> Sumptuary legislation from 1363 divided knights and esquires into two categories based upon income: the upper group of esquires had an income akin to the lower category of knights, whilst the lower group of esquires were considered socially equal to all other gentlemen (*gentils gentz*) without a knighthood.<sup>41</sup> Furthermore, the Statute of Additions in 1413 recognised the legal status of the gentleman, and signalled the absorption of this category into the social elite.<sup>42</sup>

A second approach to identifying the gentry has been to consider the group as a social and cultural entity. This has proven popular, as it avoids the pitfalls associated with the use of rigid status terminology. Ascribing qualifying characteristics to the rank of gentleman has proven a particularly difficult task, to the extent that both Acheson and Wright questioned whether gentlemen could really be considered part of the gentry at all.<sup>43</sup> T. B. Pugh noted that in ‘an age of social mobility the status of men, who had advanced their fortunes might well defy precise classification.’<sup>44</sup> Raluca Radulescu and Alison Truelove believe that this inability to precisely define the gentleman led to the exclusion from the nobility of all those beneath the peerage during the fourteenth century.<sup>45</sup> Instead, the social and cultural identity of gentry focuses on the themes of gentility and behaviour. As the previous section showed, land-owning was an important aspect in legal definitions of status terms. Yet, Radulescu and Truelove argue that, by the mid-fifteenth century, the ownership of land no longer automatically denoted the highest social status, even if it remained a marker of privilege.<sup>46</sup> Conditions following the

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<sup>39</sup> G. Dodd, ‘Crown, Magnates and Gentry: The English Parliament, 1369-1421’, (University of York PhD Thesis, 1998), 141.

<sup>40</sup> R. B. Dobson, *The Peasant’s Revolt of 1381* (London, 1983), 107.

<sup>41</sup> N. B. Harte, ‘State control of dress and social change’, in D. C. Coleman and A. H. John (eds.), *Trade, Government and Economy in Pre-Industrial England* (London, 1976), 139-140; N. Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life*, 173; E. Noble, *Stonors*, 18.

<sup>42</sup> Mercer, *The Medieval Gentry*, 8-9.

<sup>43</sup> Acheson, *Gentry Community*, 34; Wright, *Derbyshire Gentry*, 46.

<sup>44</sup> T. B. Pugh, ‘The Magnates, Knights and Gentry’, in S. B. Chrimes, C. D. Ross and R. A. Griffiths (eds.), *Fifteenth-Century England: 1399-1509* (Manchester, 1972), 96.

<sup>45</sup> R. Radulescu and A. Truelove, ‘Introduction’, in Radulescu and Truelove (eds.), *Gentry Culture*, 2.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

Black Death favoured the formation of a more affluent peasantry.<sup>47</sup> These newly affluent families were able to maintain a similar degree of lifestyle and partake in opportunities often afforded to knights and esquires without prolonged military and administrative service or a gentry ancestor.<sup>48</sup> Whilst permanent social mobility was often quite rare in late medieval England, the introduction of these newer families into the gentry signified the widening of the term's definition into a social formation. The social group that emerged lacked any prescriptive definition in terms of legal status, and included significant variety in relation to land-holding, occupation, service, pedigree and heraldry.

It is difficult to establish a set of criteria for gentility. Philippa Maddern argued that the terms of gentility were purposefully vague in order to reflect the breadth and flexibility of society. Were definitions of gentility rigid and inflexible, they would have been disadvantageous to those candidates who claimed gentry status, but were on the fringes of gentility: those who had the resources to maintain a sufficient lifestyle, but may not have been able to muster a credible bloodline or provide evidence of service or landed income.<sup>49</sup> Moreover, status was not a measurable absolute, but a matter of reputation, established and judged by the community. To be recognised as a member of the gentry did not mean an adherence to a range of rigid and inflexible social criteria. Rather, the gentry was a fluid social entity continually under negotiation, and one that developed over time to include developing tastes and trends.<sup>50</sup>

How then was an individual identified as 'gentry'? Peter Coss has determined six key criteria that would identify an individual as a member of the gentry.<sup>51</sup> These included a recognition that membership of the gentry meant being a type of lesser nobility and having a collective identity with other gentry persons.<sup>52</sup> Whilst Coss' criteria are ultimately preoccupied with the ownership of land and the authority derived from it, he touches upon the continually negotiated relationship with the local community. To be able to exercise social control or associate with public authority, the gentry needed the

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<sup>47</sup> P. Maddern, 'Gentility', 26.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, 26-27.

<sup>49</sup> Maddern, 'Gentility', 26.

<sup>50</sup> Maddern, 'Gentility', 31.

<sup>51</sup> The full six criteria are as follows: 1. They are a type of lesser nobility; 2. They are landlords and owners of rural and urban property; 3. They are members of a territorial elite who derive their status from service or personal association. Moreover, their authority is derived from landlordship; 4. They associate with public authority, through service in the localities; 5. They seek to exercise collective social control over the populace on a territorial basis, reinforcing individual status and power; 6. They have a collective identity and collective interests, which require the existence of a forum to address needs.

<sup>52</sup> Coss, 'The Formation of the English Gentry', 50.

deference of those below them in the social order. Without that deference, a gentleman would have no authority. To be able to effectively manage his estates and carry out responsibilities in local government, the male head of a given family needed at least some form of local recognition that he was a member of the gentry. Even the offices of county administration often reserved for the lower end of the gentry – the coroner, tax-collector and bailiff, for example – required the respect of other gentry figures in order to be able to effectively administer their responsibilities.

Yet, to focus on these criteria as a means to identify a gentry-person is to succumb to what Roberta Gilchrist termed ‘male-bias’. A significant number of gentry studies, including those by Acheson, Carpenter, Payling, Saul and Wright depend on multiple factors to define the gentry, all of which focus on gentry men.<sup>53</sup> This poses a problem, as their conclusions would therefore imply that gentry women were gentry by association only. Whilst this has been somewhat remedied in recent years, with an increased attention on the role of women, there has yet to be a significant study of gentry identity that includes women.<sup>54</sup> That is not to say that women were entirely absent from these studies; it is rather that these studies featured women only as objects of an inherently patriarchal system, as heiresses, wives and tradable commodities, meant only to accentuate the identity of the male. Even when the unit of the study was the gentry family, studies have still relegated gentry women to the margins. For example, Hannes Kleineke’s study on the Dinham family briefly discussed women in relation to piety and the creation of tomb monuments, whilst Nigel Saul’s study on the families of the Etchinhams of Etchinham, the Sackvilles of Buckhurst, and the Waleyses of Glynde neglects to mention women at all, even in discussions surrounding piety and family life.<sup>55</sup> In some respects, the absence of women from gentry studies is probably a combination of oversight and practicality. Little evidence survives for gentry women in proportion to the evidence for gentry men, and practically no evidence survives for female

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<sup>53</sup> R. Gilchrist, *Gender and Archaeology: Contesting the Past* (London, 1999) 1 - 16; Acheson, *A Gentry Community*; Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England*; Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*; Saul, *Knights and Esquires*; Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life*; Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry*.

<sup>54</sup> See, for example: J. C. Ward, *Women of the English Nobility and Gentry, 1066 - 1500* (1992); L. A. Pollock, *With Faith and Physic: the life of a Tudor gentlewoman, Lady Grace Mildmay, 1552 - 1620* (London, 1993); S. L. Bastow, *The Catholic Gentry of Yorkshire, 1536 - 1642: Resistance and Accommodation* (Lewiston, 2007); F. Swabey, *Medieval Gentlewoman: Life in a Widow's Household in the Later Middle Ages* (Stroud, 1999); P. J. P. Goldberg, *Woman is a Worthy Wight: Women in English Society, c. 1200 - 1500* (Stroud, 1992); M. Kowaleski and M. Erler, *Women and Power in the Middle Ages* (London, 1988).

<sup>55</sup> Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life*; H. Kleineke, ‘The Dinham Family in the Later Middle Ages’ (Royal Holloway and Bedford New College PhD Thesis, 1998).

involvement in political life. The patriarchal nature of medieval and early modern England meant that historical study of the past has often been inherently masculine in scope. However, some studies of the gentry have relegated women to the peripheries based upon unfounded conclusions that a woman's public identity was there purely to accentuate the identity of the man.<sup>56</sup> As well as being incongruous, it also has no basis in historical experience.

By giving preference to socio-cultural definitions of the gentry, it is possible to avoid implicit male bias as well as avoid the implications of rigidly defined status terms. Whilst being a member of the gentry encompassed matters such as lineage, status, service, manorial lordship and wealth, it also included behaviour and lifestyle. For example, Nicholas Orme has detailed how gentility could be present from childhood. The household was where religious, social and cultural norms and traditions were first instilled.<sup>57</sup> Growing up, the children of gentry would be exposed to the culture of their parents, but they would also be educated as future gentry.<sup>58</sup> Boys would have been instructed in warfare and lordship with such Mirrors for Princes as the *Secretum Secretorum*, whilst texts for young girls, such as *The Book of the Knight of the Tower*, focused on the virtues a woman should possess.<sup>59</sup> Even socially mobile families would instil in their children the same privileges that established gentry families may have taken as standard. Moreover, the experiences of gentry children in a household would reinforce the privilege associated with the social elite: a household of retainers and staff to attend to daily needs; the possibility of a private chapel away from the general populace; and the ostentatious display associated with consumption and hosting, all of which would have had an implicit impact upon a young child growing up, which would have then been reinforced by instructional and performance literature that focused on the appropriate manners, attire and behaviour relevant to their social rank.<sup>60</sup> This is not to say that gentility was actively taught, but rather the culture of the gentry could be learnt.

Whilst the socio-cultural aspects of gentry identity can be difficult to find in the collections of gentry families, including for the Gascoignes, this thesis considers the gentry as a cultural construct rather than as a political or legal one. To be effective, this thesis will adopt a combination of the two approaches outlined above. It recognises that,

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<sup>56</sup> N. Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages: History and Representation* (Oxford, 2009), 295.

<sup>57</sup> N. Orme, 'Education and Recreation', in Radulescu and Truelove (eds.), *Gentry Culture*, 63-83.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 63-65.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 66-67.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, 67.

in the late medieval period, the gentry was all those individuals between the nobility and the yeomanry; but it also recognises that this situation changed over time. As such, limiting the study to knights, esquires and gentlemen is not sufficiently inclusive. By the mid-sixteenth century, the gentry included doctors, lawyers, married priests (post-Reformation) and academics.<sup>61</sup> These were not traditional landholders and may not have acquired the status terms discussed above, but were considered gentry by their peers, and were given appropriate deference by those socially beneath them. By avoiding status terms, this thesis seeks to include those individuals who were members of gentry families, but would legally be unable to acquire the associated titles, such as women and children. Such an approach does not mean that that ancestry, political association, and service are side-lined as such; instead, these are used as lenses through which to view gentry activity and identity.

To reiterate: the gentry were those who were socially positioned between the yeomanry and the nobility, but were not solely knights, esquires and gentlemen. Whilst considerations of gentility were relatively restrictive in the fourteenth century, by the end of the period which forms this study, to be a member of the gentry was much more associated with behaviour, culture and lifestyle. T. B. Pugh may well have been right when he said that the gentry defy precise classification, and this thesis recognises that any kind of tick-list would simply result in having to acknowledge a multitude of exceptions to some arbitrary 'rule'. For a thesis that covers three centuries of gentry identity, to provide a rigid list of criteria would be misleading, as the gentility of William Gascoigne Senior<sup>1</sup> (d. 1378) was quite different from the gentility of George Gascoigne<sup>160</sup> (d. 1577).

### Defining Identity

As well as providing a historiographical context, it is necessary for this thesis to properly define the term identity. As discussed above the definitions and concepts of identity have changed significantly since the zenith of gentry studies and the next section will detail how this thesis will utilise current identity theory to benefit an examination of the Gascoigne family. The usage of loaded terminology, such as gentry and identity, has caused contention in academic scholarship and as with any examination of the medieval and early modern family, issues of terminology must be addressed. Meskell and Preucel argued that identity can be a challenging concept for historians, since it

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<sup>61</sup> F. Heal and C. Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Stanford, 1994), 7.

'crosses multiple theoretical frames and embodies contradictory and heterogeneous definitions.'<sup>62</sup>

The study of identity, by its very nature, is subjective, dependent on the agency and identities of the historian or scholar. But therein lies its strength. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed academic development of discussions surrounding medieval and early modern identities within fixed categories (gender, status, ethnicity, etc.); yet more recent developments have considered frameworks of identity to be more fluid and oscillatory.<sup>63</sup> Parallel to this, there has been a transition away from concepts of identity which consider sameness or difference over time, to considerations of the self and its interactions with collective identities.<sup>64</sup> If identity is a construct of the historian, and thus subject to contemporaneous ideas of identity, then advances in ideas of identity can allow for a different and perhaps more nuanced interpretations of the past. Whilst the availability of source materials influences the depth of the conclusions that can be drawn, an interdisciplinary approach enables the historian to mitigate such problems. Considering source material from a literary perspective, or as in the case of this thesis, utilising material and non-textual evidence, may allow the historian to obtain a deeper understanding of the personal and public identities of historical figures and families,

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<sup>62</sup> L. Meskell and R.W. Preucel, 'Identities', in L. Meskell and R. W. Preucel (eds.), *A Companion to Social Archaeology* (Oxford, 2007), 121.

<sup>63</sup> R. Jenkins, *Social Identity* (London, 1996), 4; M. Sökefeld, 'Debating Self, Identity, and Culture in Anthropology', *Current Anthropology*, 40 (1999), 417-8; R. Brubaker and F. Cooper, 'Beyond "Identity"', *Theory and Society*, 29 (2000), 1-47. See too, R. Gilchrist, *Gender and Archaeology: Contesting the Past* (London, 1999).

<sup>64</sup> Brubaker and Cooper, 'Beyond "Identity"', 8; Meskell and Preucel, 'Identities', 121-122. See too, J. Broadway, 'Symbolic and Self-Consciously Antiquarian: The Elizabethan and Early Stuart Gentry's Use of the Past', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 74:4 (2013), 541-558; A. Shepard, *Accounting for Oneself: Worth, Status, and the Social Order in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2015); A. Ruddick, *English Identity and Political Culture in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2013); B. Cummings, *Mortal Thoughts: Religion, Secularity, and Identity in Shakespeare and Early Modern Culture* (Oxford, 2013); D. Green, 'National Identities and the Hundred Years War', in C. Given-Wilson (ed.), *Fourteenth Century England VI* (Woodbridge, 2010), 115-129; R. Radulescu and A. Truelove (eds.), *Gentry Culture in Late Medieval England* (Manchester, 2005); J. Healey, 'The Northern Manor and the Politics of Neighbourhood: Dilston, Northumberland, 1558-1640', *Northern History*, 51:2 (2014), 221-241; J. Colson, 'Local Communities in Fifteenth Century London: Craft, Parish and Neighbourhood' (University of London PhD Thesis, 2011); S. R. Jones, 'Richard Scrope, the Bolton Hours and the Church of St Martin in Micklegate: Reconstructing a Holy Neighbourhood', in P. J. P. Goldberg (ed.), *Richard Scrope: Archbishop, Rebel, Martyr* (Donington, 2007); R. Gilchrist, *Medieval Life: Archaeology and the Life Course* (Woodbridge, 2012); R. Gilchrist, *Gender and Material Culture: The Archaeology of Religious Women* (London, 1997); A. James, 'To Know a Gentilman': Men and Gentry Culture in Fifteenth Century Yorkshire' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2012); R. E. Moss, 'Fictions of Fatherhood: Fatherhood in Late Medieval English Gentry and Mercantile Letters and Romances' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2009).

whilst avoiding the singular and more fixed traditional elements of identity that often resemble caricatures of the past.<sup>65</sup>

Recent scholarship in social archaeology and literature has, generally speaking, begun to adopt methodologies that could be loosely described as ‘Queer Theory’. Although not a theory in the unified sense, ‘Queer Theory’ originated from the social movements of the 1970s and 1980s, in an attempt to subvert traditional definitions of gender and sexualities.<sup>66</sup> Deriving from post-structuralism and post-modernism, it has, for the most part, been absent from historical scholarship – except when discussing gender and sexualities. Simply put, however, ‘Queer Theory’ states that identities are not fixed and do not necessarily determine who we are. It argues that to collectively discuss any group based on singular characteristics is wrong as the conclusions drawn from such techniques are too simplified to be of use.

Historiography surrounding the medieval ‘gentry’ has, on the whole, succumbed to this way of addressing identity, utilising singular categories (county community, gender, ethnicity, rank and status) to draw wide conclusions about the landed classes. However, the zenith of such scholarship was following the assertion by K. B. McFarlane that academics should turn away from constitutional history and should look to the localities, and thus coincided with a period where concepts of identity were dominated by fixed singular entities.<sup>67</sup> Additionally, the dearth of personal evidence and the binary nature of political source material has framed the debate surrounding medieval identities of gentry families, as most conclusions are necessarily tentative. When discussing the gentry and identity, Peter Coss framed his argument around the county community and collective identity, arguing that shared interests led to a collective communal identity on the county level.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, in his discussion on commemoration and tomb monuments Nigel Saul argued that enhancing status and reputation were the major reasons for the ostentatious displays on the Cobham effigies.<sup>69</sup> It is not the aim of this thesis to discredit or to subvert these conclusions, but to build upon them. The gentry studies over the past forty years have identified and codified numerous aspects

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<sup>65</sup> Kirsch, *Queer Theory and Social Change*, 1.

<sup>66</sup> Major proponents of ‘queer theory’ include, J. Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York, 1990); J. Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of “Sex”* (Abingdon, 2011); and L. Edelman, *Homographesis: Essays in Gay Literary and Cultural Theory* (New York, 1994).

<sup>67</sup> McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973); McFarlane, ‘*Bastard Feudalism’ in England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays* (London, 1981)

<sup>68</sup> Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry*, 202.

<sup>69</sup> N. Saul, *Death, Art, and Memory in Medieval England: the Cobham family and their Monuments, 1300 - 1500* (Oxford, 2001) 227-231; Saul, *English Church Monuments*.

of medieval identity. Yet, the multiple and numerous identities of the medieval person are akin to intersecting spectrums, each having varying and alternating degrees of influence upon a person's actions and deeds. By utilising the founding principles of 'Queer Theory' it is possible to go one step further, and suggest that scholarship can gain a more nuanced understanding of the past by assessing the gentry, not through singular categories, but by accepting that identities are fluid, malleable, and often contradictory.

This can be readily seen in the work of Miri Rubin, for example, where she advocates the adoption of insights made by historians of gender.<sup>70</sup> Rubin argues that the work by historians of gender (and Queer Theory) regarding the complexity of sexuality and identity can be transplanted onto discussions of political, social and cultural identity.<sup>71</sup> For the study of the gentry, this can be most useful in recognition that at any one time there would have been many factors affecting the decision-making process of the gentry, and thus affecting how they chose to identify. Moreover, whilst the active influences – career and social bonds – have received the most attention from historians, the role of passive influences should not be overlooked. For the purpose of this thesis, identity is considered to be a cluster of co-existing attributes, within which were components that varied in importance over time. By examining a series of such components – their social bonds, career paths, magnate interactions, local government and justice, as well as cultural exchange and commemoration – it is hoped to highlight the value of complex concepts of identity upon the study of the gentry.

### The Challenges of Periodisation

For a thesis that examines the period 1300 to 1600, some recognition as to the challenges of periodisation is required. The artificial line between the 'medieval' and the 'early modern' has served as a rigid divide in terms of historiography, research interests and academic bodies. Although the start and end dates of the medieval and early modern periods vary, they have often been marked by epochal events, such as (for England) the end of the Wars of the Roses and (for Europe at large) the Reformation. This section will briefly outline the key challenges of periodisation, how this thesis plans to circumvent those challenges, and finally provide a few sentences on how periodisation can affect discussions of identity.

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<sup>70</sup> M. Rubin, 'Identities', in R. Horrox and W. M. Ormrod (eds.) *A Social History of England, 1200-1500* (Cambridge, 2006), 383-412.

<sup>71</sup> Rubin, 'Identities', 383-385.

One of the key challenges of periodisation is the interpretation of terminology. The determination to divide history into comprehensive chunks has led to the use of a plethora of terms. For much of Europe, the designations are chronological: Antiquity, Early Medieval, High Medieval, Late Medieval, Early Modern, and so on. In single states, the units are sometimes broken down by changes of ruling dynasty, so that English history is divided into Norman, Angevin, Plantagenet, Lancastrian, Yorkist, Tudor, Stuart, Hanoverian, and so on. Finally, there are blocks of time defined by major cultural phenomenon: Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, and so on. The first and third of these forms of categorisation are heavily freighted with cultural meaning. In terms of chronological-based terminology, for example, Ludmilla Jordonova has argued that the use of the terms 'medieval' and 'early modern' imply an inevitable movement towards the present and modernity.<sup>72</sup> A product of the Renaissance, the term 'medieval' was applied to the supposed 'dark' period between classical antiquity and the 're-birth' of civilisation in the sixteenth century. 'Medieval', therefore, could invoke imagery of stagnation and barbarism, when contrasted with the 'early modern', which was seen as a period of progress, innovation and civilisation.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, Paul Courtney argued that the periodisation of the 'medieval' and 'early modern' created a paradigm that supposes a steady progression from barbarism to civilisation and feudalism to capitalism.<sup>74</sup> Dynastic terminology is also culturally deterministic in that it can imply that leadership and government were the central themes of the period. Such an implication fosters interpretations that disparate phenomena originated in the centre, from the government or figure-head, and moved outwards to the peripheries.<sup>75</sup> Moreover, the use of dynastic terms serves to place undue emphasis on the importance of monarchy by suggesting that the ruling dynasty was an embodiment of that period. For example, it suggests that the period was relatively stable or unified as the ruling dynasty remained the same. It could also suggest that the period had a culture heavily influenced by the monarch. Jordonova highlights 'Victorian values' as a prime example of dynastic periodisation that has implications outside its traditional confines, but it may also be possible to include

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<sup>72</sup> L. Jordonova, *History in Practice* (Oxford, 2006), 113.

<sup>73</sup> Jordonova, *History in Practice*, 114-116. See too, R. Starn, 'The Early Modern Muddle', *Journal of Early Modern History*, 6:3 (2002), 296-307; L. Besserman (ed.), *The Challenge of Periodization: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives* (New York, 2013); J. Simpson, 'Diachronic History and the Shortcomings of Medieval Studies', in D. Matthews and G. McMullan (eds.), *Reading the Medieval in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2007), 25-26.

<sup>74</sup> P. Courtney, 'The Tyranny of Constructs: Some Thoughts on Periodisation and Culture Change', in D. Gaimster and P. Stamper (eds.), *The Age of Transition: The Archaeology of English Culture, 1400-1600*, SMAMS, 15 (1997), 9.

<sup>75</sup> Jordonova, *History in Practice*, 107.

Elizabethan style as a secondary example.<sup>76</sup> The term Elizabethan conjures up a set of specific styles regarding the fashion, art and architecture of the period, yet the use of the term 'Elizabethan' implies a certain importance in the development of those styles by the Crown. Finally, terminology based on epochal events tends to presume that these cultural phenomena were at the epicentre for all parts of society. Terms such as Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment are prime examples of this form of terminology. The use of such terms can notionally imply that every development, movement, event or activity can be attributed to the relevant epochal event. Moreover, using epochal events of this kind can be misleading, as the change that occurred may not be as all-encompassing as implied by the term itself.<sup>77</sup>

A second key challenge of periodisation is the fact that blocks of historical time have become institutionalised. Paul Courtney has argued that the division between 'late medieval' and 'early modern' stems from the approaches and research interests of academics and the actions of their respective university departments.<sup>78</sup> The latter is a reference, in part, to the organisation of history courses by period, but it also refers to the establishment of research centres or departments by institutions that focus on a specific period of history: for example, the Universities of Bristol, Exeter, Reading, Leeds, St. Andrews, Bangor, and King's College London each has a Centre for Medieval Studies; while the Universities of Southampton, Glasgow and Edinburgh and University College London offer Medieval and Renaissance Studies. The University of York has both a Centre for Medieval Studies and a Centre for Renaissance and Early Modern Studies. Courtney argues that the segregation between medieval and early modern history is also about the distinction between the specialist skills required to study those periods: specifically, he notes the advent of vernacular sources in increasing numbers from the early sixteenth century, which means that a knowledge of Latin is no longer a prerequisite for primary research.<sup>79</sup> This, combined with the invention and proliferation of printing, means a rise in the quantity of material available to researchers without the necessity of learning medieval French and Latin.<sup>80</sup> Courtney's contention is purely hypothetical. Yet it could go some way to providing a sound explanation for the division in gentry historiography. Recent studies of the medieval gentry tend to end by 1500, with

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid, 108-109.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, 110-111.

<sup>78</sup> Courtney, 'Tyranny of Constructs', 10-11.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>80</sup> H. Tait, 'The Great Divide' in D. Gaimster and P. Stamper (eds.), *The Age of Transition: The Archaeology of English Culture, 1400-1600*, SMAMS, 15 (1997), 5.

only the occasional study including the entire reign of Henry VII.<sup>81</sup> Conversely, studies of the early modern gentry tend to focus on the gentry from the coronation of Henry VIII.<sup>82</sup> The examples recorded here are just some of the dozens of gentry studies that do not

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<sup>81</sup> Examples of Medieval Gentry Studies: M. G. A. Vale, *Piety, Charity and Literacy among the Yorkshire Gentry, 1370-1480* (York, 1976); M. Mercer, *The Medieval Gentry: Power, Leadership and Choice during the Wars of the Roses* (London, 2010); M. Johnston, *Romance and the Gentry in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 2014); E. Acheson, *A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century, c. 1422- c.1485* (Cambridge, 1992); S. M. Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry in the Fifteenth Century* (Chesterfield, 1983); R. Radulescu and A. Truelove (eds.), *Gentry Culture in Late Medieval England* (Manchester, 2005); J. C. Ward, *Women of the English Nobility and Gentry, 1066-1500* (Manchester, 1995); E. Noble, *The World of the Stonors: A Gentry Society* (Woodbridge, 2009); P. Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry* (Cambridge, 2003); T. B. Pugh, 'The Magnates, Knights and Gentry', in S. B. Chrimes, C. D. Ross and R. A. Griffiths (eds.), *Fifteenth-Century England: 1399-1509* (Manchester, 1972); M. J. Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism: Cheshire and Lancashire in the Age of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Cambridge, 1983); C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992); A. King, 'The English Gentry and Military Service, 1300-1450', *History Compass*, 12:10 (2014), 759-769; S. J. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England: The Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1991); A. J. Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community of Gentry during the Wars of the Roses', in C. D. Ross (ed.), *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Late Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1979); N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: the Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981); N. Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life: Knightly Families in Sussex, 1280 - 1400* (Oxford, 1986); P. W. Fleming, 'The Character and Private Concerns of the Gentry of Kent' (University of Wales PhD Thesis, 1985); J. Mackman, 'The Lincolnshire Gentry and the Wars of the Roses' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2000).

<sup>82</sup> Examples of Early Modern Gentry Studies: J. T. Cliffe, *The Yorkshire Gentry from the Reformation to the Civil War* (London, 1969); S. Marshall, *The Dutch Gentry, 1500-1650: Family, Faith and Fortune* (New York, 1987); G. E. Mingay, *The Gentry: The Rise and Fall of a Ruling Class* (London, 1976); P. Marshall and G. Scott, *Catholic Gentry in English Society: The Throckmortons of Coughton from Reformation to Emancipation* (Farnham, 2009); S. L. Bastow, *The Catholic Gentry of Yorkshire, 1536-1642: Resistance and Accommodation* (Lewiston, 2007); H. A. Lloyd, *Gentry of South-West Wales, 1540-1640* (Cardiff 1968); F. Heal and C. Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Basingstoke, 1994); R. Turvey, 'Politics, Patronage and the Abuse of Power: The Gentry and the Court of Star Chamber in Early Modern Carmarthenshire', *The Carmarthenshire Antiquary*, 52 (2016), 24-32; A. Wright, 'Loyalty and Tradition: Jacobitism amongst the Gentry of North-West England, 1640-1720', 10 (2010), 147-162; J. Bower, 'The Wotton Survey: The Lands of a Kent Gentry Family in the Sixteenth Century', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 132 (2012), 259-74; M. Clark, 'The Gentry, the Commons and the Politics of Common Right in Enfield, c. 1558-1603', *Historical Journal*, 54:3 (2011), 609-629; P. Wallis and C. Webb, 'The Education and Training of Gentry Sons in Early Modern England', *Social History*, 36:1 (2011), 36-53; J. Bosworth et al (eds.), *The Middleton Papers: The Financial Problems of a Yorkshire Recusant Family in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Leeds, 2010); E. M. Strudwick, 'The Darells of Calehill: Confused and Conflicting Loyalties in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century England', *Recusant History*, 29:1 (2008), 1-11; E. Throssell, 'Hartwell House: The Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Century Gardens and Parterres of the Lee Family', *Garden History*, 34:1 (2006), 92-111; R. W. Hoyle, 'The Fortunes of the Tempest Family of Bracewell and Bowling in the Sixteenth Century', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 74 (2000), 169-189; C. M. Newman, *The Bowes of Streatlam, Count Durham: the Politics and Religion of a Sixteenth Century Northern Gentry Family* (Durham, 1999).

traverse periods, despite a general acknowledgement that the dividing line is an arbitrary construct that distorts our understanding of the past.

With the issues of periodisation in mind, it could be argued that this thesis is better served by ignoring all terminology associated with distinct periods or epochs in favour of the traditional delineation by century. However, to object to all forms of periodisation implies an assumption that there is finally an agreed-upon method of viewing history. Even delineation by century is problematic, as even those who adopt such an approach make clear with the recent use of ‘long’ and ‘short’ centuries. To move forward then, it seems that this thesis must adopt a compromise.

When discussing the gentry as a social group, this thesis will employ the terms ‘late medieval’ and ‘Tudor’. Despite these terms being considered unsatisfactory, as outlined above, they are generally still used for the purposes of research and pedagogy. This thesis will adopt such a compromise for two reasons: one, to avoid the connotations of the ‘early modern’ with modernity and progress; and two, to highlight the disparity between the identities of the Gascoigne family at the beginning and end of this thesis’ timeframe. A Gascoigne living in the fifteenth century, between 1430-1480, for example, would not have experienced the same degree of epochal change as a Gascoigne living a century later. Moreover, the earliest Gascoigne in this study, William Gascoigne Senior<sub>1</sub> (d. 1378), would have a considerably different identity and life from the latest, Margaret Gascoigne<sub>233</sub> (d. c. 1592). However, it would not be accurate to claim the same degree of difference between William Gascoigne Senior and his great-great-grandson, William Gascoigne IV<sub>71</sub> (d. 1464). There would undoubtedly be differences in their lives, but not to the extent that later Gascoignes would experience. Therefore, the institution of a general division recognises the significant changes across long periods.

In order to reflect the subtler changes to identity that a general division may obfuscate, however, we should note that the use of ‘late medieval’ and ‘Tudor’ in this thesis are not value judgments, but primarily chronological signifiers. The real emphasis of this thesis is on the *generational* history of Gascoigne family. Chapter One is divided into sections that take one or two generations of the family history at a time. Different generations are denoted by their distance from the earliest traceable family member William Gascoigne Senior<sub>1</sub> (d. 1378) in degrees; i.e., his children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and so forth. Illustrating the family history in this way enables several things. First, it is more appropriate for a study of this kind as it demonstrates the family’s fortunes more clearly. Second, it enables shifts in identity, and the influences upon it, to more readily be recognised and addressed, as it acknowledges that each generation would have their own pressures, expectations and problems. Third, it enables an

assessment of the family across three centuries regardless of the problems of periodisation and other issues that may be encountered through the use of chronological boundaries; and fourth, an examination of a much shorter timeframe allows for a more detailed discussion on the continuities and changes over time.

A final point is worth addressing here: how this thesis will tackle the impact on identity of epochal events such as the Reformation and the English Renaissance. As mentioned above, this thesis considers identity to be a complex, ever-evolving construct which, for the most part, changed extremely slowly as the influences upon identity altered and shifted with the changing pressures on gentry lives. This is not to say that there were not any instances where their identities would change rapidly, as the shift from Catholicism to Protestantism, for example, would have had an immediate impact upon a given family's religious identities. Therefore, a few sentences are required to recognise the impact on identity of such epochal events, but also to address the impact of methodological restrictions on such discussions.

The Reformation and English Renaissance brought about a series of fundamental changes to English society that affected individual identities in a variety of ways and to varying degrees. In response to the perceived corruption of the Catholic Church, increased calls for religious reform across Europe led to the creation of Protestant theologies.<sup>83</sup> Combined with Henry VIII's ambition for a male heir, this led to England's break from Rome and papal authority and the foundation of a new Church that challenged the very tenets of the Catholic faith. Moreover, the translation of the Bible into English removed the ability of the Catholic church to dictate interpretation. In terms of the English Renaissance, the period saw the opening up of the new horizons, with the 'discovery' of the New World and the direct sea route to Asia; shifts in scholasticism away from monastic institutions towards universities; and the proliferation of printed texts and a preoccupation with classical learning; as well as shifts in drama, literature and architecture.<sup>84</sup> This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of the changes in society during

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<sup>83</sup> See, for example: E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* (Yale, 1992); C. Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993); W. J. Sheils, *The English Reformation* (Routledge, 2013); P. Marshall, *Religious Identities in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, 2006); D. MacCulloch (ed.), *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety* (New York, 1995), 159-180; J. Chappell and K. A. Kramer (eds.), *Women during the English Reformations: Renegotiating Gender and Religious Identity* (Basingstoke, 2014).

<sup>84</sup> For example, A. Hadfield, *The English Renaissance, 1500-1620* (Oxford, 2001); M. Hattaway (ed.), *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture* (Oxford, 2000); S. Greenblatt, *Representing the English Renaissance* (Los Angeles, 1983); A. Fox, *The English Renaissance: Identity and Representation in Elizabethan England* (Oxford, 1997).

the sixteenth century, but as a set of examples meant to give the reader a sense of what new influences would affect identity.

Yet, it is not always possible to measure the impact of such changes upon individuals and their identities. This is due to the random survival of primary material. For the Gascoigne family, there is a particularly unfortunate gap in our knowledge of the family's activities between the early and late sixteenth century. During that period, what little evidence does survive relates to a few remarkable individuals: William Gascoigne VI<sub>136</sub> (d. 1551) of Gawthorpe, William Gascoigne<sub>93</sub> of Cardington (d. 1540) and George Gascoigne<sub>160</sub> (d. 1577). With specific reference to the Reformation, it is in fact the case that we know next to nothing as to how the Gascoigne family managed these changes. It is known, for example, that some Gascoigne family members decided to remain Catholic, yet I have been unable to find any form of documentation that details the reasons for such a choice, or their experiences in society after the fact.<sup>85</sup> Additionally, a majority of the Gascoignes' funerary commemoration date before the Reformation, with only three instances dated after: at Burghwallis there remains a brass of Thomas Gascoigne<sub>164</sub> (d. 1568) and a stone slab to rector Henry Gascoigne (d. c. 1540), and at Wentworth there survives an alabaster effigy that belonged to Margaret Gascoigne<sub>233</sub> (d. c. 1592) after her marriage into the Wentworth family. Regarding personal piety, only a dozen wills survive, and many of these were drawn up before the Reformation. Moreover, they range in detail and clarity with some providing only a sentence on the distribution of their belongings. All this information is catalogued and discussed in greater detail in Chapter One or Chapter Five of this thesis, but suffice to say not enough information survives to be able to properly address the impact of the Reformation on the religious identity of the Gascoignes. The same point applies to the possible impact of the English Renaissance on Gascoigne identity. The exception here is the social networks of poet George Gascoigne<sub>160</sub> which can be framed through the changes of the English Renaissance, and is discussed in greater depth in Chapter Two. In this vein, the last section of this Introduction will outline the range of evidence available in greater detail.

### Evidence

The final section of this introduction will briefly introduce the principal evidence of this thesis, as well as emphasise how and where such evidence will be utilised. The

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<sup>85</sup> S. Bastow, *The Catholic Gentry of Yorkshire, 1536-1642: Resistance and Accommodation* (Lewiston, 2007), 93.

interests and activities of the Gascoigne family were varied, and as such to be able to effectively piece together the activities of a single Gascoigne requires a myriad of sources. The typical family studies available to the medieval historian derive their evidence from surviving family collections, which illuminate the private concerns of the family.<sup>86</sup> Whilst this thesis does have access to such a collection – the Gascoigne Collection at the West Yorkshire Archive Service – a significant proportion of this collection concerns the Gascoigne family and their activities from the seventeenth century onwards. Some evidence from the medieval and Tudor period does survive but mostly in the form of Richard Gascoigne’s earlier drafts, alongside copies of grants, wills and deeds. Nevertheless, this thesis is in the relatively unusual position of having such a collection available as source material and full use has been made of the material where pertinent. The information that does survive and that is utilised by this thesis includes records of marriage contracts and licences; feet of fines, quitclaims and bonds.<sup>87</sup> Many of these documents can be found elsewhere. However, in some instances the original has been lost and the copy in the Gascoigne archive is the only surviving version. The antiquary Richard Gascoigne appears to have spent a large portion of his life scouring the country for documents relating to his family, making a copy, then returning it to his archives.

Other key sources for the study of the gentry are *inquisitions post mortem* (IPMs).<sup>88</sup> These are useful for determining what landed wealth an individual held at the time of their death. Moreover, they provide some indication as to the size of their heir’s estate. IPMs enable the historian to trace the descent of property. For the Gascoignes, problems arise when trying to determine the size or value of the estate. Whilst it is possible to trace estates at Gawthorpe, Lasingcroft, Burghwallis and Cardington, for example, through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it is difficult to ascertain their exact size. Combined with another valuable resource, the family’s testamentary evidence, this enables a clearer picture to emerge, yet only a handful of wills survive for

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<sup>86</sup> Richmond, ‘The Pastons and London’, 211-216; Maddern, ‘Honour Among the Pastons’, 357-371; Castor, *Blood and Roses*; Noble, *The World of the Stonors*; Carpenter, ‘The Stonor Circle’, 175-200; Ruddick, ‘Local Politics and Ecclesiastical Patronage’, 93-122; Kirby, *The Plumpton Letters*, are just some examples of the pervasiveness of gentry letter collections in the study of the gentry.

<sup>87</sup> Examples include, WYL GC F/5/1/15-17a; GC F/5/1/23; DD/WBS/23; WYL GC F/5/1/40; 47D75/5/3a; WYL GC/F/5/1/25, 32.

<sup>88</sup> *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem and Other Analogous Documents Preserved in the Public Record Office*, 26 vols. (London, 1904-2010). See too, M. Hicks (ed.), *The Later Medieval Inquisitions Post Mortem: Mapping the Medieval Countryside and Rural Society* (Woodbridge, 2016).

the Gascoigne family during the late medieval and Tudor period.<sup>89</sup> In fact, there are a number of administrations of estate granted for the estates of the Gascoigne family. Administrations were granted, for example, to Henry Gascoigne<sup>46</sup> in 1457 and Alvery Gascoigne<sup>60</sup> in 1513. For many Gascoignes, however, no wills or administrations survive.<sup>90</sup>

In terms of the family's careers, evidence survives to accentuate the continued involvement of the family in the practice of law. The gaol delivery rolls, and the King's Bench indictments are just some examples of these. Moreover, the Duchy of Lancaster registers detail the family's service to the Dukes of Lancaster. The Records of Lincoln Inn shed light on the career of Robert Gascoigne.<sup>74</sup> Similar activity on commissions of the peace, for example, can be seen through the Calendar of Patent Rolls.<sup>91</sup> For the Tudor period, the Letters and Papers of Henry VIII allow for some insight to Gascoigne activity during that period, but overall the family appears relatively sedate when compared to the activity of the previous century.<sup>92</sup>

In terms of personal and private lives, it is possible to piece together evidence of the Gascoignes' activities and associations from their testamentary evidence, where extant. Moreover, the York Cause Papers detail the accusations of adultery from Matthew Redman<sup>225</sup> to his wife, Bridget Gascoigne<sup>224</sup> in 1563.<sup>93</sup> Additionally, the Plumpton family were close relatives of the Gascoigne family during the fifteenth century, and their collection of surviving letters feature a few letters which enabled a reconstruction of gentry life; some letters reveal gentry concerns over birthdays and Christmas, as well as plans for large family gatherings.<sup>94</sup>

The fragmentary nature of extant evidence will be apparent in the first chapter of this thesis, which examines the history of the Gascoigne family through the provision of biographies. These biographies are as thorough as possible but do not claim to be definitive or exhaustive. Those who embarked on careers in service or local government are examined alongside those who did not. Moreover, the Gascoigne women, whether wives, daughters, sisters or mothers, have been provided with biographies where evidence allows for a reconstruction of their lives. Structurally, the chapter will break

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<sup>89</sup> J. Raine (ed.), *Testamenta Eboracensia*, 5 vols., Surtees Society, 4 (1836), 30 (1855), 45 (1864), 53 (1869).

<sup>90</sup> See, for example, *Index of the Wills in the York Registry, 1389-1514*, Yorkshire Record Series, VI (London, 1889).

<sup>91</sup> *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 55 vols. (London, 1806-1916).

<sup>92</sup> J. F. Brewer, et al. (eds.) *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic of the Reign of Henry VIII*, 22 vols. (London, 1862-1932).

<sup>93</sup> Borthwick Institute, CP. G. 1096.

<sup>94</sup> J. Kirby (ed.), *Plumpton Letters* (Cambridge, 1996), 205.

down the three-century timeframe into an examination of each family branch independently; i.e. the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe, Cardington, Lasingcroft and Hunslet will be discussed separately. This will give a clear sense of the family's history in Yorkshire and Bedfordshire, but will also highlight the key differences between each branch of the family.

The second chapter of this thesis examines the social connections and associations of the Gascoigne family. To do this it will adopt a framework whereby influences upon gentry associations are utilised as case studies; the marriages of the Gascoigne family will be examined, as will their service with magnate affinities, their activity in local government and the law, and the role the Gascoigne family had in cultural exchange. Marriages were public affairs and evidence survives to be able to reconstruct social associations of the Gascoigne family, but also to indicate whether the marriages of the family played a role in determining the family's identity. The neighbourhood and county have often been considered key factors in the development of kinships in late medieval gentry society, yet by examining the Gascoigne family across three centuries it is argued that the choice of spouse – in terms of location – was not always a conscious one. Marriage was seen as an indicator of status. The more powerful and influential gentry families could develop marriage ties with families further away from their established estates. This suggests that the neighbourhood was a significant factor for lesser gentry families. However, an examination of the Gascoigne family shows that this is not the case. In terms of magnate affinities and local government, county-based gentry studies have often concluded that the associations established through such service were of vital importance to the gentry as they enabled social mobility and the acquisition of wealth. Yet, as Chapter Two will show, utilising the evidence of the Gascoigne family's record of service with the Dukes of Lancaster, the Earls of Northumberland and Cardinal Wolsey reveals that such associations were often short-lived and did not necessarily have a determinable impact upon the family or the family's identity.

In terms of source material, the Gascoigne collection will be of use here, especially in terms of identifying those who were involved in marriage negotiations; particularly WYL GC/F5/1, ff. 20-21. When combined with the Cause Papers from the Borthwick Institute and the Plumpton Letters, it allows for discussion on the social role of marriage contracts. Moreover, these episodes allow for identification of individuals with whom the Gascoigne family socialised and networked, and the people they trusted. Moreover, the testamentary evidence, as mentioned above, is a useful source in the identification of social bonds. In terms of secondary literature, the PhD theses of Mark Punshon and Carol Arnold are particularly useful, as they provide extensive foundational

research on the West Riding of Yorkshire as an administrative unit.<sup>95</sup> They also provide extensive biographical details about the individual families they discussed, which, whilst not exhaustive, enable the individuals with whom the Gascoignes associated to be properly identified.

The third chapter of this thesis examines the role of politics and local government in influencing the Gascoigne family and their identity. Here, the role of the Gascoignes as MPs, Sheriffs and as Justices of the Peace will be discussed. Moreover, this chapter will examine the consequences of limited service upon a gentry family. As the Gascoignes served with irregularity, then their political identity may not have been influenced by their service in local government. This chapter argues that, as with social associations, the binary nature of political identity is limiting, as even with the Gascoigne family the range of political experiences was impressive. The sources that will be utilised in this chapter include the *PRO Lists of Sheriffs and Escheators*, the Patent Rolls for the reconstruction of the commissions of the peace for the West Riding, alongside the work of Simon Walker on the Yorkshire peace commissions during the reigns of Richard II and Henry IV.<sup>96</sup> For identifying those individuals who served as MP, the *History of Parliament* Project and Arthur Gooder's *Parliamentary Representation of the County of York* have proved invaluable.<sup>97</sup>

Chapter Four of this thesis will examine the Gascoigne family's relationship with the law. The law as a tool for social mobility will be discussed, and this thesis will argue that although the Gascoigne family engaged with the law with some degree of regularity, they did not do so to foster their social rise. The career of William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419) was instrumental in the social advance of the Gascoigne family, yet as this chapter will detail, it is unlikely that he chose such a career to facilitate such a rise, given the choices he made throughout it. Moreover, it will examine how the politicisation of the law in the decades prior to Gascoigne's appointment as Chief Justice may have facilitated his

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<sup>95</sup> *PC; WR*, 2 vols.; C. E. Arnold, 'The Commission of the Peace for the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1437-1509', in A. J. Pollard (ed.), *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History* (Gloucester, 1984), 116-138; Smith, *Land and Politics*.

<sup>96</sup> S. Walker, 'Yorkshire Justices of the Peace, 1389-1413', *EHR*, 108 (1993), 281-313. See too, M. Jones and S. Walker (eds.), 'Private Indentures for Life Service in Peace and War, 1278-1476', *Camden Miscellany*, 32, Camden Society, 5<sup>th</sup> Series, 3 (1994), 1-190; *List of Escheators for England and Wales*, PRO List and Index Society, 72 (1971); *List of Sheriffs for England and Wales*, PRO Lists and Indexes, 9 (1898).

<sup>97</sup> J. S. Roskell, L. Clark and C. Rawcliffe (eds.), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons, 1386-1421*, 4 vols. (Stroud, 1993). See too, The History of Parliament Online, [www.historyofparliament.org](http://www.historyofparliament.org); A. Gooder (ed.), *The Parliamentary Representation of the County of York*, I, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 91 (1935).

legendary status with writers such as Shakespeare. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a discussion of the family's relationship with lawlessness and illegal activities, through a case study of William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> (d. 1551) and the violence he perpetrated across the West Riding of Yorkshire. The evidence utilised for this chapter includes the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and other studies which provide in-depth analysis of a number of Chief Justices of the King's Bench during the late medieval period, in order to make a comparative case concerning their education and selection for the role.<sup>98</sup> Cases from the Court of Common Pleas will also be valuable in discerning the calibre of William Gascoigne I's justice; these were published as part of the *Londoners and the Law* Project.<sup>99</sup> For evaluations concerning the family's lawlessness, their appearance in the Yorkshire Star Chamber will prove invaluable. This includes a myriad of different cases surrounding the violent William VI from the perspective of numerous witnesses. Contextual historiography includes the work of Philippa Maddern, J. R. Maddicott and B. H. Putnam, among others.<sup>100</sup>

The last chapter of this thesis, Chapter Five, will discuss the role of manorial complexes and funerary monuments in the development and projection of gentry family identity. It will seek to place the Gascoigne family, by utilising archaeological evidence and household inventories to recreate a sense of Gascoigne life and how this may have been influenced by their identity. Archaeological evidence survives for Gawthorpe and Wood Hall, and inventories for Gawthorpe and Lasincroft date from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.<sup>101</sup> The interior heraldry of Gawthorpe was recorded by Nathaniel Johnston in 1669, and his manuscript provides valuable information otherwise lost to the historian.<sup>102</sup> Additionally, this chapter will examine the surviving funerary monuments across the West Riding in terms of the identity they express. The Gascoignes of Gawthorpe invested significantly in the parish church of All Saints' Harewood and their funerary monuments will be examined, alongside their investments

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<sup>98</sup> *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004), [www.oxforddnb.com](http://www.oxforddnb.com).

<sup>99</sup> J. Mackman and M. Stevens, *Court of Common Pleas: The National Archives, CP40 1399-1500* (London, 2010), *British History Online*, [www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/common-pleas/1399-1500](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/common-pleas/1399-1500).

<sup>100</sup> P. C. Maddern, *Violence and Social Order: East Anglia, 1422-1442* (Oxford, 1992); J. R. Maddicott, *Law and Lordship: Royal Justices and Retainers in Thirteenth and Fourteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1978); B. P. Putnam, *Proceedings before the Justices of the Peace in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (London, 1938).

<sup>101</sup> V. Metcalf, 'Wood Hall Moated Manor Project: Interim Report' (Unpublished Report, 2001).

<sup>102</sup> Bodleian Library, MSS Tops. Yorks. C 13, ff. 333-344.

in liturgical texts and heraldic stained glass. Of particular note here is the work of Pauline Routh and Richard Knowles.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> P. E. Routh, 'Henry Johnston and the Missing Lady of Gawthorpe Hall', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 54 (1982), 100-103; P. E. Routh, *Medieval Effigial Alabaster Tombs in Yorkshire* (Wakefield, 1976); P. E. Routh and R. Knowles, *The Medieval Monuments of Harewood* (Wakefield, 1983).

## Chapter One: The Gascoigne Family, c. 1309 – 1592

The family history drafted by Richard Gascoigne began in the fourteenth century with William Gascoigne Senior<sup>1</sup> (c. 1309 – 1378), and his sons.<sup>1</sup> Despite the repetition and propagation of myths surrounding the family, Richard's work shows that even in the seventeenth century the early history of the Gascoignes was no clearer than it is today. The measure of Richard's life's work is visible in his collation of documents related to the families to whom the Gascoignes were related by marriage. These reveal his determination to show that even the earliest material denoted the family's association with gentle birth.<sup>2</sup> The first objective of a thesis such as this should be to piece together the extant material to present a clear and concise foundation, from which assessments may be drawn. Therefore, this chapter sets forth the history of the Gascoigne family from their earliest appearances in the source material, to the death of Gawthorpe heiress Margaret Gascoigne<sup>233</sup> (d. c. 1592).<sup>3</sup>

Ahead of such a presentation it is necessary to discuss the structure of this chapter. As mentioned in the Introduction, this thesis intends to circumvent the methodological problems of traditional gentry studies through an examination of the family unit. In order to not predefine the gentry, this chapter will detail the lives of as many members of the Gascoigne family as possible between c. 1309 and c. 1592. With infant mortality rates in the region of 20 to 30 per cent during the late medieval period, the Gascoignes were remarkably fortunate.<sup>4</sup> Few Gascoignes died young, and many Gascoigne marriages produced three to seven children. William Gascoigne II<sup>97</sup> of Lasingcroft (d. 1521) and his wife, Margaret Keighley<sup>98</sup> of Newhall, had as many as 12 children - though their appearances in the source material vary greatly. The misfortune

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<sup>1</sup> WYL115/F5/1 ff. 1 - 10.

<sup>2</sup> Richard's collection of deeds relating to the Tempest family is a prime example of this. (See, WYL115/F5/1 ff. 5- 9).

<sup>3</sup> Margaret Gascoigne was the only child of William Gascoigne VIII (d. 1567) and Beatrice Tempest to live to maturity. She outlived her husband, Sir Thomas Wentworth (c. 1520 - 1587). She was particularly active in the management of the Wentworth court following his death, and her last appearance is dated to 1592. (See Sheffield City Archives, WWM/C/2/36 (October 1592); WWM/C/2/34 (April 1592); WWM/C/2/31, 32 (1591); WWM/C/6/60 (1591), for courts at the Wentworth holdings of Hooton Roberts and Wath-On-Deane, both in the West Riding of Yorkshire).

<sup>4</sup> D. Youngs, *The Life Cycle in Western Europe, c. 1300 - c. 1500* (Manchester, 2006), 24.

that fell upon William Gascoigne VIII<sup>216</sup> (d. 1567), and his wife, Beatrice Tempest<sup>217</sup>, was uncommon in comparison to other members of the Gascoigne family; they lost five children and only the sixth, Margaret<sup>233</sup>, survived to maturity.

The Gascoignes of Gawthorpe provide ten generations of the family for consideration. Multiple Gascoigne branches were active at any one time and to prevent confusion about which branch and member of the Gascoigne family is under discussion, this chapter is sub-divided into sections, by branch and by generation. There will be four main sections, each of which represents a major branch of the Gascoigne family: Gawthorpe, Hunslet, Lasingcroft, and Cardington. Whilst there are lesser branches of the family - including those at Micklefield, Thorp-on-the-Hill, Burnby and Wood Hall - these will be subsumed into the four major branches, as in most cases the descendants of those branches have very little extant contemporary material to detail their lives. Additionally, this chapter will be split into discussions based upon generations, or chronologically. This is to ensure, again, that the 234 individuals discussed in this thesis are properly identifiable.

#### Generations One and Two: The Early Gascoigne Family (c. 1309 - 1427)

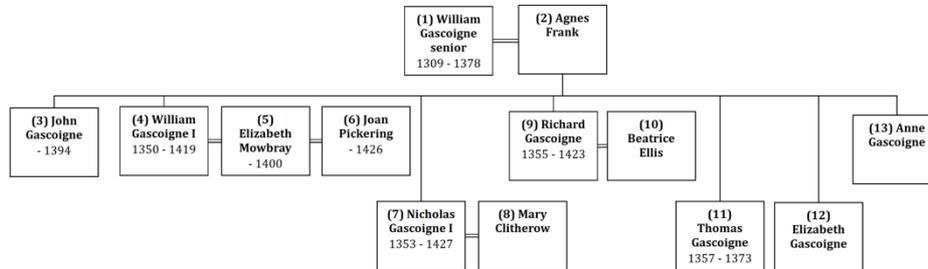
The earliest appearance of William Gascoigne Senior<sup>1</sup> (c. 1309 – 1378), placed him at the parish church of Denton near Middleton (WR), on 6 June 1332.<sup>5</sup> He was there to witness the baptism of Mauger Vavasour, the new son and heir of Thomas Vavasour of Weston. Also in attendance were members of the Vavasour household and family, including Sir Mauger Vavasour, Sir Thomas Lascy, William Frank, Alexander Snauden, William Ward and Thomas Ward.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> *CIPM 1352 - 1361*, 119.

<sup>6</sup> It seems likely that Sir Mauger Vavasour was also the father of Thomas. See, J. Burke, *A Genealogical and Heraldic History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, I* (London, 1833 - 1838), 53. Both knights were also prominent landowners in the area.

Tree 4.1: William Gascoigne Senior and his Children



The relationship Gascoigne Senior had with the Vavasour family at this stage is difficult to determine as the only connection he had to any of the attendees was through his wife, Agnes Frank<sup>2</sup>. Yet his appearance at Mauger's proof of age twenty-one years later in 1353 is suggestive of two things: first, that he was trusted by the family to vouch for them, and second that he was of sufficient status that his word carried weight.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, it seems probable that, by 1353, William Gascoigne Senior<sup>1</sup> was a member of the emergent gentry, and his marriage to Agnes Frank<sup>2</sup>, which took place *c.* 1330 - 1340, may have contributed to his elevation in status due to the local standing of the Frank family, though very little is known about the Frank family at this stage.<sup>8</sup> His sporadic appearances in the source material indicate that Gascoigne Senior was resident at a number of places in the West Riding throughout his lifetime and this could further the suggestion that he was, at one time, a member of the mercantile elite. Moreover, he was involved in two instances of mercantile/gentry violence, both as a perpetrator (1345), and a victim (1369).<sup>9</sup> In the latter instance, the mills and mill pond at Gawthorpe were

<sup>7</sup> *CIPM 1352 - 1361*, 119.

<sup>8</sup> J. Frost, *pers. comm.* (2014).

<sup>9</sup> *CPR 1343 -1345*, 496; *CCR 1369 - 1374*, 114. Gascoigne Senior claimed the damage was to the value of 100 marks. The first instance of violence is a claim that Gascoigne Senior, amongst others, attacked a property at Wainfleet in Lincolnshire and stole £65 of goods and money. The second

reportedly burned to the ground. Soon after his appearance at Vavasour's proof of age, he developed connections at the court of Edward III - most likely through William and Robert Dighton, minor members of the royal household who owned land in Harewood.<sup>10</sup> This led to a grant in July 1361 which exempted Gascoigne Senior from service on juries, or as Mayor, Sheriff, and Coroner, without his consent.<sup>11</sup> Such posts were often the reserve of the lesser gentry families, and an exemption from these posts could be indicative of a rise in social status. Whatever the case may be, this exemption preceded a series of assignments to a number of commissions in the West Riding and wider Yorkshire, suggestive of Gascoigne Senior receiving greater attention from the crown.<sup>12</sup>

William Gascoigne Senior<sub>1</sub> also acted as a surety for individuals in Lincolnshire and London, providing a portion of the £120 required as part of assurances to the Crown that violence between members of the mercantile elite in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire would cease.<sup>13</sup> The second record of Gascoigne Senior acting as surety relates to a violent dispute between Gilbert Drayton, vicar, and Willian Bryan, clerk. This wealth may have derived from property. He acquired land in the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire: at Dishforth, Bridge Hewick, and Kirkby Wharfe (NR), and Denton, Rothwell, Weardley, Weeton, Wheatcroft, and Carlton (WR).<sup>14</sup> However, most of his acquisitions were concentrated on the estates surrounding Harewood and Gawthorpe.<sup>15</sup> In 1363 he was granted permission to enfeoff himself and his heirs on this concentration of holdings, and this represented the creation of Gawthorpe manor as a separate entity.<sup>16</sup> The site of

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appears to be a retaliation to this. The fulling mill and the nearby orchard at Harewood were destroyed, and the local mill pond was also damaged.

<sup>10</sup> William Dighton was a King's clerk: *CPR 1358 - 1361*, 203.

<sup>11</sup> *CPR 1358 - 1361*, 111, 132. Gascoigne Senior also received a grant for good service in 1359, although what the service was is unclear (*CPR 1361 - 1364*, 49).

<sup>12</sup> He is mentioned on a proof of age (1362), took part in an investigation into the adherents of Gilbert de Middleton (1366), and was a member of a commission of wards and reliefs for the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire (1366), a commission of inquiry (1377) and a commission of the peace in the West Riding (1378): *CPR 1364 - 1367*, 358, 370; *CIPM 1361 - 1365*, 11, 295; *CPR 1377 - 1381*, 40, 126. It also appears that he served on an earlier peace commission in September 1361: B. H. Putnam, *Yorkshire Sessions of the Peace, 1361 - 1364* (Cambridge, 2013), 37. *CCR 1373 - 1377*, 327.

<sup>13</sup> *CCR 1372 - 1374*, 327; *CCR 1377 - 1381*, 462.

<sup>14</sup> *CPR 1358-61*, 203; *CIPM 1355-1356*, 119; *CPR 1381-1385*, 126; *CPR 1358-1361*, 467; F. S. Colman, *A History of the Parish* (Leeds, 1908), 133; A. James, 'Men and Gentry Culture in Fifteenth Century Yorkshire,' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2012), 232.

<sup>15</sup> *CPR 1356 - 1361*, 111; *CCR 1360 - 1364*, 424.

<sup>16</sup> *CPR 1361 - 1364*, 325. Gawthorpe became the principal seat of the Gascoigne family until its loss in 1567. It is possible that some form of structure was present at Gawthorpe prior to its creation

Gawthorpe lay to the immediate south of the late eighteenth-century Harewood House which still stands today. The granting of the parks, woods and warrens of Harewood to Gascoigne Senior and his sons in the same year could represent an expansion of the original grant.<sup>17</sup> Little is known about the architecture, size or composition of Gawthorpe Hall or its estate at this stage, but F. S. Colman argued that in 1373 both Gascoigne Senior and his wife, Agnes, bestowed a reasonably-sized estate on their son and heir William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (c. 1350 - 1419), with the exception of Gawthorpe itself, which transferred upon William Gascoigne Senior's death a few years later.<sup>18</sup> Interestingly, William Gascoigne I was not their eldest son; in fact, Gascoigne Senior<sub>1</sub> and Agnes<sub>2</sub> had a number of children: John<sub>3</sub> (d. c. 1394), William I (c. 1350 - 1419), Nicholas I<sub>7</sub> (c. 1353 - 1427), Richard<sub>9</sub> (c. 1355 - 1423), Thomas<sub>11</sub> (c. 1357 - c. 1373), Elizabeth<sub>12</sub>, and Anne<sub>13</sub>.<sup>19</sup> The eldest son John was placed in the Church. It is conceivable that this was due to John's seniority – he was around ten years older than William I – and his majority came at a time when the Gascoigne patrimony was partial and insecure. Circumstances had changed by the end of William Gascoigne Senior's life and, as the next section will show, not only was he able to provide his heir with an estate but he was also able to provide his younger

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as a separate manor, although if this is the case it was probably part of the de Lisle estate at Harewood. This grant indicated the establishment of Gawthorpe as a new manor, and the surrounding land - relatively small in size at this stage - as new demesne lands. There is no evidence surviving to indicate whether the Gascoigne family had their own manorial court at Gawthorpe. The Gascoigne Collection at WYL has a number of court records from the fourteenth - sixteenth century, but these cover Gascoigne manors at other locations (particularly Barwick-in-Elmet, Sherburn, and Saxton), during periods when the Gascoigne family were not in ownership of the estate, or control of the court. Sherburn's records (WYL 115/M3/154) are the most extensive, but the estate did not come into Gascoigne ownership until the seventeenth century; the late medieval and Tudor records are from a period where the Archbishopric of York was in control of the court and the estate. *CCR 136-1364*, 424.

<sup>17</sup> *CPR 1361 - 1364*, 394; the closest neighbours to the Gascoigne family were based at the thirteenth century Harewood Castle, just north of the settlement of Harewood. At this time it belonged to William de Aldeburgh and his family (who had gained a licence from the crown to crenellate in 1366, after they had inherited 2/3rds of the estate from Robert de Lisle), *CPR 1364 - 1367*, 355; *CCR 1361 - 1364*, 511.

<sup>18</sup> Colman, *A History of the Parish of Barwick-in-Elmet*, 133. Colman incorrectly stated that Gascoigne Senior died in 1383. An inquisition into his estate was issued in 1378; however, the findings of that inquisition do not survive. See *CFR 1377 - 1383*, 153.

<sup>19</sup> Unfortunately, little survives to indicate when Elizabeth and Anne were born, or were even active. The life of Thomas will not be discussed here. Evidence suggests that he died young, as he appears in only one document, in 1363, which granted the woods and warrens of Harewood to the Gascoigne family. *CPR 1361-1364*, 394.

sons with a considerable financial inheritance; enough for both Nicholas I and Richard to establish their own estates.

William Gascoigne Senior's<sup>1</sup> eldest son, John Gascoigne<sup>3</sup> (d. c. 1394), was born c. 1340 and it seems likely that he was given some form of clerical education. His early life is a mystery, but he found a patron in Simon Sudbury (d. 1381), then Bishop of London (1361 - 1375) and future Archbishop of Canterbury, who promoted John to the rectorship of Lythe (NR) in 1373, a living he would hold until his death.<sup>20</sup> The following year he was granted a second, albeit temporary, post - the living of St. Ervans, Cornwall - which he held until 1383.<sup>21</sup> It is possible that he was granted this position to assist his university education as shortly after he gained his doctorate at Oxford University, where he later taught canon law.<sup>22</sup> Very little is known about his activities whilst at Oxford, yet it appears he became embroiled in the internal strife which led to the University's condemnation of the scholar and theologian John Wycliffe (c. 1320 - 1384) in 1377.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, John's career appears to have been partially supported by his joint-ownership of lands with his brother, William I<sup>4</sup> (d. 1419).<sup>24</sup> It is probable that he occasionally returned to Yorkshire as he was the only Gascoigne recorded in the 1379 poll tax records for the West Riding.<sup>25</sup> He vacated his office at Lythe in 1394 and died shortly thereafter.

John's<sup>3</sup> brother, William Gascoigne I<sup>4</sup> (c. 1350 - 1419), had a more distinguished career and was later immortalised in one of the history plays of William Shakespeare.<sup>26</sup> He was educated at either the Inner Temples or Gray's Inn and gained his first judicial post in 1388 when he was appointed a Serjeant-at-Law by Richard II.<sup>27</sup> The following

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<sup>20</sup> *Register of Simon Sudbury, 1362 - 1375* (ed.) R. C. Fowler (Canterbury and York Society Series, 1927-8), 38, 118-120. It appears John was made Acolyte, Sub-Deacon and then Rector on the same day, which suggests some form of patronage occurred.

<sup>21</sup> *Register of Thomas de Brantyngham, Bishop of Exeter (A.D. 1370 - 1394)* (ed.) F.C. Hingeston-Randolph (London, 1901), I, 42, 82.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 383; A. B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford*, II (Oxford, 1959), 745.

<sup>23</sup> *CPR 1374-1377*, 290-291; D. Logan, 'Gascoigne, John (fl. 1376-1381)', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10422](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10422), accessed 10 March 2016; A. E. Larsen, *The School of Heretics: Academic Condemnation at the University of Oxford* (Leiden, 2011), 156.

<sup>24</sup> CP 25/1/278/143, 48.

<sup>25</sup> TNA E 179/206/49, rot. 42, c. 2.

<sup>26</sup> See Chapter Four for more information about William Gascoigne I and his relationship with the law.

<sup>27</sup> E. Powell, 'Gascoigne, Sir William (c. 1350 - 1419)', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10427](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10427), accessed 10 March 2016.

year he was promoted, temporarily, to the position of King's Serjeant, a position he regained in 1396.<sup>28</sup> Although his career began on the Midlands circuit, William I<sub>4</sub> served recurrently on the Eastern circuit and in Yorkshire where he sat on a number of West Riding peace commissions.<sup>29</sup> Despite this service across a number of counties, he remained a relatively minor lawyer. In 1397, he was appointed Chief Justice of the Palatinate of Lancaster in 1397, and this meant that, on the expulsion of Henry Bolingbroke (1367 - 1413), son and heir of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, (1340 - 1399), from England in 1398, William I<sub>4</sub> became one of Bolingbroke's representatives in England.<sup>30</sup> This connection with the house of Lancaster was not unforeseen. Richard Gascoigne served Bolingbroke as his representative at the Exchequer from the late 1380s, and William I himself acted as Steward of Pontefract for the Duchy in the early 1390s.<sup>31</sup> When Bolingbroke returned from exile in 1399, the Gascoigne family were among the first families to join his cause. Shortly after the coronation of Bolingbroke as Henry IV, William I<sub>4</sub> and Richard<sub>9</sub> were both promoted.<sup>32</sup> The former was appointed Chief Justice of the King's Bench, following William Clopton's death in 1400.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, William I was valuable to the new regime in other ways as he acted as a trier of petitions in early parliamentary sessions (1400 - 1401, 1403 - 1404), and was commissioned to quell the Percy rebellion of 1403.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> See, E. Foss, *The Judges of England* (1848); J. C. Sainty, *The Judges of England 1272-1990: a list of the judges of the superior courts* (Selden Society, 1993); G. O. Sayles, *Select Cases in the Court of King's Bench Under Edward III*, VI (London, 1965) and *Select Cases in the Court of King's Bench Under Richard II, Henry IV, and Henry V*, V, VII (London, 1971); and *CPR - Richard II Supplement*. Foss argued that Gascoigne I was old enough to act as an advocate in the Year Books of Edward III (1374): Foss, *The Judges*, 164.

<sup>29</sup> *CPR 1385 - 1389*, 474; *CPR 1381 - 1385*, 200, 502; *CPR 1385 - 1389*, 254, 472, 545, 474, 546; *CPR 1389 - 1392*, 60, 135, 136. See also: G. O. Sayles, *Select Cases in the Court of King's Bench*; and *CPR - Richard II Supplement* for more details (*CPR - RII Suppl.*, 33, 66, 73, 74, 79, 80-102, 104, 106-111, 116, 130-136). S. Walker, *Political Culture in Later Medieval England* (Manchester, 2006), 104-106, revealed that Gascoigne served on 56 West Riding peace commissions between 1390 and 1411, all but four of which were before October 1402.

<sup>30</sup> William I acted as Bolingbroke's attorney between 1398 and 1399. See, E. Powell, 'Gascoigne, Sir William'. When he was made Chief Justice, it appears he was also knighted.

<sup>31</sup> TNA JUST 3/183 m. 1d., 184 mm. 4d., 6d; Walker, *Political Culture*, 113.

<sup>32</sup> C. Given-Wilson, ed. *Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397 - 1400: The Reign of Richard II* (Manchester, 1993), 253.

<sup>33</sup> *CCR 1399 - 1402*, 219; A. Tuck, 'Clopton, Walter', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5701](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/5701), accessed 04 February 2016.

<sup>34</sup> *P.R.O.M.E.*, iii, 455, 486, 523; Sainty, *The Judges of England*, 8; *PS*, 256; *CPR 1405 - 1408*, 500; *CPR 1413 - 1416*, 426; TNA C 66/378, m 6d.; 395, m 32d.

William I's activities as a lawyer and justice are relatively obscure. His fame arose from his principled opposition to the execution of Archbishop Richard Scrope, after the latter's rebellion in 1405.<sup>35</sup> However, it is clear that he spent considerable time in London where he acted as a witness to a series of charters for London's elite and verified the records of King's Bench.<sup>36</sup> The career of William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> afforded him the opportunity to increase his family's landholdings in Yorkshire significantly. Like his father before him, William I was involved in a number of land acquisitions and he managed to expand his possessions to include land in Wheldale and Sutton (which he owned jointly with his brother John<sub>3</sub>), Thorp Arch, Barnbow, Scholes, Cottingley, Lasincroft (with Nicholas I<sub>7</sub>), Shippen, Garforth, and Mickelfield.<sup>37</sup> It was this expansion that enabled the Gascoigne family to establish themselves as one of the most dominant and powerful families of the West Riding in the fifteenth century. Many of these acquisitions were made possible by the fact that William I purchased these lands with his brothers, John<sub>3</sub>, Nicholas I<sub>7</sub> and Richard<sub>9</sub>. The value of these estates assisted in the arrangement of fortuitous marriages, which in turn enabled the foundation of lesser Gascoigne branches across Yorkshire, and another in Bedfordshire. Henry V (d. 1422) replaced William I as Chief Justice in 1413, after which he returned to Gawthorpe where the few records of him in the surviving source material indicate he remained until his death.<sup>38</sup> His investment there led to the creation of a Gascoigne chapel and chantry. His final bequests were generous and indicate that there was a small household in operation at Gawthorpe at that time. He was buried beside the first of his two wives, Elizabeth Mowbray<sub>5</sub> (d. c. 1400), the daughter and heiress of Alexander Mowbray, esquire, whom he had married in 1386, and with whom he had a son, William Gascoigne II<sub>14</sub> (d. 1422). His second wife, Joan Pickering<sub>6</sub> (d. 1426), chose to be buried in her family's local church

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<sup>35</sup> P. McNiven, 'Scrope, Richard', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24964](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24964), accessed 04 February 2016.

<sup>36</sup> Given the fact that Gascoigne's role as Chief Justice meant that he oversaw much of the legal work of the bench, it is difficult to distinguish the specific activities of Gascoigne on the bench during this period. However, some legal activities can be discerned and these are discussed in later chapters. See also: *CCR 1385 - 1389*, 275, 466, 467, 540, 599, 322, 436.

<sup>37</sup> *CCR 1385 - 1389*, 465; *CCR 1389 - 1392*, 534; *CCR 1422 - 1429*, 387; *CCR 1422 - 1429*, 245; CP 25/1/279/148, nos., 2, 14, 18, 40; 279/149, no. 45; 280/154, no. 6; 290/57, nos. 278, 282; 278/146, no. 25; 289/44, no. 156; 280/153, no. 46; 279/147, no. 44; and 290/58, no. 303.)

<sup>38</sup> R. Virgoe, 'Hankeford, Sir William', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12196](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/12196), accessed 04 February 2016.

in Holme-in-Spalding-More (ER).<sup>39</sup> With Joan, William I had two children, Agnes<sub>16</sub> and James I<sub>18</sub> (d. 1435).<sup>40</sup> He died in 1419 and is commemorated by a tomb in All Saints' Church Harewood.

John's second brother, Nicholas I<sub>7</sub> (c. 1353 - 1427), had an early life similar to that of his brothers. His early career is sparsely documented. He first appears in the records as Steward to Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent (1354 - 1397).<sup>41</sup> Although in service to the Hollands by 1380, he appeared to have been re-retained on 3 March 1399 by his son, Thomas Holland, Duke of Surrey (1374 - 1400), and was granted a tun of wine by Richard II the following week.<sup>42</sup> After the disastrous Epiphany uprising of 1400 - during which Holland died - Nicholas curried favour with the new Lancastrian regime, probably due to his brothers' careers. He returned to Yorkshire where he served as a justice for the West Riding peace commissions between 1401 and 1405.<sup>43</sup> He also served on a number of commissions and in 1404 was granted the wardship of John Cawood, the heir of a prominent West Riding house.<sup>44</sup> Whilst in service to the Holland family, Nicholas I established his family at the manor of Lasincroft which he acquired piecemeal from Geoffrey of Lasincroft in 1392, as a result of the latter's debts.<sup>45</sup> Whilst Nicholas expanded his holdings at Lasincroft in the fifteenth century, he managed to acquire

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<sup>39</sup> *Test. Ebor.* I, 410: Joan's small bequests are to her daughter, Agnes and husband, Robert Constable; and her sons James, Christopher, Robert and Richard. The latter three are from a previous marriage (see below).

<sup>40</sup> J. Foster, *Pedigrees*, among others, details more children from these marriages - particularly as a result of the second marriage. Joan Pickering did have more children but these were from a previous marriage - to Sir Christopher Moresby of Distington and Culgaith (Cumberland) and Asby Winderwath (Westmorland), (c. 1357-1391), with whom she had three sons: Christopher (1380-1443), Robert (*fl.* 1426), and Richard (d.1461). Richard, a clergyman, was presented to the church of Holme-in-Spalding Moor (where Joan was buried) in 1424 by Sir Robert Constable of Flamborough, Agnes' husband. Furthermore, it seems that he was responsible for the granting of a papal indulgence to the couple for a portable altar. Thanks here are given to John Watson and Matt Tompkins (among others) who provided valuable information and interesting discussion.

<sup>41</sup> *PS*, 258; Walker, *Political Culture*, 111; *CCR 1377 - 1381*, 353. See, too *CCR 1389 - 1392*, 26.

<sup>42</sup> *CPR 1422 - 1429*, 57; WYL115/F5/1, f. 11. It seems likely that he was the Nicholas Gascoigne who received a quitclaim for land he owned (with Walter Pasford) in Wimbledon, Surrey. (*CCR 1377 - 1381*, 353).

<sup>43</sup> *PS*, 258; Nicholas appeared semi-regularly, see. E 137/49,2B, mm. 1-4; E 373/248, rot., 12; 254, rot., 11d; 259, rot., 7d; Walker, *Political Culture*, 105.

<sup>44</sup> WYL115/F5/1, f. 12; W. Baildon, *Inquisitions Post Mortem relating to Yorkshire, of the reigns of Henry IV and Henry V* (YAS, 1918) 40; TNA C 139/157/19; *CPR 1391-96*, 353; and *CPR 1401-05*, 365-6.

<sup>45</sup> WYL115/F5/1, f. 5; *PS*, 258; *CCR 1381 - 1385*, 93. *CCR 1392 - 1396*, 498.

some possessions with his marriage to the Tempest widow, Mary Clitherow<sup>8</sup>, with whom he had a number of children: Nicholas II<sup>20</sup>, Thomas<sup>21</sup>, Elizabeth<sup>22</sup>, Margaret<sup>24</sup> and John<sup>26</sup> (d. 1445).<sup>46</sup> This involved Nicholas I in an inheritance dispute with the Tempest family, which was resolved in 1405 when Nicholas I and Mary renounced their claim on the manor of Studley, in return for which they received an income of £5 per annum from the estate.<sup>47</sup> A few years later, in 1408, Nicholas granted the manor of Bramham (WR) to Nostell Priory, near Doncaster.<sup>48</sup> Little else is known about Nicholas' life. He negotiated the marriage between his daughter Elizabeth<sup>22</sup> and Anthony St. Quintin<sup>23</sup> in 1409, between John<sup>26</sup> and Isabel Heton<sup>27</sup> in 1419, and infrequently acted as a trustee for other associates of the Holland family, including Sir William Bouchier and Nicholas Bubwith, Bishop of Bath and Wells.<sup>49</sup> In 1425, a rental noted Nicholas' status as a free tenant in Barnbow, Scholes, and Lasincroft.<sup>50</sup> He died in 1427. No will survives, and it is unclear where he was buried. The Gascoignes of Lasincroft would later be buried at the parish church in Barwick-in-Elmet (WR), so it is possible that he was buried there.

The third and final brother of John discussed here, Richard<sup>9</sup>, was born c. 1355.<sup>51</sup> His career began with an opportunity facilitated by his older brother Nicholas. Richard served as Marshal of the Exchequer from 1384, a position he acquired due to the patronage of Thomas Holland.<sup>52</sup> Although his education appears to have been autodidact in form, with no formal legal training, his activities at the Exchequer brought him to the attention of the associates of the Duchy of Lancaster and he served as Henry Bolingbroke's attorney there from 1387.<sup>53</sup> After William I's<sup>4</sup> appointment as Chief Justice

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<sup>46</sup> J. Foster, *Pedigrees*, claimed they married in 1389, but I have found no evidence for this.

<sup>47</sup> WYL115/F5/1, ff. 7 - 14.

<sup>48</sup> TNA C 143/439/8.

<sup>49</sup> WYL 230/106; WYL 115/F5/1, ff. 15, 17a; Yorkshire Archaeological Society Archives, MD 229/28; *CPR 1408 - 1413*, 158.

<sup>50</sup> WYL 115/E1/22 - 1425.

<sup>51</sup> Thomas died young, and his appearance in a single source (mentioned above) does not shed enough light upon the family to warrant discussion here.

<sup>52</sup> *CPR 1381 - 1385*, 482. Whilst there is evidence that a Richard Gascoigne served in the military around the same period (see TNA E 101/39/7 no. 3, m. 1, which denotes Richard Gascoigne serving in the 1380 expedition to France under Thomas of Woodstock, earl of Buckingham) this is likely to be Richard de Gascoyne of Worcester, a prominent MP (1382, 1383). See too, TNA C76/61 m.24; C61/91 m.6; C76/64 m.6; C76/75 m.27 for more evidence of Richard de Gascoyne's service overseas in this period. Information on Richard de Gascoyne's service was obtained from the AHRC-funded database [www.medievalsoldier.org](http://www.medievalsoldier.org), accessed 11 March 2016.

<sup>53</sup> Walker, *Political Culture*, 103; S. Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity, 1361 - 1399* (Oxford, 1990), 305 - 308; R. Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster, I* (London, 1953), 373, 408.

of the Palatinate of Lancaster in 1397, Richard joined his brother on the West Riding peace commission - in fact, Richard was one of the most active local justices, serving on 61 out of 64 sessions between 1399 and 1411.<sup>54</sup> His activity on the commission increased following the death in 1399 of Westminster lawyer and companion of William Gascoigne I, John Woodruff.<sup>55</sup>

Even with the death of John of Gaunt and the exile of his son, Henry Bolingbroke, the fortunes of the Gascoigne family - particularly William I and Richard - were tied to those of the house of Lancaster. This could explain the celerity with which Richard led the small Gascoigne forces, for which they were paid £13, to join Bolingbroke's army when it reached Pontefract on 13 July 1399.<sup>56</sup> Following the usurpation, Richard was appointed as Chief Steward of the Northern Parts of the Duchy of Lancaster - a post he held until 1407.<sup>57</sup> Richard Gascoigne's service was considerably less peripatetic than the service of William I; nevertheless, he still acquired enough wealth to establish his family at the manor of Hunslet.<sup>58</sup> However, his family branch was short-lived. He had four children by his wife Beatrice<sup>10</sup>, daughter of Henry Ellis, but only one son, Thomas<sup>28</sup> (d. 1457). His three daughters were Alice<sup>29</sup>, Elizabeth<sup>31</sup> and Joan<sup>33</sup>. Thomas was a scholar, and became Chancellor of Oxford University.<sup>59</sup> On Richard's death in 1423 the relatively small estate was left entirely to him.<sup>60</sup>

Little information survives about the lives of William Gascoigne Senior's daughters. According to Joseph Foster's pedigree of the Gascoigne family, Elizabeth Gascoigne<sup>12</sup> married John Aske of Olstroppe in 1415, yet this seems unlikely given the fact that Gascoigne Senior died in 1378 - making her at least 37 at the time of her

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<sup>54</sup> Walker suggested that between 1399 and 1414 Richard performed much of the work on the WR peace commission single-handedly, as his brother, William I, was completing the duties of Chief Justice; TNA DL 42/15, fol. 70; *PS*, 257; Walker, *Political Culture*, 91.

<sup>55</sup> Walker, *Political Culture*, 91.

<sup>56</sup> Given-Wilson, ed. *Chronicles of the Revolution*, 33 - 34, 253.

<sup>57</sup> *PS*, 100; TNA DL 42/16, fol. 18v, 223; Somerville, *History of the Duchy*, I, 418.

<sup>58</sup> CP 25/1/279/150, mm. 11-12; 279/152, m. 9; 280/154, m. 39; CP 25/1/279/150, no. 11. He also held land in Leeds and at Healaugh (CP 25/1/279/148, no. 30; 280/154, no. 39), amongst other places - most of which he held jointly with his brother William I. Richard, William I and Nicholas I had acquired land in Hunslet in 1391, alongside John Amyas and John Woodruff. See *CCR 1389 - 1392*, 508; *CCR 1402 - 1405*, 308.

<sup>59</sup> W. A. Pronger, 'Thomas Gascoigne', *English Historical Review*, 53 (1938), 606-626; 'Thomas Gascoigne 2', *English Historical Review*, 54 (1939), 20-37.

<sup>60</sup> *Test. Ebor.* I, 403.

marriage.<sup>61</sup> It is possible that Aske was not her first husband. Stained glass at Aske Manor at Aughton suggests a union between the two families at some point, however, William Greenwood states that Elizabeth married Sir Richard Redman of Harewood and Levens (d. 1426), and without any evidence either way, her spouse is indeterminable.<sup>62</sup> Similar problems arise from the supposed marriage of Anne Gascoigne<sup>13</sup> to Sir Robert Constable of Flamborough (ER). This Anne has probably been confused with Agnes Gascoigne<sup>16</sup> who did in fact marry Sir Robert Constable<sup>17</sup> of Flamborough (d. 1441).<sup>63</sup> Joseph Foster's pedigree states that Anne<sup>13</sup> married one Peter Roos, yet there is no evidence to confirm this.<sup>64</sup>

After William Gascoigne Senior's death, William I<sub>4</sub> inherited Gawthorpe, and his son James I<sub>18</sub> (d. 1435) established a branch of the family at Cardington, Bedfordshire, whilst Richard<sub>9</sub> and Nicholas I<sub>7</sub> established their own branches at Hunslet and Lasingcroft respectively. This meteoric rise in just two generations is significant. William Gascoigne Senior<sub>1</sub> struggled to create a single landholding, yet his sons established manors of their own. In the space of a generation the Gascoignes had established themselves as a prominent West Riding family. Furthermore, even at this stage the immersion of the Gascoigne family in different, often opposing, factions in national crises is apparent. The family's involvement with Richard II's loyal magnates and his opposition epitomises the family's attitude towards problematical affairs of state: they negated risk by either remaining absent from political affairs, or by supporting individuals on all sides of the conflict. As the next section will show, the Gascoignes at Gawthorpe and the Gascoignes of Lasingcroft continued to build upon those foundations during a period of English instability and uncertainty, which ultimately culminated in the Wars of the Roses.

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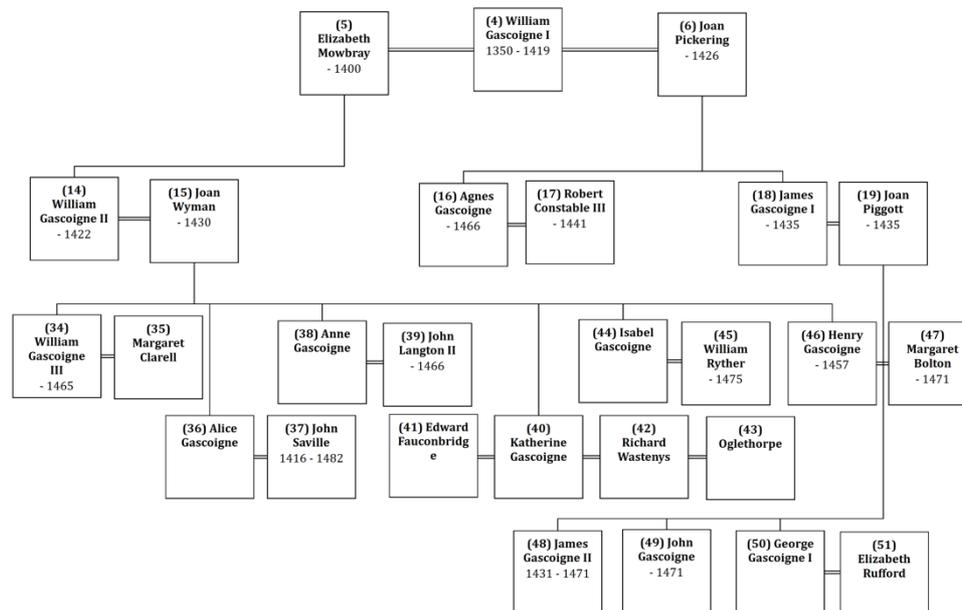
<sup>61</sup> J. Foster, *Pedigrees*.

<sup>62</sup> W. Greenwood, *The Redmans of Levens and Harewood* (Kendal, 1905), 86. There is a later manor house at Aughton, yet it is unclear whether this belonged to the Aske family as no heraldic features survive, including the stained glass reported by Glover.

<sup>63</sup> For details of the Constable family, see R. Horrox, 'Constable Family (*per. c.* 1300 - 1488), *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/52782](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/52782), accessed 11 March 2016.

<sup>64</sup> For this reason, the marriages of both Anne and Elizabeth have been excluded from the family tree.

Tree 4.2: William Gascoigne I, his children and grandchildren



Generations Three and Four: The Rise of the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe, c. 1400 - c. 1465

This section will focus on the rise of the Gawthorpe Gascoignes. Although William II<sub>14</sub> inherited a considerable fortune and estate from his father, he did not live long. It was his son who established the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe amongst the most powerful and influential in the West Riding. This section will also focus on Henry Gascoigne<sub>46</sub> who founded the lesser branch of the family at Micklefield.

Although the life and career of William Gascoigne II<sub>14</sub> (d. 1422), was cut short by his death during the siege of Meaux, Île-de-France, he played a vital part in establishing the family among the Yorkshire elite. His scant appearance in the source material suggests he continued the same method of land acquisition and expansion as his father and grandfather, by engaging with local landowners, such as Richard Redman I, to purchase estates.<sup>65</sup> He also acquired property in the city of York, most notably on Coney Street, through his marriage to Joan<sub>15</sub>, the heiress and daughter of Henry Wyman, mayor of York.<sup>66</sup> With Joan he had six children: William III<sub>34</sub> (d. c. 1465), Henry<sub>46</sub> (d. 1457),

<sup>65</sup> C. Rawcliffe, 'William Gascoigne (d. 1422)', *HOP*, [www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1386-1421/member/gascoigne-sir-william-1422](http://www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1386-1421/member/gascoigne-sir-william-1422), accessed 11 March 2016.

<sup>66</sup> Henry Wyman was mayor of York in 1378 and again between 1407 and 1409. He was a member of the wealthy mercantile and administrative elite in York. For details of his life, see: R. H. Skaife, ed. 'The Register of the Guild of Corpus Christi', *Surtees*, 57, 240, 239; *VCH: The City of York*, 97-

Alice<sup>36</sup>, Anne<sup>38</sup>, Katherine<sup>40</sup> and Isabel<sup>44</sup>. It is likely that his wife was responsible for William II's involvement with the cult of Richard Scrope and the Corpus Christi guild.<sup>67</sup> However, most of William II's activities were in military service. He went to France in 1417 where he was knighted, and in 1419 he displayed prowess on the battlefield, having captured at least one prisoner in battle.<sup>68</sup> His career appeared to show promise as, on his return to England, he was chosen to serve as an MP for Yorkshire (May 1421), and was appointed Steward, Constable, and Master Forester of Knaresborough for the Duchy of Lancaster the following year.<sup>69</sup> He clearly intended to return to France as he drew up letters of protection and a will.<sup>70</sup> He died outside the city of Meaux in March 1422, leaving his young son, William III, in charge of the Gawthorpe estate.<sup>71</sup>

William II's half-sister Agnes Gascoigne<sup>16</sup> (d.1466), married Sir Robert Constable III<sup>17</sup> (d. 1441) of Flamborough (ER). Little is known about Agnes' life, though it appears she resided at the Flamborough estate, where both she and her husband were buried.<sup>72</sup> It is likely that she was behind her husband's presentation of her half-brother Richard Moresby - from her mother's first marriage - to the church living of Holme-in-Spalding-More in 1424 where her mother was buried.<sup>73</sup> Moresby was a canon of Hoxton, London by 1428, when he, Robert, and Agnes were granted a papal indulgence for a portable

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106; J. Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries: Religion and Secular Life in Late Medieval Yorkshire* (Woodbridge, 1988) 313-314; *CCR* 1441-1447, 384; J. Lister, ed. 'The Early Yorkshire Woollen Trade', *YAS*, 64 (1924), 11-15. See too, S. R. Jones, 'Richard Scrope, the Bolton Hours and the Church of St Martin in Micklegate: Reconstructing a Holy Neighbourhood in Later Medieval York', in P. J. P. Goldberg (ed.) *Richard Scrope: Archbishop, Rebel, Martyr* (Donnington, 2007), 214-236; P. M. King, 'Corpus Christi Plays and the 'Bolton Hours': Tastes in Piety and Patronage in Fifteenth Century York', *Medieval English Theatre*, 18 (1996), 46-62. See too, B. Lambert and W. M. Ormrod, 'Friendly Foreigners: International Warfare, Resident Aliens and the Early History of Denization in England, c. 1250 - c. 1400,' *EHR* (2015), 130 (542), 1-24.

<sup>67</sup> Skaife, ed., 'The Register of the Guild of Corpus Christi', 57, 240, 239.

<sup>68</sup> C. Rawcliffe, 'William Gascoigne'.

<sup>69</sup> S. J. Payling, 'Sir William Gascoigne', in L. Clark, ed., *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons* (forthcoming, c. 2017). I am grateful to the trustees of the History of Parliament for permission to cite this work; Somerville, *History of the Duchy*, 526; *TNA C* 137/7/57; *CP* 25(1) 280/154/39, no. 41; *Test. Ebor.*, I, 402-403.

<sup>70</sup> Payling, 'William Gascoigne'; *Test. Ebor.* I, 304; *CP* 40/658, rot. 133; *Test. Ebor.* I, 402.

<sup>71</sup> *TNA C* 139/7/56, mm. 1-2. William II's lands included Thorp Arch, Shipley, Cottingley, and Burghwallis. At this stage Thorp Arch was worth £16, Shipley £10 and Cottingley 10 marks.

<sup>72</sup> *Test. Ebor.* II, 80.

<sup>73</sup> J. W. Kirkby, *The York Sede Vacante Register, 1423 - 1426* (Borthwick Publications, 2009), 40.

altar.<sup>74</sup> Their son and heir, Robert Constable IV (1423 - 1488), was born at Easter 1423. He was a minor at the death of his father in 1441. Agnes and Sir Thomas Cumberworth (d. 1451) were executors of Robert's estate upon his death.<sup>75</sup> Robert Constable IV did not inherit his father's land until 1444, and in 1448 he married Agnes, daughter of Sir Roger Wentworth of North Elmsall (WR). Cumberworth was Robert's great-uncle and, upon his death in 1451, Robert Constable IV inherited his estates.<sup>76</sup> On Agnes' death in 1466 she requested to be buried alongside her husband, in the choir of St. Edmund the King and Martyr, and made her children, William Constable and Joan Welles her executors.<sup>77</sup>

The son and heir of William Gascoigne II<sub>14</sub> (d. 1422), William Gascoigne III<sub>34</sub> (d. c. 1465), was still a minor upon his father's death. William III inherited a substantial estate encumbered by his mother's jointure and his step-grandmother's dower. Both women were dead by the early 1430s and the land passed back into William's hands, with the inclusion of further property in York which had once belonged to the Wyman family.<sup>78</sup> In February 1426 he married the widow Margaret Clarell<sub>35</sub> - a match of which his mother may have disapproved given the absence of Gascoigne attendees during the ceremony - with whom he had a number of children; William IV<sub>71</sub> (d. 1464), Robert<sub>74</sub>, John<sub>76</sub> (*fl.* 1440s), Ralph<sub>78</sub> (d. 1488), Joan<sub>80</sub>, Anne<sub>82</sub> and Margaret<sub>85</sub>. The cause for his mother's possible disapproval is not known but it could be speculated that it was due to the relatively low status of Margaret<sub>35</sub>. William III<sub>34</sub> and Margaret were married in secret and the ceremony took place in an un-consecrated place. It was conducted by Margaret's kinsman Thomas Clarell who was excommunicated for his part in the ceremony, as was Margaret's father, another Thomas, and John Mauleverer, a witness and close associate of William II<sub>14</sub>.<sup>79</sup> The excommunication was short-lived with those involved submitting to the chapter house a few days later.<sup>80</sup>

William III's<sub>34</sub> career was diverse. He was knighted in 1429 and served

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<sup>74</sup> *Calendar of Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland, 1427 - 1447* (London, 1909), 122, 136.

