

**CROWN, MAGNATES AND GENTRY: THE ENGLISH
PARLIAMENT, 1369-1421**

by

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ABSTRACT

In the light of the relative neglect by historians of the medieval parliament in the last two decades or so, together with recent calls to write medieval political history without studying the institutions of the period, the aim of this thesis is reassert the importance of parliament in the late medieval polity, placing particular emphasis on the interaction of the landed élites within it.

The structure of the thesis reflects my concern to produce a broad study of the institution between 1369 and 1421. Starting with a critical appraisal of the historiography of the medieval parliament the discussion moves on to the first major section of the thesis which considers the institution as it operated at the 'centre'. Here I focus, in turn, on the significance and rôle of the crown, the Lords and the Commons in parliament. The middle section of the thesis examines parliament as an essentially local phenomenon by discussing: firstly, the procedure of county elections and the criteria necessary for election itself; secondly, the continuing relevance of private petitioning to the late medieval parliament; and finally, the effect and impact of statutory legislation in the localities. The remainder of the thesis comprises a discussion of parliament in the political culture of late medieval England drawing, for the most part, on the chronicle and other non-official sources which recorded the activities of the institution.

The aim of this thesis is not simply to synthesize the considerable body of secondary work which is available on parliament, but to combine a re-reading of the traditional sources together with the presentation of new evidence, to produce an essentially new and revisionist interpretation of the place of parliament in the medieval polity.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| <i>A.J.L.H.</i> | <i>American Journal of Legal History</i> |
| <i>B.I.H.R.</i> | <i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i> |
| <i>B.J.R.L.</i> | <i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i> |
| <i>C.C.R.</i> | <i>Calendar of Close Rolls</i> |
| <i>C.F.R.</i> | <i>Calendar of Fine Rolls</i> |
| <i>C.P.R.</i> | <i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i> |
| <i>E.H.R.</i> | <i>English Historical Review</i> |
| <i>H.J.</i> | <i>Historical Journal</i> |
| <i>H.R.</i> | <i>Historical Research</i> |
| <i>J.B.S.</i> | <i>Journal of British Studies</i> |
| <i>J.M.H.</i> | <i>Journal of Medieval History</i> |
| <i>L.H.R.</i> | <i>Law and History Review</i> |
| <i>L.Q.R.</i> | <i>Law Quarterly Review</i> |
| <i>P&P</i> | <i>Past and Present</i> |
| <i>P.O.P.S.</i> | <i>Proceedings of the Privy Council</i> |
| <i>R.H.S.</i> | <i>Royal Historical Society</i> |
| <i>S.I.C.</i> | <i>Studies Presented to the International Commission for the History of Representative and Parliamentary Institutions</i> |
| <i>T.R.H.S.</i> | <i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i> |

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

For at least fifty years, until the so-called 'McFarlane agenda' profoundly effected the course of medieval historiography,¹ historians who wished to write about medieval politics concerned themselves principally with the institutions and workings of central government. At the forefront of this research lay the English parliament. Between 1920 and the late 1960s the sheer quantity of the work to emerge on this subject indicated just how intense the interest in parliament was for historians of the day.² Whatever aspect of parliament they scrutinised, it was undoubtedly their common aim - and, indeed their achievement - to destroy the 'Stubbsian framework' that had such a pervasive effect on English historiography from the end of the nineteenth century onwards.³ The output of numerous closely argued and specialised studies on different aspects of parliament, supported as they were by a wealth of 'hard facts' based on tangible primary evidence, consigned to oblivion Stubbs' teleological reading of the medieval constitution which he had seen in terms of Victorian principles of progress, liberty and parliamentary democracy.⁴

Yet, despite the volume of this revisionist work and its general acceptance as the new way forward, it was still possible for a prominent historian in 1948 to urge that Stubbs'

¹ Colin Richmond sums up best the impact of McFarlane's work on modern historiography: see C.F. Richmond, 'After McFarlane', *History*, lxxviii (1983), 46-60. For a more recent account of McFarlane's influence, see E. Powell, 'After "After McFarlane": The Poverty of Patronage and the Case for Constitutional History', in D.J. Clayton, R.G. Davies and P. McNiven, eds., *Trade, Devotion and Governance: Papers in Later Medieval History* (Stroud, 1994), pp.1-16.