<sup>75</sup> C. Rawcliffe, 'Cumberworth, Thomas (d. 1451), of Somerby and Stain, Lincolnshire, and Argam, Yorkshire', *HOP*, [www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1386-1421/member/cumberworth-thomas-1451](http://www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1386-1421/member/cumberworth-thomas-1451), accessed 21 February 2016.

<sup>76</sup> Horrox, 'Constable Family'.

<sup>77</sup> *Test. Ebor.* II, 80-81.

<sup>78</sup> WYL115/F5/1/101.

<sup>79</sup> Payling, 'William Gascoigne'.

<sup>80</sup> Kirkby, *The York Sede Vacante Register*, 88-89; *Test. Ebor.*, III, 325. In the same year, he settled the manor of Burghwallis on his wife, as jointure. See: CP 25(1) 280/155/42.

frequently on commissions in Yorkshire (1431, 1433, 1434, 1435, 1436, 1439, and 1448) and in other counties (1460).<sup>81</sup> He was Sheriff of Yorkshire between 1441 and 1442 and served thrice as a Knight of the Shire (1431, 1435, and 1453).<sup>82</sup> The legal turmoil of his early majority made an impression on the young William III and he regularly appeared in court.<sup>83</sup> His proclivity for litigation was not the only trait he inherited from his grandfather as he also appeared to inherit his ability to resist royal authority, especially if it over-stepped. He was responsible for a period of disorder against the Crown's annual levy of 1434 and led the unrest in Pontefract. He sued the Bailiff and championed local rights.<sup>84</sup>

By the start of the series of conflicts known as the Wars of the Roses, William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> was a prominent local knight with considerable influence in the county. This can be seen by his role in the 1441 election of MPs for Yorkshire whilst Sheriff, as those that attested to the validity of the election numbered 451 - significantly higher than usual.<sup>85</sup> The significance of this will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Three.<sup>86</sup> He had acquired wealth, close associates, and patrons across the country. His attempt to maintain his position is shown by his decision to remain detached from the tensions and conflict that engulfed the region by balancing his connections to the houses of Percy and Neville. As head of the family he remained aloof, but his brothers-in-law, Sir Thomas Langton<sup>39</sup>, Sir William Ryther<sup>45</sup> (d. 1475), and Sir John Savile<sup>37</sup>, his son William IV<sup>71</sup>, and his sons-in-laws, Sir Henry Vavasour<sup>81</sup> (d. 1460), Sir Hugh Hastings<sup>83</sup> (d. 1489), and Sir William Scargill<sup>86</sup> could take sides, and did.<sup>87</sup> This decision not to become involved in the conflict ultimately paid off and the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe survived the multiple regime changes unscathed.<sup>88</sup> Little is known about William III's<sup>34</sup> life after this point but he seems to have died a few years later. Effigies of William III and his wife Margaret<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> *CPR 1429-1436*, 126, 250, 350, 360, 522, 531; *CPR 1446-1452*, 238.

<sup>82</sup> *CPR 1429-36*, 126, 349 - 350, 360, 522, 531; *CPR 1436-41*, 250; *CPR 1446-52*, 238; Payling, 'Gascoigne'; Foster, *Pedigrees*. The other counties upon whose commissions he served include, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Warwickshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmorland. As sheriff, Gascoigne received a pardon of account: (£150 in 1441). See TNA E 159/219 BT MT m. 25 or *WR*, II, 104.

<sup>83</sup> *CPR 1436-41*, 10; *CPR 1441-46*, 297, 383; *CPR 1446-52*, 100, are just some examples.

<sup>84</sup> TNA C 1/73/115; Payling, 'William Gascoigne'.

<sup>85</sup> TNA C 219/15/21, m. 23; See too, *WR*, II, 96.

<sup>86</sup> See pages 137-175 of this thesis.

<sup>87</sup> See later chapters for an in-depth discussion of the Gascoigne Family and the effect the Wars of the Roses had on the family, 137-175.

<sup>88</sup> Payling, 'William Gascoigne'.

survive in Wentworth Old Church, Wentworth.

Less information survives for the other children of Sir William Gascoigne II (d. 1422). Alice<sup>36</sup> married Sir John Savile<sup>37</sup> of Thornhill (1415 - 1482), an active knight with Yorkist associations. He acted as Steward of Wakefield from 1461 and was a prominent MP (1450, 1467), JP and Sheriff (1455).<sup>89</sup> He was the Constable of Sandal Castle from 1454.<sup>90</sup> Alice and John's son and heir, John II, married Jane Harrington. However, John II predeceased his father and John Savile III (d. 1505), inherited the Thornhill estate from his grandfather.<sup>91</sup> A younger son of Alice and Sir John was William Savile, who served as a JP on the West Riding between 1472 and 1483, and again from 1486 to 1498. He also served as Deputy Steward of Wakefield.<sup>92</sup>

Alice's sister, Anne<sup>38</sup> married John Langton II<sup>39</sup> (d. 1466). He served as Escheator of Yorkshire between 1441 and 1445. He was fined, in 1465, for failing to take up knighthood. He also served as King's Esquire in the household of Henry VI.<sup>93</sup> Foster's pedigree states that the third daughter, Katherine Gascoigne<sup>40</sup>, appears to have married three times: first to Sir Edward Fauconbridge<sup>41</sup>, second, to Richard Wastenys<sup>42</sup>, and third to a member of the Oglethorpe<sup>43</sup> family.<sup>94</sup> Yet little information survives to detail Katherine's life, so these marriages are untraceable. She appears to have received £500 from a George Gascoigne, esquire, in 1461 - although for what reason is unclear.<sup>95</sup> Finally, the youngest daughter Isabel<sup>44</sup> married Sir William Ryther<sup>45</sup> of Ryther and Harewood (d. 1475), the prominent neighbour to the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe.<sup>96</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> *WR*, II, 64, 96; the former features a detailed biography of Savile's life.

<sup>90</sup> *PS*, 267; J. Kirby, 'Savile family', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/71873](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/71873), accessed 23 February 2016.

<sup>91</sup> Kirby, 'Savile family'.

<sup>92</sup> *WR*, II, 14.

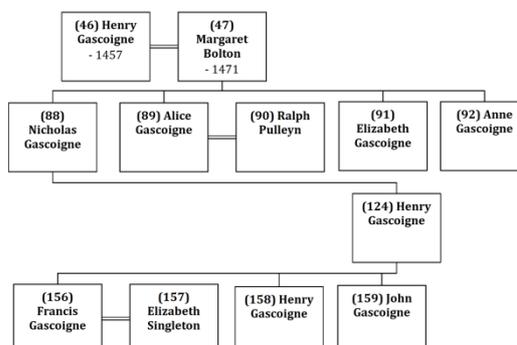
<sup>93</sup> *WR*, II, 58.

<sup>94</sup> J. Foster, *Pedigrees*.

<sup>95</sup> *CCR 1461-1468*, 72. It is unclear which George Gascoigne gave Katherine the bond. A possible candidate is George Gascoigne, son of James I of Cardington, who married Elizabeth Rufford.

<sup>96</sup> Some, including E. Rayner 'Gawthorpe, Harewood and the Creation of the Modern Landscape' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2014), 17, have claimed that Sir Robert Ryther married Isabel Gascoigne, but there is no evidence for this. Sir William Ryther (d. 1475) married 1) Isabel Gascoigne, and 2) Eleanor Fitzwilliam of Sprotborough. Both his father, Sir William Ryther (*d. c.* 1440), and son, Sir Robert Ryther (d. 1491), were sheriffs of Yorkshire. Although he was buried at All Saints', Ryther, there is no evidence to indicate where Isabel was buried. See *Test. Ebor.*, III, 218, and TNA C 140/51/18. For Sir Robert Ryther, see TNA C 142/6/24. For William Ryther (*d. c.* 1440) see TNA C 139/103/29.

Tree 4.3: The Gascoignes of Micklefield



The youngest son of William Gascoigne II (d. 1422), Henry Gascoigne<sup>46</sup> (*fl.* 1440s), founded the branch of the family at Micklefield.<sup>97</sup> He married Margaret Bolton<sup>47</sup> (d. 1471), the heiress of a prominent civic family in York, whose family was most famous for the production of the Bolton Book of Hours.<sup>98</sup> Margaret's father, John Bolton, alderman, was Mayor of York in 1410, and Knight of the Shire in 1428.<sup>99</sup> John Bolton succeeded Henry Wyman as Mayor of York, and this could indicate a determined effort by the Gascoignes to marry themselves to the York civic elite, who could provide valuable connections, privilege, and wealth to an emergent gentry family. Henry Gascoigne served on a commission of gaol delivery in 1441, but no other record appears concerning his career.<sup>100</sup> His last appearance in the records is in 1452, when he and his wife were granted a licence for a portable altar.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>97</sup> The closure of York City Archives throughout the period of the thesis has meant that the Gascoignes' activities in the city of York are not discussed here. The only evidence available was, mainly, published material. Whilst the YCA opened in late 2015, before this thesis' submission, late medieval and Tudor documents were not wholly available or catalogued.

<sup>98</sup> She was buried in St. Saviour's Church, York, alongside her father. The choir of St. John the Evangelist in St. Saviour's Church was the chapel dedicated to the Bolton family: William Bolton (d. 1429), John Bolton (d. 1445), Joan Bolton (d. 1454), Robert Bolton (d. 1459), another Margaret (d. 1464), and Grace Bolton (d. 1464) were also buried there. It is unclear where Henry was buried. York City Archives, KNO/6/2 and KNO/6/3. See too, *Test. Ebor.* III, 187.

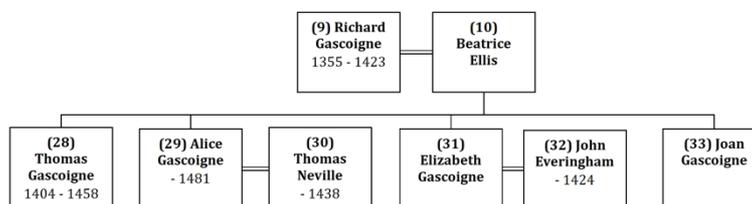
<sup>99</sup> York City Archives, KNO/6/2 and KNO/6/3: Transcript of 'Lord Mayors of York' by J.W. Knowles.

<sup>100</sup> *CPR 1441-1446*, 48; *CCR 1441-1447*, 305.

<sup>101</sup> *Calendar of Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland, 1447 - 1455* (London, 1915), 601.

This section has revealed the diversity of experience amongst the Gascoigne family. Although William Gascoigne II<sub>14</sub> (d. 1422), and William Gascoigne III<sub>34</sub> (d. c. 1465), were to establish the family at Gawthorpe as the leading Gascoigne branch, they did so in different ways. Whilst both served as a Knight of the Shire, the short career of William Gascoigne II was militaristic in scope, whilst William III actively avoided military duty, preferring to occasionally hold administrative positions. He did utilise his position on commissions in the West Riding. However, his virtual disappearance from public life during the Wars of the Roses may indicate a desire to prevent his family from being drawn into the conflict. This ensured that the Gawthorpe line continued to prosper. This section has also revealed the stark contrasts in fortune between different Gascoigne branches. Whilst William II<sub>14</sub> (d. 1422), and the Gawthorpe Gascoignes continued to build upon the fortunes of William I, Henry Gascoigne<sub>46</sub> of Micklefield was less fortunate. Henry's stagnation and his decision to focus his attention on the city of York are somewhat typical circumstances for younger sons.

#### Tree 4.4: The Gascoignes of Hunslet



#### Generation Three and Four: The Hunslet Gascoignes, c. 1404 - 1458

The Gascoigne branch at Hunslet descended from the marriage of Richard Gascoigne<sub>9</sub> (c. 1355 - 1423), to Beatrice Ellis<sub>10</sub>. His career in public service afforded Richard the opportunity to establish his family at the manor of Hunslet, near Leeds, in the West Riding of Yorkshire. He had four children: Thomas<sub>28</sub>, Alice<sub>29</sub>, Elizabeth<sub>31</sub>, and Joan<sub>33</sub>. He held lands in the surrounding area, including Beeston, most of which now form part of the Leeds suburban area. Little is known about his daughters' lives. Although Richard Gascoigne was a self-made man, his eldest daughters married into established

gentry families. Alice<sup>29</sup> (d. 1481), married Sir Thomas Neville<sup>30</sup> of Leversedge (d. 1438). She was buried at a private altar in Leeds, presumably alongside her parents, for which she donated 20s for repairs and expansion works.<sup>102</sup> Prior to her death, Alice returned to Hunslet as she received licences for a private altar there in 1453 and 1456.<sup>103</sup> She must have owned considerable property since she granted her son, John Neville, all her lands on the condition of the fulfilment of her bequests. One fascinating bequest, which may reveal something as to the character of Alice, requested that the two houses she had purchased in Holbeck (WR) be given over to two poor women in perpetuity - so that when one of the poor women died, another poor woman replaced her - and ensured that these houses remained the residence of solely women at all times. These women were also paid 13s 4d. a year to sustain themselves.<sup>104</sup> Her other son Robert Neville (*fl.* 1460s) was fined for failure to assume knighthood in 1465, and was appointed to a number of commissions of array in the West Riding.<sup>105</sup> He also served as JP between 1460 and 1470.<sup>106</sup> Elizabeth Gascoigne<sup>31</sup> married Sir John Everingham<sup>32</sup> of Birkin (d. *c.* 1424).<sup>107</sup> Nothing is known about Joan's<sup>33</sup> life. Both Alice and Elizabeth outlived their husbands and it seems that neither woman chose to remarry.

It was Richard's only son, Thomas<sup>28</sup> (1404 - 1458), who received the family's resources in order to facilitate his education, and subsequent career, at Oriel College, Oxford.<sup>108</sup> He was ordained by 1427 and six years later was appointed rector of Kirk

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<sup>102</sup> *Test. Ebor.* III, 244. Whilst there is no evidence that Richard Gascoigne had an altar, this may indicate the creation of a short-lived, and no doubt small, Hunslet Gascoigne chapel within a parish church in Leeds. However, no evidence survives detailing its location, and thus it must not survive. Alice left 20s to the church for repairs and a new vestment, 10 marks for distribution to the poor and 21 marks for a chantry priest.

<sup>103</sup> *Test. Ebor.* III, 244.

<sup>104</sup> *Test. Ebor.* III, 245: '... whilst he lives, give those two houses in Holbeck, that I begged, to two poor women; in his primary gift, to charge them that they pray duly for me and all my good doers. And, when one woman dies, to put in another woman, but put in no man; and that he pay or make to be payed to them 23s. 4d. every year....'

<sup>105</sup> *WR*, II, 60-61; *CPR 1446-1452*, 238; *CPR 1467-1477*, 199.

<sup>106</sup> *WR*, II, 61.

<sup>107</sup> See, *PS*, 217. It seems likely that Sir John Everingham II of Birkin (d. *c.* 1502) was a descendant of this marriage. The Everingham family had close contact with the Plumpton family in the second half of the fifteenth century, and this could be due, in part, to the closeness of the Plumpton family with the Gascoignes.

<sup>108</sup> He was educated between 1416 and 1420. For more details, see C. von Nolcken, 'Thomas Gascoigne', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10425](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10425), accessed 25<sup>th</sup> February 2016, and A. B. Emden, *A Biographical Register*, II, 745-748.

Deighton (WR), a parish church near Wetherby.<sup>109</sup> After receiving his doctorate he served, briefly, as Chaplain to Henry VI before returning to Oxford to teach, where he became Vice-Chancellor (by 1439). He temporarily served as Chancellor in 1442, and was elected permanently to the position in 1444. Records survive to indicate that Thomas<sub>28</sub> surrendered his benefices as he believed the replacement would better serve the parish, instead of, like him, using the parish for financial support. Thus, he spent much of his life relatively impoverished - to such an extent that upon his retirement he was granted a free room for life.<sup>110</sup> Much of his later life was spent writing sermons and a guide to preachers.<sup>111</sup> His guide to preachers reflects his itinerant lifestyle. He spoke at several places each year, including at York, London, Oxford, Pontefract, Doncaster, Leeds, Coventry, Nottingham, Evesham and Syon Monastery.<sup>112</sup> His relationship with Syon Monastery must have developed over time as he bequeathed his entire library to the nuns there.<sup>113</sup> He died in 1458. The short-lived Hunslet branch illustrates the vastly different careers of members of the Gascoigne family. Whilst Richard I<sub>9</sub> (d. 1423), had a career almost as impressive as that of his brother, William I<sub>4</sub> - especially for a family as socially mobile - the Hunslet branch was cut short by Richard's decision to place his only son in the church. Nevertheless, this is not to understate the activities of the Hunslet branch during its brief existence; Thomas Gascoigne<sub>28</sub> (d. 1458) had a distinguished career, whose published works are still used, whilst Richard's daughters married into elite Yorkshire families, which continued to thrive throughout this period. In fact, these marriages created long-lasting ties between the Gascoignes and the Everingham and Neville families; two significant gentry families of the West Riding.

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<sup>109</sup> He also served as rector of St Peter's Cornhill (London), and a Canon of Wells Cathedral; Pronger, 'Thomas Gascoigne', 20 - 37.

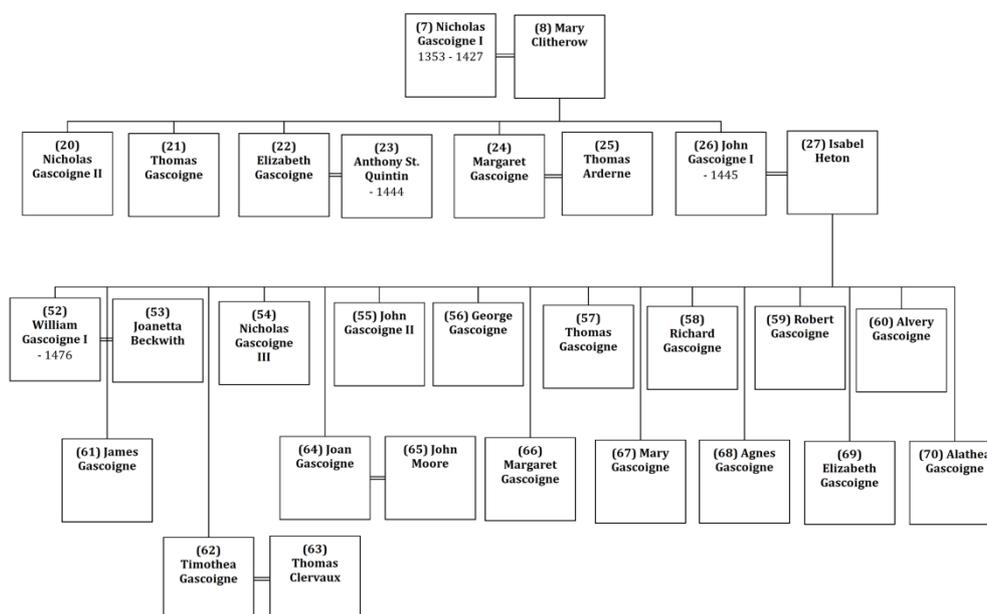
<sup>110</sup> von Nolcken, 'Thomas Gascoigne'.

<sup>111</sup> Including, *Dictionarium Theologicum or Liber Veritatum*; *Hieronimi illius vita, Septem flumina Babylonie, Veritates ex Scripturis*; *Ordinariae Lectiones*; *Sermones Evangeliorum*.

<sup>112</sup> von Nolcken, 'Thomas Gascoigne', *ODNB*.

<sup>113</sup> H. E. Salter, (ed.) *Registrum Cancellari Oxoniensis, 1434 - 1469* (Oxford, 1932), 406 - 407.

Tree 4.5: Nicholas Gascoigne, his Children and Grandchildren



Generations Three and Four: The Lasingcroft Gascoignes, c. 1400 - 1476

In the early 1390s Nicholas Gascoigne I<sub>7</sub> (c. 1353 - 1427), received the manor of Lasingcroft as payment for outstanding debts. Although the Lasingcroft Gascoignes were not as wealthy as the Gawthorpe Gascoignes in the late medieval and Tudor period, they had the greatest longevity, failing in the male line in 1970 with the death of British diplomat Sir Alvary Gascoigne.<sup>114</sup> However, of Nicholas' oldest sons, Nicholas II<sub>20</sub> and Thomas<sub>21</sub>, nothing is known, and it could be that they died relatively young. His eldest daughter, Elizabeth<sub>22</sub>, married Anthony St. Quintin of Harpam<sub>23</sub> (d. 1444).<sup>115</sup> St. Quintin served on a number of commissions in the East Riding where it appears he served in some legal capacity.<sup>116</sup> He served in the retinue of the Duke of Bedford, John of Lancaster (1389 - 1435) in 1416.<sup>117</sup> He was buried in Harpam at the parish church of St. John. Elizabeth must have outlived him, as she received a bequest in his will. They had at least four children: William and Anthony, who both received £10 from their father's will;

<sup>114</sup> Sir Alvary Gascoigne fought in the First World War, before joining the Foreign Office where he was assigned to work in Morocco, Japan and Russia. His widow, Lorna, died in 1979.

<sup>115</sup> T. Wotton, *The English Baronetage* (London, 1771), 281.

<sup>116</sup> *CPR 1429 - 1436*, 522; *CPR 1401 - 1405*, 72; *CPR 1401 - 1405*, 222.

<sup>117</sup> *PS*, 140.

Margaret, who received 14 marks, and Joan; who got 10 marks.<sup>118</sup> Margaret<sup>24</sup> married Sir Thomas Arderne<sup>25</sup> of Marton, near Bridlington (ER). Arderne was relatively active in the East Riding of Yorkshire, and had close relationships with the St. Quintins of Harpam, the Constables of Flamborough, and the Rollestons of Rolleston.<sup>119</sup> Arderne was dead by 1457 when Margaret quitclaimed her rights to his estates in Calais, where he had been a burgess.<sup>120</sup>

Following Nicholas I's death in 1427 it was John Gascoigne<sup>26</sup> (d. 1445), the former's youngest son, who inherited the Lasincroft estate.<sup>121</sup> John had married Isabel Heaton eight years earlier, in August 1419, after negotiations between Nicholas and William Heaton.<sup>122</sup> They had a number of children: William<sup>52</sup> (d. 1476), Nicholas<sup>54</sup>, John<sup>55</sup>, George<sup>56</sup>, Thomas<sup>57</sup>, Richard<sup>58</sup>, Robert<sup>59</sup>, Alvery<sup>60</sup>, James<sup>61</sup>, Timothea<sup>62</sup>, Joan<sup>64</sup>, Margaret<sup>66</sup>, Mary<sup>67</sup>, Agnes<sup>68</sup>, Elizabeth<sup>69</sup> and Alathea<sup>70</sup>. John<sup>26</sup> continued the legal tradition of the Gascoigne family and was a member of an Inn of Court by 1419.<sup>123</sup> By this time he was already working in the Exchequer as a Clerk, a position that could have been facilitated by his uncle, Richard<sup>9</sup> (d. 1423), who had numerous connections at the Exchequer. John was exempted from the administration of his father's will, as shortly before his death all of Nicholas' estates had been transferred to trustees: John Thwaites of Lofthouse (d. 1469), William Authorpe, rector of Deighton, and Robert Rawdon of Aberford (d. 1442); all of whom were Nicholas's neighbours.<sup>124</sup> They ensured the estate passed back to John smoothly. Whilst he acted as a lawyer, appearing in court over land transactions, he also appeared to have been involved in the mercantile community: in 1432, he sued merchant Nicholas Dalston of Kingston-upon-Hull after the latter reneged on a debt.<sup>125</sup> In 1441 he acted as de-facto Deputy Sheriff for Sir William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> (d. c. 1465) of Gawthorpe.<sup>126</sup> Later the same year he negotiated for the marriage of his son, William<sup>52</sup> (d. 1476), to Joan<sup>53</sup>, the daughter of William Beckwith of Clint.<sup>127</sup> On his

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<sup>118</sup> Borthwick Institute, York Wills, 2, 85.

<sup>119</sup> *CCR 1435-1441*, 244.

<sup>120</sup> *CCR 1454-1461*, 215.

<sup>121</sup> See CP 25/1/280/158, no. 24; CP 25/1/280/158, no. 29.

<sup>122</sup> WYL115/F5/1/15; WYL115/F5/1/17a.

<sup>123</sup> *PS*, 258; WYL115/F5/1/17.

<sup>124</sup> WYL115/F5/1, 39-41.

<sup>125</sup> *CPR 1429-36*, 231; DD/WBD/VI/64-65.

<sup>126</sup> WYL115/F5/1, 16.

<sup>127</sup> WYL115/F5/1, 17a.

death in 1445, letters of administration were granted to George Heaton of York and John Richardson of Leeds.<sup>128</sup>

Following the death of John Gascoigne<sup>26</sup> (d. 1445), William Gascoigne I<sup>52</sup> of Lasingcroft (d. 1476), took a number of years to accumulate his inheritance. Whilst the exact details are unclear, it appears that Isabel<sup>27</sup>, William's mother, had some form of altercation with the trustees of her husband's estate. She eventually gained her dower and immediately used it to marry Sir Ralph Greystoke.<sup>129</sup> In 1448, when William I took control of Lasingcroft and the remaining estates, he appears to have confirmed the lands she took. When Sir Ralph Greystoke was later arrested - by Sir William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> of Gawthorpe - he was resident at the former Gascoigne manor of Thorp Arch.<sup>130</sup> William Gascoigne I married Joan Beckwith<sup>53</sup> of Clint in 1441, with whom he seven children: John III<sup>96</sup>, William II<sup>97</sup>, Thomas<sup>99</sup> (d. c. 1509), Mary<sup>101</sup>, Margareta<sup>103</sup>, Joan<sup>104</sup> and Elizabeth<sup>105</sup>.

Unfortunately, for the other children of John (d. 1445) and Isabel, next to nothing survives.<sup>131</sup> John II<sup>55</sup> became a dyer in the city of York.<sup>132</sup> He also appears to have donated some land to his father's parish church in Barwick-in-Elmet, for a chantry to the Virgin Mary (which could suggest a Gascoigne chantry at Lasingcroft as early as 1455).<sup>133</sup> Richard<sup>58</sup> followed the same path as John II and established a tavern in the same city. Records indicate that Richard's tavern was a refuge for less than savoury characters; on at least one occasion he was compelled to testify against his patrons in a slander case against the mayor in 1480.<sup>134</sup> In terms of his daughters, the same dearth of evidence applies; with Margaret<sup>66</sup>, Mary<sup>67</sup>, Agnes<sup>68</sup>, Elizabeth<sup>69</sup> and Alathea<sup>70</sup>, being absent from

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<sup>128</sup> *PS*, 258; Borthwick Institute, II, f. 107.

<sup>129</sup> WYL115/F5/1, 31-2, 39, 41; *PS*, 258; *CPR 1429 - 1436*, 126, 349, 350.

<sup>130</sup> As will be shown later, the manor of Thorp Arch returned to Gascoigne possession. William I of Lasingcroft managed to bequest it to his heirs, and appointed his trustees to ensure the bequest took place. However, by the sixteenth century Thorp Arch was under the purview of the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe.

<sup>131</sup> No information survives for Nicholas, George, Robert, Alverey, James or Thomas. Foster, *Pedigrees*, stated that George was alive in 1472 and Alverey was alive in 1509, but I have been unable to substantiate this. Again, it is worth noting that this thesis could not examine the wealth of material which survives in the York City Archives. Future study could examine this branch of the Gascoigne family as given the activities of the wider family outside the city of York, their activities within the city confines are likely to be just as fascinating.

<sup>132</sup> F. Collins, ed., *Register of the Freeman of the City of York: Volume I, 1272 - 1558* (Durham, 1897), 162.

<sup>133</sup> 'Yorkshire Chantry Surveys', *Surtees*, I (1894), 218; He also gave land to a chantry at Ferrybrigg (WR), 234.

<sup>134</sup> *YHB*, 224, 301, 421.

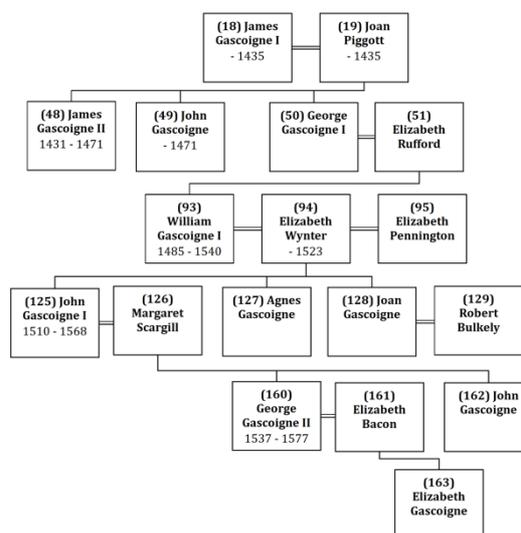
usable source material. However, Timothea<sup>62</sup> appears to have married Thomas Clervaux<sup>63</sup>, whilst Joan<sup>64</sup> married John Moore<sup>65</sup>. Family genealogist Richard Gascoigne made little mention of younger children. This may be due to their low-status occupations, or indicate that his primary concern was with the eldest sons and heirs.

This section has sought to discuss the Gascoigne family at Lasingcroft. Although some of the Gascoignes discussed in this section have ample material surviving to denote their activities, it is apparent, from the range of source material alone, that the Gascoigne family at Lasingcroft were not as influential in the West Riding. Nor were they sought-after partners in marriage or business. Although it is likely that an examination of the material which survives in York City Archives would illuminate this branch more effectively, it is nonetheless clear that the fourteenth century was a period of stagnation for them. There was no significant expansion of their estates, with even the loss of one of their most significant estates - Thorp Arch - first to Sir Ralph Greystoke, then to the Gascoigne family at Gawthorpe.<sup>135</sup> Furthermore, it is interesting to note that the marriages of the Lasingcroft branch during this period were centred on the City of York and the East Riding of Yorkshire. Although this is discussed in more detail in later chapters, the Lasingcroft family associated themselves with mercantile families and opportunities. Both the Arderne family and the St. Quintin family were located near to Bridlington and Scarborough, significant trade centres in Yorkshire and the North of England.

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<sup>135</sup> *CPR 1429-1436*, 126, 349, 350.

Tree 4.6: The Gascoignes of Cardington



Generations Three and Four: The Cardington branch of the family, c. 1400 – 1540

This section will examine the Gascoigne family of Cardington following the death of William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419). It will include James Gascoigne I<sub>18</sub> (d. 1435), and Joan Piggott<sub>19</sub> (d. 1445), as well as George Gascoigne I<sub>50</sub> and Elizabeth Rufford<sub>51</sub>.<sup>136</sup> Details surrounding the lives of the early Gascoignes of Cardington are relatively sparse. The half-brother of William Gascoigne II<sub>14</sub> (d. 1422), of Gawthorpe, James Gascoigne I<sub>18</sub> (d. 1435), spent very little of his life in Yorkshire. He married Joan Piggott<sub>19</sub> (d. 1435), the daughter of the prominent Knight of the Shire for Bedfordshire, Baldwin Piggott (b. 1352), and relocated to his father-in-law's estates at Cardington.<sup>137</sup> The career of James I was one of local service. Charles Moreton argues that like his half-brother William II (d. 1422), James I also fought in France, serving in the retinue of Thomas Montagu, earl of Salisbury in 1428. He acted as Sheriff of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire between

<sup>136</sup> *VCH Bedfordshire*, III (London, 1912), 233 - 238; 9 - 15.

<sup>137</sup> C. Rawcliffe, 'Pigot, Baldwin (b. 1352)', *HOP*, [www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1386-1421/member/pigot-baldwin-1352](http://www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1386-1421/member/pigot-baldwin-1352), accessed 16 February 2016. There seems to be some confusion as to the identity of James' wife. Some sources, including the VCH, refer to James' wife as Dorothy Picot (a probable derivation of Piggott). However, Joan's CIPM makes it clear as to her marriage. See TNA C 139/73/6 mm. 1-2. J. Foster incorrectly states that she died in 1441. As well as Cardington, Joan Piggott also held a ninth part of the barony of Bedford; *VCH Bedfordshire*, III, 15, 235.

1433 and his death.<sup>138</sup> He benefited from the distribution of lands associated with the wardship (and later young death) of Thomasina, daughter and heiress of Richard Hankford.<sup>139</sup> He also served as a Knight of the Shire for Bedfordshire in 1431 and 1434.<sup>140</sup> He and Joan had three children; James II<sub>48</sub> (c. 1431 - d. 1471), John<sub>49</sub> (d. 1471), and George<sub>50</sub>.<sup>141</sup> Both James I and his wife died relatively young in 1435, only a few months apart; at this point James II was only four years old, and was placed in the care of William Gedney.<sup>142</sup> William II's half-sister, Agnes<sub>16</sub> (d. 1466), married Sir Robert Constable IV<sub>17</sub> (d. 1441), of Flamborough, with whom she had at least one child, Robert (V) Constable.<sup>143</sup>

The fortunes of the Cardington branch did not improve. James II and John were both killed at the Battle of Barnet in 1471, their affiliation unknown.<sup>144</sup> It is possible to discern earlier military experience, as it seems that John served, alongside a Thomas Gascoigne, in 1439 with the Grey family, in 1441 with Richard, Duke of York, and in 1442 with Sir Stephen Popham, in the closing years of the Hundred Years War.<sup>145</sup> Even less information survives for the youngest brother, George<sub>50</sub>, who married Elizabeth Refford<sub>51</sub>, with whom he had a son, William Gascoigne I of Cardington (c. 1485 - 1540).

Born c. 1485, William Gascoigne I<sub>93</sub> of Cardington significantly improved the wealth and circumstances of the Cardington branch. Until William's majority the family had suffered significant setbacks. He married twice, first to Elizabeth Winter<sub>94</sub> (d. c. 1523), with whom he had three children - John I<sub>125</sub> (1510-68), Agnes<sub>127</sub>, and Joan<sub>128</sub> - and second, to Elizabeth Pennington<sub>95</sub> of Cumberland.<sup>146</sup> His first recorded presence was at the funeral of Henry VII (d. 1509), most likely in the retinue of Richard Grey, Earl of Kent

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<sup>138</sup> C. E. Moreton, 'James Gascoigne (d. 1434)', in Clark, ed., *The History of Parliament. M. Bassett, Knights of the Shire for Bedfordshire during the Middle Ages* (Streatley, 1949).

<sup>139</sup> *CFR 1430-37*, 176 (1433, escheator in Beds. and Bucks.), 187 (1434, to distribute funds), are just some examples; *TNA C 139/68/17*, mm. 1-2; *CCR 1429-35*, 86.

<sup>140</sup> *CCR 1429-35*, 269-273. In 1431 he was returned for the constituency of Barnstaple, but in 1433 he was returned for Bedfordshire. See. C. E. Moreton, 'James Gascoigne'.

<sup>141</sup> Foster, *Pedigrees*, stated that John died at Barnet (1471), yet W. Harvey (ed.) *Visitations of Bedfordshire* (London, 1884), 173, argued that he was killed at the Battle of St. Albans ten years earlier. I have found no evidence about John's life at all, and thus I am unable to confirm his death in the Wars of the Roses.

<sup>142</sup> *CPR 1441-46*, 3; *TNA C 139/68/17* mm. 1-2.

<sup>143</sup> For more information, see Horrox, 'Constable Family'.

<sup>144</sup> James II appears to have been somewhat active in Berkshire and Somerset, like his father - *CCR 1461 - 1468*, 3-4.

<sup>145</sup> *TNA E 101/53/22*, m. 5; *E 101/53/33*, m. 4; *E 101/54/3*, no. 4, m. 2.

<sup>146</sup> J. Foster, *Pedigrees*.

(1481 - 1524), for whom he was Receiver of lands.<sup>147</sup> He also acted as almoner during the coronation of Henry VIII (1509). This relationship with the crown continued and he was present at the Field of Cloth of Gold in 1520, where he was knighted, and was present at the reception of HRE Charles V in 1522, and was almoner again at the coronation of Anne Boleyn in 1533.

Most of William I<sub>3</sub> of Cardington's opportunities stemmed from his associations and his patrons. In 1520 he served in the household of Thomas, Lord Darcy, and was recommended to Cardinal Thomas Wolsey by neighbour and associate, William Franklyn, Archdeacon of Durham. Franklyn's recommendation was successful and he became Wolsey's Treasurer (1523-1529). This position had benefits, as his earlier infrequent commissions became more regular - he served thrice as JP of Bedfordshire (twice in 1515 and once in 1521); thrice in Northamptonshire (twice in 1515 and once in 1523); as JP of Middlesex (1524-1528); on gaol delivery (Bedfordshire, 1515; Northamptonshire, 1516, 1518); and on a subsidy commission in 1523.<sup>148</sup> He also served, continually, on the peace commissions of the North, East, and West Ridings throughout the 1520s, during a period where the commissions shrank considerably - the North Riding from 22 to 19, the East Riding from 25 to 20, and the West Riding from 34 to 17.<sup>149</sup> He was also the Recorder for York (1523-1527) and served as Knight of the Shire for Bedfordshire in 1529.<sup>150</sup>

With such constant service, the Gascoignes at Cardington were able to increase their wealth significantly. In 1525 William Gascoigne I of Cardington (d. 1540) was assessed as part of Wolsey's household - his total worth £266 13s 4d - similar to that of the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe at this time.<sup>151</sup> In the same year he was granted a royal annuity of £44. Much of this wealth must have stemmed from Gascoigne's role in the

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<sup>147</sup> N. M. Fudge, 'Sir William Gascoigne (by 1485 - 1540) of Cardington, Beds.' *HOP*, <http://www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-william-1485-1540>.

<sup>148</sup> *LP*, 2, 456; 1176; *LP*, 3, 1186 (14); *LP*, 2, 694; 1213; *LP*, 3, 3677; *LP*, 2, 112; *LP*, 2, 1580; 2212; *LP*, 2, 3898; *LP*, 2, 4562; Fudge, 'Sir William Gascoigne'; N. Lewycky, 'Serving God and King: Cardinal Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks and Early Tudor Government, 1514-1529, with Special Reference to the Archdiocese of York' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2008).

<sup>149</sup> Lewycky, 'Patronage Networks', 179.

<sup>150</sup> See N. Lewycky, 'Cardinal Thomas Wolsey and the City of York, 1514-1529' *NH*, XLVI: 1 (2009), 53.

<sup>151</sup> In 1526 he was taxed £12 6s on his goods (TNA E 179/69/9). A year earlier, in 1525 (TNA E 179/69/10) he had been assessed at £4 6s 8d, on lands and fees worth £266 13s 4d - a significant increase from the wealth of his grandfather, James I (d. 1434).

dissolution of lands which Wolsey had appropriated for the foundation of Cardinal College, Oxford, and the dissolution of the monasteries where he benefited from monastic lands in Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, and Northamptonshire.<sup>152</sup> This good fortune was not to last. When Wolsey fell from grace in 1529, William I was present and his communication with his close 'friend' Thomas Cromwell revealed the anxiety of an uncertain future.<sup>153</sup> The letters show the sense of urgency with which he sought to find a way of maintaining or stabilising his position - and he eventually found service in the household of Sir John Neville I (from *c.* 1535) as his Steward.<sup>154</sup> The effects on his fortunes was not as severe as it could have been - presumably due to the intervention of Cromwell - yet this represented a decline in his activities. William Gascoigne I served once more as a Knight of the Shire in 1536, and then all but disappeared from public life. He died in 1540. Although no will has survived he was commemorated with his two wives by a monumental brass which survives in the church at Cardington.<sup>155</sup>

Thus the fortunes of the early Gascoignes of Cardington appear similar to those of the Gascoignes of Lasingcroft in that although they remained active, the family's fortunes stagnated. The difference, in terms of the Gascoignes of Cardington, manifested itself through the recommendation of William Gascoigne of Cardington by the Archdeacon of Durham to Wolsey's household. From this point, the circumstances and fortunes of the Cardington branch of the Gascoigne family likewise improved, and both William and his grandson, George, engaged in service nationally. Unlike the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe, who were more inclined towards local prominence, the Gascoignes of Cardington recognised their opportunities were centred at court.

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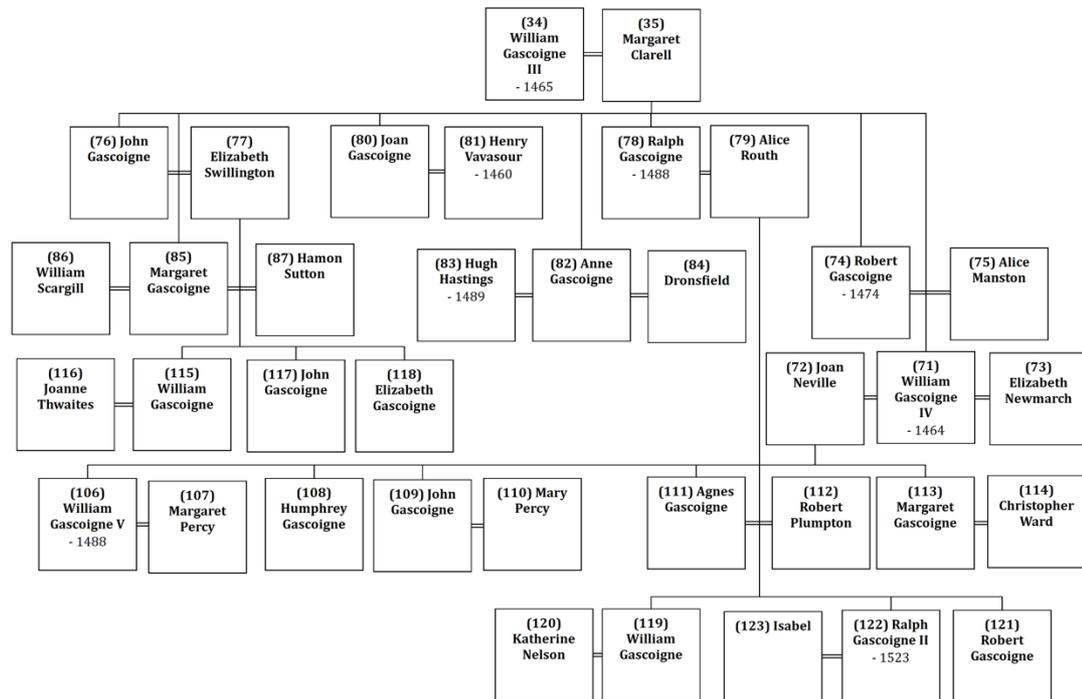
<sup>152</sup> *LP*, 4, 989, 1728.

<sup>153</sup> *LP Add.*, 1; *LP*, 5, 577; *LP*, 6, 275; *LP*, 6, 506; *LP*, 7, 277; *LP*, 7, 298; *LP*, 7, 320.

<sup>154</sup> *LP*, 1, 1 - 8, 10, 11, 13, 14; Fuidge, 'Sir William Gascoigne'.

<sup>155</sup> *VCH: Bedfordshire*, III, 233-238.

Tree 4.7: William Gascoigne III, his Children and Grandchildren



#### Generations Five and Six: The Gawthorpe Ascendency, c. 1430 - 1523

By the accession of William Gascoigne IV<sub>71</sub> (d. c. 1465) to the principal estate, the Gascoignes at Gawthorpe were a significant family in the West Riding. This period covers the life of Gascoigne and his expansion of the principal holdings, but also covers the establishment of the minor branches at Thorp-on-the-Hill, Burnby and Wood Hall.

William IV<sub>71</sub> (d. c. 1465), the eldest son of William III<sub>34</sub>, inherited the main estate at Gawthorpe following his father's death. Although his date of birth is uncertain, he is known to have been serving in the royal household by 1449.<sup>156</sup> He served as Coroner in the West Riding between 1454 and 1457; was assigned to the West Riding bench in 1459; and the following year he fought for Lancaster and Percy at Wakefield (1460), where he was knighted by the latter.<sup>157</sup> His removal from the West Riding peace commission in August 1460 followed the Neville's securement of power, and this

<sup>156</sup> *CPR 1441-46*, 397; TNA E 101/410/3.

<sup>157</sup> TNA KB9/149/2/3/470 and JUST 3/213/9; *WR*, II, 115; *CPR 1452-61*, 560, 684; *WR*, I, 149; *PS*, 62 - also knighted were Richard Aldeburgh II of Aldborough (d. 1475); Robert Mauleverer II (d. c. 1461) of Wothersome; Richard Tempest (d. 1472) of Bracewell and John Pudsey (d. 1492). BL Add. MSS. 46354, fol. 2v. Gascoigne was removed from the commission in August 1460, when the Neville family had effective control of the government. (See *WR*, I, 52.)

suggests that whilst publicly pardoned for his Lancastrian affinity he was punished as he never received another appointment to office. According to Foster, he married twice, first to Elizabeth Newmarch<sup>72</sup>, and second to Joan<sup>73</sup>, the daughter of John Neville of Oversley (Warwickshire).<sup>158</sup> He had five children: William V<sup>106</sup> (d. 1488), Humphrey<sup>108</sup>, John<sup>109</sup>, Agnes<sup>111</sup> and Margaret<sup>113</sup>.<sup>159</sup> After John's death, the Gascoignes inherited the Yorkshire property of Wood Hall, near Womersley. This moated site underwent significant change during this period, including the addition of a new drawbridge, gatehouse, and significant expansions of the manor house itself.<sup>160</sup> William IV must have been dead by 1463/4 when Joan<sup>73</sup> was granted a licence to marry Sir James Harrington, son of the prominent knight of the shire and Yorkist of the same name. It is entirely possible that Gascoigne was killed at Towton (March 1461), where his close associate Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland (1421 - 1461), was also killed, as his father appeared in a pardon of 1462, without the designation of 'elder'.<sup>161</sup> The household at Gawthorpe appears to have grown during this period, with evidence that William IV hired a minstrel to serve at Gawthorpe.<sup>162</sup> Furthermore, he paid to have the York Corpus Christi play performed outside his property on Coney Street.<sup>163</sup>

William III's<sup>34</sup> second son, Robert Gascoigne<sup>74</sup> (d. 1474), forged a career in law. He studied at Lincoln's Inn from c. 1440, where he served as Marshal (from 1460), Pensioner (from 1462) and Governor (from 1466).<sup>164</sup> He served on the West Riding peace commissions during the Wars of the Roses - in 1465 and 1466, and from 1467 until his death.<sup>165</sup> It is possible that these commissions reflected the change in political moods as William Gascoigne IV<sup>71</sup> was removed from the commissions after the Nevilles

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<sup>158</sup> It should be noted here that there is reason to doubt the veracity of Foster's claim that William IV married Elizabeth Newmarch. Elizabeth Newmarch was also the name of Joan's mother-in-law, through whom the Wood Hall estate passed to the Neville family, and then, eventually, to the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe. I have been able to find no evidence at all regarding this Elizabeth. It seems plausible that Foster confused genealogy here, yet as stated earlier in this thesis, evidence must exist to prove an individual was not related to warrant their removal from the family tree.

<sup>159</sup> At the time of his marriage his father bestowed an estate worth £10 13s. 4d. on the pair. See *WR*, II, 112-113.

<sup>160</sup> See Chapter Five for discussion on the Gascoigne activity in redeveloping their estates, 206-246.

<sup>161</sup> Payling, 'William Gascoigne'.

<sup>162</sup> A.F. Johnston, *Records of Early English Drama. York* (Toronto, 1979) I, 75-77; II, 752-755.

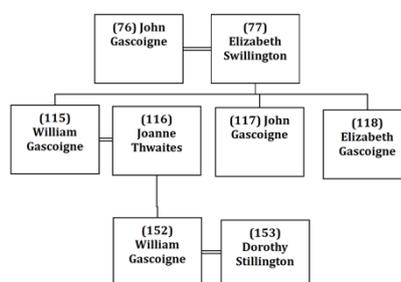
<sup>163</sup> Johnston, *Early English Drama*, I, 85; II, 762.

<sup>164</sup> Black Books, I, *Records of the Society of Lincoln's Inn* (London, 1896) 35, 37, 43.

<sup>165</sup> *CPR 1461-67*, 577; *CPR 1467-77*, 637-638.

regained power. It seems more likely that Robert Gascoigne's<sup>74</sup> regular presence on the commission was due to his ability as a lawyer, and his prominence at Lincoln's Inn. Robert had very few connections in the West Riding - he married into a family already exceedingly close to the Gascoignes - and was neither prominent, wealthy, or influential in the riding itself. Robert married the widow, Alice<sup>75</sup>, daughter and heiress of Robert Manston, who, following Robert's death, married Roger Dyneley, the administrator of Robert's estate.<sup>166</sup>

Tree 4.8: The Gascoignes of Thorp-on-the-Hill



Very little is known about the life of John Gascoigne<sup>76</sup> (*fl.* 1470s). He married Elizabeth Swillington<sup>77</sup> and it is possible that he was the same John Gascoigne of Harewood, gentleman, who was excommunicated in 1477 for assuming the office of Coroner in the liberty of the Archbishopric of York without permission.<sup>167</sup> It is also possible that he worked in the city of York as a Barber.<sup>168</sup> However, it appears that he had a habit of living beyond his means, appearing frequently in the York House Books for not paying his debts.<sup>169</sup> Of the daughters, Joan<sup>80</sup> married Sir Henry Vavasour<sup>81</sup> of Hazlewood (d. 1460). Anne<sup>82</sup> married Sir Hugh Hastings<sup>83</sup> (d. 1489), who was Sheriff of

<sup>166</sup> *Yorkshire Deeds, II, 200*; Borthwick Institute, Prob. Reg. 4; *WR, II, 15*.

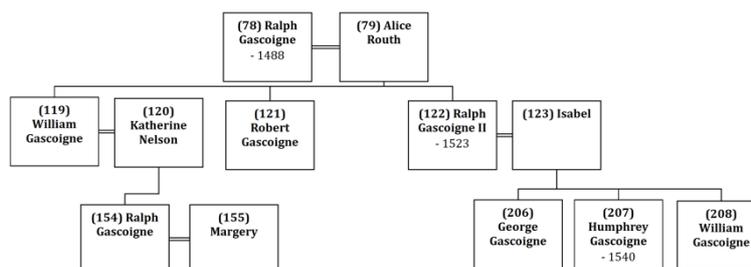
<sup>167</sup> See *WR, II, 110*: He appears to have held an inquest into the murder of a chaplain.

<sup>168</sup> 'Admissions to the Freedom of York: Temp. Edward IV (1461-83)' in *Register of the Freeman of the City of York: Vol. 1 1272-1558*, ed. F. Collins (Durham, 1897).

<sup>169</sup> See *YHB, 18, 26, 101, 154 and 182*. His debts began at 40d, but rose to 4s. 4d. and 4s. 8d. respectively.

York in 1480 and died in 1489.<sup>170</sup> The youngest daughter, Margaret<sup>85</sup>, apparently married Sir William Scargill<sup>86</sup> of Kent, but this could not be verified.<sup>171</sup>

Tree 4.9: The Gascoignes of Burnby



John's brother Ralph Gascoigne<sup>78</sup> (d. 1488), married Alice Routh<sup>79</sup>. Ralph established a branch of the Gascoigne family at Burnby, in the southern part of the West Riding. Ralph appears to have had, like his brother, ties to the city of York as he owned land on Hungate.<sup>172</sup> In 1472 Ralph committed to holding a ruined property near Great Givendale (ER).<sup>173</sup> It is entirely plausible that he purchased the estate with a mind to restore it, as the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe did at Wood Hall. Two years later he received land with assistance from his brother William Gascoigne IV<sup>71</sup> of Gawthorpe at Kirk Hammerton, near Harrogate (WR).<sup>174</sup> In the early 1480s, Ralph was involved in two land grants, first with the priory of Nun Monkton, near Great Givendale, and second, he gave land in Walton, near Sheffield (WR) to trustees.<sup>175</sup> In 1486, he was involved in granting the Everingham estate to John Southall and his wife Alice.<sup>176</sup> He died later the same year.

<sup>170</sup> Heraldry featuring Anne and Sir Hugh Hastings is present in the city of York, in the church of St. Martin-cum-Gregory; *Test. Ebor.* II, 9; KNO/4/16.

<sup>171</sup> See Foster, *Pedigrees*.

<sup>172</sup> *YHB*, 112.

<sup>173</sup> *CFR 1471-1478*, 45-6. The property also came with 4 tofts, 20 bovates of waste land and 4 bovates of land.

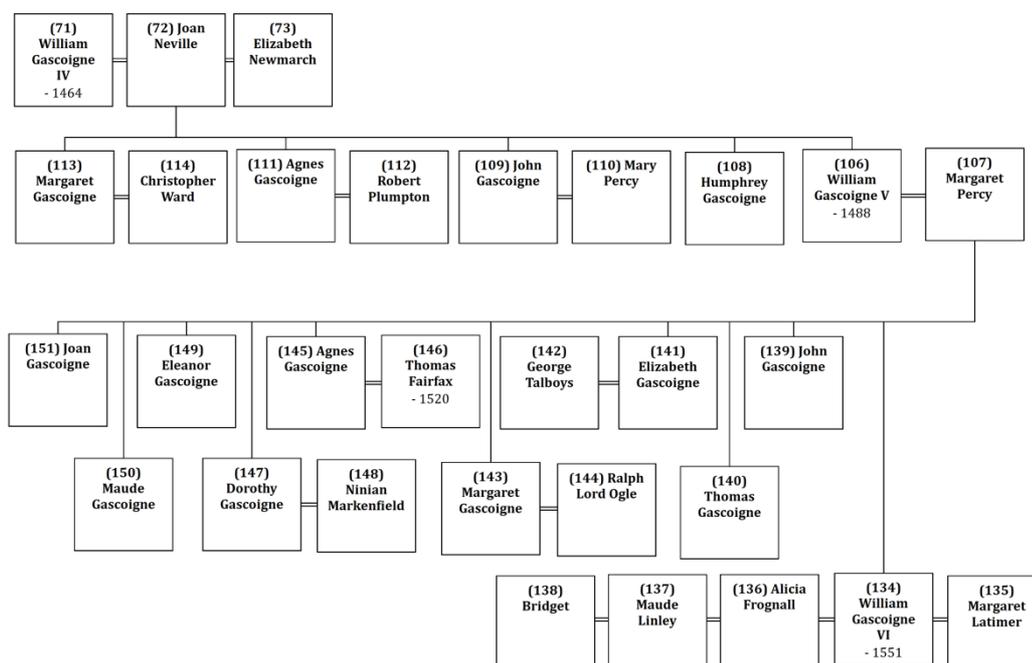
<sup>174</sup> CP 25/1/281/164, no. 15.

<sup>175</sup> TNA C 1/61/190; C 1/61/194; *CCR 1485-1500*, 167, 228.

<sup>176</sup> *CCR 1485 - 1500*, 167.

He had five children: William Gascoigne I<sub>119</sub> of Burnby, Ralph II<sub>122</sub> (d. 1523), Robert<sub>121</sub>, and two unnamed daughters. In his will, he divided his estate into four parts: the first to establish a priest to sing for the soul of Ralph and his parents, the second for his wife, the third for his two daughters' marriage, and the fourth for his son and heir. The remaining sons received a quarter of a gold chain each, and the daughters received a gem-stoned ring and a piece of plate to share.<sup>177</sup>

Tree 4.10: William Gascoigne IV, his Children and Grandchildren



The eldest son of William Gascoigne IV<sub>71</sub> and Joan Neville<sub>72</sub> was William Gascoigne V<sub>106</sub> (d. 1488).<sup>178</sup> He married Margaret<sub>107</sub>, daughter of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland (1421 – 1461), with whom he had several children: William VI<sub>134</sub> (d. 1551), John<sub>139</sub>, Thomas<sub>140</sub>, Elizabeth<sub>141</sub>, Margaret<sub>143</sub>, Agnes<sub>145</sub>, Dorothy<sub>147</sub>, Eleanor<sub>149</sub>, Maude<sub>150</sub> and Joan<sub>151</sub>. This marked a rise in the family's fortunes as it was a particularly advantageous marriage for a gentry family. It was William Gascoigne V<sub>106</sub> who firmly

<sup>177</sup> *Test. Ebor.* IV, 15-16.

<sup>178</sup> There has been some debate concerning the date of death of William Gascoigne V. Foster, *Pedigrees*, stated that he died in 1486, whilst Arnold, *WR*, I, 36, argued that a 1487 date was more likely. However, it seems to be that Gascoigne died in 1488, as there is evidence of a writ being delivered to the city of York (20 October 1488) stating that William Gascoigne had died. (See, *YHB*, 612).

established the Gascoigne family as the most powerful resident family in the West Riding of Yorkshire. He had strong ties to the city of York: he entered the Corpus Christi guild in 1473, and attended the city council meetings with some degree of frequency in the decade before his death.<sup>179</sup> He also served frequently on the West Riding peace commission (from 1472 - 1475 and from 1481 - 1485), and on commissions of array.<sup>180</sup> He was made a Knight of the Bath in 1478, at the marriage of Richard, Duke of York, and Knight Banneret in 1482 by Richard, Duke of Gloucester. The following year he was made a Knight of the Body for Richard III.<sup>181</sup> It was William V<sup>106</sup> who began an extensive redesign of the Gascoignes' principal possession, the Gawthorpe estate; he gained permission from Richard III to rebuild the Gawthorpe and Harewood mills, imparked two estates - one of roughly 400 acres surrounding Gawthorpe manor, and the second, a neighbouring park of 2200 acres - and in 1480 he was granted a licence to crenellate Gawthorpe manor itself.<sup>182</sup> This has led Nick Barratt and Karen Lynch to suppose that William Gascoigne V had strong Yorkist loyalties, but this does not appear to have been the case.<sup>183</sup> First, it is possible that his father fought and died for the Lancastrians at Towton and thus it seems unlikely that his father's premature death would have endeared him to the House of York.<sup>184</sup> Second, there is no evidence that he fought in any of the battles associated with the Wars of the Roses. Although it is likely that he was present at Battle of Bosworth in 1485, it seems unlikely that he actually fought, given the apparent unwillingness of his brother-in-law, the Earl of Northumberland, Henry Percy, to commit his troops to battle.<sup>185</sup> William V held no public offices before 1472, after which he became closely associated with the young Henry Percy (c. 1449 - 1489) and his fortunes improved. This is surprising given the prominence of his father, William IV<sup>71</sup> (d.

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<sup>179</sup> Skaife, ed., 'The Register of the Guild of Corpus Christi', *Surtees Society* (1872) 57, 87; *YHB*, 237, 308, 499, 531.

<sup>180</sup> *CPR 1476-1485*, 213, 399, 492.

<sup>181</sup> W. A. Shaw, *The Knights of England*, I (London, 1971) 138; II, 17; DL 42/20 f. 56.

<sup>182</sup> *CPR 1476-85*, 203. See also, C 66/545 f. 203; N. Barratt, *pers. comms.* (2013).

<sup>183</sup> K. Lynch's unpublished reports on Gawthorpe and the Gascoigne family drew this conclusion. N. Barratt, *pers. comms.* also utilised unpublished material - influenced by Lynch - to draw the same conclusions. There is no evidence that he was an active member in the Wars of the Roses at all, and the only evidence supporting such a claim is circumstantial and is based upon Gascoigne's associations. However, as has been made clear, Gascoigne had family members and associates on every side of the conflict, and thus it would be misrepresentational to make such a claim. (For more information on this, see later chapters).

<sup>184</sup> *PS*, 257.

<sup>185</sup> S. B. Chrimes, *Henry VII* (London, 1989), 47.

c. 1464), and grandfather, William III<sup>34</sup> (d. c. 1465), in local politics. After the death of Henry Percy (1421 - 1461) at Towton, the Earldom of Northumberland had been forfeited by the family and was granted, in 1465, to John Neville (c. 1431 - 1471), brother to Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick (1428 - 1471). Following the release of Margaret's brother, Henry Percy (d. 1489), from prison, where he was held from adolescence, his association with Yorkshire appears to have grown, and with it, his closeness to William Gascoigne. It is not surprising that Percy would associate himself with the head of the most powerful resident family in the West Riding, who happened to also be a relative, in order to orientate and to establish himself as a leading figure in Yorkshire politics. Following Percy's re-acquisition of his ancestral lands, William V acquired positions, wealth, and authority with relative speed.<sup>186</sup> His son William Gascoigne VI (d. 1551), and brother-in-law Sir Robert Plumpton<sup>112</sup> were with Percy upon his brutal murder at Thirsk in 1489, and were among those who were delayed in attending Henry VII's rally against the rebels, due to the fact they were standing vigil and burying the late Earl.<sup>187</sup>

The lives of William V's siblings are less clear. In the late fifteenth century more Gascoignes were active than at any other time, including a number of individuals with the same name. Humphrey Gascoigne<sup>108</sup> was the Rector of Newton Kyme, near Thorp Arch (WR), but it is unlikely that he was the same person as Humphrey Gascoigne, Clerk, who was active in Bedfordshire and Yorkshire in the early sixteenth century; the latter Humphrey is likely to have been the son of Robert<sup>74</sup> and Alice Manston<sup>75</sup>, the former Humphrey's uncle.<sup>188</sup> Similarly, John Gascoigne<sup>109</sup> married Mary Percy<sup>110</sup>, yet there is little evidence, beside the purchase of lands of Pontefract, of any further activity for John or Mary, although it is clear that John had a role in the retinue of Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, as his brother had.<sup>189</sup> Agnes<sup>111</sup> married Sir Robert Plumpton<sup>112</sup>, the illegitimate son and heir of Sir William Plumpton of Plumpton. They were married c.

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<sup>186</sup> Although Percy did not receive approval from Parliament until 1473, and Gascoigne's activities began in early 1472, it appears likely, given the support of the king, that Percy, Gascoigne and the northern elite/gentry were aware that such a restoration was imminent.

<sup>187</sup> T. Stapleton, *Plumpton Correspondence: written in the reigns of Edward IV, Richard III, Henry VII, and Henry VIII* (London, 1836), 61; and M. J. Bennett, 'Henry VII and the Northern Rising of 1489', *EHR*, 105 (1990), 34-59. The relationship between Plumpton, Gascoigne, and Percy will be discussed more fully in later chapters.

<sup>188</sup> Foster, *Pedigrees*.

<sup>189</sup> F. Collins (ed.) 'Yorkshire Fines: 1486-99', in Collins, *Feet of Fines of the Tudor Period [Yorks.]: Part 1, 1486 - 1571* (London, 1887), 4: John Gascoigne is described as being of Burghwallis (WR). J. Kirby, *The Plumpton Letters and Papers* (Cambridge, 1997), 68.

1477 and this united two families who, despite strained relationships, became stalwart allies.<sup>190</sup> Margaret<sub>113</sub>, the sister of Agnes, married Sir Christopher Ward<sub>114</sub> of Givendale (c. 1453 - d. 1521). As Sir Robert Plumpton, Ward was just as involved in the Gascoigne retinue of this period, associated heavily with the Percy family.<sup>191</sup>

Although there are other individuals that merit discussion in this section, the surviving evidence is simply too thin to be able to provide any form of biography. The Gascoignes of Thorp-on-the-Hill, William I<sub>115</sub>, John<sub>117</sub>, and Elizabeth<sub>118</sub>, with the Gascoignes of Micklefield, Nicholas<sub>88</sub> and Henry<sub>124</sub>, have sporadic references, if any at all. The decision to include these individuals in this study is due to the fact that there is not enough evidence to warrant their removal.

In terms of the Gascoignes of Burnby, more survives. William I<sub>119</sub> of Burnby married Katherine Nelson<sub>120</sub>, who was a member of the Guild of Corpus Christi, again suggestive of the Gascoignes' ties to the city of York.<sup>192</sup> Foster states that William I and Katherine Nelson married in 1518, yet this is incorrect as she is listed in the register of the Guild of Corpus Christi in 1509 as a Gascoigne. The marriage had a rocky start as in 1508, Katherine sued William I to ensure that the marriage was maintained, after William I instigated proceedings in the ecclesiastical courts to have it declared invalid.<sup>193</sup> It is interesting that, apart from Peter Middleton of Middleton, all of the witnesses were from the city of York; Peter was in fact resident in the city at the time. This could explain their absence from the source material examined in this thesis. Although they were of the Burnby branch, most of their connections were to the city of York. A few years later, in 1515, Katherine again took William to court, this time to reinstate her conjugal rights.<sup>194</sup> They had at least one son, Ralph<sub>154</sub>, who may have married a Margery<sub>155</sub>, but very little survives to detail either.

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<sup>190</sup> Kirby, *The Plumpton Letters and Papers*, 50. Significantly, this marriage returned the Plumpton family into the good graces of the Percy family, after divisive actions performed by Sir William a few years earlier. (This will be discussed in more detail in later chapters).

<sup>191</sup> Kirby, *The Plumpton Letters and Papers*, 149. Ward was baptised at Fountains Abbey by Prior Thomas Swynton, and received Givendale in 1474, after taking an oath of fealty from the Chapter of the Collegiate church of SS. Peter and Wilfrid in Ripon. His annual income has been estimated at 180m, £38. See. H. Peters, *Mary Ward: A World in Contemplation* (Gloucester, 1991), 7-8.

<sup>192</sup> Skaife, ed., *Register of the Guild of Corpus Christi*, 169. Foster argued that the pair married in 1518. She joined the guild in 1509, with her family; Christopher Nelson, Dorothy Nelson and William Nelson. She was recorded as Nelson (known as Gascoigne).

<sup>193</sup> Borthwick Institute, CP. G. 32.

<sup>194</sup> Borthwick Institute, CP. G. 110.

William's brother, Ralph Gascoigne II<sup>122</sup> of Burnby (d. 1523), married an Isabel<sup>123</sup>.<sup>195</sup> Ralph appears to have acquired some property, augmenting his estates at Burnby with one at Wheldale, and another at Newton Friston.<sup>196</sup> It seems likely that he appointed a relative, John, to the parish church at Friston. Again, very little is known about his life, but he appears to have served in the military, drafting his will in 1522 with the intention of fighting abroad. His will was proved the following year so it could be suggested that he died abroad - possibly during the temporary raiding by English forces in Brittany and Picardy. He left all of his estates to his brother, Robert<sup>121</sup>. His executors were Sir Henry Gascoigne of Burghwallis, John Gascoigne, Richard Calverley and William Percy.<sup>197</sup>

Two developments in this section are worth discussing. Firstly, the end of Gascoigne neutrality, by the Gawthorpe branch, who threw caution to the winds and aligned themselves with the house of Percy.<sup>198</sup> This can be seen not just in the affiliations and actions of active Gascoignes, but also in the marriages of the period - most of which were to Percy loyalists. Their alignments to the Nevilles and Percys, as well as the significant divisions in Yorkshire, fundamentally ensured that neutrality was not a long-term solution. Thus, the decision to align themselves wholly with the Percy family in 1471 shows an acute understanding of the political scene; the Battle of Barnet (April 1471) witnessed the death of kingmaker, Richard Neville (Warwick), and John Neville (Montagu), whilst the battle of Tewkesbury (May, 1471) saw the death of Edmund Beaufort (Somerset), John Beaufort (Dorset), John Courtenay (Devon), and Edward, Prince of Wales.<sup>199</sup> From the family's perspective the Wars of the Roses were at an end. Combined with the fact that the family's neutrality had worsened their relationship with the Nevilles, several whom had just been killed, this meant that supporting the Percy family's re-establishment was the only politically sensible move available to the family

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<sup>195</sup> No information survives to provide any insight in Isabel's life, including her family name. Moreover, there is no evidence to detail the life of Robert Gascoigne, the brother of William and Ralph II, apart from his mention in his father's (Ralph I) will.

<sup>196</sup> Interestingly, this could have neighboured the Gawthorpe holdings in the area, as for the past century the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe had owned Wheldale manor.

<sup>197</sup> *Test. Ebor.*, VI, 7. It is unclear which Henry Gascoigne and John it is. It is possible that it is Henry and John [155 and 156 respectively], the children of Henry [121] for whom little traceable information survives.

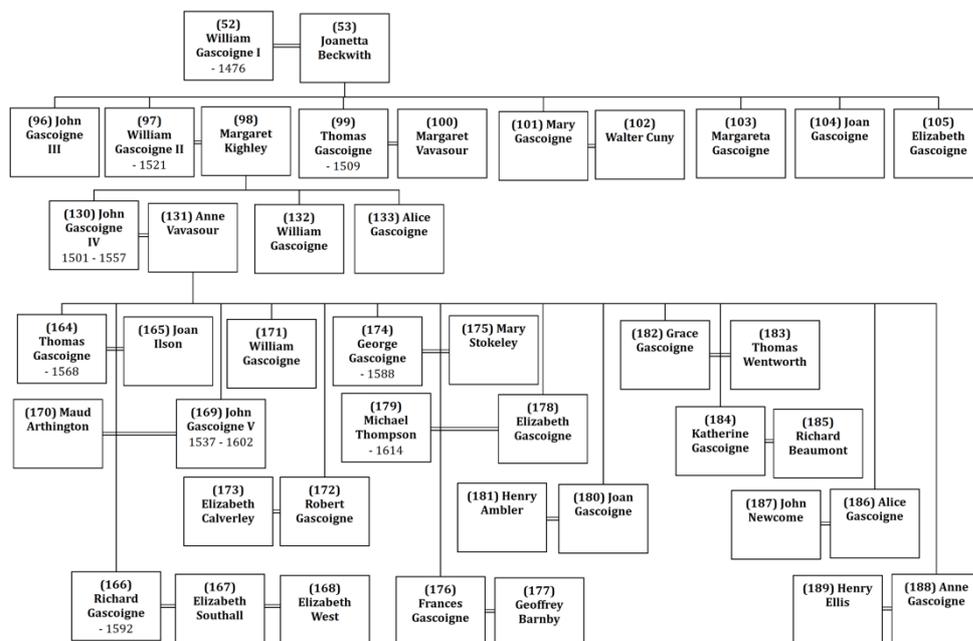
<sup>198</sup> This will be discussed more in Chapter Three, 137-175.

<sup>199</sup> M. Hicks, *The Wars of the Roses* (London, 2010). 32, 166.

at the time.

The second development worthy of note here is the prominence of the main line at Gawthorpe. Again, the success of the minor branches varied greatly and did not compete with the success, stability and wealth of the Gawthorpe line. Both the Gascoignes of Burnby and the Gascoignes of Thorp-on-the-Hill established minor estates at their respective locations, yet neither saw active service locally or nationally, especially in comparison with the Gascoigne family at Gawthorpe. The minor branches, although esquires by rank, were only able to maintain this status by their association with the Gawthorpe branch. In fact, many of the branches had been established by the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe, and had been subsequently inherited by younger sons.

Tree 4.11: William Gascoigne I of Lasincroft, his Children and Grandchildren



Generations Five to Eight: The rise of Lasincroft, c. 1460s – 1602

This section will examine the descendants of William Gascoigne I<sub>97</sub> of Lasincroft (d. c. 1521), and his wife Margaret<sub>98</sub>, the daughter of Richard Keighley, and will include William I's children, grandchildren and siblings. The relatively large scope of this section is due to the paucity of information for a number of individuals of this branch. For example, little information survives to detail anything about the lives of either William I or Margaret his wife. William I's sister Mary<sub>101</sub> married Walter Cuny<sub>102</sub>. It is possible they were both involved in a legal dispute over her marriage portion, after Margaret<sub>100</sub>, wife

of Thomas Gascoigne<sup>99</sup>, refused to hand over land in Lasingcroft, Mirfield and Heton.<sup>200</sup> Little information is known about the other sisters: Margareta<sup>103</sup>, Joan<sup>104</sup> and Elizabeth<sup>105</sup>, except for the suggestion, by Joseph Foster, that Elizabeth may have married a member of the lesser gentry family of Dyneley.<sup>201</sup>

John Gascoigne IV<sup>130</sup> (c. 1501 - 1557), of Lasingcroft, was the son and heir of William Gascoigne II<sup>97</sup> of Lasingcroft and his wife, Margaret<sup>98</sup>, daughter of Richard Keighley of Newhall. By 1552 he had married Anne<sup>131</sup>, the daughter of John Vavasour of Hazlewood.<sup>202</sup> Although his life is relatively obscure, he served as a Knight of the Shire in 1553 for the constituency of Thirsk (NR). It is possible that he and his family were Catholic, as the Lasingcroft Gascoignes were among the few recusant Gascoignes at this time, yet John IV would have been debarred from public office if this were the case.<sup>203</sup> John IV<sup>130</sup> was a JP for the West Riding from 1540 onwards and acquired the estate at Parlington from Sir Thomas Wentworth I; it was Sir Thomas Wentworth III<sup>234</sup> who married Margaret Gascoigne<sup>233</sup> of Gawthorpe.<sup>204</sup> This acquisition, in 1546, established the Gascoignes of Lasingcroft as a major West Riding family. Given that this was a period where the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe were in significant decline, this was an opportune purchase. Although the initial purchase was relatively small (the manor of Parlington with 26 messuages and 10 cottages), a later move by John to entrust his land to trustees, prior to his death, revealed that the estate significantly grew in his lifetime to include the manors of Parlington, Aberford, Potterton, and Barnbow, with 100 messuages, 100 cottages, 4 mills, and lands in Barnbow, Barwick, Scholes, Lasingcroft, Shippon, Parlington, Lotherton, Aberford, and Garforth.<sup>205</sup> Thus, by the time of his death in 1557, John IV had established the Lasingcroft (and Parlington) Gascoignes as the strongest

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<sup>200</sup> TNA C 1/410/67; C 1/313/39.

<sup>201</sup> Foster, *Pedigrees*.

<sup>202</sup> Anne was the sister of MP and prominent gentry Sir William Vavasour (1514-1566) of Hazlewood, who was appointed to the council of the north and made captain of Berwick. See, L. M. Kirk, 'Vavasour, Sir William (1514-66), of Hazlewood, Yorks.', *HOP*, [www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/vavasour-sir-william-1514-66](http://www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/vavasour-sir-william-1514-66), accessed 22 February 2016.

<sup>203</sup> S. Bastow, *The Catholic Gentry of Yorkshire, 1536-1642: Resistance and Accommodation* (Lewiston, 2007), 93.

<sup>204</sup> A. Davidson, 'Gascoigne, John I (by 1501-57), of Lasingcroft, Barnbow, and Parlington', *HOP*, [www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-john-i-1509-57](http://www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-john-i-1509-57), accessed 22 February 2016; *LP Henry VIII*, xv-xvii, xx; *CPR 1547-1548*, 92; *1553*, 353, *1553-4*, 26.

<sup>205</sup> WYL115 115/DZ/2054.

Gascoigne branch in Yorkshire.<sup>206</sup>

Very little is known about the life and career of Thomas Gascoigne<sup>99</sup> (d. c.1509), a younger son of William Gascoigne I<sup>5</sup> of Lasincroft (d. 1476), and Joan Beckwith<sup>53</sup>. He was involved in a land dispute with Sir John Gilliot between 1504 and 1515 over the detention of deeds at Lasincroft.<sup>207</sup> The surviving source materials mostly detail the circumstances of his apparently tragic love life. In the early 1470s his father, William Gascoigne I of Lasincroft (d. c. 1476) began negotiations with representatives of John Southall, the father of Elizabeth Southall.<sup>208</sup> These negotiations had fallen through by William I's death a few years later, and by the end of the same year Elizabeth appealed to the consistory courts of York with a claim that Thomas had violated their marriage contract. The court found in Elizabeth's favour, and ordered Thomas to uphold the marriage agreement. Instead of obeying the court, Thomas appealed to Pope Sixtus IV, who granted a papal bull which enabled Thomas to marry whomever he chose - in this case Margaret Vavasour<sup>100</sup>, daughter of Sir Henry Vavasour of Hazelwood.<sup>209</sup> According to the tradition dictated by family antiquarian Richard Gascoigne, a few months after their marriage, Margaret ventured out riding in the family's woods, where her horse reared, resulting in her death - it is claimed she broke her neck.<sup>210</sup> This seems to be a dramatic re-telling of the story, as following their marriage the couple were granted a series of pardons - five in total - for their violation of the marriage contract between 1477 and 1504. Furthermore, when Thomas died in 1509, he did not leave a will and the custody of his estate was granted to Margaret - who, it appears, outlived him.

John Gascoigne V<sup>169</sup> of Lasincroft and Parlington (c.1537 - 1602), was the son of John Gascoigne IV. Like his father, he served as a Member of Parliament for the constituency of Aldborough (NR). He married Maud<sup>170</sup>, the daughter of William Arthington of Adwick le Street (WR), with whom he had several children. His life is otherwise obscure, and most mentions of him surround his family's recusant beliefs, although John himself was never a recusant himself.<sup>211</sup> He died in 1602 and was buried at the parish church in Barwick-in-Elmet, the site of burial for many Gascoignes of

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<sup>206</sup> TNA C 142/111/30.

<sup>207</sup> TNA C 1/313/37.

<sup>208</sup> Borthwick Institute, CP. F. 345.

<sup>209</sup> WYL115/F5/1, f. 21.

<sup>210</sup> WYL115/F5/1, f. 21.

<sup>211</sup> *CPR 1560-1563*, 396, 448.

Lasincroft. His son would become Baronet of Nova Scotia in 1635.<sup>212</sup>

For the other children of John Gascoigne IV<sub>130</sub> and Anne Vavasour<sub>131</sub>, less survives. Thomas<sub>164</sub> married Joan<sub>165</sub>, the daughter of William Ilson of Gunby. He died c. 1568 leaving a daughter, Elizabeth, as his heiress.<sup>213</sup> Richard<sub>166</sub> married Elizabeth Sotehill<sub>167</sub>, and widow of Sir Henry Savile of Thornhill.<sup>214</sup> His second marriage, to the widow<sub>168</sub> of William Scargill, enabled Richard to establish his family at Kippax.<sup>215</sup> He died there in 1592.<sup>216</sup> Nothing survives to detail William Gascoigne's<sub>171</sub> life, although Foster believed he travelled to Brussels, where he joined the Carthusians there.<sup>217</sup> Robert<sub>172</sub> married Elizabeth Calverley<sub>173</sub>, the widow of Sir William Vavasour of Hazlewood. Finally, the youngest son, George<sub>174</sub> (d. 1588), established himself at Kirkby (WR) and Oldhurst (Hunts.) after he married Mary Stokesley<sub>175</sub>, a co-heiress.

Of the daughters of John Gascoigne IV<sub>130</sub>, little contemporary material survives, except mentions by antiquarian genealogists from the later centuries.<sup>218</sup> It is possible that Frances<sub>176</sub> married Geoffrey Barnby<sub>177</sub> of Derbyshire, Elizabeth<sub>178</sub> married Michael Thompson<sub>179</sub> (d. 1614), Joan<sub>180</sub> married Henry Ambler<sub>181</sub> of Leeds, Grace<sub>182</sub> married Thomas Wentworth<sub>183</sub> of Scroby, Alice<sub>186</sub> married John Newcome<sub>187</sub>, Katherine<sub>184</sub> married Richard Beaumont<sub>185</sub> in 1554, and Anne<sub>188</sub> married Sir Henry Ellis<sub>189</sub> of Kiddall, although it is difficult to confirm this.<sup>219</sup> The marriages of John Gascoigne V's children is indicative that their social range was not as broad as other Gascoigne branches such as Gawthorpe or Cardington. The Gascoigne men married mainly widows whose marriage would have come with some form of estate, whilst the women married mainly gentlemen from across several counties.

Thomas'<sub>99</sub> death in 1509 is representative of the sudden change in Gascoigne fortunes over the next century. The first half of the sixteenth century saw a rise in the

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<sup>212</sup> A. Davidson, 'Gascoigne, John II (by 1537-1602), of Parlington, Yorks', *HOP*, [www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-john-ii-1537-1602](http://www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-john-ii-1537-1602), accessed 22 February 2016.

<sup>213</sup> WYL115/F5/1/32.

<sup>214</sup> Foster, *Pedigrees*

<sup>215</sup> WYL115/F5/1/17.

<sup>216</sup> WYL115/E1/25.

<sup>217</sup> Foster, *Pedigrees*.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*

outbreaks of disease, including plague, influenza and sweating sickness.<sup>220</sup> Yorkshire, and parts of the West Riding, were all hit harder than other parts of the country.<sup>221</sup> These outbreaks not only affected the Lasingcroft branch of the family, but had a significant impact on the whole family's adult male population. Gawthorpe, Wood Hall, Burnby and Micklefield Gascoignes were affected. Furthermore, famine became a threat, and Palliser argued that the 1587 famine nearly brought the West Riding to its knees. Twenty-five inquisitions post-mortem were issued for the Gascoigne family during the sixteenth century for the main estates of Lasingcroft and Gawthorpe, a majority of which were during the plague outbreaks of c. 1515 - 1520 (five Gascoigne landholders died), and c. 1550 - 1570 (eleven Gascoigne landholders died).<sup>222</sup> It is unlikely, however, that these represent the only Gascoigne deaths related to these epidemics. As no personal evidence survives to detail the Gascoigne family's health at this time, the cause of the significant increase in Gascoigne mortality can only be surmised.

Generations Five and Six: The Cardington Revival, c. 1485 - 1577<sup>223</sup>

Of the children of William Gascoigne<sup>93</sup> I of Cardington and Elizabeth Wynter<sup>94</sup>, next to nothing is known about the daughters. It appears that Agnes Gascoigne<sup>127</sup> was a nun at the Benedictine Abbey at Elstow, in Bedfordshire, where she became Abbess in 1524.<sup>224</sup> Of Joan<sup>128</sup>, nothing survives. For John Gascoigne I<sup>125</sup> (c. 1510 - 1568), more information survives to posterity.<sup>225</sup> He married (by 1531), Margaret Scargill<sup>126</sup> of Thorpe Hill (NR), with whom he had three children: George<sup>160</sup> (1537 - 1577), John II<sup>162</sup>, and Elizabeth<sup>163</sup>. John Gascoigne I's career was less auspicious than his fathers. His association with court echoed that of his father - with his attendance, in 1540, at the reception of Anne of Cleves, and acting as Almoner at the coronations of Edward VI (in

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<sup>220</sup> D. M. Palliser, *Tudor York* (Oxford, 2002) 124; H. Schroder, *The Annals of Yorkshire*, I (Leeds, 1851), 114.

<sup>221</sup> See, amongst others; J. F. D. Shrewsbury, *A History of Bubonic Plague in the British Isles* (Cambridge, 1970), 161; D. Youngs, *Humphrey Newton (1466-1536): An Early Tudor Gentleman* (Woodbridge, 2008), 213; H. Schroeder (ed.) *The Annals of Yorkshire* (Leeds, 1851), 113-115.

<sup>222</sup> Unfortunately, no information survives to indicate how Gascoigne women fared during these outbreaks.

<sup>223</sup> See Tree 4.6 - James Gascoigne and his descendants.

<sup>224</sup> Bedfordshire Archives, Fasti/3/Els.

<sup>225</sup> TNA PROB 11/50/174.

1547) and Mary (1553).<sup>226</sup> Following his father's death he became active locally - serving as Sheriff of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire (1542 - 1543), as JP (1554 - 1563, 1564 - *d.*); and as Recorder of Bedford (in 1566).<sup>227</sup> He was knighted in 1541 and was elected a Knight of the Shire for Bedford the following year. He served as an MP on two more occasions - in 1553 and 1558.<sup>228</sup>

The private life of John Gascoigne I<sub>125</sub> (d. 1568) was far from happy. Records detail his wife's complaints to the Privy Council on his private behaviour, which resulted in intercession by Cardinal Reginald Pole in 1556, who ordered John to stop his adulterous escapades with a household servant.<sup>229</sup> The extravagance of his son, George Gascoigne<sub>160</sub>, must have similarly taken its toll upon the family, as John I took steps to try to ensure that George did not inherit any part of the Cardington estate. This ultimately failed and he received a patrimony of £135 a year, as well as £60 from his mother's property.<sup>230</sup> A few years before his death, John was imprisoned in the Fleet Prison as a result of a court case brought forward by his ex-mistress Anne Drury. Aside from a few charitable requests and provisions for his younger son and wife, he left the remainder to his son George (under the trusteeship of Thomas Colby I) - possibly indicating some form of reunion between the pair - with requests that his son end the annuity that he was forced to bestow on his mistress.<sup>231</sup> The possibility of a reunion is further increased by the involvement of George in his parents' purchase of Hawnes Park, Bedfordshire, in 1562, and the sale of neighbouring Franklin manor a year later.<sup>232</sup> Interestingly enough, in 1574, Thomas Colby II purchased a portion of the Cardington estate from John Winch of North-hill for £405; the transaction specifically indicated that John (then deceased),

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<sup>226</sup> N. M. Fuidge, 'Gascoigne, John', *HOP*, [www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-john-1510-69](http://www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-john-1510-69), accessed 1 March 2016.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*; *LP*, 1, 10, 21; *CPR 1547-1548*, 80; *CPR 1563-1566*, 19.

<sup>228</sup> *Fasti*/1/Hayn.

<sup>229</sup> C. T. Prouty, 'George Gascoigne and Elizabeth Bacon Bretton Boyes Gascoigne: A Series of Problems and their Answers,' *The Review of English Studies*, 15 (1939); C. T. Prouty, *George Gascoigne* (Columbia, 1942), 7-8, 10-11, 13, 19, 21, 36-38, 45; *CPR 1550-1553*, 311; *CPR 1560-1563*, 410; *CPR 155-1599*, 300-301, 307.

<sup>230</sup> G. Austen, *George Gascoigne* (Cambridge, 2008), 77; TNA C142/151/3.

<sup>231</sup> Little is known about John and Elizabeth Gascoigne - the younger siblings of George. Foster suggested that John married Jane St. John, and Elizabeth married Edward Butler and Richard Skylling, but I can find no evidence of these matches.

<sup>232</sup> Surrey History Centre, G 85/13/181/1; VCH Bedfordshire, II (London, 1908), 342

George, or Thomas Colby I rescinded all claims upon the land in question.<sup>233</sup>

George Gascoigne<sup>160</sup> (c. 1537 - 1577) is arguably the best-known Gascoigne of the Cardington branch. Numerous biographies have been written about the life of the failed soldier, spy, and poet - most notably those by C. T. Prouty and Gillian Austen - and thus the following account of his life will be kept relatively brief.<sup>234</sup> Born c. 1537, it is likely that he was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. By 1555 he was studying at Gray's Inn, an institution no longer concerned solely with supplying England's senior justices, but a place of cultural development, patronage opportunities, and literary notables. The contacts he established at Gray's Inn were responsible for many of the opportunities he had in life. His fondness for extravagance began early as he was nearly expelled on account of his debts. Even his marriage to Elizabeth<sup>161</sup>, daughter of John Bacon, was not without controversy. Elizabeth's first husband had died in early January 1559 and within a few months she had remarried, this time to Edward Boys.<sup>235</sup> Yet it appears she married Gascoigne at the same time, and thus began a public feud between the two men.<sup>236</sup> Henry Machyn, a merchant of London, recorded a great fray between the two men and their companions over Elizabeth, whilst in court only the intervention of Queen Elizabeth I - on behalf of Sir Nicholas Bacon - could end the quarrel in Gascoigne's favour.<sup>237</sup> His character was brought into further dispute when he was investigated, by the Lord Mayor of London, for wasting the inheritance of Richard Breton, Elizabeth's son from her first marriage. Gascoigne was elected a Knight of the Shire in 1558, 1559 and 1572; on the latter occasion the Privy Council described him as a 'common rhymer', 'a deviser of [slander]', 'a notorious ruffian', 'a spy', and 'an atheist' who 'lurked in villages' to ensure his election and thus he was removed from the position.<sup>238</sup>

Nevertheless, through connections forged at Gray's Inn, George Gascoigne came

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<sup>233</sup> Bedfordshire Archives, Z 1297/1a; the conveyance included the Gascoigne land at Eastcotts (worth £7 6s 8d) and 100 acres (worth £6 6s 8d).

<sup>234</sup> Prouty, *George Gascoigne*; Austen, *George Gascoigne*.

<sup>235</sup> Austen, *George Gascoigne*, 24, 36.

<sup>236</sup> Whilst this was the term employed by the merchant Henry Machyn, it is unclear if she was married to both, betrothed to both, or that one marriage was considered invalid.

<sup>237</sup> Austen, *George Gascoigne*, 5, 23; J. G. Nichols (ed.) *The Diary of Henry Machyn* (London 1848), 293.

<sup>238</sup> SP 12/86/ f.235. In 1558 and 1559 he was returned for the constituency of Bedford, yet in 1572 he was returned for the borough of Midhurst, Sussex, on the influence of Anthony Browne, 1<sup>st</sup> Viscount Montagu. The accusation of atheism may not be entirely incorrect - Elizabeth Gascoigne was recorded as a recusant a few months after George Gascoigne's death, and there were accusations, through the lives of both, that they frequently did not attend church.

to the attention of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester (1532 - 1588), from whom he received patronage. Through Leicester, Gascoigne was able to develop links at court, where he received patronage from amongst the royal family and the court favourites, including the Earl of Bedford and Elizabeth I herself.<sup>239</sup> All the while, he spent time abroad visiting France and Holland. Whilst in the Netherlands he was suspected of being a spy and ejected from court.<sup>240</sup> He returned a second time, where he witnessed the siege of Antwerp in 1576. He died, of poor health, in 1577, leaving his wife and son with little but mounting debts, ill-favour, and his blessing.<sup>241</sup>

Very little is known about George's siblings, John II<sup>162</sup> and Elizabeth<sup>163</sup>. A lease, in 1575, suggests that John, a gentleman, was resident at Fenlake Barns, Bedfordshire, as he expanded his holdings there by six acres, with the help of Thomas Colby I.<sup>242</sup> The following year, Colby sold off Gascoigne lands, including two Cardington mills, and land belonging to the widow, Margaret<sup>126</sup> in Cardington and Fenlake Barns.<sup>243</sup> Margaret died the same year.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>239</sup> W. C. Hazlitt, *The Complete Poems of George Gascoigne*, II (London, 1870), 303. 'The Noble Art of Venerie or Hunting' was published in 1575, and presented to Elizabeth I.

<sup>240</sup> Austen, *George Gascoigne*, 71, 194.

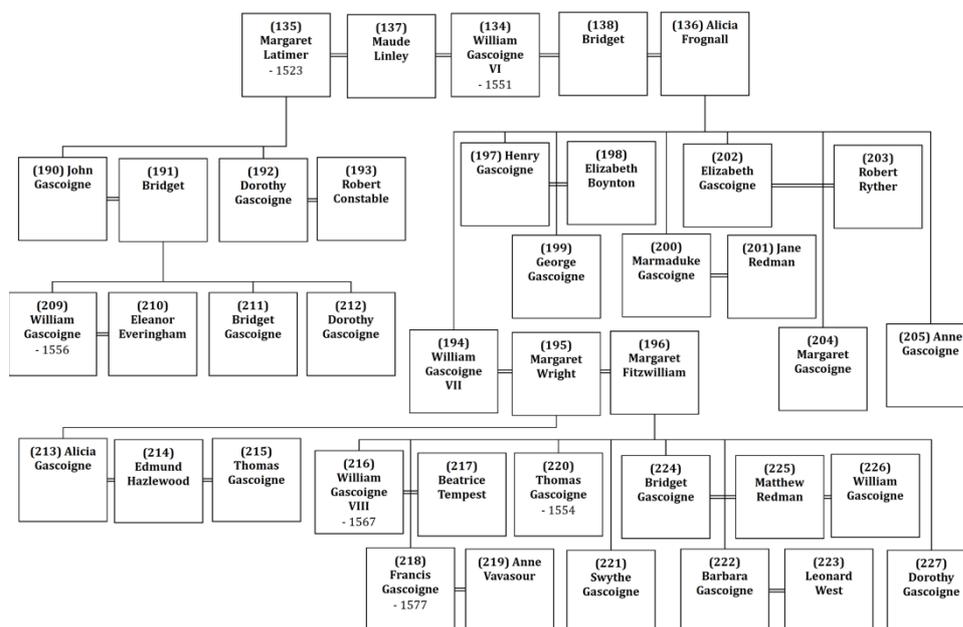
<sup>241</sup> See Chapter Two of this thesis for more details, 97-136.

<sup>242</sup> Bedfordshire Archives, Whitbread Collection, W 164; FN 1254 (from 1590) reveals that Fenlake Barns was the parsonage of Cardington manor. John was still alive in 1590 as he made moves to protect the advowson of the parsonage from being leased at £68 15s 4d.

<sup>243</sup> Bedfordshire Archives, Whitbread Collection, W 318.

<sup>244</sup> PROB 11/59/44.

Tree 4.12: William Gascoigne VI, his Children and Grandchildren



Generation Seven to Ten: The Final Years of the Gawthorpe Gascoignes, c. 1467 - 1587

The decline of Gawthorpe was hastened by the activities of William Gascoigne VI<sub>134</sub> (c. 1467 - 1551). From an examination of traditional sources, it would appear that his life was rather typical of a member of a prominent late medieval and Tudor gentry family. He married four times - first to Alicia<sub>136</sub>, daughter of Sir Richard Frognall, second to Margaret Latimer (d. 1523), third to Maud Lyndley<sub>137</sub>, and finally to Bridget<sub>138</sub>, the widow of Robert Stokes of Bickerton. He had a number of children from these marriages - William VII<sub>194</sub>, Henry<sub>197</sub>, George<sub>199</sub>, Marmaduke<sub>200</sub>, Elizabeth<sub>202</sub>, Margaret<sub>204</sub>, and Anne<sub>205</sub> from his first marriage to Alicia Frognall, and John<sub>190</sub> and Dorothy<sub>192</sub> from his second marriage to Margaret Latimer.<sup>245</sup>

William VI<sub>134</sub> inherited his estates at nineteen, following the death of his father, and was made a Knight of the Bath later the same year, at the coronation of Elizabeth of York (1466 - 1503).<sup>246</sup> He was made a Knight Banneret by Thomas Howard, Earl of

<sup>245</sup> It appears that Margaret never married, as her will described her as a single-woman. *Wills and Inventories from the Registry at Durham*, II, 273. She was buried, in 1567, at White Friars in London. Her income was valued at £60 per annum.

<sup>246</sup> *CPR 1485-1494*, 197; Shaw, *The Knights of England*, I, 142. He was already a Knight of the Body for Henry VII.

Surrey and Duke of Norfolk (1443 - 1524) during the Scottish campaign of 1497.<sup>247</sup> He served as a Knight of the Shire and Sheriff, in 1495, on commissions of array, and as a collector of subsidies, and served with frequency on the West Riding peace commission.<sup>248</sup> Yet, on a more local level, William VI appeared to have rampaged over the West Riding. There are a number of surviving court cases - discussed in later chapters - which detail the violent and bloody actions of William VI and his 100-strong retinue throughout the West Riding. He became embroiled in a feud with John St. Pol of Campsall which ended with St. Pol's dismemberment, and in one instance is recorded as having nearly drowned a young boy after William VI stole his horse.<sup>249</sup> Despite this, there appears to have been few very repercussions for Gascoigne as he was a senior Justice of the Peace. Even the Sheriff of York was apparently too fearful to intervene. Gascoigne also openly challenged Henry VII's regime on a number of occasions, most notably when attempting to claim the Earldom of Westmorland. Letters between Lord Dacre and the crown discuss the oppression with which William VI and his retinue dominated West Riding politics and called upon Cardinal Wolsey, an associate of the family, to intervene.<sup>250</sup> The effect Wolsey's intervention had is unknown, but it does appear that Gascoigne remained aloof from politics for the remainder of his life. The exploits of William Gascoigne VI<sub>134</sub> (d. 1551) may allow some insight into the mind-set of the Gawthorpe Gascoignes at this stage, as it demonstrates the considerable privilege to which they had become accustomed. In 1525, he was assessed as part of the 1523 subsidy and was charged £16 13s 4d on an income of £333 6s 8d (500 marks).<sup>251</sup> Furthermore, an extent of Gascoigne's possessions during this period showed the value of his estates: Gawthorpe (£70), Burton Leonard (£26 8s 4d), Thorp Arch (£11), Wheldale and Sutton (£19), Thorp-in-Balne (£40) and Shipley (£17), among others.<sup>252</sup> Including expenditure, the Gawthorpe inheritance was worth £247 13s 4d per annum; a considerable income. Following a post mortem inquisition in 1551, it was found that alongside these estates he owned 500 messuages, 300 cottages, 4000 acres of land, 2000 acres of meadow, 7000 acres of pasture, 500 acres of wood, 7000 acres of fields, moors

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<sup>247</sup> W. C. Metcalfe, *A Book of Knights* (1885), 31; *WR*, II, 58.

<sup>248</sup> *CPR 1494-1509*, 52, *WR*, II, 58.

<sup>249</sup> *SC*, 3, 171-174; *SC* 2, 50-56.

<sup>250</sup> *LP*, 3, 1415, 1420.

<sup>251</sup> TNA E 179/207/138, m. 1.

<sup>252</sup> TNA SC 12/17/15.

and marshes, and £20 of free rent.<sup>253</sup> With such wealth and influence, it is unsurprising that the Gascoigne family felt untouchable, as even the crown had difficulty keeping the family's head in check.

This level of arrogance proved to be the family's undoing. William VI became embroiled in a fight for Gawthorpe's neighbouring estate, Harewood. Although the family had made previous attempts to secure parts of the estate, particularly through marriages to the descendants of the Aldeburgh heiresses, all such attempts had been unsuccessful. However, on 18 December 1515, William Gascoigne VI wrote to his uncle, Robert Plumpton<sup>112</sup>, to notify him of his successful bid in court: the Lordship of Harewood, with all its profits and incomes were under the control of Gascoigne until Jane, the daughter of recently-deceased knight Henry Redman (d. c. 1515) had a son come of age.<sup>254</sup> This most likely represented only a moiety of the lordship, while the other half was in the possession of Sir Robert Ryther<sup>203</sup>, to whom William IV's daughter, Elizabeth<sup>202</sup>, was married, it allowed Gascoigne to gain a significant degree of control over the neighbouring lordship. With this success came trouble, and the purpose of his correspondence with Plumpton was to request his assistance in holding the new estate.<sup>255</sup> Whilst there seems to have been no violence the judicial response by other parties was significant. Robert Redman (d. 1547), brother to Henry Redman, filed court proceedings against the ruling. William VI, in retaliation to this, married his son Marmaduke<sup>200</sup> to the heiress Jane Redman<sup>201</sup>. This meant that Marmaduke became the focus of the aggressive litigation.<sup>256</sup> Maintaining the Gascoigne hold on Harewood required the input and attention of the whole family, the result of which, following a two-decade dispute, was the loss of Harewood and debts totalling £1,400.<sup>257</sup> He died in 1551.

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<sup>253</sup> TNA WARD 7/6/57.

<sup>254</sup> Stapleton, *Plumpton Letters*, CLXXV.

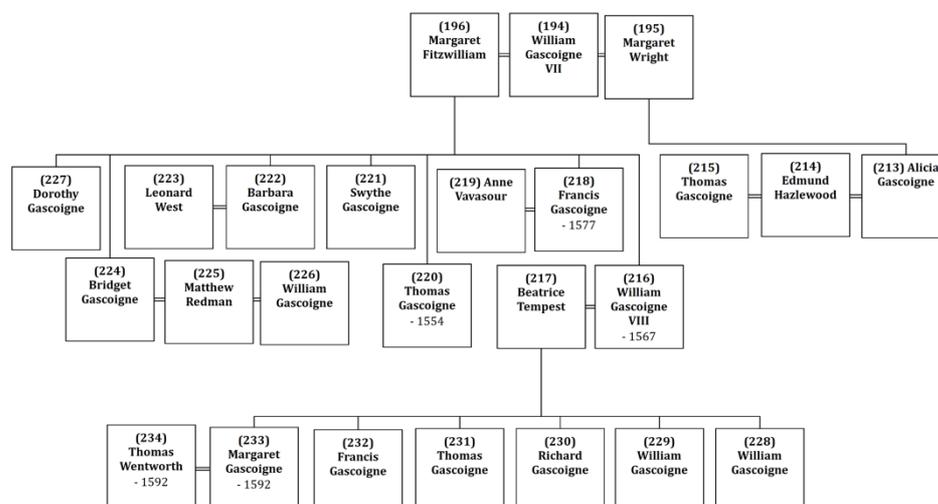
<sup>255</sup> For Gascoigne to take these threats seriously enough to call upon his kin - when he could muster over 100 men himself - must be significant.

<sup>256</sup> TNA C 1/879/27-28; C 1/798/9-11; C 1/798/13-14; C 1/798/12; C 1/563/6; C 1/315/70.

<sup>257</sup> In 1524, William VI borrowed £400 from William Brown of London (C 131/268/6); in 1526 a considerable estate was taken from Gascoigne due to his debts. Furthermore, William was not found, and thus could not be arrested. The estates seized included: Womersley (40 messuages, 800 acres of land, 800 acres of pasture, 100 acres of meadow, 500 acres of moor and 200 acres of woodland), Thorp Audlin (20 messuages, 300 acres of land, 200 acres of pasture, 100 acres of meadow, 100 acres of moor and 60 acres of woodland), the manor Burghwallis, Chepley (200 acres of land, 100 acres of pasture, 100 acres of meadow, 200 acres of moor and 100 acres of woodland), and the manor of Sheldall (with 200 acres of land, 100 acres of pasture, 100 acres of meadow, 100 acres of moor and 20 acres of woodland). Womersley was worth 44m., Thorp

His will requested a tomb for himself like those of his ancestors, yet no evidence of such a tomb survives.<sup>258</sup> Less evidence survives for William VI's siblings. John Gascoigne<sup>139</sup> became the vicar of Fryston in 1522, and it appears Thomas<sup>140</sup> died young. Elizabeth Gascoigne<sup>141</sup> (d. 1553) married George, Lord Talboys<sup>142</sup> (d. 1538), and this may have been due to the financial support for her marriage from the will of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland (d. 1489).<sup>259</sup> Margaret<sup>143</sup> married Ralph, Lord Ogle<sup>144</sup> of Bothall, Northumberland. Agnes<sup>145</sup> married Sir Thomas Fairfax<sup>146</sup> of Walton (d. 1520), and Dorothy<sup>147</sup> married Sir Ninian Markenfield<sup>148</sup>. Both of these marriages were to major northern families. No information survives for the remaining three sisters, Eleanor<sup>149</sup>, Maude<sup>150</sup>, and Joan<sup>151</sup>. The eldest son of William VI, John Gascoigne<sup>190</sup>, was said by Foster to have married in 1564, but this seems unlikely.<sup>260</sup> His son, William Gascoigne<sup>209</sup>, who married Eleanor Everingham<sup>210</sup> was dead by 1556, and he had already inherited the estates of Wood Hall and Wheldale, often associated with the heir to Gawthorpe.<sup>261</sup>

Tree 4.13: William Gascoigne VII, his Children and Grandchildren



Audlin, 13m., Burghwallis, 16m., and Chepley, 22m. The manor of Wheldale also appears to have been seized, and its income was 12m. (C 131/268/7); and in 1528, he took a loan of £1000 from Richard Gresham, merchant of London (C 241/281/126).

<sup>258</sup> *Test. Ebor.* VI, 106.

<sup>259</sup> *Test. Ebor.* III, 304.

<sup>260</sup> Foster, *Pedigrees*.

<sup>261</sup> TNA C 142/107/34; C 142/111/30.

William Gascoigne VII<sup>194</sup> of Gawthorpe and Cusworth had inherited the Gawthorpe estate following the death of his father in 1551. He was the eldest son of William VI's<sup>134</sup> second marriage to Alicia Frognall<sup>136</sup>. He is recorded alongside his brothers, George<sup>199</sup> and Marmaduke<sup>200</sup> in the 1539 muster rolls.<sup>262</sup> William VII married twice, first to Margaret Wright<sup>195</sup> and second to Margaret Fitzwilliam<sup>196</sup>, yet little more is known about his life. It is unclear when he died, but Gawthorpe had left his possession by 1566 when his son died. He had several children: Alicia<sup>213</sup>, who married Edmund Hazlewood<sup>214</sup> and Thomas Gascoigne<sup>215</sup> of Parlington; William VIII<sup>216</sup> (d. 1566/7), who married Beatrice Tempest<sup>217</sup>; Francis I<sup>218</sup> (d. 1578), who married Anne Vavasour<sup>219</sup>; Thomas<sup>220</sup> (d. 1554), of Burghwallis; Barbara<sup>222</sup> who married Leonard West<sup>223</sup>, esquire; Dorothy<sup>227</sup>; and Bridget<sup>224</sup> who married Sir Matthew Redman<sup>225</sup> and William Gascoigne<sup>226</sup> of Caley.

It is at this stage of the Gascoigne history where the sequence of events becomes unclear. It is apparent that the level of debt left behind by William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> (d. 1551) created problems for the Gascoigne family, and resulted in disagreements and divisions. In all the Gascoignes' traceable history, the family had never fought against itself. This is remarkable given the size of the family and the breadth of its interests. This, combined with the severe misfortune of losing several generations of male heirs to disease, meant that the large collection of estates was divided amongst the survivors. Cusworth, Wood Hall, Wheldale, and Burghwallis were all parcelled out to surviving Gascoignes. With the deaths of William VI<sup>134</sup> (d. 1551), John<sup>190</sup> of Wheldale and Wood Hall, Thomas of Burghwallis<sup>220</sup> (d. 1554), William<sup>209</sup> of Wheldale and Woodhall (d. 1556), William VII<sup>194</sup>, William VIII<sup>216</sup> (d. 1566/7), and Francis I<sup>218</sup> (d. 1578), the male strength of the Gascoigne family was all but extinguished.<sup>263</sup> The premature deaths of William VIII's five sons<sup>228-232</sup>, increased the problem of inheritance. Thus, Margaret Gascoigne<sup>233</sup>, who married Thomas Wentworth<sup>234</sup>, inherited the property upon Francis' <sup>218</sup> death. She was the last Gascoigne to hold Gawthorpe and her extensive redesign and rebranding of the estate – discussed more fully in Chapter Five - represented a demarcation that,

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<sup>262</sup> W. P. Baildon, 'Musters in the Skeyrack Wapentake, 1539', *Thoresby* IV (1895) 302.

<sup>263</sup> These are the Gascoigne family members who died during between 1530 and 1585. All of whom were the heads of their respective estates, and they include the minor estates mentioned earlier; TNA C 142/95/57; E 150/246/25; C 142/111/30; C 142/107/34; C 142/173/52; WARD 7/9/103; E 150/265/31; WARD 7/16/121; C 142/181/70; C 142/125/48; E 150/250/21; C 142/147/155; WARD 7/7/27; E 150;247;70; C 142/109/50-53; E 150/281/1; C 142/105/50; C 142/189/60; WARD 7/8/16; WARD 7/11/139; C 142/151/3.

despite the previous decades of turbulent misfortune, the Gascoigne family were still one of the strongest in the West Riding.

### Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the lives of 234 members of the Gascoigne family. Although many of them led lives that were not wholly traceable in surviving source material, the wide range of careers and lifestyles accentuates the benefits of a family led study. The Gascoignes of Lasingcroft and Parlington stood in stark contrast to the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe. The first generation after their establishment at Lasingcroft by Nicholas I<sup>7</sup> (d. 1427), failed to build upon their founder's success, yet in the mid-fifteenth century they began to expand. Incrementally, the Gascoignes at Lasingcroft and Parlington grew over the next century, and by the mid-sixteenth century - when the Gascoignes at Gawthorpe were in decline - those at Lasingcroft were ready to replace them, usurping the mantle of knighthood. The success of the Cardington branch was, ultimately, down to the successful career of one individual; William Gascoigne of Cardington<sup>93</sup> (d.1540), who exploited a period of religious uncertainty in England to establish large estates and earn significant incomes. However, this was relatively short-lived and the branch faded into relative obscurity following the death of infamous poet George Gascoigne in 1577.

Finally, the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe were a family who built upon their initial success to become one of the most powerful families in Yorkshire. They could draw on significant wealth and associations to support them if the need arose and they survived significant regime changes intact. Furthermore, the family underwent substantive social movement - from the mercantile elite to holding knighthood for successive generations - with further unsuccessful attempts to establish themselves among the aristocratic elite. A fundamental element of the Gascoignes' status and power derived from their ability to avoid public office and yet maintain a significant hold on the West Riding. The family operated as an established aristocratic family in all but name. The level of debt accrued by William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> (d. 1551) was substantial, yet it was the unforeseen consequences of plague and sickness which brought the family line at Gawthorpe to an end.

## Chapter Two: Networks and Social Circles

When studying an individual, family, or even the wider county gentry, historians must by necessity acknowledge the society in which they lived. The framework pioneered by K. B. McFarlane over seventy years ago still carries credence today. Generally speaking, history is best served by an examination of the people rather than the institutions of which they were part.<sup>1</sup> McFarlane's discussion was orientated towards political society and the relationships between the nobility and the Crown, yet this has led to an examination of the gentry, as they were the individuals who held the majority of positions within the administrative, political and judicial system. Whilst the number of gentry studies being produced has declined in recent years, the closing decades of the twentieth century witnessed a wide range of research on the social, political, economic, and cultural influences of the gentry and the impact these influences had on their social networks and identity.<sup>2</sup> Studies such as these are a significant undertaking and often embrace multidisciplinary, through historical demography, sociological and anthropological ideas, and archaeology. They therefore regularly limit the period of study to a single generation or particular theme. This frequently includes themes concerning the family unit and marriage, the law, the administrative community, cultural exchange and service.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> K. B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), 279-280.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example: C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992); K. B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972); A. J. Pollard, *North-Eastern England during the Wars of the Roses* (Oxford, 1990); S. J. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England* (Oxford, 1991); R. V. Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust: Administrative Service and Upward Mobility in Angevin England* (Philadelphia, 1988); H. M. Thomas, *Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders and Thugs: the Gentry of Angevin Yorkshire, 1154-1216* (Philadelphia, 1993).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example: S. M. Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry in the Fifteenth Century* (Chesterfield, 1983); D. Youngs, 'Cultural Networks' in R. Radulescu and A. Truelove (eds.) *Gentry Culture in Late Medieval England* (Manchester, 2005); S. R. Jones, 'Richard Scrope, the Bolton Hours and the Church of St. Martin in Micklegate: Reconstructing a Holy Neighbourhood in Late Medieval York' in P. J. P. Goldberg (ed.) *Richard Scrope: Archbishop and Martyr* (Donnington, 2007); E. Acheson, *A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1992); C. Richmond, *John Hopton: A Fifteenth Century Suffolk Gentleman* (Cambridge, 1981); S. Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity, 1361-1399* (Oxford, 1990); A. J. Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community of Gentry during the Wars of the Roses' in C. D. Ross (ed.) *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1979); M. Arvanigian, 'The Nevilles and the Political Establishment in North-Eastern England, 1377-1413' (University of Durham PhD Thesis, 1998); S. J. Payling, 'Social Mobility, Demographic Change and Landed Society in Late Medieval England', *Economic History Review*, NS, 45:1 (1992), 51-73; S. J. Payling, 'The Economics of Marriage in Late Medieval England: the Marriage of Heiresses', *Economic History Review*, NS, 54:3 (2001), 413-429.

This chapter seeks to utilise several of these themes to examine the associations and kin groups of the Gascoigne family and the impact these associations may have had on the family's identity. It will also consider the effects of this identity upon the development and maintenance of these associations. It seeks to establish the significance of career-based networks and the associations developed within magnate affinities, and will seek to determine whether these associations were more influential than associations of kinship, neighbourhood and marriage in developing an individual's identity. The scope of this thesis is somewhat broader than many previous discussions on social networks and as such a few sentences are required to clarify the chapter's methodological scope. Previous authors of gentry associations have had a tendency to narrow the focus of their studies to periods where primary evidence has survived in higher quantity and, therefore, allowed for a greater clarity, yet where that has not been possible they have also utilised anthropological and sociological methodologies.<sup>4</sup> Due to the scope of this thesis there are periods when the clarity of Gascoigne networks is diminished due to the lack of surviving evidence, yet these periods are random and due, in part, to Thomas Watson-Wentworth's destruction of the Gascoignes' family archive in 1728.<sup>5</sup> However, this thesis does not adopt an anthropological or sociological framework, nor does it assess the associations of the family through network analysis.

To provide such an in-depth assessment of more than 234 individuals over almost three centuries would be a thesis in itself. Instead this chapter will adopt a framework similar to the gentry studies of the previous century – including Christine Carpenter, Susan Wright, Peter Fleming, Nigel Saul and Simon Walker – whereby case studies are utilised to provide examples of gentry associations involving the Gascoigne family.<sup>6</sup> These case studies will be used to highlight the composition of the Gascoignes' inner circles and the common influences on the family's identity. They will also enable

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<sup>4</sup> D. O'Hara, 'Ruled by my Friends: Aspects of Marriage in the Diocese of Canterbury, c. 1540-1570', *Continuity and Change* 6:1 (1991), 9; C. Levi-Strauss, *Introduction to the work of Marcel Mauss*, translated by F. Baker (London, 1987); A. Jenkins, *The Social Theory of Claude Levi-Strauss* (London, 1979); B. J. Hamblen, 'Communities of the Hinterland', 14; C. Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community in Medieval England', *Journal of British Studies* 33:4 (1994), 378-380.

<sup>5</sup> See the Introduction of this thesis, 12-34.

<sup>6</sup> Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*; Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community'; Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry*; P. W. Fleming, 'Charity, Faith and the Gentry of Kent, 1422-1529', in A. J. Pollard (ed.) *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History* (Gloucester, 1984), 36-58; P. W. Fleming, 'The Character and Private Concerns of the Gentry of Kent' (University of Wales PhD Thesis, 1985); N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981); Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*; S. Walker, 'Sir Richard Abberbury (c. 1330-1399) and his kinsmen: the rise and fall of a gentry family', in S. Walker (ed.), *Political Culture in Later Medieval England* (Manchester, 2006), 39-67.

engagement with questions and conclusions raised by historiography elsewhere particularly regarding the importance of geography and community in marriage, and the significance of cultural networks and aristocratic affinities. Furthermore, these case studies will demonstrate several criteria used to determine the nature of social associations - frequency, duration, type of interaction - to highlight the associations the Gascoigne family had with other regional gentry families during the late medieval and Tudor periods. Singular short-term interactions, such as with famed London mayor Richard Whittington, will be excluded, despite providing a flavour of the social milieu.<sup>7</sup> To summarise then, this thesis will examine the social networks and associations of the Gascoigne family to uncover the complexity and fluidity of such relationships, as well as how these relationships would affect the family's identities.

Prior to such an examination, a historiographical context should be provided. Reference will be given to the county community or, in more general terms, the influences from topographical, geographical, or administrative factors on social groupings. The definition and composition of the county community has been a matter of contention among academics. J. R. Maddicott's argument that the fourteenth-century shire should be treated as a single community encouraged much discussion over the degree of influence local administrative factors had upon gentry networks.<sup>8</sup> The county community is the term used to describe the gentry families within a county (or administrative district), who shared identifying characteristics; their landholdings were focused in a county which also acted as the focus of their administrative or political responsibilities.<sup>9</sup> Examinations of such interactions have traditionally excluded private aspects of the gentry's identity and lifestyles; including their marriages, kinship groups, cultural associations and shared experiences. This is because it has often been assumed that the sporadic and piece-meal evidence of the gentry's private concerns do little to illuminate historical understandings of the gentry.<sup>10</sup> However, the restriction of social bonds and networks to the administrative county has received significant opposition. Jonathan Mackman and Michael Bennett, for example, argued that the county did little to

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<sup>7</sup> WYL GC/F/5/1/13. Nicholas Gascoigne purchased a piece of land in Pendley (near Tring) from Richard Whittington in 1403.

<sup>8</sup> J. R. Maddicott, 'The County Community and the Making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth Century England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> Series, 28 (1978), 27-43; J. R. Maddicott, 'Parliament and the Constituencies, 1272-1377' in R. G. Davies and J. H. Denton (eds.) *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (Manchester, 1981), 61-87.

<sup>9</sup> Fleming, 'The Character and Private Concerns of the Gentry of Kent', 1.

<sup>10</sup> Fleming, 'The Character and Private Concerns of the Gentry of Kent', 1; Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, V; J. S. Garrison, *Friendship and Queer Theory in the Renaissance: Gender and Sexuality in Early Modern England* (London, 2014), xxv.

hinder social ties.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore Wright, in her examination of the Derbyshire gentry, concluded that there was no coherent social group active within the county during the fifteenth century, and Carpenter dismissed the concept of the 'county community' entirely, preferring topographical features as influences that divided communities.<sup>12</sup> More recently Carpenter went further and remarked that historians could 'stop wasting time by looking for the chimera of communities' and instead should focus on the issues that the term has become shorthand for.<sup>13</sup> Specifically, Carpenter noted identity: how the gentry saw themselves, and how, likewise, they were perceived. Alongside other historians including Michael Hicks, Carpenter has supported the pervasiveness of magnate retinues and affinities in the creation of communities. This will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.<sup>14</sup> However, Walker rationalised that the two arguments were not mutually exclusive, as importance of the topographical or geographical community does not deny the significance of magnate lordship.<sup>15</sup>

Examinations of Yorkshire have drawn conclusions markedly different from those mentioned above. Due to the sheer size and topography of Yorkshire - the West Riding itself was larger than most counties in England - Anthony Pollard, Carol Arnold and Mark Punshon have all concluded that it would be more prudent to describe Yorkshire communities, where applicable, as being limited to a region, a district, or a parish.<sup>16</sup> Pollard, for example, discussed both the regional identities of the north-east of England and the smaller socio-political community in Richmondshire, and argued that affinities and magnate retinues had a significant influence on the gentry resident in those areas.<sup>17</sup> Punshon and Arnold have assessed the West Riding as a whole, but have argued for the importance of smaller neighbourhoods united by local administration, marriage, affinities and topography and the distribution of population within the smaller parish districts.<sup>18</sup> Arnold went so far as to argue that the extreme nature of the topography in

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<sup>11</sup> J. S. Mackman, 'The Lincolnshire Gentry and the Wars of the Roses' (University of York DPhil, 1999), 13; M. J. Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism* (Cambridge, 1983); Payling, *Political Society*.

<sup>12</sup> Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry*; Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*.

<sup>13</sup> Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community', 378-380.

<sup>14</sup> C. Carpenter, 'The Beauchamp Affinity: A Study of Bastard Feudalism at Work', *English Historical Review*, 95:376 (1980) 514-532; M. Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism* (London, 1995); Arvanigian, 'The Nevilles and the Political Establishment'; B. Coward, *The Stanleys, Lord Stanley and Earls of Derby, 1385-1672* (1983); W. H. Dunham, 'Lord Hastings' Indentured Retainers, 1461-1483' *Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 34 (1995).

<sup>15</sup> Walker (ed.), *Political Culture in Later Medieval England*, 69.

<sup>16</sup> Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community of Gentry', 50-59; *WR*, I, 99-109; *PS*, 63-74.

<sup>17</sup> Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community', 37-59; Pollard, *North-Eastern England*.

<sup>18</sup> *PS*, 70-78; *WR*, I, 100-110.

the West Riding effectively divided the county into regions between which there was little to no contact.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Punshon argued that gentry society in the West Riding was centred upon five districts, all of which were centres of noble lordship.<sup>20</sup> Although contact between the districts was often limited for lesser gentry, or emergent gentry families, Punshon argued that this was not the case for the greater families of the county. However, Punshon concluded that gentry marriage in the West Riding of Yorkshire tended to remain within these smaller areas, and suggested that noble lordship and locality were influential factors.

This chapter seeks to challenge assertions made concerning the prevalence of the county community and the importance of the retinue in historiography. Instead it will suggest that an examination of the Gascoigne family's associations, and kin groups reveal that to refer to a single influence upon the composition of these networks would be wholly wrong. Furthermore, by examining aspects of the private and public concerns of the gentry - marriage, lordship and affinity, parliament, the judicial bench, and cultural exchange – it will be shown that the associations of the gentry should not be described as bound by either a county or noble family. These factors, at least in the case of the Gascoigne family, were a means through which to view these networks in action, rather than an over-powering influence upon them. The networks of the Gascoigne family reveal not a single county community but *numerous* over-lapping communities, united by kinship, memory, shared experiences and culture. These communities often interacted and could act in unison when the need arose, but were ultimately a conglomeration of family, wider-kin, personal bonds and inherited relations. Moreover, these relationships were fluid and adaptable, and would adjust per specific pressures.

### Marriage

The first influence on Gascoigne social associations discussed in this chapter is the role of marriage. To the men and women of medieval Europe, marriage was considered a rite of passage; it was the ascension to adulthood and the casting off of adolescent immaturity.<sup>21</sup> At the 1299 Council of Venice it was decreed that young men and women (beneath the ages of twenty and thirteen respectively) could only claim to be adults if they were married.<sup>22</sup> For landholding families in medieval England it also provided the opportunity for social advancement, political alliances and wealth,

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<sup>19</sup> *WR*, I, 105.

<sup>20</sup> *PS*, 74.

<sup>21</sup> D. Youngs, *The Life Cycle in Western Europe, c. 1300-1500* (Manchester, 2006), 131.

<sup>22</sup> Youngs, *Life Cycle*, 132.

particularly if the marriage involved an heir or heiress.<sup>23</sup> The bulk of a family's resources were in land and the rights provided by marriage (or from a ward-ship) were a means through which landholders could profit.<sup>24</sup>

Marriage negotiations were a public affair: neighbours, family, and close associates would often take part and would, if the need arose, prolong the encounter to protect the interest of the families involved. Evidence from these negotiations may provide some insight into the Gascoigne family's associations. The first case study refers to the negotiations for a marriage between Thomas Gascoigne<sup>99</sup> (d. c. 1509) and Elizabeth Southall in the 1470s.<sup>25</sup> Although these negotiations were ultimately unsuccessful (falling apart shortly after the death of Thomas' father, William Gascoigne I<sub>52</sub> of Lasingcroft [d. 1476]), it is still possible to determine who was involved in the negotiations: Sir John Pilkington, John Lacy of Cromwellbotham and John Woodruff of Woolley represented the Southall family, whilst Sir William Stapleton of Wighill (d. 1503), Thomas' uncle, Richard Gascoigne<sup>58</sup> (fl. 1450s), and Nicholas More represented the Gascoigne family.<sup>26</sup> Stapleton and More were close associates of William Gascoigne I of Lasingcroft as both were named as executors of his will and trustees of his estate.<sup>27</sup>

Shortly before his death, William I<sub>52</sub> of Lasingcroft passed the manor of Lasingcroft to his four trustees - the other two being John Vavasour of Newton (d. 1502) and William Scargill. They held the estate until after his death, when they then bestowed it to William I's son and heir, William Gascoigne II<sup>97</sup> of Lasingcroft (d. 1521). They also ensured that lands in Mirfield, Parlington and Lotherton, which had belonged to William I's mother Isabel<sup>27</sup>, remained with the family, and that 200 marks from those lands were reserved for the marriages of William I's daughters.<sup>28</sup> Stapleton and More were clearly included among a group of men trusted by William Gascoigne I; both in regards to carrying out his wishes after his death, and to engage in marriage negotiations for his son. Furthermore, neither Stapleton nor More benefited from William Gascoigne I's will: bequests were made to Sir Henry Vavasour of Hazlewood (d. 1460), his brother, Richard

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<sup>23</sup> Payling, 'Social Mobility, Demographic Change, and Landed Society', 51-73; Payling, 'The Economics of Marriage', 413-429.

<sup>24</sup> F. R. H. Du Boulay, *An Age of Ambition: English Society in the Late Middle Ages* (New York, 1970), 92.

<sup>25</sup> Borthwick Institute, C. F. 345.

<sup>26</sup> *WR*, I, 108-109, noted that Lacy, Woodruff, Gascoigne, and More were all gentlemen, whilst Pilkington and Stapleton were knights.

<sup>27</sup> WYL GC/F5/1, f. 20.

<sup>28</sup> WYL GC/F5/1, f. 20; Stapleton, *Plumpton Correspondence*, 176-177.

Gascoigne<sup>58</sup>, William Scargill, and Mary<sup>101</sup>, his daughter.<sup>29</sup>

The evidence discussed above suggests that the Gascoignes of Lasingcroft relied upon a small number of families at that time: Vavasour, Stapleton, More and Scargill could be included as members of William I's inner circle. These families were all related to the Gascoignes in some way. Sir Henry Vavasour<sup>81</sup> (d. 1460) was the second husband of Joan Gascoigne<sup>80</sup>, a daughter of Sir William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> of Gawthorpe (d. c. 1465); Scargill<sup>86</sup> married Margaret<sup>85</sup>, another daughter of William III of Gawthorpe; and Nicholas More was a close relative of John More<sup>65</sup>, who married Joan Gascoigne<sup>64</sup> of Lasingcroft.<sup>30</sup> The fact that the individuals involved in the negotiations of Thomas Gascoigne's marriage were family and wider kin is significant. These were the individuals best suited to understanding either the potential bride or groom, but they also had some degree of knowledge about the family they represented. Moreover, that understanding of the family they represented must have developed from a protracted relationship with the family, and built upon shared memories and experiences on a personal level.

The importance of family in marriage is again visible through the wedding ceremony itself. A prime example of this is the clandestine wedding ceremony of William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> (d. c. 1465) to Margaret Clarell<sup>35</sup> in 1426; the result of which was the brief excommunication of those involved. The reason for the excommunication appears to be that it took place in an un-consecrated place without the reading of banns, yet it presents historians with a unique insight into those present at the marriage ceremony.<sup>31</sup> The Chaplain Thomas Clarell (a kinsman of Margaret) was excommunicated, as was Thomas Clarell (Margaret's father), John Mauleverer, Robert Clarell and Alice Povey.<sup>32</sup> Their excommunication was short-lived, and by early February 1426 John Attlane, the Rector of Rawmarsh (the Clarell's home parish), and William Bramley, Rector of All Saints' Pavement, York, were given permission to return them to the fold.<sup>33</sup> Given the noticeable absence of Gascoigne family members it appears that the marriage was kept a secret

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<sup>29</sup> WYL GC/F5/1, f. 20-21; William Scargill is likely to be the son of the William Scargill who featured in the will of Richard Gascoigne of Hunslet (d. 1422). *Test. Ebor.*, IV, 403. Vavasour received a fat cow worth 10s; Richard Gascoigne, 13s 4d; Scargill 6s 8d; and Mary, a gown worth 9s.

<sup>30</sup> Stapleton, *Plumpton Correspondence*, 176-177.

<sup>31</sup> S. J. Payling, 'Sir William Gascoigne' in L. Clark (ed.) *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons* (forthcoming, c. 2017); I am grateful to the trustees of the History of Parliament for permission to cite this work.

<sup>32</sup> *Test. Ebor.*, IV, 325. Thomas Clarell, the father, featured in the will of James Gascoigne (d. 1435). See TNA C 139/68/17 and C 139/73/6.

<sup>33</sup> J. W. Kirby (ed.) *The York Sede Vacante Register, 1423-1426: A Calendar* (York, 2009), 88-89. It is unclear why William Bramley was given permission to receive the family back to the fold.

from the Gascoignes themselves, and thus it seems plausible that the consternation concerning the marriage stemmed from the family's disapproval of the match. This may be supported by the absence of Gascoigne-Clarell heraldry from Richard Gascoigne's (d. 1661) drawings of a heraldic shield, at one time located in the church of Barwick-in-Elmet.<sup>34</sup> However, Gascoigne-Clarell heraldry is abundant in Henry Johnston's records of Gawthorpe manor from the seventeenth century, which is illustrative of a period of renovation by Margaret Gascoigne and Thomas Wentworth.<sup>35</sup>

To digress briefly, plausible reasons for the disapproval of the marriage may be suggested. Firstly, Margaret Clarell<sup>35</sup> had been twice-widowed. Secondly, although she brought considerable estates to the marriage, she was only the daughter of an esquire.<sup>36</sup> The Clarells of Aldwark were Lancastrian associates and were part of a small group of gentry families near Conisborough (WR), which included the Fitzwilliams of Wadworth and the Wentworths of West Bretton; none of whom were particularly influential or prominent in Yorkshire affairs at that time.<sup>37</sup> Whilst Simon Payling remarked that the two were social equals, some evidence indicates subtle differences.<sup>38</sup> William III<sup>34</sup> (d. c. 1465) was the son, and grandson, of knights, and thus there would have been some expectation for him to be knighted; whereas Thomas Clarell was an esquire who, despite an active career, refused to take up the mantle of knighthood on multiple occasions (presumably due to his relatively modest estates).<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, William III had only recently come of age - the age of Margaret is unknown - and his patrimony was burdened by the jointure of his mother, Joan Wyman<sup>15</sup>, and step-grandmother, Joan Pickering<sup>6</sup>. Although he had gained a portion of his estate by Easter 1423, he would not regain his inheritance in its entirety until the early 1430s.<sup>40</sup> This enabled him to attain his knighthood and may have increased the number of marriage opportunities open to him.<sup>41</sup> It is arguable, then, that the Gascoigne family viewed the marriage to Margaret Clarell as beneath the status of the family, and sought a marriage with a knightly family rather than with a family from the lesser gentry; even though the bride was a wealthy

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<sup>34</sup> WYL GC/F5/1; See too, F. Colman, *A History of the Parish of Barwick-in-Elmet* (Leeds, 1910), 47. There appears to be little evidence as to when the heraldic device was installed in the church of Barwick-in-Elmet, although it was present by the late sixteenth century.

<sup>35</sup> Bodleian Library, N. Johnston, MSS Tops. Yorks. C13, ff. 333-344.

<sup>36</sup> Once the ceremony had been 'accepted' Gascoigne III settled the manor of Burghwallis on his wife, as her jointure. See CP 25 (1) 280/155/42.

<sup>37</sup> *PS*, 44.

<sup>38</sup> Payling, 'Sir William Gascoigne'.

<sup>39</sup> *PS*, 249.

<sup>40</sup> *Test. Ebor.*, IV, 394; CP 40/658, rot. 133.

<sup>41</sup> Payling, 'Sir William Gascoigne'; WYL GC/F5/1, f. 101.

widow. Those who attended the secret wedding were likely to be close associates of the bride and groom. This therefore allows for some insight into their personal relationships. Three of the five individuals mentioned in the marriage of William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> were Clarells; only John Mauleverer (d. 1451) and Alice Povey do not have any familial link to the Gascoigne family. It is likely that Mauleverer was the same John who granted the manor of Bramham to Nostell Convent, Yorkshire, in 1408 alongside his brother Robert (c. 1372 - 1443), John Amyas, and William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419), Nicholas Gascoigne<sup>7</sup> (d. 1427) and Richard Gascoigne<sup>9</sup> (d. 1423).<sup>42</sup> If this is the case then it seems likely that the Mauleverer family had some form of close relationship with the Gascoignes. This is further supported by the fact that the Wothersome branch of the Mauleverer family resided in the parish of Barwick-in-Elmet alongside the Gascoignes of Lasingcroft, and less than ten miles from the Gawthorpe estate.<sup>43</sup> Given the nature of the marriage, it could be supposed that Povey and Mauleverer were either servants or close associates of William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> or Margaret Clarell<sup>35</sup>.

The marriages of heiresses, and to a lesser extent widows, could provide opportunities for an examination of gentry associations. As J. C. Holt remarked, 'few maidens at their betrothal were heirs apparent. Some were heirs presumptive. All were heirs potential.'<sup>44</sup> Some families went to great lengths in order to provide their daughters with attractive dowries. Common methods used were legacies and other financial incentives. These legacies and dowries grant insight to the social connections of the medieval gentry, as it would be wrong to fully attribute such bequests to social expectations. William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> of Gawthorpe (c. 1350 - 1419) left considerable amounts of wealth to his daughter, but also bequeathed 100 marks to his niece Joan<sup>33</sup> and £40 to the youngest daughter of Nicholas I<sub>7</sub> (d. 1427).<sup>45</sup> Similarly, Elizabeth Gascoigne<sup>141</sup> was given £66 13s 4d towards her marriage by her uncle Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland (d. 1461), whilst John Heton paid 40 marks towards the marriage of his sister Isabel Heton<sup>27</sup> to John Gascoigne<sup>28</sup> (d. 1445).<sup>46</sup> Such amounts were not unusual. Carol Arnold has shown that between 1437 and 1509 the West Riding gentry paid between £26 13s 4d and £266 13s 4d for a marriage.<sup>47</sup> Sir Ninian Markenfield (d. 1497), the father-in-law of Dorothy Gascoigne<sup>147</sup>, set aside £333 6s 8d for his daughter in his

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<sup>42</sup> TNA C 43/439/8.

<sup>43</sup> *PS*, 261.

<sup>44</sup> J. C. Holt, 'Feudal Society and the Family in Early Medieval England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> series, 32 (1982), 6.

<sup>45</sup> *Test. Ebor.*, I, 390-395.

<sup>46</sup> *Test. Ebor.*, III, 243; WYL GC/F5/1, f. 15.

<sup>47</sup> *WR*, I, 99.

will.<sup>48</sup> However, not all marriage agreements were honoured. William Gascoigne I<sub>93</sub> of Cardington (d. 1540) was sued for failing to fulfil the contract of marriage of Lewis Dyve, who had married the daughter of Elizabeth Gascoigne, Mary Strickland.<sup>49</sup> Similarly, Sir William Plumpton defaulted on the agreed terms for the marriage of heiresses Margaret and Elizabeth Plumpton to Brain Roucliffe and Henry Southall, despite having received 400 marks and £333 respectively for the marriages in 1463.<sup>50</sup> In this case Plumpton continued to delay proceedings until he could remarry and have a son, thereby nullifying Margaret and Elizabeth as heiresses.<sup>51</sup>

As well as a dowry, marriages could often result in property disputes as women often had weak claims to their family's land-holdings, which were then pursued by their husband. In the case of the marriage between Nicholas Gascoigne<sub>7</sub> (d. 1426) to Mary Clitherow<sub>8</sub> the dispute arose over Nicholas's pursuit of the Tempest inheritance; of interest to Nicholas was the manor of Studley which was the subject of contested ownership for nearly a decade. In a series of charters between the Tempest family and the Gascoignes - the last of which was in 1405 - the history of the estate's ownership is detailed, but also the individuals involved in the contest are identified; including, Isabel Tempest, the mother-in-law of Mary, her son William Tempest (d. c. 1440), Richard Gascoigne<sub>9</sub>, William I<sub>4</sub> of Gawthorpe, William Ledes (d. c. 1423), Robert Linley, William Frank, Nicholas Frank, and Robert Bolton.<sup>52</sup> William Ledes appears to have been the son of Robert Ledes of Skipton, an associate of William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419).<sup>53</sup> Robert Bolton was a clerk active in Yorkshire in the early 1400s.<sup>54</sup> William and Nicholas Frank were cousins to the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe through the marriage of William Gascoigne Senior<sub>1</sub> to Agnes Frank<sub>2</sub>, and were neighbours to the Gawthorpe estate, with a residence

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<sup>48</sup> *WR*, I, 99; Borthwick Institute York, probate register, 5 f. 498.

<sup>49</sup> N. M. Fuidge, 'Gascoigne, Sir William (by 1485-1540)' of Cardington, Beds.' in *HOP*, [www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-william-1485-1540](http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-william-1485-1540), accessed 29/04/2016. It is unclear who the Elizabeth Gascoigne mentioned is. It is possible that it was William I's great-granddaughter but there is no evidence to confirm this.

<sup>50</sup> J. K. Kirby (ed.) *The Plumpton Letters and Papers* (Cambridge, 1996), 8.

<sup>51</sup> The son of William Plumpton was Sir Robert Plumpton [112] who married Agnes Gascoigne [111].

<sup>52</sup> *WYL GC/F5/1*, ff. 7, 10, 13, 14; *CP 25/1/279/150*, no. 29; Nicholas and Mary gained £5 from the manor of Studley after renouncing their claim on the Tempest inheritance in 1405.

<sup>53</sup> Robert Ledes served on a series of royal commissions, *CPR 1374-1377*, 324 (with John Aske and Roger de Fulthorpe, justice); *CPR 1381-1385*, 414 (with John Malghom), 585 (with William Ryther, William Gascoigne, William Mowbray, John Woodruff and John Depeden), 593 (with William Mowbray, Richard Basy, and John Depeden).

<sup>54</sup> See *CP 25/1/279/150*, nos. 6, 28, 34.

at Alwoodley.<sup>55</sup> Little information survives to detail the life of Robert Linley or his connection to the Gascoigne family, however, considering that William I<sub>4</sub>, Richard<sub>9</sub>, and Nicholas<sub>7</sub> all had legal expertise, as did William Ledes (a JP of Ripon), then it is entirely plausible that Linley also had some form of legal expertise or local knowledge. This is especially plausible given the family's reliance upon small family circles, and could suggest that such tendencies were relinquished in favour of those who were legally trained, if the situation required it.<sup>56</sup> Conversely, it is possible that these individuals had no contact with the Gascoigne family and were legal representation for the Tempests. A further point of interest for this group of associations was an instance in 1408 when William I<sub>4</sub> presided in judgement over a case in Common Pleas between William Ledes and Thomas Markenfield, on the one hand, and Thomas Coleworth, draper, on the other. Coleworth argued that Ledes and Markenfield prevented the restitution of debts accrued by a Richard Ledes during his tenure as butler for Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmorland. William I<sub>4</sub> found in favour of Ledes and the case was dismissed.<sup>57</sup>

The section above has utilised several case studies surrounding marriage to assess the Gascoigne family's social circles. It appears to be the case that the Gascoigne family relied upon kin and close associations, both in the negotiation of marriage and in the ceremony. This is not unexpected. It is unlikely that the Gascoigne family would select individuals who did not know the family's circumstances, the wishes of the bride or groom, or who they did not trust enough to represent the family. Additionally, it is unlikely that William III and Margaret Clarell would have invited those to whom they did not have some form of close relationship to their secret wedding ceremony. However, the section also demonstrated that there were variables to this. When it came to the dower or landed interests surrounding the marriage, the family appears to have been willing to substitute close associates and kin who could represent their interests with professional lawyers or individuals with expertise in law. This could indicate a considerable awareness as to the limitations of relying upon a small group of individuals, and highlight the adaptability of gentry families to ensure their interests were maintained. The next section will survey broader trends. Mark Punshon and Carol Arnold have argued that in the West Riding of Yorkshire geographical proximity played a significant role in the creation of networks and had a measurable impact upon gentry

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<sup>55</sup> It is not certain what their relation to Agnes was at that time, but it appears that she was their aunt given Glover's assessment of the family. However, as Glover is the only visitation that deals with the Franks of Alwoodley, this is tenuous. See, R. Glover, *Visitation of Yorkshire in the Year 1563 and 1564* (London, 1881) for more details.

<sup>56</sup> *CCR 1396-1399*, 409-412.

<sup>57</sup> CP 40/590, rot. 231d.

marriages.<sup>58</sup> If marriages within the local neighbourhood were favoured for their ability to foster and strengthen social ties, then it seems likely that the Gascoignes would have attempted to secure marriages near to the prominent family estates of Gawthorpe and Lasingcroft. If this is the case, then mapping the traceable marriages may allow for a visual demonstration of such activity. For such an examination, the marriages of the Gascoigne family will be discussed by branch and gender. Between *c.* 1309 and 1592 there are 78 marriages between the Gascoignes and other families, where both spouses are identifiable. Of these 78 marriages, 38 refer to husbands for Gascoigne women – i.e. those who had the maiden name Gascoigne – whilst 40 refer to wives for Gascoigne men. To be able to spatially assess these marriages it is imperative that the marriage partner can be traced to a specific location; i.e. their family's estates (if female) or their own personal manor (if male). This has only been possible for 34 of the 38 men and 36 of the 40 women.<sup>59</sup> Of these locations 29 and 34 respectively are in Yorkshire.<sup>60</sup> For this examination, the Yorkshire marriages will be focused upon. Moreover, several lesser branches of the Gascoigne family, including Hunslet, Burnby, Micklefield and Thorp-on-the-Hill, have only two or three traceable marriages, which makes an assessment of marriage trends impossible. Thus, the marriage partners assessed are the 34 of Gawthorpe (16 male and 18 female) and 17 of Lasingcroft (8 male and 9 female).

The first set of marriages discussed (see Map 3.5) are those of female spouses for Gascoigne men.<sup>61</sup> It shows there was a considerable spread of marriages across the eastern part of the West Riding, where population density was highest. Only one family was based in the North Riding of Yorkshire; namely the Mowbrays<sup>5</sup>, whilst two were based in the East Riding; Pickering<sup>6</sup> and Boynton<sup>198</sup>. A majority were in the West Riding and seem to have no correlation or trend. It is, however, possible to discern two clusters. The first cluster was centred on the Gascoigne manor of Gawthorpe, whilst the second appears to have been close to the Gascoigne manors of Burghwallis and Wood Hall (near Womersley). These were centres of authority for the Gascoigne family. This was particularly true for the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe, as Wood Hall was where the heir apparent resided prior to his inheritance of Gawthorpe. Again, a considerable spread can

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<sup>58</sup> *WR*, I, 14-16; *PS*, 65-66.

<sup>59</sup> The untraceable individuals are Mary Stokeley (175), Elizabeth West (160), Joan Ilson (165), Margaret Wright (195), Michael Thompson (179), Geoffrey Barnby (177), Walter Cuny (102) and John Newcome (187).

<sup>60</sup> Those individuals not resident in Yorkshire were Edward Fauconbridge (41) of Nottinghamshire; Hamon Sutton (87), Alicia Frognall (136), and George Talboys (142) of Lincolnshire; Ralph, Lord Ogle (144) of Northumberland; Leonard West (223) of Devon; and Elizabeth Singleton (157) of Suffolk.

<sup>61</sup> See pages 291-297 of this thesis for the maps used in this discussion.

be seen in the marriages of male spouses to Gascoigne women (see Map 3.6). Only the families of Constable<sup>17</sup>, and Wastenys<sup>42</sup> had their principal estates in the East Riding, whilst only a single family, the Hastings<sup>83</sup> family of Slingsby, had their principal estates in the North Riding. Similar clusters can be discerned, particularly around Pontefract, Wakefield and Leeds, yet there appears to be no overall pattern or trend.

An examination of both the male and female spouses of the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe (Map 3.7) reveal that most marriage partners were based in the West Riding. The cluster around the principal estates of Gawthorpe and Wood Hall is particularly notable. Whilst it may be possible that the seeking of marriage partners in those areas was deliberate, so the Gascoigne family had allies close to their familial estates, it seems more likely that these marriages evolved as an effect of meeting local landed families and developing associations with their neighbours. To some degree, a cluster is expected given the population density of some areas of the West Riding.<sup>62</sup>

It may be possible to speculate further and suggest that gender roles may have played a part. Marriage negotiations were completed by the family on behalf of the bride and groom. The desire of gentry families to acquire heiresses suggests that men (or the family of the groom), actively sought their spouse.<sup>63</sup> Thus, the networks of their family played a role, particularly the networks of the father, as can be seen through the marriage negotiations for Thomas Gascoigne outlined above. This meant that the wider a family's networks, the further they could reach to find potential spouses. See, for example, the marriages to the families of Pickering and Mowbray in areas where William I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419) had no discernible landholdings. It seems likely that these marriages came about because the social networks of each family overlapped in some way, even if the exact interaction is no longer apparent. Take, for an additional example, the marriage of Margaret Gascoigne<sup>113</sup> to Sir Christopher Ward<sup>114</sup> of Givendale (c. 1453 - d. 1521). Receipts of fees show that in 1442, William Plumpton II, John Tempest and Nicholas Ward (Christopher's father) were all retained by the Earldom of Northumberland.<sup>64</sup> It could be argued therefore that the marriage came about due to Ward's network with the aforementioned, who were also associates of the Gascoigne family at that time.

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<sup>62</sup> J. Thirsk (ed.), *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, 1348-1500*, III (Cambridge, 1991); R. S. Schofield, 'The Geographical Distribution of Wealth in England, 1334-1649', *ECHR*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Series, XVIII (1965), 483-510; M. L. Faull and S. A. Moorhouse (ed.), *West Yorkshire: An Archaeology Survey to 1500*, 3 vols. (Wakefield, 1981), particularly volumes two and three. See too, R. B. Dobson, 'Yorkshire Towns in the Late Fourteenth Century', *Publications of the Thoresby Society*, 59 (1983), 4.

<sup>63</sup> Payling, 'The Economics of Marriage', notes the benefits of securing an heiress.

<sup>64</sup> Bean, *Estates of the Percy Family*, 92; *PS*, 35.

This is not to argue that women had no agency regarding their choice of marriage partner, and this interpretation is not necessarily borne out in the evidence, yet it is possible that women were not just passive or only sought, but sought themselves. For example, the marriages for Gascoigne women were considerably more clustered than those of the male Gascoignes of Gawthorpe which could be due to the type of interactions they had. Men could draw on career networks that women could not. Many associations of Gascoigne women were likely to have been closer to the Gascoigne estates, to families that the Gascoigne family interacted with more frequently, or even on a day-to-day basis.

A different picture can be seen for the marriages of the Lasingcroft branch of the Gascoigne family. For the marriages for Gascoigne men (see Map. 3.8), it is apparent that most spouses came from estates between the rivers Aire and Wharfe. Whilst each is not especially far from Lasingcroft manor, the same close clustering is not as clear. What is particularly noteworthy is the absence of marriage partners from the East and North Ridings. Of the marriages for Gascoigne women (see Map 3.9), there is no clustering at all. The spouses come from across Yorkshire. Whilst a majority come from across the West Riding, the Clerveaux family of Croft and the St. Quintin's of Harpam were based in the North and East Riding respectively. This distribution would argue against the premise put forward above, whereby women most likely found husbands through their more localised networks. To reiterate the sentiments of the previous paragraph, this is not to suggest that women necessarily sought their own husbands, nor does it suggest they never did so either, it is simply one interpretation of the evidence available. Moreover, it seems to argue against Punshon and Arnold's argument that the parish was a key influence in acquisition of marriage partners for the gentry as a social group.<sup>65</sup> However, it should be noted that both considered a significantly larger number of gentry, including minor and lesser gentry, and it is possible the significance of the parish is greater the further one goes down the social scale. The branches of the Gascoigne family for whom it is possible to trace marriages are knightly and esqurial families and thus may tilt the findings in favour of more prominent gentry families. Both Punshon and Arnold further argued that a family of higher status would be more likely to traverse boundaries and find spouses further afield.<sup>66</sup> The Gascoignes of Gawthorpe were a knightly family whilst the Lasingcroft branch were esquires. Both families have marriage partners located near to the branch's principal estates, as well as marriages considerably further afield. This would suggest that the boundaries of marriage partners were fluid, and that families of different ranks could traverse those boundaries for different reasons.

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<sup>65</sup> *PS*, 35-36; *WR*, I, 45.

<sup>66</sup> *PS*, 74-75; *WR*, I, 45-46.

Finally, a consideration of all Gascoigne spouses (Map 3.11) reveals that there were six marriages in the East Riding of Yorkshire between c. 1309 and 1592. These were to the families of Constable<sup>17</sup>, St. Quintin<sup>23</sup>, Routh<sup>79</sup>, Pickering<sup>6</sup>, Wastenys<sup>42</sup> and Boynton<sup>198</sup>. Additionally, only four spouses were traceable to the North Riding; Clervaux<sup>63</sup>, Mowbray<sup>5</sup>, Hastings<sup>83</sup>, and Stillington<sup>153</sup>. Of those marriages, only two are to lesser branches of the Gascoigne family; Alice Routh married Ralph Gascoigne of Burnby<sup>78</sup>, whilst Dorothy Stillington married William Gascoigne<sup>152</sup> of Thorp-on-the-Hill. The Burnby branch were based in the West Riding and whilst they did not share a parish with the Routh family, they lived relatively close-by and thus could have had overlapping localised networks. The Gascoignes of Thorp-on-the-Hill, however, lived south of Leeds in the West Riding, and thus a marriage connection to a family to the north of York in the North Riding seems unusual. The Thorp-on-the-Hill Gascoignes were not wealthy, nor did they have traceable careers which would have seen them travel. Unfortunately, no evidence of marriage negotiations survives to assess this arrangement further, yet it is apparent that it was not only the wealthiest and most influential families who could traverse boundaries in the search for a spouse.

The search for a spouse, therefore, was relatively fluid and could adapt as circumstances changed. Families of different statuses and wealth could traverse parish and county borders relatively freely or could likewise choose to search for a spouse closer to home. Like the aspects of marriage discussed above, the search for a spouse demonstrates the gentry's adaptability to their environments. They could and did use lawyers in lieu of reliable and trustworthy kin when professional expertise was required. Moreover, those marriages to individuals further afield do not indicate a union which bettered their circumstances, and may suggest that personal choice had a role to play. However, with only William III's marriage to Margaret Clarell available as an indicator of personal choice, the role of personal preference is purely speculation.

### Lordship and Affinity

Assessing the late medieval and Tudor gentry's socio-political associations through lordship and affinity is not new. Simon Walker's study on the Lancastrian Affinity prior to Henry Bolingbroke's usurpation in 1399, and Christine Carpenter's assessment of the Beauchamp Affinity are both prime examples of such assessments which examine how service to a particular magnate could influence and foster social

ties.<sup>67</sup> Similarly, prosopographical approaches have often been adopted to discern associations between like-minded groups, including the knights of the chamber of Edward III, Richard II, and Henry IV.<sup>68</sup> By examining the affinities the gentry were part of, as well as their roles within the Lancastrian Affinity and Percy household, it is possible to reveal further evidence of the Gascoignes' associations throughout the late medieval and Tudor period. Moreover, the Gascoignes acted as retainers themselves and maintained one of the larger gentry affinities in Yorkshire during the sixteenth century. An examination of this may provide valuable insight into local society. There were multiple forms which association with a magnate could take; including service as a member of the magnate's household staff, indentured retainers or estate officials. Each had different roles within the household and the wider affinity. Furthermore, each would have developed different social relationships with the magnate, and with the other groups. For instance, household staff, such as the Chamberlain and Steward, would have had a considerably closer relationship to the individual they served when compared to indentured retainers (who were primarily retained for martial roles) and estate officials, such as a Reeve or Bailiff, (whose responsibilities meant that they spent considerable amounts of time travelling between estates).<sup>69</sup> Yet, regardless of the proximity, duration, or type of interaction with the noble in question, all members of the affinity would have built a reciprocal relationship of trust with their employer.

Aside from Thomas Gascoigne<sup>11</sup>, who died young, all of William Gascoigne Senior's<sup>1</sup> sons had some form of relationship with their political superiors. John Gascoigne<sup>3</sup> (d. c. 1393) for example, found a patron in Archbishop Simon Sudbury.<sup>70</sup> William I<sup>4</sup> (d. 1491), Richard<sup>9</sup> (d. 1423) and Nicholas<sup>7</sup> (d. 1427) all served multiple lords throughout their lives. Despite William I being the eldest of the three, it was Richard whose career began first. The network which enabled this career in service had its origins in a military campaign. When Richard accompanied Thomas of Woodstock, Earl of Buckingham, to Brittany in 1380 he did so alongside other Yorkshire gentry (as well as other county gentry) who fought under the command of William Windsor (d. 1384); including John Middleton, Henry Middleton, Thomas Talbot, and Bernard Brocas the

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<sup>67</sup> Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*; Carpenter, 'The Beauchamp Affinity'. See too, Arvanigian, 'The Nevilles and the Political Establishment'; Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism*; Coward, *The Stanleys*; and Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*.

<sup>68</sup> C. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and King's Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance in England, 1360-1413* (Yale, 1986).

<sup>69</sup> Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*, 8.

<sup>70</sup> R. C. Fowler (ed.), *Register of Simon Sudbury, 1362 - 1375* (Canterbury and York Society Series, 1927-8), 38, 118-120.

younger.<sup>71</sup> Given the geographical proximity of these families to one another, it is probable that these individuals were well acquainted prior to the campaign. In fact, it appears likely that Bernard Brocas the younger facilitated the introduction of Richard Gascoigne to Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent. Although the date for this is unknown it was likely to have been between the outbreak of the Peasants' Revolt (June 1381) and late 1384. Holland was obviously impressed by Richard, as he was his choice for Marshal of the Exchequer in November 1384.<sup>72</sup> Yet this relationship developed further and Richard acted as the conduit through which his brothers entered service. He was Holland's attorney at the Exchequer whilst marshal, whereas William I acted as one of the family's counsellors - retained by 1388. Yet, by the end of the century it was Nicholas who had the closest relationship to the family, acting as Steward for the younger Thomas Holland, Duke of Surrey.<sup>73</sup> Whilst Nicholas remained with the Holland family, William I and Richard subsequently found service in the Duchy of Lancaster. The Duchy of Lancaster was the greatest landowner in England aside from the Crown and held extensive estates in Yorkshire and the West Riding.<sup>74</sup> With such extensive holdings the Duchy provided an obvious choice for patronage, especially with the Lancastrian control of the honours of Tickhill and Pontefract. Following the usurpation in 1399 the Crown was in the hands of a King who already commanded a considerable estate, and a lordly affinity.<sup>75</sup> Charles Ross argued that the King had a special advantage in Yorkshire because of the wages and patronage he could dispense.<sup>76</sup> Thus the Duchy of Lancaster would likely create a form of socio-political group within which associations and networks could operate.

Several individuals can be identified as having links to the Gascoigne family, facilitated by their involvement in the Lancastrian affinity. Thomas Pinchbeck and Roger

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<sup>71</sup> TNA E 101/39/7, no. 3, m. 1; from the AHRC-funded database, [www.medievalsolidier.org](http://www.medievalsolidier.org), accessed 12/04/2016. 412 individuals served under William Worcester's captaincy. Many of the men-at-arms were from Northern England but were not limited to Yorkshire.

<sup>72</sup> *CPR 1381-1385*, 482.

<sup>73</sup> Walker (ed.), *Political Culture in Later Medieval England*, 102; *CPR 1381-1385*, 482.

<sup>74</sup> It has been argued that several gentry families in Yorkshire were loyal to the Lancastrians. For example, the 1318 pardons by Edward III to all those affiliated with Thomas earl of Lancaster (*CPR 1317-1321*, 227-235), included the following Yorkshire families: Salveyn, Chaumber, Woodruff, de Lisle, Neville, Mauleverer, Swillington, Stapleton, Everingham, Ward, and Frank. Similarly, see C. Given-Wilson (ed.) *The Chronicles of the Revolution 1397-1400: The Reign of Richard II* (Manchester, 1993), 252-253 which included members of the Swillington, Neville and Gascoigne in the assembled Lancastrian army of 1399. Sir Robert Swillington acted as chamberlain to John of Gaunt. (See DL 42/2, f. 59v; C. Beanlands, 'The Swillingtons of Swillington', *Thoresby Society Miscellanea*, 15 (1909), 204-205; Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*, 26.

<sup>75</sup> H. Castor, *The King, the Crown and the Duchy of Lancaster: Public Authority and Private Power, 1399-1461* (Oxford, 2000), 19.

<sup>76</sup> C. D. Ross, 'The Yorkshire Baronage, 1399-1435' (University of Oxford, DPhil, 1950), v; *PS*, 23.

Fulthorpe, both Justices of the Peace for the Duchy, had demonstrable links with the Gascoigne family. Given that William Skipwith, Robert Swillington, Thomas Skelton, and William Thirning, among others, also acted as justices for the Palatinate of Lancaster, it is reasonable to conclude that they too had some form of professional connection with the Gascoigne family. Beyond Duchy responsibilities, Pinchbeck and Fulthorpe served alongside William Gascoigne I on commissions of the peace.<sup>77</sup> Pinchbeck's career would have established contact with William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> through other means. Firstly, William I's<sub>4</sub> appointment to the judicial circuit (Eastern) was alongside Pinchbeck.<sup>78</sup> Secondly, until Pinchbeck's death he appeared frequently on assize commissions and appointments of gaol delivery, as well as being appointed as legal counsel to John of Gaunt.<sup>79</sup> Given the number of connections between the two, it is likely they had some form of working relationship. However, this does not guarantee that the two individuals had a close relationship, merely that they were capable or had a mutual patron. Similar conclusions can be drawn for other members of the Lancastrian Affinity. Thomas Skelton acted as a trustee alongside William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> of Gawthorpe (d. 1419) and served on commissions of gaol delivery with him. He was also Chief Steward of the Southern Parts of the Duchy of Lancaster and most likely had some form of professional relationship with Richard<sub>9</sub>, who was Chief Steward of the Northern Parts of the Duchy between 1400 and 1407.<sup>80</sup> Similarly, William I<sub>4</sub> and Skelton were involved in a land grant of 1404 which made bequests of land to the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds.<sup>81</sup> Thus it appears that Skelton and Gascoigne had some form of informal relationship. They had numerous forms of interaction over a sustained period, increasingly the probability they were close associates.

However, simply an affiliation with the Duchy of Lancaster did not necessarily mean that they were part of William Gascoigne I's social networks, as William Skipwith demonstrated. Despite being Chief Justice of the Duchy from 1377 and serving on commissions of the peace alongside William Gascoigne I, Skipwith appears to have no

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<sup>77</sup> Thomas Pinchbeck (*CPR 1385-1389*, 545; *CPR 1389-1392*, 60, 136); Roger Fulthorpe (*CPR 1381-1385*, 200, 502; *CPR 1385-1389*, 254). For aspects of Pinchbeck's career, see Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*, 135-7, 192, 195, 201; M. E. Aston, *Thomas Arundel* (Oxford, 1967), 240; *CPR 1388-1392*, 345, 524; Somerville, *The Duchy of Lancaster*, 367, 373, 605, 609; For Fulthorpe, see Somerville, *The Duchy of Lancaster*, 57, 467-468, 471.

<sup>78</sup> *Calendar of the General and Special Assize and General Gaol Delivery Commissions on the Dorses of the Patent Rolls, Richard II 1377-99* (Liechtenstein, 1977), 33.

<sup>79</sup> TNA C 66/325, mm. 26d, 17d, 35d; C 66/326, m. 10d.

<sup>80</sup> CP 25/1/289/55, no. 174; Somerville, *The Duchy of Lancaster*, p. 427; TNA C 66/340 mm. 37d, 27d; C 66/342 mm. 20d., 6d.; C 66/345 m. 25d; C 66/346 m. 15d.

<sup>81</sup> L. S. Woodger, 'Sir Thomas Skelton', *HOP*, [www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/skelton-sir-thomas-1416](http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1386-1421/member/skelton-sir-thomas-1416), accessed 16/04/2016.

personal connection with the Gascoigne family at all.<sup>82</sup> Yet some of the individuals affiliated with the Duchy of Lancaster did have discernible and long-lasting relationships with the Gascoigne family. For example, Sir Robert Swillington (d.1391) had a diverse military career and it seems likely that he served in the same army as Richard Gascoigne<sub>9</sub> in 1380.<sup>83</sup> Locality undoubtedly played a role in the relationship that developed as the manor of Swillington was only *c.* 10 miles to the south of Gawthorpe. Swillington acted as Steward of Pontefract castle, and as senior advisor, personal counsellor and Chamberlain to John of Gaunt.<sup>84</sup> Thus, as with Pinchbeck and Skelton, Swillington interacted with the Gascoigne family in multiple ways, which may have allowed the relationship to flourish. William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> acted as Swillington's executor following his death in 1391 alongside another close associate, John Woodruff.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore it is likely that this relationship led to the marriage of John Gascoigne<sub>76</sub>, William I's great-grandson, and Elizabeth Swillington<sub>77</sub>.

The individuals discussed above reflect just a sample of those for whom the Duchy of Lancaster acted as the conduit through which they interacted with the Gascoigne family. This was a network based upon service and thus most of the relationships the Gascoignes formed were superficial. They were united by their common allegiances (even if temporarily), and their careers. These associations rarely lasted longer than a single generation. For connections that did endure, like those with the Swillington and Middleton families, it seems that locality of residences in the West Riding was a key factor. The lasting nature of some of these relationships was not due to their temporary involvement in the Duchy of Lancaster, or through any other form of service, but their relationships to one another in the West Riding of Yorkshire, as part of a wider gentry community, associated by kinship ties, marriage, and a range of shared experiences.

The same short-term connections can be seen through the social associations of William Gascoigne I<sub>93</sub> of Cardington (d. 1540), William VI's cousin. He had one of the most distinguished careers among the Gascoigne family, with service in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire local administration, as well as service in a number of gentry

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<sup>82</sup> Somerville, *The Duchy of Lancaster*, 468; *CPR 1381-5*, 502; *CPR 1385-9*, 254. Skipwith did, however, have mutual acquaintances. Both Roger Fulthorpe and William Nesfield, and was steward of Pontefract (Walker, 114), replacing William I (who had likewise replaced Sir Robert Swillington).

<sup>83</sup> See Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, 282 for more information on Robert Swillington's military career.

<sup>84</sup> He served as chamberlain (1372, 1376-7, 1383-4), and counsellor (1372, 1373, 1387).

<sup>85</sup> Somerville, *The Duchy of Lancaster*, 375.

households. His political affiliations may help reveal some of his social associations. By the death of Henry VII in 1509, William I<sub>93</sub> already had connections to Richard Grey, Earl of Kent, serving in Grey's household as Receiver.<sup>86</sup> He continued in Grey's service until c. 1524 when William Franklin, Archdeacon and Chancellor of Durham, wrote to Cardinal Thomas Wolsey 'recommend[ing] to his notice Sir William Gascoigne, of Bedfordshire.'<sup>87</sup> Wolsey took notice and a few months later he made William his treasurer.<sup>88</sup> After Wolsey's downfall in 1529, William I<sub>93</sub> found work with Sir John Neville, Lord Latimer.<sup>89</sup> In 1524 he was commissioned, alongside lawyer William Burbank and Thomas Cromwell, to investigate and survey a number of monasteries for the conversion of use to Cardinal's College, Oxford.<sup>90</sup> William I's connections to Wolsey were beneficial as by 1526 he had an annuity of £44 per annum from the Crown.<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, William Gascoigne of Cardington (d. 1540) had interactions with other members of Wolsey's household. In 1527, for instance, he was commissioned to collect Henry VIII's subsidies for the proposed war with France, alongside Thomas Heneage, a groom of Wolsey's chamber.<sup>92</sup> Given his role in the household, it was likely that he was amongst Wolsey's most trusted officials.<sup>93</sup> As Treasurer of Wolsey's household it is likely that he

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<sup>86</sup> *L&P*, 1, 692; C. Burrow, 'Wyatt, Sir Thomas (c.1503-1542)', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30111](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30111), accessed 05/05/16; For more general information, see J. J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (Yale, 1997); C. W. Brooks, *Law, Politics and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2008), 352-384.

<sup>87</sup> *L&P*, 3, 1241. For Wolsey, see C. W. Ferguson, *Naked to mine Enemies: The Life of Cardinal Wolsey* (London, 1958), R. Fiddes, *The Life of Cardinal Wolsey* (London, 1724); J. A. Guy, *The Cardinal's Court: The Impact of Thomas Wolsey in Star Chamber* (Sussex, 1977); P. Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal: The Rise and Fall of Thomas Wolsey* (London, 1990).

<sup>88</sup> *L&P Majesty's Commission*, 1, 145; For Wolsey, see T. W. Cameron, 'The Early Life of Thomas Wolsey', *The English Historical Review*, 3, 11 (1888), 458-477; N. Sammon, 'The Henrician Court During Cardinal Wolsey's Ascendancy, c.1514-1529' (University of Wales PhD Thesis, 1988); W. H. Dunham Jr., 'Wolsey's Rule of the King's Whole Council', *The American Historical Review*, 49, 4 (1944), 644-662; J. S. Block, *Factional Politics and the English Reformation, 1520-1540* (Woodbridge, 1993). Interestingly, John Neville was a northern lord, with estates in Yorkshire. It's significant then, that when Gascoigne's future seems uncertain, that he found recruitment in the household of a northern noble.

<sup>89</sup> Fuidge, 'Gascoigne, Sir William (by 1485-1540)'; For information regarding Wolsey's fall, see: J. Gairdner, 'The Fall of Cardinal Wolsey', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 13 (1899), 75-102; G. W. Bernard, 'The Fall of Wolsey Reconsidered', *Journal of British Studies*, 35, 3 (1996), 277-310.

<sup>90</sup> *L&P*, 4, 432.

<sup>91</sup> *L&P*, 4, 991.

<sup>92</sup> TNA E 179/69/8; N. Lewycky, 'Serving God and King: Cardinal Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks and Early Tudor Government, 1514-1529, with special reference the Archdiocese of York' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2008), 46.

<sup>93</sup> Lewycky, 'Serving God and King', 48. Gostwick appeared in a letter between Gascoigne and Cromwell in 1534 in which he is included in the private discussions of Cromwell and Gascoigne

accompanied Wolsey on his travels, and was presumably present at the Field of Cloth and Gold. It is also possible he travelled with Wolsey to Rome.<sup>94</sup> Yet the relationship with Wolsey appears to have been a professional one, as there is no evidence of any personal relationship. That being said, Henry VIII did turn to Wolsey to convince William Gascoigne VI (d. 1551) not to claim the Earldom of Westmorland, which could suggest some form of personal familiarity with the Gascoigne family.

The relationship William Gascoigne I<sub>93</sub> of Cardington had with Thomas Cromwell is worthy of further discussion. The extent of the 'friendship' between Gascoigne and Cromwell is clear from a letter sent by Gascoigne to Cromwell in August 1527:

To my right heartily and well-beloved friend Mr. Cromwell; one of my lord Cardinal's council, Desires his favour and counsel to [the] bearer, in matters [of] the law; and he will be rewarded. Bearer is a kinsman to a servant of the writer. From my house in Bedfordshire (14 August)

P.S, I heartily thank you for the pain you took for my wine.<sup>95</sup>

The fact that the matter is deemed too personal to write in a letter is an indication of the trust developed within the relationship at this stage. Unfortunately, none of Cromwell's responses survive so the correspondence between these two men is one-sided. Yet, this is not the only instance in which William I relied on Cromwell. In 1532 he wrote 'if he had defamed me to you that I might not take the law against him, I will be wholly at your disposal', after hearing of a court case in York with Robert Gill.<sup>96</sup> The case in question refers to a robbery where a merchant, referred to only as Johnson, was robbed by Robert Gill and when caught claimed that William I was an accomplice. In June 1533, however, the case was not over and William was subpoenaed to appear before Cromwell and the council.<sup>97</sup> The case must have been over by 1537 when he hosted

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over land disputes. Gascoigne claims that Gostwick knows Gascoigne's mind and can speak for him. See *L&P*, 7, 320; C. Coleman and D. Starkey (eds.), *Revolution Reassessed: Revisions in the History of Tudor Government and Administration* (Oxford, 1986).

<sup>94</sup> For more information, see. W. Rockett, 'Wolsey, More and the Unity of Christendom', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*, 35, 1 (2004), 133-153; T. Corcoran, 'Thomas, Cardinal Wolsey, Educator', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 20, 77 (1931), 24-38; J. A. Guy, 'Wolsey, the Council and the Council Courts', *The English Historical Review*, 91, 360 (1976), 481-505; R. L. Woods Jr., 'Politics and Precedent: Wolsey's Parliament of 1523', *Huntingdon Library Quarterly*, 40, 4 (1977), 297-312.

<sup>95</sup> *L&P addenda*, 1. For Cromwell, see G. R. Elton, *Policy and Police: The Enforcement of the Reformation in the age of Thomas Cromwell* (Cambridge, 1972).

<sup>96</sup> *L&P*, 5, 577.

<sup>97</sup> *L&P*, 6, 275. I believe the council in question here is the Star Chamber at York. In Cromwell's Remembrances (*L&P*, 10, 358 (1536) Gascoigne is mentioned among others beside the sum of

Cromwell at his estates in Bedfordshire, and his distant cousin William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> relied upon Cromwell's intervention when Robert Constable rebelled as one of the leaders of the Pilgrimage of Grace alongside Robert Aske and Lord Darcy. Aske was a distant relative of the Gascoigne family.<sup>98</sup>

Again, whilst the career of William Gascoigne I<sup>93</sup> of Cardington (d. 1540) demonstrates a network based upon a career, the connections made were short-lived, and often superficial. Whilst the relationship between him and Thomas Cromwell influenced the life of the former, it had little impact upon the wider Gascoigne family. Even though William I resided in Bedfordshire, he still maintained connections with the West Riding throughout his life, specifically through the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe and the roles of Richard Redman and Henry Saville in the household of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, whose household drew significantly from Yorkshire gentry.<sup>99</sup>

During the late fifteenth century indentured retainers played a more active role in service to their respective households. Michael Hicks has highlighted that the Wars of the Roses was the culmination of the indentured retainer.<sup>100</sup> For the Gascoigne family it may be possible to identify a socio-political network during this period, centred on the Earls of Northumberland. In the 1480s Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland (d.1489) retained a number of individuals from Yorkshire.<sup>101</sup> Among them were Robert Plumpton<sup>112</sup>, Sir William Beckwith of Clint, Sir Peter Middleton of Middleton, Sir Randall Piggott of Clotherholme, Sir Christopher Ward<sup>114</sup>, Sir William Ingleby and Sir William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> of Gawthorpe (d.1551).<sup>102</sup> As Anthony Pollard noted these men were members of a tight group who were all related in some way, and had, over numerous generations, served the Percy family.<sup>103</sup> All but the Middleton and Ingleby families had direct ties to the Gascoignes. Robert Plumpton married Anne Gascoigne<sup>111</sup>, a sister of William Gascoigne V,<sup>106</sup> who had in turn married Margaret Percy<sup>107</sup>, and was thus Henry Percy's brother-in-law.<sup>104</sup> William Gascoigne I<sup>52</sup> of Lasingcroft (d.1476) had married Joanetta Beckwith<sup>53</sup>, William Beckwith's sister. James Gascoigne<sup>18</sup>, the younger son of

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£4000. Gascoigne has the far highest sum, the next being Tregyan, £700, Dudley, £700, Jenney, £700, Darcy, £100 and others.

<sup>98</sup> *L&P*, 12, 357; M.H. Dodds and R. Dodds, *The Pilgrimage of Grace, 1536-1537 and the Exeter Conspiracy, 1538*, vols. 1-2 (Cambridge, 1915).

<sup>99</sup> N. Lewycky, 'Cardinal Thomas Wolsey and the City of York, 1514-1529', *Northern History*, XLVI: 1 (2009), 43-60; See appendix 2 (TNA E 179/69/9) of Lewycky, 'Serving God and King', 240-247.

<sup>100</sup> See, for example, Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism*; M. Hicks, *The Wars of the Roses* (London, 2010).

<sup>101</sup> Pollard, *North-Eastern England*, 127.

<sup>102</sup> It is likely that it is the younger Gascoigne given that most of those included were knighted by Percy in the 1480s.

<sup>103</sup> Pollard, *North-Eastern England*, 127.

<sup>104</sup> William Gascoigne VI was Percy's nephew.

Chief Justice William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d.1419) had married Joan Piggott<sup>19</sup>. Similarly, Christopher Ward<sup>114</sup> had married Margaret Gascoigne<sup>113</sup> (a sister to William Gascoigne V<sup>106</sup>). Yet, the Middleton family could be considered distant relatives, as Thomas Middleton (d.1492) had married Joan Plumpton in 1468.<sup>105</sup> Additionally, at some point between 1485 and 1486, Henry Percy (d. 1489) sent a letter to his retainers, namely John Gascoigne, Sir William Stapleton, Sir Thomas Mauleverer, John Hastings and John Roucliff, as well as those mentioned above, requesting them to be ready upon warning.<sup>106</sup> It was likely that this was a message calling for readiness as Henry VII was visiting Yorkshire, and these individuals were with Percy when he met Henry VII in 1486.<sup>107</sup> Thus it is likely that further examination will reveal more than familial links between those mentioned. For instance, William Gascoigne V<sup>106</sup> and Sir Brian Stapleton, Hugh Hastings<sup>83</sup>, Thomas Tempest, Thomas Mauleverer and Peter Middleton, were all made Knights Bannerets on the same day, 24 July 1482.<sup>108</sup> Furthermore, in 1480, Sir William Gascoigne V (Robert Plumpton's<sup>112</sup> brother-in-law) reached an agreement with Edmund Pierpont, the Escheator of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, for the inquisition post mortem of Sir William Plumpton (d. 1478).<sup>109</sup> When Katherine Gascoigne<sup>120</sup> (formerly Nelson) took her husband William Gascoigne<sup>119</sup> of Burnby to court in 1508 to fight for a validity of marriage, Peter Middleton acted as a witness for William.<sup>110</sup>

In the second half of the fifteenth century the Percy-affiliated West Riding gentry families often had close social, familial or personal relationships with each other. This may be due, in part, to trust. In 1488 Edward Plumpton wrote to his kinsman Robert Plumpton<sup>112</sup> after speaking to William VI<sup>134</sup> and forwarded greetings of the Gascoigne family to both Robert and his wife Alice<sup>111</sup>. Edward also noted that Robert should advise a mutual associate William Scargill<sup>86</sup> to be wary of Richard Tunstall - a royal officer at

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<sup>105</sup> *WR*, II, 12. William Gascoigne (d. 1419) and Nicholas Middleton had acted as trustees for the manor of Plumpton on the death of Robert Plumpton in 1407. See Stapleton, *Plumpton Correspondence*, xxvi.

<sup>106</sup> Stapleton, *Plumpton Correspondence*, 53. It is unclear which John Gascoigne was being referred to in the letter.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 53; Pollard, *North-Eastern England*, 127.

<sup>108</sup> *WR*, I, 63. When Gascoigne was made knight of the body in 1484 he was granted £20 p.a. for life from the honour of Knaresborough. (TNA DL 42/20 f.34v) His son, William VI was made knight of the body for Henry VII in 1498 (TNA DL 37/62, m. 36v).

<sup>109</sup> Stapleton, *Plumpton Correspondence*, lxxxvii. This included details that Gascoigne could choose the jurors, and could provide whatever evidence he chose.

<sup>110</sup> Borthwick Institute, CP.G. 32. In 1514 Katherine Gascoigne sought an annulment from the court based on adultery. (CP.G.864) but William Gascoigne won the case. She appealed again in 1515 for restitution of conjugal rights (CP.G.110). Peter Middleton acted only as a witness in the first case.

Pontefract Castle - and to 'take good regard to himself and not to use his old walks; for and he do, he will be taken, and brought to find such surety for peace and otherwise, as shall be to him inconvenient.'<sup>111</sup> Furthermore, Edward continued that 'the said Master Tunstall gave to me right courteous words at my departing; but there to is no great trust.'<sup>112</sup> This letter referred to the dispute between Tunstall and his officer Thomas of Pomfret on the one side, and Scargill on the other. Yet Tunstall wrote directly to Plumpton with advice that Scargill should relent for if 'he will not I intend to show his obstinance to the king and his counsel, which if I do so, I think it will not be for his ease.'<sup>113</sup> The fact that Plumpton assumed the role of intermediary for Scargill reflects the closeness between them. It is suggestive of a close network that, although not always harmonious, rallied together when threatened.

Another letter to William V's sister, Agnes<sup>111</sup>, reinforced the importance of family among this close group. This letter, sent in 1502 by Robert Plumpton<sup>112</sup> to his wife, answered queries from his wife concerning his diet and sent reassurances about his activities, particularly the cleanliness of their house. He also mentioned that he had company that evening for dinner: William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup>, Randolph Piggott, Christopher Ward<sup>114</sup>, Ralph Neville of Oversley, Ninian Markenfield<sup>148</sup>, and Thomas Fairfax<sup>146</sup>, a number of whom were affiliated with the house of Percy.<sup>114</sup> The phrasing of the letter implied that Agnes had enquired of the wellbeing of those mentioned as Robert's response mentions these and 'many other friends and lovers' who 'were with [him] at supper [that] night.'<sup>115</sup> The fact that all were close relatives of the Gascoigne family reinforces the fact that associations through marriage were powerful influences on gentry associations.

Therefore, the associations visible within the Percy affinity during the late fifteenth century were markedly different from those affiliations to the Lancastrians during the first half of the same century. This is again due to proximity, as the estates of the Percy family were relatively concentrated - with a significant portion in the West Riding - and the Percy family resided, on occasion, at the Barony of Spofforth (WR). Thus, the Percy affinity during this period is reflective of the communities that had been active

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<sup>111</sup> Stapleton, *Plumpton Correspondence*, 59.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 59-60.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, cx. See *WR*, II, 17, for biography of Ninian Markenfield: educated at Oxford, and at the Inns of Court in London (*Test. Ebor.* IV, 124), and for the biography of Thomas Fairfax, the younger son of Sir Guy Fairfax, under-steward of Knaresborough (from November 1505) under Henry Percy, and Serjeant-at-Law (See too R. B. Smith, *Land and Politics in the England of Henry VIII*, 157; and Somerville, *The Duchy of Lancaster*, 483.

<sup>115</sup> Stapleton, *Plumpton Correspondence*, cx.

in the West Riding for more than two generations. Whilst not all of the families were related to the Gascoignes by marriage, many of them were relatives or distant kin. Their shared experiences through service to the Duchy of Lancaster, then the house of Percy, strengthened a community built on cultural similarities, shared memories, marriage, and kinship. As Chapter Three details, the associations between the Gascoigne and Percy family enabled Henry Percy to rebuild his affinity and the strength of his family, following his father's death and his disinheritance during the Wars of the Roses.<sup>116</sup> By the mid-fifteenth century the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe could draw on considerable resources and thus may have acted as de-facto lords of their own affinities. This mentality can be seen by William VI's claim of the Earldom of Westmorland in the 1520s. It is possible that lesser gentry families gravitated towards the Gascoignes in the hope of receiving patronage.

As patrons, the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe provide further nuance to an interpretation of the communities active within the West Riding during the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Whilst William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d.1419) had a small household - making bequests in his will to Henry and John Chamber, William Scot and William Ottyr, all of whom could have been members of the Gascoigne household or the wider Gascoigne estate - it is not possible to ascertain the size of the household maintained by the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe until much later.<sup>117</sup> During the early sixteenth century, for example, William Gascoigne VI<sub>134</sub> (d.1551) was involved in a series of land disputes, the most serious of which was with John St. Pol, esquire, of Campsall (near Doncaster).<sup>118</sup> In 1530 St. Pol petitioned the Crown for justice, claiming that William VI had tried to murder him and his wife over a land dispute concerning the manor of Carcroft (WR).<sup>119</sup> The latter was accused of sending 'diverse of his servants and tenants of the number of forty riotous persons' to Carcroft manor where they drove out the current tenant, William Wilson.<sup>120</sup> St. Pol recruited the Bailiff of Osgoldcross to intervene and on the Bailiff's arrival at Gawthorpe he was threatened and nearly killed. However, the Bailiff

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 61; and M. J. Bennett, 'Henry VII and the Northern Rising of 1489', *EHR*, 105, 414 (1990), 34-59. See Chapter 3, 137-175.

<sup>117</sup> *Test. Ebor.*, IV, 390-395. The Scot family appear to be residents on the Gawthorpe estate, as when John Scot died in 1404 he made references to a William Carter, Robert Waterton, and others, including William Gascoigne, (*Test. Ebor.*, IV, 346), and continued to be affiliated with the Gascoigne family until the following century, as will be discussed later. It is probable that Henry and John were members of the local lesser gentry family and thus estate officials, rather than members of a knightly household. When Joan Pickering died in 1426 she left a bed to her chamber maid, Margaret. (*Test. Ebor.*, IV, 410).

<sup>118</sup> This case will be discussed further in the following chapter.

<sup>119</sup> *YSC*, II (YAS, 45), 50-54.

<sup>120</sup> *YSC*, II, 50.

was Marmaduke Vavasour, a kinsman of the Gascoigne family, which may add doubt to St. Pol's claim. A month later (3 May 1530) William Gascoigne VI intercepted John St. Pol's travelling party (his wife, brother William and neighbour, Thomas Pullen were present) and attempted to murder all those present. St. Pol was grievously wounded but all escaped and survived, with Pullen hiding in the house of Brian Stringer, a neighbour.<sup>121</sup> Furthermore, when St. Pol sought justice at the West Riding peace sessions he was opposed by Gascoigne, who also attended with a retinue of over 100 armed men.<sup>122</sup>

This case is revealing of local affiliations and networks, and evidence survives to identify some of the members of Gascoigne's affinity. In the same 1523 tax assessment where John Gascoigne II<sup>130</sup> of Parlington was assessed for £26 13s 4d, William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> was assessed at Gawthorpe for £333 6s 8d (500 marks) and a number of others were also assessed at Gawthorpe: Charles Hedon (8s on £16 of goods), John Byscham (2s on £4 of goods), George Wright (18d on £3), and Thomas Plessington (12d on 20s of fees).<sup>123</sup> It seems likely, given that none of them held lands and they only had taxable goods, that they were members of the Gascoigne household.

More information can be gleaned from St. Pol's testimony following his attempted murder, when he noted that Thomas Arnton, John Store, Oliver Cooper, John Beckett, John Lee, John Harrison, Thomas Kettell, Nicholas Hardcastle, William Forster, William Dickinson, John Sysson, John Scot, William Curwen and George Woodhouse, were among those sent to harass William Wilson.<sup>124</sup> It is likely that these were also members of the Gascoigne affinity. William Dickinson's relative, Richard, was involved in the aforementioned land dispute, as was William Forster. It is likely, given the distance of roughly 24 miles between Gawthorpe and Burghwallis, and given St. Pol's apparent familiarity with the men who attacked his estate, that some of those mentioned were tenants or officials of the Burghwallis estate rather than the Gawthorpe estate. Similarly, even if St. Pol had a grudge to settle, and was listing those known to associate with Gascoigne, this could also be indicative of some form of association. If this is the case then Forster and Dickinson could have been Gawthorpe officials sent to orchestrate the events at Burghwallis, indicating that they were trusted by William Gascoigne VI. Similarly, several individuals can be identified in muster roll evidence. In 1539, the muster was completed by Sir William Gascoigne VI, Sir William Middleton and Sir

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<sup>121</sup> YSC, II, 51.

<sup>122</sup> YSC, II, 53.

<sup>123</sup> TNA E 179/207/138, m. 1.

<sup>124</sup> YSC, III, 171-4.

William Mauleverer; three of the more powerful gentry in the West Riding at that time. A number of archers and billmen were listed at Gawthorpe including Matthew Wright, John Curson, Henry Wardman, William Cooke, William Ward, Thomas Smithson, William Forster, William Fletcher, William Taylor, Edward Fletcher, Nicholas Hardcastle and John Lee.<sup>125</sup> Due to the lack of evidence it is not possible to do more than identify possible members of the Gascoigne household or affinity during the Tudor period. However, the repeated appearance of individuals throughout the early sixteenth century suggests that a number spent their lives working for the Gascoigne family. This suggests, therefore, that some of these families had been retained by the Gascoigne family for several generations, and that a few held posts through hereditary service. Without comprehensive evidence from the late fifteenth century it is not possible to do anything more than speculate, but it is arguable that if these families resided at Gawthorpe or in the surrounding villages, that they had a history of shared experiences with the Gascoignes, albeit a very different sort of shared experiences than the gentry families discussed elsewhere in this chapter. These individuals and the possibility of hereditary service could suggest a community centred on Gawthorpe, with the Gawthorpe Gascoignes at the centre. This community transcended status. Many aspects of their lives would have been shared; from religious worship, to cultural exchange, education, and the births, deaths, marriages, and baptisms of household members. Whilst not related through marriage or kinship to the Gascoignes, their relationship with the family would have been significant.

The examples detailed above are revealing. Relationships of service vary in strength, form and duration, yet they tend to be limited to a single generation and those affiliated with the Gascoigne family do not remain so following the individual's death. Connections developed by those in service rarely developed into the connections of the sons or daughters. The households and the estate officials were a collaboration of gentry from numerous counties each with different familial associations, personal relationships and networks. Although these networks interacted in the affinities and service of the nobility, there was no reason to maintain them in later generations. Furthermore, for those Yorkshire gentry who engaged in similar service-based activities as the Gascoignes, the strength of their connections to the Gascoignes was significantly stronger than the service-only connections. This is because many gentry families in Yorkshire had similar shared experiences, and were related in some way. These bonds were forged from familial ties, shared experiences and memories, and locality.

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<sup>125</sup> W. P. Baildon, 'Musters in Skyrack Wapentake, 1539', *Thoresby Record Society*, IV (1895), 302.

### Local Government

During the late medieval and Tudor period, many gentry families engaged in some form of local office-holding, whether acting as an MP for the county or local urban constituencies, serving as a Sheriff for the county or dispensing justice on the commissions of the peace. Given the nature of these offices, source material denoting the identity of the office-holders is extant and thus it may be possible to discern some form of political associations or wider network active within the West Riding and Yorkshire as a whole. Whilst the Gascoigne family engaged in local government relatively infrequently, the individuals who served alongside them may provide an insight into their personal associations. The impact local government had on the Gascoigne family's identity is discussed more broadly in the next chapter.

The commissions of the peace are an obvious opportunity for assessing the socio-political connections of the county gentry. The composition varied in size throughout the fifteenth century but it typically involved a broad cross-section of local gentry society, magnates, local lawyers and national representatives. However, for social bonds to be visible it is reasonable to conclude that assessments must be focused upon periods where attendance data, as well as compositional data, is available. The work of Simon Walker on the Yorkshire peace commissions provides such a combination of available material.<sup>126</sup> Between 1389 and 1413, the Gascoigne family were particularly active upon the commissions of the peace for the West Riding. During that period William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419) was an active local lawyer and Chief Justice of the King's Bench, whilst Richard Gascoigne<sub>9</sub> (d. 1423) was Chief Steward of the North Parts of the Duchy of Lancaster. The holder of the latter office was assigned to local peace commissions by virtue of their office. Table 1.6 details the individuals assigned to the Yorkshire commissions of the peace between 1489 and 1413. As can be seen, on the West Riding commission of the peace, William I and Richard Gascoigne were the two most active attendees. Among the other active justices on the West Riding commission were Sir John Saville and John Woodruff, with 31 and 28 appearances respectively.<sup>127</sup> Both had considerable connections to the Gascoigne family: lawyer John Woodruff served extensively alongside William I throughout the latter's legal career, whilst William I's

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<sup>126</sup> Walker (ed.), *Political Culture in Later Medieval England*, 81-114.