² For some useful surveys of the historiography of the English parliament as it stood up to the 1960s, see G.T. Lapsley, 'Some Recent Advance in English Constitutional History (Before 1485)', *The Cambridge Historical Journal*, v (1936), 119-46, repr. in *idem*, *Crown, Community and Parliament in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1951), pp.1-33; G. Templeman, 'The History of Parliament to 1400 in the Light of Modern Research', *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, i (1948), 202-31, repr. in R.L. Schuyler and H. Ausubel, eds., *The Making of English History* (New York, 1952), pp.109-27; R.S. Hoyt, 'Recent Publications in the United States and Canada on the History of Representative Institutions before the French Revolution', *Speculum*, xxix (1954), 356-77, esp. pp.358-66; J.G. Edwards, *Historians and the Medieval English Parliament* (Glasgow, 1960); G.P. Cuttino, 'Mediaeval Parliament Reinterpreted', *Speculum*, xli (1966), 681-87; G.P. Bodet, ed., *Early English Parliaments: High Courts, Royal Councils, or Representative Assemblies?* (Boston, 1968); G.O. Sayles, 'Modern Myths and Medieval Parliaments', in *idem*, *The King's Parliament of England* (London, 1975), pp.3-20. See also the collection of extracts on various aspects of parliament contained in P. Spufford, *Origins of the English Parliament* (London, 1967). For more recent comprehensive bibliographies on the history of parliament see E.B. Fryde and E. Miller, eds., *Historical Studies of the English Parliament*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1970); G.O. Sayles, *The King's Parliament of England* (London, 1975); and R. Butt, *A History of Parliament: The Middle Ages* (London, 1989).

³ The phrase was one coined by McFarlane in 1938 to describe the 'Whiggist' approach to political history as propounded by Bishop Stubbs in *The Constitutional History of England*, 3 vols., 4th edn. (Oxford, 1906). See K.B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), 'Annexe', pp.279-97 (quotation from p.280).

⁴ See J.W. McKenna, 'The Myth of Parliamentary Sovereignty in Late Medieval England', *E.H.R.*, xciv (1979), 481-506, pp.482-3. G. Templeman also provides a succinct account of Stubbs' portrayal of the medieval parliament in 'History of Parliament to 1400', pp. 203-9.

Constitutional History remained ‘...indispensable to the student of early history’.⁵ If this suggested that there were certain inadequacies to the work that followed Stubbs, it was a situation made no clearer than in the gloomy perception amongst post-war historians of the uncertain position that parliament itself held in current historiography. This general sense of dissatisfaction was summed up by Professor Plucknett in his famous dictum that ‘...no English institution has been studied with such ardour, and with so little definite result, as parliament’.⁶ The outcome, according to R.S. Hoyt, was a situation where even ‘...eighty years after Stubbs [it is] still true that the history of parliament remains to be written...’.⁷

Nor can we gain much comfort from historical commentators of the present day who point to a different, but equally fundamental problem. The neglect of parliament in more recent years, we are told, is part of the much wider aversion amongst political historians to research on constitutional theory in general and the institutions of central government in particular.⁸ It is a poignant question put by Edward Powell when he asks whether ‘...there is any historian under the age of sixty who has written a book on the late medieval parliament?’⁹ Debate over the nature and function of this institution has now virtually ceased; from the prominent, if somewhat uneasy, position parliament enjoyed at the top of the historical agenda forty years ago, it now attracts little more than a passing interest from modern historians of the medieval polity whose attentions are principally focussed elsewhere.¹⁰ The aim of the following paragraphs is to account for these historiographical problems. It is not the intention to give an exhaustive description of the historiography of the medieval parliament since this has been provided elsewhere.¹¹ Instead, this introductory chapter starts out with a critical appraisal of the major controversies and methodological problems that have dominated and shaped the course of historical writing on the medieval parliament, before proceeding to

⁵ H. Cam, ‘Stubbs Seventy Years After’, *Cambridge Historical Journal*, ix (1948), 129-47, repr. in *idem*, *Law Finders and Law Makers in Medieval England* (London, 1962), p.188.