<sup>127</sup> Walker (ed.), *Political Culture in Later Medieval England*, 105.

daughter, Alice<sub>36</sub>, married Saville's grandson, Sir John Saville<sub>37</sub> (d. 1482).<sup>128</sup> Less frequent attendees also had some form of social relationship with the Gascoigne family. Richard Tempest was a kinsman of Mary Clitherow<sub>8</sub>, the wife of Nicholas Gascoigne<sub>7</sub> (d. 1427), whilst Sir Richard Redman (d. 1426) was a neighbour, based at Harewood Castle, which he inherited through marriage.<sup>129</sup> William I and Redman acted as witnesses together, but were also commissioned to arrest leading members of the Percy rebellion in 1403.<sup>130</sup> There were similar relationships amongst individuals active on the commissions of the peace for the East and North Ridings. John Aske was a kinsman, as Gascoigne heraldry on the stained glass at the Aske manor of Aughton strongly indicates a connection between the families at that stage; it is possible this was through Elizabeth Gascoigne<sub>12</sub>, sister of William I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419) though this is unclear.<sup>131</sup> Sir Robert Constable III<sub>17</sub> married Agnes Gascoigne<sub>16</sub>. It is unclear when the marriage took place, but the bequests of Marmaduke Constable (d. 1404) strongly indicate that not only had the Gascoigne-Constable marriage already taken place, but there was a familial link between both families and the Askes of Aughton.<sup>132</sup>

Yet this case study does not seek to claim that the commissions of the peace were responsible for many of the relationships the Gascoignes cultivated with families who also happened to serve. Those with whom the Gascoigne family had traceable and meaningful social relationships were only a small number of the whole commissions during that period. In fact, between 1389 and 1413 the Gascoigne family had no traceable association with 30 Justices of the Peace for Yorkshire, from a total of 43 justices. Of the remaining thirteen justices, their associations with the Gascoigne family

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<sup>128</sup> *CCR 1381-1385*, 607 (a land grant involved Sir Brian Stapleton, Sir Robert Swillington, Thomas Ellis, John Woodruff, William Gascoigne, John Amyas, and others); *CCR 1385-9*, 322, 436, 491-2, 465; *CPR 1388-92*, 242; *CCR 1389-92*, 525, 534 (alongside William and Nicholas Gascoigne, John Amyas, Robert Neville, Robert Franke and William Ryther), 398 (alongside Brian Stapleton, Robert Swillington, William Gascoigne and John Amyas). He acted as executor of Swillington's estate with William Gascoigne (*CCR 1392-1396*, 78).

<sup>129</sup> *CCR 1405-9*, 161; See too, *CCR 1435-41*, 145.

<sup>130</sup> *CCR 1409-13*, 83; *CPR 1401-5*, 297; Ross, 'The Yorkshire Baronage', 343. *CPR 1405-8*, 75. The Redman family remained closely affiliated (as neighbours and friends) to the Gascoignes throughout the period of this thesis. In 1555 Bridget Redman and William Ellis (among others) acted as a witness in the validity of a will dispute between William Gascoigne and Joan Gascoigne, over the estate of Thomas Gascoigne. [CP.G. 3516, Borthwick Institute].

<sup>131</sup> Glover, 118.

<sup>132</sup> *Test. Ebor.*, IV, 337. Similarly, when Robert Constable (d.1441) made bequests, he did so to Agnes Gascoigne (his wife) and Thomas Pickering, to whom he was related via the Gascoigne family (Joan Pickering married William Gascoigne I, Agnes' father. *Test. Ebor.*, III, 80-81. These bequests to John Aske may confirm some form of association between the three families and could increase the likelihood of the Gascoignes and Askes being related at this stage.

appear to be limited. Although it is likely that the Thomas Arderne<sup>25</sup> who married Margaret Gascoigne<sup>24</sup> was a relative of Hugh Arderne, an East Riding Justice of the Peace, the links between the Gascoigne family, the Markhams and the Watertons, for example, were limited to career-based associations with no discernible social impact. By assessing the Gascoigne family's infrequent service as MPs, it may be possible to test conclusions made above: that the offices of local government were not always the means through which social bonds were made, but were the means through which such bonds were visible. Sir William Gascoigne II<sup>14</sup> (d. 1422) was returned to parliament once, in 1421, alongside Sir Edmund Hastings. Neither appears to have had any form of association other than attending parliament together. Whilst the Gascoigne family would develop associations with the Hastings family during the late fifteenth century – through the marriage of Hugh Hastings<sup>83</sup> (d. 1489) and Anne Gascoigne<sup>82</sup> – there is no evidence to suggest that this political association was responsible for the future matrimonial ties. A similar picture can be seen in the three terms William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> (d. c. 1464) served as Knight of the Shire. In 1431 he served alongside Sir William Eure, in 1435 Sir Robert Waterton II, and in 1453 he was returned to parliament alongside Sir Brian Stapleton II.<sup>133</sup> Although Stapleton had ties to the Gascoigne family, the closeness of their relationship is difficult to determine.<sup>134</sup> Eure and Waterton had no distinguishable links to the Gascoigne family, other than Waterton's father was on the peace commissions alongside William I<sup>4</sup> (d. 1419). Conversely, William VI<sup>106</sup> was returned as an MP in 1495 alongside Sir Marmaduke Constable, his distant kinsman. Agnes Gascoigne<sup>16</sup> had married Sir Robert Constable<sup>17</sup>, and thus Marmaduke Constable was William V's distant cousin. Whilst this may seem like too distant a relation, the Constables appear to have maintained strong links with the Gascoigne family throughout the late medieval period.

It may also be possible to discuss the Yorkshire representation in Parliament more generally. As Table 1.4 makes clear, the number of families to whom the Gascoigne family were related is not inconsiderable. This suggests that whilst the Gascoigne family, generally speaking, relied upon smaller groups of trusted individuals, close associates and kin, these associations developed between gentry families of similar status, as the restrictions for being returned to parliament meant that only knightly families with an income in excess of £40 per annum were eligible.<sup>135</sup> Significantly, the range of families to whom the Gascoignes were related, but who were also returned to parliament is not considerable. Instead, multiple individuals from those families serve as MP. These

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<sup>133</sup> Payling, 'Sir William Gascoigne'; *PS*, 89.

<sup>134</sup> See previous section and the discussion involving Sir Brian Stapleton.

<sup>135</sup> See Chapter Three, 137-175 for more details.

connections were limited to the following families: Tempest<sup>8</sup>, Langton<sup>39</sup>, Hastings<sup>83</sup>, Ryther<sup>45</sup>, Pickering<sup>6</sup>, Constable<sup>17</sup>, Saville<sup>37</sup>, Aske, Fairfax<sup>146</sup> and Neville<sup>30</sup>. Yet, as has been demonstrated, matrimonial bonds did not necessitate inclusion into the Gascoigne family's inner circle of trusted associates. In fact, the Aske, Fairfax and Langton families had very little involvement with the Gascoigne family other than the marriages discussed in above, in Chapter One of this thesis.<sup>136</sup> It is possible to infer that the relationships of the Gascoigne family were not impacted by the influence of local government, nor by the status and income of an individual – many of the Gascoignes' close family were esquires or gentlemen – and thus it was more likely a matter of choice. Virtually nothing is known about the role of the Gascoigne family as Sheriffs, yet in 1441 William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> appointed his cousin, John Gascoigne<sup>26</sup> of Lasingcroft as his Deputy. John was not particularly prominent, nor was he wealthy, yet the two families were obviously close. Without any evidence concerning the private lives of the Gascoigne family available, it is only possible to suggest that this association had its roots in childhood. The associations of the parents may influence those of the children, as the parents would facilitate the interactions of their children with others of their age. Moreover, if some entered household 'service' at a young age, then it could enable the growth of personal relationships. It may suggest why some individuals appear in the family's bequests, yet seem to have little public involvement with the family. The evidence from which the historian draws is substantially public in scope, and personal bonds were private relationships which could manifest on the public stage. The decision to witness, attest, support or engage in any sort of activity, whether concerning local office, the protection of children, the exchange of lands or the execution of last wishes, was deliberate and any absence of an individual from those roles may not indicate the absence of a personal relationship.

### Material Culture

The ties that bound the medieval gentry together are not always traceable through the traditional sources. Charters, deeds and legal documents rarely record any form of ownership or production of medieval culture; from books and education, to poetry and patronage. Often when patronage has been discussed by modern writers the focus has been primarily upon service-related patronage rather than creative or cultural

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<sup>136</sup> See Chapter One, 44-96.

outputs.<sup>137</sup> Yet between c. 1309 and 1592, England witnessed a plethora of such outputs: including the 'heretical' texts of John Wycliffe; the production of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Malory's *le Morte d'Arthur*; as well as theological texts (such as those written by Thomas Gascoigne<sup>28</sup>); the patronage of poetry (especially in the sixteenth century); writers such as William Langland and Thomas More; and investment in hagiographical works (including the Bolton Book of Hours, the Wilton Diptych and the Gascoigne Breviary); as well as saintly movements (the cult of Richard Scrope and the cults of Elizabeth I); and the development of the printing press in England (chiefly led by William Caxton).

In recent years the historiographical focus has shifted to the study of the fluid connections that were part of medieval gentry culture. Deborah Youngs has examined the gentry's book-reading interests and has argued that an examination of wills and inventories revealed the shared interests (and routes through which ideas travelled) of the medieval gentry.<sup>138</sup> Furthermore, Youngs argued that due to the book remaining a rarity until the early modern period, the exchange of such texts is important.<sup>139</sup> Lowry contended that the book should be considered a symbol of friendship, and thus the recipients of such an exchange would, necessarily, be friends.<sup>140</sup> Correspondingly, Field has demonstrated a literary network surrounding Marie of St. Pol and the acquisition of her books.<sup>141</sup> Therefore it seems likely that an examination of the cultural networks and cultural patronage associations in which the Gascoigne family were involved will reveal their networks and social connections.

The life and career of George Gascoigne<sup>160</sup> (c. 1535-1577), a poet, soldier and courtier, may provide evidence which enables the reconstruction of a cultural network. His attendance at the Inns of Court in the 1560s reveals a coterie of poets and playwrights. Furthermore, by tracing his literary career (despite being relatively brief) a network of patrons and printers can be discerned. Finally, the influence of his writings

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<sup>137</sup>Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism* is a notable exemption. Fleming, 'The Character and Private Concerns of the Gentry of Kent' is a good example of a study which does not focus on the traditional elements of gentry studies.

<sup>138</sup> Youngs, 'Cultural Networks', 119.

<sup>139</sup> Youngs, 'Cultural Networks', 120; Sir Roger Townshend (d. 1493) is cited as being exceptional for owning around 40 books at his death. See C.E. Morton, 'The "Library" of a Late Fifteenth Century Lawyer', *The Library (Transactions of the Bibliographical Society)*, 6<sup>th</sup> Series, 13 (1991), 338-346.

<sup>140</sup> M. Lowry, 'John Rous and the Survival of the Neville Circle', *Viator*, 19 (1988), 331.

<sup>141</sup> S. Field, 'Marie of Saint-Pol and her Books', *English Historical Review*, 125, 513 (2010), 255-278. See too, J. B. Trapp, 'Erasmus and His English Friends' *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook*, 12 (1992), 18-44, for discussion of friends via literary networks and letter writing, as well as association via education.

may reveal a small cultural community within Elizabethan England. He had a wide range of contacts and patrons, despite apparently being (briefly) disinherited by his parents, John Gascoigne<sup>125</sup> of Cardington and Margaret Scargill<sup>126</sup>.<sup>142</sup> This can be seen in the remarks of Francis Bacon, who closed his essay *Of Followers and Friends* (1597) with a conclusion that preferred patronage relationships in Elizabethan England over personal relationships.<sup>143</sup> Both forms of relationship, however, are worthy of discussion. Labreche argued that both Bacon and Edmund Spenser perceived the Elizabethan literary community as one where any form of patronage relied upon a personal relationship with the patrons; and therefore a personal relationship with the literary community (authors, playwrights, printers) itself, from whom recommendations stemmed.<sup>144</sup>

In the late sixteenth century, during the so-called 'English Renaissance', the Inns of Court were held in the highest regard, as hubs of textual production and cultural exchange.<sup>145</sup> Given that George Gascoigne<sup>160</sup> studied at the Inns of Court and returned to it at various points during his life, it seems credible that he may have been part of the cultural network which stemmed from it. As translator and Jesuit missionary Jasper Heywood (1535-1598) concluded, to seek those with 'works of waight' and where 'finest witts do swarme', one must go 'to Lyncolnes Inne and Temples twayne, Grayes Inne and other moe.'<sup>146</sup> Shannon argued that this web of poets, authors and playwrights shows connections that would not be visible by other means; relations via blood, marriage, land or patronage networks.<sup>147</sup> Yet the Inns of Court had a large number of poets, playwrights and authors among its number throughout the late sixteenth century, including: Thomas Norton (d.1584), Thomas Sackville (d.1608), Jasper Heywood (d.1598), Francis Kinwelmersh (d. c. 1580), George Whetstone (d.1587), Arthur Golding (d.1606), Alexander Neville (d.1614), Barnabe Googe (d.1594), and George Turberville (c.1597),

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<sup>142</sup> For George Gascoigne's career, see the previous chapter. B.M. Ward, 'George Gascoigne and His Circle', *The Review of English Studies*, 2, 5 (1926), 32-41; G. Ambrose, 'George Gascoigne', *The Review of English Studies*, 2, 6 (1926), 163-168; G. Ambrose, 'New Light on the Life of George Gascoigne', *The Review of English Studies*, 13, 50 (1937), 129-138; N.M. Fuidge, 'George Gascoigne', in *HOP*, [www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-george-1537-77](http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-george-1537-77), accessed, 27/04/2016.

<sup>143</sup> F. Bacon, 'Of Followers and Friends', in E. Arber (ed.) *A Harmony of Essays* (English Reprints), (New York, 1966), 33-9.

<sup>144</sup> B. Labreche, 'Patronage, Friendship and Sincerity in Bacon and Spenser', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, 50, 1 (2010), 84.

<sup>145</sup> L. Shannon, 'Minvera's Men: Horizontal Nationhood and the Literary Production of Googe, Turberille and Gascoigne' in M. Pincombe and C. Shrank (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Tudor Literature, 1485-1603* (Oxford, 2009), 438.

<sup>146</sup> J. Heywood (trans.) *The seconde tragedie of Seneca entituled Thyestes faithfully Englished by Iasper Heywood fellowe of Alsolne College in Oxford* (London, 1560), xii.

<sup>147</sup> Shannon, 'Minvera's Men', 438.

Richard Edwards (d.1566), Arthur Brooke (d.1563), Thomas Twyne (d.1613) and Roger Baynes (d.1623).<sup>148</sup> It seems unlikely, then, that all of these were affiliated in some way with George Gascoigne, other than their shared locality.

When George Gascoigne published *A Hundred Sundry Flowers Bound Up in One Small Poesy* (in 1573), a small network was revealed.<sup>149</sup> Robertson argued that the 'G.T.' who wrote the preface to the collection of poetry was George Turberville (c.1540-1597), poet, nephew of the Bishop of Exeter and a member of the Inns of Court cultural network.<sup>150</sup> Similarly, the works of both Turberville and Gascoigne were published by the same printer, Henry Bynneman.<sup>151</sup> In *The Noble Arte of Venerie* (1576) an explanation is given to the readers concerning the book's creation; the dedication to Sir Henry Clinton was written by Christopher Barker and printed by Henry Bynneman.<sup>152</sup> The translator of the text is recorded as George Gascoigne. Barker and Bynneman may have had a close personal relationship with Gascoigne, as poets, writers and playwrights often had close relationships with their publishers. Barnabe Googe, for example, called his publisher Laurence Blundeston a 'very friend of mine'.<sup>153</sup> Yet the fact that *A Hundred Sundry Flowers* was published without Gascoigne's permission, shows that a good relationship between printer, publisher and author was not always necessarily the case.

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<sup>148</sup> See A. Hadfield, *The English Renaissance, 1500-1620* (Oxford, 2001) for Gascoigne, 61, and Googe, 63; M. Axton, 'Thomas Norton', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20359](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20359), accessed 5/05/2016; R. Zim, 'Thomas Sackville', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24450](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/24450), accessed 5/05/2016; D. Flynn, 'Jasper Heywood', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13182](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13182), accessed 05/05/2016; S. M. Thorpe, 'Francis Kinwelmersh', *HOP*, [www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/kinwelmersh-francis-1538-1580](http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/kinwelmersh-francis-1538-1580), accessed 05/05/2016; E. Smith, 'George Whetstone', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29198](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/29198), accessed 05/05/2016; J. Considine, 'Arthur Golding', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10908](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10908), accessed 05/05/2016; E. Leedham-Green, 'Alexander Neville', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19923](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/19923), accessed 05/05/2016; R. Lyne, 'Barnabe Googe', *ODNB*; [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11004](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11004), accessed 05/05/2016; R. Lyne, 'George Turberville', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27825](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27825), accessed 05/05/2016; C. Bate, 'George Turberville and the Painful Art of Falconry', *English Literary Renaissance*, 41, 3 (2011), 407.

<sup>149</sup> The work was published in 1573 without his permission, and caused offence due to its apparent attacks on figures at court. Several of the plays (*Supposes* and *Jocasta*) had been performed at the Inns of Court during the 1560s. In 1575, the works were revised and published, titled *The Poesies of George Gascoigne*. See Hadfield, *The English Renaissance*, 62.

<sup>150</sup> J. Robertson, 'The Noble Arte of Venerie and Hunting', *The Modern Language Review*, 37, 4 (1942), 484.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, 484; Turberville's *The Booke of Faulconrie, or Hauking* (1575).

<sup>152</sup> Robertson, 'The Noble Arte of Venerie and Hunting', 484; G. Gascoigne, *The Noble Arte of Venerie or Hunting*. (The text is an adaption/translation of Jacques du Fouilloux, *La Venerie*. Sir Henry Clinton is most likely the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Lincoln.

<sup>153</sup> Shannon, 'Minvera's Men', 238.

Barker's choice of publication date for *The Noble Art of Venerie* (both Gascoigne and Turbervile were published together) may have had an ulterior motive; an attempt to gain the attention of the Earl of Leicester, Robert Dudley, who, at the time, was preparing to host an 'extravaganza' at Kenilworth in 1576 which Elizabeth I was expected to attend; an attempt that was ultimately successful.<sup>154</sup> Elizabeth was fond of hunting and, though George Gascoigne published his work anonymously, the situation represents the network within which he and other poets and playwrights moved in order to obtain noble, or even royal, patronage. Furthermore, Barker included two woodcuts with the publication and dedicated the work to the Master of the Queen's Hounds, Lord Clinton. It was probably no accident then that George<sup>160</sup> had managed to secure the marriage of Elizabeth Boyes<sup>161</sup> (formerly Bacon) in 1561; a cousin to Sir Nicholas Bacon, lord keeper of the great seal to Elizabeth I.<sup>155</sup>

George Turbervile was not the only one with whom George Gascoigne would work. In 1566 he worked with Francis Kinwelmersh to publish a translation of *Jocasta*, the epilogue of which was written by Christopher Yelverton, another member of Gray's Inn.<sup>156</sup> Similarly, Alexander Neville, Laurence Blundeston, Barnabe Googe and Gascoigne all made dedications and references to each other in their works.<sup>157</sup> In 1565, Gascoigne was required by five of his associates to 'wrighte in verse somewhat worthy to be remembered, before he entred into their felowship, he compiled these five sundry sortes of metre uppon five sundrey theames which they delivered unto him.'<sup>158</sup> These associates were Francis Kinwelmersh, Anthony Kinwelmersh, Alexander Neville, John Vaughn and Richard Courtrop.<sup>159</sup> Furthermore Gascoigne would work with Sir Humphrey Gilbert to aid him in his publication of *Discourse of a Discovery for a new Passage to Cataia*.<sup>160</sup> Thus it seems that Gascoigne's networks at the Inns of Court were

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<sup>154</sup> G. Austen, 'Self-Portraits and Self-Presentation in the Work of George Gascoigne', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 14, 1 (2008), 6.

<sup>155</sup> G. W. Pigman III, 'George Gascoigne', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10421](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10421), accessed 5/05/2016; Austen, 'Self Portraits', 31; R. Tittler, *Nicholas Bacon: The Making of a Tudor Statesman* (London, 1976). Gascoigne appeared to have a close (yet strained) relationship with Nicholas Bacon. See the ODNB entry. Furthermore, Gascoigne in the year prior to his death sent a New Year's card to Bacon which thanked Bacon for his kindness to the reader throughout his life. Gascoigne would fall ill a few months later and after 3 months of suffering, he died. See Ward, 'George Gascoigne and his Circle', 40.

<sup>156</sup> Shannon, 'Minvera's Men', 444-445; *Jocasta* was the first vernacular English version of Greek drama (Euripides), though it was translated from Italian.

<sup>157</sup> Shannon, 'Minvera's Men', 449.

<sup>158</sup> C. H. Cooper (ed.), *Athenae Cantabrigienses: 1500-1585*, I, 374.

<sup>159</sup> Shannon, 'Minvera's Men', 451.

<sup>160</sup> Fuidge, 'Gascoigne, Sir William (by 1485-1540)' of Cardington, Beds.'; G. Gascoigne, *The Complete Works* (ed.) J. W. Cunliffe (c.1910) I, 5.

relatively extensive. George Gascoigne had a significant social circle, identified by their collaboration with each other, but also with their influence and references to each other's work. Prior to the publication it was likely that the Inns of Court saw manuscripts or drafts of their work. These networks also represented channels through which ideas could travel, and those who adopted similar theories, or were influenced by the thoughts and works of George Gascoigne, form a network of ideas. By identifying those with whom there was an idea-based exchange (and secondly a reading network), historians can create a further network of associations featuring contemporaries to George Gascoigne. Austen argued that Gascoigne made significant innovations in tragedy, comedy, satire and prose fiction.<sup>161</sup> Thomas Watson (d. 1592), John Grange (b. c. 1556/7), Timothy Kendall (fl. 1577), George Whetstone (d. 1587), and Nicholas Breton, Gascoigne's step-son (1545-1626), all adopted phrases and ideas from George Gascoigne. Sir Philip Sidney (d. 1586), George Pettie (d. 1589), Robert Greene (d. 1592), Thomas Nashe (d. 1601), William Shakespeare (d. 1616) and Christopher Marlowe (d. 1593) also took inspiration and ideas from the work of George Gascoigne. Most significantly of the above-named perhaps is Nicholas Breton, Gascoigne's step-son, who was conditioned to the literary pursuits and cultural outputs of Elizabethan England from an early age. Similar to Gascoigne and Bynneman, Breton had a close relationship with his printer, Richard Jones. Interestingly, Jones had published some of the works of George Gascoigne, as well as Christopher Marlow and Thomas Nashe, both of whom reveal Gascoigne influence in their work.<sup>162</sup>

Another aspect of George Gascoigne's cultural circles has already been touched upon above with mention of Christopher Barker; the role of patronage. Though Gascoigne would have many patrons throughout his life, none were so important, or so sought after, as the Queen. Barker's attempt to get Gascoigne and Turberville noticed in time for the Kenilworth celebrations was successful as Gascoigne was recruited by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, for the party.<sup>163</sup> Moreover, Gascoigne accompanied the royal party from Kenilworth to Woodstock where the Queen celebrated the New Year. Following the celebrations Gascoigne presented Elizabeth with a manuscript of *The Tale of Hemetes*, translated into Latin, Italian and French.<sup>164</sup> Heaton stated that it was not until

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<sup>161</sup> G. Austen, *George Gascoigne* (Cambridge, 2008), 6.

<sup>162</sup> H. R. Woudhuysen, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Circulation of Manuscripts, 1558-1640* (Oxford, 1986), 288.

<sup>163</sup> Austen, *George Gascoigne*, 137.

<sup>164</sup> G. Heaton, *Writing and Reading Royal Entertainments: From George Gascoigne to Ben Jonson* (Oxford, 2010) 30. George Gascoigne did not, however, write the play that he presented to Elizabeth, and in his introduction states this, claiming credit for the translation.

the following century that writers were given credit for public performances and it was often the patron (in whose name the performance took place) that gained the credit.<sup>165</sup> The reason why Gascoigne presented such a gift to Elizabeth is the subject of much debate.<sup>166</sup> However, Heaton states that Gascoigne's own explanation demonstrated his willingness to serve patrons:

I fynd in my self some suffycyency to serve your highnes which causeth me thus presumpteowsly to present you with theis rude lynes/ having turned the eloquent tale of *Hemetes* the *Heremyte* (wherwith I saw your lerned judgement greatly pleased at Woodstock) into latyne, Italyan and frenche.<sup>167</sup>

However, it is unlikely that Gascoigne delivered the gift personally to Elizabeth. This was not the first occasion when Gascoigne had used his writings to deliver messages to his patrons. In the *Droomme of Domes day*, Gascoigne made reference to the earl of Bedford.<sup>168</sup> He later dedicated work to Lord Grey of Wilton and wrote a piece for the double wedding of Lord Montagu's son and daughter.<sup>169</sup> Nonetheless it is unclear with whom Gascoigne first had contact. Although it was Leicester who was responsible for the connection between Gascoigne and Elizabeth I, Gascoigne's connections with Lord Grey and Bedford seem to stem either from Leicester, or from the Inns of Court. Thus, the importance of the Inns of Court cannot be understated in terms of their role in cultural encouragement. The Inns clearly played a role in introducing Gascoigne to both a patronage network and a literary society. Whether it was a recommendation that gained him noble patronage or their own personal opinions (Leicester, for example, attended plays at the Inns of Court) is difficult to determine. Yet it appears highly likely that patronage links and close personal relationships were very much intertwined.

Whilst George Gascoigne was the only member of the family for whom a considerable amount of material survives pertaining to his cultural associations, he was not the only family member for whom it is possible to suggest a cultural network from

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<sup>165</sup> Heaton, *Writing and Reading*, 33. Heaton also argues that the translator gains considerable merit.

<sup>166</sup> A. Pollard (ed.) *The Queen's Majesty's Entertainment at Woodstock 1575* (Oxford, 1910), xiii; J. W. Cuncliffe, 'The Queenes Maiesties Entertainment at Woodstock', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, 26 (1911), 128-9.

<sup>167</sup> Heaton, *Writing and Reading*, 35; C. Bates, *The Rhetoric of Courtship in Elizabethan Language and Literature* (Cambridge, 1992). See too G. Gascoigne, *The Glasse of Government: The Princely Pleasures at Kenelworth Castle: The Steele Glas, and other poems and prose works* (Cambridge, 1910); C. Bajetta, 'The Manuscripts of Verse Presented to Elizabeth I: A Preliminary Investigation', *The Ben Jonson Journal*, 8 (2001), 147-205.

<sup>168</sup> Heaton, *Writing and Reading*, 43; Fuidge, 'Gascoigne, Sir William (by 1485-1540)'.

<sup>169</sup> Fuidge, 'Gascoigne, Sir William (by 1485-1540)' of Cardington, Beds.'

piecemeal evidence. Both William Gascoigne<sup>1</sup> (d.1419) and Thomas Gascoigne<sup>28</sup> (d.1458) provide smaller literary networks associated with their writings, yet both are incomplete. The published works of the Chancellor of Oxford, Thomas Gascoigne (1404-1458), offer another glimpse into the social circles of the medieval Gascoignes. In his *Loci et Librum* Gascoigne discussed the execution of Archbishop Richard Scrope using witnesses to construct a historical narrative. It is these witnesses who provide the partial network given that they were likely to have been associations of the Chancellor.<sup>170</sup> Sir Thomas Cumberworth of Lincoln was a distant relative of Thomas Gascoigne. Cumberworth was the uncle to Agnes Gascoigne (Thomas' cousin), who had married Sir Robert Constable of Flamborough. George Plumpton was the great nephew of Archbishop Richard Scrope, and son of William Plumpton; the knight executed alongside Scrope in 1405.<sup>171</sup> Also interviewed by Thomas Gascoigne was William Kexby, and although neither a relative of Scrope nor connected to the Gascoigne family via marriage, he was a Penitentiary of York and was uncle to John Kexby. John was a contemporary of Thomas', who became Chancellor in 1452.<sup>172</sup> However, given that Gascoigne was interested in witnesses to Scrope's execution there are obvious limitations to this partial network. It is likely, for instance, that each of those mentioned (Kexby as a possible exception) had a more familial relationship with the previous generation of Gascoignes (William I, Richard and Nicholas) rather than Thomas himself, who spent much of his life at Oxford. Nevertheless, this partial network presents an image of an extended family, all willing to feature as witnesses in Gascoigne's reconstructed history. Likewise, Gascoigne's reconstruction of Scrope's execution is not coincidental, given that his uncle, William I, had already received an unprecedented status for his disobedience to Henry IV, especially amongst lawyers.<sup>173</sup> A possible explanation for the survival of considerable evidence relating to George Gascoigne's cultural associations is the proliferation of printing and the rise in significance of the Inns of Court as hubs of textual production during the period associated with the so-called English Renaissance. The associations of George Gascoigne were made possible by these 'new' changes to society. The Inns of Court provided a space in which poets, playwrights and authors could forge meaningful relationships, and the ability to print and publish more readily than previous centuries meant that ideas could be exchanged much quicker and far wider than before.

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<sup>170</sup> W.A. Pronger, 'Thomas Gascoigne', *EHR*, 35, 212 (1938), 608-9.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 609.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, 609.

<sup>173</sup> See Chapter Four of this thesis for further discussion about Thomas Gascoigne, William Gascoigne I and rebel Archbishop Richard Scrope, PGNOS.

Cultural and literary networks are important to the historian and they reveal shared interests among late medieval and early modern gentry networks. Scott-Warren has claimed that the early modern literary community was brought together by 'shared practices', discussing communities in relation to manuscript networks in early modern England.<sup>174</sup> Jason Scott-Warren argued that literary manuscripts embellish already established communities (institutions, kin groups etc.) with a sense of communal identity, with 'local references, their in-jokes and their pointed exclusions'. However, he concedes that both books and manuscripts were originally gifts, intending to develop the reputation, fame and status of the author or giver.<sup>175</sup> George Gascoigne utilised such networks in order to establish his literary career. It was, after all, through his cultural and patronage networks that Gascoigne gained access to Elizabeth I. Cultural networks do not supplant other forms of networks, but they can be used to add depth to known networks, or on occasion reveal networks that would otherwise be lost.<sup>176</sup> For the medieval period cultural networks appear to have been primarily regional, or local. Most of those involved were from Yorkshire, or owned property in York. It could be argued too, that George Gascoigne's network is essentially local, being based at the Inns of Court. Cultural networks too, offered no gender restrictions; women are as equally involved as men. Textual communities can transcend imposed divides; gender, profession, status and geography.<sup>177</sup>

### Conclusion

This chapter has examined the networks and associations of the Gascoigne family to demonstrate the complexity and range of social interaction in late medieval and Tudor England. Overall it has revealed two clear types of association; the network and the community. The network – seen through the discussion of the Lancastrian affinity, Knights of the Shire, and judicial bench, for example – tends to be short-lived and composed of superficial relationships, which often lasted only for the duration of the individual's association. Networks rarely transcended generations. When they did so it was often due to other, external, factors, including marriage and kinship ties. The community – seen through discussions of marriage, for example – tended to be made up of long-term associations of substantial depth. They were influenced by factors including

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<sup>174</sup> J. Scott-Warren, 'Reconstructing manuscript networks' in A. Shepard, and P. Vithington (eds.) *Communities in Early Modern England: Networks, Place, Rhetoric* (Cambridge, 2000), 19.

<sup>175</sup> Scott-Warren, 'Reconstructing manuscript networks', 33.

<sup>176</sup> Youngs, 'Cultural Networks', 130.

<sup>177</sup> Youngs, 'Cultural Networks', 131.

neighbourhood and kinship, as well as local traditions and culture. Moreover, these relationships appear to have developed over time, and often involved multiple generations. By the late fifteenth century, the Gascoigne family had associations with the Franks, Vavasours and Plumpton that had their origins generations earlier. Yet, it would be wrong to assume that all Gascoigne relationships could be assigned to one of either of these two categories. A further conclusion of this chapter is the flexibility and adaptability of social relationships. As different needs arose, the associations of the Gascoigne family would adapt. When negotiating marriage, the family would rely upon personal relationships and kin, yet would still be able to balance professional and political associations in other aspects of their lives. It was simply the case that there were moments in the life cycle of the gentry where different relationships could be of greater assistance. The Gascoigne family could manage and balance many networks and communities simultaneously, in different areas of their lives.

When considering the family's networks through the framework of Queer Theory, it could be argued that the shifts in social bonds reflect the family's complex identity and how it changed. As time passed and influences shifted, the need to maintain certain relationships lessened. This can be seen in the legal associations of William I<sub>4</sub> of Gawthorpe. After 1419, the only lawyers in the Gascoigne family were younger sons. The need to utilise the legal career as a path of social mobility was no longer necessary, as the main branches of the family were recognisably members of the gentry. Thus, the connections developed by William I were no longer necessary. Moreover, the complexity is shown by the family's relationships with magnate affinities. Individuals were able to associate with multiple magnates during their lifetime, and balance the needs and responsibilities of such activity, but over time the general associations of the family could vary dependent on the needs of the branch.

### Chapter Three: Politics and Local Government

Politics has generally been considered a critical part of everyday life for the late medieval and Tudor gentry. Regardless of how politics has been defined, whether as participation in public life, the innovation and implementation of policy, or simply a general awareness of political trends and national events, the seemingly pervasive nature of politics into almost every facet of gentry life means that a gentry study which neglects politics would fundamentally distort the identity of the gentry themselves.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the political lives of the medieval gentry have often acted as a foundation from which medieval historians could build a representation of past communities, due to the fact that extant evidence from the period was substantially governmental in scope. This can be seen in the myriad county-based gentry studies of the 1980s and early 1990s.<sup>2</sup>

Unwittingly, however, the political identity of the gentry has to some extent been distorted. Occasionally, county-based studies have relied upon questionable predefinitions for their foundations; the main assumption being that active political life was fundamentally necessary for the survival and social mobility of gentry families. Therefore, such studies focused upon local administrative and political officials to fill out their samples, ignoring those who could not, did not, and would not serve. Nigel Saul, for example, went to considerable length to identify the number of possible gentry living in fourteenth-century Gloucestershire, then limited his assessment to those few active gentry families who were often involved in military service, magnate affinities and local administration.<sup>3</sup> Likewise Carol Arnold defined the West Riding gentry as broadly as possible, including all those who could be knights, esquires and gentlemen, yet her analysis side-lined those that did not serve, in favour of office-holders and the gentry involved in magnate affinities.<sup>4</sup> When discussing one subset of twenty-six gentry involved in the political communities of Leicestershire, Eric Acheson drew attention to the fact that of his sample, 46 per cent of gentry acted as sheriff, escheator or justice of

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<sup>1</sup> W. M. Ormrod, *Political Life in Medieval England, 1300-1450* (New York, 1995), 1.

<sup>2</sup> S. M. Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry in the Fifteenth Century* (Chesterfield, 1983); N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981); N. Saul, *Scenes From Provincial Life: Knightly Families in Sussex, 1280-1400* (Oxford, 1986); S. J. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England: The Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1991); C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992); J. Mackman, 'The Lincolnshire Gentry and the Wars of the Roses' (University of York D.Phil Thesis, 1999).

<sup>3</sup> N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, 30-35.

<sup>4</sup> Arnold, *WR*, I, 34-78.

the peace, 54 per cent were returned to Parliament, and 61 per cent were lawyers, yet he then excluded any discussion on those individuals who were not involved in such activity, even though the percentages shown clearly indicate that many of the sample did not serve in local administration.<sup>5</sup>

Rosemary Horrox was correct when she wrote that we must consider *all* political society in order to understand it properly, but often this is interpreted to mean those considered greater and lesser gentry (i.e., the knights, esquires and gentlemen), alongside the county's magnates.<sup>6</sup> This appears to be a simplification of her intentions. All political society must include those gentry who did not serve with any regularity, or at all. These individuals, and families, were still part of the county's political fabric, whether their voices were heard or not, and an attempt to understand their motivations or actions would take us a long way to fully comprehending gentry political identity. If members of the gentry chose not to serve, then historians must seek to answer why that was. If others served infrequently, yet their siblings or children did not, again we must assess the circumstances which led to such an outcome. Only examining one aspect of gentry political society means that our conclusions on medieval identity are themselves only one-sided.

It is difficult to exactly quantify what historians may have missed by limiting their field of study to those who held the principal offices of local government, but it simply is not true that we have a reliable picture of gentry political identities. This is not to say that the holding of office or administrative position was unimportant, rather that this is just part of a wider political identity, and blinkering ourselves to that fact limits the conclusions we can draw. Understandably, this is quite a controversial statement. To call into question the conclusions of decades of research is certainly not my intention, as those studies have contributed much to our comprehension of the past. Yet, our reliance upon the simplistic, even possibly archaic, dichotomy between those who held office and those who did not has led to misdiagnoses and has championed the polarisation of political identity into easily quantifiable and digestible portions. The Gascoignes provide a suitable example of this. Even when evidence is sparse, assumptions have been made whereby the political associations and identities of entire families are attributed a certain way based upon single instances or the acts of an individual. Michael Hicks, Mark Punshon, Nick Barratt and Karen Lynch have all defined the Gascoignes as being of particular affinities; the former two noted them as being stalwart Lancastrians, whilst

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<sup>5</sup> Acheson, *A Gentry Community*, 88-89.

<sup>6</sup> R. E. Horrox, 'Local and National Politics in Fifteenth-Century England', *Journal of Medieval History*, 18 (1992), 395, 402.

the latter three described them as prominent Yorkists; all these arguments were based upon singular occurrences within the source material.<sup>7</sup> Problems with such simplistic delineations notwithstanding, the unconscious need to assign political persuasions to every gentry family or individual of note, especially those prominent in local society, is a result of a further dichotomy which treats the influence of magnate affinities and the presence of county communities as mutually exclusive entities.

This focus on singular instances is what will be challenged in this chapter. The political activity of the Gascoigne family, with a focus on office-holding, demonstrates that there are instances of involvement with magnates and their respective factions, but these are individual and not necessarily representative of any familial loyalties. The first section of this chapter will do two things. First, it will provide a political context to subsequent discussion on office-holding. Second, it will incorporate in this the limited political activity of the fifteenth-century Gascoigne family, especially in relation to their involvement (or lack thereof) in national and local politics. The second section will focus more closely on the offices of local government. Specifically, it will examine how the historiographical theories of Bastard Feudalism and the County Community have influenced the debate around office-holding and political identities. It will also consider whether either theory is applicable to the politics of Yorkshire. Prior to such discussions, however, it is necessary to briefly outline the contextual framework, particularly given the wide range of factors and influences involved in political life. The following paragraphs will outline the parameters of the offices of local administration and national politics relevant here. Moreover, they will place the Gascoignes within the administrative framework of the West Riding of Yorkshire by discussing the significance, if any, of the honours of Yorkshire in the political life of the county.

Much has been written on the offices of local government in the later medieval period, which allows for a summary of the main roles and responsibilities gentry families might hold. Since the Gascoignes did not hold the position of Escheator during the later medieval and Tudor periods, this office has been excluded from subsequent discussion. The shrievalty was the most important office of the localities during the later medieval period.<sup>8</sup> The Sheriff presided over the county court and was responsible for empanelling

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<sup>7</sup> M. Hicks, 'Bastard Feudalism', in M. Hicks (ed.) *English Political Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 2002), 141; *PS*, 81; see chapter one, 41-42, of this thesis for discussion on N. Barratt and K. Lynch's unpublished material. See too, K. Lynch's unpublished report, *Gawthorpe Hall, 1260-1774*.

<sup>8</sup> P. Fleming, 'Politics', in R. Radulescu and A. Truelove (eds.) *Gentry Culture in Late Medieval England* (Manchester, 2005), 51; H. M. Jewell, *English Local Administration in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1972), 182; A. J. Pollard, *North-Eastern England during the Wars of the Roses: Lay*

juries. Sheriffs served royal writs, and oversaw elections to Parliament and the appointment of lesser officials.<sup>9</sup> After Parliamentary elections had taken place it was the responsibility of the Sheriff to find enough individuals to verify or attest to the election. When required, they raised troops and levies for the crown, and acted as keepers of the county gaols. Sheriffs were appointed by the crown and were supposed to serve only for a single year; yet some Sheriffs of Yorkshire served for successive terms. During their year in office, Sheriffs had to be resident in the county itself, and have landholdings worth £20 per annum. Furthermore, it should be noted that during the reign of Henry VI the office of Sheriff was dispensed by the Crown as a form of patronage, which faced fierce opposition from the Commons.<sup>10</sup>

Parliamentary representation was also a significant responsibility in the local political sphere.<sup>11</sup> From the late thirteenth century, Parliament usually included representatives of every diocese, the Archbishops, Bishops, Archdeacons and Cathedral proctors, as well as proctors of the lower clergy; Knights of each Shire; citizens of each city and burgesses of each borough; as well as the Dukes, Earls and wider baronage who were summoned by name. The magnates and the clergy, appearing in their own right, formed the upper house, whilst the Knights of the Shires, citizens and burgesses formed the Commons.<sup>12</sup> The main responsibilities of the Commons were to grant taxation and to suggest reforms that might be made up into royal legislation. In the fourteenth century, the county Sheriff oversaw the elections of county, borough and civic representation; but as the later medieval period progressed, and a number of towns and cities secured their own Sheriffs, this practice became less prominent. After 1396, the city of York returned two citizens to Parliament from an election overseen by the Sheriff of York, rather than the Sheriff of Yorkshire. Gwilym Dodd argued that borough and civic representatives had

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*Society, War and Politics, 1450-1500* (Oxford, 1990). See too, R. Virgoe, 'The Crown, Magnates and Local Government in 15<sup>th</sup> Century East Anglia', in J. R. L. Highfields and R. Jeffs (eds.) *The Crown and Local Communities in England and France in the Fifteenth Century* (Gloucester, 1981); R. Gorski, *The Fourteenth-Century Sheriff: English Local Administration in the Late Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> W. A. Morris, 'The Sheriff', in W.A. Morris and J. R. Strayer, *The English Government at Work, 1327-1336*, ii (Cambridge, 1947), 41; *PS*, 82.

<sup>10</sup> W. M. Ormrod (ed.) *The Lord Lieutenants and High Sheriffs of Yorkshire, 1066-2000* (Barnsley, 2000), 42 - 43.

<sup>11</sup> Fleming, 'Politics', 52; E. Acheson, *A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century, c. 1442-1485* (Cambridge, 1992), 108 - 109. See too, G. Dodd, 'Crown, Magnates and Gentry: The English Parliament, 1369-1421' (University of York PhD Thesis, 1998).

<sup>12</sup> For more information on Parliamentary Representation, see M. McKisack, *The Parliamentary Representation of the English Boroughs During the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1932); G. O. Sayles, *The King's Parliament of England* (London, 1975); A. L. Brown, 'Parliament 1377-1422', in R. G. Davies and J. H. Denton (eds.) *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (Manchester, 1981).

an inferior political position in relation to the Knights of the Shires, who tended to dominate Parliamentary committees in the period.<sup>13</sup> However, borough and civic representatives were usually leading members of mercantile and urban communities and would often influence business as experts in mercantile matters.<sup>14</sup> In the fifteenth century, some urban constituencies began to be represented by members of the gentry. Interestingly, during the sixteenth century, the Gascoignes of Cardington were mainly returned to Parliament as borough representatives.

Christine Carpenter argued that the office of MP bestowed enormous prestige upon the holder, but held little importance after the election.<sup>15</sup> Each county returned two Knights of the Shire to represent their views, and legislation passed in 1430 limited the franchise to all landowners with an annual income in excess of 40s.<sup>16</sup> Helen Cam argued that as the expenses of each member of Parliament was paid by their constituents, rather than by the Crown, their reimbursement following a Parliament offered an opportunity for some form of accountability; if the freeholders were unhappy with the outcomes of Parliament they could refrain from complete reimbursement of a representative's expenses.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, Parliamentary representation may offer insight into the competence of those Knights returned for the Shires as it could be argued that those who demonstrated incompetence or acted unfavourably towards the county would not be returned to Parliament a second or third time. Parliament also represented the opportunity for the crown to canvass local opinion and provided a means of communication between the centre and the localities. From 1445, any candidate for the office of Knight of the Shire must have held land worth at least £40 per annum in the county of question.<sup>18</sup>

The final office discussed here is that of Justice of the Peace.<sup>19</sup> Each county or major county division had a commission of the peace, and for Yorkshire there were separate commissions for each of the North, East and West Ridings. There was little

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<sup>13</sup> Dodd, 'Crown, Magnates and Gentry', 104

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>15</sup> Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, 265.

<sup>16</sup> *Stat. Realm*, II, 243. This chapter focuses predominantly on the Knights of the Shire. Whilst in the sixteenth century the Gascoignes were returned to Parliament as MPs, they were part of the borough representation as they were returned to Parliament for urban constituencies.

<sup>17</sup> H. Cam, *Liberties and Communities in Medieval England* (London, 1963), 236-247.

<sup>18</sup> *WR*, 215 - 216; *Stat. Realm*, II, 170, 340; J. S. Roskell, 'Sir James Strangeways of West Harsley and Whorlton: Speaker in the Parliament of 1461', *Yorkshire Archaeological Society*, 39 (1958), 455 - 482.

<sup>19</sup> For an in-depth discussion on the responsibilities of the office, see. A. Musson and W. M. Ormrod, *The Evolution of English Justice: Law, Politics and Society in the Fourteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 1999), 42 - 74.

connection between the three ridings in terms of composition of the commissions or the dates on which membership was renewed or changed. The general peace commission of 1389 changed the county benches; the general size of the commissions was reduced, but a number of powers, including the ability to determine all felonies and common law trespasses, were (as it proved) permanently enshrined.<sup>20</sup> The composition of the bench included magnates, justices of the assize courts, local lawyers of the quorum and members of the gentry. The commission was responsible for the maintenance of the King's peace.<sup>21</sup> J. G. Bellamy argued that the relocation of judicial enforcement to the localities aided the perversion of justice for the gentry's own benefit.<sup>22</sup> However, it is acknowledged that the gentry of the localities were no more likely to pervert justice than the gentry resident near centres of national government.<sup>23</sup> B. H. Putnam argued that the commission was the dominant office of local government in times of normalcy.<sup>24</sup>

These were not the only offices of local government. Within the West Riding's administrative boundaries there were several major lordships, or honours, which had a number of minor offices available to the gentry, including, for example, Master Forester. A Master Forester was responsible for the administration of the forests within the honour or lordship.<sup>25</sup> The forest was not just a geographical entity, but a legal one. Regular forest courts were held, with jurisdiction over small trespasses of vert and injury to plant life. There was also a court of attachment, which were meant to address those who hunted in the forest illegally, and a court to issue licences for pannage, pasture and foraging. The Master Forester oversaw the administrators and judicial officers that carried out these duties, as well as wardens of individual forests, bailiffs, stewards and seneschals.<sup>26</sup> However, the honours of Yorkshire appear to have had limited impact upon county political society. Whilst they offered employment opportunities and affiliation with a leading magnate – for most of this thesis this took the form of the Duke of Lancaster – they did not prevent gentry resident within the honours from engaging in wider political life.

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<sup>20</sup> R. L. Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace, 1388-1390', in F. R. H. du Boulay and C. M. Barron (eds.) *The Reign of Richard II* (London, 1971) 131-152.

<sup>21</sup> *WR*, I, 297.

<sup>22</sup> J. G. Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order in England in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1973), 2.

<sup>23</sup> Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order*, 12. See too, M. Hastings, *The Court of Common Pleas in Fifteenth-Century England* (New York, 1947).

<sup>24</sup> B. H. Putnam, *Proceedings before Justices of the Peace in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (1938), xix-xxxv; R. Sillem, 'Commissions of the Peace, 1380-1485', *BIHR*, 10 (1932) 81-104.

<sup>25</sup> See, H. Jewell, *English Local Administration* (Newton Abbott, 1972), 80-83.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, 83.

Table 1.1 and 1.2 shows the collective experience of the Gascoigne family in local government between 1399 and 1600.<sup>27</sup> These tables detail the periods where the Gascoigne family served on commissions of the peace, as Sheriffs and Members of Parliament, as well as when they held the offices of Steward, Constable and Master Forester. For the sake of clarity, the case studies of this chapter have been mostly limited to the Yorkshire branches of the Gascoigne family. This is not to suggest that the Gascoignes of Cardington did not hold political office. As can be seen, James I<sub>18</sub> (d. 1434) was returned twice to Parliament, once representing the town of Barnstaple, and the second time representing the county of Bedfordshire. He also served as Sheriff of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire between 1433 and 1434.<sup>28</sup> William I<sub>93</sub> of Cardington (d. 1540) also served twice as a Knight of the Shire for Bedfordshire (in 1529 and 1536), whilst John I<sub>125</sub> (d. 1568) served thrice (in 1542, 1553 and 1558), and once as Sheriff (1542 - 1543).<sup>29</sup> Finally, George II<sub>160</sub> (d. 1577), served twice as an MP for the town of Bedford (in 1558 and 1559).<sup>30</sup> The service of the Cardington Gascoignes as Justices of the Peace was limited to the sixteenth century; William I<sub>93</sub> (d. 1540) served on the commissions for Bedfordshire (1510 - d.), Buckinghamshire (1525 - d.), Huntingdonshire (1510 - d.), Middlesex (1524 - 1528), and Northamptonshire (1512 - d.), whilst John I<sub>125</sub> (d. 1568) served solely on the Bedfordshire commission (1547 - d.).<sup>31</sup> However, although it may appear that the Gascoignes served with frequency, with sixteen Parliamentary terms and four shrieval terms, these were restricted to a small number of individuals: Cardington had nine Parliamentary returns and two shrieval terms distributed amongst four men, Gawthorpe had five Parliamentary terms and two terms as Sheriff distributed amongst three men, and the two Parliamentary terms of the Lasingcroft Gascoignes were held by two knights, John IV<sub>130</sub> (d. 1557) and John V<sub>169</sub> (d. 1602) who represented Thirsk (1553) and Aldborough (1558) respectively. Similarly, Tables 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5 detail all those individuals who held the office of Sheriff, Knight of

<sup>27</sup> See pages 256-257 of this thesis.

<sup>28</sup> C. E. Moreton, 'James Gascoigne (d. 1434)', L. Clark (ed.), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, (forthcoming, c. 2017); M. Bassett, *Knights of the Shire for Bedfordshire during the Middle Ages* (Streatley, 1949).

<sup>29</sup> N. M. Fuidge, 'Sir William Gascoigne (by 1485 - 1540) of Cardington, Beds.' *HOP*, [www.historyofParliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-william-1485-1540](http://www.historyofParliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-william-1485-1540), accessed 27 July 2016; N. M. Fuidge, 'Sir John Gascoigne (by 1510 - 1568) of Cardington, Beds.' *HOP*, [www.historyofParliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-john-1510-68](http://www.historyofParliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-john-1510-68), accessed 27 July 2016.

<sup>30</sup> G. Austen, *George Gascoigne* (Cambridge, 2008), N. M. Fuidge, 'Sir George Gascoigne (by 1537 - 1577), of Cardington, Beds.', *HOP*, [www.historyofParliament.org/volume/1558-1603/member/gascoigne-george-1537-77](http://www.historyofParliament.org/volume/1558-1603/member/gascoigne-george-1537-77), accessed 27 July 2016.

<sup>31</sup> Fuidge, 'Sir John Gascoigne'.

the Shire and Escheator during the late medieval and Tudor periods. These tables not only help to contextualise the Gascoignes' limited service, but also highlight those individuals related to the Gascoigne family who also provided service in local government. However, whilst it is illuminating to identify those individuals who served in local government and who also married into the Gascoigne family, they are not included in the subsequent discussion, as to infer Gascoigne responsibility for such appointments removes the agency of other gentry families in the West Riding and wider Yorkshire. Finally, by focusing on the Yorkshire branches of the Gascoigne family, the subsequent discussion is heavily medieval in scope, with much of the Tudor political activity excluded. It is recognised that this will have an impact on the conclusions drawn, especially because, as can be seen, the Cardington branch were more likely to represent borough constituencies, than serve as Knights of the Shire. Such a focus was necessary because information regarding the Cardington office-holders is relatively sparse, and often without the appropriate context to allow for a meaningful discussion.

#### Political Developments, 1377 - 1547<sup>32</sup>

The purpose of this section is to place the Gascoigne family's political activity into a wider chronological context, especially in terms of political developments in Yorkshire and wider England, but also in relation to magnate power struggles. Between 1377 and 1547, when the Gascoigne family were arguably most active, there were significant political developments. The following section seeks to place the Gascoignes (and wider Yorkshire) within those developments.

The death of Edward III in June 1377 precipitated a period of uncertainty in the Kingdom of England. His son, Edward of Woodstock, had died the year before and his new heir and grandson, Richard II, was just ten years old. During Richard's minority, the realm was governed by a series of continual councils dominated by his uncle John of Gaunt (d. 1399), the Duke of Lancaster, and his allies.<sup>33</sup> The most powerful and influential magnate in England, Gaunt drew significant support from a number of northern counties; specifically Lancaster, Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, where the Duke was a

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<sup>32</sup> Since the Gascoigne family were not active within Yorkshire or wider England during the first half of the fourteenth century, this section begins with the political developments during the reign of Richard II, which saw some active involvement by the Gascoigne family.

<sup>33</sup> N. B. Lewis, 'The "Continual Council" in the Early Years of Richard II, 1377-1380', *EHR*, 31 (1926). For more information on the reign of Richard II, see N. Saul, *Richard II* (Yale, 1997) and A. Goodman, *John of Gaunt: The Exercise of Princely Power in Fourteenth-Century Europe* (London, 1992).

source of substantial patronage.<sup>34</sup> Combined with the three Lancastrian honours of Pontefract, Knaresborough and Tickhill, the Duchy was virtually unrivalled in the West Riding of Yorkshire in terms of the influence it could muster and the patronage it could dispense.<sup>35</sup> After the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, which saw the execution of a number of royal 'favourites', Richard II began to take a more active role in government.<sup>36</sup> This took the form of a determined challenge to Lancastrian authority through direct recruitment in the northern counties where Duchy influence was strongest.<sup>37</sup> Richard II selected members of the established gentry who, for the most part, had substantive political experience and could provide ready access to local power structures.<sup>38</sup> In Yorkshire the number of King's Knights rose from two (prior to 1389) to twelve by 1396. They included Hugh Hastings (d. c. 1396), Richard Redman I (d. 1426), James Pickering (d. c. 1399), Thomas Talbot (d. 1417) and William Plumpton I (d. 1405).<sup>39</sup> In response, Gaunt's retaining policy shifted, and he actively recruited a socially and geographically diverse group, with minimal experience in service or administration.<sup>40</sup> Among these, the Gascoignes could certainly be counted. Their associations with the Duchy of Lancaster began in the late 1380s and intensified in the 1390s. Moreover, these newer associations were recruited into the Duchy to serve alongside Gaunt's son, Henry Bolingbroke, rather than Gaunt himself; a deliberate tactic to ensure Lancastrian loyalty should Gaunt die.<sup>41</sup> Henry Bolingbroke was in exile when his father died in 1399. The strength of association Gaunt had developed between the gentry and his sons is typified by the speed with which the Gascoignes rallied to Bolingbroke's banner on his return to England in 1399, when he sought to reclaim his inheritance and, later, the Crown. Alongside Richard Gascoigne,

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<sup>34</sup> See works on the Duchy of Lancaster for more details. H. Castor, *The King, the Crown and the Duchy of Lancaster: Public Authority and Private Power, 1399-1461* (Oxford, 2000); R. Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster* (London 1953), and S. Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity, 1361-1399* (Oxford, 1990).

<sup>35</sup> *PS*, 112.

<sup>36</sup> Saul, *Richard II*. See too, R. B. Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* (London, 1970).

<sup>37</sup> C. Given-Wilson, 'The King and the Gentry in Fourteenth-Century England', *TRHS* 5<sup>th</sup> series, 37 (1987), 94-96; Castor, *Duchy of Lancaster*, 23-24.

<sup>38</sup> Given-Wilson, 'The King and the Gentry', 94.

<sup>39</sup> C. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance in England, 1360-1413* (New Haven, 1986) 221. Although the families of Redman, Plumpton and Hastings would later be related to the Gascoigne family, only James Pickering had a familial association with the family at this stage, after the marriage of his kinswoman, Joan, to William Gascoigne I (d. 1419).

<sup>40</sup> Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*, 35.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 36 - 37.

(d. 1423), were Robert Neville (d. 1413), Roger Swillington I (d. 1417), Thomas Clarell I (d. 1442), Henry Vavasour I (d. 1413), and Robert Waterton.<sup>42</sup>

Following the accession of Henry Bolingbroke as King Henry IV, the Crown faced a different problem than it had thirty-three years earlier; a lack of trustworthy adult nobility. A number of noble titles were in the hands of minors and Henry could only draw support from a small group of individuals; including John Beaufort (Somerset), Henry Percy (Northumberland), Thomas Percy (Worcester), Ralph Neville (Westmorland), Thomas Holland (Kent), John Holland (Huntingdon), John Montagu (Salisbury), Thomas Despenser (Gloucester) and the young Henry 'Hotspur' Percy.<sup>43</sup> This group was reduced further in January 1400, when the Earls of Kent, Huntingdon, Salisbury and the former Earl of Gloucester rebelled against the Crown during the Epiphany Rising.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, the rebellion of the Percy family in 1403 resulted in the execution of Hotspur and Worcester, and the subsequent Percy rebellions of 1405 and 1407 ended the career (and eventually the life) of the Earl of Northumberland.<sup>45</sup> By necessity, Henry IV relied upon the gentry to govern England effectively. Douglas Biggs noted that Henry consolidated his position by assigning almost half of the shrievalties in England to Lancastrian supporters.<sup>46</sup> The Gascoignes benefited from this consolidation and gained a number of new offices including Chief Justice of the King's Bench, Chief Steward of the Northern Parts of the Duchy of Lancaster, and an increased involvement on the commissions of the peace.<sup>47</sup> Furthermore, these peace commissions were expanded; by May 1401, 119 Lancastrian knights and esquires were Justices of the Peace.<sup>48</sup> At this time, the Duchy of Lancaster – with the honours of Pontefract, Tickhill and Knaresborough – merged with the Crown, yet the honours were immediately declared to be separate from the Crown's estates. Mark Punshon argued that in Yorkshire the Duchy of Lancaster remained firmly

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<sup>42</sup> C. Given-Wilson (ed.) *Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1400: The Reign of Richard II* (Manchester, 1993). Thomas Clarell I would later become a kinsman to Richard Gascoigne, as Margaret Clarell married William Gascoigne III. Moreover, although it is unclear how many troops Richard took to Knaresborough – where he met Bolingbroke – he received £13 in payment.

<sup>43</sup> A. L. Brown, 'The Reign of Henry IV: The Establishment of the Lancastrian Regime' in S. B. Chrimes, C. D. Ross and R. A. Griffiths (eds.) *Fifteenth-Century England* (Manchester, 1972), 7-11.

<sup>44</sup> Punshon, 'Government and Political Society', 117; E. Powell, 'Lancastrian England', in C. Allmand (ed.) *New Cambridge Medieval History*, vii (Cambridge, 1998), 459. See too, C. Given-Wilson, *Henry IV* (Yale, 2016).

<sup>45</sup> R. Lomas, *The Fall of the House of Percy, 1368-1408* (Edinburgh, 2007), ch. 5.

<sup>46</sup> D. Biggs, 'Sheriffs and Justices of the Peace', 153.

<sup>47</sup> See Chapter One of this thesis for more details on the careers of William I and Richard Gascoigne.

<sup>48</sup> Biggs, 'Sheriffs and Justices of the Peace', 160.

in control of local governmental offices.<sup>49</sup> However, the reality is less clear-cut. Sir John Depeden (d. 1402) was appointed as Sheriff of Yorkshire in 1399. He was a leading knight with no identifiable link to the Duchy of Lancaster prior to the usurpation, although he was appointed King's Knight in 1400 following his dismissal from the shrievalty.<sup>50</sup> Depeden did not hold the post for very long as he was replaced by Sir John Constable of Halsham (ER), a knight with significant experience in local government, in 1399.<sup>51</sup> Constable had served abroad in the army of John of Gaunt in the 1370s, but otherwise had no discernible link to the Duchy. It could be argued, therefore, that Henry IV's initial intention was to distance himself from the strategy employed - somewhat unpopularly - in the later years of Richard II's reign, namely the advancement of friends, associates and members of the royal affinity. Instead, Henry preferred individuals who either had no traditional link, or were distantly connected, to the Duchy of Lancaster, but also had considerable expertise in their respective fields. This was the case with Sir John Constable, Sir William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> and Richard Gascoigne<sub>9</sub>. Simon Walker argued that the transition between the final decade of Richard II and the first decade of the usurper's regime showed very little procedural change; the commissions were no more nor no less a tool of the local gentry in self-government than they had been under Richard II, and nor were the commissions any more likely to fall victim to the ambitious corruption of the magnate affinities.<sup>52</sup> That being said, the attendance payments of Richard Gascoigne increased dramatically following the usurpation: he attended just 4 out of 13 sessions between 1395 and 1399, compared with payments for attending 66 out of 72 attendance sessions between 1399 and 1409.<sup>53</sup> As will be discussed later in this chapter, it could be argued that during the reigns of Richard II and Henry IV, the dispensing of justice in the West Riding of Yorkshire was dominated by the Gascoigne family.

The death of Henry IV in 1413 changed this. The young Prince Hal, crowned Henry V (d. 1422), replaced William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> as Chief Justice. Back in Yorkshire, William I served sporadically on the West Riding peace commission as befitted his status as a senior legal figure, yet both Richard<sub>7</sub> (d. 1423) and Nicholas<sub>9</sub> (d. 1427) were removed.<sup>54</sup> In one fell swoop the Gascoignes had lost all the influence they had mustered. This suggests that they were not, in fact, Lancastrians, but were rather Henry IV's men. None of them would hold another office for the remainder of their lives. The year 1415

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<sup>49</sup> *PS*, 118 - 120.

<sup>50</sup> *PS*, 119.

<sup>51</sup> Ormrod (ed.) *The Lord Lieutenants*, 73.

<sup>52</sup> S. Walker, *Political Society*, 99.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 105-106.

<sup>54</sup> TNA E 372/264, rot. 11. See, for example, E 372/269, rot. 11d, and E 372/272, rot. 12d.

saw the Earldom of Northumberland restored to Henry Percy (d. 1455), who was required to marry Eleanor Neville, daughter of Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmorland, to assure his loyalty.<sup>55</sup> The new Earl, Henry Percy, reclaimed his extensive estates in Yorkshire, including the Lordship of Spofforth, the family's stronghold in the West Riding, from the Duke of Bedford, and immediately began to rebuild his affinity.<sup>56</sup> Among those re-employed were Sir John Langton (d. 1459), of Farnley, Richard Fairfax and Guy Fairfax (d. 1446), of Walton, Nicholas Tempest and Sir William Plumpton II.<sup>57</sup> Without the direct lordship required to manage the extensive ties of the Duchy of Lancaster in the northern counties - due to the fact that the Duke was now the King of England - the situation provided the opportunity for other regional magnates to establish themselves. Most notable amongst these were the Nevilles of Westmorland and the Percys of Northumberland. When Henry V resumed the Hundred Years War, William Gascoigne II<sub>14</sub> revealed himself to be an accomplished fighter. He ventured across the English Channel with a number of other Yorkshire gentry, including members of the Plumpton family, and died outside the city of Meaux in 1422.<sup>58</sup> The siege also took the life of Sir Robert Plumpton II and, after contracting dysentery, Henry V himself.<sup>59</sup>

The reign of Henry VI (1422-1461), accentuated the competition between the Percys of Northumberland and the Nevilles of Westmorland. As Henry VI was a minor when he became King, his reign was placed under the control of minority councils, with Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester named as the realm's protector.<sup>60</sup> Something quite dissimilar from Richard II's reign, however, was the fact that the Duchy of Lancaster - the most powerful landowner in the West Riding of Yorkshire - was also in the hands of a minor. Furthermore, the Duchy was divided - the widowed Queen Katherine de Valois was given control of the honour of Knaresborough in 1422 as part of her dower - and unstable. In quick succession, the Stewardship of Knaresborough passed from Sir Robert Plumpton II (d. 1421), to Sir William Gascoigne II<sub>14</sub> (d. 1422), Sir William Harrington (d.

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<sup>55</sup> G. L. Harriss, 'The King and his Magnates', in G. L. Harriss (ed.) *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (Oxford, 1985), 37.

<sup>56</sup> J. M. W. Bean, *The Estates of the Percy Family, 1416-1537* (Oxford, 1958), 71. Bedford was compensated with an annuity of 3,000 marks, which could suggest the worth of the Percy estates at that time.

<sup>57</sup> A. J. Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community of Gentry during the Wars of the Roses', in C. D. Ross (ed.) *Patronage, Pedigree and Power* (Gloucester, 1979), 52; Pollard, *North-Eastern England, 126 - 127; CPR 1405-1408, 42 - 49.*

<sup>58</sup> S. J. Payling, 'Sir William Gascoigne', Clark (ed.), *The History of Parliament.*

<sup>59</sup> John, Lord Clifford also fell at the siege of Meaux. Moreover, Sir Brian Stapleton died at Alençon in 1417 and John Fitzwilliam II was killed at Rouen in 1421; See, *PS*, 37, 142.

<sup>60</sup> Castor, *Duchy of Lancaster*, 38 - 39; *PS*, 149.

1440), and finally, to Sir Richard Hastings of Slingsby.<sup>61</sup> This volatility in the Duchy's holdings was increased with the death of popular gentry figurehead Sir Robert Waterton (d. 1425), as there was no suitable replacement who could muster as much local support. Thus, the decision was made to grant the Stewardship of Pontefract and Tickhill to Sir Richard Neville (d. 1460), the future Earl of Salisbury, and the son of the Earl of Westmorland, in an attempt to make Neville the same form of uniting force that Waterton had been. All the while, without a figurehead able to dispense patronage and rally supporters, the Duchy of Lancaster took measures to ensure control over the West Riding; the placement of the Chief Steward of the North Parts on the commissions of the peace continued, as did the appointment of the Steward of the honour of Pontefract.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the Duchy's representatives were joined on the commissions of the peace by a significant increase in magnates and, from 1431, the Steward of Knaresborough.<sup>63</sup> These replaced a number of Yorkshire families who had held the office of Justice of the Peace with some regularity, due in part to their status as leading families in the West Riding. It is possible that this was the reason why no Gascoigne served on any peace commission between 1419 and 1459.<sup>64</sup> Sir Richard Neville (d. 1460) held just one manor in the West Riding and had little influence within the shire, yet following his appointment in 1425 as Steward he was able to utilise considerable Duchy resources to establish his own local power-base.<sup>65</sup> He recruited two men from lesser gentry families to his cause, Thomas Wombwell (d. 1452) and William Scargill I (d. 1459), both of whom were close associates to Sir Robert Waterton prior to his death.<sup>66</sup> Given that it would be unfeasible for a magnate to retain all of the gentry in a particular area, Carpenter argued that influential families were retained; these influential families would bring others to the affinity without the need to dispense further patronage.<sup>67</sup> For the Duchy of Lancaster and the Nevilles, this took the form of recruiting the families of Wombwell and Scargill,

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<sup>61</sup> Somerville, *Duchy of Lancaster*, 199 - 207; *PS*, 150. Very little information survives to suggest anything as to the activities of William II whilst Steward, Constable and Master Forester of Knaresborough. It is possible that he was abroad during his entire occupancy of the office and although he held the title, never actually administered the role.

<sup>62</sup> The career of Richard Gascoigne, who served as Chief Steward of the North Parts of the Duchy of Lancaster between 1400 and 1407, is discussed in Chapter One of this thesis.

<sup>63</sup> *PS*, 150; *CPR 1416-1422*, 463; *1422-1429*, 563; *1429-1436*, 628; C. E. Arnold, 'The Commission of the Peace for the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1427-1509', in A. J. Pollard (ed.) *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History* (Gloucester, 1984), 118 - 119.

<sup>64</sup> See Tables 1.6 and 1.7.

<sup>65</sup> R. A. Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI* (Stroud, 1998), 21-23; *PS*, 156.

<sup>66</sup> Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*, 25; See too, A. J. Pollard, 'The Northern Retainers of Richard Nevill, earl of Salisbury', *Northern History*, 11 (1976), 52-69.

<sup>67</sup> C. Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community in Medieval England', *JBS*, 33 (1994), 360.

whose main estates were at the very south of the West Riding. For Percy, the solution was to employ the families of Plumpton and Fairfax. Similar to the Earls of Warwick in Buckinghamshire, Salisbury worked with the minority councils - where he was a favourite - to replace established gentry families with members of the lesser gentry; Alfred Manston (d. 1439), Thomas Clarell I (d. 1442), Richard Wentworth I (d. c. 1449), Nicholas Fitzwilliam and Richard Peck (d. c. 1439), among others, all of whom were either esquires or gentlemen.<sup>68</sup> Both Alfred Manston and Thomas Clarell I were kinsmen of the Gascoigne family, and seemed to have significant legal and administrative experience.<sup>69</sup>

In 1437 Henry VI took control of his government; his minority was at an end.<sup>70</sup> Yet by the early 1440s the King was under the sway of the Earl (subsequently the Duke) of Suffolk and his favourites, including the Earls of Westmorland and Salisbury.<sup>71</sup> Magnates were increasingly excluded from government, and this resulted, ultimately, in Suffolk's murder and the rebellion of Jack Cade of Kent in 1450.<sup>72</sup> In Yorkshire, the resistance to the favourites of Henry VI can be seen through the disputes between the foresters from the honour of Knaresborough and Archbishop Kemp of York, another royal favourite, which concerned the appropriate behaviour of the tenants to their liege lord. In 1440, 700 foresters led by Thomas Beckwith of Clint, John Fawkes (d. 1496), and others made their way to Otley where they threatened Robert Mauleverer I (d. 1443), the Archbishop's Steward, following a series of heavy-handed episodes meant to exploit

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<sup>68</sup> Castor, *Duchy of Lancaster*, 235 - 239; Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community', 360. Some leading gentry did serve, however, but these families were often associated with service. Sir Thomas Wombwell served on six commissions (1431, 14435, 1436, March, April and July, 1437); John Thwaites and Thomas Clarell served on eight commissions of the peace (between 1430 and 1440), whilst Robert Waterton served on six. See *CPR 1422-1429*, 578; *CPR 1429-1436*, 628; *CPR 1436-1441*, 594.

<sup>69</sup> Whilst Alfred Manston was related it is unclear how, the will of William Gascoigne I (d. 1419) refers to him as a kinsman. Later, Alfred's kinswoman Alice Manston married William I's grandson and lawyer Robert Gascoigne (d. 1474). Alfred Manston was an annuitant of the Duchy of Lancaster by 1415 (DL 42 17, fol. 94v) where he appears to have been retained as an apprentice-at-law (Somerville, *Duchy of Lancaster*, 453). Alfred served as Escheator for Yorkshire in 1419. Thomas Clarell I was related to the Gascoigne family through the marriage of his eldest daughter, Margaret, to William Gascoigne III (d. c. 1465). He had an equally active career. He was an annuitant of the Duchy of York between 1415 and 1433 (*CCR 1429-1435*, 260), and a King's esquire by 1415 (*CPR 1422-1429*, 66; *1416-1422*, 260). He also served twice as the Sheriff of Lincolnshire (1413-1414 and 1422-1423) and as Escheator of Yorkshire between 1427-1428 and 1434-1435. See *PS*, 248. He joined the West Riding commission of the peace as part of the quorum in 1420 and was regularly reappointed until 1450.

<sup>70</sup> See B. P. Wolffe, *Henry VI* (Yale, 1983) for more details on the reign of Henry VI.

<sup>71</sup> Griffiths, *Henry VI*, chs. 12-14; Castor, *Duchy of Lancaster*, 45.

<sup>72</sup> See, I. M. W. Harvey, *Jack Cades' Rebellion of 1450* (Oxford, 1991).

the decline of royal authority in the county.<sup>73</sup> The Steward of Knaresborough, Sir William Plumpton, was assigned to keep the peace between the opposing sides, but Kemp alleged that Plumpton favoured the rebels, and went so far as to offer assistance to them.<sup>74</sup> In 1441, Kemp led a force of 300 and fought a contingent of foresters. Kemp proclaimed himself the victim, and Northumberland - until this point on the side-lines of the conflict - entered the fray, offering support to the foresters. He initiated a propaganda campaign against Kemp and in 1443, following an attack on Bishopthorpe Palace, Kemp produced evidence of Northumberland's complicity in assembling forces to strike at Kemp and end the feud.<sup>75</sup> Northumberland, Plumpton, William Normanville, John Salvin, Alexander Neville and John Pennington were all called to appear before the council and, after an investigation, were found to be at fault.<sup>76</sup> In what could only be seen as an act of chastisement towards Northumberland, Salisbury was granted the Stewardship of Knaresborough in 1445.<sup>77</sup>

The mid to late fifteenth century was a period which experienced episodic violence between the Nevilles, the Percys and their allies, in what became known as the Wars of the Roses. It would claim the lives of the second and third Earls of Northumberland, Henry Percy (d. 1455) and Henry Percy (d. 1461); Thomas Percy (d. 1460), Lord Egremont; Thomas (d. 1455), Lord Clifford; John (d. 1461), Lord Clifford; Richard Neville (d. 1460), Earl of Salisbury, and his son Sir Thomas Neville (d. 1460).<sup>78</sup> In 1453 events became more violent when the Nevilles agreed a marriage between Thomas Neville and Maud Stanhope, the co-heiress of Ralph, Lord Cromwell, which granted the Neville family a foothold in the East Riding; until that point a stronghold of the Percys. Raids, kidnappings, and acts of violence were perpetrated by both sides and the Crown's attempts to mediate were fruitless. The problems were exacerbated by the decline of the King's mental health and the rise of the Duke of Somerset as Lord Protector. A constitutional crisis emerged in government when Richard, Duke of York,

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<sup>73</sup> *PS*, 171 - 177. See too, T. Stapleton (ed.) *The Plumpton Correspondence*, liv, lvii - lviii; R. A. Griffiths, 'Local Rivalries and National Politics: The Percys, the Nevilles and the Duke of Exeter, 1452-1454', in R. A. Griffiths (ed.) *King and Country: England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1991), 325; *WR*, I, 26.

<sup>74</sup> Stapleton (ed.), *The Plumpton Correspondence*, liv - lvii.

<sup>75</sup> *CPR 1441-1446*, 111; *CCR 1441-1447*, 143; *WR*, I, 26; Griffiths, 'Local Rivalries and National Politics', 324.

<sup>76</sup> *CCR 1441-1447*, 143; Bean, *Estates of the Percy Family*, 92; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 579.

<sup>77</sup> Griffiths, *King Henry VI*, 577-579; Pollard, *North-Eastern England*, 247.

<sup>78</sup> For more information on the Wars of the Roses, see. M. Hicks, *The Wars of the Roses* (London, 2010); R. E. Archer, *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century* (Stroud, 1995); J. Gillingham, *The Wars of the Roses: Peace and Conflict in Fifteenth-Century England* (1981), among many others.

challenged Somerset's authority.<sup>79</sup> This provided enough distraction for violence in Yorkshire to escalate further; Lord Egremont and his brother, Thomas Percy, led 700 men against the Nevilles at Heworth, during the wedding ceremony of Thomas Neville to Maud Stanhope.<sup>80</sup> The ascendancy of York created more instability, as York favoured the Nevilles and relied upon them to maintain his national influence. As a result, Henry Holland, Duke of Exeter, entered the localised conflict as an ally of Percy. More violent episodes were prevented, however, by the return of Henry VI in 1455, who had recovered his health and dismissed York and his allies from court. The attempts by Somerset to regain the upper hand for the Crown failed, and led to the Duke of York and the Earls of Warwick and Salisbury attacking a force led by the Duke of Gloucester at St. Albans on 22 May 1455, the date typically given as the start of the Wars of the Roses.

Information regarding the activities of local government during the decades that followed is sparse. The Wars of the Roses had a significant impact upon the gentry of Yorkshire, and the display of independence shown in 1441 became a distant memory. During this time, the Gascoigne family made determined efforts to remain aloof from the conflict, yet at the same time backed all available parties. William Gascoigne IV<sup>71</sup> was knighted at Wakefield in 1460, yet this is the only demonstrable appearance of the family in the Wars. Moreover, that the Percys began the conflict fighting on behalf of the house of Lancaster yet ended the conflicting fighting alongside Richard III and the house of York, meant that to engage in this particular political quagmire was to guarantee that significant manoeuvrings were necessary to ensure the family would not be on the losing side. Malcolm Mercer argued that the Yorkshire gentry involved themselves in rebellious affairs with hesitancy, and if they could, avoided such encounters altogether.<sup>81</sup> Despite the unlikely possibility that William Gascoigne IV<sup>71</sup> (d. c. 1464) died alongside Northumberland at Towton in 1461, the Gascoigne family survived the Wars of the Roses relatively unscathed.<sup>82</sup> At this stage they were close to the Percy family, through marriage, and the Gascoignes aided the eventual resurgence of the Percy family in Yorkshire from 1470 when the family regained the Earldom of Northumberland. The

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<sup>79</sup> C. Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution in England, c. 1437-1509* (Cambridge, 1997).

<sup>80</sup> Amongst those in the Percy unit were John Clifford, son of Thomas, Lord Clifford; Sir John Stapleton (d. 1455), Roger Ward II of Givendale, Richard Aldeburgh II (d. 1475), Richard Tempest II, John Pudsey II and a number of members of the Hammerton family. See Griffiths (ed.), *King and Country*, 329 - 331.

<sup>81</sup> M. Mercer, *The Medieval Gentry: Power, Leadership and Choice during the Wars of the Roses* (London, 2010), 125 - 128.

<sup>82</sup> It is possible that William IV died of injuries sustained at Wakefield, but due to his complete disappearance from surviving source material, there is no way to know for sure.

Gascoignes' involvement in local politics during this period was quite minimal; only Robert Gascoigne<sup>74</sup>, a lawyer of Lincoln's Inn, served with any regularity as Justice of the Peace for the West Riding. Not until the reign of Henry VII did the Gascoigne family see a return to local politics. They were reappointed to the commissions of the peace and William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> (c. 1467 - 1551) served as Knight of the Shire in 1495. He was also appointed Sheriff in Michaelmas the same year.

The reigns of the early Tudor Kings marked a very different sort of political engagement for the Gascoigne family in Yorkshire.<sup>83</sup> The Gawthorpe branch's involvement in political life declined, and only William VI (d. 1551) continued to serve as a Justice of the Peace, a position he had been assigned to from 1498.<sup>84</sup> Instead, the sixteenth century saw the rise of the Gascoignes of Lasingcroft.<sup>85</sup> For the Lasingcroft branch, John IV<sup>130</sup> (d. 1557) and John V<sup>169</sup> (d. 1602) were returned to Parliament and the former served as a Justice of the Peace for the West Riding between 1540 and 1557.<sup>86</sup> Whilst this is only minimal involvement in local government, it was representative of the minor role that the Gascoigne branches of Yorkshire had in the sixteenth century.<sup>87</sup> The decline in office-holding for the Gawthorpe Gascoignes could reinforce the argument that William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> considered himself to be above the ordinary gentry. In the 1520s he attempted to claim the Earldom of Westmorland.<sup>88</sup> During the tax assessments of 1524 he had refused to be assessed in his own county on the grounds that, as the rightful heir to the Earldom of Westmorland, he should be assessed at Westminster.<sup>89</sup> Those assessments noted the incomes of the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe as £247 13s 4d per annum, marking them out as the most powerful and influential family in the West Riding.<sup>90</sup> The role the Gascoigne family in Yorkshire had during the Reformation appears

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<sup>83</sup> For biographies of the early Tudor Kings, see S. B. Chrimes, *Henry VII* (London, 1977); J. J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (Yale, 1997).

<sup>84</sup> The activity of William Gascoigne VI as a Justice of the Peace will be discussed in later chapters.

<sup>85</sup> Ormrod (ed.) *The Lord Lieutenants*, 100 - 101.

<sup>86</sup> See Tables 4.1 and 4.2.

<sup>87</sup> The same century saw a similar increase in office-holding for the Gascoigne family of Cardington, Bedfordshire. This increase is detailed in the first chapter of this thesis, and has been excluded here for the sake of clarity. This is due to the fact that the Gascoigne family's political life cannot be examined independently, but must be seen as part of the wider county, which this thesis has done. To contextualise the Bedfordshire Gascoignes would mean that it would be necessary to include the gentry of the latter county. For this to be done to a standard worthy of a PhD thesis would increase the number of individuals mentioned in this thesis far beyond a manageable and presentable quantity. This deliberate exclusion has been detailed more fully in the introduction to this thesis.

<sup>88</sup> *LP*, 3, 1415, 1420.

<sup>89</sup> R. B. Smith, *Land and Politics in the England of Henry VIII* (Oxford, 1970), 145.

<sup>90</sup> SC 12/17/15; WARD 7/6/57; E 179/207/138, m. 1.

minimal, except for the fact that William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> attempted to profit from it by claiming a stake in the foundation of Nun Monkton priory.<sup>91</sup> Nor is their activity during the Pilgrimage of Grace (1536-7) known. The Pilgrimage of Grace was a series of risings in northern England - particularly Yorkshire - against the Reformation led by individuals such as Thomas, Lord Darcy.<sup>92</sup> Although the Gascoignes had served alongside Darcy, as had many other West Riding gentry families, the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe appear to have given themselves over to England's new religion. Whilst the Gascoignes themselves appear absent, neither supporting nor opposing the rebellion, members of their distant kin were among the rebellion's leadership. Sir Robert Aske and Sir Robert Constable of Flamborough were particularly active in their support of Darcy.<sup>93</sup> As with the assignment of the Gascoigne family to either the Lancastrians or the Yorkists by historians - as mentioned earlier in this chapter - the Gascoignes have been discussed as both absent from the Pilgrimage of Grace and as participants.<sup>94</sup> Although there is evidence to suggest that the Gascoignes of Lasingcroft were a recusant family, I have been unable to find any evidence to suggest anything as to their loyalties or decisions in regards to the Pilgrimage itself. Evidence utilised in regards to the assignment of the family's role is circumstantial.

The chronological context discussed above provides a general overview of the political developments in Yorkshire between the reigns of Richard II and Henry VIII, when the Gascoignes were arguably most active. The sixteenth century witnessed a shift in political service by the lesser Gascoigne branches of Lasingcroft and Cardington. Comparisons can be made to other gentry families in Yorkshire. In contrast with the Gascoignes' four terms as Sheriff between 1399 and 1550, the Constables of Flamborough and Halsham (ER) held the office of Sheriff for thirteen terms, whilst the Rythers of Ryther (WR) and the Harringtons of Brierley (WR) held the office seven times

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<sup>91</sup> Gascoigne unsuccessfully sought preferential treatment in the division of lands from the priory of Nun Monkton (WR). He appears to have fabricated a claim on the monasteries foundation.

<sup>92</sup> See, M. H. Dodds and R. Dodds, *The Pilgrimage of Grace, 1536-1537, and the Exeter Conspiracy, 1539* (Cambridge, 1915).

<sup>93</sup> Smith, *Land and Politics*, 165 - 212. Both Aske and Constable were relatives of the Gascoigne family. Constable was the great-grandson of Sir Robert Constable III (d. 1441) who married Agnes Gascoigne (d. 1466). It is also possible that this Sir Robert married Dorothy Gascoigne, although it is unclear. Similarly, it is unclear how Sir Robert Aske was related to the Gascoignes due to inconsistencies in evidence (it is possible that Elizabeth Gascoigne, daughter of William Gascoigne senior (d. 1378) married his ancestor) but it is likely that the families were related at this stage due to the presence of Gascoigne heraldry in the Aske manor at Aughton. See Chapter Five of this thesis for more details on this.

<sup>94</sup> S. L. Bastow, *The Catholic Gentry of Yorkshire, 1536-1642: Resistance and Accommodation* (Lewiston, 2007); Smith, *Land and Politics*, 165-170.

apiece.<sup>95</sup> In terms of Knights of the Shire, no family in Yorkshire had any tradition of office, or held the post with any frequency. When a family did hold the office on three or more occasions this tended to be limited to one, particularly active, individual. Sir Brian Stapleton II (d. 1466), of Carlton served as Knight of the Shire in 1437, 1445 and 1453, whilst Sir Richard Redman (d. 1426), served five times: in 1406, 1414, 1415, 1420 and 1421. Only William Gascoigne III<sub>34</sub> (d. c. 1465), could compare, serving in 1431, 1435 and 1453.<sup>96</sup> Although it may appear that the Gascoigne family served in local government with regularity, this is not the case. The family's service was limited to a number of individuals, divided amongst the family's main branches. Moreover, these individuals would often serve with some frequency, yet their kin would serve less often, if at all. Whilst the earlier chapters of this thesis have detailed the careers, lives and networks of the Gascoigne family, this section has provided a brief political overview of the later medieval and Tudor period with a focus on Yorkshire. It is difficult to assign the Gascoignes, as a family, to particular factions during this period with any degree of certainty due to the fact that they did not hold office with any regularity.

#### Office-holding, Bastard Feudalism and the County Community

To be able to effectively orientate discussion around office-holding, it is necessary to discuss two phenomena that are prevalent in the historiographical discourse: Bastard Feudalism and the County Community. Whilst both are constructs of the historian, they act as labels to phenomena which influenced local political society, and therefore influenced political identities. The following section outlines both phenomena, with a focus on those aspects most relevant to discussions of office-holding, before briefly discussing the relationship between each, and the possible implications on political identities. It will then turn its attention to a consideration of the offices of local government held by the Gascoigne family, in relation to Bastard Feudalism and the County Community. It should be noted that whilst both phenomena influence considerations of office-holding, office-holding comprises only one aspect of Bastard Feudalism and the County Community. Despite the recognition above that discussions limited to those who held the offices of local government tend to have limited conclusions, this section will adopt a similar approach, with the acknowledgement that conclusions drawn by this section will be tentative. This is due to the fact that a

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<sup>95</sup> *List of Sheriffs for England and Wales*, PRO Lists and Indexes, 9 (1898), 162 - 163.

<sup>96</sup> A. Gooder (ed.), *The Parliamentary Representation of the County of York*, I, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 91 (1935).

consideration of the relationship between each phenomena and office-holding may add greater clarity to our understanding of its role in local communities and its significance for the gentry. Moreover, the decision to focus on office-holding specifically is due, in part, to the survival of source material. The nature of evidence is such that those who did not serve leave little behind regarding their political identities.

First, let us turn our attention to Bastard Feudalism. Whilst the term was originally coined by Charles Plummer in 1885, it was William Stubbs (d. 1901) who acted as the theory's primary advocate.<sup>97</sup> In his *Constitutional History of England*, Stubbs considered Bastard Feudalism to be a means of acquiring manpower.<sup>98</sup> If Feudalism was based on the tenancy of land in exchange for military service (a knight's fee), then Bastard Feudalism referred to the establishment of a contract-based system where the tenancy of land was replaced by monetary payments. This transition began during the late thirteenth century when knights could offer a cash payment in lieu of their obligatory service on campaign.<sup>99</sup> Magnates would then use these payments to maintain armed retainers. Stubbs (and the school of thought associated with him) believed that this had a negative impact on the structure of political society in two key ways. First, it meant that magnates could maintain full-time retinues of soldiers, whose primary allegiance was to their paymasters.<sup>100</sup> This created a disconnect from what had gone before, as levies were traditionally only raised to serve the realm. A permanent private fighting force could, therefore, be used for private reasons including, for example, the ability to pursue personal feuds. Magnates could also indulge in violent crime and rebellion. Second, a system of payments enabled abuse.<sup>101</sup> It allowed magnates to bribe and coerce judges, justices and other representatives of the Crown in local government; and could subvert royal interests in favour of their own, by stacking juries and dominating commissions of the peace. Stubbs was not alone in this belief that Bastard Feudalism had a detrimental effect on English society. H. G. Richardson, for example, argued that Bastard Feudalism allowed magnates to dominate the shires, proposing their own candidates for political office and influencing the decisions of the county courts with regard to the election of MPs.<sup>102</sup> Helen Cam, R. L. Storey and J. G. Bellamy

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<sup>97</sup> J. Fortescue, *Governance of England* (ed.), C. Plummer (Oxford, 1885), 15-16.

<sup>98</sup> W. Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England, in its origin and development*, 3 vols. (Oxford, 1875).

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid*, iii, 304-305, 573-588, 591. See too, M. Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism*, 15-16.

<sup>100</sup> Hicks, 15-17.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid*, 15-17.

<sup>102</sup> H. G. Richardson, 'John of Gaunt and the Parliamentary Representation of Lancashire', *Bulletin of John Rylands Library*, 22 (1938), 175-222.

have all argued that Bastard Feudalism had a malign impact on justice.<sup>103</sup> Cases were influenced by the use or threat of violence, bribery of judges, juries and officials and intervention by a third party.<sup>104</sup> Moreover, Bellamy argued that crime and violence were endemic in England, and attributed this to the abuses of Bastard Feudalism.<sup>105</sup> Lastly, Christine Carpenter believed that the contract-based system created exclusive and binding ties between the magnate and gentry.<sup>106</sup> At the core of Carpenter's interpretation was tenurial disputes, which would, according to her interpretation, dominate local politics and break out into violence.<sup>107</sup> These relatively minor local issues were then exacerbated by magnates, who utilised the gentry's interests as a proxy to further their own influence in a particular region, county or area.

The detrimental impact of Bastard Feudalism was initially challenged by K. B. McFarlane in the 1940s, who argued that Bastard Feudalism was not an illegitimate mechanism which enabled and encouraged violence, crime and rebellion, but a neutral system that was open to abuse if there was a failure of political control by central government or the Crown.<sup>108</sup> Others have followed suit. It has been suggested, for example, that Storey and Bellamy's arguments regarding the perversion of justice are an exaggeration of reality, given that it requires historians to concede that every single member of the gentry in late medieval England was violent and bloodthirsty, held only in check by the prospect of harsh punishment.<sup>109</sup> Philippa Maddern deconstructed Bellamy's claim that violence was endemic at all, and demonstrated that references to violence in East Anglia's courts were generally uncommon, and actual violence slight.<sup>110</sup> Moreover, McFarlane argued against what Stubbs considered to be the key principle of Bastard Feudalism: the recruitment and maintenance of a permanent armed retinue. He argued that whilst the use of cash contracts, as opposed to tenurial obligations, enabled magnates to maintain significantly larger affinities, these affinities were not solely limited to soldiers. They also included household officers, estate officials, lawyers and

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<sup>103</sup> H. Cam, *Liberties and Communities in Medieval England* (London, 1963); R. L. Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster* (Gloucester, 1986); J. G. Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order in England in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1973); *Ibid*, *Bastard Feudalism and the Law* (London, 1989).

<sup>104</sup> Hicks, 119-124.

<sup>105</sup> Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order*, 1-10.

<sup>106</sup> Carpenter, 'The Beauchamp Affinity', 514-532.

<sup>107</sup> Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism*, 33.

<sup>108</sup> McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century*, 22-43.

<sup>109</sup> R. L. Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster* (Gloucester, 1986); J. G. Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order in England in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1973); *Ibid*, *Bastard Feudalism and the Law* (London, 1989).

<sup>110</sup> P. Maddern, *Violence and the Social Order* (Oxford, 1992), 175, 209.

civil servants, the services of whom were often sealed by indenture.<sup>111</sup> McFarlane contended that contracts between magnates and the gentry were different from tenurial obligations as those retained by magnates entered a non-binding agreement: one, ultimately, reliant upon mutual advantage. Arguably, if the gentry saw no benefit in maintaining such an agreement, they could choose not to.<sup>112</sup> Therefore, it was fundamental that the gentry received something in return. They were not simply employees receiving a wage or an office, but were partners. The magnate could rely upon support from the gentry, by filling offices in the household, representing their interests on commissions or in court rooms, or fighting on the battlefield. The gentry could expect similar support in return, with intervention by the magnate in favour of just causes.<sup>113</sup> For McFarlane, the significance of Bastard Feudalism was these relationships between the magnate and the gentry they employed.

Yet Bastard Feudalism is not without its critics. One specific issue has been the idea that magnates utilised their considerable influence and resources in a county to dominate commissions of the peace or other offices of local government, yet appeared not to put this dominance to use. In his study of Lincolnshire, for example, Jonathan Mackman argued that arbitrary appointment by magnates of 'their men' to the offices of local government without any justification or need would be a waste of resources.<sup>114</sup> This seems logical. It would make little sense for magnates to dedicate a portion of their influence and resources to attaining a position for a member of their affinity, if that person's term was characterised by a failure to attend meetings or carry out their responsibilities. Mackman argued that justification, therefore, had to be given by the historian for suggesting magnate intercession in a political appointment, especially if that individual was a leading member of the county's gentry, who could reasonably expect such an appointment without interference on their behalf. Similarly, Colin Richmond criticised the view that Bastard Feudalism was the primary influence on the behaviour of the gentry. He noted that to suggest that the magnates' interests took precedence above all else would be to suggest that the gentry were Pavlovian dogs, 'jumping at the chance of a fee, a rent charge, a Stewardship here, a Parkership there.'<sup>115</sup> He argued that to suggest that magnate ties *predetermined* gentry behaviour would be

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<sup>111</sup> McFarlane, 29.

<sup>112</sup> See McFarlane, 'Parliament and Bastard Feudalism'; and 'Bastard Feudalism', 23-44, particularly, 23-25.

<sup>113</sup> Hicks, 150.

<sup>114</sup> Mackman, 'The Lincolnshire Gentry', 91.

<sup>115</sup> C. Richmond, 'Review: After McFarlane', *History*, 68 (1983), 57.

to suggest that the gentry lacked any agency of their own.<sup>116</sup> However, general opposition to Bastard Feudalism has been embodied by a second historiographical phenomena, to which we now turn our attention.

The second phenomena prevalent in the historiography of the medieval gentry is that of the County Community. Although the idea is often associated with early modern examinations of the gentry, it was a group of medievalists, including F. W. Maitland, Frederick Pollock and Helen Cam, who were among the first to consider the possibility of a 'community' within the county's administrative confines. Pollock and Maitland argued that the county should be viewed as an organised body of men, whilst Cam went further and suggested that the county community was 'an organism, a unit held together by proximity, by local feeling and above all by common living traditions and common responsibilities'.<sup>117</sup> The popularity of the County Community theory is mainly the result of a series of articles by John Maddicott, in which he argued for an active and politically-minded community in the fourteenth-century shires.<sup>118</sup> Maddicott claimed that within the administrative framework of the county there existed social communities of gentry, created by geographical proximity, kinship ties and socio-cultural exchange, that were capable of acting as a unified whole and agreeing on their own leaders and spokesmen.<sup>119</sup>

Whilst the County Community has not undergone the same level of revision that the theory of Bastard Feudalism has, more recent studies have expanded on Maddicott's conclusions. In his study of Cheshire and Lancashire, for example, Michael Bennett explored the idea that the County Community was more than just a political community. He suggested that the administrative confines created a meaningful world of political *and* social activity for gentry resident within them. Although many of the significant and leading gentry would have had families and connections in neighbouring counties – as indeed the Gascoignes did – the social world for a majority of gentry was based, ultimately, within the personal connections and collective responsibilities of a single shire.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, the county community's interaction with office-holding and county

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 57-58.

<sup>117</sup> F. Pollock and F. W. Maitland, *The History of English Law*, I, 534; H. Cam, *Liberties and Communities*, 247.

<sup>118</sup> J. R. Maddicott, 'The County Community and the Making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth-Century England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> series, 28 (1978), 27-43; 'Magna Carta and the Local Community, 1215-1259', *P&P*, 102 (1984), 25-65; 'Parliament and the Constituencies, 1272-1377', in R. G. Davies and J. H. Denton (eds.), *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (Manchester, 1981), 61-87.

<sup>119</sup> S. Walker, *Political Society*, 68-69.

<sup>120</sup> M. Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism*, 21. See too, Ibid, 'A County Community', 24-44. See too, E. Acheson, *Leicestershire*, 89-92.

politics is often considered to be part of what Simon Walker termed the county's 'corporate personality'.<sup>121</sup> The county could legally sue and be sued, as well as return representatives to Parliament that would act in the name of the entire community of a county.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, the justices of the peace could be seen as a representation of the County Community, as although they were not elected to the post, they often included leading gentry figures, who would then be expected to dispense justice fairly regardless of personal loyalties or magnate ties.<sup>123</sup> They therefore acted as representatives of the entire community.

The County Community has also been subjected to criticism. In one respect, the phenomenon assumes that so-called 'horizontal' connections between members of the gentry operated within clearly defined administrative and geographical borders. Moreover, as Christine Carpenter has argued, discussions of the County Community have often assumed a 'face-to-face' social community.<sup>124</sup> She suggests that the concept of such a community may apply to villages but cannot realistically be applied to entire counties. This is because a gentry community should take into account all the gentry within the county, not just those at the top. In his study on the Nottinghamshire gentry, Simon Payling emphasised the corporate identity of the County Community, yet limited his assessment to only a handful of gentry families.<sup>125</sup> Similarly, Susan Wright's study on Derbyshire examined fifty gentry families out of over two hundred.<sup>126</sup> Carpenter argues that whilst this shows the importance of localised groups, with close links between leading families, it is not necessarily indicative of a County Community.<sup>127</sup> Jonathan Mackman has highlighted the geographical variation and its possible implications for the County Community. The counties of England varied enormously in size, from Yorkshire (3.6 million acres) to Rutland (97,500 acres), and to assume that the gentry of a larger county could engage in the same sustained and frequent interactions as smaller counties would be misleading.<sup>128</sup> With regard to Yorkshire, Carol Arnold and Mark Punshon proposed that instead of a single community, there was a series of communities which were not necessarily based on administrative or political boundaries, but were determined by social bonds influenced by administrative or political factors.<sup>129</sup> These

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<sup>121</sup> Walker, *Political Culture*, 70.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid*, 70.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid*, 70-71.

<sup>124</sup> Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community', 344.

<sup>125</sup> Payling, *Political Society*, 1-20.

<sup>126</sup> Wright, *Derbyshire*, 5-6, 11.

<sup>127</sup> Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community', 354.

<sup>128</sup> Mackman, 'The Lincolnshire Gentry', 13-19.

<sup>129</sup> *PS*, 8-10; *WR*, I, 373-375.

social bonds developed through a combination of magnate influences, political office, and social and cultural exchange in the localities. This seems logical. It seems unlikely that the gentry resident in the honour of Tickhill, for example, could develop sustained meaningful relationships with gentry resident in Richmondshire (roughly 71 miles away) or Flamborough (roughly 62 miles away), both of which were within Yorkshire's county borders. Whilst the Gascoignes were able to occasionally foster such relationships, particularly with the Constables of Flamborough, such instances were rare.

Before moving on, one point should be reiterated, not just for the sake of clarity but also for its significance in the coming discussion. This point relates to the historiographical conflict between these phenomena and why they are often considered at odds with each other. Neither Bastard Feudalism nor the County Community is wholly concerned with office-holding, yet it is this singular aspect that has caused the most controversy between each phenomena's respective advocates. On one hand, the proponents of Bastard Feudalism argue that a magnate used his influence and resources to obtain positions and offices in local government for his supporters. These men would then use the authority and influence of their position to favour the magnate's interests and other members of the magnate's affinity. On the other hand, the County Community argues that those gentry who received the majority of patronage from the Crown were appointed to offices of local government, or were elected to serve as MPs, acted as leaders of a community that could and did act for themselves and for their community. They could prioritise issues over others, resolve problems and feuds without violence or intercession and could act as a unified whole when necessary. It has even been suggested that the principles of the County Community imply that the gentry would put the concerns and needs of the community above their own private interests.<sup>130</sup>

Such interpretations have implications on considerations of political identities. If this interpretation of Bastard Feudalism was accurate, and it was commonplace that gentry were assigned to offices of local government as a result of magnate intercession or favour, then it stands to reason that their conduct whilst in offices would reveal little as to their political identities. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to know for sure whether they were acting of their own free will, or whether they were following the instruction of their puppet-masters, and as such could be indicative more of magnate interests and concerns rather than gentry ones. In turn, if this interpretation of County Community was accurate, that the gentry acted as leaders of the community, and

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<sup>130</sup> See, for example, M. J. Bennett, 'The Cheshire Gentry', 27-28; Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism*, 42-43; Walker, *Political Culture*, 68-70.

selflessly put the county's needs above their own, then it could likewise be restrictive of the conclusions that could be drawn. More often than not, it is not possible to determine whether a gentry figure was assigned to a position because of intercession or not, nor is it possible to ascertain whether a gentry figure acted in the interests of the county or themselves, yet, simply by accepting such interpretations as influential in office-holding assumes a lack of agency on the part of the gentry. This is not to say that the reality of decision-making in late medieval England is that simplistic, yet these examples serve to demonstrate a point. The situation would be complicated further when consider the fact that members of the gentry could be involved in multiple magnate affinities, and recognise that one decision in favour of a magnate would not necessarily indicate that every decision was inherently biased.

With that in mind, it is time to return our attention to the goal of this section: a consideration of the offices of local government in relation to the theories of Bastard Feudalism and the County Community. To do this, the case studies discussed in the following paragraphs are centred on Yorkshire. Yorkshire provides the best parameters through which to examine the Gascoigne family, so far as the offices of local government were concerned, as the county was home to significant honours and lordships which provided additional recruitment opportunities alongside the traditional offices of local government, service in magnate retinues and the royal household. Assessing these offices has often been used to determine political identities, but also the extent to which a magnate might influence a county's politics.<sup>131</sup>

The first suitable case study assessed here is the commissions of the peace. This is because numerous members of the Gascoigne family were assigned to the commissions were a degree of regularity. Two periods (1389-1413 and 1430-1455) will be used. The reasons for this are four-fold. First, an examination of those appointed to the commissions of the peace without any data on their attendance is fruitless, as it would be logical to assume that if a magnate were to commit considerable resources and influence in having 'their men' appointed, then the magnates would, presumably, want

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<sup>131</sup> Payling, *Political Society*; M. J. Bennett, 'A County Community: Social Cohesion Amongst the Cheshire Gentry, 1400-1425', *Northern History*, 8: 1 (1973), 36-43; M. Cherry, 'The Courtenay Earls of Devon: The Formation and Disintegration of a Late Medieval Aristocratic Affinity', *Southern History*, I (1979), 71-97; B. R. Harvey, 'The Berkeleys of Berkeley, 1281-1417: A study in the lesser peerage of Late Medieval England', (University of St. Andrews, PhD Thesis, 1988); M. L. Holford, 'The Esh Family: Office-holding and Landed Society in the Palatinate of Durham in the Early Fourteenth Century', *Northern History*, 43:2 (2006), 221-239; H. Kleineke, 'The Dinham Family in the Later Middle Ages', (Royal Holloway PhD Thesis, 1998); J. R. Maddicott, 'The County Community and the Making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth-Century England', *T.R.H.S.*, 5<sup>th</sup> Series, 27 (1978), 27-43.

their interests represented. Thus, an individual's attendance is vital to this. Second, the survivability of attendance information varies throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the two periods under examination represent periods where data is most abundant. Third, these periods have been examined before, by Simon Walker and Mark Punshon. Walker used his examination to demonstrate that the commissions of the peace were just a continuation of Richard II's reign, and that the local political offices of Lancastrian England were not necessarily dominated by Lancastrians themselves.<sup>132</sup> Punshon has argued the opposite point and utilised the evidence to demonstrate that during the reign of Henry IV there was a considerable increase in the appointment of Lancastrian personnel to local government offices.<sup>133</sup> Finally, the availability of source material, ease of access, and divided opinion coincide with periods where the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe were amongst the most powerful gentry in the West Riding, and thus their inclusion, or absence, from such offices may allow for conclusions concerning the Gascoignes' interaction with magnates, but also allow for wider consideration of political identities.

Between the years 1389 and 1413, 50 commissions of the peace were established for the three ridings of Yorkshire, divided amongst a total of 94 justices: 19 magnates, 9 assize justices, 24 justices of the quorum and 42 local gentry. The latter, Walker noted, lacked the specialised legal knowledge that was required to be considered as part of the quorum.<sup>134</sup> To examine the impact of Bastard Feudalism and the County Community on local political society, it is necessary to limit discussion to those for whom attendance payments survive. As argued above, the gentry could neither distort justice in favour of magnates and their affinities, nor act independently, if they were not in attendance. Additionally, as this discussion is concerned primarily with the gentry, magnates will not be included. Of these 94 justices, attendance payments survive for 17 individuals on the West Riding peace commission, recorded in Table 1.6 of this thesis.<sup>135</sup> During the reign of Richard II, the responsibilities of the commission were principally carried out by William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419), John Woodruff, John Saville and William Rilleston; respectively, the Duchy of Lancaster's Chief Steward, secondary Justice of the Duchy of Lancaster, Constable of Pontefract and Bailiff of Staincross, all of which were Lancastrian offices. It could be suggested, therefore, that during the reign of Richard II the Duchy of Lancaster held sway over the West Riding peace commission. During the

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<sup>132</sup> Walker, *Political Culture*, 99-104.

<sup>133</sup> *PS*, 96-108, 117-119.

<sup>134</sup> Walker, *Political Culture*, 82.

<sup>135</sup> See page 265.

reign of Henry IV, the responsibilities were carried out almost single-handedly by Richard Gascoigne<sup>9</sup> (d. 1423), who attended 61 out of 64 recorded peace session days between 1399 and 1411. Richard sat on the commission by virtue of his position as Chief Steward of the Northern Parts of the Duchy of Lancaster, which is again suggestive of a Lancastrian influence on West Riding peace commissions at that time.

The prominence of the Gascoigne family on the peace commissions during that time warrants further discussion. William I's presence was due, in part, to his position on the judicial circuits and his responsibilities as a lawyer for the Duchy of Lancaster. After his promotion to Chief Justice, William I's activity declined dramatically, although not before 1402. This is because it was he and Thomas Tildesley who represented the central courts on the Yorkshire commissions of gaol delivery and assize during the reign of Henry IV.<sup>136</sup> This meant that he was visiting Yorkshire at least twice a year. Moreover, in the first two years of Henry IV's reign, there was a flurry of activity on the judicial circuits, with seven additional sessions of gaol delivery, providing explanation for his attendance at 11 out of 31 session days between March 1399 and October 1402.<sup>137</sup> As this flurry of activity subsided so did his attendance on the West Riding peace commissions, only to surge again after he left office; between 1415 and 1419 he received attendance payments for twelve sessions.<sup>138</sup> However, although central court justices were assigned to the peace commissions with great frequency, their attendance was typically sparse. For example, John Cokayn (Chief Baron of the Exchequer, 1400-1406), attended just one session of the West Riding peace commission during the reign of Henry IV.<sup>139</sup>

It is possible to make several assessments from this first case study. First, the Gascoigne family had a significant role in the dispensation of justice on the West Riding peace commissions during the reigns of Richard II and Henry IV, though this was often due to their association with the Duchy of Lancaster. This does not necessarily mean that these commissions were dominated by Lancastrians. A more suitable descriptor of William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> and Richard Gascoigne<sup>9</sup> would be that they were Henry IV's men, not Lancastrians. Neither continued their involvement in the Duchy after Henry's death, and even from evidence during his lifetime there is little to suggest that they were avid Lancastrians. It should be noted, however, that they were among the first to join Henry Bolingbroke when he returned to England in 1399 – which is discussed in greater detail

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<sup>136</sup> Walker, *Political Culture*, 87.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid*, 87.

<sup>138</sup> *PS*, 237.

<sup>139</sup> Walker, *Political Culture*, 87.

in Chapter Four – though this should not necessarily be considered an act of loyalty, but an act of preservation.<sup>140</sup> Second, though William I<sub>4</sub> attended the peace commissions with great frequency, he should not be considered unusual to other central court justices, as his continued activity in the early years of Henry IV's reign could be attributed to the upheaval caused by a new regime. Once things had returned to normal, his activity declined. Third, it would be wrong to suggest that the Crown utilised individuals from the central courts to influence local justice as they were simply not present at enough commissions to exert any form of influence. Most of the commission's power resided with the quorum – those on the commissions who were required to be present in order that felonies and trespasses could be brought to judgement. The quorum of the West Riding included William I<sub>4</sub>, John Woodruff of Wooley, Richard Gascoigne<sup>9</sup>, Robert Tirwhit, John Ingelby, John Scardeburgh, Robert Newton, John Foljambe and William Lodington.<sup>141</sup> The latter four did not attend a single commission and of the others, Tirwhit and Ingelby appeared only sporadically. Fourth, their activity is suggestive of the reputation that the Gascoigne family had in the West Riding and beyond at that time, for by the reign of Richard II the Parliamentary commons were insisting that justices were well-established, qualified and 'of good fame and condition'. They also specified that justices were not responsible for any discord or quarrelling in the county.<sup>142</sup>

The second set of commissions cover the period between 1430 and 1455. Table 1.7 shows the 19 individuals who received at least one payment for attendance during that period.<sup>143</sup> Information on how many session days were held between 1433 and 1437 is lacking, yet survives for the other years of this set. The year 1455 is chosen as a cut off for these case studies as attendance data for the decades after 1455 are inconsistent and incomplete. Whilst the composition of the commission is often known, the frequency with which they attended is not, and therefore any discussion of justices during that period would simply be too speculative to be of use in discussions about magnate influence or political identities. Moving on to the possibility of magnate inference, it makes sense to exclude from discussion those who only appeared at one session during their term of office. This includes: Edmund Fitzwilliam I, Alexander Aune, Sir Thomas Harrington, Sir John Talbot and John Hastings. The most active gentry on the West Riding peace commission between 1430 and 1455 were John Thwaites, Thomas Clarell I and Guy Fairfax of Walton, all members of minor gentry families then on the rise.

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<sup>140</sup> See pages 176-205.

<sup>141</sup> See *PS*, appendix 4.a, 233.

<sup>142</sup> Walker, *Political Culture*, 94.

<sup>143</sup> See page 266 of this thesis.

Thomas Wombwell of Wombwell, a family often associated with the Duchy of Lancaster, was also relatively active.<sup>144</sup> Of the active members of these commissions, John Thwaites of Lofthouse (d. 1469) was a close associate of the Lasingcroft Gascoignes. He had been Nicholas Gascoigne's<sup>7</sup> (d. 1427) trustee upon his death in 1427, and had been associated with Nicholas' son and heir, John<sup>26</sup>. In 1430 and 1436, Thwaites also served as Yorkshire's Escheator.<sup>145</sup> Similarly, Thomas Clarell I (d. 1442) of Aldwick was a kinsman of William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> (d. c. 1465), who married Margaret Clarell<sup>35</sup>. He also served as Escheator in 1427 and 1434.<sup>146</sup> Guy Fairfax (d. 1446) of Walton served continuously on the West Riding peace commission from his appointment in early 1431 until his death. He also served as a legal advisor to Sir Robert Waterton, and was associated with the Percy Earls of Northumberland. Henry Percy, the second Earl of Northumberland, granted Fairfax a life interest in lands at West Walton in 1433 in place of an annuity.<sup>147</sup> Significantly, of the most active members only one, Thomas Wombwell, had any association at all with the Earl of Salisbury, who was in control of the Duchy's possessions during the period under examination.

There are a few differences between the West Riding peace commissions of 1389 - 1413 and those of 1430 - 1455. Of the first set of commissions, ten of the total number were knights, whilst the remaining seven were esquires and gentlemen. The second set of commissions comprised only five knights, with fourteen esquires and gentlemen. Moreover, the second set of commissions includes a considerable increase in the number of gentry who had served as Escheator of Yorkshire, a post typically reserved for lesser gentry and aspirant yeomanry. Only two individuals from the first set of commissions served as Escheator - Sir Richard Redman in 1404 and Edmund Fitzwilliam in 1413 and 1428 respectively - whilst the second set featured five: the previously mentioned Edmund Fitzwilliam, Thomas Clarell I, John Thwaites, Alfred Manston and Nicholas Fitzwilliam.<sup>148</sup> This could represent a shift in recruitment by Henry VI to include a wider range of gentry in dispensing justice in the localities. Yet evidence is lacking to argue such a point. An argument could be made that the mid-fifteenth century was a period when there was simply a lack of interest amongst the leading gentry in taking up offices of local government. This could be because the gentry of Yorkshire found themselves at the centre of magnate disputes. Given the disturbed state of national politics, it could be

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<sup>144</sup> PS, 71, 157; *Somerville, Duchy of Lancaster*, 513.

<sup>145</sup> *List of Escheators for England and Wales*, PRO Lists and Indexes, 72 (1971), 192.

<sup>146</sup> *List of Escheators*, 192.

<sup>147</sup> WR, I, 12; PS, 144.

<sup>148</sup> *List of Escheators*, 190-193.

considered astute to remain uninvolved in local government and justice. With a king, unable or unwilling to provide arbitration, distrust and disagreement between competing magnates developed into episodic violence, as the section above detailed, and thus there could be a desire for the gentry to declare themselves independent of such quarrels.

From here, let us turn our attention to the second set of case studies. Parliamentary representatives and their elections provide an opportunity to examine the political domain of the Yorkshire gentry, to ascertain whether there was any degree of magnate interference. The election of 1442, overseen by the Sheriff, William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> (d. c. 1465) is a suitable example. Whilst very little is known about the election process within the county court, it is possible to assume that a series of events led to a consensus amongst the landowning elite. For instance, it is reasonable to assume that some form of process took place to ensure that there was a short-list of candidates from which the county electorate could choose their representatives. Canvassing likely took place to discern the opinions of the county franchise, as in 1455 the Duke of Norfolk sought views amongst the local gentry after making it known that he wished for Sir Roger Chamberlain and John Howard to be returned for the county of Norfolk; in this instance only the former was selected, and John Paston was selected to fill the other seat after Howard's unpopularity was determined.<sup>149</sup> The Parliamentary returns of 1442 are the earliest surviving returns for Yorkshire to include a list of attestors, following the statutes of 1429-1430 which legally defined the elections, and formally ensured that the knights returned to Parliament had the support of a majority of the county's attestors.<sup>150</sup> Moreover, the same legislation widened the franchise to all those individuals who had an income of 40s.<sup>151</sup> Whilst those who could be returned were limited to knights with landed incomes of £40 per annum (from 1445), the fact that any freeholder with an annual income of 40s was involved in the selection process, provided they were resident in Yorkshire, meant that the electors of the county's Knights of the Shire were not just representative of the knights and esquires, but were also representative of lesser landowners.

Following an election, the Sheriff would return a writ to the chancery which

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<sup>149</sup> S. J. Payling, 'The Widening Franchise - Parliamentary Elections in Lancastrian Nottinghamshire', in D. Williams (ed.) *England in the Fifteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1986 Harlaxton Symposium* (Woodbridge, 1987), 177.

<sup>150</sup> *Stat. Realm*, II, 170, 243.

<sup>151</sup> *Stat. Realm*, II, 243.

noted the result.<sup>152</sup> After 1430, the returns also listed the electors, who were included to attest to the fact that the election had been fairly conducted.<sup>153</sup> When attestors were noted, the clerk would often divide them into four categories: knights, esquires, gentlemen and others, the latter referring to individuals who were unstyled. As can be seen by Table 1.8, the 1442 election featured a significantly higher proportion of attestors than other elections in Yorkshire. Moreover, only three knights are styled as such. The fact that no esquires or gentlemen were counted indicates that the clerk chose not to differentiate; among the list of 451 are a number of esquires, including William Scargill I (d. 1459) of Lead, Robert Sandford II (d. 1459) of Askham, and Thomas Wombwell I (d. 1452) of Wombwell.<sup>154</sup> In her study of the West Riding of Yorkshire, Carol Arnold argued that these 451 individuals who attested to the fair elections of 1442 numbered all the attestors of Yorkshire.<sup>155</sup> This is representative of a historiographical tendency to assign the elections of the Knights of the Shire to the gentry, rather than all freeholders with an income of 40s. It is likely that many of those who attested the election of 1442 were not members of the county gentry and appeared infrequently in surviving source material. This would be due to their relatively low rank, which restricted their access to the offices of local government. Whilst a number of lesser families, including the Beestons, Mirfields, Thwaites and Rythers, were represented by multiple family members, there were a number of individuals – who would have been part of the franchise – that were missing, including a significant number of knights.<sup>156</sup> Moreover, aside from William III and John Gascoigne of Lasingcroft, only one other Gascoigne was present – Henry Gascoigne<sup>46</sup> of Micklefield (d. 1457).

However, the number of individuals who attested this election is noteworthy.<sup>157</sup> It is possible that it was hotly contested, yet given the fact that a commission was established to investigate the election makes that improbable, as such an act suggests that the events surrounding the election were not commonplace.<sup>158</sup> Arnold has argued that this was a move by the Yorkshire gentry to declare themselves independent of magnate control.<sup>159</sup> Prior to 1442, it had been commonplace that the attestation of an election in the county had been the purview of the magnates' lawyers and county

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<sup>152</sup> TNA C 219/15/2, m. 23; Sir William Eure and Sir Thomas Saville were returned to Parliament for Yorkshire in 1442.

<sup>153</sup> WYL GC/F/5/1, f. 16.

<sup>154</sup> TNA C 219/15/2, m. 23.

<sup>155</sup> TNA C 219/15/2, m. 23; See too, *WR*, I, 222, 217; ii, 96; *PS*, 88.

<sup>156</sup> TNA C 219/15/2, m. 23-25.

<sup>157</sup> *WR*, I, 217-218; II, 96; *PS*, 88; C 219/15/2, m. 23; *Stat. Realm*, ii, 243.

<sup>158</sup> *CPR 1441-1446*, 108.

<sup>159</sup> *WR*, I, 218-219.

officials.<sup>160</sup> This suggests that in such instances the magnates were required to consent to the individual being returned to Parliament. If this was the case, then it presents an image of a magnate stranglehold on Yorkshire's political offices. If, as Simon Payling noted, the actual names of the individuals listed were not important, but rather that the collaboration and consensus of the county as a whole was, then this election should be viewed as part of a wider political narrative.<sup>161</sup> Since Henry VI took control of his government in 1437 he had been strongly influenced by the Earl of Suffolk and his magnate allies, the Earls of Westmorland and Salisbury.<sup>162</sup> Not only were the Percys at odds with Richard Neville, the Earl of Salisbury, but both also had other challenges to their authority to contend with. As detailed above, Archbishop Kemp used his royal influence to dominate the gentry resident in the honour of Knaresborough; the latter had received Percy support, whilst Salisbury had to contend with a dispute over the inheritance of the earldom of Westmorland, which was only resolved in 1443.<sup>163</sup> Therefore, a declaration by a substantial number of the county's freeholders of their independence would be a powerful statement.<sup>164</sup>

The intensity of these political disputes undoubtedly had an impact upon Yorkshire. Not only did a series of violent episodes take place within the county borders, but resident gentry were often employed by, and had ties to, a number of participants. Rather than there being a lack of interest in holding office, it could be suggested that it was in the gentry's interests not to participate. Siding with Northumberland against Archbishop Kemp would put the gentry at odds with the Earl of Salisbury – a close associate of Kemp – who was then the custodian of the Duchy of Lancaster's lands in the county. Conversely, siding with Salisbury would put them at odds with Northumberland, and ally them with Kemp, an individual who abused his position to further his own ambitions, often at the expense of the prominent gentry in the West Riding. Thus, the only politically astute decision for a majority of the gentry was to do nothing, and to wait

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<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, I, 218.

<sup>161</sup> S. J. Payling, 'County Parliamentary Elections in Fifteenth-Century England', *Parliamentary History*, 18:3 (1999), 248-249.

<sup>162</sup> Griffiths, *Henry VI*, chs. 12-14; Castor, *Duchy of Lancaster*, 45.

<sup>163</sup> Pollard, *North-Eastern England*, 246; Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster*, 113-114.

<sup>164</sup> Moreover, given that in 1445 Parliament passed legislation – at the urging of the Commons – against improper election activity by Sheriffs, and determined that only knights, esquires and gentlemen resident in the county could be returned suggests that possible magnate influence was a genuine concern of the Commons as a whole, rather than just the Yorkshire gentry. See, A. Curry (ed.), 'Henry VI: Parliament of February 1445, Text and Translation', in C. Given-Wilson et al., *The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, item 48. Internet version, at [www.sd-editions.com/PROME](http://www.sd-editions.com/PROME), accessed 21/07/2015 (Leicester, 2005).

out the uncertainty.

If this is the case, then it stands to reason that the knights returned to Parliament reflected an electorate that could think and act for itself, not just within the selection process. The period between 1430 and 1455 was a period of political instability, with a number of magnates vying for control; including Edmund, Duke of Somerset (d. 1455), Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (d. 1447), John, Duke of Bedford (d. 1435), John Holland, Duke of Exeter (d. 1447), Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick (d. 1471), Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury (d. 1460), William de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk (d. 1450), Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland (d. 1455), and Richard, Duke of York (d. 1460). If the gentry of Yorkshire wished to set themselves apart from the magnate hostilities within their own county, then they would avoid being returned to Parliament when such hostilities could manifest themselves on a national stage.

Between 1430 and 1455, Yorkshire returned sixteen individuals to fourteen Parliaments (or twenty-eight seats).<sup>165</sup> Of those sixteen individuals, three were from the East Riding, four were from the North Riding and eight were from the West Riding. The remaining knight was from County Durham. Significantly, of these sixteen knights, only four had no ties to either Salisbury or Kemp; William Normanville (ER), Alexander Neville (NR), William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> and Brian Stapleton II, all of whom were associated with, or tenants of, the Percys. Aside from Thomas Saville, who was a close associate of Archbishop Kemp, the remainder had ties to Salisbury.<sup>166</sup> Connections alone did not necessarily guarantee that an individual had been returned to Parliament because of a magnate's intercession. Arguably, the families of Gascoigne, Waterton, Stapleton, Saville and Constable were prominent enough to be returned to Parliament in their own right. Yet why did these families serve as Knights of the Shire if they actively chose not to serve with any consistency in other offices?

The answer to that question could be found in the Parliaments themselves. It is highly unlikely that the land-owning elite would return members to Parliament without

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<sup>165</sup> See Gooder (ed.) *The Parliamentary Representation*.

<sup>166</sup> *PS*, 126, 243, 242, 246; *WR*, I, 45; II, 43, 64; R. A. Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI: The Exercise of Royal Authority, 1422-1461* (London, 1981), 602; Bean, *The Estate of the Percy Family*, 96-97; C. Richmond, *John Hopton: A Fifteenth-Century Suffolk Gentleman* (Cambridge, 1981), 106; 'Gregory's Chronicle: 1461-1469', in J. Gairdner (ed.) *The Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1878), 210; Pollard, *North-Eastern England*, 212; Pollard, 'The Northern Retainers', 63; J. S. Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422* (Manchester, 1954), 178; J. C. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament, 1439-1509: biographies*, 426-427, 682-683; M. Jones and S. Walker, 'Private Indentures for Life Service in Peace and War, 1278-1476', *Camden Miscellany XXXII*, Camden Society, 5<sup>th</sup> series, 3 (1994), 146; Somerville, *Duchy of Lancaster*, 518-519.

some idea of the political circumstances of the realm, or without any idea of what business was likely to be discussed. Both the Gascoignes and the Plumpton – prominent families in the West Riding – maintained lawyers in London. The volume of correspondence between the two families, their lawyers, and other gentry, in Yorkshire and London, suggests that information was constantly being exchanged.<sup>167</sup> Thus the election of specific individuals may be a response to specific business being addressed, or a need for experienced and steady representatives who could speak for the county. The example of William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> (d. c. 1465), who served in three Parliaments, 1431, 1435 and 1453, demonstrates this. His return in 1431 was his first public office, and as Simon Payling argued this was often seen as a rite of passage for a young head of a prominent gentry family.<sup>168</sup> This rite of passage coincided with the return of a number of extensive land-holdings to Gawthorpe ownership after a burdensome jointure from Joan Wyman<sup>6</sup> and Joan Pickering<sup>15</sup>, respectively William Gascoigne III's mother and grandmother.<sup>169</sup> The Parliament itself was relatively routine. William's next Parliament, in 1435, was a stark contrast.<sup>170</sup> The years before had seen an intensification of feuding between Gloucester, Bedford, Archbishop Kemp and Cardinal Beaufort. Moreover, William Plumpton II (d. 1480) was with Bedford when he died in France in early 1435.<sup>171</sup> On his return to Yorkshire he likely brought news of Bedford's death, and the defection of the Burgundians to the French cause.<sup>172</sup> Thus it would make political sense to send two members of the leading gentry who were experienced and influential in the localities

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<sup>167</sup> Letters were exchanged with justices of King's Bench and Common Pleas, the lead Baron of the Exchequer, and lawyers Godfrey and Henry Green, among others. Richard Neville, earl of Warwick and Salisbury also wrote to the Plumpton to urge them to drop a 'pretend claim' on lands claimed by the former. See Stapleton (ed.), *Plumpton Correspondence* (London, 1839).

<sup>168</sup> S. J. Payling, 'Identifiable motives for Election to Parliament in the Reign of Henry VI: The operation of public and private factors', in L. Clark (ed.) *Identity and Insurgency in the Late Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2006), 89.

<sup>169</sup> The inheritance of William Gascoigne II (d. 1422) was an arduous affair for the Gascoigne family. His executor, Nicholas Gascoigne (d. 1427) fought to keep Joan Wyman from receiving her dower – the extensive manor of Wheldale. Wyman's death also brought property from York. Although the value of the land is unknown at that time, records from 1551 may provide some insight. Gawthorpe was worth £40, Burton Leonard £26 8s 4d, Thorp Arch £11, Shipley, £17 and Wheldale £19. The holdings of Gawthorpe manor expanded significantly in the last decades of the fifteenth century, and thus it is arguable that in the mid-fifteenth century the Wheldale holdings constituted a significant part of the Gawthorpe patrimony. Combined with the land-holdings of Joan Pickering, it suggests that in the early 1430s the annual income of William Gascoigne III increased significantly.

<sup>170</sup> A. Curry (ed.), 'Henry VI: Parliament of October 1435, Text and Translation', in Given-Wilson et al., *The Parliament Rolls*.

<sup>171</sup> *PS*, 246.

<sup>172</sup> Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI*, 200; J. S. Roskell, *Parliament and Politics in Late Medieval England*, III (London, 1983), 144.

to a Parliament which could have been difficult; Robert Waterton II, another experienced Knight of the Shire, accompanied Gascoigne.<sup>173</sup> The same could be said of the 1453 Parliament where the violent discord between Salisbury and Northumberland was discussed, the Duke of Somerset was indicted for treason, the Duke of York's character was attacked in the Commons, and Salisbury was promoted to Chancellor of England upon Kemp's death.<sup>174</sup> This time William Gascoigne III<sup>34</sup> was accompanied by Brian Stapleton II, another veteran of Parliament and an influential member of the West Riding gentry.<sup>175</sup>

Reasons could also be provided for the attendance of other Yorkshire gentry. In 1437, Brian Stapleton II and William Normanville were returned to a Parliament which discussed the rights of monastic houses in Craven, West Riding, the most prominent of which was Bolton Abbey.<sup>176</sup> At this time the Stapleton family of Carlton were closely associated with the Plumpton of Plumpton by marriage. The Plumptons may have had interests in Bolton Abbey due to the fact that George Plumpton, a cleric, was based there.<sup>177</sup> William Eure and Thomas Saville were returned to Parliament in 1442, when Eure proposed a petition concerning his own maritime interests alongside those of a number of northern gentry.<sup>178</sup> In 1439, John Constable and Alexander Neville, both Percy associates, were returned to the Parliament which confirmed that the heirs of Henry 'Hotspur' Percy (d. 1403) and Thomas Percy (d. 1403), Earl of Worcester, would receive their rightful inheritance.<sup>179</sup> Moreover, the absence in 1439 of a West Riding knight being returned to Parliament for Yorkshire was politically astute, as the West Riding was at the epicentre of the Salisbury-Percy feud. The North and East Ridings were part of the Percy heartland, and could reasonably afford to support the return of land to the Percy family. The West Riding gentry could neither afford to support nor oppose the return of

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<sup>173</sup> *WR*, II, 12; *PS*, 61, 81.

<sup>174</sup> A. Curry (ed.), 'Henry VI: Parliament of March 1453, Text and Translation', in Given-Wilson et al., *The Parliament Rolls*.

<sup>175</sup> *CCR 1441-1447*, 167; Pollard, *North-Eastern England*, 248; *Lists of Sheriffs for England and Wales*, PRO Lists and Indexes, 9 (1898), 79.

<sup>176</sup> A. Curry (ed.), 'Henry VI: Parliament of January 1437, Text and Translation', item 36; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 579; Bean, *Estates of the Percy Family*, 92, 96-97.

<sup>177</sup> Stapleton (ed.), *Plumpton Correspondence*, xxxix.

<sup>178</sup> A. Curry (ed.), 'Henry VI: Parliament of January 1442, Text and Translation', item 26. In 1448, Sir William Eure was elected to be a Yorkshire Knight of the Shire, but the council overrode the decision, and he was replaced by Sir John Conyers. R. Jeffs, 'The Later Mediaeval Sheriff', 54-55; *CPR 1416-1422*, 38; Punshon noted that Thomas Saville (d. 1449) was shortlisted for Sheriff in 1442. *PS*, 83.

<sup>179</sup> A. Curry (ed.), 'Henry VI: Parliament of November 1439, Text and Translation', item 25; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, 579.

land given the division of loyalties in the riding itself. Thus, the decision to return considerable resources to the Percys did not implicate any West Riding gentry with torn loyalties or a wish to remain apart from the hostilities. If, between 1435 and 1455, some of those returned to Parliament from the West Riding were returned for specific reasons or business, then it suggests some form of balance between the county community, magnate affinities, and political developments. For the electors of a county to reach a consensus concerning which knights to return to Parliament, there must have been some form of recognition as to the importance of their business. Whilst the legal rights of monastic houses in Craven, or the maritime rights of gentry in the East Riding, were unlikely to affect all the electors in Yorkshire, there must have been considerable agency among the landed classes to articulate and decide that such business interests merited the election of a particular individual as their Parliamentary representative. If the county community did not exist in any form then it seems unlikely that one individual would be able to effectively convince the electorate of a whole county that his interests and business were worth pursuing, especially if the county's electorate was divided into magnate factions, or merely sought their own advancement. To be able to balance the desire and need to protect the wider landholding community from magnate quarrels with the active pursuit of their own interests demonstrates that the county could, when necessary, act as an independently-minded whole.

Let us return briefly to the theories of Bastard Feudalism and the County Community. From the case studies above, there is evidence of a County Community, that could act, on occasion, independently of magnate or royal influence, but there is also evidence of Bastard Feudalism, in the sense that at any time there were individuals on the peace commissions that had strong ties to leading magnates, or sat upon the commission by virtue of the offices they held within magnate affinities. Yet, this thesis is hesitant to go so far as to say that the placement and attendance of these individuals equates to magnate dominance of the shire or the influencing of decision-making. Simply by drawing a line between the gentry, the magnates they associated with, and the offices of local government they held, is not enough to suggest interference. Richard Gascoigne sat upon the peace commission of the West Riding as part of his responsibilities as Chief Steward of the Northern Parts of the Duchy of Lancaster. This demonstrates that his involvement in local government was due to his affiliation with the Duchy, but does not necessarily mean that in any, or every, case he was involved in trying he ruled in favour of the Duchy or its interests. To argue otherwise suggests an unfavourable opinion of past figures, and suggest that magnates, and by extension the gentry, were selfish individuals preoccupied with the furthering of their own interests, and disinterested in

the governance and security of the realm. That is not to say that some of them were not selfish individuals, or capable of selfish acts, but rather it is not on the historian to assume this is the case. It is likely to have been much more complicated. In fact, it seems much more appropriate to suggest that rather than conflicting with each other, both the County Community and Bastard Feudalism were simultaneously active within the county, acting as influences upon the gentry's actions and identity. On a county level, there could be occasions where magnate ties and patronage acted as a greater influence than that of the county community, as well as periods when it made more sense for the community to act as a united whole. On an individual level, it is possible that a gentry figure could balance these influences. They were not necessarily competing, but could also be complementary. It may be possible, for example, that Richard Gascoigne<sup>7</sup> obtained his position in local government by his affiliation with the Duchy of Lancaster, yet during his term acted on behalf of the entire West Riding, as there is little evidence to suggest that the interests of magnates were continuously at odds with the interests of the county community.

### Conclusion

As Miri Rubin argued, identity is best described as a cluster of co-existing attributes in which components could gain or lose their relative importance over time.<sup>180</sup> Attempts at defining identity have only sought to show how convoluted and complicated identity can be. No individual, male or female, studied in this thesis was alike: William Gascoigne I forged a career in law; William II fought abroad; William III spent most of his life at home, occasionally holding political office in the county; and William IV did very little, ensuring his family's survival.<sup>181</sup> Thus, any conclusions regarding the whole Gascoigne family would only seek to force them into a straitjacket of conformity, based, ultimately, upon the fact that the family did not serve with any regularity.<sup>182</sup> To do so would be a mistake.

This chapter has highlighted how singular instances are not representative of an individual or familial identity. As has already been discussed, several historians have

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<sup>180</sup> M. Rubin, 'Identities', in R. Horrox and W. M. Ormrod (eds.) *A Social History of England, 1200-1500* (Cambridge, 2006), 383.

<sup>181</sup> E. Powell, 'Gascoigne, Sir William (c. 1350-1419)', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10427](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10427), accessed 27 July 2016; J. C. Sainty, *The Judges of England, 1272-1990* (Selden Society, 1993); *CPR 1385-1387*, 474; *CPR 1381-1385*, 200, 802; C. Rawcliffe, 'William Gascoigne (d. 1422)', *HOP*, [www.historyofParliament.org/volume/1386-1421/member/gascoigne-sir-william-1422](http://www.historyofParliament.org/volume/1386-1421/member/gascoigne-sir-william-1422), accessed 27 July 2016; Arnold, 'West Riding', II, 96, 110; Payling, 'William Gascoigne'.

<sup>182</sup> Rubin, 'Identities', 384.

used circumstantial evidence to attribute what may well be false loyalties to members of the Gascoigne family. Such efforts are the result of attempt to fit the family into rigidly defined concepts of identity that revolve on the one hand around service to a lord and on the other around membership of the county community. Neither of these accurately represents the Gascoigne family. Nor do they appear to represent gentry society in the West Riding. Applying such labels to a whole family or county is particularly misleading as it removes the considerable agency the gentry had during the late medieval and Tudor period. At different points during the fifteenth century, some members of the Gascoigne family engaged in active political service; at others, they did not. Some were caught up in the networks and affinities of magnates by virtue of their position, career or relationships, but association alone was not a guarantee of loyalty or influence upon their identity. Moreover, the case studies have shown that gentry could be influenced both by magnate ties and by the collective identity of the community. Greater care should be taken before assigning any county (and its political structure) as either characteristic of Bastard Feudalism or the County Community, for it is likely that every county had within its history episodes suggestive of both. An examination through the lens of the Gascoigne family has revealed that neither theory adequately accounts for the political activities of the West Riding of Yorkshire during this period. The Duchy of Lancaster was a considerable influence upon the Yorkshire gentry, yet it did not necessarily command the loyalty of all the gentry it recruited. The combination of Duchy resources, crown lands and honours simply meant that it would be difficult for any resident gentry family to avoid service in one of those areas during their lifetime. The gentry were also capable of acting independently, as is particularly evident when there was a threat that the county could be engulfed by magnate factionalism and competition. The need to balance political independence with magnate affinities reflects the considerable agency exercised by the gentry of the West Riding and the wider county of Yorkshire.

The final sentences should return to the subject of the Gascoigne family. In the opening paragraphs of this chapter I argued that considerations of political identity should include all those that did not serve at all, or with any regularity, and that historians should ask why that was. The subsequent discussion has focused on placing the limited political activity of individuals within the Gascoigne family in their appropriate historical and historiographical context, yet has not given much room to discussion of this question. Little evidence survives to indicate why many of the Gascoigne family had little involvement in political life. Not only did many not hold any of the offices of local government or positions within the honours present in Yorkshire, there is evidence that suggests that some were not involved in political society at all. The

parliamentary election of 1442 shows this. Although both the Sheriff and his deputy were Gascoignes, only one other Gascoigne took part in the proceedings, despite the fact that there were many male Gascoignes alive at that time who could be considered gentry and had incomes large enough to be part of the franchise. It is unclear why this was. This undoubtedly raises questions as to the significance of political involvement within definitions of the gentry, as well as on gentry identities, but this thesis cannot go much further without fervent speculation. It is unfortunate, that the popularity of gentry studies declined before a clear picture of political society was achieved. With such decline, questions like this can only be advanced, with the only firm conclusion being that further research is required and that conclusions on political identities are restricted to the individual.

## Chapter Four: The Law and Lawlessness

In late medieval and Tudor England, the law was often utilised by the socially ambitious as a means to advance up the social hierarchy.<sup>1</sup> For the Gascoigne family, this relationship with the law took on a further – almost legendary - dimension as the family, particularly William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419), became associated with honour, integrity and judiciousness. Among those responsible for this association was William Shakespeare, with William I embodied by Shakespeare as Lord Chief Justice in *Henry IV*, part two; a key part of which was the soliloquy made by the Chief Justice whereby he announced that he would rather choose a painful death than allow the abuse of law, even by the Crown.<sup>2</sup> The legendary, and almost philosophical, status that William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> had created in taking ‘principled’ stands against Henry IV and the young Prince Hal during his lifetime existed in the oral tradition (and to a lesser degree in the written tradition) long before his sixteenth-century immortalisation. This is apparent through Shakespeare’s disinclination to use William I’s name at all in the play itself, and to rely instead on the title of his office. Although the anecdotal evidence has, to some degree, been accepted as having some basis in historical fact, it should not be omitted that Shakespeare’s evidence derived from the fifteenth-century Bridgettine monk, Clement Maidstone. Clement drew heavily on the work and memories of William I’s nephew, Thomas Gascoigne<sup>28</sup>, when constructing his account of the trial of the rebel Archbishop, Richard Scrope.<sup>3</sup>

The veracity of Shakespeare’s portrayal, though questionable, is not under scrutiny here. Rather, the portrayal illustrates the reason why the Gascoigne family’s association with the law in the medieval and Tudor period is worthy of examination. The perceived identity of William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> - and to a lesser extent his family - is one of

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<sup>1</sup> P. C. Maddern, ‘Social Mobility’, in R. Horrox and W. M. Ormrod, *A Social History of England, 1200-1500* (Cambridge, 2006), 113-133.

<sup>2</sup> W. Shakespeare, *Henry IV pt. 2*, Act 5, Scene 2:

‘Sweet princes, what I did, I did in honour,  
Led by the impartial conduct of my soul:  
And never shall you see that I will beg,  
A ragged and forestall’d remission.  
If truth and upright innocence fail me,  
I’ll to the king my master that is dead,  
And tell him who hath sent me after him.’

<sup>3</sup> H. Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, 2 vols. (1691); For other instances of Gascoigne’s immortalisation see, for example, T. Elyot, *The boke named ‘The Governour’* (1531).

bravery, fair justice, and a strict code of honour. William I<sub>4</sub> was prepared to accept whatever fate the newly crowned Henry V had in store for him as he knew he had acted justly. Though historically there was no indication that William would face punishment for his resistance to Richard Scrope's execution, the oral and literary discourses emphasize the possibility of ramifications.<sup>4</sup> That these discourses developed most evidently in York (and Yorkshire), and within the Inns of Court and judicial bench – spheres of influence where the Gascoigne family maintained sustained contact during this period – is significant. Likewise, it is significant that Gascoigne's dramatized stance developed concurrently with the cult of Scrope, and the attempts at canonisation. Given the development of these traditions it seems unlikely that the Gascoigne family remained incognisant of the reputation of their family. It could be argued that the Gascoigne family as a whole was often seen by later writers to have the same, almost romantic, characteristics as William Gascoigne I.<sup>5</sup> Yet this was not the case. This chapter seeks to reconcile the perceived identity of the Gascoigne family with the legal reality; namely that they were just like any other gentry family of the late medieval and early modern period, who on occasion engaged in violence and rough justice, but sought, ultimately, to uphold the king's peace and to utilise the law to further their own ends.

Before such reconciliation it is necessary to discuss the law and its development during the later middle ages and the early modern period. For the sake of brevity only a brief overview will be given with the purpose of ensuring clarity in the discussion

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<sup>4</sup> T. Maude, *Verbeia; Or, Wharfdale, a Poem, Descriptive and Didactic;: With Historical Remarks* (1782), 37; T. Shaw, *The History of Wharfdale* (1830), 162; C. Maidstone, *The Loyal Martyr; or, the life of... Richard Scroop, Archbishop of York, cruelly put to death by King Henry IV for adhering to his rightful sovereign*, edited by T. Payne (1722); J. C. B. Campbell, *The Lives of the Chief Justices of England* (1858), 125. Whilst there is evidence of such discourses – as highlighted by the sources indicated – it is necessary to note that other antiquarians note that Henry IV's opinions of Gascoigne improved substantially. These diverse opinions represent those of the writers and editors, rather than having basis in historical fact.

<sup>5</sup> See, for example A. Collins, *The English Baronetage*, 334-37; F. Drake, *Eboracum: or, the history and antiquities of the City of York*, II, 438-9; Of particular interest is F.S. Colman, *A History of the Parish of Barwick-in-Elmet*, 145-7, which gives a copy of the rhymes written by Michael Murgetrode about the Elizabethan Gascoigne, Richard, who by his account was a kind, generous and loving patron above reproach, and ended his significant homage to the family with 'A Richer Gascoigne I might have, then Richard Gascoigne is, But Richardes Liberalitie, in Richer wee shall misse.' These sources represent just a few of the antiquarian (and earlier) sources which take their account of the Gascoigne family from Clement Maidstone or Thomas Gascoigne. Included further in this list could be Shakespeare, George Gascoigne, Richard Gascoigne (the antiquarian) and others. These ideas surrounding the Gascoigne's bravery could further be supported by the foundation myths (formed after William I's death) and have been recorded by Gascoigne the antiquarian.

below.<sup>6</sup> The century before William Gascoigne I's appointment as King's Serjeant in 1389 witnessed a considerable evolution to the English judicial system. The scope of the common law expanded, the courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas gained extra significance, commissions of assize and peace sessions had become regular sights in the localities, and a professional body of lawyers had come into existence.<sup>7</sup> Attitudes towards justice developed too, as gentry in the localities and on the peripheries were able to seek the King's justice without necessarily visiting London. Local and royal attitudes towards justice were no longer entirely dissimilar, as regional gentry served as Justices of the Peace, or on assize commissions, which had evolved from the 'trailbastons' of Edward I.<sup>8</sup> As the ability to engage with the law increased, so did the demands on it, which led to an increased number of justices in both King's Bench and Common Pleas. By the end of the fourteenth century Common Pleas fluctuated between four and seven justices, whereas the King's Bench increased from two to three. Whilst the main institutions which evolved during the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries remained more or less in place during the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, there were subtle differences to the legal profession. For example, the Inns of Court gained new importance, both as centres of education and as hubs of textual production.<sup>9</sup> Likewise the early sixteenth century saw the maturity of the Star Chamber courts, which were often associated with judicial or administrative misconduct.<sup>10</sup> Thus the late medieval and Tudor period was one of slow, gradual change which evolved more quickly when the

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<sup>6</sup> For further information on the development of the justice system during the late medieval and early modern period see, for example: A. Musson, *Medieval Law in Context* (Manchester, 2001); A. Musson (ed.) *Boundaries of the Law: Geography, Gender and Jurisdiction in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Aldershot, 2005); A. Musson and W.M. Ormrod, *The Evolution of English Justice: Law, Politics and Society in the Fourteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 1999); A. Musson (ed.) *Expectations of the Law in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2001); E. W. Ives, *The Common Lawyers of Pre-Reformation England* (Cambridge, 1983); C. W. Brooks, *Law, Politics and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2008); D. Youngs, *Humphrey Newton (1466-1536): An Early Tudor Gentleman* (Woodbridge, 2008); C. Cross, D. Loades and J. J. Scarisbrick (eds.) *Law and Government Under the Tudors* (Cambridge, 1988); H. Kleineke, 'The Dinham Family in the Later Middle Ages' (Royal Holloway and Bedford College PhD Thesis, 1998); L. R. Poos and L. Bonfield, 'Law and Individualism in Medieval England', *Social History*, 11, 3 (1986), 287-301; R.W. Kaeuper, *War, Justice and Public Order: England and France in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1988); A. L. Brown, *The Governance of Late Medieval England, 1272-1461* (London, 1989); A. Harding, *The Law Courts of Medieval England* (London, 1973), and many others.

<sup>7</sup> Musson and Ormrod, *The Evolution of English Justice*, 1.

<sup>8</sup> W. M. Ormrod, 'Law in the Landscape: Criminality, Outlawry and Regional Identity in Late Medieval England', in A. Musson (ed.) *Boundaries of the Law*, 8; A. Musson and E. Powell (eds.) *Crime, Law and Society in the Later Middle Ages* (Manchester, 2008), 114-116.

<sup>9</sup> See J. H. Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History* (London, 1990), 182-185.

<sup>10</sup> Brooks, *Law, Politics and Society*, 12.

need for a finer and more specialised judicial system arose. Yet the summary above represents the structural development of royal justice, and does not necessarily reflect upon the judicial quality.

There are two particular debates of focus within historiography to which attention must be drawn: first, the debate about the level of engagement the gentry had with the law, with emphasis on the gentry's manipulation of it; a subset of which would be violence and lawlessness.<sup>11</sup> Generally speaking, an earlier historiography considered the gentry as particularly lawless with arguments suggesting that the further away they were situated from London (and other judicial centres) the more lawless and violent they were; the most lawless areas were therefore in the border regions.<sup>12</sup> However, this apparently lawless behaviour associated with the gentry of the border regions, referred to, on the whole, a more specific type of lawlessness. Rather than seeing gentry involved in indiscriminate generic banditry and aggression, historians have been more inclined to characterise the gentry as preferring violence and 'rough justice' as a first resort, with judicial intervention as a reserve. J. R. Maddicott offered a reason for this: that the supposed preference of 'rough justice' within England during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries may be suggestive of a lack of faith in the judicial system, but may too represent a widely held antagonism towards the endemic corruption of royal justices.<sup>13</sup> Yet this view is continually being revised, with comparative studies showing that violence was no more and no less common in border regions than in the vicinity of

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<sup>11</sup> For debates on medieval violence and lawlessness see: P. C. Madder, *Violence and Social Order: East Anglia (1422-1442)* (Oxford, 1992); J. G. Bellamy, *Criminal Law and Society in Late Medieval and Tudor England* (Gloucester, 1984); Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1973); C. Carpenter, 'Law, Justice, and Landowners in Late Medieval England', *Law and History Review*, I (1983), 205-237; M. T. Clanchy, 'Law, Government and Society in Medieval England', *History*, 59 (1974), 73-78; N. Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life: Knightly Families in Sussex 1280-1400* (Oxford, 1986); R. E. McLaughlin, 'Gentry Perceptions of Violence in Fourteenth Century England' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2015); A. Musson and E. Powell (eds.) *Crime, Law and Society in the Later Middle Ages*; P. Brand, 'Inside in the Courtroom: Lawyers, Litigants, and Justices in England in the Later Middle Ages', in P. Coss, *The Moral World of the Law* (Cambridge, 2000); H. S. Bennett, *The Pastons and Their England* (Cambridge, 1951).

<sup>12</sup> This includes historians such as Charles Plummer, who coined the term Bastard Feudalism. See P. R. Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', *Past and Present*, 125 (1989), 27; A. J. Pollard, 'The Characteristics of the Fifteenth-Century North', in J. Appleby and P. Dalton (eds.), *Government, Religion and Society in Northern England, 1000-1700* (Stroud, 1996), 131-145; R. Storey, 'The Wardens of the Marches of England towards Scotland, 1377-1489', *EHR*, 72 (1957), 599; C. Neville, *Violence, Custom and the Law: The Anglo-Scottish Border Lands in the Late Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1998).

<sup>13</sup> J. R. Maddicott, *Law and Lordship: Royal Justices as Retainers in Thirteenth and Fourteenth-Century England*, *Past and Present*, Supplement IV (1978), 1.

London.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, recent historiography has indicated that the gentry were far from the violent individuals which past historiography had labelled them, and they were in fact particularly litigious, preferring legal means which provided written evidence of the outcome.<sup>15</sup>

The second debate considers the importance of the law in terms of social mobility, and whether or not the legal profession superseded the Church and service as a means by which gentry families could improve their lot. Within the historiography there is a general consensus that as the medieval period progressed (and to a certain extent, the early modern period) the gentry preferred the law as a means of acquiring wealth, status, and social mobility more and more frequently.<sup>16</sup> Yet it has been argued that a legal career path was no more likely to enable social mobility or improved status than a clerical, administrative, or even service based career, and that enduring (lasting more than a generation or so) social mobility was particularly uncommon, no matter the career path in question. However, some clarification for this argument is necessary, as legal and ecclesiastical careers represent two vastly different enterprises because advancement in the Church prevented the individual from passing on his achieved status to offspring, landed families very rarely placed their eldest sons in holy orders. Contrastingly, the law did represent a career of possibility, as those involved in such a career could expect significant rewards, especially if they had wealthy patrons or royal positions, which they could then pass on to their progeny. In the fourteenth century, justices in King's Bench or Common Pleas could accrue substantial fees, robes, and even land-holdings from their 'clients'; to such an extent that legislation was passed (and later repealed) to curb such activities.<sup>17</sup>

The purpose of this chapter then, is twofold. Firstly, it aims to demonstrate, as far as can be, that the law aided in the social mobility of the Gascoigne family. For this, focus will be given to the career of William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> prior to his appointment as Chief Justice in 1400. An ancillary debate will place William Gascoigne I's social mobility in the context of the law becoming increasingly politicised in the late fourteenth century. Moreover, it will suggest that this politicisation meant that William I's purported stand

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<sup>14</sup> McLaughlin, 'Gentry Perceptions', 233-241.

<sup>15</sup> Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order*, 1,10; R. L. Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster* (Gloucester, 1966), 8; R. A. Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI* (Stroud, 1981); K. B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century, Collected Essays* (1981); M. E. James, *Change and Continuity in the Tudor North* (York, 1965), 7; Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life*, 73-77.

<sup>16</sup> P. C. Maddern, 'Social Mobility', R. Horrox and W.M. Ormrod (eds.) *A Social History of England, 1200-1500* (Cambridge, 2006), 113-132.

<sup>17</sup> Maddicott, *Law and Lordship*, 4.

against Henry IV whilst as Chief Justice enabled the development of a Gascoigne legend, facilitated in part by his nephew, Thomas Gascoigne. Secondly, the Gascoignes' use (or misuse) of the law will be examined – both through William Gascoigne I's behaviour (where demonstrable) during his law cases, and through the violence alluded to above. This is embodied by William Gascoigne VII<sub>194</sub>'s disputes with his neighbours.

### Social Mobility and the Law

The subject of social mobility has been an area of frequent discussion amongst historians.<sup>18</sup> Historians have been primarily concerned with the upward social movement of the later middle ages, a period dubbed 'an age of ambition' by F. R. H. Du Boulay.<sup>19</sup> In the thirteenth century tough economic conditions may have precipitated the stratification of the gentry, relative to the fortunes of the nobility and lesser freeholders, and minor gentry began holding positions in local government and administration which had typically been the reserve of knightly families.<sup>20</sup> Du Boulay's description of the late medieval period relates to the pursuit of social, economic and political enhancement by the individual, often termed 'careerism'. The infiltration of the term careerism into everyday academic use represents the need for clarity in such discussion.<sup>21</sup> The very definition of the term indicates the mentality of the individual or family in question, denoting purposefulness behind their social climb, and as such its usage can be rather hazardous. This is because the intent behind the actions of an individual may be inferred

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<sup>18</sup> S. Payling, 'Social Mobility, Demographic Change and Landed Society in Late Medieval England', *Economic History Review*, 2nd series, 45 (1992), 51-73; M. J. Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism: Cheshire and Lancashire Society in the Age of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Cambridge, 1983); C. Carpenter, *Lordship and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992); D. A. Carpenter, 'Was there a Crisis of the Knightly Class in the Thirteenth Century? The Oxfordshire Evidence', *EHR*, 95 (1980), 721-752; P. R. Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality: A Study in English Society, c. 1180-1280* (Cambridge, 1991); C. Dyer, *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages: Social Change in England, c. 1200-c. 1520* (Cambridge, 1989); C. E. Moreton, *The Townshends and their World: Gentry, Law and Land in Norfolk, c. 1450-1551* (Oxford, 1992); C. Richmond, *John Hopton: A Fifteenth Century Suffolk Gentleman* (Cambridge, 1981); R. L. Storey, 'Gentleman-Bureaucrats', in C. H. Clough (ed.), *Profession, Vocation and Culture in Later Medieval England* (Liverpool, 1982), 90-129.

<sup>19</sup> F. R. H. Du Boulay, *An Age of Ambition: English Society in the Late Middle Ages* (New York, 1970).

<sup>20</sup> P. C. Maddern, 'Social Mobility' in R. Horrox and W. M. Ormrod (eds.), *A Social History of England, 1200-1500* (Cambridge, 2006), 113; P. Coss, 'An Age of Deference', in R. Horrox and W. M. Ormrod (eds.), *A Social History of England*, 36-37.

<sup>21</sup> Maddern, 'Social Mobility', 114-115; M. J. Bennett, 'Careerism in Late Medieval England', in J. Rosenthal and C. Richmond, *People, Politics and Community in the Later Middle Ages* (Gloucester, 1987), 19-39; M. J. Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism: Cheshire and Lancashire Society in the Age of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Cambridge, 1983).

by the historian or editor rather than be a representation of the individual's motivations, due to the fact that such motivations are usually blurred by the very nature of historical evidence. An individual who engaged in a career, was successful in it, and was subsequently promoted, was not necessarily a careerist. For the individual to be a careerist they must aspire to (and actively pursue) the highest positions, not just acquire them. A careerist would too, by their nature, seize upon every opportunity to enhance their own position, power or prestige, yet within history it is difficult to ascertain the opportunities that were missed or were simply allowed to pass by.

Whilst utilisation of the term 'social mobility' is less hazardous than that of careerism, the problems with its use stem from determining which factors were caused by, or an effect of, social movement.<sup>22</sup> Social mobility tends to indicate the ability to transition between different social groups, and for the medieval gentry this has been taken to mean the movement between 'gentle' or noble ranks; from Gentleman to Duke. Whilst this simplifies the matter greatly, it has resulted in a general assumption that wealth (be it cash, material goods or land) is the greatest indicator, or precursor, of social mobility: i.e. the higher up the social ladder you are, the richer you are. Generally speaking, this maybe the case, yet it is possible to have a poor knight and a rich esquire. Therefore, wealth could not be the only indicator of social status – a poor knight did not become an esquire in his lifetime.<sup>23</sup> Rather the factors that cause, affect or are results of social mobility are heavily intertwined and are numerous; including wealth, income, career, power and kinship ties.

Without the above criteria, it would be a relatively easy task to demonstrate that William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419) was a careerist. He rose significantly through the ranks of the legal system and obtained the highest judicial position in the country. Furthermore, the fact that William Gascoigne I was a knight, yet his father was not, would be an ample representation of social advancement. Yet, this section seeks to do more than simply provide evidence to indicate that the Gascoigne family climbed the social ladder over time; that is already evident in previous chapters. This section seeks to engage with the

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<sup>22</sup> See, for example, P. Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry* (Cambridge, 2003), 11; P. Coss, 'The Formation of the English Gentry', *P&P*, 147 (1995), 38-64; and P. Coss, 'Knights, Esquires and the Origins of Social Gradation in England', *TRHS*, 6<sup>th</sup> Series, 5 (1995), 155-178; G. G. Astill, 'Social Advancement through Seignorial Service? The Case of Simon Pakenham', *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, 54 (1980), 14-25; P. J. Jeffries, 'Social Mobility in the Fourteenth Century: The Example of the Chelreys of Berkshire', *Oxoniensia*, 41 (1976), 324-336; and D. A. Carpenter, 'Was there a Crisis of the Knightly Class in the Thirteenth Century? The Oxfordshire Evidence', *EHR*, 95 (1980), 721-752.

<sup>23</sup> Maddern, 'Social Mobility', 114.

career of William Gascoigne I prior to his appointment as Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1400, to determine how and why the social movement occurred when it did. Moreover, it seeks to establish whether this social move was a result of careerism.

For the law, some degree of social mobility was far from uncommon in the later medieval and early modern period. By the late fifteenth century, the gentry's involvement in the law had risen to such an extent that William Worcester's view was outdated; that:

the grettir pite is, many ones that [had] been descended of noble bloode and borne to arms, as knightis sonnes, esquiers, and of other gentille bloode, set him silfe to singuler practik, straunge faculteege from that fet, as to lerne the practique of law or custom of lande.<sup>24</sup>

Studies have focused on the lives and careers of individuals such as Sir Roger Townshend (c. 1435-1493), John Hopton (c.1405–1478) and Sir John Fortescue (c. 1395-1477), who improved their lot and achieved social mobility through their careers in the law; the Townshend family went from yeomanry to established squirearchy in a single generation.<sup>25</sup> However, it was common for individuals, such as Humphrey Newton (d. 1536) of Cheshire to utilise the law not for the purpose of social mobility, but as a supplement to their social status, income and to aid in the defence of their own estates.<sup>26</sup> Yet these examples tend to focus on the later fifteenth century, whereas William Gascoigne I was active at the end of the fourteenth and at the beginning of the fifteenth centuries.

William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419) inherited his family's landholdings at Gawthorpe following his father's death in 1378.<sup>27</sup> Although relatively small in comparison with more established gentry families, there must have been a large enough income from the estates to support his education, but also to provide some form of financial support to John<sub>3</sub>, William I's older brother.<sup>28</sup> There must also have been enough familial wealth to

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<sup>24</sup> W. Worcester, *The Boke of Noblesse* (ed.), J. G. Nichols (London, 2010), 176-177; D. Youngs, *Humphrey Newton (1466-1536): An Early Tudor Gentleman* (Woodbridge, 2008), 41.

<sup>25</sup> C. Richmond, *John Hopton: A Fifteenth Century Suffolk Gentleman* (Cambridge, 1981); C. E. Moreton, *The Townshends and their World: Gentry, Law and the Law in Norfolk, c. 1450-1551* (Oxford, 1992); E. W. Ives, 'The Common Lawyers', in C. H. Clough (ed.), *Profession, vocation and culture in later medieval England: essays dedicated to the memory of A.R. Myers* (Liverpool, 1982), 181-217.

<sup>26</sup> Youngs, *Humphrey Newton*, 41-69. It is worth noting that Humphrey, though versed in the law, was not a professional lawyer.

<sup>27</sup> *CFR 1377-1383*, 153.

<sup>28</sup> CP 25/1/278/143, 48.

enable Nicholas<sub>7</sub> (d. 1427) and Richard<sub>9</sub> (d. 1423) to purchase their own estates. The education afforded by the estate at Gawthorpe is undocumented. Edward Powell noted that William I<sub>4</sub> was said to have studied at both Cambridge and the Inner Temple, yet I have found no evidence of this.<sup>29</sup> When William I was created a Serjeant-at-Law in Michaelmas 1388 he was noted as being a member of the Inner Temple, yet it is unclear whether he was there as a student or a practising lawyer.<sup>30</sup> It may be possible to speculate on the form and type of education William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> may have had. To do this requires extrapolation from the oral legal education of the early fourteenth century and the education standards at the Inns of Court in the mid-fifteenth century, due to the fact that William's education took place during a period of transition when the Inns of Court were not yet the hub of legal training.

During the reign of Edward I, professional lawyers specialised in two different forms of judicial function: Serjeants, who argued for their clients in court, and attorneys, who were responsible for the preliminary and surrounding work; including, for example, ensuring the client's opponent appeared in court.<sup>31</sup> The Serjeant was the more specialised and skilled individual and they numbered around 30 in 1300; conversely 210 attorneys were active at Common Bench in 1300.<sup>32</sup> Individuals would usually begin their legal education around the age of fourteen. Prior to this, they would learn how to read and write, study grammar, and be able to translate Latin prose and poetry into Anglo-French. B. H. Putnam speculated that the early teenage years involved education in logic, reason and rhetoric.<sup>33</sup> At the age of fourteen, students ventured to Common Bench, which provided the informal and oral education to the Serjeants at that time. A key aspect of legal training was that the trainee Serjeants sat in court and observed the court cases in action. Moreover, the Justices took part in their training process by explaining the verdict and the reasoning behind it.<sup>34</sup> By the reign of Edward II, the training had widened to

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<sup>29</sup> E. Powell, 'Sir William Gascoigne', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10427](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10427), accessed 31 October 2016.

<sup>30</sup> J. Baker, *The Order of Serjeants* (London, 1984), 159.

<sup>31</sup> P. Brand, 'Legal Education before the Inns of Court', in J. A. Bush and A. Wijffels (eds.), *Learning the Law: Teaching and the Transmission of Law in England, 1150-1900* (London, 1999), 61; P. Brand, *The Origins of the English Legal Profession* (Oxford, 1992), chapter, 2.

<sup>32</sup> Brand, 'Legal Education', 61.

<sup>33</sup> B. H. Putnam, *The Place in Legal History of Sir William Shareshull* (Cambridge, 1950), 15.

<sup>34</sup> E. Ives, *The Common Lawyers of Pre-Reformation England. Thomas Kebell: A Case Study* (Cambridge, 1983), 37-40; Brand, 'Legal Education', 63-81. See too, E. Ives, 'Common Lawyers', in C. H. Clough (ed.), *Profession, Vocation and Culture in Later Medieval England: Essays dedicated to the Memory of A. R. Myers* (Liverpool, 1982), 181-217.

include lectures and commentaries of statutes and legal legislation.<sup>35</sup> By the late fourteenth century the Inns of Court provided more specialised training; Eric Ives noted that this included training on the writing of documents, clerical procedures and the handling of writs.<sup>36</sup> It is likely that the legal education of William Gascoigne I was a combination of these two forms of education.

Little is known about life at the Inns of Court in the late fourteenth century. To be a student at the Inn required sponsorship, and the students had most likely spent the year before at the Inn of Chancery learning the foundational elements of the law.<sup>37</sup> William Gascoigne I's sponsor is not known. The earliest records for life at an Inn of Court come from Lincoln's Inn in 1422. They reveal that the students lived communally, alongside practising lawyers, and that conditions were cramped. Moreover, their education was standardised; senior chancery clerks would provide instruction to the individuals under their charge, and readings would take place, whereby students would expound a particular statute, clause by clause, and discuss the problems with the audience, which would often include justices, senior attorneys and clerks.<sup>38</sup>

The expenses of such an education were not inconsiderable, and it is significant, that it was only after William I's appointment as Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1400 that the substantive acquisition of property began. Prior to that point William I appears to have relied upon his association with the Duchy of Lancaster to supplement his legal career, and it is possible the Duchy was responsible for his referral to the Inner Temple. In terms of his judicial service, before his recruitment as Serjeant-at-Law in 1388, he rarely left Yorkshire on legal business, and instead served sporadically on West Riding commissions.<sup>39</sup> After his appointment as Serjeant-at-Law, with the customary fees and robes, he began to engage in judicial roles on a wider geographic scale.<sup>40</sup> His service on the Midlands and Eastern circuits, alongside commissions in Northamptonshire,

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<sup>35</sup> Ives, 'Common Lawyers', 199.

<sup>36</sup> Ives, *The Common Lawyers*, 39-40.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 36-37.

<sup>38</sup> Brand, 'Legal Education', 199.

<sup>39</sup> He served on four commissions in 1382, 1385 and 1386. *CPR 1381-1385*, 200, 502; *CPR 1385-1389*, 254. The fourth commission was of special assize (*CPR Richard II Supplement*, entry 344, 349). He left the county on one occasion, to visit Windsor on a commission of gaol delivery (*CPR Richard II Supplement*, entry 268).

<sup>40</sup> TNA E 1091/405/14, f. 20r and E 101/405/22 represents the types of fur Justices and Chief Justices would receive. The former represented the winter robes of Henry IV, whilst the latter are gifts from the King. The furs (120 squirrel bellies) were granted by the King's tailor with ten ells of coloured cloth and a hood made from 32 bellies of pure miniver. I would like to acknowledge Lauren Bowers here, who brought this to my attention.

Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk reflect this.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, it appears that William I developed some form of reputation during this time, as is evident from the request of assistance in a law case (1390) by the Chief Baron of the Exchequer John Cassy, who clearly felt that William could contribute to the trial in some way.<sup>42</sup>

Yet, it was his association with the Duchy of Lancaster that would propel William I to the national stage. His work on the judicial circuits gradually increased to the point where Henry Bolingbroke established William I as a member of his legal counsel in the 1390s, alongside John Markham; both of whom were Serjeants-at-Law at that time.<sup>43</sup> In 1395, his responsibilities with the Duchy grew further as he was appointed Chief Steward of Lancashire. Finally, in 1397 he was appointed Chief Justice for the Palatinate of Lancaster.<sup>44</sup>

Although William I saw active service with the Duchy of Lancaster, his responsibilities for the Crown remained relatively minor. Yet his promotion as one of Henry Bolingbroke's personal lawyers whilst the latter was in exile is significant as, whether by encouragement by John of Gaunt or his own choice, he tied his own fortunes to those of the house of Lancaster. Such a move, against so volatile a monarch, was risky and is suggestive that William I was not a careerist. To put it another way, when William I, a King's Serjeant for Richard II, agreed to be the lawyer in-situ for the King's biggest rival, he became a lawyer of national standing and immediately forfeited any possibility of Richard II assigning him to any of the judicial benches. Moreover, the King sought to confiscate as many Lancastrian lands as possible following John of Gaunt's death in February 1399, and the cessation of William's activity on the judicial circuits from 1398 may reflect the King's opinion of William I's decision to defend the Lancastrian estates.<sup>45</sup> It is no surprise then, given the Gascoigne family's vested interests in seeing Bolingbroke properly restored, that Richard Gascoigne, joined Bolingbroke on his return to England

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<sup>41</sup> See Table 1.2 in the appendices. It should be noted that those appointed to judicial circuits were prohibited from serving on those circuits where the jurisdiction of the circuit would include the individual's main estates. Thus, William Gascoigne I could not have served on the northern judicial circuit.

<sup>42</sup> Coram Rege Roll, no. 515 (Hilary 1390), m. 16.

<sup>43</sup> DL 28/3/3, m. 4.

<sup>44</sup> He also served as Steward of Pontefract for the Duchy of Lancaster in the early 1390s. S. Walker, *Political Culture in Later Medieval England* (Manchester, 2006), 113. R. Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*, I (London, 1953), 133, 148, 373.

<sup>45</sup> 'Chronicle of Dieulacres Abbey, 1381-1403', in M. V. Clarke and V. H. Galbraith, 'The Deposition of Richard II', *BJRL* (1930), 164-170.

in 1399.<sup>46</sup> Fortunately for the Gascoigne family, their association with John of Gaunt and Henry Bolingbroke paid dividends, as can be seen by their assignment to new positions once the latter had been crowned; William I as Chief Justice of the King's Bench and Richard as Chief Steward of the Northern Parts of the Duchy of Lancaster.

In terms of social mobility, it is the case that the social advance by the Gascoigne family was due primarily to their association with the Duchy of Lancaster. The acquisition of two offices of significant importance boosted the Gascoigne family's income and enabled their expansion in the West Riding.<sup>47</sup> Yet, this cannot be labelled careerism. Between 1397 and 1399 the Duchy was weak; John of Gaunt was sick and his son was in exile. Yet, both William I and Richard remained steadfast in their service to the family, with the former even strengthening his association by acting as Bolingbroke's attorney. At that stage, it was unclear whether Bolingbroke would return to England to regain his inheritance. If William I was a careerist, then it could be regarded as the safer bet to rescind his association with the Duchy of Lancaster for continued service with the Crown, where his responsibilities were gradually increasing. Given his experience and increased activity of the judicial circuits, William I could have reasonably expected to have been appointed as a Justice by the end of his career. With the benefit of hindsight, it would be easy to overlook this undoubtedly difficult choice by William Gascoigne I. Furthermore, it would be easy to ascribe this as a simple choice, yet both options – Bolingbroke and Richard II – had significant risks. The return of Henry Bolingbroke in 1399 was questionable, yet Richard II was increasingly authoritarian and there was considerable discontent amongst the nobility and the Commons; it was unlikely that Henry Bolingbroke would have remained Richard II's only meaningful opposition.

#### The Politicisation of the Law

The previous section has outlined the initial social mobility of the Gascoigne family which enabled them to establish themselves as a leading gentry family in the West Riding of Yorkshire. It also discussed the role of the Lancastrians in this, and argued that the circumstances which led to the Gascoigne family's social rise were not indicative of careerism. Yet, it did not provide any reasons as to why William Gascoigne I was appointed as Chief Justice of the King's Bench, nor did it discuss why he became the almost legendary figure after his death. The answers to both of these lie in the

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<sup>46</sup> C. Given-Wilson (ed.), *Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1400* (Manchester, 1993), 253.

<sup>47</sup> William Gascoigne I (d. 1419) as Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and Richard (d. 1423) as Chief Steward of the Northern Parts of the Duchy of Lancaster.

politicisation of the law in the fourteenth century. Specifically, the focus was on the role of royal officials and corruption. Much has been written about the politicisation of the law (and justice) as well as the role of corruption in medieval society, yet this section will focus on the reign of Richard II and how this period of increased resistance to corruption manifested itself.<sup>48</sup> During the last thirty years of the fourteenth century, the activity and behaviour of the justices became a major political issue for the first time.<sup>49</sup> Of particular focus was the allegiances justices had to the nobility which encouraged partiality in their judgements, the ability of the rich and the powerful to buy verdicts, and the general effectiveness of justice. Whilst there had been sporadic and short-lived attempts to curb the corruption of justice – discussed in detail by J. R. Maddicott – from the 1370s there was considerable public pressure for reform, which can be most readily seen in the production of literature and in chronicles at that time.<sup>50</sup> In William Langland's *Piers Plowman*, Lady Meed acts as the personification of the power of money and the influence that could be obtained through its liberal use in court.<sup>51</sup> Langland's text survives in three versions; the latter of which (C-Text) was edited by Langland to distance the text from politically dangerous associations after it was cited by heretical preacher John Ball

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<sup>48</sup> J. R. Maddicott, *Law and Lordship: Royal Justices as Retainers in Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century England*, Past and Present Supplement 4 (Oxford, 1978); A. Musson, 'Let's Kill All the Lawyers', *History Today*, 60 (2010), 20-26; A. Musson, 'Centre and Locality: Perceptions of the Assize Justices in Late Medieval England', in R. W. Kaeuper (ed.), *Law, Governance and Justice: New Views on Medieval Constitutionalism* (Leiden, 2013), 211-241; A. Musson, 'Attitudes to Royal Justice in Fourteenth-Century Yorkshire', *Northern History*, 39:2 (2002), 173-185; C. D. Fletcher, 'Corruption at Court? Crisis and the Theme of Luxuria in England and France, c. 1340-1422', S. J. Gunn and A. Janse (eds.), *The Court as a Stage: England and the Low Countries in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2006), 28-38; J. A. Burrow, 'Lady Meed and the Power of Money', *Medium Aevum*, 74:1 (2005), 113-118; W. R. Prest, 'Judicial Corruption in Early Modern England', *P&P*, 133 (1991), 67-95.

<sup>49</sup> Maddicott, *Law and Lordship*, 59.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, for more details on the activity and behaviour of the justices prior to (and including) the reign of Richard II. See too, A. Musson and E. Powell (eds.), *Crime, Law and Society in the Later Middle Ages* (Manchester, 2009).

<sup>51</sup> W. Langland, *The Vision of Piers Plowman* (ed.), A. V. C. Schmidt, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London, 1995), 43-44:

'For she is favourable to False and injures Fidelity often.  
By Jesus! With her jewels she corrupts your justice  
And lies against the law and blocks his way,  
That faith may not have his course, her florins go so thickly.  
She leads the law as she likes and makes "lovedays".  
And makes men lose through love of her that which legal proceedings might win –  
The confusion for a mean man though he litigate for ever.  
Law is so haughty and reluctant to make end:  
Without presents or pence he satisfies very few.'

during the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.<sup>52</sup> Whilst Langland's commentary on the state of England's judicial system was critical in many respects, it was not meant to be a revolutionary text. Thus, it has been argued that his modifications to latter copies reflected Langland's desire to comment on the real need for judicial reform, but not support the extreme revolutionary ideas of John Ball, Wat Tyler and other prominent rebels.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, the historical poem 'the London Lickpenny' satirises the state of the judicial system:

Unto the common place I went then  
 Where sat one with a silken hood  
 I did him reverence for I ought to do so  
 And told my case as well as I could  
 How my goods were defrauded me by falsehood.  
 I got not even a murmur of his mouth for my meed!  
 And for the lack of money I might not succeed.<sup>54</sup>

Whilst it should be recognised that these are exaggerated literary representations of contemporary justice, nonetheless their topics must have resonated with public opinion at that time. The popularity of the Robin Hood ballads in the fifteenth century may attest to this.<sup>55</sup> In fact, the resurgence of these texts in early modern print culture suggests that the corruption of justice was a continuous issue. Indeed, Sir John Fortescue's (d. 1479) remarks that men of justice were above reproach and did not take

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<sup>52</sup> D. G. Scott, 'Silent Reading and the Medieval Text: The Development of Reading Practices in the Early Prints of William Langland and John Lydgate' (University of Glasgow PhD Thesis, 2015). I should like to thank Diane Scott here for her valuable discussion of the texts of *Piers Plowman*, and the possible motivations behind textual changes, 72-75. See too, S. Justice, *Writing and Rebellion: England in 1381* (London, 1994), 106.

<sup>53</sup> D. G. Scott, 'Silent Reading and the Medieval Text: The Development of Reading Practices in the Early Prints of William Langland and John Lydgate' (University of Glasgow PhD Thesis, 2015), 72-73.

<sup>54</sup> 'The London Lickpenny', in *Historical Poems of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (ed.), R. H. Robbins (New York, 1959), 130-131.

<sup>55</sup> See for example, R. B. Dobson and J. Taylor (eds.), *Rymes of Robin Hood: An Introduction to the English Outlaw* (Stroud, 1997), 85-86:

'I am retained by the abbot' said the justice,  
 'Both by robes and fee':  
 'Now, good sir sheriff, my friend.'  
 'More than that, by God', said he.

bribes were ironic, given that he received a cloth of gold robe with crimson velvet (worth £6 13s 4d) from Sir John Fastolf during his time as Chief Justice of the King's Bench.<sup>56</sup> This public pressure against the corrupt judicial system also played a significant role in the Peasants' Revolt of 1381, and it was only after this point that judicial reform became a major part of parliamentary business.<sup>57</sup> Although the three poll taxes between 1377 and 1381 were the instigator to the outbreak of violence, the judicial overtones cannot be understated. Anthony Musson argued that the seasonal timing of the initial outbreak was legally significant. Late May and early June saw the major religious festivals of Whitsun, Trinity and Corpus Christi as well as a number of village and town festivals, processions and the holding of courts leet and law days.<sup>58</sup> Not only would these events provide legitimate reason for the movement and congregation of people, but they could also show an acute awareness by the rebels of the judicial system; the central courts were not in session and the central court justices were in the localities delivering gaols and holding assizes.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, it has been argued that the rebels held their own gaol delivery, stormed castles and opened up prisons, releasing those detained inside.<sup>60</sup> Prisoners at the Fleet in London, King's Bench prison at Marshalsea, Rochester gaol and the Archbishop of Canterbury's prison at Maidstone were all released.<sup>61</sup> This could reflect the lack of faith in the judicial system so far as a belief that some of those imprisoned were done so unjustly.

Royal officers and representatives of the law were also targeted. The Sheriffs of Essex and Kent, Sewale and Stepvans were both captured on the same day.<sup>62</sup> The *Anonimale Chronicle* noted that Sir Robert Belknap, Chief Justice of Common Pleas, was assaulted at Brentwood, whilst Sir John Cavendish, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, was executed at Bury St. Edmunds alongside Prior John Cambridge. Notably, the almoner of the Abbey at Bury St. Edmunds remarked on how the rebels used the heads of their victims in a puppet-play where they parodied the relationship Cavendish had with the

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<sup>56</sup> Ives, *The Common Lawyers of Pre-Reformation England*, 309.

<sup>57</sup> Maddicott, *Law and Lordship*, 61.

<sup>58</sup> M. Aston, 'Corpus Christi and Corpus Regni: Heresy and the Peasants' Revolt', *P&P*, 143 (1994), 4-9.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, 7-8; C. Dyer, *Everyday Life in Medieval England* (London, 1994), 232-233; *Essex Sessions of the Peace, 1351, 1377-1379* (ed.), E. C. Furber, Essex Archaeological Society, 3 (Colchester, 1953), 28.

<sup>60</sup> N. Brooks, 'The Organisation and Achievements of the Peasants of Kent and Essex in 1381', in H. Mayr-Harting and R. I. Moore (eds.), *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R. H. C. Davies* (London, 1983), 261-269.

<sup>61</sup> Musson, *Medieval Law in Context*, 243-245.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid*, 246.

Priory, with specific focus on how Cavendish provided legal counsel against the town's inhabitants in an on-going legal dispute with the Priory.<sup>63</sup> Similarly, when Richard II appeared at Mile End to meet the rebels on 14 June 1381, others stormed the Tower of London and killed, among others, Chancellor Simon Sudbury, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and High Treasurer Robert Hales. The deaths of both these individuals is significant, as it was to them complaints about judicial officials were to be directed after the 1346 Ordinance of Justices.<sup>64</sup>

A final point concerning the anti-judicial sentiment demonstrated during the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 can be made regarding the demands of Wat Tyler. Tyler sought to utilise the machinations of royal government to prepare legislation that enabled the murder of all legal officials. As the St. Albans Chronicle noted:

Now [Wat Tyler] wished above all to obtain a commission for himself and his men to behead all lawyers, escheators and everyone that either had been trained in the law or by virtue of their office participated in it. He believed that once all those learned in the law had been killed everything would be ordained according to the decrees of the common people.<sup>65</sup>

The *Anonimale* Chronicle noted identical requests by Wat Tyler and the rebels, including a reference to the law of Winchester, believed to be 1285 Statute of Winchester in which the traditional forms of community policing were enrolled, and symbolised an emphasis on localised justice, rather than interference from the central courts.<sup>66</sup> Anthony Musson argued that the reference to the statute was not itself a request to reinstitute grass-roots justice but an evocation of a 'golden age' of justice, since the Winchester statute was often proclaimed alongside Magna Carta, imbuing both with symbolic values concerned with good governance.<sup>67</sup>

Thus the publication of satirical commentaries, such as those by Langland, as well as the legal manifestations of the Peasants' Revolt reveal that the general view of

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<sup>63</sup> H. Eiden, 'Sir John Cavendish (d. 1381)', *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4938](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4938), accessed 26 October 2016; N. Saul, *Richard II* (New Haven, 1999), 57-58; J. Taylor (ed.), *Kirkstall Abbey Chronicles* (Leeds, 1952), 110-111; V. H. Galbraith (ed.), *The Anonimale Chronicle, 1331 to 1381* (Manchester, 1970), 135, 150-151.

<sup>64</sup> Musson, *Medieval Law in Context*, 248.

<sup>65</sup> J. Taylor, W. R. Childs and L. Watkiss (eds.), *The St Albans Chronicle: The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham* (Oxford, 2010), I, 434.

<sup>66</sup> A. Musson, *Expectations of the Law in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2001), 175; A. Harding, 'The Revolt Against the Justices' in R. H. Hilton and T. H. Aston (eds.), *The English Rising of 1381* (Cambridge, 1984), 175-178.

<sup>67</sup> Musson, *Expectations of the Law*, 175.

justice during the reign of Richard II was not complimentary. In fact, in the years after the Peasants' Revolt moves were made in Parliament to reform the judicial system. The 1383 Parliament opened with an address by Chancellor Michael de la Pole (d. 1389) which spoke of the need to maintain peace in the realm, and described the Peasants' Revolt as a rebellion against the Crown's officials and the King.<sup>68</sup> During the same Parliament the Commons brought forward a petition which sought to make the Justices of the central courts – King's Bench, Common Pleas and Chancery – take new oaths of office, which focused on the need for Justices to treat all equally.<sup>69</sup> The following year saw a renewed attack on the relationships between Justices and magnates. In April 1384, the Commons brought forward a petition concerning the habit of magnates to distribute livery badges in their own localities, especially amongst royal officials, which led to a disregard of the law.<sup>70</sup> They requested a statute prohibiting such activity, which received staunch opposition from the Duke of Lancaster, John of Gaunt, whose tirade apparent reduced the Commons to silence.<sup>71</sup> Yet later that year, in the November Parliament the Commons persisted. In the first of two petitions the Commons requested that the Justices of assize not serve in their own counties or in areas where they had ties to a particular resident magnate.<sup>72</sup> The second petition requested that the King should legislate to prevent abuses by the Justices of King's Bench, Common Pleas and the Barons of the Exchequer who took fees, pensions, gifts or robes from any magnate.<sup>73</sup> On this occasion the petitions were accepted by the Crown, yet in the Parliament of 1385, just one year later, the statute was repealed.<sup>74</sup> A final attempt at reform during the Wonderful Parliament of 1386 failed to renew the 1346 Statute, which prohibited Justices from taking gifts and rewards from those their business involved them with.<sup>75</sup>

Whilst no other attempts at reform were recorded on the Parliament Rolls, J. R.

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<sup>68</sup> Maddicott, *Law and Lordship*, 65.

<sup>69</sup> C. Given-Wilson (ed.), 'Richard II. Parliament of October 1383. Text and Translation', m. 5, item 27, in C. Given-Wilson, et al. (eds.), *The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*, Internet version, at [www.sd-editions.com/PROME](http://www.sd-editions.com/PROME), accessed on 31 October 2016. Scholarly Digital Editions, Leicester: 2005.

<sup>70</sup> N. Saul, 'The Commons and the Abolition of Badges', *Parliamentary History*, 9 (1990), 302-315.

<sup>71</sup> L. C. Hector and B. F. Harvey (eds.), *The Westminster Chronicle 1381-1394* (Oxford, 1982), 83.

<sup>72</sup> Given-Wilson (ed.), 'Richard II. Parliament of November 1384. Text and Translation', in *PROME*, m. 2, item 17.

<sup>73</sup> Given-Wilson (ed.), 'Richard II. Parliament of November 1384. Text and Translation', in *PROME*, m. 2, item 18.

<sup>74</sup> Given-Wilson (ed.), 'Richard II. Parliament of October 1385. Text and Translation', in *PROME*, m. 2, item 18.

<sup>75</sup> Given-Wilson (ed.), 'Richard II. Parliament of October 1386. Text and Translation', in *PROME*, m. 2, item 24.

Maddicott highlighted the entries made by the chronicler Knighton in the Parliament of 1388.<sup>76</sup> The petition again mentioned how the Justices failed to deal equally with the rich and poor and suggested that this could only be remedied by reform.<sup>77</sup> It called for a commission to be established which would remedy the abuses.<sup>78</sup> Whilst evidence is patchy, Maddicott tentatively argued that the activity of Parliament in the 1380s led to a decline in the retaining of Justices by magnates and ecclesiastics.<sup>79</sup> Whilst it is the case that the surviving magnate accounts of the 1390s do not feature any reference to fee payments made to Justices or Serjeants-at-Law, it does not seem to be the case that the practice disappeared entirely, and that the connections between Justices and magnates became less transparent. William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419) is a prime example of this. His activity with the Duchy of Lancaster increased dramatically following his appointment as a Serjeant-at-Law in 1389. As outlined above, he served as a member of Bolingbroke's legal counsel in the early 1390s and acted as both Chief Justice of the Palatinate of Lancaster, and as one of Henry Bolingbroke's attorneys whilst the latter was in exile.<sup>80</sup>

William I was not the only member of the judicial establishment to have ties to the Duchy of Lancaster in the late 1380s and 1390s; ties which arguably influenced their ability to dispense justice impartially. William Thirning (d. 1413) became a Justice of the Common Pleas in 1388, prior to which he had been a King's Serjeant for Richard II.<sup>81</sup> Yet he was in office as the Chief Justice at Lancaster by April 1389.<sup>82</sup> John Markham (d. c. 1409) succeeded Thirning as Chief Justice at Lancaster in February 1394, and was appointed as a Justice of Common Pleas in 1396.<sup>83</sup> Both were associated with the commission for deposing Richard II, and both had two masters; the Duchy of Lancaster and the Crown. Irregardless of whether they were receiving fees or robes, as was the traditional way of determining the judicial (and corrupt) relationships between magnates and justices, these justices had conflicting loyalties. Yet, it is possible that such retaining fees were still utilised, as it is likely that Justice John Hill of the King's Bench (1390-1407), was the same John Hill who was retained by the Duchy of Lancaster for

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<sup>76</sup> Maddicott, *Law and Lordship*, 67; G. H. Martin (ed.) *Knighton's Chronicle, 1337-1396* (Oxford, 1995), 511-512.

<sup>77</sup> Maddicott, *Law and Lordship*, 67.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, 68.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, 74-81.

<sup>80</sup> *CPR 1396-1399*, 425.

<sup>81</sup> J. Sainty, *The Judges of England, 1272-1990: A List of Judges of the Superior Courts* (London, 1993), 67.

<sup>82</sup> PL 3/1/37; Somerville, *Duchy of Lancaster*, I, 468.

<sup>83</sup> Somerville, *Duchy of Lancaster*, 468; Sainty, *Judges of England*, 67.