⁶ T.F.T. Plucknett, ‘Parliament’, in J.F. Willard, W.A. Morris, J.R. Strayer and W.H. Dunham, eds., *The English Government at Work, 1327-1336*, 3 vols. (Cambridge Mass. 1940-50), i, pp.82-128, p.82.

⁷ Hoyt, ‘Recent Publications’, p.358.

⁸ McKenna, ‘Myth of Parliamentary Sovereignty’ and Powell, ‘After “After McFarlane”’.

⁹ Powell, ‘After “After McFarlane”’, p.9.

¹⁰ For example, the last book written about the medieval parliament was by Butt, *A History of Parliament*, which provides a useful summary of the development of the medieval parliament, particularly of the Commons, but offers little by way of new synthesis. In recent years the output of articles on the late medieval parliament has been reduced to a trickle. Interestingly, the most recent ones have focussed on the reign of Henry IV. They include A.J. Pollard, ‘The Lancastrian Constitutional Experiment Revisited: Henry IV, Sir John Tiptoft and the Parliament of 1406’, *Parliamentary History*, xiv (1995), 103-19 and E. Wright, ‘Henry IV, the Commons and the Recovery of Royal Finance in 1407’, in R.E. Archer and S. Walker, eds., *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England: Essays Presented to Gerald Harriss* (London, 1995), pp.65-81.

¹¹ See above, note 2.

summarise what contribution this thesis will make in taking the subject forward.

* * *

It would, of course, be absurd to suggest that the history of parliament is unwritable. Yet even a cursory glance at some of the debates dominating the subject will confirm the impression that, at the very least, the medieval English parliament has proved to be extremely problematical for historical analysis. This is nowhere better, or more appropriately, illustrated than in the vigorous discussion between H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles on the one hand, and Sir Goronwy Edwards on the other.¹² At issue was the very origin and function of the medieval parliament itself.¹³ For Richardson and Sayles the early parliament's 'essential function' was judged to have been the 'dispensing of justice'¹⁴ because '...the one constant attribute of parliament was...for the better part of a century, the hearing...of petitions which, in the most instances, asked for justice'.¹⁵ For Edwards, however, the essence of parliament's function was '...not specifically judicial...or specifically anything [but] consisted in being *unspecific*, in being omnicompetent'.¹⁶ Whilst this disagreement contributed enormously to pushing back the frontiers of research on the medieval parliament (as one commentator put it, the debate '...worked like leaven in the study of the early English parliament'¹⁷), its true significance lay in the fact that even after so much discussion, very little progress was actually made in reconciling the two divergent views. The production of numerous articles as well as several books by the protagonists, well supported as they were with primary evidence, failed to yield common ground; Richardson and Sayles remained entrenched in their 'judicial' interpretation, whilst Edwards, receiving the lion's share of

¹² Although Edwards was the most outspoken critic of Richardson and Sayles he was not the first, as the work of M.V. Clarke and B. Wilkinson testify: see G. Templeman, 'Parliament', pp.217-23. For the views of Richardson and Sayles see their collection of joint articles in *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (London, 1981), esp. ch. xxvi, 'Parliaments and Great Councils in Medieval England', first published in *L.Q.R.*, lvvii (1961), 213-36, 401-26. For the views of Edwards, see his article, 'Justice in Early English Parliaments', *B.I.H.R.*, xlii (1954), 35-53.

¹³ Richardson and Sayles defined the 'early' period of the history of parliament as that from the institution's inception in the mid-thirteenth century to the end of Edward II's reign: see below, note 29.

¹⁴ I have paraphrased what is now the classic statement of the views of these two historians: '...parliaments are of one kind only and that, when we have stripped every non-essential away, the essence of them is the dispensing of justice by the King or by someone who in a very special sense represents the King': H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, 'The Parliaments of Edward II', *B.I.H.R.*, v (1928), 71-89, p.133, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament*, ch.xvi.

¹⁵ Richardson and Sayles, 'Parliaments and Great Councils', p.43.

¹⁶ Edwards, *Historians and the Medieval English Parliament*, p.24. See also *idem*, 'Justice', pp.52-3.