£10 between 1388 and 1399.<sup>84</sup> A final example of partiality can be seen in 1405, when Chief Justice of the King's Bench William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> provided legal counsel to Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland. Although it is unclear if and how William I benefited from this advice, it was a clear ethical transgression, as this advice enabled Henry Percy to act as arbitrator.<sup>85</sup>

The above section has shown that the law became increasingly politicised during the reign of Richard II. Moreover, it argued that the relationships between magnates and legal professionals did not decline in the 1390s, but rather the corruptive relationships manifested in less visible ways. When William Gascoigne I was appointed as Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1400, it was a further demonstration of magnates promoting individuals who would best represent their interests to positions of judicial responsibility. As J. R. Maddicott stated, corruption was endemic in late medieval England.<sup>86</sup> William's appointment was a continuation of what had come before.

Yet William Gascoigne I was immortalised by Shakespeare as an individual who was unlike the other Justices and Chief Justices of the late medieval period, and it may be possible to speculate on a reason for this. Shakespeare's characterisation of William I as Chief Justice is a manifestation of principal, integrity and honour, who preferred death to compromise. This may have been inspired by two 'legendary' episodes, which occurred during his time as Chief Justice of the King's Bench. The first episode was the stand William I took against Henry IV in 1405, when he abandoned the commission meant to be trying Archbishop Richard Scrope, after claiming that the King had no authority to judge a member of the clergy.<sup>87</sup> The main contemporary sources for this are *Martyrium Ricardi Archiepiscopi* by Clement Maidstone (d. 1456), and *Decollatio Ricardi Scrope*, attributed to Thomas Gascoigne<sub>28</sub> (d. 1458), the nephew of William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419).<sup>88</sup> Both detail Gascoigne's resistance to Henry IV (alongside the Archbishop of

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<sup>84</sup> G. O. Sayles, *Select Cases in the Court of King's Bench under Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V* (London, 1971), lxii; S. Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity, 1361-1399* (Oxford, 1990), 272.

<sup>85</sup> C 40/571, rot. 375.

<sup>86</sup> P. McNiven, 'The Betrayal of Archbishop Scrope', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 54 (1971), 173-213; S. Walker, 'The Yorkshire Risings of 1405: Texts and Contexts' in G. Dodd and D. Biggs (eds.), *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Reigme, 1399-1406* (York, 2003), 161-184; J. G. Bellamy, *The Law of Treason in England in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1970); T. Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum: Passages Selected from Gascoignes' Theological Dictionary illustrating the Condition of Church and State, 1403-1458* (Oxford, 1881), 225-226.

<sup>87</sup> See, for example: C. Given-Wilson, *Henry IV* (London, 2016), 269; J. Wylie, *History of England under Henry the Fourth*, 4 vols. (London, 1884-1898), 2, 233-236; *CPR 1405-1408*, 65.

<sup>88</sup> See, for example: D. Pirovansky, 'Martyrio Pulchro Finitus': Archbishop Scrope's Martyrdom and the Creation of a Cult', in P. J. P. Goldberg (ed.), *Richard Scrope: Archbishop, Rebel, Martyr* (Donington, 2003), 101; J. Raine (ed.), *The Historians of the Church of York and Its Archbishops*

Canterbury, Thomas Arundel), and both report on the Scrope miracles that became the foundation of his claim to sainthood. Moreover, both chroniclers preferred the aforementioned resistance to Scrope's execution over the misgivings raised by the subsequent Parliament, when the Lords were anxious about association Scrope with treasonous activities.<sup>89</sup> Dana Piroyansky argued that in the years immediately after the execution there was a rise in memorabilia associating with Scrope being collected in a form of mourning for the deceased, and this was evidence of the 'legends' around Scrope beginning to materialise.<sup>90</sup> For example, Agnes Wyman, the mother-in-law of William Gascoigne II<sub>14</sub> (d. 1422), donated a mazer which had been blessed by Scrope to the Guild of Corpus Christi before her death in 1413.<sup>91</sup> It is possible that the legend of William I may have developed as a by-product of the Scrope cult. J. W. McKenna noted the importance of Scrope in anti-Lancastrian propaganda during the reign of Edward IV, and this may have led to the immortalisation of both individuals.<sup>92</sup> The propaganda rendered Henry IV as an individual who usurped the Crown and who forwent the advice of the leading judicial and spiritual figures in England to behead a member of the clergy, who was later associated with reform.<sup>93</sup> Additionally, Thomas Gascoigne and Clement Maidstone were two of the main texts that speculated on Henry IV's health, and the onset of leprosy (seen as God's judgment), in the immediate aftermath of the execution.<sup>94</sup>

The second influence on Shakespeare's immortalisation of William I may have been his relationship with the young Prince Hal. One of the main plots of Henry IV, part two, is the imprisonment of the young Prince after he supposedly hit the Lord Chief Justice. Next to nothing is known about this event itself, and the fullest of account of their

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(London, 1879-1894), vol. 2; British Library Manuscript, Cotton Vespasian, E. VII; Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Auctar IV 5; T. Gascoigne, *Loci et Libro Veritatum e Libro Veritatum*, edited by J. E. T. Rogers (Oxford, 1881); and W. A. Pronger, 'Thomas Gascoigne', *English Historical Review*, 53 (1938), 606-26.

<sup>89</sup> W. M. Ormrod, 'An Archbishop in Revolt: Richard Scrope and the Yorkshire Rising of 1405', in P. J. P. Goldberg (ed.), *Richard Scrope: Archbishop, Rebel, Martyr* (Donington, 2007), 32; C. Valente, *The Theory and Practice of Revolt in Medieval England* (Aldershot, 2003), 41.

<sup>90</sup> Piroyansky, 'Archbishop Scrope's Martyrdom', 108.

<sup>91</sup> R. H. Skaife (ed.), *The Register of the Guild of Corpus Christi in the City of York*, Surtees Society, 57 (1872), 291-292.

<sup>92</sup> J. W. McKenna, 'Popular Canonization as Political Propaganda: The Cult of Archbishop Scrope', *Speculum*, 45 (1970), 612.

<sup>93</sup> D. Piroyansky, *Martyrs in the Making: Political Martyrdom in Late Medieval England* (New York, 2008), 63-67.

<sup>94</sup> T. Gascoigne, *Loci e Libro Veritatum* (ed.), J. E. Thorold Rogers (Oxford, 1881), 299; H. Wharton, *Anglica Sacra* (London, 1691), 2, 369-372; J. Raine (ed.), *Historians of the Church of York and its Archbishops* (London, 1886-1894), 3, 203-294.

relationship is in John Stow's *Annals of England*.<sup>95</sup> However, Stow's mention is preoccupied with an apparent chastisement of Prince Hal by Gascoigne, after the former mistreated a servant. It may be more likely that this relationship is the inspiration for Shakespeare's depiction because few chroniclers mention William I's stand during Scrope's execution. A known source for Shakespeare's history plays, Ralph Holinshed's chronicle makes little mention of Scrope's execution, and makes no mention at all, of either Arundel or Gascoigne's interventions.<sup>96</sup> Additionally, Edward Hall's *Union of the Two Noble and Illustre Famelies of Lancastre & Yorke* (1548) – which Holinshed used as a source – mentions the Scrope rebellion briefly, but adds a derisive assessment of Thomas Gascoigne and Clement Maidstone's claim that Henry IV had leprosy.<sup>97</sup>

That being said, few chroniclers mention the relationship between the young Henry V and William Gascoigne I. Therefore, it is not possible to definitively prove how Shakespeare discerned his information about the character of William I, yet it seems to be the case that in Tudor England there were multiple narratives of his activity as the Chief Justice, many of which appear to highlight his apparent judiciousness. As this section has detailed, the appointment of William I as Chief Justice was a highly political act, during a period where the law was increasingly politicised. Moreover, the fact that multiple narratives which emphasis aspects of his identity were prominent in late medieval and Tudor narratives, may provide some explanation as to why the Gascoigne family became associated with good justice and integrity, which, as the next section will detail, may not be entirely deserved.

#### The use and misuse of the law

This section debates the Gascoignes' engagement with the law, with an emphasis on their manipulation, if any, of the legal system. It will include an examination of William Gascoigne I's<sup>4</sup> legal cases, where possible, to show that he was not the incorruptible font of judicial wisdom Shakespeare made him out to be, but was no different from other Justices of the period. Furthermore, this section will briefly assess the Gascoigne family's interactions with illegality, in the form of violence and

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<sup>95</sup> J. Stow, *Annals of England* (London, 1603), 558. The text was originally published in 1580, and therefore would have been theoretically available for Shakespeare's *Henry IV*, part 2, which was believed to have been written between 1596 and 1599.

<sup>96</sup> R. Holinshed, *Chronicles of England, Scotland and Ireland*, IV (1577), 1118: on The Holinshed Project ([english.nsms.ox.ac.uk/holinshed](http://english.nsms.ox.ac.uk/holinshed)) by I. W. Archer, F. Heal, P. Kewes and H. Summerson, accessed 20 December 2016.

<sup>97</sup> H. Summerson, 'Sources: 1577' in P. Kewes, I. W. Archer, and F. Heal (eds.), *Holinshed's Chronicles* (Oxford, 2013), 69. Holinshed often quoted verbatim from Hall's chronicle.

lawlessness, in order to test and replicate conclusions drawn elsewhere in modern historiography. When assessing the Gascoignes' relationship with violence and lawlessness, there will be a slight change in methodology; the focus instead being on small case studies or vignettes during the life of William Gascoigne VI<sub>134</sub> of Gawthorpe, in order to extrapolate wider conclusions about the Gascoigne family as a whole. Prior to such analysis, methodological problems must be discussed. Firstly, due to the nature of the source material – both in its structure and composition and in its scarcity – evidence relating to lawlessness and violence is drawn from court records. Awareness must be drawn to the single-dimensioned nature of court sources, particularly witness testimonies. Similarly, they provide no indication, apart from witness speculation, on the motivations of the lawless or violent behaviour. On occasion, these documents are incomplete and provide no outcome of any legal hearings.

William Gascoigne I's activities following his appointment as Chief Justice are not always transparently clear. Simon Walker has demonstrated that following his appointment, William I's (d. 1419) presence at the West Riding peace commissions declined dramatically – being replaced by his brother Richard<sub>9</sub> (d. 1423).<sup>98</sup> Furthermore, where William I<sub>4</sub> does appear in the legal records, it is not always as a practitioner of the law, as after 1400 he began acquiring land; those transactions were often registered in Westminster as a final concord or agreement which recorded the new ownership of the land. Yet, there are a number of instances where William I's involvement in active law cases can be discerned – his presence in these cases taking different forms. The first aim of this section is to assess these instances to determine, if possible, his character as a dispenser of justice.

As stated above, the activity of William I<sub>4</sub> whilst Chief Justice is difficult to determine, since his responsibilities meant his name was associated with every piece of business in King's Bench during his tenure. However, the utilisation of his appearances in Common Pleas, where he was not as active, may allow for some insight into his activities. For this discussion, the project 'The Court of Common Pleas' has been utilised. These cases provide the opportunity to critically assess his activities.

The first two cases discussed – both in 1403 – are revealing. The first case concerned a debt, owed to Robert Manfeld, the provost of Beverley Minster, by John Hore and John Starlyng, both of whom were executors of the will of Simon Nok, a woolmonger of London. Both defendants claimed they had never administered the estates of Simon Nok, and thus all were asked to appear before the Chief Justice (Gascoigne), and an

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<sup>98</sup> S. Walker, 'Justices of the Peace, 1389-1413', *EHR*, 108 (1993), 313.

associate justice John Mauleverer.<sup>99</sup> Manfeld declined to appear, and the case was dismissed. Interestingly, what appears to be a relatively simple case required the judgement of two justices. This may be because both William I and Mauleverer were both from Yorkshire, and thus could provide some form of local knowledge to the proceedings.

The second case is much more interesting in terms of William I's quality of justice. The case is one of arbitration and the detention of goods, and involved Sir Edward Botiller's claim that John Walcote, Mayor of London, was purposely withholding bonds to the value of 1,000m.<sup>100</sup> The case involved individuals including the Bishop of Norwich, Henry Despenser, Sir John Cheyne, and Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland. The role of William I<sub>4</sub> in this case is not as the judge, or justice, but rather as a personal advisor to Henry Percy. He appeared to be the person responsible for the solution and advised Percy to take the lead in the arbitration, which he then did. Following the arbitration, the bonds were returned to Botiller, and Sybil Despenser, widow and kinswoman to the Bishop, paid damages of 10 marks. The revealing aspect of this case stemmed from William I's association – as advisor – to Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland. Despite not being either a defendant or plaintiff in this case, Percy still sought the advice of the leading justice in the country. Furthermore, as Maddicott has argued, fraternisation of leading justices with members of the aristocratic elite – following legislation in Richard II's reign to curb such activities – was seen as a form of corruption by many contemporaries.<sup>101</sup> Whilst historians cannot know the full extent of such a relationship, the appearance of the two together is suggestive, especially given the close connection the families of Gascoigne and Percy would have in the following decades.

Given his position as Chief Justice, William I's appearance as an attorney during his term is rather suggestive. In 1405 he appeared in court as an attorney for John Chivaler, who was taking action against Joan Williamservant, who had stolen £20 of goods and abducted Chivaler's servant John Grigge.<sup>102</sup> He similarly appeared as an attorney for Thomas Northfolk, a chaplain, in a case during the later years of his life –

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<sup>99</sup> CP 40/568, rot. 486. The following legal cases are from *The Court of Common Pleas: The National Archives, CP40 (1399-1500)*, by J. Mackman and M. Stevens, which were published as part of the 'Londoners and the Law' Project in 2010. Accessed on British History Online, [www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/common-pleas/1399-1500](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/common-pleas/1399-1500).

<sup>100</sup> CP 40/571, rot. 375.

<sup>101</sup> Maddicott, *Law and Lordship*, 81.

<sup>102</sup> CP 40/579, rot. 290 – some of the goods taken include 20lbs of pepper, 20lbs of ginger, 20plbs of cinnamon, cloves and mace. Damages were claimed at £40.

after his term as Chief Justice – but died before the case was settled.<sup>103</sup> William I's choice to act as an attorney for John Chivaler (whilst he was Chief Justice) is significant, yet unfortunately, indeterminable as he appears to have had no connection to any of the individuals involved in the case, either before or after 1405.

Similarly worthy of discussion are the actions of William Gascoigne I as a justice or judge.<sup>104</sup> In two traceable instances he presides over cases regarding debts and bonds. Furthermore, both are related to the north – one from Yorkshire and the other from the household of the Earl of Westmorland. In 1406, William I acted as a justice over a case of a 10m bond, with Thomas Farndon claiming that Roger Ruston, of Ruston (Yorkshire), refused to pay. Ruston provided evidence that he did pay, and was released from the bond, but unfortunately no conclusion remains to indicate in whose favour he found. Again, in 1408, William I presided over a case involving a number of individuals from Yorkshire, including William Ledes, the defendant, Thomas Markenfield, and Ralph Neville. He appears to find in favour of William Ledes, the executor of the will of Richard Ledes, Butler and Coroner of Ralph Neville, after draper Thomas Coleworth claimed that he had outstanding debts owed to him by the aforementioned Richard.<sup>105</sup> In both these instances, William I appears to be presiding over cases involving Yorkshire gentry. In the case that appears to provide a conclusion, the fact that he found in favour of his neighbour, though not definitive, is significant. Though it may be beyond the boundaries of this chapter, or even the historian, to add intent or suppositions to evidence that is, by its nature, one-dimensional, conclusions can be tentatively drawn. Firstly, William Gascoigne I worked as an advisor to the aristocracy of northern England, especially for those who held significant lands within Yorkshire – or more specifically, the West Riding. Furthermore, in the limited evidence that survives he appears to have been involved in judicial cases of northerners more than any other region of the country. Whilst the latter is more speculative than factual, evidence indicates that he was not necessarily the font of infallible judicial wisdom that later commentators, including Shakespeare, have made him out to be. Moreover, William I significantly represented the interests of the gentry and aristocracy who held land in Yorkshire, and this could provide a reason for his stance against Henry IV, in favour of executed archbishop, Richard Scrope. Most of his own interests lay within Yorkshire, and the ability to adjust justice in such a way as to advance his own (and his family's) local standing, cannot entirely be ruled out. Whilst the

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<sup>103</sup> CP 40/637, rot. 134.

<sup>104</sup> CP 40/583, rot. 139; and CP 40/590 rot. 231d.

<sup>105</sup> CP 40/590, rot 231d.

motivations of William Gascoigne I in terms of judicial fallibility have been assessed, the lawless (or law-abiding) nature of the Gascoigne family will now be discussed.

The endemic nature of lawlessness in late medieval and early modern England has long been a subject of attention amongst historians. Previous historiography has indicated its belief that the late middle ages – and from that the gentry – were particularly lawless, with violence being labelled as characteristic of medieval society.<sup>106</sup> Yet this view has been continually challenged.<sup>107</sup> Philippa Maddern concluded that there was no evidence of violence or lawlessness being endemic within late medieval society, with Christine Carpenter adding, that whilst violence did occur on occasion, it was often as a last resort.<sup>108</sup> Rhian McLaughlin has argued that violence was, on the whole, carefully considered by the gentry before enacted – repercussions from those harmed would give them pause, not the impositions by the crown or royal officials.<sup>109</sup> Thus the view of endemic violence – argued for in M. E. James' work on northern England – does not appear to carry much conviction in recent historiography.<sup>110</sup>

Regarding the Gascoigne family, the view purported by Maddern, Carpenter and McLaughlin – that violence was less common than believed – appears to be accurate. Between 1300 and 1600 there are only a few traceable instances of violent disputes and criminal activity where the Gascoignes were involved as perpetrators. In 1345, William Gascoigne Senior<sub>1</sub> raided the lands of John Kyme the younger; in 1562, Henry Machyn recorded that George Gascoigne<sub>160</sub> was involved in a city brawl over a marriage dispute; and in 1577, a William Gascoigne was accused of engaging with pirates and their illegal wares.<sup>111</sup> Very little survives to expand further on these instances or the ramifications of such actions. More information survives for the activity of William Gascoigne VI<sub>134</sub> (d. 1551). A series of testimonies given in Court of Star Chamber enable some insights into possible illegal activity. It should be noted that this is unlikely to be the sum of the Gascoigne family's illegal activity, yet the examples above, and the discussion below,

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<sup>106</sup> Bellamy, *Crime and Public Order*, 1,10; Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster*, 8; Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI*; McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century, Collected Essays* (1981); James, *Change and Continuity in the Tudor North* (1965), 7.

<sup>107</sup> Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life*, 73-77.

<sup>108</sup> P. C. Maddern, *Violence and Social Order: East Anglia 1422-1442*, 4-5; Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, 186-188.

<sup>109</sup> McLaughlin, 'Gentry Perceptions', 233.

<sup>110</sup> James, *Change and Continuity in the Tudor North*, 7.

<sup>111</sup> J. G. Nichols (ed.), *The Diary of Henry Machyn, Citizen and Merchant-Taylor of London (1550-1563)* (London, 1848), 287-298; *Acts of the Privy Council of England*, X, 138 [PC 2/12 f.105]; *CPM 1343-45*, 4967: Over £65 was allegedly stolen in cash and goods, with a number of people killed in the episode.

serve to show how infrequent such episodes are in the source material, and indicate that where evidence does survive, it is suggestive of actions by an individual, rather than a familial trait. The subsequent paragraphs summarise the testimony given in the Court of Star Chamber, but it should be viewed with caution. John Baker and J. A. Guy have both argued that a majority of suits within the first area of Star Chamber – which concerned disputed property titles – were accompanied with allegations of criminal misdemeanour: riot, unlawful assembly, perjury and forgery, among others.<sup>112</sup> These allegations were often entirely fictitious, or greatly exaggerated. Moreover, they were secondary to the plaintiff's concerns, as the parties had come to the Star Chamber over disputes over real or personal property.<sup>113</sup> Guy argued that the plaintiffs were not interested in judicial determination of their claims, but were using the court as an arbitrator.<sup>114</sup> This is not to say that the testimony below were either embellished or fictitious, as Guy suggests that there were genuine complaints of trespass and assaults before the Star Chamber, but rather it is not possible to know for sure.<sup>115</sup>

In 1530, as spring turned into summer, John St. Pol, esquire, of Campsall (near Doncaster) arrived in London. From the evidence he was to give later, it was likely he was nervous.<sup>116</sup> His visit to London was of the utmost importance to him and his family. The reason for his visit was simple: justice. St. Pol had become embroiled in a feud with another member of the West Riding gentry – William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> of Gawthorpe – the result of which had nearly cost him, his wife, and others, their lives. The foci of this dispute was the manor of Carcroft, a small land-holding in the honour of Pontefract, and less than two miles southeast from the Gascoigne manor of Burghwallis. A territorial dispute which had turned violent, St. Pol sought adjudication from the king because he was certain that local justice was partial towards William VI, a knight of fearsome reputation, who, if witness testimony is to be believed, utilised blackmail, extortion, and strong-arm tactics to get his own way.

According to St. Pol, in early April, William VI had sent 'diverse of his servants and tenants to the number of forty riotous persons', armed and arrayed, to the manor dispute, where they stole from the tenant farmer in residence – one William Wilson – and attempted to drive him and his family from the property.<sup>117</sup> In response to this St.

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<sup>112</sup> J. H. Baker, *Introduction to English Legal History*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (London, 2002), 117-118; J. A. Guy, *The Cardinal's Court: The Impact of Thomas Wolsey in Star Chamber* (Berkeley, 1977), 36-37.

<sup>113</sup> S. Guy, *Cardinal's Court*, 56.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid*, 56.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, 58.

<sup>116</sup> *YSC*, II, 50-54.

<sup>117</sup> *YSC*, II, 50.

Pol sought justice, approaching the bailiff of Osgoldcross, Marmaduke Vavasour, who investigated the incident and visited Gawthorpe to demand the return of the stolen property.<sup>118</sup> Whilst there, Vavasour was threatened and assaulted, whereby the ‘servants and [William VI] drew their daggers at the bailiff and came against him, and menaced the bailiff to such an extent that he dare not [complete his purpose there].’<sup>119</sup> A month later, a party of men led by William Gascoigne VI<sup>136</sup> intercepted the travelling company of John St. Pol near Norton Priory – a party which included his wife, brother William, and neighbour Thomas Pullen. The ‘furious and malicious’ William VI, ‘not dreading [the] laws’, after receiving a passing greeting from St. Pol responded ‘nay, St. Pol, by the blood of God thou shall not escape so’, after which he and his party apparently drew their weapons and descended on the company.<sup>120</sup> According to St. Pol William VI gave a rallying cry to his retainers: ‘by God’s blood you shall never do me more service [than if] you slay them all.’<sup>121</sup> St. Pol, despite taking sanctuary at Norton Priory, was grievously wounded, with multiple wounds to the chest, and seemingly losing an arm. His wife and neighbour escaped unharmed. However, the fear that drove St. Pol to seek justice in London rather than relying upon the royal arm of justice stemmed from his attempt to report the incident to the West Riding peace sessions, when William VI<sup>134</sup> ‘and retained persons to the number of 100 persons and above’ entered the session behind him, who then approached the bench and took the empty seat. As St. Pol noted ‘no man there had the authority to bind him to the peace, for he was a justice himself, and the oldest and best that there was.’<sup>122</sup>

If true, this excerpt is fundamental to the understanding of the relationship between the Gascoigne family and lawlessness because it suggests that William VI must have felt secure enough in his position, both through his career and social status, to understand that threatening and refusing the local representative of royal justice would have very few permanent implications for him. It was an overt demonstration of the authority and power he carried in the West Riding. Furthermore, his relationship with the crown was already severely strained. Seven years earlier, in 1523, Cardinal Thomas Wolsey had received a letter from the Earl of Surrey, Thomas Howard, whereby Howard had requested Wolsey’s assistance in defusing a situation that had arisen in Yorkshire: William Gascoigne VI was on his way to London with the intention of claiming the arms

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<sup>118</sup> See Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*, I, 521-522.

<sup>119</sup> YSC, II, 51.

<sup>120</sup> YSC, II, 51.

<sup>121</sup> YSC, II, 51.

<sup>122</sup> YSC, II, 53.

of the Earldom of Westmorland, from which he was descended by his grandmother.<sup>123</sup> This further reinforces William IV's opinion of his own power and authority, not just within the West Riding, but in the whole of the north of England. His journey to London demonstrates a number of things. Firstly, that he considered the current Earl of Westmorland not worthy of that title. Secondly, that his authority, power, and right to the title, was such that he deserved it; and thirdly, that such an ostentatious display would convince Henry VIII – whose power in the north was relatively limited at that time – to transfer the title. Additionally, it is interesting to note that William VI chose the Earldom of Westmorland to claim, not the Earldom of Northumberland, to which he had the considerably better claim. This was not the only instance where William VI asserted his authority over crown officials – he refused access to crown officials to assess his lands for the 1523 lay subsidy.<sup>124</sup>

Yet this does not appear to be the only case of violence between St. Pol and Gascoigne. A later case alludes to the fact that William VI was meant to make reparations for the damages caused during the previous bout of violence, but instead he moved to harass St. Pol's tenants and farmers.<sup>125</sup> Furthermore in February 1531 he sent a large group of his household men to the estate of St. Pol where they physically attacked him, and any of his tenants they could find. They also attacked his house, where they broke the windows and doors, and stole considerable amounts of wealth, including two horses – one of which was obtained by trying to drown the young boy who attempted to rescue it.<sup>126</sup> Attacks on St. Pol's property continued until June, when St. Pol approached the bishop of Durham for mediation. During the mediation it is revealed from numerous witness testimonies that St. Pol was a tenant of the Gascoigne family who had defaulted on his rent of 20*d.* for six years. Peaceful attempts at mediation were made, before violence occurred, but St. Pol had refused.

The second case in Star Chamber involves the same William Gascoigne VI<sup>134</sup> and the estate of Holing Hall (WR), an estate where his son Marmaduke<sup>200</sup>, and daughter-in-law, Jane<sup>201</sup>, when Holing Hall had then been sold to William Fairfax of Stetton, esquire, for 30 years.<sup>127</sup> According to witness testimony, the William VI sought to return the property to Gascoigne ownership. During Easter 1530, William VI<sup>134</sup> sent a band of his household men, totalling 26 people, to the farm where Agnes Maude, recent widow of

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<sup>123</sup> *L&P*, IV, 44 [The letter was sent on 3 October 1523].

<sup>124</sup> TNA E 179/207/132, rot. 2.

<sup>125</sup> *YSC*, III, 171.

<sup>126</sup> *YSC*, III, 172.

<sup>127</sup> *YSC*, II, 54-56.

Costan Maude, lived. An ill Agnes and her son John were told that the same farm was the property of the Gascoigne family and that the rents must be paid to them.<sup>128</sup> In a remarkable set of events, Agnes and John were refused the right to leave the property and were contained there against their will, whilst all the goods and chattels were driven off to Gawthorpe – the property left damaged and the family destitute. In response to this Agnes, rather than approaching royal justice for mediation, confronted William VI herself and demanded the return of her goods, chattels and cattle. He agreed, on the condition that she would now pay her return to him, rather than its owner – Fairfax had leased the farm to one Henry Bulke. When Bulke arrived to claim his rent Agnes claimed that '[through] fear of Sir William Gascoigne, and forfeiture of such [an agreement made] by compulsion and oppression, she [cannot] pay unto him the said rent.'<sup>129</sup> It was at this point that Henry Bulke sought royal adjudication, where he noted to the crown that the Gascoignes had virtual control of the West Riding, in terms of power, strength, control over the justices and minor royal officials, and as well as having lawless and violent men in his retinue. Motivations for such violence are unclear. Recent research has indicated that numerous reasons can be listed as being motivations for violence; including, a desire for goods or lands, the enhancement of local status or standing – as well as attempts to decrease an enemy's status or standing - resentment against royal officials or the crown, and avoidance of punishment in courts.<sup>130</sup> William VI's apparent use of armed retainers at justice sessions indicates his disapproval of royal justice, despite having his own career in royal judicial service – both as a justice and a Sheriff. Whether or not his choice to use armed retainers at justice sessions was a demonstration of his ability to disrupt justice, or rather an attempt to coerce an outcome suiting his own interests is difficult to determine. Yet, within his own lifetime he appears to have engaged in violence with a range of individuals, and it was not solely limited to his tenants, but with individuals who threatened Gascoigne interests, and power, within the county. Given the frequency with which he appeared to resort to violence and lawlessness, as well as his continued antagonism towards the crown – and royal representatives – suggests that William Gascoigne VI may be the exception, rather than the rule – his proclivity towards violence could be representative of his nature or the opportunities he had available to him, rather than a usage of violence as a form of 'rough justice'.

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<sup>128</sup> *YSC*, II, 55.

<sup>129</sup> *YSC*, II, 55.

<sup>130</sup> McLaughlin, 'Gentry Perceptions', 233.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was twofold. First, it aimed to demonstrate, as far as can be, that the law enabled the social mobility of the Gascoigne family during the late medieval and early modern period. The politicisation of the law created the circumstances through which William I was appointed Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and his association with the Duchy of Lancaster assisted such a rise. Moreover, this chapter argued that the social mobility experienced by William I was not deliberately sought by him, as William I's decision to actively align himself with the Duchy of Lancaster was not a decision indicative of a careerist, seeking personal advancement, given the circumstances at that time. It was unclear whether Henry Bolingbroke would return to England with his patrimony in-tact, especially given the volatility of Richard II during the closing years of the fourteenth century.

Secondly, the Gascoignes' use (or misuse) of the law was discussed, with particular focus given to the roles of William Gascoigne I and William Gascoigne VI. The role of William Gascoigne I as an advisor to the Percy family whilst Chief Justice is suggestive of some form of corruption. The fact that he was able to sell his services represents the ability to divert or control the interests of private individuals within the judicial system.<sup>131</sup> As Maddicott has argued, it was justice for those who could afford it.<sup>132</sup> In fact, combined with William I's demonstrable support of individuals with interests within Yorkshire, it could be suggested that he was an opportunist rather than a careerist, and that he was not, as Shakespeare represented him, an incorruptible demonstration of justice.

The apparent use of violence by William Gascoigne VI<sup>136</sup> as a means by which he could achieve his own ends, in these cases, appears excessive. Violence has been seen as a means to an end, and the seeming lack of fear that William VI demonstrated concerning the repercussions of such actions suggests that either his reputation was too fearsome to challenge, or that his actions were seen as justified. Whatever the extent of the violence he carried out, it cannot realistically be suggested as purely a tool of the late medieval and early modern gentry, but rather should be seen as either a personal representation of his character, or of the opportunities available. Rarely in the late medieval and early modern period did the Gascoigne family engage in any form of lawless behaviour, let alone consistent abuses against royal officials and the crown, and excessively violent attacks against neighbours and tenants.

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<sup>131</sup> Maddicott, *Law and Lordship*, 1.

<sup>132</sup> Maddicott, *Law and Lordship*, 39.

Ultimately, this chapter has sought to reconcile the perceived identity of the Gascoigne family - one of honour, integrity, and fair justice - with the reality: that they were similar to other gentry families of the period. Whilst they did, on occasion, engage in violent and lawless behaviour, it cannot be suggested that it was a common motif for the Gascoigne family. William Gascoigne VI aside, evidence suggests they sought to uphold the King's Peace, often participating in the judicial system as trained and gentry lawyers. Finally, this chapter has demonstrated that the reputation of the Chief Justice is not entirely justified, and that the Gascoigne family, like any other gentry family, were susceptible to opportunism and occasional bouts of aggression.

## Chapter Five: Identity on the Landscape

The previous three chapters of this thesis have discussed a range of influences upon late medieval and Tudor gentry identity: their social networks, political associations, magnate patronage and the law. This chapter will take a different approach, and will examine the Gascoigne family's representations of their own identity upon the West Riding landscape. It has often been the case that late medieval and Tudor gentry studies have omitted a discussion of the relationship between identity and the landscape. Whilst it is not possible to attribute a definite reason for this lacuna, it may be that the landscape has often been seen as passive – the setting in which activity took place – and not as an active artefact created and shaped by said activity.<sup>1</sup> However, the landscape is important in understanding the gentry's opinion of themselves. As Paul Groth wrote:

Landscape denotes the interaction of people and place: a social group and its spaces, particularly the spaces to which the group belongs and from which its members derive some part of their shared identity and meaning.<sup>2</sup>

The identities which the Gascoigne family conveyed through their interactions with the landscape existed within a community which shared common values. The routines through which they and their neighbours organised their lives, as well as the obligations and demands upon each of them, mean that the landscape is a culturally meaningful resource.<sup>3</sup> Such a landscape must include the houses in which the Gascoigne family lived, and the churches in which they worshiped, as these formed parts of the Gascoignes' wider environment. Moreover, these were landscapes that were altered by the family; the adding of monuments, stained glass and the redesign of manorial complexes. Each development reflected a relationship with the landscape that conveyed aspects of the family's identity.

Within these landscapes one might argue there were a series of 'nested

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<sup>1</sup> J. Finch, 'Historic Landscapes', in P. Howard, I. Thompson, E. Waterton (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Landscape Studies* (Abingdon, 2013), 143.

<sup>2</sup> P. Groth, 'Frameworks for Cultural Landscape Study', in P. Groth and T. W. Bressi (eds.), *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes* (New Haven, 1997), 1.

<sup>3</sup> J. C. Barrett, 'The Archaeology of Social Reproduction', in J. C. Barrett, R. J. Bradley, and M. T. Green (eds.), *Landscapes, Monuments and Society: The Prehistory of Cranborne Chase* (Cambridge, 1991), 6-8.

landscapes' – delineated by family, kin, community and gender – which attributed different meanings to the spaces in which they lived.<sup>4</sup> As Natalie Davis argues, people's sense of their own selves emerged from their relationships to their patrons, friends, families and God.<sup>5</sup> Through an examination of the wider landscape, as well as the 'nested landscapes' created by social networks, it is possible to suggest some aspects of the Gascoigne family's identity, albeit elements that are fluid and transitional, as this identity could and did vary with each generation.

To date, it has primarily been archaeologists, art historians and historical geographers who have embraced features of the landscape as an analytical framework.<sup>6</sup> When monuments have been discussed by historians, for example, they have tended to adopt an empirical approach. Nigel Saul and Peter Sherlock assessed commemoration as a direct reflection or recreation of gentry identity.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, such studies have traditionally examined monuments and memorials through the lens of art history. This methodology, which often removed the monuments from their context and space, has meant that the significance of many tombs has been missed. As Jonathan Finch noted:

By removing the monuments from their spatial, ideological and social contexts, traditional approaches to the study of monuments strip them of their meaning, role and significance, and are limited to descriptions based on aesthetic criteria imposed by the wider discipline.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Finch, 'Historic Landscapes', 143; A. Bernard Knapp and W. Ashmore, 'Archaeological Landscapes: Constructed, Conceptualised, Ideational', in W. Ashmore and A. Bernard Knapp (eds.), *Archaeologies of Landscape: Contemporary Perspectives* (Oxford, 1999), 1-32.

<sup>5</sup> N. Davis, 'Boundaries and the Sense of Self in Sixteenth Century France', in T. Heller, M. Sosna and D. E. Wellbery (eds.), *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality and the Self in Western Thought* (Stanford, 1986), 53-63.

<sup>6</sup> See, for example, A. Richardson, 'Gender and Space in English Royal Palaces, c. 1160-1547: A Study in Access Analysis and Imagery', *Medieval Archaeology*, 47 (2003), 131-165; R. Gilchrist, 'Blessed Art Thou Among Women': The Archaeology of Female Piety', in P. J. P. Goldberg (ed.), *Woman is a Worthy Wight: Women in English Society, c. 1200-1500* (Stroud, 1992), 212-216; 'Medieval Bodies in the Material World: Gender, Stigma and the Body' in S. Kay and M. Rubin (eds.), *Framing Medieval Bodies* (Manchester, 1994), 43-61; *Gender and Archaeology: Contesting the Past* (London, 1999); D. Gaimster and R. Gilchrist (eds.), *The Archaeology of the Reformation, 1480-1580* (Leeds, 2003).

<sup>7</sup> P. Sherlock, *Monuments and Memory in Early Modern England* (Aldershot, 2008), 1-10; N. Saul, *English Church Monuments in the Middle Ages: History and Representation* (Oxford, 2009), 288-290.

<sup>8</sup> J. Finch, 'Church Monuments in Norfolk before 1850: An Archaeology of Commemoration', *BAR British Series*, 317 (2000), 2.

More recently, academic studies have sought to improve on the traditional approach by examining the monuments in-situ to assess the commemoration in its spatial environment.<sup>9</sup> Integrating archaeology into historical methodologies allows for an insight into medieval and Tudor society that documentary sources alone cannot provide. Paul Binski's examination of death culture, for example, recognised the need to study commemoration within the space of the parish church, especially in regards to the politics of space that led the gentry to compete for recognition after death.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, Binski argued that commemorations were not solely about idealising the past but presenting a cultural and pious vision of the future. Similarly, Mike Parker Pearson argued that memorials and funerary rituals were not separate from the political, social and economic aspects of life, but were active in them; they were not just symbolic markers.<sup>11</sup> Sarah Tarlow noted that the emotional components of commemoration should not be ignored and that the line between belief, body and artefact was not clear-cut.<sup>12</sup> These aspects of memorials impacted the collective and communal identity and memory of the parish too. Kelsey Wilson-Lee argued that the active performative aspects of memorials and commemoration occurred within the parish boundaries and created an identity which affected the social and cultural functions of the Church.<sup>13</sup>

This chapter seeks to utilise an interdisciplinary approach to discuss the landscape of the Gascoigne family within the West Riding of Yorkshire. It will focus, primarily, on the manorial complexes and the monuments of the Gascoigne family, but will also discuss the relationship between space and identity. Emphasis will be given to the role of stained glass, heraldry and liturgical texts. Before such an approach, it is necessary to reaffirm this thesis' consideration of identity, as discussed more fully in the

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<sup>9</sup> P. Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (New York, 1996); N. Llewellyn, *The Art of Death: Visual Culture in the English Death Ritual, c. 1500-1700* (London, 1997); S. Badham and G. Blacker, 'The Pudsay Family of Bolton-by-Bowland and their Monuments', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 89 (2014), 138-168; J. Barker, 'Monuments and Marriage in Late Medieval England: Origins, Functions and Reception of Double Tombs' (Courtauld Institute of Art PhD Thesis, 2015).

<sup>10</sup> Binski, *Medieval Death*, 70-122. See too, P. Binski, 'The English Parish Church and its Art in the Later Middle Ages: A Review of the Problem', *Studies in Iconography*, 20 (1999), 1-25.

<sup>11</sup> M. Parker Pearson, *The Archaeology of Death and Burial* (Stroud, 1999), 193-197. See too, M. Parker Pearson, 'Mortuary Practices, Society and Ideology: An Ethnoarchaeological Study', in I. Hodder (ed.), *Symbolic and Structural Archaeology* (Cambridge, 1982), 99-113.

<sup>12</sup> S. Tarlow, *Ritual, Belief and the Dead in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2011), 1-19.

<sup>13</sup> K. Wilson-Lee, 'Dynasty and Strategies of Commemoration: Knightly Families in Late-Medieval and Early Modern Derbyshire', pt. 1, *Church Monuments*, 25 (2011), 85-104; pt. 2, *Church Monuments*, 26 (2011), 27-43.

introduction.<sup>14</sup> This thesis has drawn upon current theories of identity in archaeology which have begun to adopt aspects of 'Queer Theory' in their methodologies. 'Queer Theory' in its simplest form states that identities are not fixed and do not necessarily determine who we are.<sup>15</sup> Lynn Meskell and Robert Preucel argued that the sense of our own identity is fluid and tolerant, whereas the sense of the identity of others is often more fixed, and this can lead to problems when assessing identities of the past.<sup>16</sup> These considerations have codified in the works of historians such as Miri Rubin, who argues that 'Queer Theory' can be transplanted onto discussions of gentry identity, through an understanding that identity is not binary.<sup>17</sup> For the gentry this includes a recognition that at any time there are multiple influences upon an individual's identity; both passive, in the form of the environment, education and childhood, and active, in the terms of careers and social bonds.

A final point should be highlighted. This chapter will adopt a methodological framework like that of the previous chapters. It will examine case studies where evidence is extant to draw conclusions about the family's identity. Although considerations will be made to ensure that each branch's identity is discussed independently, the sheer lack of primary evidence, especially from archaeological remains, dictates that a general assessment of Gascoigne investment will be more fruitful. This chapter will now turn its attention to Gawthorpe Hall and All Saints', Harewood.

#### Gawthorpe Hall and All Saints', Harewood

In discussions of material legacy, it seems logical to begin with the area where such investment was most common. For the Gascoigne family, this is at Gawthorpe and Harewood. Whilst no medieval or Tudor residence of the Gascoigne family survives intact, it is possible to draw inferences of the style and substance of the Gascoigne

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<sup>14</sup> See the Introduction of this thesis, 12-43.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, R. Jenkins, *Social Identity* (London, 1996); M. Sökefeld, 'Debating Self, Identity and Culture in Anthropology', *Current Anthropology*, 40 (1999), 417-418; R. Brubaker and F. Cooper, 'Beyond 'Identity'', *Theory and Society*, 29 (2000), 1-47. For more on Queer Theory, see A. N. Wilson, *Incline Our Hearts* (London, 1990); M. H. Kirsch, *Queer Theory and Social Change* (London, 2000); and J. Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York, 1990); *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (Abingdon, 2011).

<sup>16</sup> L. Meskell and R. W. Preucel, 'Identities', in Meskell and Preucel (eds.), *A Companion to Social Archaeology* (Oxford, 2007), 121.

<sup>17</sup> M. Rubin, 'Identities', in R. Horrox and W. M. Ormrod (eds.), *A Social History of England, 1200-1500* (Cambridge, 2006), 383-412.

landscape centred on Gawthorpe by bringing together a myriad of piecemeal evidence. Such evidence does not provide a complete picture of their material legacy but it is the best view of their identity that remains to historians and archaeologists. The following section will outline such evidence and will discuss how the development of Gawthorpe and Harewood as sites of material legacy reflected multiple forms of identities to different audiences, but also provided a familial inter-generational identity that other source material often does not afford.

The first site discussed here is Gawthorpe Hall, the family's *caput honoris*, and its surrounding parkland. It seems probable that the manor of Gawthorpe was founded in April 1363 when William Gascoigne Senior<sup>1</sup> (d. 1378) paid half a mark for a licence to enfeoff himself and his family at a close called 'Le Stokyng' and three acres of land at Harewood, for 33s 4d yearly to Robert de Lisle, then Lord of Harewood.<sup>18</sup> In October of the same year, the Lord of Harewood granted the Gascoigne family the keeping of the park, wood and warren of Harewood with 3d a day in wages.<sup>19</sup> In 1378, the manor was further augmented with a grant of a messuage, 100 acres of land and 2 acres of meadow in nearby Garforth.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, the following year the Gascoignes further expanded their holdings in the area: in October 1379 they gained 2 messuages, 80 acres of land, 4 acres of meadow and 12d of rent in Harewood and Garforth, whilst in November, they acquired 2 messuages, 160 acres of land, 3 acres of meadow and 12d of rent in Harewood.<sup>21</sup> In 1392 William I<sub>4</sub> acquired a moiety of 60 acres of land, 8 acres of meadow, 4 acres of wood and 16 acres of pasture at Harewood and Gawthorpe from William Ryther and his wife, Sybil.<sup>22</sup> For this, William I paid £20 and gives a rough estimate of the size of Harewood at that time. However, grants from 1364 and 1401 suggest that at that time Gawthorpe was not held in chief, and was still considered part of the Lordship of Harewood.<sup>23</sup>

Very little else is known about the site until the late fifteenth century. No chapel licence has been found, although minor members of the family were recipients of papal

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<sup>18</sup> *CPR 1361-1364*, 325. The circumstances around the foundation of Gawthorpe are discussed more fully in Chapter One, 44-96, of this thesis.

<sup>19</sup> *CPR 1361-1364*, 394.

<sup>20</sup> CP 25/1/277/140, no. 6.

<sup>21</sup> CP 25/1/278/141, nos. 13, 16.

<sup>22</sup> CP 25/1/278/146, no. 25. A moiety often represents half of the manor's holdings, but could also mean one of two parts, irrespective of size.

<sup>23</sup> The Lordship at this point appears to have included the nearby holdings of the families of Frank, Mauleverer, Ward, Thornhill, Thwaites and Depeden, among others. For the Lordship, William de Aldeburgh and Elizabeth paid £1000. (CP 25/1/277/140, no. 15). See too, CP 25/1/279/149, no. 36.

indulgences for portable private altars from the 1440s onwards, and therefore it seems likely that the private chapel at Gawthorpe was commissioned between then and 1480, when Richard III granted William V<sub>106</sub> (d. 1488) a licence to crenellate Gawthorpe and impark two large parks.<sup>24</sup> The licence to crenellate reads thus:

July 14 1480: Licence for William Gascoigne, knight, or his heirs to crenellate their manor of [Gawthorpe], co. York, and to enclose and impark 200 acres of land, 100 acres of meadow, 60 acres of pasture and 40 acres of wood of their demesne lands in [Gawthorpe], [Weardley] and [Harewood] and 1,000 acres of land, 400 acres of meadow, 200 acres of pasture and 600 acres of wood in [Towhouses], Lofthouse, [Weardley], [Harewood] and [Wike] of their demesne lands, provided that they be not within the metes of the king's forest.<sup>25</sup>

This is a key moment in the development of the Gawthorpe site for several reasons. Firstly, this licence appears to have preceded an immediate redesign of Gawthorpe Hall. Secondly, it enabled the Gascoignes to impark two significant areas of land in the immediate vicinity of their *caput honoris*. Thirdly, it is possible that this grant included the parish church of All Saints' Harewood within the Gascoignes parkland and wider estates. The Gawthorpe park and the relationship between the Gascoigne family and All Saints' Harewood will be discussed, but first the redesign of Gawthorpe and what the manorial complex may have looked like will be considered.

All indications as to what Gawthorpe Hall may have looked like are from the seventeenth century onwards, after the house and estates had passed from Gascoigne ownership. The final Gascoigne owner of Gawthorpe Hall was Margaret Gascoigne<sup>233</sup> (d. 1592), who married Sir Thomas Wentworth III<sup>234</sup> (d. 1587). Her great-grandson was William Wentworth (d. 1695), 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Strafford, and he had inherited the manors of Gawthorpe and Harewood, as well as lands at Wike, East Keswick, Weardley, Weeton, Lofthouse and Thorp Arch. Due to the actions of the family during the civil war (1642-1651), the Earldom was temporarily lost and this led to the sale of the combined estates of Gawthorpe and Harewood in 1649 for £28,000 to Sir John Cutler (d. 1693), 1<sup>st</sup> Baronet. At that time, a bill of sale was drawn up, as was a survey which detailed aspects of the manors and the surrounding lands. The bill, from 10 November 1656 notes:

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<sup>24</sup> *Calendar of Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland, 1427 - 1447* (London, 1909), 122, 136.

<sup>25</sup> *CPR 1476-1485*, 203.

'Gawthorpe Hall most part of the walls built with good stone, and all the houses covered with slate, and a great part of that new building, four rooms in the old building all wainscoted, five large rooms in the new building all wainscoted likewise, and coloured like walnut tree, the materials of which house, if sold, would raise 500£ at least.

To this belongs a park, in former times stored with deer, a park-like place it is, and a brook running through the middle of it, which turns 4 pair of millstones, at 2 mills.

There is at Gawthorpe a garden and orchards about 3 acres in compass, fenced around with high stone walls, the garden towards the north side hath 4 walls lying one above another, both the garden and orchard well planted with great store of fruit trees of several kinds, which with the dovecote and the hill before the door Mr. Fox hath in lieu of 83 part of his wages yearly'.<sup>26</sup>

Arguably, the 'new building' refers to the seventeenth-century structure shown in the eighteenth-century engravings of Willem Van der Hagen (d. 1745), where the architecture contrasts from that of the rest of the complex (figs. 2.3 and 2.4). The symmetrical and uniform windows were part of a classical design popular during the early seventeenth century amongst the gentry houses of England.<sup>27</sup> The 'old building' referred to by the bill of sale might denote the structure (visible most clearly in fig. 2.4). These designs, which ranged about two or three sides of a courtyard, were commonplace in the West Riding of Yorkshire in the late medieval period; the Vavasours of Hazlewood, Markenfields of Markenfield Hall, and the Scargills of Lead are each examples of manor houses which utilised these designs.<sup>28</sup> Typically, these structures developed incrementally over time as the needs of the gentry changed, and households expanded.<sup>29</sup>

In terms of the Van der Hagen engravings, it should be noted that the Gawthorpe Hall depicted might represent an entirely different structure than was present during the late medieval and Tudor period when the Gascoigne family were resident, since both the engravings have been embellished and certain features contradict each other. This can be furthered by the discovery of broken medieval green-glazed tiles packed into Gawthorpe's central range, used as a hard core below a more recent floor.<sup>30</sup> It is unlikely

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<sup>26</sup> WYLL 250/3/12a (Or HAR/Surveys/12a).

<sup>27</sup> See, for example, N. Pevsner, *Pevsner's Architectural Glossary* (London, 2010), and J. Summerson, *Architecture in Britain, 1550-1830* (Harmondsworth, 1983).

<sup>28</sup> A. Emery, *Greater Medieval Houses I: Northern England* (Cambridge, 1996), 284-285.

<sup>29</sup> M. Howard, 'The Courtyard House, Late Medieval and After', in M. Airs and P. S. Barnwell (eds.), *The Medieval Great House* (Donnington, 2011), 97.

<sup>30</sup> J. Finch, 'Excavations at Gawthorpe' (forthcoming, c. 2017). I would like to acknowledge Jon Finch here for kindly discussing the finds of his excavations at Gawthorpe.

that the broken tiles were brought from another site, so this suggests that the main range underwent renovations.<sup>31</sup> Of the inconsistencies with Van der Hagen's prints, the first is that the architectural style of the two wings do not match. In the 1722 engraving it is apparent that the upper floor of one of the wings was an open gallery (mentioned in the 1607 inventory of Gawthorpe Hall as the gallery over the garner).<sup>32</sup> Moreover, this open gallery may be what was referred to in the bill of sale, when it was noted that 'most part' of Gawthorpe Hall was built with good stone.<sup>33</sup> Secondly, the gateway, and the space between where the buildings end and the gate begins is substantially different to the 1727 engraving, where smaller walled courtyards are visible, and where it appears that the entire second floor of the wings were completely built from stone, with no open gallery. Secondly, the depth of the engravings is suspicious. In the 1722 engraving the sixteenth-century extension appears to connect to the older complex through one of the wings, allowing for a large window believed to have been in the main hall. The later engraving, albeit from a different perspective, makes no such distinction and suggests that the new building connected through the main range of the old complex. These inconsistencies may be due to artistic licence, restrictions imposed by the choice of material, or could represent a significant (but unlikely) re-modelling of the estate between 1722 and 1727, yet they do provide general information about the earlier structure in two ways. Firstly, it is likely that the Gascoignes' Gawthorpe consisted of several buildings ranged upon a courtyard. Secondly, their manor house featured an upper storey – a point reinforced by the inventory of 1607.

At this point an examination of the December 1607 inventory of Gawthorpe Hall (Appendix 5) may allow for a more nuanced understanding of the exterior of the manor buildings, but also might allow for some understanding of what the interior may have looked like. Twenty-five rooms are listed on the inventory, and these most likely represent the rooms in the main manorial complex at that time.<sup>34</sup> Thirteen of these rooms related to service, such as the brew-house, dairy house, larder, parlour, wine cellar and washhouse. Inferences can be made which may allow for the allocation of rooms to either the 'old' or 'new' buildings referred to in the 1656 bill of sale. Firstly, given that Thomas Wentworth (d. 1641), 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Strafford, was a staunch royalist, it

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<sup>31</sup> Finch, 'Excavations.'

<sup>32</sup> See Table 1.9 for a room comparison, appendix five for a transcript of the Gawthorpe Inventory and figures 2.3 and 2.4 for Van der Hagen's engravings.

<sup>33</sup> J. Jones, *The Antiquities of Harewood* (London, 1859), 62-65.

<sup>34</sup> Table 1.9 shows a comparative list of the rooms in each of the surviving inventories for Gawthorpe (1607) and Lasingcroft (1577), as well as lists the rooms Johnston's notes in his 1669 visit to Gawthorpe Hall.

may be possible to assign the rooms entitled 'Stuart' or some derivation of, as being parts of the new structure which was built during the early seventeenth century. Similarly, Henry Johnston's visitation of Gawthorpe in 1669 noted heraldry in the few rooms in which it appeared; most notably, the 'dining room', chapel and a chamber dedicated to the Duke of Albany (fig. 2.10). Presumably this latter room is a reference to the same Stuart Chamber recorded in 1607, as James I was the first Stuart King of England, and inherited the title of Duke of Albany shortly after the murder of his father, Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, at Kirk o' Field in 1567. Moreover, the rooms entitled 'new' could also be included as part of the later structure; thus, the 'Stuarts' chamber', 'the chamber next to the Stuarts' chamber', and the new pantry, may tentatively be ascribed to Gawthorpe's extension. Furthermore, it could be possible to assign the balcony chamber to the later structure as balconies became popular in England during the early seventeenth-century, especially in country homes.<sup>35</sup>

Other rooms can likewise be tentatively placed. The gallery over the garner (as mentioned above) can be seen in Van der Hagen's 1722 engraving (fig. 2.3), and it is possible that the kitchen and brew-house were in the opposite wing, due to the faint presence of chimney stacks also in Van der Hagen's earlier engraving. Moreover, a mill stone was recovered from that area, which may have been used in the kitchen's range.<sup>36</sup> A final correlation between the Van der Hagen engravings, the inventories and the bill of sale can be highlighted: the location of the great chamber. Figure 2.4 shows that part of the south face of the 'old building' had large windows, suggesting it was not floored like the rest of the structure. Combined with the location of the chimney stack, the large arched window could suggest that this was the likely site of the great chamber. In Gervase Markham's plan for a country home from 1613, private hosting space was separated from the service quarters.<sup>37</sup> For Gawthorpe, this could mean that the lord's closet, knight's chamber and old parlour were clustered together for reasons of privacy, whilst the old pantry, cellar, wine cellar, larder and other service buildings were clustered in one of the wings, near the kitchen and bake house.

Very little else is known about how the rooms would have been decorated. As shown by the bill of sale, several rooms in the seventeenth-century structure had wood

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<sup>35</sup> L. Levy Peck, *Consuming Splendour: Society and Culture in Seventeenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 2005), 190-191. See too, N. Cooper, *The Houses of the Gentry, 1480-1680* (London, 1999); M. Airs, *The Tudor and Jacobean Country House: A Building History* (Stroud, 1995); and M. Airs, *the Making of the English Country House, 1500-1640* (London, 1975).

<sup>36</sup> Finch, 'Excavations.'

<sup>37</sup> A. Gomme and A. Maguire, *Design and Plan in the Country House: From Castle Donjons to Palladian Boxes* (New Haven, 2008), 135-137.

panelling or wainscoting.<sup>38</sup> Henry Johnston's visit to Gawthorpe in 1669 noted down heraldic devices that may give some indication as to the decoration of the interior space.<sup>39</sup> The largest and most impressive collection of heraldic stained glass present at Gawthorpe upon Johnston's visit was recorded in the 'windows of the dining room' (fig. 2.6). It is likely this was a reference to the great hall of the old building because Johnston also recorded heraldry in the window of 'the north chamber to the dining room', suggesting that Johnston's dining room was on the south side of the building. This collection of stained glass featured 24 heraldic shields, seven of which related to the Wentworth family, suggesting that the windows were either replaced or commissioned after the Wentworth-Gascoigne marriage.<sup>40</sup> In the chamber to the north of the dining room (fig. 2.5), heraldry referenced St. George, the families of Neville, Newmarch, Mowbray, Gascoigne and Clare, as well as the Prince of Wales and Holland family (the Earls of Exeter and Huntingdon). In the Duke of Albany (Stuart) bedchamber (fig. 2.10), heraldry referenced the coat-of-arms of the Darcy family, the Bretton family and Wentworth, Woodhouse and Neville. The Darcy and Bretton family have no link to the Gascoignes and thus this is further indication that the Stuart bedchamber was in the seventeenth-century building. Two heraldic shields are also recorded in the chapel (fig. 2.8) carved into the pews: Per Pale, Gascoigne and Mowbray, and a Gascoigne escutcheon within Quartered 1 and 4, Wentworth, 2 and 3, Woodhouse.

Also in the chapel was an unidentified alabaster effigy, recorded by Henry Johnston in 1669 (see fig 2.7).<sup>41</sup> P. E. Routh in her examination of the 'missing lady' of Gawthorpe Chapel believed this to be Beatrice Ellis<sup>10</sup>, wife of Richard Gascoigne<sup>9</sup> (d.

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<sup>38</sup> Jones, *The Antiquities of Harewood*, 62-65.

<sup>39</sup> Bodleian Library, MSS Tops. Yorks. C 13, ff. 333-344.

<sup>40</sup> There were 24 coats of arms in the Grand Hall window, 7 of which related to the Wentworth family. Including, 1) Heaton or Boteler (?): A fess chequy between six cross crosslets; 2) Per pale, quartered 1 and 4, Gascoigne, 2 and 3, Mowbray and Unknown: A fess chequy with 1 cross crosslet in dexter chief; 3) Per pale, Wentworth and Gascoigne; 4) Per pale, Gascoigne and Mowbray; 5) Per pale, Wentworth and Gascoigne; 6) Gascoigne escutcheon within quartered 1 and 4, Wentworth, 2 and 3, Woodhouse; 7) Per pale, Gascoigne and Wyman; 8) Per pale, Gascoigne and Fitzwilliam; 9) Per pale, Gascoigne and Langton; 10) Per pale, Gascoigne Unknown: a fess or. between three birds, arg.; 11) Per pale, Gascoigne and Mowbray; 12) Per pale Gascoigne and Wyman; 13) Per pale, Gascoigne and Clarell; 14) Per pale, Gascoigne and quartered, 1 and 4, Neville of Raby, 2 and 3, Neville; 15) Per Pale, Gascoigne and Percy; 16) Per pale, Gascoigne and Butler (?): Barry, or. and sable; 17) Per pale, Gascoigne and quartered: 1, Fitzwilliam, 2, Clarell, 3, Neville, and 4, Newmarch; 18) Per pale, Gascoigne and quartered, 1 and 4, Tempest, 2 and 3, Bolling; 19) Per pale, Wentworth and Gascoigne; 20) Gascoigne; 21) Per pale, Wentworth and Gascoigne; 22) Gascoigne escutcheon within Wentworth; 23) Newmarch; 24) Per pale, Wentworth and Gascoigne.

<sup>41</sup> Bodleian Library, MSS Tops. Yorks. C 13, ff. 333-344.

1423), who requested to be buried at an unspecified church in Leeds, presumably the parish church at Hunslet.<sup>42</sup> However, there is no evident reason why husband and wife were not buried together; the short-lived Hunslet branch was neither particularly wealthy nor knighted so it seems unlikely that the family would have been able to afford commemorations in alabaster.<sup>43</sup> Yet the only other Beatrice<sub>217</sub>, similarly unlikely, in the Gascoigne family was the wife of Sir William Gascoigne VIII<sub>216</sub> (d. 1567), a daughter of the Tempests of Bracewell and Bolling. Although her date of death is unknown, the attire and design of the effigy appears to indicate that it was commissioned in the late fifteenth century. It is unlikely that the private chapel at Gawthorpe was her intended resting place, yet there is no evidence to suggest why her effigy was there. Given that Johnston's drawing is the only evidence for this effigy, it is not possible to positively ascribe an identity.

Due to the widespread presence of Wentworth heraldry it is not always possible to determine whether any of the material recorded was pre-Wentworth. Within 'the dining room', for example, Johnston recorded the heraldry from multiple windows and made no distinction between its relative spread, or whether he meant multiple window panes within a larger arched window, like that seen in Van der Hagen's engravings. Two rooms feature no Wentworth heraldry and may have been from the Gascoigne-era. The first room which may feature Gascoigne-era heraldry is the chamber to the north of the dining room, the heraldry of which is recorded above. The second is the recording of two achievements of arms in the 'dining room' (fig. 2.9), which feature crests, supporters, mantling, shields of arms and compartments. Johnston's detailing of the achievement of arms is relatively lax, and as such it is only possible to determine the shields of arms; the first features 8 coats-of-arms, only six of which are identifiable (the remaining two are blank): 1) Gascoigne, 2) Percy, 3) Newmarch, 4) Wyman, 5) Percy, 6) Lucy. The second features 4 coats-of-arms, and again only two are identifiable: 1) Neville and 2) Boteler.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> P. E. Routh, 'Henry Johnston and the Missing Lady of Gawthorpe Hall', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 54 (1982), 100-103; *Test. Ebor.* I, 403.

<sup>43</sup> R. Dodsworth suggested that there was a stone slab dedicated to the Gascoigne family in Whitkirk Church, Leeds, and this could be representative of the funerary monuments dedicated to the Hunslet branch, yet I have been unable to find any trace of this. See. R. Dodsworth, *Church Notes* (Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1904), 28-29.

<sup>44</sup> Whilst this thesis has identified the heraldry as Boteler (Gu. A fess compony Az. And Or. Between six crosses pateé fitched at the foot, Or.), some trepidation should be noted. There are numerous versions of the Boteler coat-of-arms, the distinguishing feature being the changes in tincture for the fess. Johnston records the tinctures as either Ar. and Gu., or Ar. and Vert., yet after a considerable search I have been unable to find an exact match for these colours. It could be the case that Johnston was mistaken, but given the context of the heraldry, it seems likely it refers to a branch of Boteler family as the great-grandparents of Joan Neville were Jean Beaufort, Countess

This enables a tentative conclusion that there was Gascoigne heraldry at Gawthorpe during their ownership of the site, and that it was redesigned at least twice during the period of this thesis; first in 1480 when the licence to crenellate was issued, and second, at some point after the marriage of Margaret Gascoigne to Thomas Wentworth III.

Thus, the evidence that survives pertaining to Gawthorpe Hall enables a partial picture whereby the interior of the house had a determinable relationship with the family who owned it. Both the Gascoignes and the Wentworths made efforts to brand (or rebrand) the house, and their ancestry and lineage was an important part of this display. Noticeable amongst the rooms recorded by Johnston is the fact that they are predominantly rooms that visitors were received in or would have seen. The Stuart bedchamber was presumably for guests (given that Johnston suggested the Duke of Albany once stayed there), and the chapel, Great Hall and dining room would have been a part of hosting. Moreover, of the two collections of heraldry where the Wentworth coat-of-arms is not present, one was in the dining room, where stained glass windows featuring Wentworth heraldry was also in proximity, and the second was in an undesignated chamber to the north of the dining room, and thus arguably was a room infrequently visited by guests. The central focus of the Wentworth internal redesign appears to have been, therefore, the rooms most frequently visited by guests, and this conveys a preoccupation with status. Specifically, it was about communicating who they were from an inter-generational point-of-view, but also about proving that they were established members of the gentry. It also inferred that the Wentworth family were linked to the Gascoignes, and were a continuation of the same identity.

The park also contributed to the Gascoigne identity at the site. As with the house, it may be possible to piece together some aspects of the park from post-medieval source material. As noted, the 1656 bill of sale and survey indicated that Gawthorpe Hall was encompassed by a garden and orchard of roughly three acres in size.<sup>45</sup> It also noted that the park at Gawthorpe once contained deer. Moreover, it noted that in the centre of the park was a brook, which turned two mills. It is likely that this park bears some correlation to the land referred to in the 1480 licence to crenellate which gave the Gascoignes permission to impark two areas of land. The locations mentioned by the licence to crenellate were: Gawthorpe, Harewood, Wike, Weardley, Lofthouse and Towhouses, each of which has been highlighted on Map 3.12. These locations had been part of the landscape from around the seventh centuries, alongside Weeton, Kearby, East

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of Westmorland, and Robert Ferrers, Baron Boteler. That William Gascoigne VI (d. 1551) claimed the Earldom the Westmorland reinforces this genealogical link.

<sup>45</sup> WYL 250/3/12a Estate Surveys (Or HAR/Surveys/12a)

Keswick and Dunkeswick, and may assist in framing the location of the park.<sup>46</sup> It could be argued that these areas represented the boundaries of the park: Weardley to the west, Harewood to the east, Towhouses to the south, and Lofthouse and Wike to the south-east.

Moreover, the estate map features several boundary markers, which were often used to designate boundaries between parcels of land with different owners. The west end of Weardley moor, for example, features a boundary stone, whilst either side of Stubhouse moor are two border oak trees. There is a further border oak to the east of Wike, near the edge of the estate map. These could suggest possible boundaries for the medieval park. Field-names could also be suggestive of the park's spread. Visible on Map 3.12 are 'High Park Closes', 'High Park Wood', both to the south of Gawthorpe near Towhouses and Lofthouse. 'Park Close' is also highlighted, as is 'Castle Park.' These could give some form of indication of the spread of the park at Gawthorpe. The latter could refer to a park at Harewood castle, yet it is unclear, firstly, when the park gained that name, secondly, whether the Lords of Harewood had their own park after the granting of the keeping of the park, woods and warrens to William Gascoigne Senior in 1363, and thirdly, whether the park was so-called because of its proximity to the castle or because it belonged to the castle. Furthermore, the presence of 'Lodge Hall' to the south-east of Gawthorpe is also suggestive of a deer park as lodges were common as a temporary resting place whilst hunting or riding. Finally, the presence of fields named 'the Oakes' and 'Timber Garth' suggest that there were areas close to Gawthorpe that were wooded prior to the creation of this estate map, although it is possible that these fields were wooded pasture.<sup>47</sup>

Medieval manors were the residence and administrative centre within their landscapes. They had a significant role as symbols of power and influence and could be seen as a manifestation of authority, particularly when seen through the mechanisms of display, patronage and status.<sup>48</sup> The licence to crenellate in 1480 is key to understanding the relationship the Gascoigne family at Gawthorpe had with their landscape. In terms of such licences it was a late grant and the reason for this is unknown.<sup>49</sup> Later licences to

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<sup>46</sup> L. A. S. Butler, 'All Saints' Church, Harewood', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 58 (1986), 85-108; E. Dennison and S. Richardson, *Harewood Castle, Harewood, West Yorkshire: An Archaeological and Architectural Survey*, (2008), 11; M. L. Faull and S. A. Morehouse (eds.), *West Yorkshire: An Archaeological Survey to A. D. 1500* (Wakefield, 1981), II, 194-5.

<sup>47</sup> Finch, 'Excavations.'

<sup>48</sup> O. H. Creighton, *Castles and Landscapes: Power, Community and Fortification in Medieval England* (London, 2002), 65.

<sup>49</sup> P. Davies, 'English Licences to Crenellate: 1190-1567', *The Castle Studies Group Journal*, 20 (2006), 226-245.

crenellate were often symbolic representations of lordly status.<sup>50</sup> This may be the case for the Gascoigne family, who sought to maintain their independence from the neighbouring Harewood Lordship. Additionally, it may have reflected a rise in social status; in 1482 William V<sub>106</sub> was made a Knight Banneret.<sup>51</sup> This elevation may have come shortly after his marriage to Margaret Percy<sub>107</sub>, daughter of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland (d. 1461). Moreover, Charles Coulson argued that it inferred royal recognition and acknowledgement of the family's status and represented royal patronage.<sup>52</sup> Whilst late licences to crenellate were often associated with façade adjustments and artificial changes, the Gascoignes at Gawthorpe initiated a complete redesign of the manorial complex and the surrounding estate, as at the same time two mills also at Gawthorpe were rebuilt.<sup>53</sup>

Parks were also significant status symbols and the fact that a family of very little standing gained control of a historic park in 1363 must be evidence of a climb in social status for the Gascoigne family. Moreover, the parks created by the grant of 1480 were comprised of a variety of different land cover – pasture, wood and meadow. The combination of different land covers within a single park located conveniently close to the *caput honoris* and which could be integrated into the main estate conveys the significant wealth and status of the family who made that possible.<sup>54</sup>

Gawthorpe Hall, therefore, was a site of continued development across the late medieval and Tudor period. The house and the grounds reveal a pre-occupation with status, but also suggest an active relationship between the people and the landscape. The recognition of the environment as decisively Gascoigne influenced the decision by the Wentworth family to tie into the former's identity. Yet, this was only part of the Gawthorpe landscape.

The second site within the Gawthorpe landscape was the parish church at All Saints' Harewood, located within half a mile of Gawthorpe Hall, and possibly set within the boundaries of the 1480 park grant. Map 3.12 shows All Saints' Harewood and its proximity not only to Gawthorpe Hall, but Harewood Castle and the village of Harewood. The church originally served the aforementioned as well as the medieval settlements of

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<sup>50</sup> C. Coulson, 'Hierarchism in Conventional Crenellation', *Medieval Archaeology*, 20 (1982), 72.

<sup>51</sup> W. A. Shaw, *The Knights of England*, I (London, 1906), 17.

<sup>52</sup> Coulson, 'Hierarchism in Conventional Crenellation', 83. See too, C. Coulson, 'Structural Symbolism in Medieval Castle Architecture', *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 132 (1979), 73-90; C. Coulson, 'Freedom to Crenellate by Licence – A Historiographical Revision', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, 38 (1994), 86-137.

<sup>53</sup> TNA E 134/18&19Eliz/Mich8.

<sup>54</sup> S. Moorhouse, 'The Medieval Parks of Yorkshire: Functions, Contents and Chronology', in R. Liddiard, *The Medieval Park: New Perspectives* (London, 2007), 102, 113.

Lofthouse, Newall, Stockton, Weeton and Weardley.<sup>55</sup> It is perpendicular in style, and the current structure was built c. 1410 for Elizabeth and Sybil de Aldeburgh, the daughters and heiresses of Sir William de Aldeburgh (d. 1388), the builder of Harewood Castle in the 1370s. All Saints' Church has a short west tower, and a long nave and chancel of equal height. It has no clerestory. The southern porch, east gable and battlements were rebuilt in the eighteenth century, and G. G. Scott restored the roof and interior in the 1862.<sup>56</sup> The nave is made up of four-bay arcades with tall octagonal piers and single arches between the chancel and the side chapel. The south aisle is dedicated to a Gascoigne chapel, whilst a vestry is situated in the north aisle.

Inside the church is the largest collection of alabaster effigies in England. Alabaster was one of the most exclusive and prestigious materials for the creation of tombs in the late medieval period. It was prized for its colour – it was a translucent creamy white – and was a substitute for white marble, which was not as readily available in England.<sup>57</sup> Large collections of alabaster tombs are rare; the largest collections are at Harewood, where there are twelve alabaster effigies; Macclesfield (7), Westminster, Canterbury, Ashbourne, Bromsgrove, Llandaff and Tong (6 each).<sup>58</sup> The earliest alabaster effigies were of royalty and leading magnates, thus creating the association between alabaster and status; Edward II's monument at Gloucester, and John, Earl of Cornwall's monument at Westminster Abbey are prime examples. The production of alabaster effigies was highly specialised and as such there are relatively few. The two leading workshops were near York and in the Midlands. Pauline Routh and Richard Knowles argued that the earlier tombs of the Gascoigne family, as well as the Redman and Ryther monuments, came from the workshop near York, whilst the later tombs were products of the Chellaston workshop in the Midlands, shipped up the Trent and Wharfe rivers.<sup>59</sup> The prominent alabaster deposits of the medieval period were in Staffordshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and it is likely that the Gascoignes' alabaster came from one of these sites.<sup>60</sup>

This makes the collection at Harewood more intriguing to the historian. Not only are half of the effigies attributed to the Gascoigne family, but those depicted in the remainder can be counted amongst the Gascoigne family's distant kin. The twelve

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<sup>55</sup> Faulk and Moorhouse (eds.), *West Yorkshire*, 2, 386-287.

<sup>56</sup> Leach and Pevsner, *Buildings of the West Riding*, 296-298.

<sup>57</sup> Saul, *English Church Monuments*, 67. N. Ramsay, 'Alabaster' in J. Blair and N. Ramsay (eds.), *English Medieval Industries* (London, 1991), 29-40.

<sup>58</sup> A. Gardner, *Alabaster Tombs of the Pre-Reformation Period in England* (Cambridge, 1940), 2.

<sup>59</sup> P. Routh and R. Knowles, *The Medieval Monuments of Harewood* (Wakefield, 1985), 1-5.

<sup>60</sup> Routh and Knowles, *Medieval Monuments*, 1.

effigies at Harewood are generally believed to represent William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> and Elizabeth Mowbray<sub>5</sub> (d. c. 1400), Richard Redman (d. 1426) and Elizabeth Aldeburgh, William Ryther (d.1426) and Sybil Aldeburgh, William III<sub>34</sub> (d. c. 1465) and Margaret Clarell<sub>35</sub>, William V<sub>106</sub> (d. 1488) and Margaret Percy<sub>107</sub>, and Edward Redman (d. c. 1510) and Elizabeth Huddleston.<sup>61</sup> It is difficult to know the original location of the monuments within the church. Whilst it is likely that all three Gascoigne tombs were located within the chapel, P. E. Routh noted that the monuments had been documented in different locations: a drawing from c. 1796, T. Whitaker's records in 1816, Routh's own photography in 1976, as well as the physical locations today (2016) all depict the Gascoigne monuments in different parts of the chapel.<sup>62</sup> The drawing of H. D. Pritchett (figure 2.11) marks the monuments and their locations between 1927 and 1929. As can be seen all but two of the alabaster tombs are in the Gascoigne chapel.<sup>63</sup> The tombs of Richard Redman and William Ryther are part of the wider architectural fabric, positioned on raised plinths between the aisles and the nave. This makes detailed conclusions regarding space and the monuments difficult, yet more generalised conclusions regarding the chapel and its placement within the church are still possible.

The earliest Gascoigne alabaster tomb at Harewood – that of William I<sub>4</sub> (c. 1350-1419) and his first wife Elizabeth Mowbray<sub>5</sub> (d c. 1400) – has five angels apiece on the south and north sides of the tomb chest, each standing and holding shields (fig. 2.12a).<sup>64</sup> Likewise, the east end has two similar angels, whilst the west end of the tomb chest has two angels holding one shield between them.<sup>65</sup> These two angels are facing each other and the shield depicts the heraldry of the Royal House, 1340-1405. The male effigy wears the red judicial robes of the Chief Justice, although the pigmentation has faded

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<sup>61</sup> Routh and Knowles note tentative dates of the tombs' placements: Gascoigne-Mowbray (c. 1419), Redman-Aldeburgh (c. 1426), Ryther-Aldeburgh (c. 1426), Gascoigne-Clarell (c. 1461-65), Gascoigne-Percy (c. 1480-90), and Redman-Huddleston (c. 1510).

<sup>62</sup> P. E. Routh, *Medieval Effigial Alabaster Tombs in Yorkshire* (Ipswich, 1976), 42-45. Routh believed that the current location of the effigies in All Saints' Harewood is representative of where they originally would have been located.

<sup>63</sup> H. D. Pritchett, *The Harewood Alabaster: Drawings by H. D. Pritchett; introduced by Richard Knowles and Pauline Routh* (Wakefield, 1983).

<sup>64</sup> Joan Pickering, William I's second wife chose to be buried with her parents at the parish church of Holme-on-Spalding-Moore in the East Riding of Yorkshire. Although no monument survives, her will indicated a desire to be buried inside the church. R. Dodsworth, *Yorkshire Church Notes* (1904), 14.

<sup>65</sup> Technical tomb descriptions are based upon my own viewings of the tombs and the work of P. E. Routh and R. Knowles, *The Medieval Monuments of Harewood* (Wakefield, 1983), 9-13; H. D. Pritchett, *The Harewood Alabaster: Drawings by H. D. Pritchett; introduced by Richard Knowles and Pauline Routh* (Wakefield, 1983); P. E. Routh, *Medieval Effigial Alabaster Tombs in Yorkshire* (Ipswich, 1976).

considerably. The face is framed by a coif and under the mantle, which fastens at the right shoulder, is a full robe bound at the waist. On the left side of the effigy hangs a purse. On the right side is an anelace, the civilian's dagger. The scabbard is decorated and includes the monogram IHC (the Greek abbreviation for Jesus) against a criss-cross background. The feet rest on a couchant lion. The face of the female effigy is framed by an ornate headdress. On either side of her head are arranged 'cauls' which enclose the hair. The head is crowned by a chaplet carved with leaves and roses, and includes a medallion which features a symbol of a pelican (representing redemption). A veil covers the crown of the head and is shoulder-length. She wears an early fifteenth-century gown (a houppelande), with a flat turned-down collar. The gown is fastened at the neck and is buckled at the waist. Her feet rest upon a dog, which sits in the folds of her gown. The Latin inscription which identified the pair has since been lost, but read:

Hic jacet Will'm's Gascoigne nuper capitalis justiciarius de banco Henrici nuper Regis Angliae Quarti, et Elizabetha uxor ejus, qui quidem Will'm's obit die D'nica XVII die Decembris A°Dni...<sup>66</sup>

The fact that the tomb chest features heraldry of the Royal House, 1340-1405 may suggest a commissioning date for shortly after the death of Elizabeth Mowbray (d. c. 1400). If William I had commissioned the tomb chest after 1405, it is likely it would have featured the altered heraldic devices. It seems unlikely that he would have ordered a tomb after 1405, with the express intention of displaying an out-of-date coat-of-arms from a period when the Gascoigne family's service to the Crown was minimal and when William I's own service as Chief Justice had just begun.<sup>67</sup>

The second tomb is situated to the west of the first tomb, and is presently believed to be that of William III<sub>34</sub> and Margaret Clarell<sub>35</sub> (fig. 2.12b). However, this thesis will argue that this is incorrect and that another, more complicated identification is possible: that the tomb chest belonged to William II<sub>14</sub> and Joan Wyman<sub>15</sub>, whilst the effigies represent William IV<sub>71</sub> (d. c. 1464) and Joan Neville<sub>73</sub>. At some point in the twentieth century it was moved into the south-east corner of the church, and thus the south and east ends of the tomb are damaged beyond recognition. The tomb chest features a series of ogee canopies separated by buttresses which each bear a small

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<sup>66</sup> R. Glover, *Visitation of Yorkshire 1584/5*, edited by J. Foster (1875).

<sup>67</sup> William I became Chief Justice of the King's Bench in 1400, after the death of William Clopton. Prior to this he had minimal service to the crown, other than his 1388 assignment as a Serjeant-at-Law for Richard II. See, Chapter One, 35-92, and Chapter Four, 171-202, of this thesis.

heraldic shield.<sup>68</sup> The niches formed contain a weeper on a pedestal; on the north side of the chest are six ladies and five knights, whilst the west end features four knights. The second lady from the east is depicted in the attire of a widow or nun. The other five women has veiled headdresses and full gowns and collars. Their hands are folded in prayer. The knights are depicted in full plate armour, bascinet with a raised visor, collar and medallion belt. They have daggers but no swords, and their hands are raised in prayer. There is one exception, on the west end – this knight holds a sword in his right hand, which points down towards the ground, whilst his left hand grasps a poleaxe. The design and depiction of these weepers indicate a date range of c. 1430-1440. The head of the male effigy is resting on a shaped helm, the sights of which consist of seven holes and a short narrow slit. The mantling is shown, and on top is the crest of the Gascoigne family. The effigy does not wear a helmet and as such the male's hair can be seen. Around the neck is a mail standard, whilst the shoulders are protected by pauldrons. There are chevrons on the cuisses, the greaves and on the gauntlets. The effigy's feet rest on a roaring lion. The belt around the waist features medallions which bear a sun-burst. A sword hangs from the left side of the effigy whilst a dagger hangs from the right. The effigy wears a Yorkist collar of alternate sun and roses, the ends of which include the monogram IHC within a circle. A badge of Edward IV hangs pendant from the trefoil link which joins the suns and roses. The gown of the female effigy denotes a widow of gentle birth: a veiled head and 'barbe' covering the throat and chin. The mantle is fastened across the breast and the gown has slit pockets. Her feet rest upon two dogs crouched amongst the gown's folds. Her hands are together in prayer.

In terms of the effigies' identities, this thesis argues that several inconsistencies between the commemoration and historical record have led to a misidentification. The present identification is based upon several reasons: firstly, that the number of weepers on the tomb chest; secondly, the fact that the lady's apparel indicated she was of gentle birth; thirdly, the presence of a Gascoigne *lucie head* on the male's helmet; and fourthly, the Yorkist collar of alternate suns and roses, joined by a pendant badge of Edward IV.<sup>69</sup> However, of these only two could arguably identify a specific Gascoigne and his spouse (the weepers and the Yorkist collar). For the weepers, current scholarship on the Harewood monuments attests that they matched the number of children that William III

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<sup>68</sup> Technical tomb descriptions are based upon my own viewings of the tombs and the work of P. E. Routh and R. Knowles, *The Medieval Monuments of Harewood* (Wakefield, 1983), 27-33; H. D. Pritchett, *The Harewood Alabaster: Drawings by H. D. Pritchett; introduced by Richard Knowles and Pauline Routh* (Wakefield, 1983); P. E. Routh, *Medieval Effigial Alabaster Tombs in Yorkshire* (Ipswich, 1976).

<sup>69</sup> Routh and Knowles, *The Medieval Monuments at Harewood*, 27-29.

and Margaret Clarell had.<sup>70</sup> However, there is no evidence to contradict Foster's detailing of 4 sons and 3 daughters (9 sons and 7 daughters if in-laws are considered), yet only 7 sons and 6 daughters are recorded on the tomb. It seems unlikely that William III and Margaret made the decision to not include one of their daughters or daughters-in-law on the tomb chest, and thus it is reasonable to conclude that these 'mourners' were not limited to just children, but could instead have represented wider family. Given that all the male individuals were dressed in plate armour and of the women one appeared to be either a nun or a widow, one could further suggest that these figures represented the wider family unit. Moreover, of the children (in-laws aside), only the eldest son, William IV<sup>71</sup> was knighted. Thus, their depictions as knights seems out of place, especially considering that Ralph Gascoigne I<sup>78</sup> of Burnby (d. 1488), William III's fourth son, could not be described as anything close to wealthy.<sup>71</sup> Additionally, the interests of John Gascoigne<sup>76</sup> lay primarily in the city of York, and thus civilian attire would have been more appropriate. However, literally speaking, the fact that neither Ralph nor John would have owned expensive plate armour is irrelevant in their depiction, since many representations were depictions of the ideal, not the actual, and thus given that they were members of the gentry (and members of the Gascoigne family), depictions as knights was not wholly exceptional. Alternatively, it is possible that those represented on the tomb chest were not family members or close relatives, but were ancestors of the Gascoigne family; something Jessica Barker argues was relatively common.<sup>72</sup>

If the weepers did represent the wider family then only the collar and pendant of Edward IV identifies William III as the individual depicted. Yet neither William III<sup>34</sup> or William IV<sup>71</sup> actively demonstrated Yorkist loyalties during their lifetimes. As mentioned in Chapter Three of this thesis, William III actively avoided choosing sides during the Wars of the Roses and thus it seems unlikely that he would do so in death, whilst William IV was an active Percy adherent – fighting at the Battle of Wakefield (1460) for the Lancastrians, alongside Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, who knighted him there.<sup>73</sup> Although on the surface this may appear to argue against the possibility of William IV being depicted as a Yorkist, he appeared in two commissions of oyer and terminer in

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<sup>70</sup> Routh, *Medieval Effigial Alabasters*; Routh and Knowles, *The Medieval Monuments of Harewood*; Butler, 'All Saints Church, Harewood', 85-108.

<sup>71</sup> His will (*Test. Ebor.* IV, 15-16) demonstrates this limited wealth. Ralph gave his son (apart from a piece of plate and the manor of Burnby), a gold chain, whilst the rest of his wealth – a few pieces of plate and a gold ring – was split between his widow, his remaining children, outstanding debts and paying a priest for two years of intercessory prayers for his parents' souls.

<sup>72</sup> Barker, 'Monuments and Marriage in Late Medieval England', 222.

<sup>73</sup> Shaw, *Knights of England*, 75.

1460: the first, in May, under the Lancastrian government, and the second in December, under the Yorkist government.<sup>74</sup> Whilst not necessarily a serious sign of political commitment, his assignment to the Yorkist commission could indicate that he was not wholly out of favour with the new regime, but too could suggest Yorkist disorganisation. The fact that his close friend, patron and main tie to the Lancastrian cause, Henry Percy, died at Towton the following year might mean that the Yorkist collar represents William IV's successful assimilation to the new regime; an assimilation made more likely by his wife, Joan Neville.

A further explanation for the presence of the Yorkist collar can be offered. It is possible that Joan Neville, who outlived her husband, added the collar herself. Her family were staunch (and prominent) Yorkists. She outlived William IV and was married for a second time to another firm Yorkist. Moreover, at the time of William IV's death his father was old and infirm, and it is possible that his mother, Margaret Clarell, pre-deceased him. Thus, without surviving testamentary evidence it could be the case that Joan acted as William IV's executor and may have added the collar and pendant badge.

Whilst the evidence outlined above is not absolute, the presence of two heavily damaged effigies at Wentworth (discussed in more detail below) may provide clarity. Previously, these damaged effigies have been identified as being William IV<sup>71</sup> and Joan Neville<sup>73</sup>, yet the male effigy displays familial heraldry that makes such an identity unlikely, due to the absence of the Clarell coat-of-arms. The heraldry depicted on the damaged male effigy at Wentworth are quartered arms: 1 and 4, Gascoigne; 2, Mowbray; and 3, Wyman, and whilst it is possible that some members of the Gascoigne family disapproved of the Gascoigne-Clarell marriage – discussed more fully in Chapters One and Two of this thesis – it is unlikely that Margaret Clarell's own son would disapprove of his mother. Moreover, Clarell heraldry featured prominently in Gawthorpe Hall, and thus there is no valid reason why William IV would choose not to display the arms of his heiress mother, but would choose to feature the arms of his heiress grandmother and great-grandmother. Therefore, the heraldry strongly suggests that the damaged effigies at Wentworth belong to William III<sup>34</sup> and Margaret Clarell<sup>35</sup>. Combined with the presence of William V<sup>106</sup> and Margaret Percy<sup>107</sup> at Harewood, the only plausible identity for the second tomb at Harewood is William IV and Joan Neville. Yet, this does not account for the tomb chest which this thesis believes belonged to William II and Joan Wyman. The mourners on the tomb chest are stylistically dated to the 1430s, and thus seem out-of-place with the effigies which are styled to the mid-1460s. The absence of any heraldry

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<sup>74</sup> S. Payling, 'William Gascoigne', *HOP* (forthcoming, c. 2017).

or inscription means that a definitive attribution is not possible, yet the only Gawthorpe Gascoignes to die during that period are William Gascoigne II<sup>14</sup> (d. 1422) and his wife, Joan Wyman<sup>15</sup> (d. c. 1431).

The third Gascoigne monument at All Saints' Harewood is attributed to William Gascoigne V<sup>106</sup> and Margaret Percy<sup>107</sup> (fig. 2. 14). It is presently the most westerly tomb in the Gascoigne chantry chapel. The tomb chest is like that of the Gascoigne-Clarell monument.<sup>75</sup> It consists of separate niches and buttresses with cusped canopies. The north side has nine niches, the south, eight; the west end four and the east, three. There are shields on the buttresses of the north, west and south ends. The central shield on the west end is larger than the others and is held by two angels. On the east end, in the centre, is a smaller shield held by a single angel. The shield is quartered and bears *three lozenges in fess* in the first quarter. The two remaining niches on the east end contain the figures of St. Christopher and St. George. St. George is depicted in plate armour, and beneath his feet is a dragon. He wields a broken lance, the tip of which is in the dragon's head. St. Christopher appears to be holding a figure of the Christ-child. In the niches of the west end are St. John the Baptist, carrying a lamb on a book, and St. Anthony the Great, the founder of monasticism. On the north side of the tomb chest are four more saints: St. Lawrence, St. John the Evangelist, St. James of Compostella, and St. Michael the Archangel. Of the remaining five niches on the north side, all are filled with knightly weepers. They wear armour styled to 1460-1480. On the south side all the niches are filled with female weepers. Of the effigies, the lady's head lies on two cushions with angels on either side. The face is veiled in the style of a widow. She wears a mantle and a full gown. Around the waist is a girdle with a decorated pendant end. Also, hanging from the pendant is a rosary. Two dogs are by the feet. Like the previous tomb, the knight's head lays upon a helm, bearing a bulls-head crest. He wears plate armour, but it is mostly covered by a short-sleeved tabard. The effigy also wears gauntlets and a main skirt. Routh and Knowles have speculated that between the effigy's clasped hands is a heart. Around the neck is an alternating chain of SS and Os. At the centre is a rose. He also wears a dagger and a sword. The sabatons rest upon a lion.

As well as the monuments, the use of space within All Saints' Harewood involved stained glass and liturgical texts. The performance of liturgy, prayers, and songs of

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<sup>75</sup> Technical tomb descriptions are based upon my own viewings of the tombs and the work of P. E. Routh and R. Knowles, *The Medieval Monuments of Harewood* (Wakefield, 1983), 33-41; H. D. Pritchett, *The Harewood Alabaster: Drawings by H. D. Pritchett; introduced by Richard Knowles and Pauline Routh* (Wakefield, 1983); P. E. Routh, *Medieval Effigial Alabaster Tombs in Yorkshire* (Ipswich, 1976).

intercession interacted with the space through the fabric of the church. In the Gascoigne chapel at Harewood were two pieces of stained glass that accentuated the identity of the Gascoigne family. In the south window of the Gascoigne chapel were three coats-of-arms: to St. George, Gascoigne (the *lucie head*), and an escutcheon of Gascoigne on quartered Wentworth-Woodhouse. Firstly, this suggests that the chapel underwent key transformations as the need arose, especially when new owners took control of the Gascoigne patrimony. The appropriation of where the heads of the Gawthorpe branch were buried by Margaret Gascoigne<sup>233</sup> (d.1592) and Thomas Wentworth III<sup>234</sup> was fundamental in legitimising the new ownership, as the combination of Gascoigne-Wentworth heraldry showed that a continuation of the Gascoigne family, and not an unknown new liege lord.

On the eastern window of the chapel was another piece of stained glass depicting two female figures clad in heraldic clothing: the figure sinister in Gascoigne and Mowbray, the figure dexter in Gascoigne and Pickering (fig. 2.13). These represented the two wives of William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419): Elizabeth Mowbray<sub>5</sub> and Joan Pickering<sub>6</sub>. Both had books in their hands, open as if in prayer and each was surrounded by the heraldry of her family: Gascoigne; Pickering; Per Pale Gascoigne and Mowbray; and Quartered Gascoigne and Mowbray. Moreover, this piece of stained glass was positioned above an altar to St. Mary. This stained glass could also articulate a form of female identity. The women depicted were shown as educated and pious, by the books in their hands (as befits their rank) and it could be argued that it represented the role of the women in the perpetuation of the Gascoigne line, not just in terms of producing progeny, but also in educating the young. As Roberta Gilchrist argued, the role of women in the Church was passive, in comparison to men's active roles, and thus the influence of women was often limited to the education of the young or the instruction of young women.<sup>76</sup> Thus the stained glass could represent the family's wider spirituality, as both the founding matriarchs of the family were clasping books in their hands and praying over the Gascoigne chantry chapel.

Whilst it does not survive, it is likely that the chapel featured a par-close screen which separated the chapel from the remainder of the Church. It is likely too that it was inscribed with prayers and pleas of intercession, as was commonplace during the late medieval period when the laity's preoccupation with purgatory meant that any and all

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<sup>76</sup> R. Gilchrist, *Gender and Archaeology* (1999), 87.

means of encouraging intercessory prayers were taken advantage of.<sup>77</sup> This created a space dedicated to remembrance and memory, as it is associated with the accumulation of commemorative masses and intercessory prayer, described by John Bossy as a cult of the living in service to the dead.<sup>78</sup> William I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419), for example, gave 100 marks to his poorest tenants as well as £20 for celebrating a mass in his name. Moreover, he paid 4d. to each priest to conducting the mass, and left a further 54 marks for three priests to conduct masses for him and his wife Elizabeth, his parents and his brother John for three years. William VI<sub>134</sub> (d. 1551) made similar bequests and gave £40 for the 'setting forth of a quere there' and to make a tomb over his grave.<sup>79</sup> He also bequeathed £5 so that a priest should sing over his grave for four years. Moreover, he paid 6s. 8d. to each of the six priests who performed masses of remembrance (obits) in the chantry chapel annually and willed that they continue and include him. This suggests that the performing of obits had long occurred at All Saints' Harewood and that intercession for the Gascoigne family was a significant part of the Church's activity. Moreover, the bequests from both William I and William VI indicate that there was a sizeable collection of priests at Harewood during the late medieval and Tudor period in service to the Gascoigne family. The endowment of chantry priests to intercede on behalf of the Gascoigne family was a considerable financial burden. The fact that there appears to have been a considerable congregation of priests at Harewood in service to the Gascoigne family must have also had an impact upon the use of the church, as well as the fabric of the community. It would indicate that the community present at All Saints' Harewood were there due to the generosity and piety of the Gascoigne family.

Additionally, the fact that William VI<sub>134</sub> notes that the annual prayer occurred on 3 May each year increases the intercessory focus, as the Festival of the Cross was concerned, ultimately, with salvation. This touches upon the relationship between religious practice and the Gascoigne family, typified by the presence of a Gascoigne breviary in use at Harewood. The Gascoigne breviary was written for use at Harewood, at some point during the fifteenth century.<sup>80</sup> It features no music and the lessons it features tend to be longer than was typical amongst the extant surviving York

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<sup>77</sup> J. Finch, 'A Reformation of Meaning: Commemoration and Remembering the Dead in the Parish Church, 1450-1640', in D. Gaimster and R. Gilchrist (eds.), *The Archaeology of Reformation 1480-1580* (Leeds, 2003), 440.