¹⁷ Templeman, 'History of Parliament to 1400', p.217.

support amongst contemporary historians,¹⁸ continued to advocate the multifarious approach. Uncompromising though Richardson and Sayles may have been,¹⁹ this should not be taken as sufficient explanation for the deadlock between them and Sir Goronwy Edwards. The problem clearly ran deeper than this because even now, to the simple question, ‘what was the original nature of the medieval parliament?’, historians continue to produce widely diverging responses.²⁰

It is quite possible that Hoyt’s remark in 1954, that the history of parliament still awaited to be written,²¹ reflected a widespread resignation that such a history would never, in fact, be undertaken. After all, if the origins and functions and indeed, the very ‘essence’ of parliament itself, remained as contentious as ever, what hope was there for a work that might claim to outline a general history of parliament?²² Re-writing the parliamentary history of Stubbs was evidently not going to be so easy. Where Stubbs had written with an unshakeable conviction in parliament’s central rôle in the inalienable ‘...progress [of history] towards the blessed political state of nineteenth century England’,²³ his successors had the far less straightforward task of matching their interpretations to the limited and imperfect evidence of what was a highly complex institution. Where the *Constitutional History* produced convenient and simplistic answers to questions about the origins, development and nature of the medieval parliament, historians of the ‘post-Stubbsian’ era discovered that many of these questions were either unanswerable or, at the very least, extremely contentious. Well might McFarlane have commented of parliament, ‘...here are many problems and little agreement among historians’.²⁴

¹⁸ This is indicated by the caution and doubt which attended the majority of works touching the subject in the fifties and sixties. For example, ‘No very precise answer can be given to the question “What is Parliament?”’: M. McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century, 1307-1399* (Oxford, 1959), p.182; ‘...we can no longer be so precise about what, originally, parliament was’: Cuttino, ‘Medieval Parliament Reinterpreted’, p.686; the mystery which attends the beginnings of parliament ‘is the mystery which attends on all beginnings’: F.M. Powicke, *Henry III and the Lord Edward*, 2 vols. (London, 1947), i, p.340. A summary of Powicke’s opinions can be found in a short article which, significantly, he entitled, ‘Can one really discover the nature of the Early Parliaments?’, in Bodet, *Early English Parliaments*, pp.43-5.

¹⁹ See McFarlane, *Nobility of Late Medieval England*, p.289.

²⁰ For example, those historians who toe the line of Sir Goronwy Edwards include E. Miller who, in 1979, emphasised the ‘...highly miscellaneous nature of the business which...was done *in* parliament’; ‘Introduction’, in Fryde and Miller, eds., *Historical Studies*, i, p.4. See also G.L. Harriss, *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (Oxford, 1985), p.137. For a more reserved support for the Richardson and Sayles line see M. Prestwich, *English Politics in the Thirteenth Century* (London, 1990), p.134, and W.M. Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III: Crown and Political Society in England, 1327-1377* (London, 1990), p.61, note 124.

²¹ See above, note 7.

²² Hoyt himself implies this when he contrasts ‘...a generally accepted interpretation of the origin, development, nature and significance of the medieval parliament...with the more modest but more specific results achieved by the continuing study of special aspects of its history’. The latter, he goes on to suggest, will take historians nearer to the desired result of a better understanding of the medieval parliament; Hoyt, ‘Recent Publications’, p.358.

²³ McKenna, ‘The Myth of Parliamentary Sovereignty’, p.485.

²⁴ McFarlane, *Nobility of Late Medieval England*, p.288.

But what are these ‘problems’? What is it about the medieval parliament that makes it *so* contentious that even the reason for its conception still remains in dispute? Indeed, why is it that ‘the history of parliament’ still awaits to be written? These questions may be answered, at least initially, in two ways.