<sup>78</sup> J. Bossy, 'The Mass as a Social Institution, 1200-1700', *Past and Present*, 100 (1983), 36-42.

<sup>79</sup> *Test. Ebor.* VI, 106.

<sup>80</sup> See figures 2.15 and 2.16

breviaries.<sup>81</sup> It includes commemorations to the Virgin Mary, William of York, and SS. Paul and Peter.<sup>82</sup> Incorporated into the breviary is also a liturgical psalter, followed by a Benedicite, Te Deum, and other blessings and prayers.<sup>83</sup> Notes have been added to the text by other hands, particularly noting names; an Anthony, Master Henry, William Greene and Bryan are noted, and these most likely represent some of the parish clergy at All Saints' Harewood during the late medieval and Tudor period.

Liturgical texts served a dual purpose: they were a public demonstration of personal piety and provided an opportunity for the Gascoigne family to associate themselves with the ritual of the liturgy, and thus be closer to God.<sup>84</sup> Furthermore, several folios (ff. 160-162v) were dedicated to a red and black calendar which featured obituaries to five individuals: Thomas Johnson (d. 1544), Thomas Lindley (d. 1500), Maude Gascoigne<sup>137</sup> (d.1543), Brian Palmes (d. 1518) and John Cholmley.<sup>85</sup> These obituaries were written in a later hand and provide something of an insight into the parish services at Harewood.<sup>86</sup> All these individuals appear to have had ties to William VI (d. 1551). Maude was his third wife, and Thomas Lindley was a relative of hers. Brian Palmes was an active justice in Yorkshire and sat on the bench in the West Riding. He was a relative of the Markenfield family, to whom William VI was related through his sister, Dorothy<sup>147</sup>, who had married Sir Ninian Markenfield<sup>148</sup>. John Cholmley was probably a relative of Elizabeth Cholmley, who married William Gascoigne I<sup>93</sup> (d. 1540) of Cardington. Thus, if these names had some form of vocal remembrance or masses at All Saints Harewood, on the days in which they were marked, it suggests a wider recognition of the Gascoigne family and their associates. If these individuals were members of the Gascoigne affinity, their remembrance at Harewood represents the possibility that the Gascoigne family (or at the very least William VI<sup>134</sup>) recognised those individuals as worthy of commemoration. If this was the case then the parish community at Harewood was not just remembering those families physically commemorated in the church, but were also praying for intercession of behalf of those families' associates.

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<sup>81</sup> N. R. Ker and A. J. Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, IV (1992), 818-812; York Minster Archives, Add. 70, Breviarium.

<sup>82</sup> YMA, Add. 70, Breviarium, ff, 149v – 153v.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, ff. 163-198v.

<sup>84</sup> Finch, 'A Reformation of Meaning', 67.

<sup>85</sup> Palmes, Cholmley and Lindley were all minor gentry. I have been unable to definitively identify Thomas Johnston.

<sup>86</sup> Unfortunately, nothing is known about when the later obituaries were written, or how long the liturgical text was in use at All Saints' Harewood. It is entirely possible that these names were retrospectively added during the reign of Mary, when the return to Rome was briefly in sight, but that is pure speculation.

The relationship between the liturgy and the monuments was one of personal piety. Pre-Reformation funeral services usually included evensong, matins and mass on the evening before and the day of the funeral.<sup>87</sup> During such services, liturgy such as the Gascoigne breviary would be used, and would create an association of the individual's wealth and patronage, as well as personal piety. Sermons would also utilise the interior space and parish priests could use monuments to reinforce ideas of good behaviour and moral living. After the Reformation, the absence of purgatory had a significant impact upon the range of services that could be provided, but also on the relationship and negotiation of the space. Pleas for intercessory prayers were no longer required, nor were long drawn-out funerary rites. Annual obits too were no longer necessary. Therefore, the post-reformation gentry sought new ways to publicly demonstrate their piety and affluence through the church fabric. Distributions to the poor remained an important contribution to the funerary ritual, as they provided prayers of thanks in intercession, but post-reformation they became increasingly associated with status and the elite's ability to control the fortunes and favour of the community. In the decades after the Reformation, there was a degree of uncertainty about what was considered acceptable in terms of commemoration or pious investment in the parish church. When William VI died in 1551, he chose to have some form of traditional Catholic ceremony, as he requested prayers to be read for him, but also charged the chantry priests with continuing the annual obits which took place.<sup>88</sup> He also requested that a tomb be set over his grave. Reasons for why no tomb survive are unclear, yet it could be due to changing religious beliefs – especially regarding what was and was not acceptable – and thus his executors may have intended to wait until the dust had settled. This was not unusual. As Finch noted, the uncertainty of the Reformation led to a decline in monuments across Norfolk.<sup>89</sup> However, William VI's death coincided with a period of substantial decline in the Gascoigne family as many individuals died in short-succession, possibly from the outbreaks of disease in the Leeds area at that time.

The landscape of the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe was thus diverse, and the amount of surviving material legacy enables some observations. The first of which is a preoccupation with lineage. Lineage was the sequence of ancestors that stood behind a particular individual, at any one moment.<sup>90</sup> Lineages of distinction could demonstrate

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<sup>87</sup> V. Harding, 'Choices and Changes: Death, Burial and the English Reformation', 391.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, 390-391. *Test. Ebor.* VI, 106. The Act of Chantries, which outlawed such activity, was issued in 1548 which suggests that William VI drew up his will before this.

<sup>89</sup> Finch, 'Commemoration in Norfolk', 50-55.

<sup>90</sup> D. Crouch, 'The Historian, Lineage and Heraldry', 18-19.

the wealth and ability of ancestors, and would create an expectation of those qualities being reproduced in their descendants.<sup>91</sup> As David Crouch argued, lineage influenced identity as it could be very important to an individual's perception of their own status, but also in the gentry claims of deference from those also resident in the landscape around them.<sup>92</sup> The presence of Gascoigne tombs in All Saints' Harewood that focused on the family's association with law, religious guilds in York and family across multiple generations would have assisted in the creation of such an expectation for descendants of the Gascoigne family. The character traits inferred from the effigies would have been inter-generational. For example, William I<sub>4</sub>'s term as Chief Justice and his association with honest and good justice could interweave with the expectations of good lordship, especially to the parish community, many of whom were either in the employment, or were tenants, of the Gascoigne family. Moreover, the Gascoigne monuments interacted with the heraldry and wider landscape as it enabled later generations to claim right to ownership by descent. Not only did the Gascoignes brand their own manorial complex with heraldry of their ancestors, but they also heavily invested in the nearby parish church. It showed not only a long history with the site – over multiple generations – but also that the Gascoignes were interconnected with the gentry of Yorkshire. This relationship with Gawthorpe is what the Wentworth family were trying to tap into when they merged the Gascoigne heraldry with their own.

It should be noted too, that the Reformation had a limited impact on aristocratic and gentry concerns with lineage. During the 1550s, when iconoclasm received official sanction, funerary monuments were the only iconographic media to be exempted.<sup>93</sup> Moreover, after legislative ambiguity during the reigns of Edward VI and Mary, Elizabeth I issued a proclamation in 1560 which Finch argued was the 'most extensive official explication of the defence of funeral monuments.'<sup>94</sup> The proclamation specifically recognised and protected the legality of all purely commemorative monuments. It distinguished between monuments that featured commemoration, and those that featured images of idolatry, pilgrimage, feigned miracles and other images considered 'abused'.<sup>95</sup> Although the impact of such legislation is unclear, it provided legal backing

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 18.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, 19.

<sup>93</sup> J. Finch, 'Church Monuments in Norfolk', 127-128; M. Aston, *England's Iconoclasts: Laws against Images* (Oxford, 1988), 267; J. R. Tanner (ed.), *Tudor Constitutional Documents* (Cambridge, 1951), 115.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, 128. See too, J. Phillips, *The Reformation of Images: Destruction of Art in England, 1535-1660* (Berkeley, 1973), 114-117.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, 128.

for gentry families to intervene against excessive iconoclasm in their localities.<sup>96</sup> Lawrence Stone suggested that rural monuments survived most outbreaks of iconoclasm because the gentry and nobility were continuously in a position to protect them.<sup>97</sup> Given the proximity of All Saints' Church to Harewood Castle and Gawthorpe Hall, it could provide a reason as to why the monuments survive relatively unscathed. Furthermore, the fact that legislation actively prohibited the destruction of commemorative monuments suggests a contemporary recognition of their value, beyond changing religious beliefs.

Similar landscapes can be recreated elsewhere in the West Riding, on a smaller scale, can be recreated. The Lasincroft branch of the family, for example, have surviving material legacy in All Saints' Church, Barwick-in-Elmet, close to their principal estate at Lasincroft Hall. Moreover, an inventory from 1577 for Lasincroft Hall also survives. Additionally, it is possible to further speculate on the creation of material legacy and identity at sites at Womersley, Burghwallis and Wentworth.

#### Lasincroft Hall and All Saints', Barwick-in-Elmet

The first site of the Lasincroft branch of the family is Lasincroft Hall. It was purchased in the 1390s by Nicholas Gascoigne<sup>7</sup> (d. 1427).<sup>98</sup> At that time the manor of Lasincroft included 29 messuages, 2 tofts, 1 dove-cot, 5 carucates and 340 acres of land, 72 acres of meadow and 8 acres of pasture. Nicholas made three arrangements, one with Robert Revel for 100 marks of silver, one with Geoffrey of Lasincroft for 200 marks of silver, and a third with John Peterborough for a further 200 marks of silver, paying a total of 500 marks for the manor and its holdings. Little else survives to detail the lands and development of the Lasincroft estate, until an inventory took place on the death of John Gascoigne of Lasincroft in 1577.<sup>99</sup> As with Gawthorpe, 25 rooms are listed. These include a chapel, parlour, maid's parlour, nursery, mill house, rye chamber, bake house, kitchen, larder and buttery. Since no licence to crenellate is recorded, nor does any chapel licence for the Lasincroft manor exist, it is unclear when the building was built or whether it underwent any renovations. Several buildings are described as bordering a yard and therefore it could be that the property ranged on a courtyard in a similar

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<sup>96</sup> Finch, 'Church Monuments', 128.

<sup>97</sup> L. Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: The Middle Ages* (Baltimore, 1955), 2.

<sup>98</sup> CP 25/1/278/146, nos. 26, 30; CP 25/1/279/148, no. 18.

<sup>99</sup> See Appendix 4.10. See too, F. S. Colman, *A History of the Parish of Barwick-in-Elmet* (1910), 216-220.

manor to the buildings at Gawthorpe.

Whilst the manor complex had a similar number of rooms to Gawthorpe, it is unclear whether the buildings were of equal size. Firstly, the inventory at Gawthorpe does not mention a chapel, yet the presence of the chapel (and an effigy) in the visitation of Henry Johnston confirms that Gawthorpe had one. Secondly, the type of rooms noted give the impression that the Lasingcroft branch did not need to host as frequently as their prominent cousins, and were a relatively smaller family as Lasingcroft appears to have had fewer bedchambers. Moreover, it could be the case that Lasingcroft at that time had not undergone a renovation, and thus was built in the style of late-medieval houses that served function rather than status. Twelve rooms mentioned in the Lasingcroft inventory reference a function: malt chamber, bake-house, buttery, larder, kitchen, mill-house, many of which are like that of the Gawthorpe inventory. There is no mention at Lasingcroft of a wine cellar or washhouse. In fact, given the room names and their uses, it would be difficult to ascertain whether Lasingcroft had an upper storey, although most late medieval gentry houses had a second floor in at least part of their complex.

The second site of the Lasingcroft branch of the Gascoigne family is the parish church of All Saints', Barwick-in-Elmet. The original church structure was built during the twelfth century, and only the north window of the chancel survives of that structure. The remainder of the church is from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The West tower, aisles, arcades and clerestory are built in the perpendicular style, and the tower can be dated to the mid-fifteenth century by the niches (and their figures) in the west wall. Whilst only one figure survives, the inscriptions identify Sir Henry Vavasour (d. 1455) and Richard Burnham.<sup>100</sup> In recent years the interior of the church has undergone substantial renovation. Wooden flooring has been placed above the traditional stone floor and many of the walls have been plastered and painted. No monuments that may have been placed in the floor are visible, and only one Gascoigne memorial survives for this site: a stone cross slab dedicated to John Gascoigne<sup>26</sup> of Lasingcroft (d. 1445). As Aleksandra McClain argues, cross slabs were just as active, dynamic and communicative in the spiritual life of medieval England as brasses and alabaster sculpture.<sup>101</sup> Stone cross slabs incorporated a wide array of commemorative styles; often they were recumbent,

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<sup>100</sup> I would like to acknowledge here the current parish community of Barwick-in-Elmet, who welcomed me into their church and provided a local history of the church, from where this information derives. See too, Pevsner, *Buildings of England*, 95-96.

<sup>101</sup> A. McClain, 'Cross Slab Monuments in the Late Middle Ages: Patronage, Production and Locality in Northern England', in S. Badham and S. Oosterwijk (eds.), *Monumental Industry: The Production of Tomb Monuments in England and Wales in the Long Fourteenth Century* (Donnington, 2010), 38.

of various sizes, incised or carved and could be decorated with a wide variety of different designs.<sup>102</sup> Of all the commemoration discussed in this chapter, stone cross slabs have the earliest origin, in use throughout England from the eleventh century. Whilst stone cross slabs decline in some areas during the fifteenth century, in northern England they retained their use alongside other monumental forms. In the West Riding of Yorkshire, there are 49 sites with surviving stone cross slabs.<sup>103</sup> When compared with the North Riding (138 sites), East Riding (41), Cumbria (118), and Northumberland (87), it shows that whilst among the northern counties it was not as popular as other areas, but was considerably more popular than counties further south, like Herefordshire (25) and Rutland (16).<sup>104</sup> In the North Riding, the 138 sites featured a total of 703 grave slabs, however only twenty-three monuments were dated between 1400 and 1600.<sup>105</sup> For the West Riding of Yorkshire, there are 185 surviving stone slabs, yet only 29 come from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The Gascoigne stone slab dedicated to John Gascoigne (d. 1445) is located leaning against the northern wall, making any assessment of space impossible and location difficult. Antiquarian sources, such as F. S. Colman, argued that there was a Gascoigne chantry chapel in the north aisle – where the stone slab currently rests – but it has not been possible to confirm this due to the lack of surviving testamentary evidence from that branch of the family. In terms of its design, the stone cross slab features an incised cross with clustered terminals, resting on a masonry base. Set in the base is a rose on the top step. A simple border inscription survives which identifies John Gascoigne of Lasingcroft. Each corner features a simple plain shield.

The lack of evidence surviving for the Lasingcroft family makes specific conclusions regarding their identity difficult, yet from the piecemeal evidence that does survive, it could be suggested that the Gascoignes of Lasingcroft engaged with their landscape in the same way the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe did, albeit on a lesser scale. They may have had a chantry, with an altar, in the parish church of Barwick-in-Elmet. F. S. Colman suggested that there was likely to have been more commemorations at the site, yet there is no testamentary evidence to support that. Additionally, the inventories

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<sup>102</sup> McClain, 'Cross Slab Monuments', 38-39.

<sup>103</sup> P. F. Ryder, *Cross Slab Grave Stones in West Yorkshire* (Wakefield, 1995).

<sup>104</sup> McClain, 'Cross Slab Monuments', 43; See too, A. McClain, 'Medieval Cross Slabs in the North Riding of Yorkshire: Chronology, Distribution and Social Implications', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 79 (2007), 155-193; B. Gittos and M. Gittos, 'A Survey of East Riding Monuments before 1500', in C. Wilson (ed.), *Medieval Art and Architecture in the East Riding of Yorkshire*, 91-108; P. F. Ryder, *The Medieval Cross Slab Cover in County Durham* (Durham, 1985); P. F. Ryder, *The Medieval Cross Slab Grave Covers in Cumbria* (Oxford, 2005).

<sup>105</sup> McClain 'Cross Slab Monuments', 50-51.

reveal a chapel – an addition which conveyed considerable status as a gentry family – and several rooms associated with both public and private space, like in Gawthorpe. It demonstrates that an active relationship with the landscape was not the sole prerogative of the wealthiest, but all gentry families could engage with the landscape to foster their own forms of identity.

### Wood Hall

The third site where evidence survives detailing the Gascoigne material legacy is the manor of Wood Hall, which lies approximately one mile north of the village of Womersley (WR). Very little is known about the history of the site. The village of Womersley passed to the Newmarch family in 1183, and remained with the family until *c.* 1440. However, after the death of Ralph de Newmarch at the battle of Shrewsbury in 1403 it becomes unclear as to who in the Newmarch family resided at the site. Upon the marriage of Elizabeth de Newmarch<sup>73</sup> to John Neville of Oversley in *c.* 1440, the manor passed into the hands of the Neville family. John's daughter, Joan,<sup>72</sup> married Sir William Gascoigne V<sup>71</sup>, and on John's death in 1482 the site passed into the hands of the Gascoigne family where it was utilised as the residence of the heir apparent. Given that William V died in 1488, it seems likely that his son, William VI<sup>134</sup> (d. 1551) was the individual who renovated the site in the early 1490s. By the sixteenth century there appears to have been a chapel at the site, as William VII<sup>194</sup> married his second wife, Margaret Wright<sup>195</sup>, at the chapel there in 1548.<sup>106</sup> In 1557 William VII died and Margaret was remarried shortly after to Sir Thomas Stanley. Upon her remarriage, Wood Hall passed from Gascoigne possession.

From archaeological remains it is possible to detail certain aspects of the site and its development, which occurred over a series of phases. The first phase of development was in the late twelfth and thirteenth centuries by the Newmarch family. The most prominent aspect of the first phase of development was the construction of a moat, which encompassed an area roughly three and a half acres in size.<sup>107</sup> The moat varied

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<sup>106</sup> C 3/Eliz/H19/56. The court case between Sir Thomas Stanley and the Gascoigne family detailed that the Wood Hall manor totalled roughly 300 acres.

<sup>107</sup> Very little information survives to pertaining to Wood Hall and its development. Unless otherwise specified, the following details stem from the interim project report of the excavations of Wood Hall which took place in the late 1980s and 1990s. See, V. Metcalf, 'Wood Hall Moated Manor Project' (Interim Report, 2001). See the bibliography of this thesis for links to the unpublished report.

between 10 and 13 metres in width and 1.5 and 2 metres in depth.<sup>108</sup> The material from the moat was distributed around the interior edge to create a levee to prevent flooding. The moat was fed by springs to the north-west of the site and was connected to a drainage system on the east side of the gatehouse. Vivienne Metcalf believes that at that time the buildings and bridge on the site were timber framed; whilst the kitchen was demolished for the construction of the moat, the main hall remained.

The second phase of development at Wood Hall occurred during John Neville's ownership of the site. In 1457 the drawbridge was demolished and a new one built. Moreover, space in the southern part of the site was cleared for the construction of a garden. The old hall was renovated, and was most likely a timber structure with stone foundations, which was divided into four bays: the northernmost two bays were for the dais area and private quarters, whilst the southernmost bays were for the communal hall, pantry and buttery. The entrance and the cross-passage were between the two southernmost bays, with the pantry and buttery being split from the communal hall and the private quarters. A stone kitchen was built to the south of the new hall, and was surrounded with a small garden, most likely for vegetables.

The third and final phase of late medieval and Tudor development occurred in 1493, when William Gascoigne V<sub>106</sub> (d. 1488) began a complete redesign of the estate. He constructed a stone gatehouse and drawbridge. The room above the gatehouse may have been used for storage, given the presence of food items and utensils found in the immediate vicinity. Moreover, the gatehouse had a chimney, as evident on the artistic reconstruction in figure 2.2. William V also modernised the Hall. The kitchen was demolished and was incorporated into the main hall (in stone) as part of a three-storey tower. Its second floor appears to have been accessed through the old buttery and pantry. The ground floor was a half-cellar (1.4 metres below ground level) and was probably used as a buttery. This room had an external door. Metcalf believes the third floor of the tower was used as the new kitchen, due to the presence of a valve system, which took water to the third floor from the well outside. It is unclear whether there were any alterations to the room layout in the northernmost bays of the hall, where the private quarters and communal hall were based.

Also, found at the site were several artefacts that demonstrate the site's use in the late medieval and Tudor period. A glass goblet, enamelled and gilded, was found in the moat inscribed with the lettering 'Iesu Maria'. Gaming counters, turning pegs for musical instruments, and three drinking vessels were found, suggesting that games and

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<sup>108</sup> See figures 2.1 and 2.2.

recreational activities were a common occurrence. Metcalf speculated that peacocks roamed the lawns at Wood Hall, yet the interim report provides no evidence for this.

This touches upon the range of recreational activities that may have taken place at Wood Hall, and by extension Gawthorpe Hall. Dancing and music, for example, were important aspects of the gentry's social lives in the late medieval and Tudor period. A contemporary biographer of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey noted how on one occasion dancing went from five o'clock to the early hours of the morning.<sup>109</sup> As Alison Sim noted, the courtly aspect of dancing was vital, as it enabled men and women to meet each other, and become familiar.<sup>110</sup> It also revealed whether potential lovers were in good health and fitness, and whether they were appropriately able to dance.<sup>111</sup> Music and dancing was not just an ability to demonstrate prowess, but also reflected the gentry's ability to meet current tastes and trends. It was a social aspect of their identity associated with display and chivalric and courtly theatre. As Nicholas Orme noted, children were taught to sing and dance at a young age, demonstrating that these were note-worthy and necessary skills of the late medieval and early modern gentry.<sup>112</sup>

Sports, gaming and hunting were also large parts of gentry social activity. Hunting lodges were occasionally used, like those at Gawthorpe, whereby the gentry men and women congregated with bows, whilst the gamekeepers would drive deer past them.<sup>113</sup> This was considered the height of privilege, as it was hunting without the effort.<sup>114</sup> Traditional forms of hunting were utilised by the gentry as a means of maintaining health and fitness, but they also demonstrated status from the venison that was acquired during the hunt. Fishing was also a popular pastime and sport amongst the gentry. The presence of a fishing pond at Gawthorpe infers the practice of the sport at the site. Moreover, the Gawthorpe legend – that the Gascoigne family acquired Gawthorpe during an angling party – suggests an implicit association with gentry life and status. The presence of gaming counters at Wood Hall also suggests that gambling took place there. Card and dice games were also common amongst the gentry and their households, but were often associated with less than savoury behaviour.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> G. Cavendish, *The Life and Death of Cardinal Wolsey*, (eds.) R. S. Sylvester (London, 1959), 106.

<sup>110</sup> A. Sim, *Pleasures and Pastimes in Tudor England* (Stroud, 1999), 114-115.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, 115-116.

<sup>112</sup> N. Orme, 'Education and Recreation' in R. Radulescu and A. Truelove (eds.), *Gentry Culture in Late-Medieval England* (Manchester, 2005), 77-79.

<sup>113</sup> Sim, *Pleasures and Pastimes*, 177-178. See too, R. Almond, *Medieval Hunting* (Gloucester, 2003).

<sup>114</sup> See, for example, J. G. Cummins, *The Hound and the Hawk: The Art of Medieval Hunting* (London, 1988).

<sup>115</sup> See, for example, H. J. R. Murray, *A History of Board Games other than Chess* (Oxford, 1952); D. Parlett, *The Oxford Guide to Card Games* (Oxford, 1990).

### Holy Trinity, Wentworth

All Saints' Harewood was not the only location to feature alabaster effigies related to the Gawthorpe branch of the Gascoigne family. Two heavily-damaged effigies survive at the church of Holy Trinity, in the village of Wentworth, alongside a late-sixteenth century memorial to Sir Thomas Wentworth III<sup>234</sup> (d. 1587) and Margaret Gascoigne<sup>233</sup> (d. 1592), the heiress and last Gascoigne owner of Gawthorpe Hall. There are two churches at the site of Holy Trinity. The earlier medieval church is ruined except for the Wentworth Old Chapel. This comprises the chancel and the north chapel of the church.<sup>116</sup> The west tower is also medieval and is unbuttressed. The widows in the nave are tall and arched. The site appears to have been renovated prior to its destruction. The nave and the parallel east gables are from the seventeenth century.

The earlier (heavily damaged) alabaster tomb at Wentworth most likely represented William III<sup>34</sup> and Margaret Clarell<sup>35</sup> for the reasons outlined above. Very little survives of the female effigy but a damaged head and shoulders. The hair is depicted loose and confined by an orle.<sup>117</sup> The head of the male effigy rests on a helmet. Whilst the tasselled mantling remains, the crest has been lost. The armour indicates the mid-fifteenth century. Engrailed spaulders are present on the shoulders, whilst the sabatons are broken and composed of chevroned lames. There is no sword, or sword belt, but the knight does wear an emblazoned tabard and a SS collar, from which the badge is lost. The arms carved on the tabard are Quartered: 1 and 4, Gascoigne; 2, Mowbray and 3, Wyman. Figure 2.24 shows the engraving by Joseph Hunter of these effigies from c. 1830, when considerably more survived. It shows the bottom half of the male effigy, which is depicted in greaves and sabatons, and whose feet are resting upon a dog.<sup>118</sup>

The second tomb, to Sir Thomas Wentworth III and Margaret Gascoigne is an altar tomb with recumbent effigies. The male effigy does not wear a helm, but is depicted wearing an Elizabethan ruff collar. Moreover, he wears no gorget, but is depicted in besagues, rerebraces, vambraces, and couters. His breast plate appears to feature no heraldry. On his legs, he is depicted wearing cuisses, greaves, poleyns and fanplates. On his feet are sabatons. On his wrists, he wears a similar Elizabethan ruff, and by his waist he wears the remnants of a sword. The female effigy features a close figure-of-eight

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<sup>116</sup> Pevsner, *Buildings of England*, 538-539.

<sup>117</sup> Technical tomb descriptions are based upon my own viewings of the tombs and the work of P. E. Routh, *Medieval Effigial Alabaster Tombs in Yorkshire* (Ipswich, 1976), 131-135.

<sup>118</sup> J. Hunter, *South Yorkshire*, 2 (Wakefield, 1974), 98-99.

pleated ruff, with a fur-lined gown, tied at the waist. Her arms are together as if in prayer (yet the hands themselves are missing). Around her neck are chains, like those on the male effigy. On her feet are shoes. On the monument is a shield of arms which features the following heraldry: Wentworth, Woodhouse, Pollington, Hooton, Skelton, Tinsley, Marjorelles and Wentworth.

In the space around the monuments are other memorials to the Wentworth family. Joseph Hunter recorded a brass to Thomas Wentworth I (d. 1548), and a second to Thomas Wentworth II (d. 1549). Opposite the effigies is a heraldic shield which featured an escutcheon of twenty-two within a quarterly of eight. The quarterly of eight represented the families with whom the Wentworth's were associated: Wentworth, Woodhouse, Pollington, Hoton, Skelton, Majorelles and Tinslow. The twenty-two coats-of-arms related to the Gascoigne family and included the heraldry of Gascoigne, Gawthorpe, Bolton, Frank, Mowbray, Wyman, Barden, Neville, Bulmer, Ferrers, and Newmarch, amongst others - including several arms that cannot be identified due to the lack of tinctures.

The inclusion of Gascoigne heraldry in the stonework may be suggestive of two things: firstly, the pride the Wentworth family had of aligning the two families through marriage. Displaying the arms of an heiress was common in late medieval and Tudor England, as it not only inferred status, but also wealth, as competition for heiresses was fierce. The second inference is that the family's attempt to align their identity with the Gascoignes was not solely limited to Gawthorpe Hall and All Saints', Harewood. As argued above, attributing the Wentworth family with the identity of the Gascoignes, garnered the former legitimacy on the landscape. The Gascoignes were, by the late sixteenth century, a relatively old and influential family in the West Riding. To align themselves with such a history tied them with a sense of good and stable lordship.

### St Helens, Burghwallis

The final site of Gascoigne material legacy is the parish church of St Helens, Burghwallis. The church has a Norman nave and unbuttressed west tower. Nikolas Pevsner noted that the chancel arch may date from the fourteenth century, along with a lancet on the south wall of the nave.<sup>119</sup> Inside the church are two Gascoigne monuments, a brass dedicated to Thomas Gascoigne<sup>164</sup> (d. 1568) and a stone cross slab dedicated to Rector Henry Gascoigne (d. c. 1540). Brass memorials are the most widely studied form

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<sup>119</sup> N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Yorkshire, the West Riding* (London, 1967), 150-151.

of medieval and Tudor commemoration.<sup>120</sup> The most common forms of brass were the inscription, heraldic emblem and effigy, which could They depict sartorial tastes, show perceived status and religious motivations, as inscriptions were often devoted to messages of intercession. In 1408 the brass of Sir Hugh Hastings was utilised in court to demonstrate the family's claim to knighthood.<sup>121</sup> As Jonathan Finch demonstrated, although brass memorials were widespread in the twelfth and thirteenth century they often took the form of stone slabs inlaid with brass lettering for inscriptions.<sup>122</sup> Memorial brasses were relatively cheap, especially when compared to alabaster monuments. Between 1397 and 1538, R. H. D'Elboux suggested that the standard price for a brass memorial with an inscription was about £1 6s 8d, compared to the £40 that could be paid for raised monuments of alabaster with two effigies.<sup>123</sup> Commemorations in brass are most commonly found in Kent (393), Essex (272), Norfolk (265) and Suffolk (200), and are relatively rare in Northern and Western England; there are, for example, only 73 surviving brasses in Yorkshire.<sup>124</sup>

The only surviving memorial brass of the Gascoigne family – that of Thomas Gascoigne - is set in the nave, near the chancel. The main knightly figure is set in a stone slab and is still intact, yet three pieces of inlay have been removed; allegedly stolen during the nineteenth century.<sup>125</sup> These pieces appear to have been a border inscription, a heraldic shield and a thin piece of plate depicting Thomas Gascoigne's wife and

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<sup>120</sup> See, for example: S. Badham, *Brasses from the North East: A Study of Brasses made in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Durham and Northumberland in the Pre-Reformation Period* (London, 1979); S. Badham, 'Monumental Brasses: the Development of the York Workshops in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', in C. Wilson (ed.), *Medieval Art and Architecture in the East Riding of Yorkshire*, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions, 9 (Leeds, 1989), 165-185.

<sup>121</sup> Norris, *Monumental Brasses*, 23.

<sup>122</sup> Finch, 'Church Monuments', 28-30.

<sup>123</sup> R. H. D'Elboux, 'Testamentary Brasses', *Antiquaries Journal*, 29 (1949), 183-191; M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Craft*, 53.

<sup>124</sup> M. Norris, *Monumental Brass: The Craft*, 45. These figures do not include brass inscriptions or those inscriptions that only featured heraldic devices. These were more common in Yorkshire, with 278 recorded before 1710. H. Chadwick and G. Wild, *Brass Rubbing in Yorkshire* (Clapham, 1975), 6-9, examined only the fourteenth and fifteenth century monumental brasses and concluded that there were sixty-six surviving monumental brasses. Yet this number refers to only those brasses that could be reasonably ascribed to an individual. Norris' number, conversely, includes the unattributed brass monuments. In Northumberland, there is only one surviving monumental brass (from the seventeenth century), Westmorland has two surviving brass monuments, and Cumberland has ten. See Norris, *Monumental Brass*, 45-46 for a further breakdown of surviving brass.

<sup>125</sup> I would like to acknowledge here Rev Dr Richard Walton and his churchwardens who graciously invited me to view the memorial brass of Thomas Gascoigne and shared with me all the information they had acquired about St Helens. It is commonplace in the parish that the brass was stolen during the Victorian period by thieves who also stole other valuable items.

children. This is possible to determine due to the shape of the inlay as they were cut to form and were not, as common in continental brasses, engraved onto a rectangular piece of brass. Jessica Barker argued that the inclusion of spouses and children on commemoration was often emblematic of lineage and dynastic achievement, but could also represent a reminder to living kin of their commemorative responsibilities.<sup>126</sup> Gascoigne is displayed as a knight in full armour, with a sword and dagger behind him. His hands are clasped together in prayer. Figure 2.20 shows a brass rubbing of Thomas Gascoigne by Chadwick and Wild from 1975.

The stone cross slab dedicated to Rector Henry Gascoigne (d. c. 1540) is the second surviving stone cross slab related to the Gascoigne family, the first of which is discussed above and is located at All Saints', Barwick-in-Elmet. Henry was presented to the church in 1521.<sup>127</sup> It is unclear which Henry Gascoigne is commemorated here, due to the fact that it is unclear who his parents were, though given the heraldry on the memorial it is apparent he was a member of the Gascoigne family. He was presented by the Gascoigne family to the parish church, and was the last such presentation (of eight rectors). He was buried in the north-east corner of the chancel, near the vestry. His monument is similar in design to that of John Gascoigne<sup>45</sup> at Barwick-in-Elmet. It features a straight cross with expanded terminals standing on masonry. Moreover, on the left-hand side of the cross is a heraldic shield, whilst on the right-hand side is a chalice. A simple inscription identifies the commemorated as Henry Gascoigne, the parish Rector.

Little is known about Thomas from documentary sources. Additionally, nothing is known about Henry, other than his presentation to the church. Yet, the commemorative evidence indicates a pre-occupation with status that has been evident at other sites. The depiction of Thomas in full knightly attire, complete with sword and dagger, also demonstrates the desire to display status. This is the latest depiction of military attire in memorial brass that survives in Yorkshire, as civic costume and armorial shields were more popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, as commemoration in brass became standard practice for the civic elite.<sup>128</sup> This symbolic representation as a knight is important in terms of identity. Whilst not a knight himself, Thomas was associating himself with his knightly kin, but was also establishing himself as a gentleman or member of the gentry.

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<sup>126</sup> J. Barker, 'Monuments and Marriage in Late Medieval England: Origins, Functions and Reception of Double Tombs' (Courtauld Institute of Art PhD Thesis, 2015), 225-226.

<sup>127</sup> J. Torre, *Antiquities Ecclesiastical of the City of York and the West Riding*, v. 6, f. 15.

<sup>128</sup> H. Chadwick and G. Wild, *Brass Rubbing in Yorkshire* (Clapham, 1975), 21-25.

## Discussion

This chapter has assessed the material legacy of the Gascoigne family, as well as the relationship between the Gascoignes and their landscape. The sites of Gawthorpe and Harewood, Lasingcroft and Barwick-in-Elmet, Burghwallis and Wood Hall have been discussed, and their surviving material brought together to reconstruct the environments in which the family lived and worshipped. Some common themes can be highlighted.

As has been discussed above, the surrounding, and often enclosed, environment was demonstrative of considerable status, particularly parkland and deer parks. Yet the role of gardens should not be understated. Gardens were present at Gawthorpe and Wood Hall, and though no evidence survives to prove this with any certainty, it is also likely that there was some form of garden at Lasingcroft Hall too. The classic image of the medieval garden was one of a small enclosed square or rectangle, often with smaller squares and rectangle spaces within the enclosed area. These would range in size, yet for the moderately wealthy gentry, they could range between 0.5 and 1.8 hectares (or 1.2 to 4.4 acres).<sup>129</sup> As the bill of sale discussed above mentioned, the size of the gardens at Gawthorpe was three acres. Moreover, whilst the gardens at Wood Hall are not described, it is likely they would have been considerably smaller, given the fact that roughly 3 acres was enclosed by the moat, and this space also included the residence, gatehouse and yard.

Gentry gardens were impressive spectacles that combined display and pageantry with elements of practicality. As Oliver Creighton noted, they featured herbs for medicinal and culinary use, but were also a private area for the courtly ritual and lover's tryst.<sup>130</sup> Fruit trees, hedges and benches were also common within the garden space, and the presence of a stone plinth at Wood Hall suggests a site where individuals could contemplate their surroundings. Gardens were not just visually impressive, as they appealed to different sense, including smell. Creighton noted the religious association with gardens too, as they could evoke images of the garden of Eden and paradise.<sup>131</sup>

The presence of an orchard at Gawthorpe fed into the family's status. Patsy Dallas, Gerry Barnes and Tom Williamson argued that the presence of orchards and

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<sup>129</sup> O. H. Creighton, *Designs Upon the Land: Elite Landscapes of the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2009), 45.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, 45-46.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid*, 47.

gardens in the landscape demonstrated an acute awareness of the ecology. Orchards could offer grazing for goats and sheep, or could be kept for hay.<sup>132</sup> They could also demonstrate status in another practical way; by showing, at a glance, the wide and varied diet the owner had. Food variety was a symbol of wealth and importance, and the more varieties of food (including fruit) that could be provided, the wealthier the family was.

Whilst gardens were enclosed and offered a private space, they were not entirely private. Medieval people of all social status could have a garden, and even within the gentry garden, people of lower social status – household staff and servants - would enter to help with work and maintenance. Moreover, imagery from Christine de Pisan's *Cité des Damnes* (1475) showed that in such spaces women were active alongside their households in the development and maintenance of gardens.<sup>133</sup> Yet, the gardens of the gentry were considerably different from those of lower social standing. The variety of fauna and flora would denote status, and the presence of wildfowl (and possibly peacocks) at Gawthorpe and Wood Hall respectively, would differentiate them from other common gardens, which were predominantly associated with vegetable patches and herb gardens.

The wider landscape also assisted this relationship between garden and status. For example, the water-mills at Gawthorpe were a symbol of lordly authority. The ability for a lord to ensure that their demesne mills were used by the local population was a symbol of the family's agency, power and influence in the area. Moreover, the fact that there were mills to the north of Gawthorpe, as part of the Harewood estate, increased the influence, as there was competition in the immediate environment. Gardens (and parks), therefore conveyed multiple aspects of gentry identity. They had associations with status, chivalry and romance, religious connotations, and had practical functions, which enabled negotiations with identity that highlighted different aspects to different people.

A further aspect that has been highlighted by the discussion above, is the importance of where the commemoration was placed. Space inside the church was costly, and became more so the closer the memorial was to the chancel. Whilst the most prominent gentry families established a private chantry chapel – like the one at Gawthorpe – most gentry had to compete for space within the main church fabric. Tombs could and were moved, as time passed and wealthier patrons made bequests in return for intercessory favour. The movement of the Gascoigne-Neville tomb into the south-

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<sup>132</sup> P. Dallas, G. Barnes and T. Williamson, 'Orchards in the Landscape: A Norfolk Case Study', *Landscapes*, 16:1 (2015), 31-32.

<sup>133</sup> British Library, Add. MS 20698, f. 17v.

west corner of All Saints' Harewood may suggest such a pressure for space, even within the Gascoigne chantry chapel. Such competition may be visible in the parish church at Harewood, which was rebuilt in the early fifteenth century by Elizabeth and Sybil de Aldeburgh and their husbands, Richard Redman and William Ryther.<sup>134</sup> Those responsible for the rebuild were commemorated at Harewood, but not before William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub> and Elizabeth Mowbray<sub>5</sub> were interred there. The Gascoigne-Mowbray tomb was placed c. 1419, whilst the memorials of Redman, Ryther and their spouses were not placed until c. 1426. Moreover, William I founded a chantry in the only space available, as the north aisle was the location of the church vestry. The fact that William I and Elizabeth were the first major commemoration in the newly rebuilt Church must have had some impact upon the fabric of the parish community. If the Gascoigne family were keen to represent themselves as an independent family (from the Harewood Lordship) of note, then placing the first major piece of commemoration – built from expensive alabaster – in a Church rebuilt by the Lordship of Harewood must have been considered a significant act of independence representative of their status and influence, especially since the monument itself commemorated the most senior judicial official in England.

The competition for space was even fiercer in smaller parish churches as less space was available, yet in Burghwallis this was not the case. The brass of Thomas Gascoigne<sub>164</sub> was placed at the end of the nave, near the chancel, which was suggestive of his social standing in the local community.<sup>135</sup> Even though the altar had moved with the Reformation, it remained the case that closeness to the chancel equated to closeness to God.<sup>136</sup> It is unclear whether monuments were removed or lost over time, yet presently there are only a few pieces of commemoration in the church: two nineteenth century inscriptions set into the chancel's south wall, opposite the only surviving other Tudor piece, the stone cross slab of Rector Henry Gascoigne, which is situated next to the vestry. The absence of monuments within the church may suggest that the village of Burghwallis was not the site of competing gentry interests, especially as the nearby parish of Campsall was not only much larger, but was home to the locally dominant St. Pol family, with whom the Gascoignes clashed violently.<sup>137</sup> As the gentry were relatively few in the parish of Burghwallis, the need for impressive and expensive monuments was

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<sup>134</sup> Leach and Pevsner, *Buildings of the West Riding*, 296.

<sup>135</sup> V. Harding, 'Choices and Changes: Death, Burial and the English Reformation', in D. Gaimster and R. Gilchrist (eds.), *The Archaeology of the Reformation 1480-1580* (Leeds, 2003), 388.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 389.

<sup>137</sup> See Chapter Four of this thesis for more information.

not as high. As Jonathan Finch noted in Burnham, Norfolk, the gentry were clearly differentiated from those below them, and in areas where there was no gentry competition, commemoration could be kept relatively simple.<sup>138</sup>

Sartorial tastes could reflect aspects of identity. In terms of the law, for example, William Gascoigne I<sub>4</sub>'s depiction in judicial robes and coif was representative of his career and achievement, yet it was not always the prime choice for those that held the post. The monument of Sir William Hankford (d. 1422), Chief Justice of the King's Bench (1413-*d*) was an Easter Sepulchral monument in Monkleigh Church, Devon, and did not appear to feature an effigy. Easter Sepulchral monuments were an arched recess in the north wall of the chancel where the crucifix was placed between Good Friday and Easter Sunday. The fact that Hankford chose to forgo an effigy and instead prefer placement directly under a place of extreme religious significance is noteworthy for several reasons. Firstly, it was a marker of considerable status to be buried underneath an altar, not just near it. Secondly, monuments were often reminders for the living to pray for the dead not just remember them, and for Hankford to be located beneath an altar dedicated to a religious ceremony which contained symbolism associated with resurrection and redemption ensured that the parishioners had an on-going, annual relationship with the dead. Thirdly, it meant that depiction as a Chief Justice was not necessary when it came to intercessory prayers. He substituted a material representation of his own identity with closeness to the symbolic ceremony.

Yet that is not to say that the judicial coif and gown was not an attractive form of commemoration. Sir John Cottesmore (d. 1439), Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, chose to depict himself in judicial attire, despite only serving in the office for six months. His brass is in St. Bartholomew's Church in Brightwell Baldwin, Oxfordshire, and both he and his wife, Amice, are depicted beneath a double canopy alongside four heraldic devices and their children; five sons and thirteen daughters.<sup>139</sup> Sir John Fortescue (d. 1479) is likewise depicted in a judicial coif and gown, although like William I, Fortescue was immortalised in alabaster. He was Chief Justice of the King's Bench from 1442 to 1461, and his commemoration survives at the parish church of Ebrington in Gloucestershire.<sup>140</sup> These examples suggest that the prestige of the office of Chief Justice did not decline over the course of the fifteenth century, and suggest that it was a defining achievement in their lives, which played a critical role in the shaping of their identity.

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<sup>138</sup> J. Finch, 'A Reformation of Meaning', 438-439.

<sup>139</sup> M. Norris, *Monumental Brasses: The Portfolio Plates* (1988), 210; *Monumental Brasses: The Memorials*, 2 vols. (1977); J. Prince, *The Worthies of Devon* (1810), 461.

<sup>140</sup> J. Weever, *Ancient Funerall Monuments* (1631), reprinted (1979), 821.

Moreover, the variety of tomb monuments suggest that although the office did not correlate with the acquisition of wealth, it was possible to garner substantial status from its representation.

Thus, this chapter has detailed a range of sites where Gascoigne material legacy can be reconstructed, and has detailed the multi-faceted identity present at each site. The Gascoigne family's manors and monuments reveal aspects of their identity: the law, status, family, wealth, kinship, piety, are just some examples. Such relationships were not just generational but transcended generations, as each Gascoigne contributed and refined the site's association with the family. It reveals not a singular identity, but multiple, complex and fluid identities that could be read by different people in different ways.

More broadly, this chapter has shown how instrumental negotiation with the landscape was in communicating the identities of the gentry. Through the utilisation of manorial complexes, parks, churches and commemoration, the gentry could define aspects of their own identity and communicate them to different audiences. By negotiating their own identities into the spaces in which people lived, the gentry could converse their status. This was relational, but is evident from the examination above. The landscape of the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe was far more expansive, and communicated an increased number of different attributes, than the landscape of the Gascoignes of Lasingcroft, and the Gascoignes of Burghwallis. This is, to some degree influenced by what survives to the present day, but also highlights the desire, and perhaps the need, of influential and important gentry families to assert their status onto their immediate environments. The utilisation of material culture and the landscape in which the gentry resided allowed the gentry to communicate who they were and where they sat in the late medieval and Tudor social hierarchy. As such, an examination of surviving material culture, and the gentry environment, is vital in understanding the gentry's understanding of their own identity.

## Conclusion

This thesis began with an assertion that whilst sizeable evidence had been lost, the Gascoigne family were not unfamiliar to the late medieval and Tudor historian. However, it posited that such familiarity was limited to only those family members who had some form of national significance. This has now been rectified, and this thesis has brought together evidence from a variety of different sources to create a historical narrative for the Gascoigne family from their earliest appearances in surviving source material to the death of Gawthorpe heiress Margaret Gascoigne<sup>233</sup> in 1592. Extensive biographies which detailed careers, relationships and achievements have been pieced together, and where the lives of Gascoigne family members remain obscure it is due to their absence from surviving material. The thesis has also sought to correct common misconceptions about the Gascoigne family, some of which will be briefly reiterated.

Firstly, this thesis has argued that the probable date for the foundation of Gawthorpe manor was 1363.<sup>1</sup> Secondly, it has established the first modern definitive family tree supplanting that of Joseph Foster which was published in 1874. It has identified, for example, that Christopher (1380-1443), Robert (*fl.* 1426), and Richard (d.1461), were not members of the Gascoigne family, but were rather children of Joan Pickering<sup>6</sup>'s earlier marriage to Sir Christopher Moresby of Cumberland and Westmorland.<sup>2</sup> It has also ascertained that Foster mistakenly conflated the marriages of Anne and Agnes Gascoigne, and that during the late fourteenth/early fifteenth centuries there was only one marriage between the Gascoigne family and the Constables of Flamborough.<sup>3</sup> Thirdly, it has discussed the role of the Gascoigne family in the Wars of the Roses and demonstrated that whilst William III<sup>34</sup> remained aloof, and William IV<sup>71</sup> occasionally engaged, neither were prominent supporters of Richard III, as had been previously suggested.

This thesis has brought together the lives of two hundred and thirty-four individuals and weaved them into a single narrative: the story of the Gascoigne family. It has shown the remarkable social rise of the family from their likely origins as travelling merchants to established gentry within two generations, epitomised by

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<sup>1</sup> *CPR 1361 - 1364*, 325. See too, Chapter One of this thesis, 48-49, and Chapter Five of this thesis, 206-246, for more details on the establishment of Gawthorpe as an independent entity.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter One of this thesis, fn. 41.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapter One of this thesis 60-61; For details of the Constable family, see R. Horrox, 'Constable Family (*per. c.* 1300 - 1488), *ODNB*, [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/52782](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/52782), accessed 11 March 2016.

William I<sub>4</sub>'s appointment as Chief Justice of King's Bench and Richard Gascoigne<sub>9</sub>'s appointment as Chief Steward of the Northern Parts of the Duchy of Lancaster, both in 1400.<sup>4</sup> It has also demonstrated the considerable aptitude of successive generations of the family. Particularly, the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe and Cardington revealed an ability to survive (and often thrive) amongst the shifting political sands. The Gascoignes of Gawthorpe emerged from the Wars of the Roses relatively unscathed, due to the skill with which William Gascoigne III deftly managed the opposing parties in the West Riding, whilst the Gascoignes of Cardington managed to avoid being cast into the political wilderness after the fall of Cardinal Thomas Wolsey.<sup>5</sup> This same aptitude can be seen in their social circles and friendship groups, which were complex, fluid and could adapt to different pressures and scenarios. The analysis of these issues has revealed an understanding that different skills were required for different situations, whether the negotiation of marriage contracts, the purchase or defence of estates, or the furtherance of careers.

The thesis has also revealed the importance of the theme of family. William Gascoigne Senior<sub>1</sub> ensured that his sons were provided with enough to establish their own branches at Gawthorpe, Lasincroft and Hunslet. Similarly, William Gascoigne III<sub>34</sub> of Gawthorpe defended his young son and heir after the latter sided with the Lancastrians, seeking to ensure his son was not attainted following Henry VI's defeat at Towton in 1461.<sup>6</sup> Protecting the family's wealth and patrimony was also important, as can be seen from the considerable influence of the law in the family's history. The fifteenth century saw at least four Gascoignes study at the Inns of Court.<sup>7</sup> Whilst only Robert Gascoigne<sub>74</sub> (d. 1474) remained with Lincoln's Inn for his career, the impact the law had on the Gascoignes is evident.<sup>8</sup> It was the law, and its politicisation, that enabled William I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419) to acquire substantial landholdings in the West Riding and to establish the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe as a leading gentry family of Yorkshire. It was also the family's familiarity with the law that enabled them to defend their patrimony from aggressive litigation, and in some cases, even expand their holdings; it is unlikely that William VI, for example, would have gained a moiety of the Lordship of Harewood without his considerable legal experience garnered from his service on the Commissions of the Peace. It was this understanding of the law that also enabled William VI<sub>134</sub> (d. 1551) to break it, and to take the law into his own hands when the

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<sup>4</sup> See Chapter One of this thesis, 65, and Chapter Four of this thesis, 176-205.

<sup>5</sup> See Chapter One, 61-62.

<sup>6</sup> S. Payling, 'Sir William Gascoigne', *HOP* (forthcoming, c. 2017); *CPR 1461-1467*, 24.

<sup>7</sup> See, Black Books, I, *Records of the Society of Lincoln's Inn* (London, 1896), 35, 37, 43.

<sup>8</sup> Robert Gascoigne's career at Lincoln's Inn is iterated in Chapter One of this thesis, 89-90.

need arose.

This touches upon the broad range of experiences within the Gascoigne family. Each Gascoigne had a life and career unique to that individual. Even amongst the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe, the range of experiences is such that it makes it almost impossible to produce a single catch-all Gascoigne identity. There were numerous Gascoignes identities, and any attempt to rigidly define the family by over-arching statements would cease to be accurate after only a few words. As Miri Rubin noted, 'identity is as elusive as it is central to individual lives and collective experience.'<sup>9</sup> Extra caution should, therefore, be taken when extrapolating the conclusions of studies such as this one upon the wider gentry. Where this has been done, it has occasionally led to overgeneralisation. In the conclusion of Saul's *Death, Art and Memory*, for example, he takes the experiences of the Cobham family in regard to commemoration as 'typical' of gentry families.<sup>10</sup> He argues that in the late medieval period, 'many gentry families were creating mausoleums in their local churches' citing other collections of commemorative pieces as examples of this: the collections of the Astley family in Warwickshire, the Etchingham family in Sussex, and the Malyns in Oxfordshire, among others.<sup>11</sup> Given that the Cobham family, and the other families cited, were knightly ones, to argue that mausoleums were commonplace amongst the gentry risks conflating the experiences of a few knightly families with the gentry as a whole. Similarly, the conclusions of Charles Moreton's study on the Townshends of Norfolk, between c. 1450 and 1551, risk overgeneralisation. In his conclusion, Moreton remarked that their experiences argue against the existence of a County Community.<sup>12</sup> He suggests that its proponents have taken it too far, saying that 'by controlling the gentry, powerful local magnates could create the illusion of a county community, but this superficial unity did not survive their absence.'<sup>13</sup> The possibility of overgeneralisation stems from the fact that Moreton's study focuses primarily on the careers of just three Townshend knights: John (d. 1466), Roger (d. 1493), and Roger II (d. 1551), from a sample of forty family members, many of whom are mentioned only briefly. It simply cannot be the case that the experiences of three knights from East Anglia are representative of an entire section of society, that was not only comprised of knights, esquires and gentlemen, but women, children and, at the end of his timeframe,

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<sup>9</sup> M. Rubin, 'Identities', 383.

<sup>10</sup> Saul, *Death, Art and Memory*, 245.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, 245-246.

<sup>12</sup> C. E. Moreton, *The Townshends and their World, c. 1450-1551* (Oxford, 1992), 194-195.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 195.

teachers, priests and lawyers.<sup>14</sup> This is not to say that studies such as this one provide little to our understanding of the gentry as a social group, but rather that conclusions drawn need to be focused not on individual experiences, but on those themes and trends that were present in multiple individuals and generations.

With that in mind, it may be possible to provide a few observations on persistent themes within the thesis, with the proviso that these are general sentiments that are not completely applicable to every member of the Gascoigne family. First, the identities of each individual shifted and changed slowly over the course of a lifetime. They could, and did, adapt to different circumstances. Individual identities were relational, and different aspects were visible in the person's social environments, cultural exchange and political associations. Moreover, personal experience would alter and affect an individual's identity. For example, William III's<sup>34</sup> early experiences, both as a minor and a young adult, shaped his later life. The premature death of his father meant that there was considerable expectation and pressure on him from an early age. Furthermore, the burdensome jointure of his mother, the dower of his grandmother, and the possible conflict between them and his father's executors meant that William III<sup>34</sup> was skilled in litigation and the law by his late twenties. It also contributed to his diplomacy in managing numerous conflicting interests, and may thus have provided him with the experience to avoid involvement in the Wars of the Roses, when other gentry families chose sides.

Moreover, whilst individual identities altered imperceptibly over time, the general identity of a family could shift much faster on the death of the branch head. During the life of William I<sub>4</sub> (d. 1419), the family had considerable association with the law, not just in terms of William's own career, but also in terms of the law as a tool for social mobility. William I, Nicholas<sub>7</sub> and Richard<sub>9</sub> were all assigned to Commissions of the Peace, and acquired varying degrees of legal knowledge throughout their lifetimes. Their legal knowledge must have assisted their rise. Aside from William I's career as Chief Justice, Richard served in the Exchequer in the late 1380s and early 1390s. Yet when William I died, the family's central identity shifted. The identity of William II<sub>14</sub> (d. 1422) was not law-focused, and from the piecemeal evidence that survives it is unclear whether William II engaged with the legal profession at all. Instead, the career of opportunity was replaced with a career of status and stability, as William II engaged in military service abroad with relative frequency. This identity was self-fashioned and represented a shift in the status of the Gascoigne family. They were no longer an aspirant family but an established one.

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<sup>14</sup> See Introduction, 27-28 of this thesis.

This self-fashioning is representative of the second observation of this thesis: the role of status markers. Throughout the late medieval and Tudor period, the Gascoignes of Gawthorpe appear to have dedicated considerable time and resources to ensure that people knew who they were and that they were members of the gentry. Heraldry was a fundamental part of the family's identity. It was displayed in their houses, the local parish churches and on their monuments. It reinforced notions of gentle birth and depicted their ancestors and distant relatives; a hugely important sentiment for a family who rose from obscurity. The presence of Gascoigne heraldic devices in stained glass across the West Riding is a testament to the family's success. Not only did they create an identity through their use of ancestry and lineage, but they also constructed an identity that other aspirant gentry families were willing to associate themselves with. The presence of Gascoigne heraldry at the Aske manor at Aughton is evidence of this. Additionally, the attempts by Sir Thomas Wentworth to combine his family with the identity of the Gascoignes demonstrates the usefulness of such self-fashioning. The use of material culture was of paramount importance in the communication of the family's status. As has been shown in Chapter Five of this thesis, the investment of stained glass, the construction of manorial complexes and the installation of commemorative pieces in parish churches enabled the Gascoigne family to negotiate their identity (and status) with their surrounding landscape.

The third observation regards the degree of choice available to the Gascoigne family in the late medieval and Tudor period. Choice is difficult to quantify. Very little explicit evidence survives to indicate the decision-making process of the gentry, and nothing survives of the opportunities that passed the Gascoigne family by. But there are subtle indications throughout this thesis that relate to the Gascoignes' ability to choose. For one, William III chose not to engage in the Wars of the Roses. Moreover, he chose to marry Margaret Clarell in secret, for which they were both temporarily excommunicated. This is not to argue that choice was a tangible outcome of this thesis, especially as a factor influencing the family's identity, but an acknowledgement that choice was ubiquitous and relational, and the degree of choice available was ever changing. The facts of an individual's life were influenced by choice; the opportunity, restriction and range of choices were factors that affected an individual's life and therefore, their identity.

To end, it would be expedient to comment on how this research could benefit the wider discipline. One such way is the adoption of an interdisciplinary methodology centred upon concepts, or definitions of, identity. In the late 1980s and early 1990s there were fundamental shifts in academic understandings of identity that did not

permeate into the frameworks of many gentry studies. For example, old models of identity would tend to advocate that power was held by dominant groups. This can be seen most evidently in discussions of bastard feudalism, which tend towards the idea that magnates were the principal influence upon the identity of the late medieval gentry.<sup>15</sup> While these innovative models of identity also greatly influenced concepts of gender, gentry studies still tended to excluded women by defining the gentry as office (or title) holders and therefore attributing power and agency to the men who held those positions. Such models relied upon binary, rigid, definitions of identities, in which how the gentry saw themselves was unambiguous and constant. Michel Foucault's writings in the 1980s argued extensively that to suggest power could be possessed or controlled by some and not by others was an over-simplification.<sup>16</sup> Instead, he argued that power could be used in a multitude of ways by different groups for different reasons and was not restricted to a particular subsection of society. Judith Butler built upon this in *Gender Trouble* (1990) whereby she argued that popular feminism of the 1970s and 1980s made a misstep when it attempted to attribute identifiers to all women, as it was unwittingly reinforcing the same binary reflections of identity it had sought to depose.<sup>17</sup> Butler's arguments gave way to Queer Theory, which reasoned that identities were not fixed and to assess a group based upon a single shared characteristic is wrong.<sup>18</sup> Yet this later shift developed concurrently with the decline of interest in gentry studies. The year 1992 saw the last major contributions to the study of the county, as Eric Acheson and Christine Carpenter published their research.<sup>19</sup> Since

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<sup>15</sup> See for example, A. J. Pollard, 'The Northern Retainers of Richard Nevill, earl of Salisbury', *Northern History*, 11 (1976), 52-69; C. Carpenter, 'The Beauchamp Affinity: A Study of Bastard Feudalism at Work', *English Historical Review* 95 (1980), 514-533; M. A. Hicks, 'The Beauchamp Trust, 1439-1487', *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 54 (1981), 135-49; C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992); C. Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community in Medieval England', *Journal of British Studies*, 33 (1994), 340-380; M. Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism* (London, 1995); C. Carpenter, 'The Stonor Circle in the Fifteenth Century', in R. E. Archer and S. Walker (eds.), *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England* (London, 1995); M. A. Hicks, *English Political Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 2002).

<sup>16</sup> See, for example, M. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977* (London, 1980); M. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: The Will to Knowledge* (London, 1998). The latter text was originally published in three volumes between 1978 and 1986.

<sup>17</sup> J. Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London, 1990).

<sup>18</sup> See, among others: J. Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (London, 1993); L. Edelman, *Homographesis: Essays in Gay Literary and Cultural Theory* (New York, 1994); E. Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Berkeley 1991).

<sup>19</sup> E. Acheson, *A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century, c. 1442-1485* (Cambridge, 1992); C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity* (Cambridge, 1992). A. J. Pollard, *North-*

then there have been remarkably few major gentry studies, and those there have been adopted the frameworks of their predecessors; Hannes Kleineke's work on the Dinham family of Devon, Jonathan Mackman's research on the gentry of Lincolnshire, and Nigel Saul's study of the Cobhams of Kent are prime examples of this.<sup>20</sup> This is not to argue that the ruminations of Foucault and Butler have been entirely absent from gentry studies, yet where they have featured it has tended to be in studies of an individual or in discussions of gender and women.<sup>21</sup>

This contrasts considerably to the field of archaeology. The close ties between sociology, anthropology and archaeology have meant that examinations of identity have often included aspects of the highly-theorised approaches like that of Foucault and Butler which consider identity to be complex and transitional.<sup>22</sup> These highly-theorised approaches, which were among the first to adopt post-processual concepts of identity, have tended to engage with pre-history, whilst medieval archaeological studies have tended to focus on agendas within medieval history. This focus on agendas is due, in part, to the comments of Ivor Noel Hume in 1964, who claimed that archaeology was the 'handmaiden to history'.<sup>23</sup> He argued that whilst archaeology and history could work together, history was the dominant partner, and this led to a wave of contribution within archaeology which set to justify the independence of the

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*Eastern England during the Wars of the Roses: Lay Society, War and Politics, 1450-1500* (Oxford, 1990), and S. J. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England: The Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1990), were also published around that time.

<sup>20</sup> H. Kleineke, 'The Dinham Family in the Later Middle Ages' (Royal Holloway PhD Thesis, 1998); J. Mackman, 'The Lincolnshire Gentry and the Wars of the Roses', (University of York D. Phil Thesis, 1999); N. Saul, *Death, Art and Memory in Medieval England: The Cobham Family and their Monuments, 1300-1500* (Oxford, 2001).

<sup>21</sup> M. Rubin and S. Kay, *Framing Medieval Bodies* (Manchester, 1994); M. Rubin, 'Identities', in R. Horrox and W. M. Ormrod (eds.), *A Social History of England, 1200-1500* (Cambridge, 2006), 383-412; J. Murray (ed.), *Conflicted Identities and Multiple Masculinities: Men in the Medieval West* (New York, 1999); K. M. Phillips, 'Feminites and the Gentry in Late Medieval East Anglia: Ways of Being', in L. H. McAvoy (ed.), *A Companion to Julian of Norwich* (Cambridge, 2008).

<sup>22</sup> B. J. Clark and L. Wilkie, 'The Prism of Self: Gender and Personhood' in S. M. Nelson (ed.), *Handbook of Gender in Archaeology* (New York, 2009), 333-364; E. Casella Conlin and C. Fowler (eds.), *The Archaeology of Plural and Changing Identities* (New York, 2004); L. Meskell, 'Archaeologies of Identity' in I. Hodder (ed.), *Archaeological Theory Today* (Cambridge, 2001), 187-213; L. Meskell and R. W. Preucel, 'Identities', in L. Meskell and R. W. Preucel (eds.), *A Companion to Social Archaeology* (Oxford, 2007), 121-141; B. L. Voss, 'Sexuality in Archaeology' in S. M. Nelson (ed.), *Handbook of Gender in Archaeology* (Walnut Creek, 2006); L. Wilkie and K. H. Hayes, 'Engendered and Feminist Archaeologies of the Recent and Documented Past', *Journal of Archaeological Research*, 14 (2006), 243-264; T. Insoll, 'Introduction: Configuring Identities in Archaeology', in T. Insoll (ed.), *The Archaeology of Identities* (New York, 2007), 1-18; A. Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford, 1998).

<sup>23</sup> I. Noel Hume, 'Archaeology: Handmaiden to History', *The North Carolina Historical Review*, 41:2 (1964), 214-225.

discipline, with a particular focus on social theory.<sup>24</sup> This search for justification has led to some extreme assertions. David Austin, for example, argued for an archaeological interpretation of medieval history which ignored historical studies of the period. He claimed these distorted archaeological interpretations due to the agendas set, and enforced, by historians.<sup>25</sup> Such a hard stance is not entirely unwarranted. During the late-twentieth century, medieval archaeology was often afforded a secondary role to historical documentation, and was primarily used as a companion to historical studies.<sup>26</sup> Later medievalists have sought to integrate archaeology and history in their studies, and this thesis is a contribution to this integration. This thesis has also sought to (partially) bridge the divide between gentry studies and modern concepts of identity. It has adopted a framework of identity that allows for diversity of experience and identity. That is not to say that highly-theorised approaches have been utilised in all parts in this thesis. Rather, as has been demonstrated, the benefits of a more nuanced interpretation of identity, provided by archaeological and anthropological theory, allowed for a deeper understanding as to the complexity of gentry life and recognised that binary definitions do little to aid our understanding of the past, and they can, in fact, complicate matters further.

In its own way, then, this thesis has restarted the conversation about the late medieval and Tudor gentry and their identities. It has attempted to reignite the debate surrounding the identities of the gentry as a social group, from a fresh perspective. It has significance too, in its contribution to the identity of the Gascoigne family on the present-day Yorkshire landscape. Due to the absence of a narrative, the medieval and Tudor Gascoignes have been absent from the public's engagement with the family. Lotherton Hall remains the place to visit for the history of the Gascoigne family, and this thesis will augment its findings with the later, post-sixteenth-century history, to provide a fuller account of the family's activities, achievements and identities. Moreover, it can ensure that the Gascoigne family's relationship with the landscape continues to evolve, as their identities are renegotiated as times passes, and audiences change.

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<sup>24</sup> P. A. Rahtz and L. Watts, *Wharram Percy: The memorial stones of the Churchyard* (York, 1983); R. Hodges, 'New Approaches to Medieval Archaeology' in D. A. Hinton (eds.), *25 Years of Medieval Archaeology* (Sheffield, 1983), 24-32; R. Gilchrist, 'Medieval Archaeology and Theory: A Disciplinary Leap of Faith' in R. Gilchrist and A. Reynolds, *Reflections: 50 Years of Medieval Archaeology, 1957-2007*, Society for Medieval Archaeology Monographs (Leeds, 2009), 385-408.

<sup>25</sup> D. Austin, 'The 'Proper Study' of Medieval Archaeology', in L. Alcock and D. Austin (eds.), *From the Baltic to the Black Sea: Studies in Medieval Archaeology* (London, 1990), 13-14.

<sup>26</sup> Gilchrist, *Gender and Material Culture*, 9.

## Appendices

### Appendix One: Tables

#### 1.1 Service of the Gascoigne Family, pt. 1.

[Sources: TNA JUSTS 3/183, m. 1d; 184, mm. 4d., 6d.; A. Gooder (ed.) *The Parliamentary Representation of the County of York*, I, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 91 (1935); R. Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*, I 523, 525; C. E. Moreton, 'James Gascoigne, *HOP* (forthcoming c. 2017); WYAS GC/F/5/1, f. 16; *Lists of Sheriffs for England and Wales*, PRO Lists and Indexes, 9 (1898), 162; N. M. Fuidge, 'William Gascoigne (d. 1540)', *HOP*; 'George Gascoigne', *HOP*; 'John Gascoigne (d.1568)'; A. Davidson, 'John Gascoigne (d. 1602)', *HOP*; 'John Gascoigne (d. 1557)', *HOP*; C. E. Arnold, 'West Riding', II, 33.]

Name	Office	Location	Date
William I <sub>4</sub> (d. 1419)	Steward	Pontefract	c. 1390s
William II <sub>14</sub> (d. 1422)	Knight of the Shire	Yorkshire	1421
	Constable	Knaresborough	1422
	Steward	Knaresborough	1422
	Master Forester	Knaresborough	1422
James <sub>18</sub> (d. 1435)	MP/Knight of the Shire	Barnstaple and Bedfordshire	1431, 1434
	Sheriff	Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire	1433-1434
John I <sub>26</sub> (d. 1445)	Deputy-Sheriff	Yorkshire	1441-1442
William III <sub>31</sub> (d. c. 1465)	Knight of the Shire	Yorkshire	1431, 1435, 1453
	Sheriff	Yorkshire	1441-1442
William V <sub>106</sub> (d. 1488)	Steward	Spofforth	1474
	Deputy Steward	Knaresborough	1476
William I <sub>93</sub> (d. 1540)	Knight of the Shire	Bedfordshire	1529, 1536
William VI <sub>134</sub> (d. 1551)	Knight of the Shire	Yorkshire	1495
	Deputy Steward	Knaresborough	1481
	Steward	Tadcaster	1492
	Sheriff	Yorkshire	1494-1495
John IV <sub>130</sub> (d. 1557)	MP	Thirsk	1553
John I <sub>125</sub> (d. 1568)	Knight of the Shire	Bedfordshire	1542, 1553, 1558
	Sheriff	Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire	1542-1543
George II <sub>160</sub> (d. 1577)	MP	Bedford	1558, 1559
John V <sub>169</sub> (d. 1602)	MP	Aldbrough	1558

## 1.2 Service of the Gascoigne Family, pt. 2

	William I <sub>4</sub> (d. 1419)	Richard <sup>o</sup> (d. 1423)	Nicholas <sup>r</sup> (d. 1427)	Robert <sup>r</sup> <sub>4</sub> (d. 1474)	William III <sub>31</sub> (d. c. 1459)	William VI <sub>106</sub> (d. 1472-1473, 1481-1485)	William VI <sub>134</sub> (d. 1498-1508)	John VI <sub>130</sub> (d. 1557)	William I <sub>93</sub> (d. 1540)	John I <sub>25</sub> (d. 1568)
Yorks (WR)	1399-1407, 1412-1419	1399-1407, 1412-1413	1401, 1405-1407	1465-1473	1459	1472-1473, 1481-1485	1498-1508	1540-1557		
Yorks. (NR)	1399-1407, <del>1411-1412</del>	1405, 1407								
Yorks. (ER)	1399-1407, <del>1407-1412</del>	1401, 1405								
Westm.	1403-1407, <del>1410-1411</del>		1405							
War.		1401, 1406								
Suff.	1399-1400									
Northumb.	1403-1407, <del>1412</del>									
Northants.		1401, 1404, <del>1402</del>							1512-1540	
Norf.	1399									
Mddx.									1524-1528	
Leic.		1401, 1404, <del>1402</del>								
Hunts.	1399								1510-1540	
Derbs.		1401, 1406								
Cumb.	1405-1406, <del>1410-1412</del>	1405								
Cambs.	1399-1400									
Bucks.	1399								1525-1540	
Beds.	1399								1510-1540	1547-1568

[Sources: E 137/49/2B, mm. 1-4; E 372/248, rot. 12; 264, rot. 11; 269, rot. 11d; 272, 12d; 273, 12; E 101/598/42, m 1; E 372/278, rot. 15; 283, rot. 16; 290, rot 14d; 292, rot 17; 293, rot 16; 299, rot. 22; 301, rot. 23; 304, rot. 23d; *CPR 1399-1401*, 556-567; *1401-1405*, 515-524; *1405-1408*, 489-500; *1408-1413*, 479-488; *1413-1416*, 416-426; *1416-1422*, 449-465; *1429-1436*, 613-628; *1436-1441*, 578-594; *14414-1446*, 467-482; *1446-1452*, 586-598; *1461-1467*, 559-577; *1467-1477*, 607-638; *1478-1485*, 553-580; *1485-1494*, 460-508; *1494-1509*, 629-669; N. M. Fuidge, 'Sir William Gascoigne (by 1485 - 1540) of Cardington, Beds.' *HOP*, <http://www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-william-1485-1540>; *LP*, 2, 456; 1176; *LP*, 3, 1186 (14); *LP*, 2, 694; 1213; *LP*, 3, 3677; *LP*, 2, 112; *LP*, 2, 1580; 2212; *LP*, 2, 3898; *LP*, 2, 4562; N. Lewycky, 'Serving God and King: Cardinal Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks and Early Tudor Government, 1514-1529, with Special Reference to the Archdiocese of York' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2008); A. Davidson, 'Gascoigne, John I (by 1501-57), of Lasingcroft, Barnbow, and Parlington', *HOP*, [www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-john-i-1509-57](http://www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-john-i-1509-57), accessed 22 February 2016; *LP Henry VIII*, xv-xvii, xx; *CPR 1547-1548*, 92; *1553*, 353, *1553-4*, 26; N. M. Fuidge, 'Gascoigne, John', *HOP*, [www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-john-1510-69](http://www.historyofparliament.org/volume/1509-1558/member/gascoigne-sir-john-1510-69), accessed 1 March 2016; *LP*, 1, 10, 21; *CPR 1547-1548*, 80; *CPR 1563-1566*, 19.]

## 1.3 Sheriffs of Yorkshire, 1399-1550

[Source: *Lists of Sheriffs for England and Wales*, PRO Lists and Indexes, 9 (1898), 162]

Sept. 1399	Sir John Depeden	1452	Sir James Strangeways
Nov. 1399	Sir John Constable	1453	Sir John Melton II
1400	Sir Thomas Brounflete	1454	Sir John Saville II
1401	Sir William Dronsfield	1455	Sir Thomas Harrington
1402	Sir John Saville I	1456	Sir John Hotham
1403	Sir Richard Redman I	1457	Sir Ralph Bygod
1404	Sir Peter Buckton	1458	Sir John Tempest
1405	Sir William Dronsfield	1459	Sir Thomas Metham
1406	Robert Mauleverer I	1460	Sir John Melton II
1407	Sir John Etton	Mar. 1461	Sir John Saville II
1408	Sir William Harrington	Nov. 1461	Sir Robert Constable
1409	Sir Edmund Hastings	1463	Sir John Constable
1410	Sir Edmund Sandford	1464	Sir Edmund Hastings
1411	Sir Thomas Rokeby	1465	Sir Richard Fitzwilliam
1412	Sir John Etton	1466	Sir James Harrington
1413	Sir William Harrington	1467	Sir John Conyers
1414	Sir Thomas Brounflete	1468	Sir James Strangeways
1415	Sir Richard Redman I	1469	Sir Henry Vavasour
1416	Sir Edmund Hastings	1470	Sir Edmund Hastings
1417	Sir Robert Hilton	1471	Sir Ralph Ashton
1418	Sir John Bygod	1472	Sir Ralph Ashton
1419	Sir Thomas Brounflete	1473	Sir Walter Griffith
1420	Sir Halnath Mauleverer	1474	Sir John Conyers
1422	Sir William Harrington	1475	Sir James Harrington
1423	Sir Robert Hilton	1476	Sir Edmund Hastings
1424	Sir John Langton I	1477	Sir Robert Ryther
Jan. 1426	Sir Richard Hastings	1478	Sir Robert Constable
Dec. 1426	Sir William Ryther II	1479	Sir Hugh Hastings
1427	Sir Robert Hilton	1480	Sir Marmaduke Constable
1428	Sir William Harrington	1481	Sir Ralph Bigod
Feb. 1430	Sir John Clervaux	1482	Sir William Eure
Nov. 1430	Sir William Ryther II	1483	Sir Edmund Hastings
1431	Sir Richard Pickering	1484	Sir Thomas Markenfield
1432	Sir Henry Brounflete	1485	Sir John Saville
1433	Sir Richard Hastings	1486	Sir Robert Ryther
1434	Sir William Ryther II	1487	Sir John Neville
1435	Sir William Tirwhit	1488	Sir Marmaduke Constable
1436	Sir John Constable	1489	Sir Henry Wentworth
1437	Sir Richard Constable	1490	Sir Thomas Wortley
1438	Sir William Ryther II	1491	Sir Richard Tunstall
1439	Sir John Tempest	1492	Sir Henry Wentworth
1440	Sir Robert Waterton	1493	Sir Marmaduke Constable
1441	Sir William Gascoigne III	1494	Sir John Neville
1442	Sir Thomas Metham	1495	Sir William Gascoigne VI
1443	Sir Edmund Talbot	1496	Sir John Melton
1444	Sir William Eure	1497	Sir William Conyers
1445	Sir James Strangeways	1498	John Hotham
1446	Sir Robert Ughtred	1499	Sir John Hotham
1447	Sir William Plumpton II	1500	Sir Walter Griffith
1448	Sir John Conyers	1501	Sir Thomas Wortley
1449	Sir James Pickering	1502	Sir William Conyers
1450	Sir Robert Ughtred	1503	Sir Ralph Ryther
1451	Sir Ralph Bygod	1504	Sir John Cutt

1505	Sir Ralph Eure
1506	Sir John Norton
1508	Sir James Strangeways
1509	Sir Marmaduke Constable
1510	Sir Ralph Eure
1511	Si John Constable
1512	Sir John Everingham
1513	Sir William Percy
1514	Sir John Norton
1515	Sir John Carre
1516	Sir Richard Tempest
1517	Sir William Bulmer
1518	Sir John Neville
1519	Sir Peter Vavasour
1520	Sir Thomas Strangeways
1522	Sir William Mauleverer
1523	Sir John Neville
1524	Sir John Constable
Jan. 1526	James Metcalf
Nov. 1526	Sir William Middleton
1527	Sir John Neville
1528	Sir John Constable
Nov. 1530	Thomas Strangeways
Mich. 1530	Sir James Strangeways
1531	Nicholas Fairfax
1532	Sir Marmaduke Constable, snr.
1533	Sir John Constable
1534	William Fairfax
1535	Sir George Darcy
1536	Sir Brian Hastings
East. 1537	Francis Frobisher
Nov. 1537	Sir Henry Saville
1538	Sir James Strangeways
1539	Sir William Fairfax
1540	Sir Robert Neville
1541	Sir Henry Saville
1542	Sir Thomas Tempest
1543	Sir John Dawney
1544	Sir Nicholas Fairfax
1545	Sir Christopher Danby
1546	Sir John Tempest
1547	Sir Richard Chomeley
1548	Sir William Vavasour
1549	Sir William Calverley
1550	Sir Leonard Beckwith

#### 1.4 Knights of the Shire for Yorkshire, 1399-1600

[Source: A. Gooder (ed.) *The Parliamentary Representation of the County of York, I*, Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 91 (1935)]

1399	Sir Ralph Eure	Sir Robert Neville
1401	Sir John Scrope	Sir Gerard Usflete
1402	Sir Thomas Colville	Sir Robert Rockley
Jan. 1404	Sir Peter Buckton	Sir Ralph Eure
Oct. 1404	Sir John Routh	<i>Sir Richard Tempest</i>
1406	Sir Richard Redman I	Sir Thomas Rokeby
1407	Sir Edmund Hastings	Sir Alexander Lound
1411	Sir John Etton	Sir Robert Plumpton II
May 1413	Sir Edmund Hastings	Sir Alexander Lound
Apr. 1414	Sir Alexander Lound	Sir Robert Plumpton II
Nov. 1414	Sir Richard Redman I	Sir John Etton
1415	Sir Richard Redman I	Sir John Etton
Mar. 1416	Sir Brian Stapleton I	Sir Robert Plumpton II
1419	Sir Robert Hilton	Sir Halnath Mauleverer
1420	Sir Richard Redman I	<i>Sir John Langton I</i>
May 1421	Sir Edmund Hastings	Sir William Gascoigne II
Dec. 1421	Sir Richard Redman I	Sir John Etton
1422	Sir William Eure	Sir Edmund Hastings
1423	Sir Thomas Rokeby	<i>Sir William Tempest I</i>
1425	Sir Robert Hilton	<i>Sir Richard Hastings</i>
1426	Sir Robert Hilton	<i>Sir William Ryther II</i>
1427	Sir Robert Hilton	<i>Sir Edmund Hastings</i>
1429	<i>Sir Richard Hastings</i>	<i>Sir Richard Pickering</i>
1431	Sir William Eure	Sir William Gascoigne III
1432	Sir Robert Ughtred	Sir William Normanville
1433	Sir Edmund Darrell	Sir Robert Hopton
1435	Sir William Gascoigne III	Sir Robert Waterton II
1437	Sir Brian Stapleton II	Sir William Normanville
1439	<i>Sir John Constable</i>	Sir Alexander Neville
1442	Sir William Eure	<i>Sir Thomas Saville</i>
1445	<i>Sir John Constable</i>	Sir Brian Stapleton II
1447	<i>Sir James Pickering</i>	Sir William Normanville
Feb. 1449	Sir William Eure	Sir James Strangeways
Nov. 1449	<i>Sir James Pickering</i>	Sir William Normanville
1450	<i>Sir John Saville</i>	Sir John Melton II
1453	Sir Brian Stapleton II	Sir William Gascoigne II
1455	<i>Sir Thomas Harrington</i>	<i>Sir James Pickering</i>
1459	Sir Richard Tunstall	-
1460	Sir James Strangeways	Sir Thomas Mountford
1461	Sir James Strangeways	-
1467	<i>Sir John Saville</i>	Sir John Melton
1472	Sir John Pilkington	<i>Sir Hugh Hastings</i>
1478	Sir John Pilkington	<i>Sir Robert Constable</i>
1491	Sir Henry Wentworth	Sir Richard Tunstall
1495	<i>Sir Marmaduke Constable</i>	Sir William Gascoigne V
1529	<i>Sir Marmaduke Constable</i>	John Neville, Baron Latimer
1532	<i>Sir John Neville</i>	-
1541	Sir Ralph Ellerker	Sir Robert Bowes
1542	Sir Thomas Waterton I	-
1547	<i>Sir Nicholas Fairfax</i>	Sir William Babthorpe
1552	Sir Thomas Gargrave	<i>Sir Robert Constable</i>
1553	<i>Sir Robert Constable</i>	-
Apr. 1554	Sir William Babthorpe	Sir Christopher Danby
Nov. 1554	Sir William Babthorpe	Sir Thomas Gargrave

1555	Sir Thomas Gargrave	-
1557	Sir Thomas Wharton	Sir Richard Cholmley
1558	Sir Thomas Gargrave	<i>Sir Henry Saville</i>
1562	<i>Sir Nicholas Fairfax</i>	Sir Thomas Gargrave
1571	Sir Thomas Gargrave	Sir Henry Gates
1572	Sir Thomas Gargrave	Sir Thomas Waterton II
1575	Sir Robert Stapleton	-
1584	Sir Ralph Eure	Sir William Mallory
1586	Sir Henry Gates	-
1588	<i>Sir Henry Constable</i>	Sir Ralph Burchier
1592	Sir George Saville	<i>Sir John Aske</i>
1597	<i>Sir John Saville</i>	<i>Sir William Fairfax</i>

## 1.5 Escheators of Yorkshire, 1377-1600

[*List of Escheators for England and Wales*, PRO List and Index Society, 72 (1971), 190-197. Those that have been italicised are related, in some form, to the Gascoigne family. After 1341, it was increasingly the case that the office of escheator and sheriff were collectively assigned. Between 1357 and 1377, a single escheator was appointed for the counties of Yorkshire, Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmorland. Moreover, between 1361 and 1362, the county of Lancaster was also included. From 1377 the escheator was assigned on a county basis.]

1377	Sir William Melton	Dec. 1426	Robert Hatfield
1378	Sir William Mirfield	1427	<i>Thomas Clarell</i>
1379	James Pickering	1428	Edmund Fitzwilliam
Feb. 1381	Sir John Bygod	Fed. 1430	Robert Mauleverer
Oct. 1381	Robert Passelewe	Nov. 1430	John Thwaites
1382	<i>James Pickering</i>	1431	Thomas Lindley
1383	Thomas Graa	1432	Robert Mauleverer
1384	John de Dent	1433	Nicholas Fitzwilliam
1385	Sir John Bygod	1434	<i>Thomas Clarell</i>
1386	William de Holm	1435	<i>John Langton</i>
1387	Sir John Goddard	1436	John Thwaites
1388	William Frost	1437	Christopher Conyers
1390	<i>James Pickering</i>	1438	Nicholas Fitzwilliam
1391	<i>Hugh Arderne</i>	1439	Sir Robert Ughtred
1392	Richard Basy	1440	<i>Henry Vavasour</i>
1394	William de Holm	1441	<i>John Langton</i>
Nov. 1394	<i>Hugh Arderne</i>	1442	Nicholas Fitzwilliam
1395	Sir Peter Buckton	1443	Edmund Portington
1397	Sir John Routh	1444	John Hotham
1399	Sir Thomas Brounlete	1445	<i>John Langton</i>
1400	William Skipwith	1446	John Southall
1401	William Hungate	1447	<i>Richard Clervaux</i>
1402	Thomas Egmonton	1448	Robert Newport
1403	Nicholas Gower	1449	Henry Banastre
1404	Sir Richard Redman	1450	<i>Henry Langton</i>
1405	Thomas Pickering	1451	<i>Thomas Beckwith, esq.</i>
Aug. 1406	John de Cherleton	1452	<i>Roger Ward, esq.</i>
Nov. 1406	Thomas Egmonton	1453	<i>Walter Calverley, esq.</i>
1407	Alexander Lounde, esq.	1454	William Burgh
1408	Thomas Santon	1455	Richard Hansard, esq.
1409	Nicholas Gower	1456	John Wombwell, esq.
1410	Robert Hilliard	1457	William Hungate, jr.
1411	Robert Gargrave	1458	William Stoke, esq.
1412	Robert Morton	1459	Thomas Ilderton, esq.
1413	Edmund Fitzwilliam	1460	<i>John Harrington, esq.</i>
1414	Peter de la Hay	1461	Edmund Hastings
1415	Robert Hilliard	1463	John Ferriby
1416	Christopher Boynton	1464	Thomas Gower, esq.
1417	Gerard Salvin	1465	John Woodruff
1418	William Chauncellor	1466	Robert Ottyr
1419	<i>Alfred Manston</i>	1467	<i>John Fitzwilliam, esq.</i>
1420	John Barton	1468	Christopher Sharpe, esq.
1422	Richard Wentworth	1469	Miles Wilthorp
1423	Peter de la Hay	1470	<i>John Everingham</i>
1424	<i>William Scargill</i>	June 1471	Richard Portington
Jan. 1426	Guy Roucliff	Nov. 1471	Guy Vincent

1472	Richard Burgh	1524	Thomas Trygot, esq.
1473	Richard Portington	Feb 1526	Richard Smethley, esq.
1474	William Hungate, esq.	Nov. 1526	Thomas Greene
1475	Roger Cotton, esq.	1527	Robert Hodgeson, esq.
1476	Robert Percy	1528	Christopher Bradford,
1481	William Hungate	esq.	
1483	<i>Thomas Frank</i>	1529	Edmund Copindale, esq.
1484	William Hungate	1530	<i>Thomas Wentworth, esq.</i>
1485	Robert Gower	1531	William Maunsell, esq.
1486	Richard Wentworth, esq.	1532	Thomas Greene, esq.
1487	<i>Marmaduke Clervaux</i>	1533	Christopher Lauselles,
1489	<i>Thomas Ryther, esq.</i>	esq.	
1491	William Craythorn, esq.	1534	Anthony Hammond, esq.
1495	Robert Pilkington	1535	<i>Ralph Pulleyn, esq.</i>
1497	Thomas Haslarton	1536	Thomas Greene, esq.
1498	William Crouch	1537	James Fox, esq.
1509	Walter Rudson	1538	Christopher Tomlinson,
1510	John Baxter	esq.	
1511	Hugh Serlby	1539	<i>Roger Wentworth, esq.</i>
1512	Robert Crake	1540	John Thorpe
1513	Edward Knight	1541	Robert Hastings, esq.
1514	<i>John Saville</i>	1542	Thomas Barton, esq.
1515	Roger Cholmley	1543	Charles Jackson, es.
1516	<i>John Pulleyn</i>	1544	Richard Bowes, esq.
1517	Thomas Merring, esq.	1545	<i>William Constable, esq.</i>
1518	Thomas Beverley, esq.	1546	Thomas Reynold, esq.
1519	Thomas Gargrave, esq.	1547	Anthony Hammond, esq.
1520	William Danby	1548	Robert Waterhouse, esq.
1521	<i>Leonard Beckwith, esq.</i>	1549	Thomas Greene, esq.
1522	Robert Southall, esq.	1550	William Davell, esq.
1523	William Legh, esq.		

## 1.6 Justice of the Peace for the West Riding, 1489-1413

[Source: S. Walker, *Political Culture in Later Medieval England* (Manchester, 2006), 105]

	Richard II			Henry IV		
	1390-1392	1392-1395	1395-1399	1399-1402	1402-1409	1409-1411
Sir John Saville	15	16				
Sir William Gascoigne I <sub>4</sub>	15	15	11	11	2	2
John Woodruff	11	17				
Sir William Rilleston		2	2			
Sir John Depeden		1	2	9		
John Ingleby		1	1	4		
Richard Gascoigne <sub>9</sub>			4	25	26	15
Sir Richard Tempest				2	3	1
Sir William Dronsfield				9		
Sir Nicholas Middleton				11	7	
Sir John Cokayn				1		
Robert Tirwhit				1		
Nicholas Gascoigne <sub>7</sub>				1	8	
Robert Waterton					1	1
Sir Robert Neville					6	5
Sir Richard Redman					1	
Edmund Fitzwilliam						7
<b>No. of Session Days</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>15</b>

## 1.7 Justices of the Peace for the West Riding, 1430-1455

[Source: M. Punshon, 'Government and Political Society in the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1399-1461' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2002), 237]

	Henry VI						
	1430-1433	1433-1437	1443-1444	1445-1447	1447-1448	1452-1453	1454-1455
Edmund Fitzwilliam I	1						
Thomas Clarell	13	11					
John Thwaites	5	22	6	8	8	3	6
Alfred Manston	10						
Guy Fairfax (Walton)	9	14	5	1			
Thomas Wombwell	6	7					
Alexander Aune		1					
Sir Robert Waterton		3					
Sir Thomas Harrington			1				
John Stafford			1	3	3	3	2
Percival Cresacre				3	1	3	1
Sir William Plumpton				2	1	1	
Nicholas Fitzwilliam					3		
Sir John Talbot						1	
Robert Drax						3	2
Ralph Reresby						2	1
Henry Southall							3
Sir John Neville							2
John Hastings							1
<b>No. of Session Days</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>?</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>

## 1.8 Elections and Attestors for Yorkshire MPs

[Sources: C. E. Arnold, 'West Riding', II, 96; TNA C 219/15/2/1, m. 23; 4/1, m. 25; 6/1, m. 26; 7/1, m. 26; C 219/16/1/1, m. 24; 2/1, m. 29; 3/1, m. 15; 6/1, m. 6; C 219/17/1/1, m. 33; 2/1, m. 27; 3/1, m. 33]

Date of Election	Sheriff	Knights	Esquires	Gentlemen	Other	Total
1442	William Gascoigne III	3	-	-	448	451
1447	Robert Ughtred	-	6	-	36	42
1449	John Conyers	2	22	-	-	24
1449	John Conyers	7	40	-	45	92
1450	James Pickering	-	14	-	20	34
1453	James Strangeways	2	5	-	17	24
1455	John Saville	3	1	-	50	54
1460	Thomas Metham	-	24	-	34	58
1467	James Harrington	1	35	44	134	214
1472	Ralph Ashton	2	9	13	-	24
1478	Robert Ryther	10	90	-	-	100

## 1.9 A Comparison of Rooms noted in the Inventories of Gascoigne Estates

[Source: WYAS Add. 78/5/14; F. S. Colman, *A History of the Parish of Barwick-in-Elmet* (1910), 230; Bodleian Library, MSS Tops. Yorks. C 13, ff. 333-344.]