Firstly, the term ‘parliament’, with its connotations of unity and uniformity, should not disguise the fact that in reality what characterised parliament was its very diversity and *non*-uniformity. To a greater or lesser extent, all historians are in agreement with this.²⁵ Parliament was a gathering of the ‘community of the realm’, which naturally ensured that its composition and functions would be both diverse as well as multifaceted.²⁶ From a methodological standpoint this greatly complicates any attempt to produce a general account of the institution. The huge range of business that the medieval parliament dealt with - in terms of legislation, finances, politics, administrative work and of course, its judicial functions - together with the very disparate nature of its membership, creates many angles from which the institution can be viewed; but it also severely complicates any attempt to produce a single ‘overview’ of the assembly. Moreover parliament was not simply a phenomenon of central government but had an equally important bearing on communities in the localities whether it was through the process of electing MPs to attend parliament, the opportunity presented by the assembly for individuals or local groups to articulate their grievances or simply because much of the business of parliament could have profound effects on the way of life and the customs of local people. It was in recognition of this multiplicity of approaches and the methodological dangers inherent therein that Michael Prestwich warned that, ‘...to try to reduce parliament to its barest minimum is to adopt a misleading approach that fails to reveal the true nature of the assembly’.²⁷ Even Richardson and Sayles were willing to admit that the legal aspect of parliament’s activity, vital though it was (in their opinion), formed only part of the complete ‘whole’ that made the early parliament what it was;²⁸ it is worth pointing out that they came to adopt a far more ambiguous standpoint *vis-à-vis* parliament as the ‘dispenser of justice’, to

²⁵ Lapsley was arguably the first historian properly to articulate this important truism when, in 1915, he said that ‘...no one thought of parliament as a whole’, and explanations were not made ‘to parliament but to groups *in* parliament’: ‘Archbishop Stratford and the Parliamentary Crisis of 1341’, *E.H.R.*, xxx (1915), 6-18, 193-215, repr. in *idem*, *Crown, Community and Parliament*, pp.231-72 (quotation from pp.269, 270).

²⁶ For more detailed accounts of the meaning and application of the term ‘community of the realm’, see S. Reynolds, *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900-1300*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1997), esp. 266-73 and 309-10; Prestwich, *English Politics*, esp. pp.132-45; and *idem*, ‘Parliament and the Community of the Realm in Fourteenth-Century England’, in *Historical Studies*, xiv (1981), 5-24.

²⁷ Prestwich, *English Politics*, p.134.

²⁸ ‘We have at no time suggested that, because the distinctive quality of parliament was the dispensing of justice, this was its sole purpose...’: Richardson and Sayles, ‘Parliaments and Great Councils’, p.43.

the institution as it functioned from the mid-fourteenth century onwards.²⁹ Indeed, Richardson and Sayles are the classic illustration of how unwieldy the late medieval parliament could be as an inclusive research project for they had originally set out to write a broad history of the institution but soon abandoned the idea in favour of small-scale articles on certain selected and specialised topics.³⁰

The second problem concerns the limitations of the evidence relating to the medieval parliament. This needs only brief attention as it is a familiar topic and one that most historians recognize.³¹ It is now widely acknowledged that the parliament rolls - the main source available to parliamentary historians - can no longer be treated as an impartial witness to the events of the parliamentary sessions.³² The only other evidence relating directly to parliament - other than theoretical works³³ - are the accounts of chroniclers which shed extremely valuable, but, unfortunately, only limited light on the majority of parliaments in this

²⁹ For example, on the one hand, they have stated that ‘...objection is still taken to our statement that the essence of parliament - *we spoke with particular reference to the parliaments of Edward I and Edward II* [my italics] - is the dispensing of justice’: Richardson and Sayles, ‘Parliaments and Great Councils’, pp.42-3. They explain elsewhere that after 1327, the permanent presence of the Commons and the development of the common petition ‘...drove the private petitioner from parliament’ which ‘greatly influenced parliamentary procedure’ away from its purely judicial function: see pp.15-16 of the same article. In addition, Sayles, this time on his own, states that, ‘The judicial aspect of parliament [after 1327] never disappeared...but it began to fade out of the foreground’ and, ‘As judicial work decreased, politics engrossed an ever greater share of parliamentary time’; Sayles, *The King’s Parliament*, pp.107, 111. Finally, both Richardson and Sayles explicitly state that by Edward III’s reign ‘...the dominant purpose of parliament became political instead of judicial’: ‘The King’s Ministers in Parliament, 1327-1377’, *E.H.R.*, xlvii (1932), 377-97 (quotation from p.397), repr. in *The English Parliament*, chapter xxii. On the other hand, they have asserted elsewhere that, ‘Under Edward III there are reasons why such a large proportion of parliamentary time should be given to politics and economics, but it was only a proportion. The dispensation of justice remained in the eyes of the people, if not in the eyes of the King and his ministers, the prime purpose of parliament...’: ‘The Parliaments of Edward III’, *B.I.H.R.*, viii (1930), 65-77; ix (1931), 1-18 (quotation from ix, p.2), repr. in *The English Parliament*, chapter xxi. Sayles himself says that ‘...the dispensation of justice was indissolubly connected with parliament throughout the Middle Ages’, *The Functions of Medieval Parliament of England* (London, 1988), p.39.