<b>Lasincroft, 1577</b>	<b>Gawthorpe, 1607</b>	<b>Gawthorpe, 1669</b>
Hall	Dining Parlour	Hall
Inner Chapel Chamber	Great Chamber	Dining Room
Great Chamber	Lord's Closet	Duke of Albany Chamber
Parlour Chamber	Chamber next to the Stuarts' Chamber	Chapel
Parlour	Knight's Chamber	Four Windowed Chamber
Maid's Parlour	Corner Chamber	Chamber to the north of the Dining Room
Outer Chamber	Balcony Chamber	
Nursery	Lime Chamber	
Well Yard Parlour	The Chamber by the Stairs	
Well Yard Chamber	The Larder	
Mill House Chamber	Old Parlour	
Malt Chamber	Stuarts' Chamber	
Rye Chamber	Gallery	
Bake-house	Little Chamber	
Bolt House	New Pantry	
Milk House	Cellar	
Mill House	Wine Cellar	
Well yard	Old Pantry	
Kitchen	Pastry	
Larder	Kitchen	
Outer Larder	Brewhouse	
Kiln	Diary House	
Buttery	Washhouse	
Chapel	Bolting House	
Cloak Chamber	Barn	

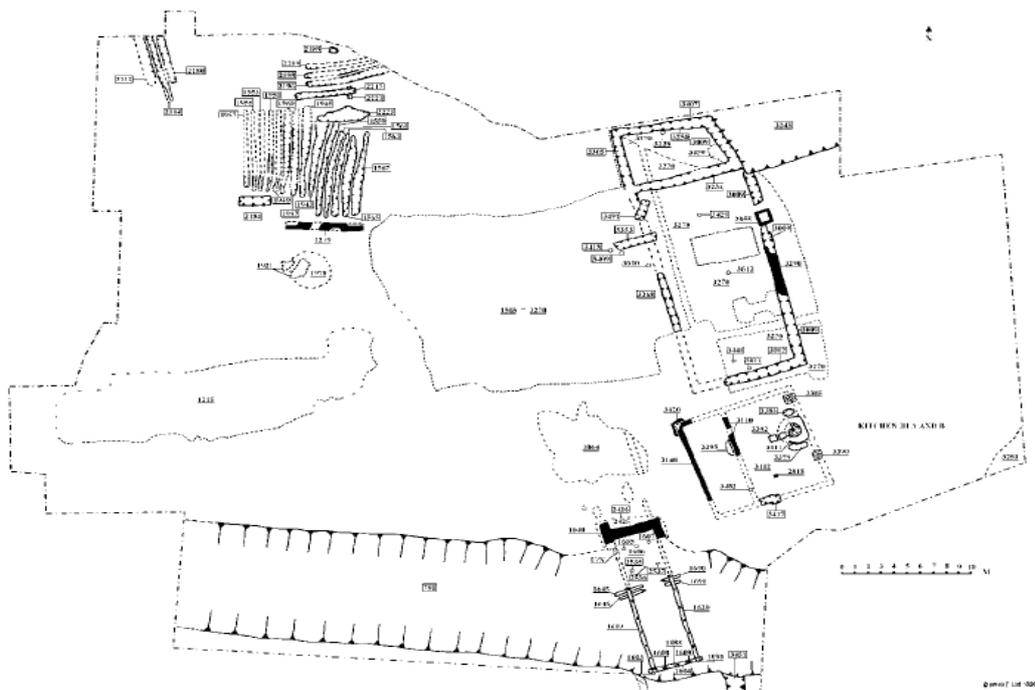
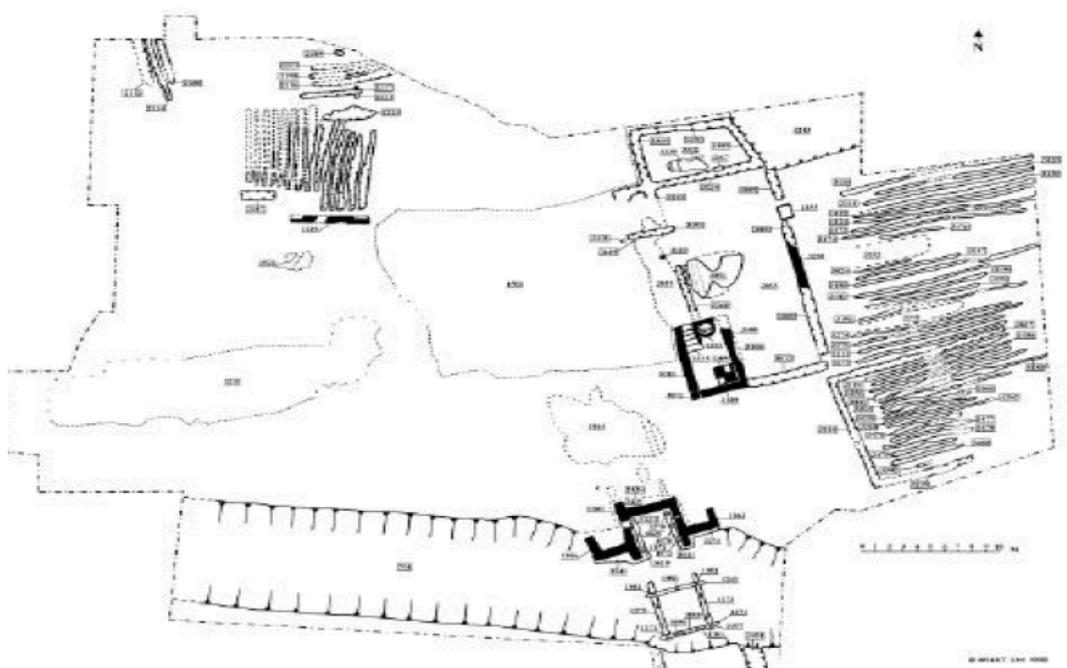
## Appendix Two: Figures

### 2.1 Wood Hall Excavation Site

#### a. Wood Hall: Late Neville/Early Gascoigne

#### b. Wood Hall: Late Gascoigne

[Source: V. Metcalf, 'Wood Hall Moated Manor Project: Interim Report' (2001), 19, 25]



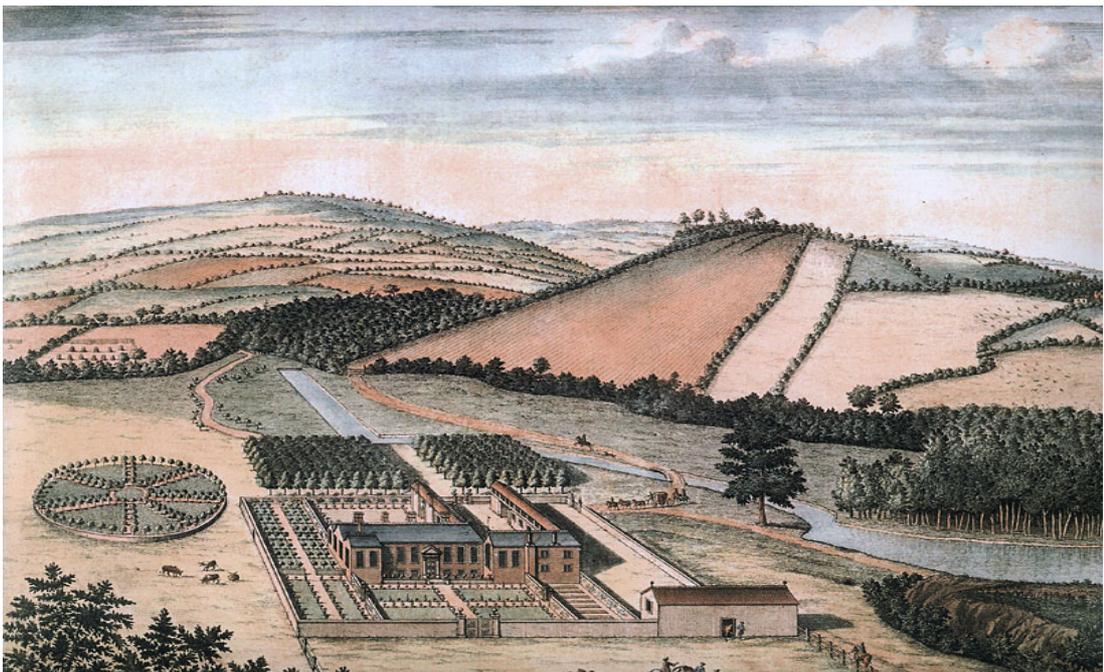
## 2.2 Artist Impression of Wood Hall

[Source: V. Metcalf, 'Wood Hall Moated Manor Project: Interim Report' (2001), 19, 25. Artwork by P. Scholefield]



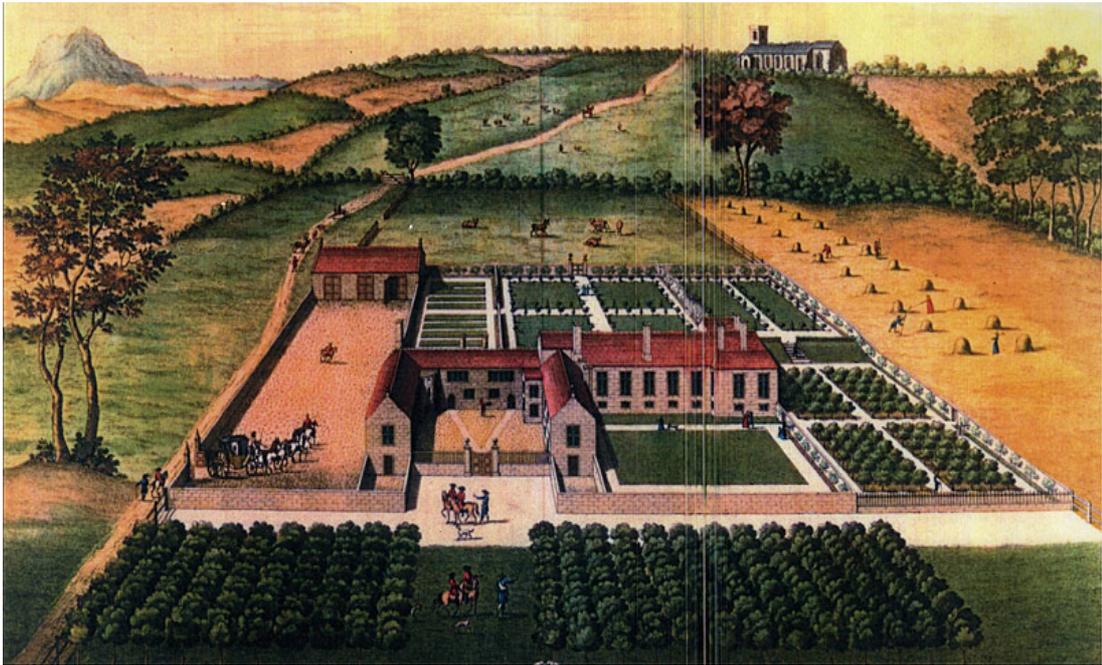
## 2.3 Willem Van der Hagen, 'Gawthorpe from the North', 1722

[Source: Image Courtesy of J. Finch, University of York]



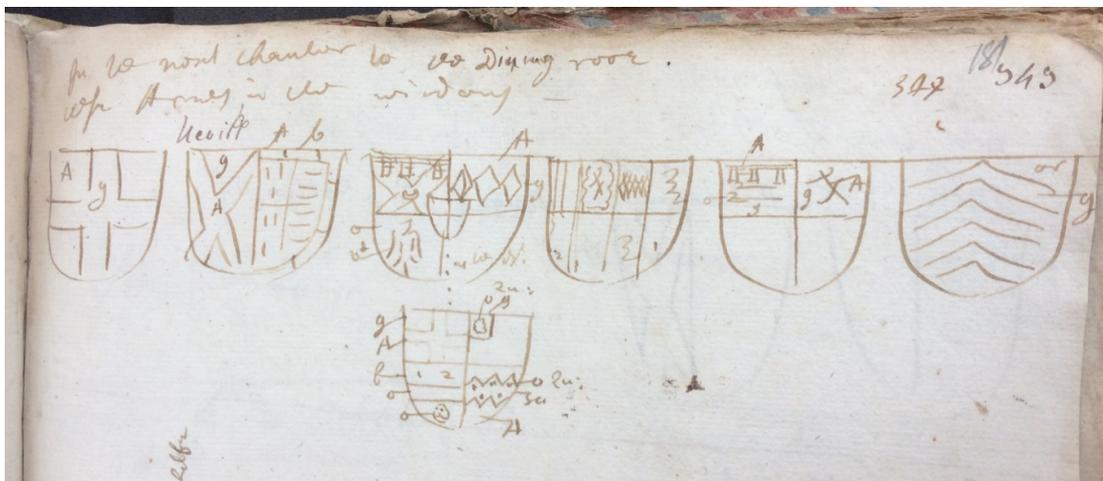
## 2.4 Willem Van der Hagen, 'Gawthorpe from the South', 1727

[Source: Image Courtesy of J. Finch, University of York]



## 2.5 Heraldry in the 'north chamber' to the dining-room in Gawthorpe Hall

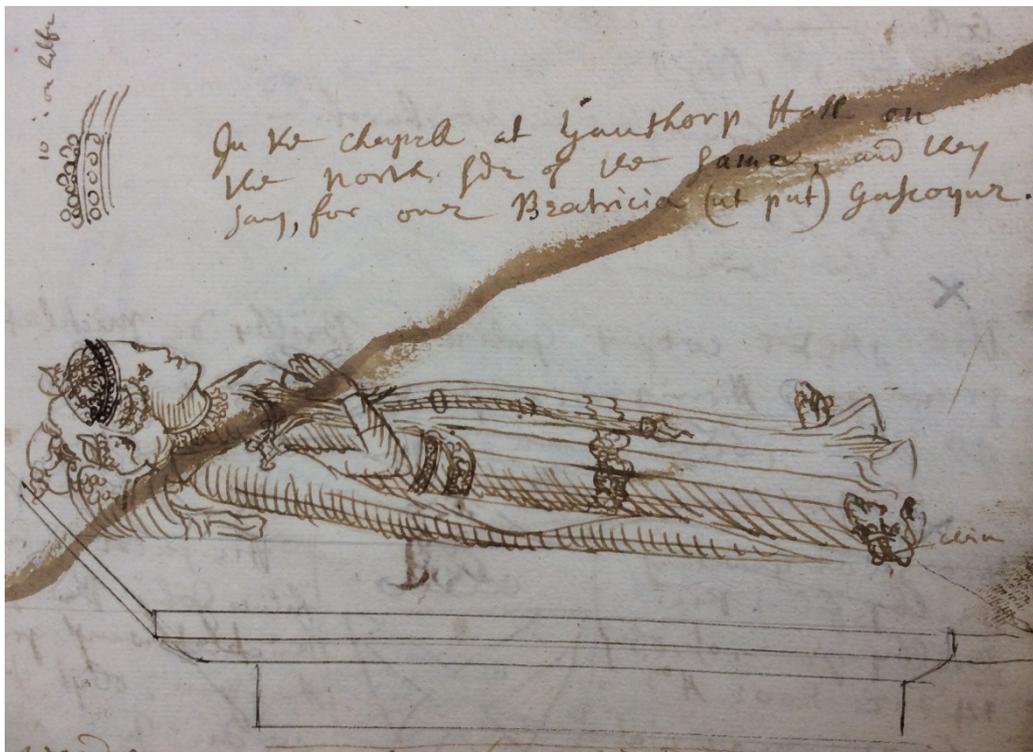
[Source: Bodleian Library, Nathaniel Johnston, MSS Tops. Yorks. C 13 ff. 333-344]





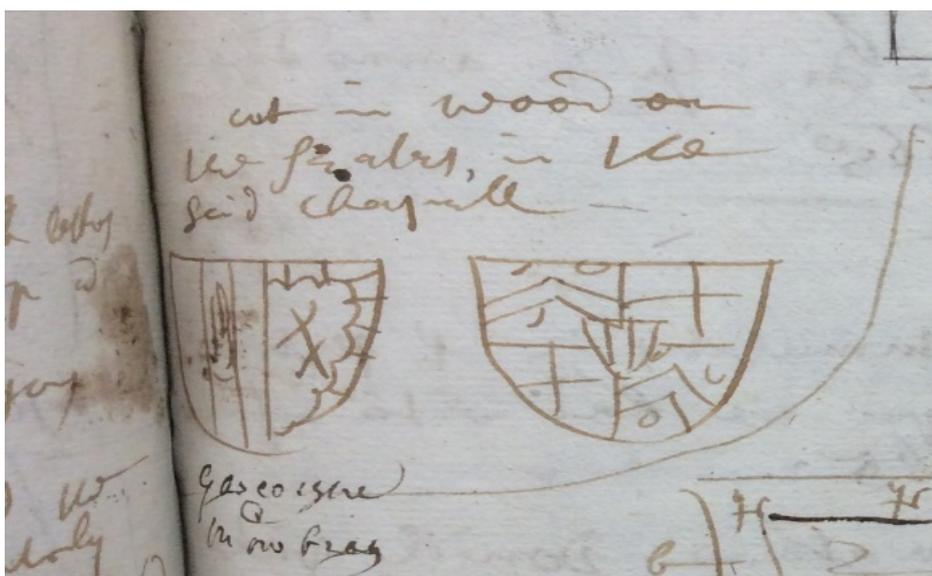
## 2.7 Unknown effigy in Gawthorpe Chapel

[Source: Bodleian Library, Nathaniel Johnston, MSS Tops. Yorks. C 13 ff. 333-344]



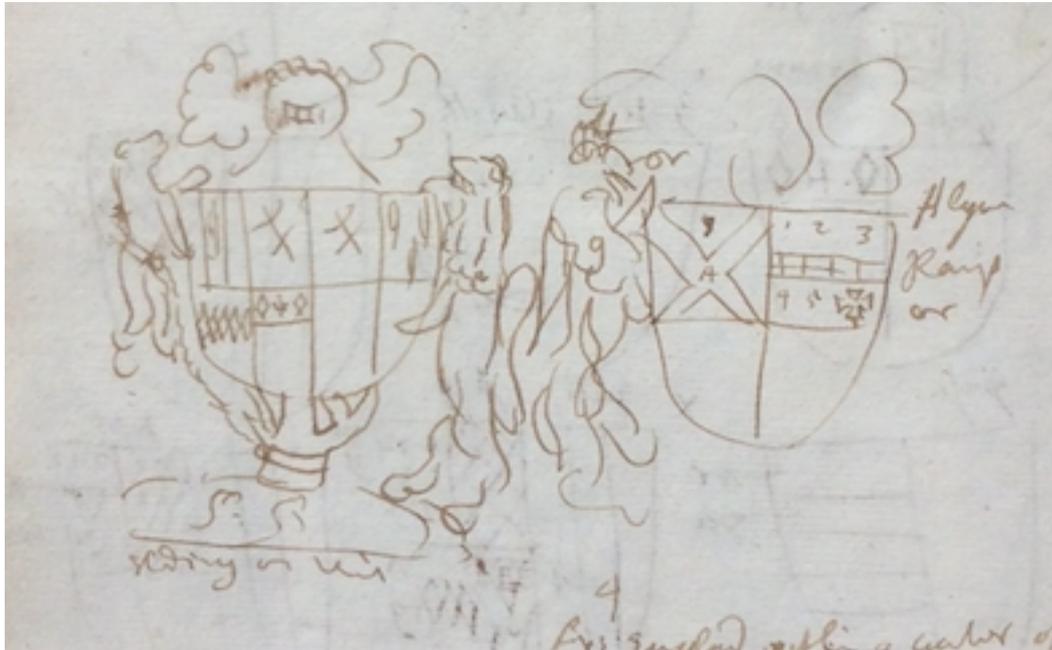
## 2.8 Heraldry in Gawthorpe Chapel

[Source: Bodleian Library, Nathaniel Johnston, MSS Tops. Yorks. C 13 ff. 333-344]



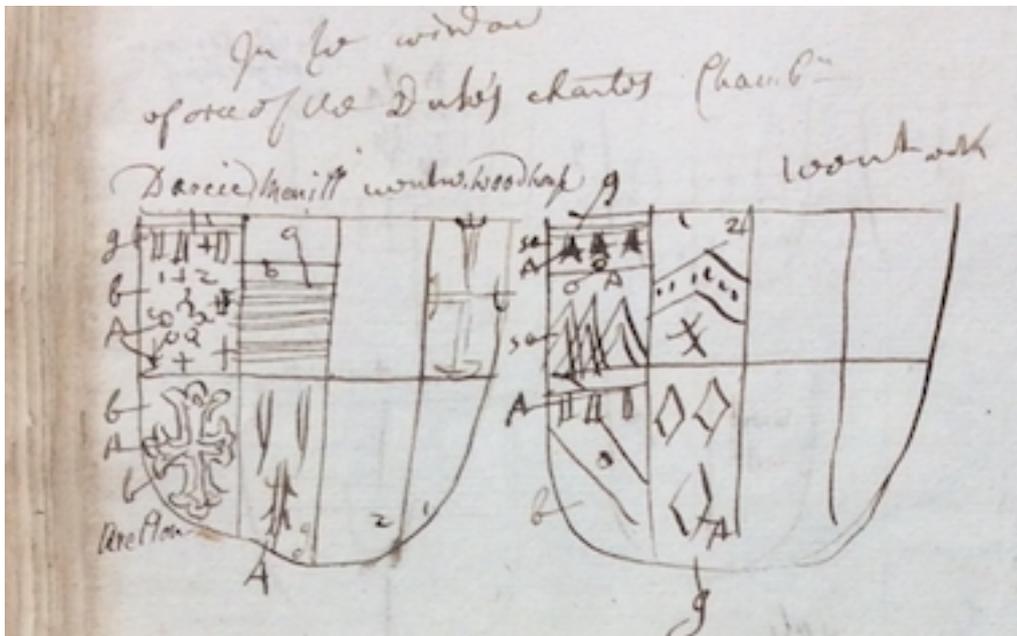
2.9 Heraldry in the wainscoting

[Source: Bodleian Library, Nathaniel Johnston, MSS Tops. Yorks. C 13 ff. 333-344]

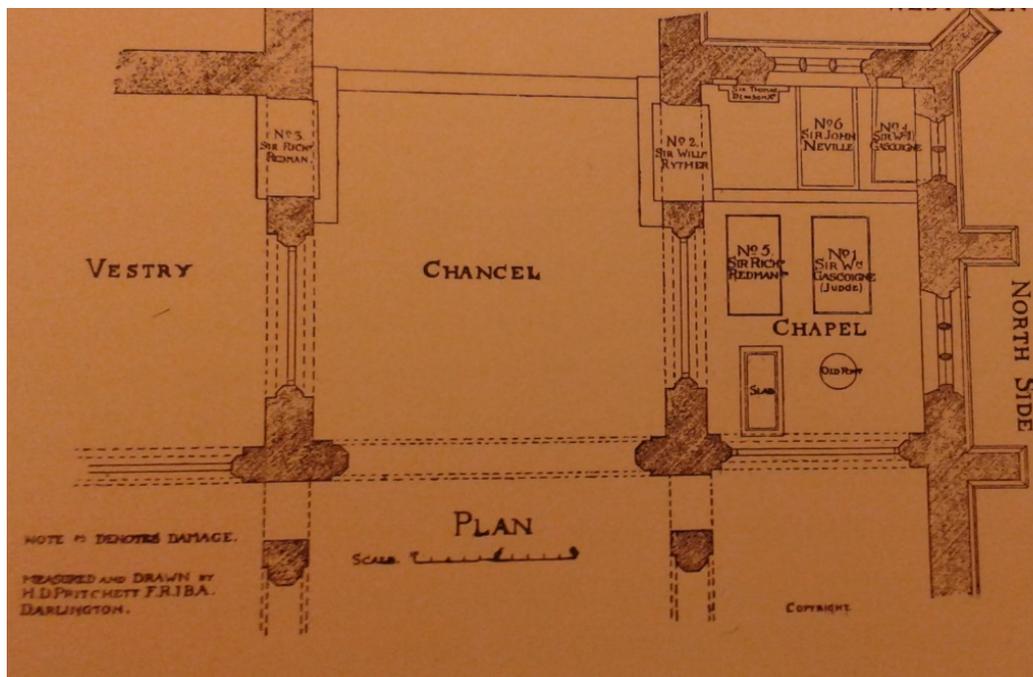


2.10 Heraldry in the Duke of Albany Room

[Source: Bodleian Library, Nathaniel Johnston, MSS Tops. Yorks. C 13 ff. 333-344]



2.11 The Placement of Alabaster Effigies in the Church of All Saints', Harewood  
 [Source" H. D. Pritchett, *The Harewood Alabasters: Drawings by H. D. Pritchett; introduced by Richard Knowles and Pauline Routh* (London, 1983)]



2.12a The Alabaster Effigy of William Gascoigne I and Elizabeth Mowbray  
 [Source: Bodleian Library, Nathaniel Johnston, MSS Tops. Yorks. C 13 ff. 333-344]





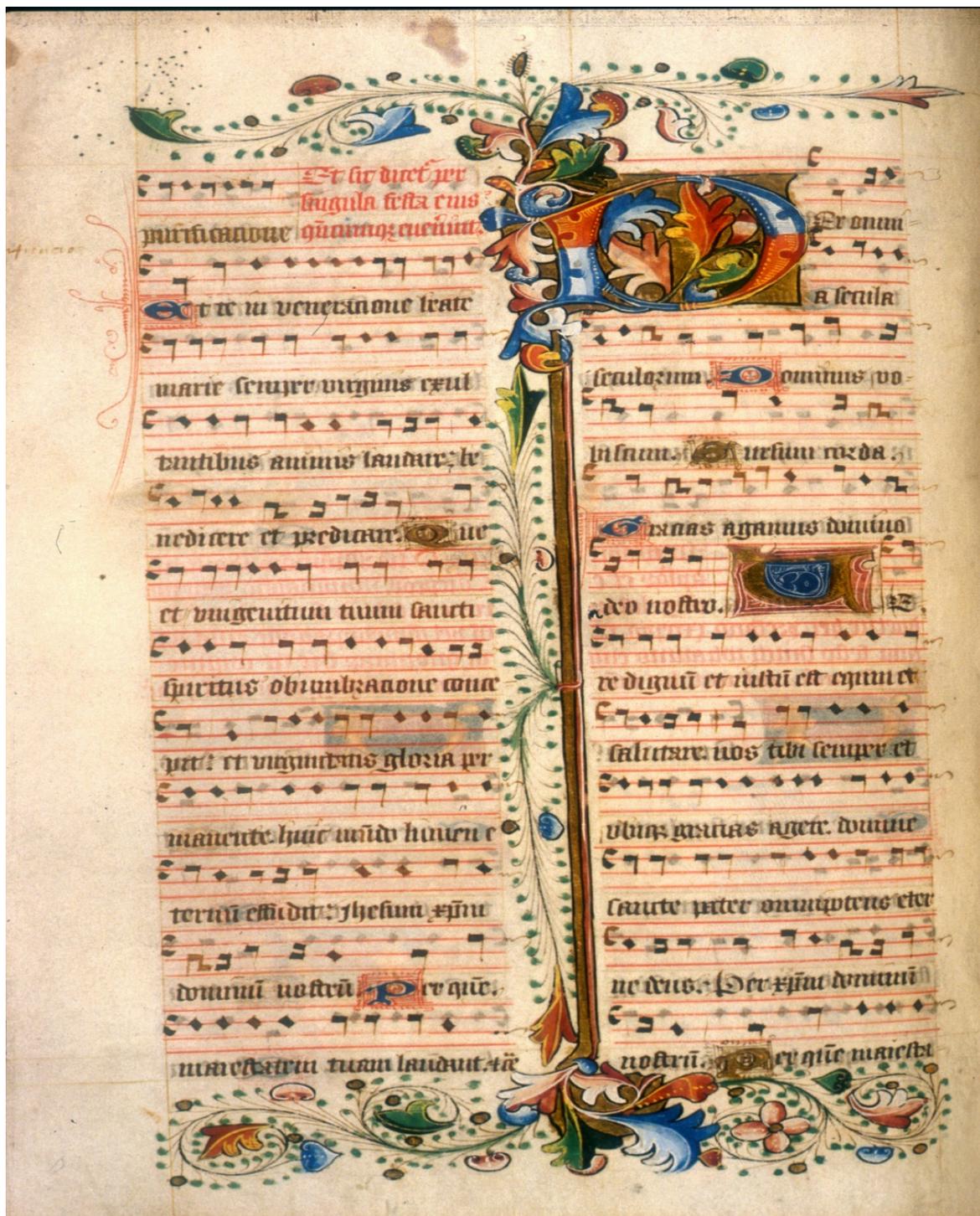
2.14 The Alabaster Effigy of William Gascoigne V and Margaret Percy

[Source: Bodleian Library, Nathaniel Johnston, MSS Tops. Yorks. C 13 ff. 333-344]



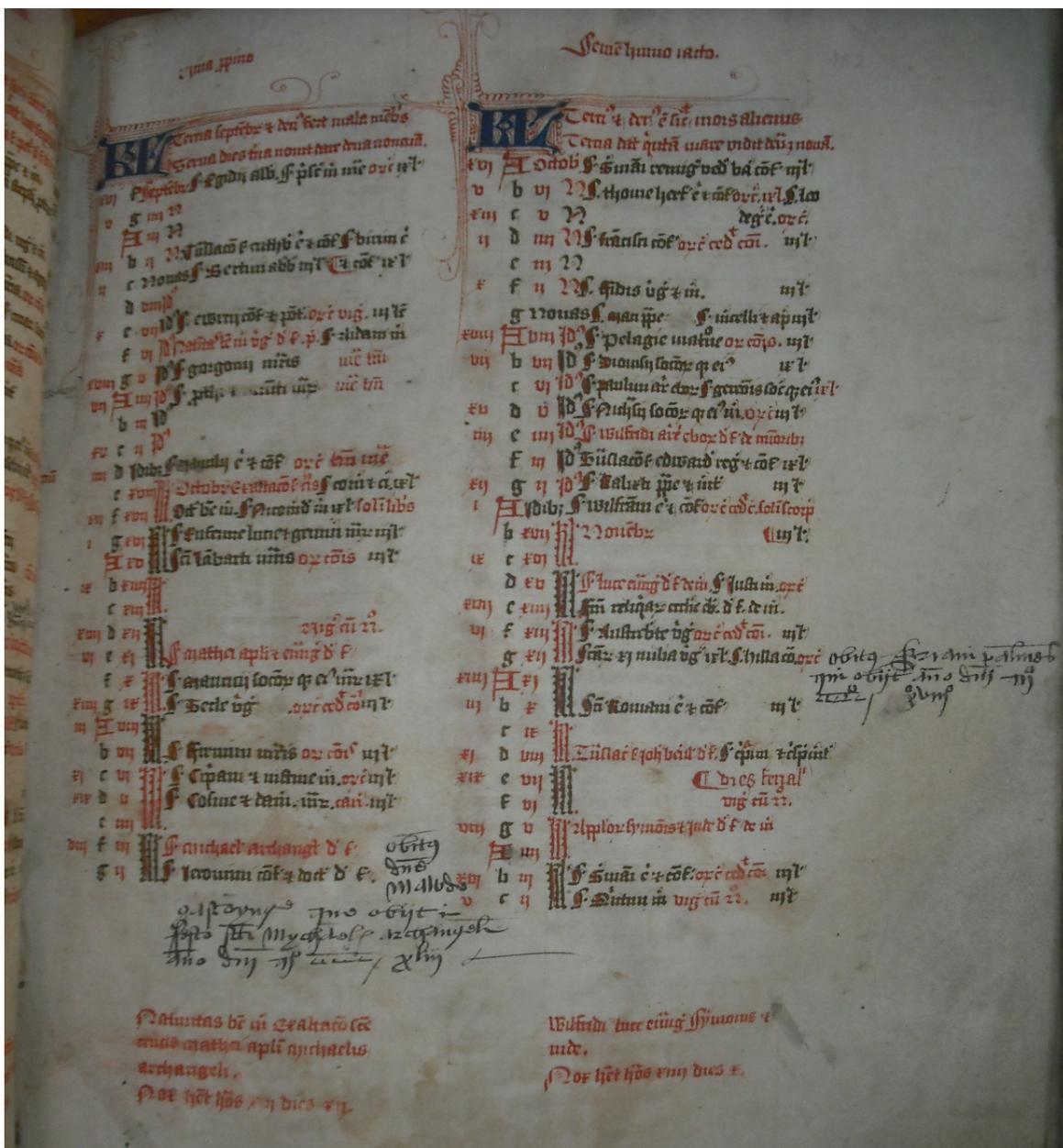
## 2.15 Extract from the Gascoigne Breviary

[Source: York Minster Archives, Add. 70, Breviarium. See too, N. R. Kerr and A. J. Piper, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, IV (1992), 818-820, for more details]



2.16 Calendrical Notations from the Gascoigne Breviary

[Source: York Minster Archives, Add. 70, Breviarium]



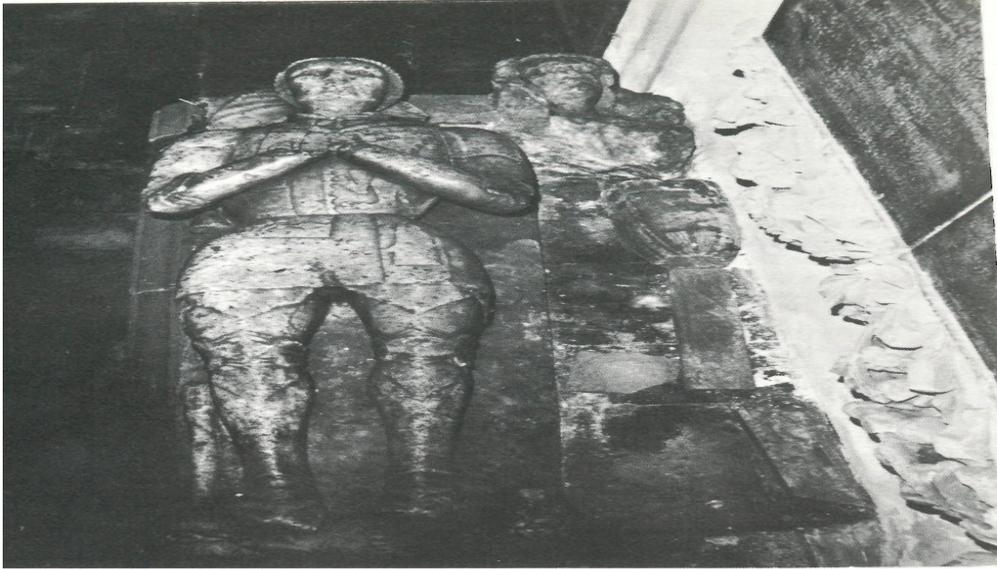
### 2.17 The Alabaster Effigies of Sir Thomas Wentworth and Margaret Gascoigne

[Source: From the Private Collection of Graham White of the Churches Conservation Trust]



2.18 The remains of the Alabaster Effigies of Sir William Gascoigne III and Margaret Clarell

[Source: P. E. Routh and R. Knowles, *The Medieval Monuments of Harewood* (Wakefield, 1983), 76.]



2.19 The Heraldry of Wentworth Old Chapel

[Source: The Private Collection of Graham White of the Churches Conservation Trust]



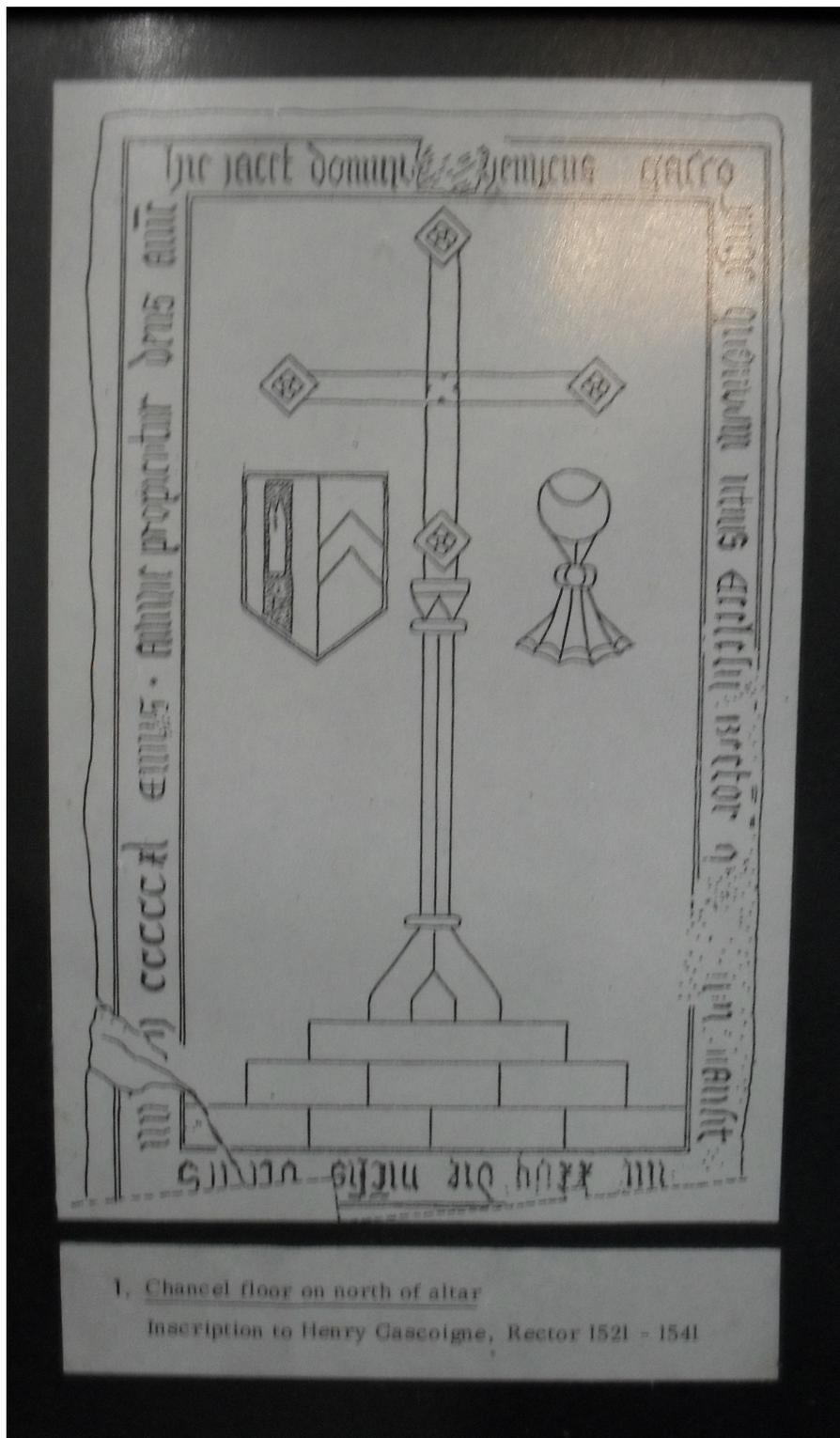
## 2.20 The Brass of Thomas Gascoigne, at St Helen's Church, Burghwallis

[Source: Personal Photography, 2015]



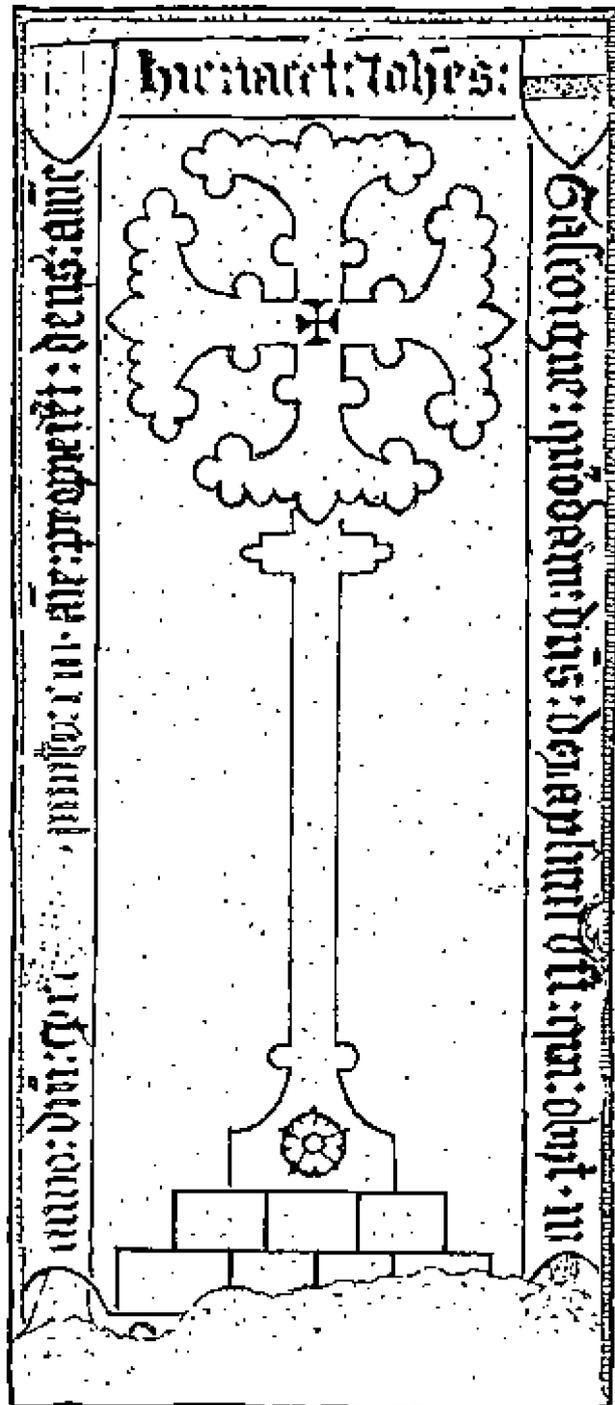
## 2.21 The Stone Cross Slab of Rector Henry Gascoigne, at St Helen's Burghwallis

[Source: The Parish Leaflet of St Helen's Burghwallis]



2.22 The Funerary Monument of John Gascoigne of Lasingcroft at All Saints' Church, Barwick-in-Elmet

[Source: Drawing courtesy of P. F. Ryder]



2.23 The heraldic drawings of Richard Gascoigne, antiquary

[Source: WYAS GC/F/5/1, no known folio]



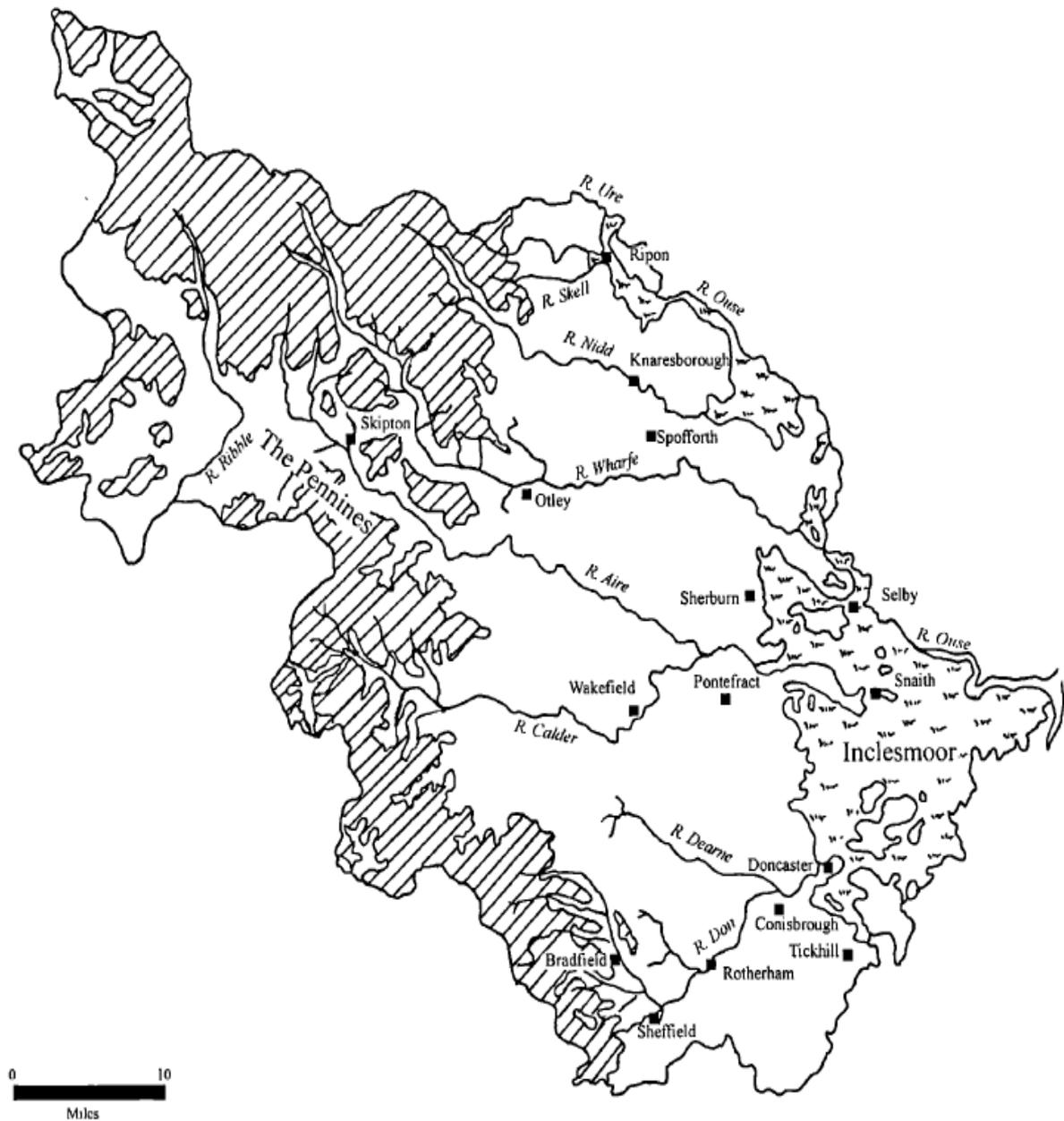
2.24 Joseph Hunter's engraving of the Gascoigne effigies at Wentworth  
[Source: J. Hunter, *South Yorkshire*, 2 (Wakefield, 1974), 98.]



## Appendix Three: Maps

### 3.1 Topography of the West Riding of Yorkshire

[Source: M. Punshon, 'Government and Political Society in the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1399-1461 (University of York PhD Thesis, 2002), 11]



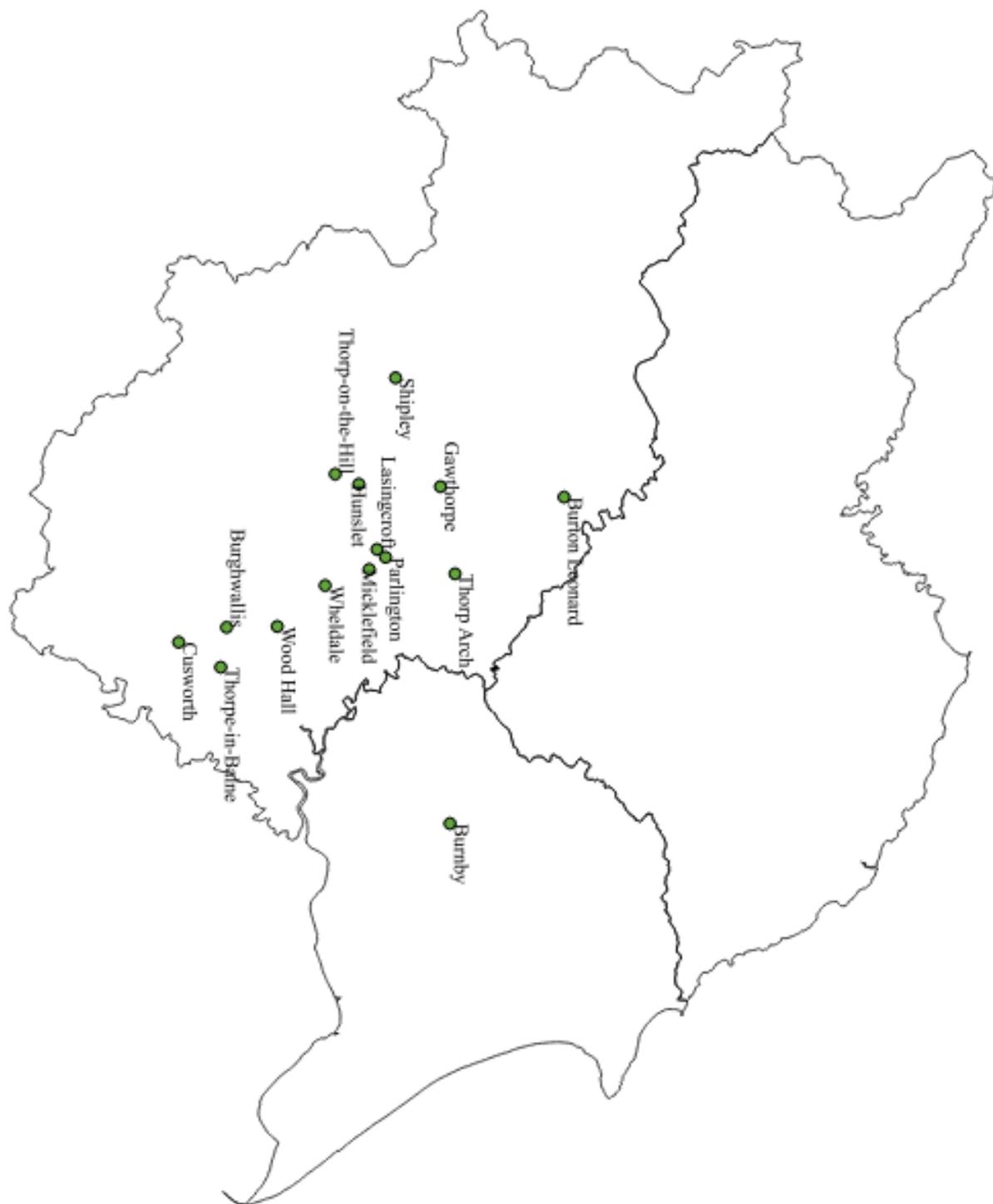
### 3.2 Administrative Regions of the West Riding of Yorkshire

Source: M. Punshon, 'Government and Political Society in the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1399-1461 (University of York PhD Thesis, 2002), 10]

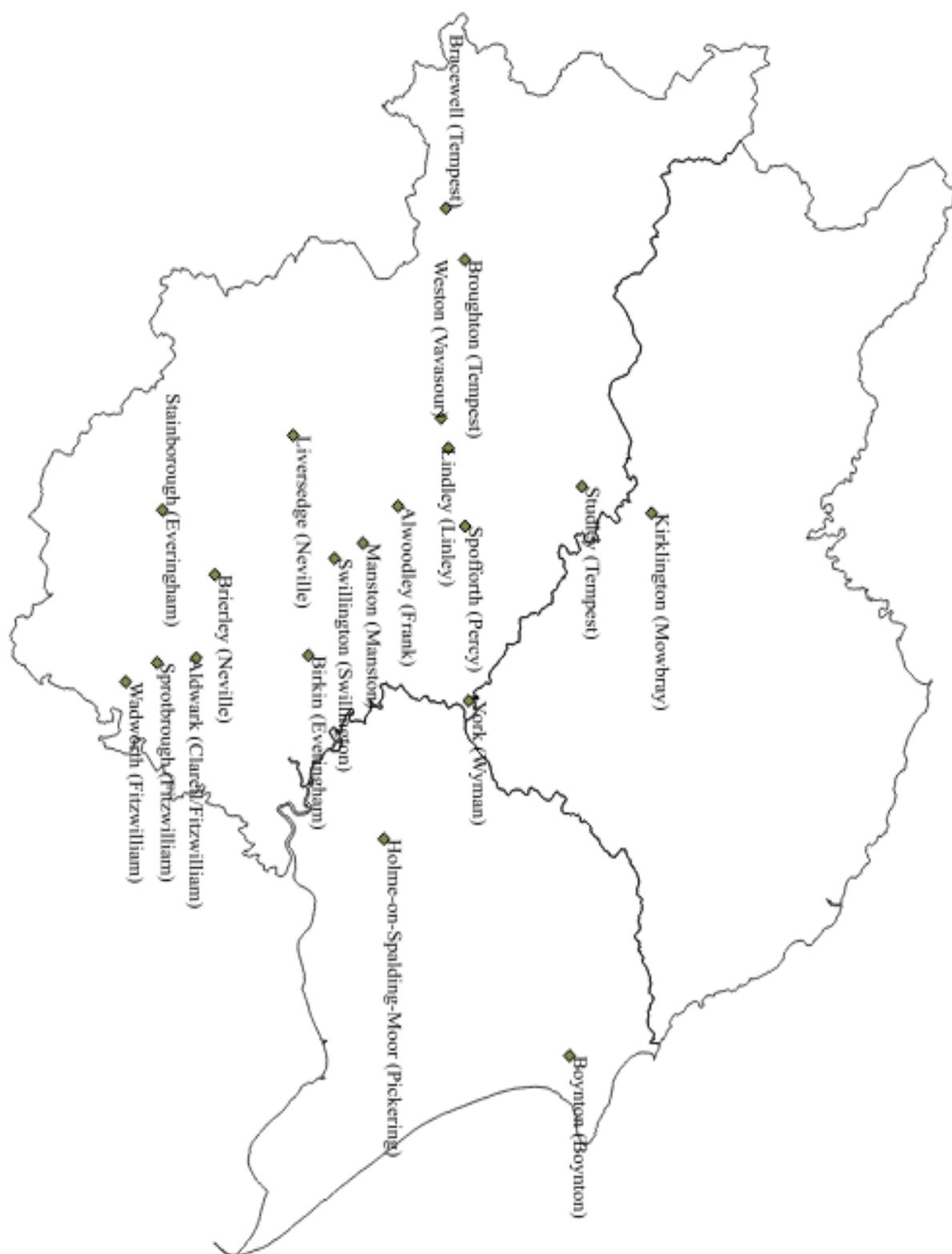




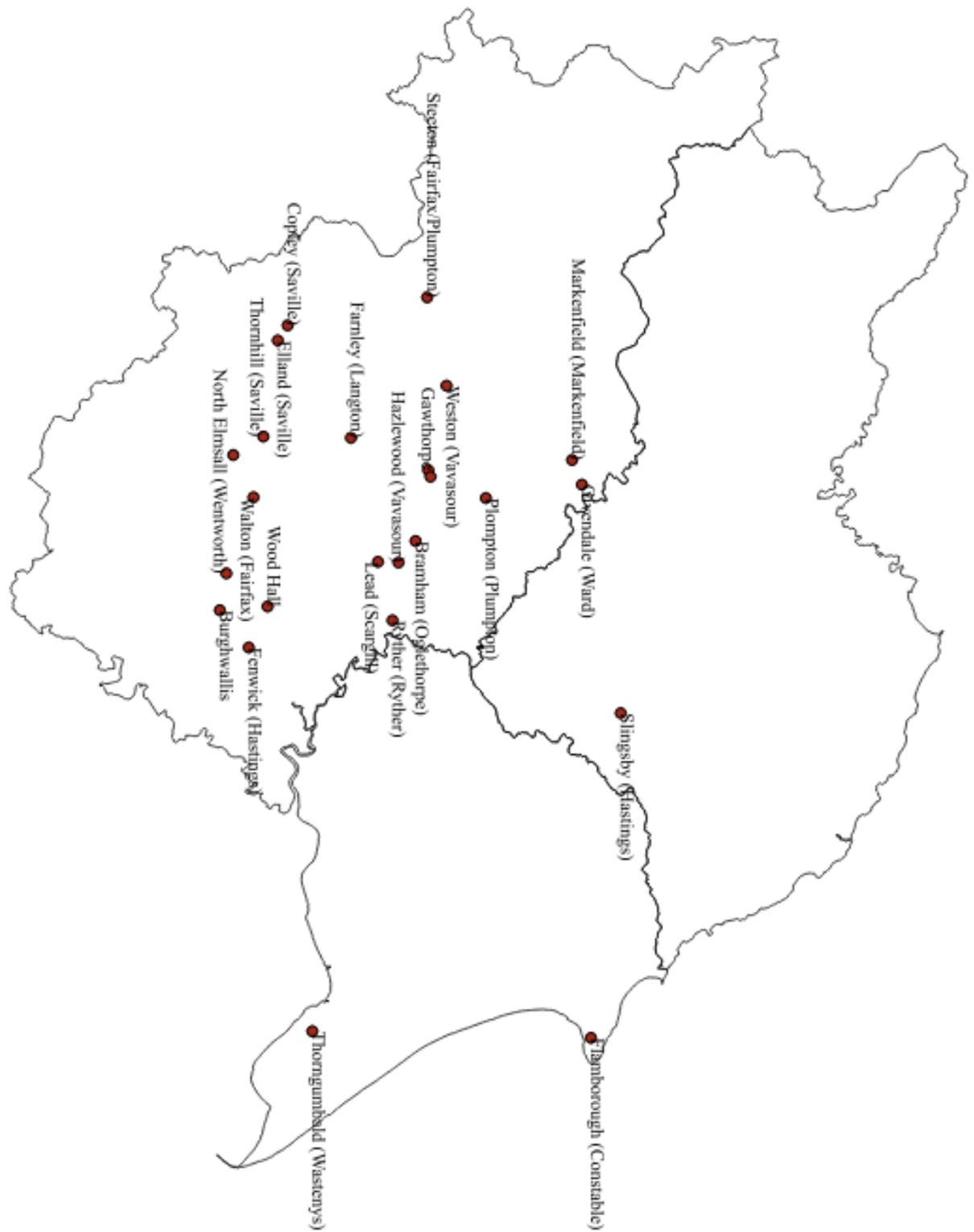
## 3.4 Prominent Estates of the Gascoigne Family in Yorkshire



## 3.5 Marriages of the male Gascoignes of Gawthorpe

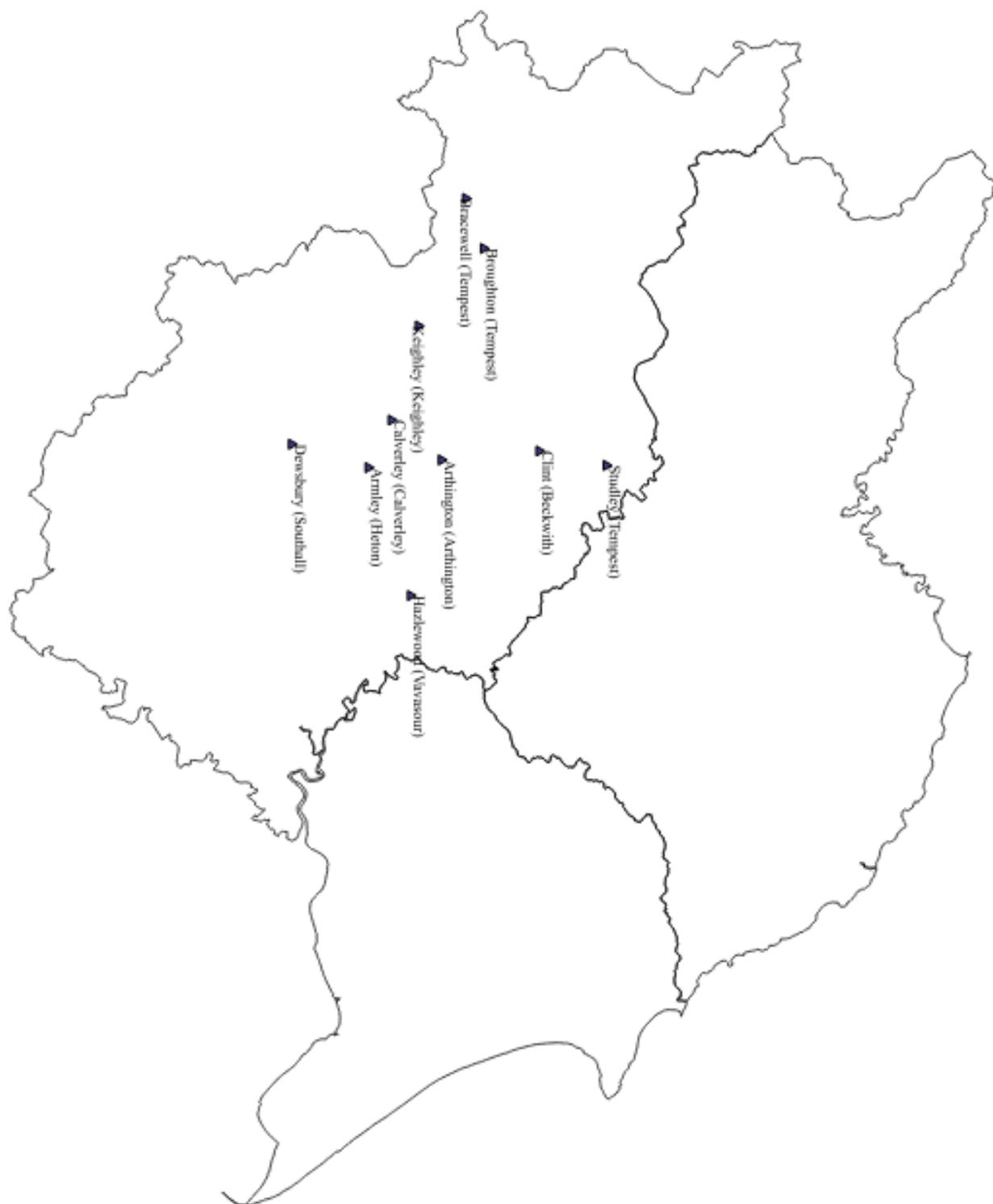


## 3.6 Marriages of the female Gascoignes of Gawthorpe

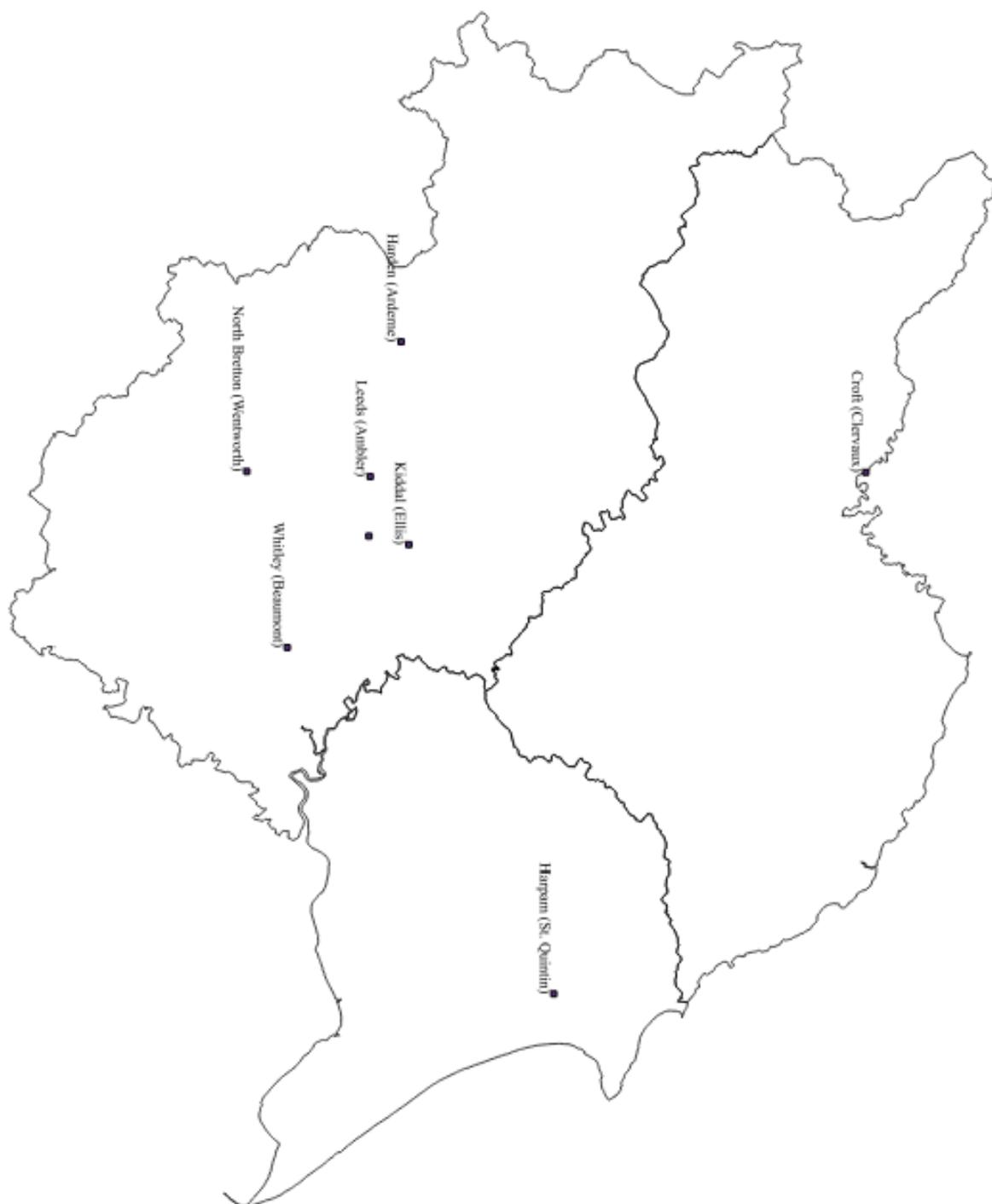




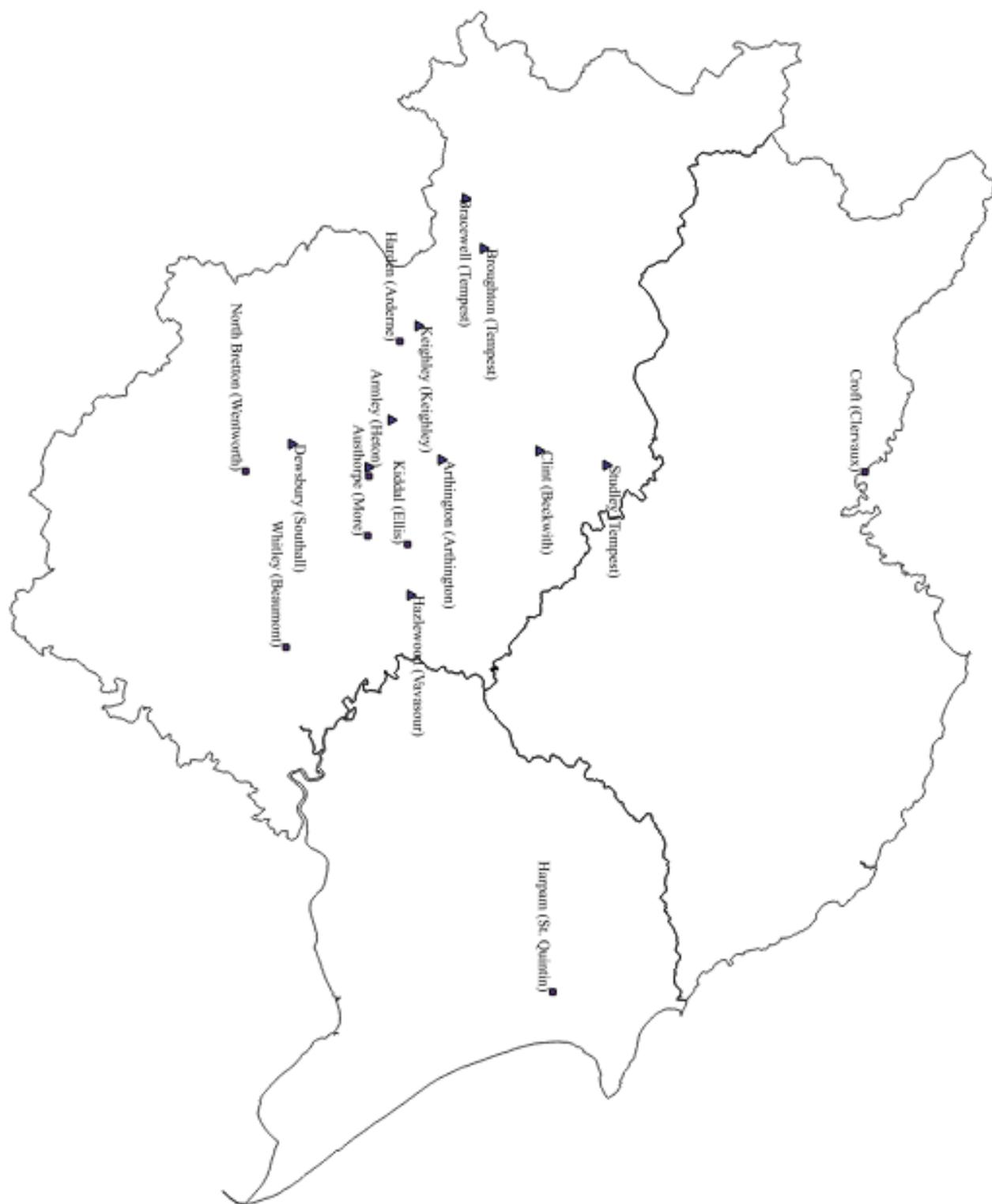
## 3.8 Marriages of male Gascoignes of Lasingcroft



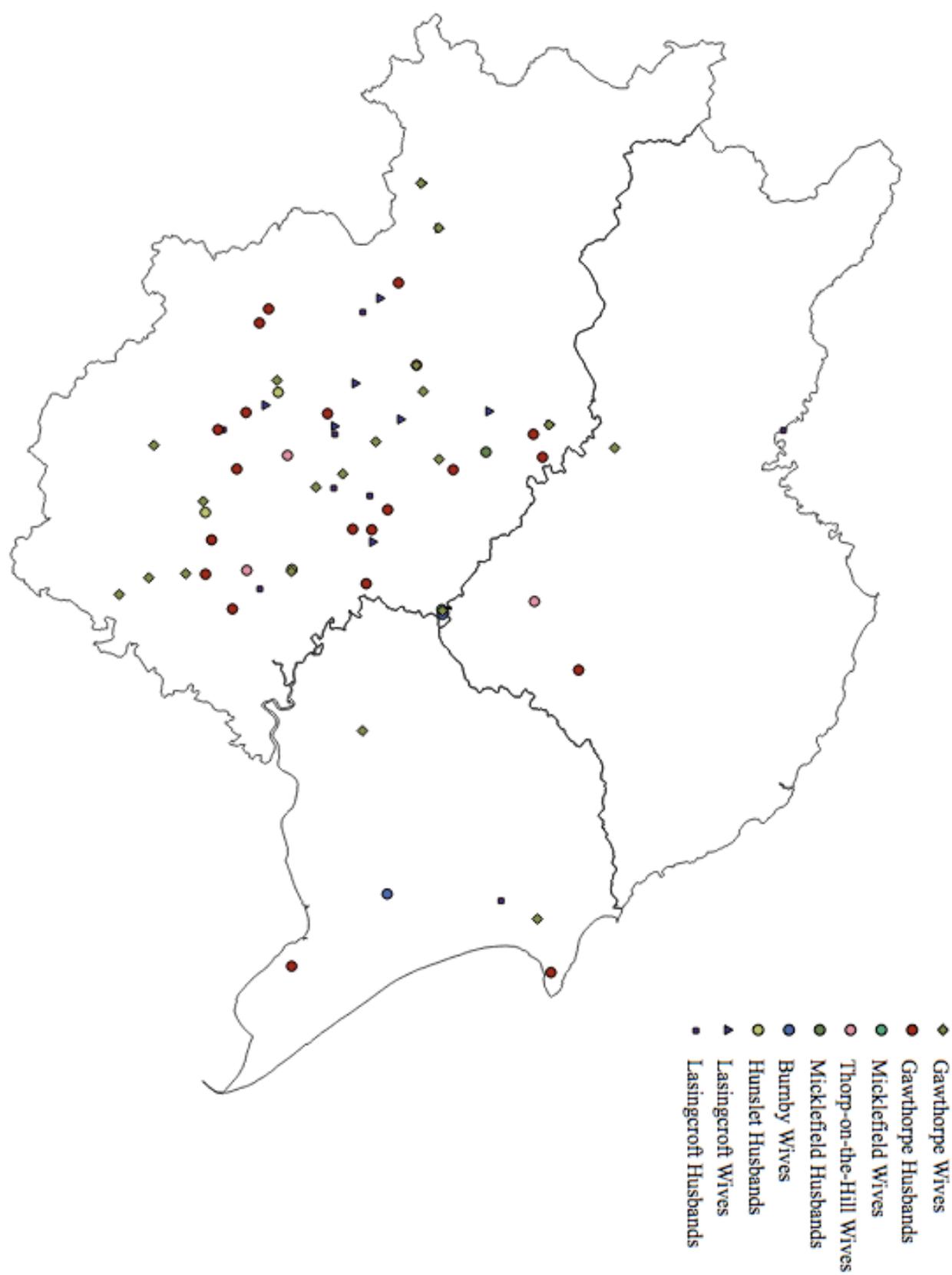
## 3.9 Marriages of female Gascoignes of Lasingcroft



3.10 All Lasingcroft marriages

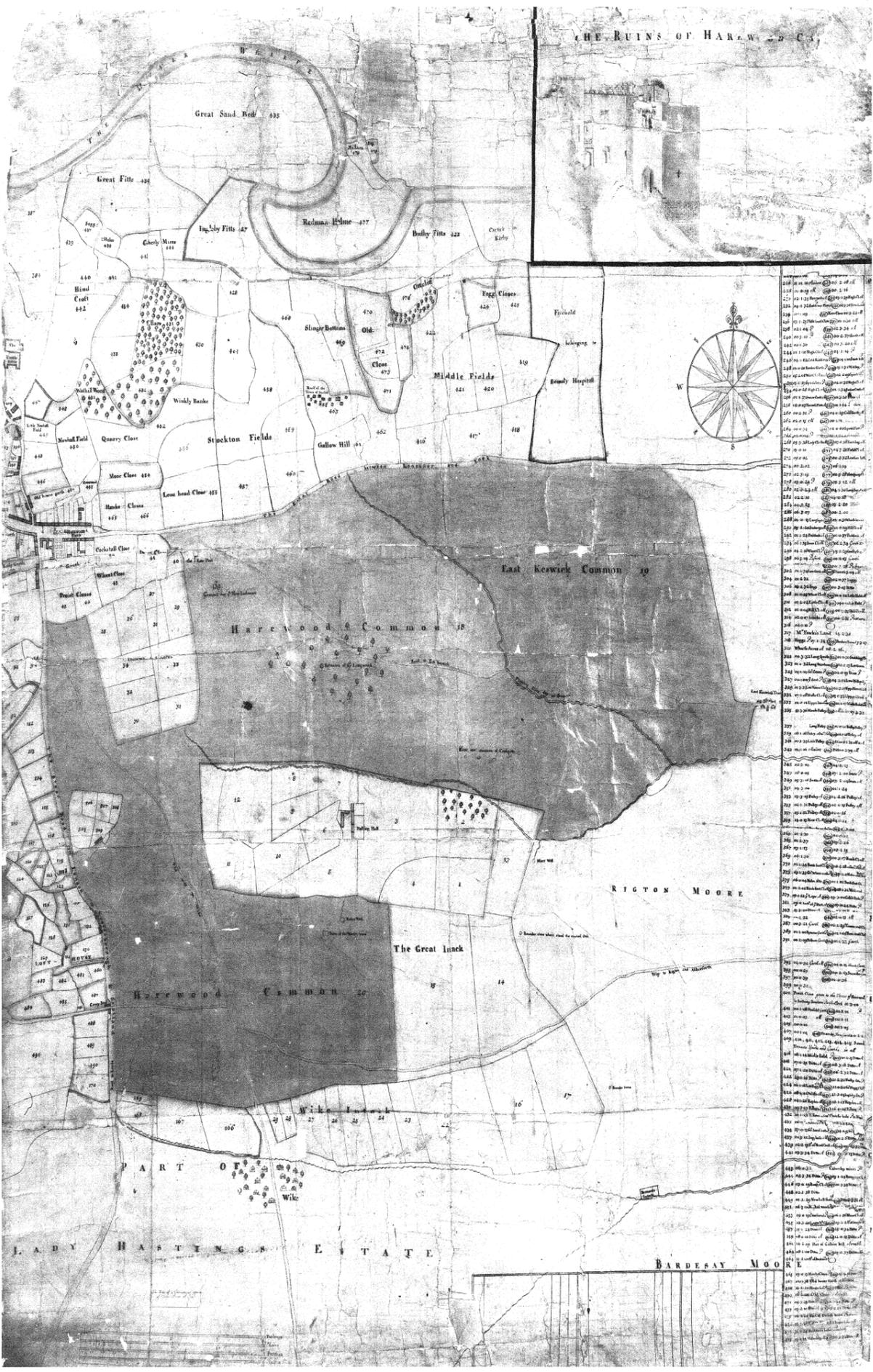
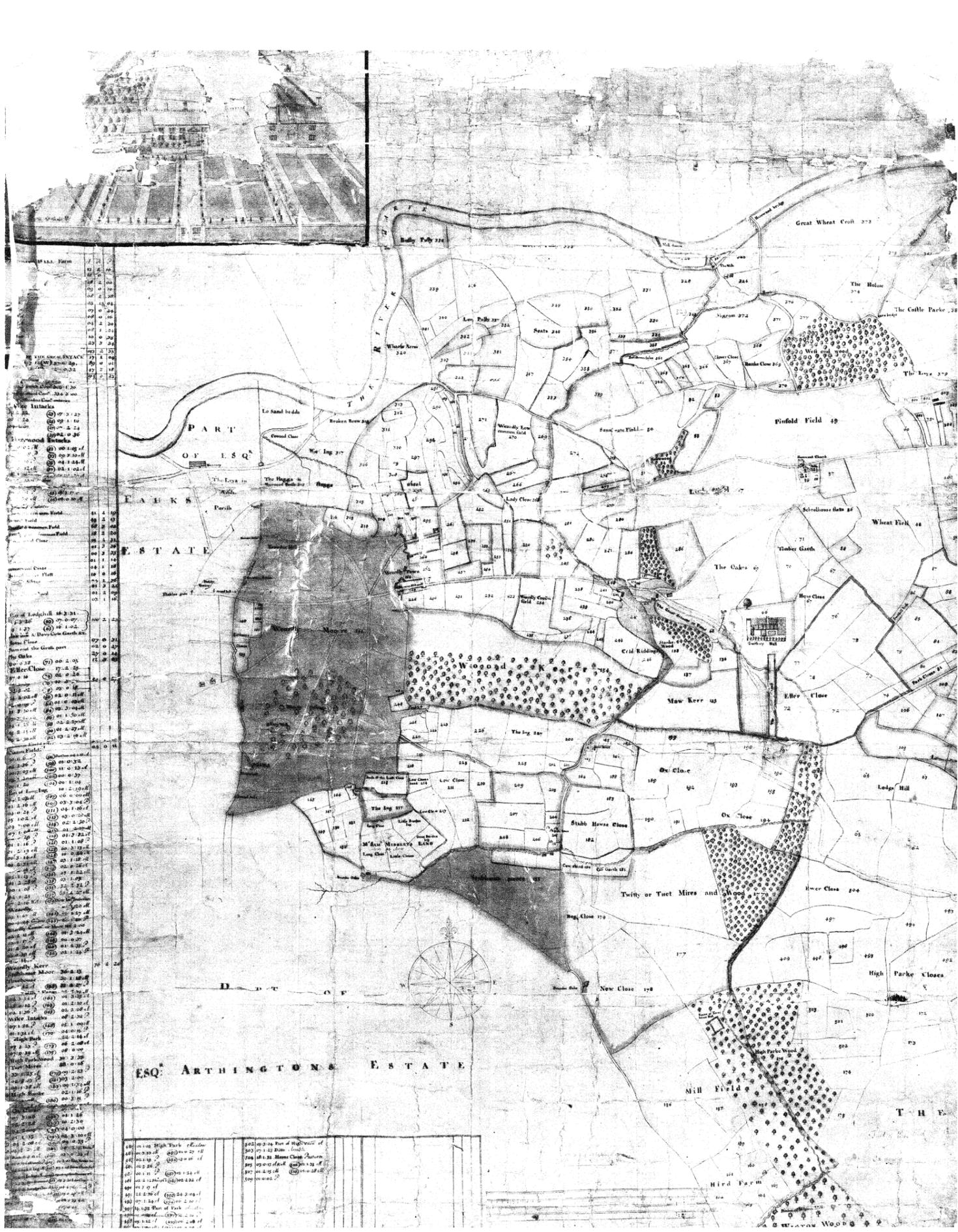


## 3.11 All Gascoigne marriages



Map 3.12 1698 Estate Map of Harewood and Gawthorpe

[WYAS WYL 250/3/12a Estate Surveys (Or HAR/Surveys/12a)]



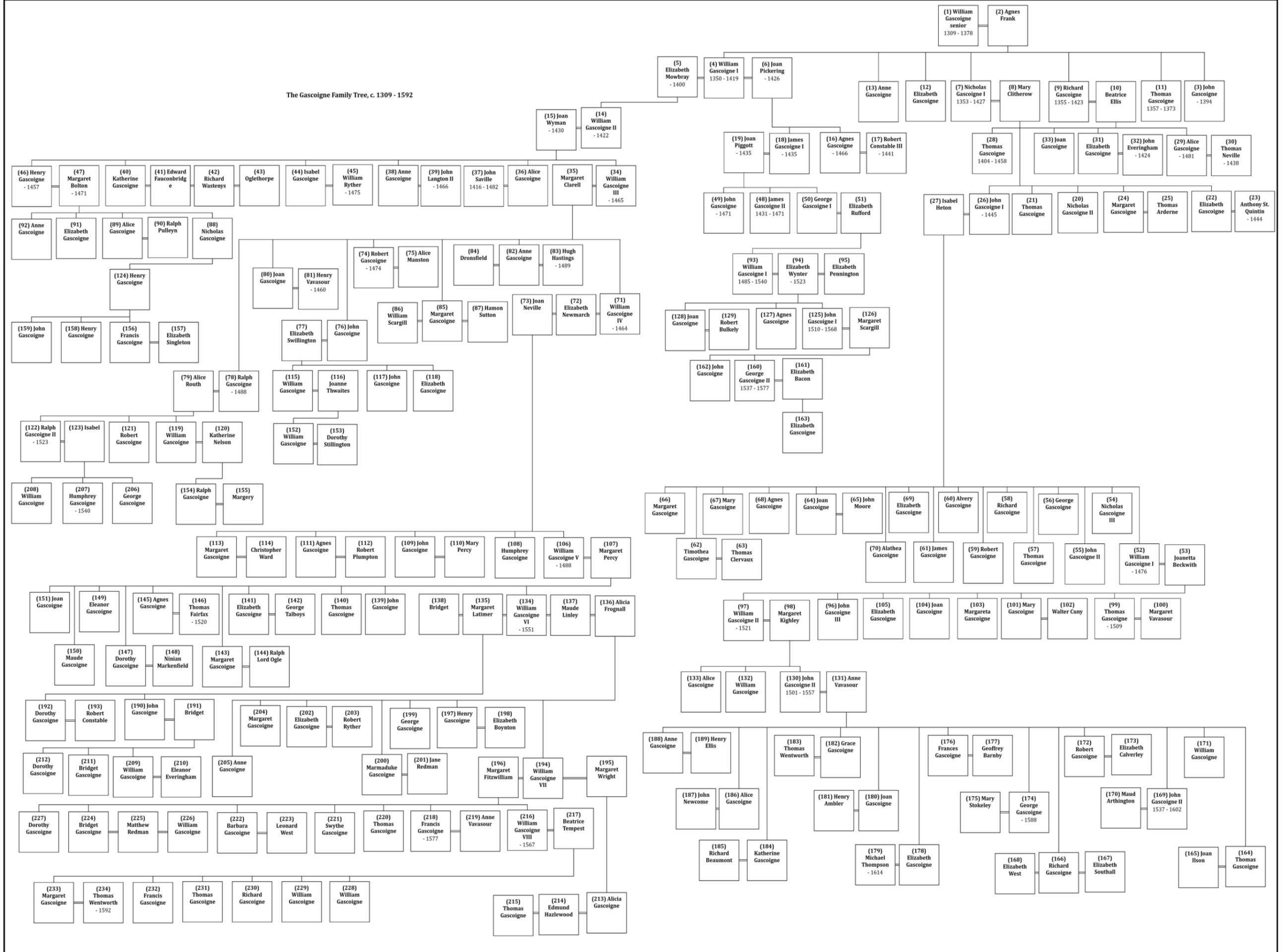
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Tree 4.14 Family Tree of the Gascoigne Family

[Compiled through utilisation of my own research (seen in Chapter One of this thesis), and Joseph Foster's *Pedigrees of the County Families of Yorkshire, 2: The West Riding* (London, 1874)]

The Gascoigne Family Tree, c. 1309 - 1592



Tree 4.14 Family Tree of the Gascoigne Family

[Compiled through utilisation of my own research (seen in Chapter One of this thesis), and Joseph Foster's *Pedigrees of the County Families of Yorkshire, 2: The West Riding* (London, 1874)]

**Appendix Four: Transcription: Inventory of Gawthorpe Hall, 1607 (WYL Leeds Add. 78/5/14)**

Editorial Practice: Transcriptions have been produced in accordance with the transcription conventions employed by the University of Cambridge's *Scriptorium: Medieval and Early Modern Manuscripts Online* (Beadle et al. 2006-2009) and *English Handwriting 1500-1700: An Online Course* (Zurcher et al. 2015). Lineation, indention and any notable spacing have been retained as they appear in the manuscript and there has been no intervention in the orthography or punctuation. Other scribal features such as superscript, subscript and strike-through have also been retained. Moreover, capitalisation has also been retained, as well as any other lexicology that may affect the transcription.

[f. 1]

The houshoald goods heare under wrighten were apreised by us whose names are  
heare subscribed the twelfth day of December 1607

Copie

Imprimis:

In the Hall

One longe table one Tressels	}	
2 square tables	}	
1 long forme	}	
1 seat in the half pale	}	03.00.0
1 littall forme	}	
1 seat beyond the long table	}	
4 old black seald chairs	- -	00.04.00

In the Dyneing Parlour

1 long table & frame	}	
2 formes	}	
1 long seat Joyneing to the sealing	}	03.06.05
1 old Cubbard	}	
1 fire range	}	
1 stand bed & teaster	}	

In the great Chamber

1 draw table	}	
1 range a paire land irons	}	03.05.00
20 Joyned stools	}	
1 short table	}	

In my lords Closet

2 frams for Boxes	}	
-------------------	---	--

1 sealing Chest	}	00.00.00
-----------------	---	----------

## In the Chamber next stuart's Chamber

1 table	}	
1 Chest	}	00.17.00

[f. 2]

## In the knights Chamber

1 stand bed with an Embroidered	}	
teaster & valence	}	
1 Covering with curtains	}	
2 paire valence sutable	}	
6 Covered Chaires one	}	10.00.00
duble chaire 2 covered stools	}	
1 littell table 1 Iron range	}	

## In the balcony chamber

4 stone pewter	--	02.13.04
2 old Clofe stools pans	--	00.03.04
10 pairs old worne sheets	}	
2 old pillow beares	}	00.12.00
2 Cubbard cloths	}	
2 old trunkes	--	00.06.00
2 old window cushins wth black velvet covers	--	00.04.00
1 weight wooden Bawke wth a	}	
paire scales 1 stone lead waight	}	00.03.04
1 paire littell scales	--	00.00.04
<del>1 paire littell scales</del>	<del>--</del>	<del>00.00.04</del>

## In the corner Chamber

1 table		
1 old chaire		
1 paire of playing table leaves	}	
2 firre deales 10 foot long	}	
00.12.00		

## In the lime Chamber

4 paire of old wheels	}	
-----------------------	---	--

	1 paire of Horse Harrows wth som Iron teeth	} }	
	1 press with som boxes	}	
	6 new Haltres 4 mould leds	}	04.05.00
	1 kneading trough 1 table wth 6 feet 2 long laders 7 long inch	} }	
	bords 3 oul seds 1 frame stone for grinding mustard	}	
[f. 3]			
In the Turne greecs Chambers			
	3 cloge beds	--	00.07.06
In the Larder			
	2 paire Gantrey 1 tressell table	}	00.16.05
	1 iron range	}	
In the ould Parlor			
	3 press of lose wainscoats	--	00.01.00
	<del>1 stand</del> beds 2 trundle beds		
In the stuarsts Chamber			
	1 standbed 2 trundlebeds	}	
	1 short table 1 iron range	}	01.15.00
	2 paire garden sheers	}	
In the Gallery over the Garners			
	9 high chaires } made for covering	--	01.04.00
	3 low chaires }		
	1 trundle bed wth head	--	00.06.05
	1 firdeale bord 1 oakeboard 1 crabrake	}	
	1 cheesfat 1 sinker 1 drippinpan	}	
	3 pairs laudirons 1 old chafondish 2 bras	}	
	pots one of them eared 2 old churns 3 side for beds	} }	03.10.00
Iron Geare			
	1 duple horfedraught 2 wame heads	}	
	shackils 1 boul 1 Cadwithy 1 oxe team	}	00.06.00
In the littell chamber next ye staires			

3 old chaires covered with velvet	}	
7 setworke chaires 4 stooles setworke	}	
4 low buffetstooles 1 littell livery	}	03.01.00
table 1 chaires covered with greene	}	
cloth	}	

[f. 4]

## All the Bedding

1 red rugg 1 yeallow happing 1 duple	}	
blanket 1 littell blanket 4 feather	}	
Boulsters 2 short pillowes 3 feather beds	}	7.12.06
1 chafe bed 2 flockbeds 1 covering for a	}	
bed with lace & a canopy sutable to it	}	
vallence 3 say curtains 1 greene Table	}	
cloth	}	
1 Cover for a Canopy bed wth vallence	--	00.06.00
1 green happing 1 blanket 1 old	}	
coverlot	}	00.05.00

## In the new Pantry

3 frames of wood with 9 leaden milk	}	02.10.00
boules	}	

## In the sellor

1 paire Gantres 2 hod heads 1 old Counter	}	01.06.05
1 old krinbling	}	

## In the wine sellor

1 paire Gantres	--	00.05.00
-----------------	----	----------

## In the old Pantrey

1 littell Cubard 2 tables one of them	}	
with on box standing on tressels 6 frute	}	
dishes of glas 2 of each 1 old grater	}	01.02.00
5 shelves 1 pastry poole	}	

## In the Pastrey

3 kneading bords on open tressels	}	
-----------------------------------	---	--

	3 shelves 1 Cubbard 1 old box	}	01.09.10
	1 spinning wheel 1 hod hoad	--	00.02.00
In kitching			
	1 thick table on tressels	--	00.13.04
	4 dresser tables & 2 shelves	--	01.00.00
	1 bucket rope & frame	--	00.06.05
	1 long iron range 2 iron crooks for	}	
	the gallow boates 2 rackons 1 iron gallow	}	
	bawke 1 pa: pott hookes 1 pa: tongs 1 old fire}		04.14.6
	shoofle 1 pa: great iron racks 5 spitts 1	}	
	dripping pan 1 clever		
[f. 5]			
	3 bras pots 1 like a pan 1 bras ladle	--	03.06.00
	1 warming pan	--	00.03.04
In Brewhouse			
	2 brewing leads	--	06.06.09
	1 Cooler & frame 3 Brewing tubs	--	01.06.05
	1 ston work trough	--	00.10.00
	2 old Cushings 1 old turke work	--	00.01.06
	1 Chapel Bell	--	01.00.00
In the dayery house			
	1 large press	--	01.03.04
	1 table	--	00.10.00
	1 Dresser table, 1 Chest of ha.led		
	1 great former 4 shelves I forme 1 tressel	--	00.10.00
In the Washouse			
	1 table 2 forms	--	00.05.00
In the Boulting house			
	1 long Press 2 clogbeds 2 littell forms	--	01.10.00
	1 frame for Casting Lead	--	00.10.00
	In the barne sertaine cumpased sawed	--	02.00.00

Timber 1 pa waine balds	}	01.00.00
1 old Coupe 2 pa Coupstangs	}	
7 stone troughs	--	00.07.00

[f. 6]

## Goods in the Custody of Mr Traps

1 table 1 forme	--	00.06.05
1 littell range	--	00.02.00
1 pair of old darnex Curtains wth valence	}	
1 carpet decayed	}	00.10.00
5 chairs with setworke 2 high	}	
ons 3 low ons	}	00.15.00
2 plain sealing chaires	--	00.04.06
2 paire tongs 1 spitt	--	00.03.06
1 littell old pan	--	00.02.00
3 buffet stooles	--	00.03.00
1 old square table	--	00.03.00
1 hodghead	--	00.02.00
5 sheles of fir deale	--	00.02.00
1 milke flaske	--	00.01.00
1 pillow beare	--	00.00.06
1 pt of an old table frame	}	00.01.00
3 bedsteads without leathers	}	
1 old stand	--	01.04.00

29.14.02

William Pullin  
Lancelote

Conistone

[f. 6v]

A Copie of goods at Gawthorp valewed for the Apointment of Mr Bower

## Abbreviations

<i>Bodl.</i>	<i>Bodleian Library</i>
<i>CCR</i>	<i>Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, 1272-1509</i> , 47 vols. (London, 1869 - 1963)
<i>CFR</i>	<i>Calendar of the Fine Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, 1272 - 1509</i> , 22 vols. (London, 1911 - 1963)
<i>CIPM</i>	<i>Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem and Other Analogous Documents Preserved in the Public Record Office</i> , 26 vols. (London, 1904 - 2010)
<i>CPR</i>	<i>Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, 1232 - 1509</i> , 53 vols. (London, 1891 - 1971)
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>HOP</i>	<i>The History of Parliament</i>
<i>JMH</i>	<i>Journal of Medieval History</i>
<i>LP</i>	<i>Letters and papers, foreign and domestic, of the reign of Henry VIII, 1509-47</i> , eds. J.S. Brewer, J. Gairdner and R.H. Brodie (London, 1862 - 1910)
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (Oxford, 2004), <a href="http://www.oxforddnb.com">http://www.oxforddnb.com</a>
<i>Pedigrees</i>	J. Foster, <i>Pedigrees of the county families of Yorkshire II: The West Riding</i> (London, 1874)
<i>PS</i>	M. Punshon, 'Government and Political Society in the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1399-1461' (University of York PhD Thesis, 2002)

- Test. Ebor.* J. Raine (ed.) *Testamenta Eboracensia*, Surtees Society (1836-1869) 5 vols.
- VCH* *Victoria County History*
- WR* C. E. Arnold, 'A Political Study of the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1437-1509' (University of Manchester PhD Thesis, 1984), 2 vols.
- WYL* *West Yorkshire Archive Service (Leeds)*
- YAS* *Yorkshire Archaeological Society*
- YSC* 'Yorkshire Star Chamber Proceedings', Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, 3 vols.

## Bibliography

### Manuscript Sources

The Borthwick Institute of Archives, York:

CP            Cause Papers

City Archives, York:

KNO            J. W. Knowles Collection (stained-glass manufacturer)

The National Archives, London:

C1            Early Chancery Proceedings, Series 1

C137-142    Chancery, Inquisitions Post Mortem

C143            Chancery, Inquisition Ad Quod Damnum, Henry III to Richard III

C219            Chancery, Wardrobe, Royal Household, Exchequer and miscellaneous commissions

CP25            Common Pleas, Feet of Fines

DL42            Duchy of Lancaster, Registers

E101            Exchequer, Various Accounts

E159            Exchequer, Memoranda Rolls and Enrolment Books

E179            Exchequer, Subsidy Rolls

JUST3            Gaol Delivery Rolls

KB9            King's Bench, Ancient Indictments

Sheffield Archives, Sheffield:

WWM            Wentworth Woodhouse Muniments

The West Yorkshire Archive Service, Leeds:

GC            The Gascoigne Collection

Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Leeds:

MD            Middleton Collection

### Published Primary Sources

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