³⁰ This was stated by Sayles in his Foreword to *The English Parliament*. In it, he wrote, ‘...we [he and Richardson] agreed to collaborate in writing the history of the medieval parliament of England...Yet in the end the book was not completed’. He goes on to explain that this was due in large part to their ‘fastidiousness’ which prevented them from ignoring the many avenues of research which this ambitious project opened out for them. It is noteworthy and significant that, by contrast, they were able to complete a book on the Irish parliament; see H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles., *The Irish Parliament in the Middle Ages* (London, 1952).

³¹ For example J.G. Edwards, *The Commons in Medieval English Parliaments* (London, 1958), pp.3-4; A.L. Brown, ‘Parliament, c.1377-1422’, in R.G. Davies and J.H. Denton, eds., *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (Manchester, 1981), 109-40, pp.109-10; Sayles, *The King’s Parliament*, p.19; K.B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972), p.80. In his short piece on the historiography of parliament, Cuttino suggested that the explanation for the many contradictory interpretations of parliament’s nature and function ‘...lies in the defects in the evidence...and the paucity of the evidence itself’; ‘Medieval Parliament Reinterpreted’, p.687.

³² McFarlane has perhaps been the most forthright in questioning the accuracy of these records: ‘The [parliament] rolls give the royal side of the picture’: McFarlane, *Nobility of Late Medieval England*, p.291.

³³ Even here, historians have very little with which to go on. As Chrimes wrote of the fifteenth century, ‘Unless some major discoveries remain to be made, we cannot suppose that the fifteenth century witnessed any prominent attempt to examine very closely into the nature of the assembly...Even Fortescue, the most distinguished publicist of the century, was at no pains, so far as we know, to pursue very far such an examination’, *English Constitutional Ideas in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1936), pp.66-7

period.³⁴ One of the possible consequences of this paucity of information has been disagreement and a sense of uncertainty over the precise rôle and degree of power the Commons enjoyed in parliament.³⁵ Certainly, McFarlane considered that it was H.G. Richardson's uncritical acceptance of the parliament rolls - his view that they were 'unimpeachable' - that led to the latter's erroneous belief that '...the strength of the Commons in parliament was not their own but the Lords'.³⁶ The question of what exactly went on in parliament, particularly in the Lower House,³⁷ has tantalized historians ever since the history of the institution began to be written and although most historians are now more convinced of the capacity of the Commons for independent action,³⁸ most would also accept that such issues will never be resolved entirely, without the availability of better sources.

However, the reluctance to consider parliament in more general terms has run somewhat deeper than an inability to overcome the twin difficulties of the huge variety of subject matter and the problematic nature of the source material. Such a general consideration would require a 'constitutional' treatment of parliament; that is, at its most basic level, an analysis of parliament in the context of broad questions about the nature of political power and the operation of medieval government. Until recently, however, 'constitutional history' was anathema to all but a handful of historians because of its whiggist connotations of 'parliamentary sovereignty' and 'limited monarchy'.³⁹ 'Constitutional history,' J.W. McKenna

³⁴ For example, see the comments by the editors in *Parliamentary Texts of the Later Middle Ages*, ed. N. Pronay and J. Taylor (Oxford, 1980), pp.5-6; '...evidence about parliament from chronicles is relatively scanty...parliament...made relatively little appeal to monastic chronicles...[and] even if Chroniclers did have a substantial interest in politics and in political arguments they tended not to be too well informed upon the technicalities of parliament and parliamentary procedure...the exception being the *Anonimale Chronicle*'.

³⁵ J.S. Roskell, 'Perspectives in English Parliamentary History', *B.J.R.L.*, xlv (1964), 448-75, repr. in Fryde and Miller, *Historical Studies*, ii, pp.296-323, p.299

³⁶ See McFarlane *Nobility of Late Medieval England*, p.291. McFarlane's principal contribution to the question of the independence of the Commons is found in his article, 'Parliament and "Bastard Feudalism"', *T.R.H.S.*, 4th ser., xxvi (1944), 53-73, repr. in *idem, England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays* (London, 1981), pp.1-21. For the quotation from Richardson, see 'John of Gaunt and the Parliamentary Representation of Lancashire', *B.J.R.L.*, xxii (1938), 175-222, p.218; see also Richardson's article, 'The Commons and Medieval Politics', *T.R.H.S.*, 4th ser., xxviii (1945), 21-48, esp. p.47, repr. in *The English Parliament*, ch. xxiv.

³⁷ To avoid repetition, the words 'Commons' and 'Lords' have frequently been substituted in this thesis for the terms 'Lower House' and 'Upper House', respectively. It should be stressed that this is a purely syntactic device and does imply that 'Lower House' or 'Upper House' were contemporary descriptions. S.B. Chrimes has shown that the terms 'house of Lords', 'house of Commons' and 'houses of parliament' really only became established towards the end of the fifteenth century: "'House of Lords" and "House of Commons" in the Fifteenth Century', *E.H.R.*, xlix (1934), 494-7; and *idem, English Constitutional Ideas*, pp.126-30.

³⁸ Apart from McFarlane's article on parliament and bastard feudalism, J.S. Roskell has produced a number of important works throwing much light on who attended parliament and the capacity of the Commons to act independently from external interference; see especially *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422: Political Society and Parliamentary Representation under the Lancastrians* (Manchester, 1953) and *The Commons and their Speakers in English Parliaments, 1376-1523* (Manchester, 1965). G.L. Harriss has approached the subject from the point of view of the Commons' control over the supply of taxation; see G.L. Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance in Medieval England to 1369* (Oxford, 1975).

³⁹ McKenna, 'Myth of Parliamentary Sovereignty', esp. pp.485-86.

wrote, ‘...had been born as a whig pursuit...and henceforth the adjectival form would...appear in inverted commas, and often with a parenthetical qualification - “‘constitutional’ (i.e., limited)”’.⁴⁰ The problem was that constitutional history was irreducibly connected to questions of parliamentary power and to the generations of scholars following Stubbs, such a narrow definition rendered this approach obsolete because other aspects of medieval government came to be seen as being more important. For Tout, for example, the task for political historians in the post-Stubbsian age was clear:

...we now have to put parliamentary institutions back into their proper setting...the remedy for the over stressing, by former historians, of the importance of medieval parliaments is, for historians of the present, to devote greater attention to the study of the machinery and daily routine of medieval executive government.⁴¹

Important though Tout’s new scheme for ‘administrative history’ was, it did little to disguise the crucial fact that no substitute had actually been found to replace the Stubbsian ‘monopoly’ on the definition of what constitutional history actually was.⁴² Tout was not redefining the term, he was simply discrediting it. For parliament, this meant that there was still no generally accepted framework with which to produce a broad overview of the institution *in the polity*, because such an overview was still conceptually restrained by the widespread assumption that it could only produce a picture of parliament as the defender of the peoples’ liberties and bulwark against royal excesses. As late as 1969, for example, it was still possible for a reviewer to comment that there was still ‘...no alternative model half so persuasive’ as that outlined by B. Wilkinson in his book *The Later Middle Ages in England* - a work noted by the same reviewer for its ‘unabashed allegiance’ to the Whig tradition and, in particular, its championing of parliament’s central status in medieval politics.⁴³

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.485. McKenna’s ‘parenthetical qualification’ has been taken from B. Wilkinson, *Constitutional History of England in the Fifteenth Century, 1399-1485* (London, 1964), pp.4-5.

⁴¹ T.F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England*, 6 vols. (Manchester, 1920-33), ii, p.7. For a useful summary of Tout’s work and its significance, see Lapsley, ‘Some Recent Advance’, pp.121-22.

⁴² The important exception to this was the view expressed by S.B. Chrimes in 1936, when he defined the constitution as, ‘...that body of governmental rights and duties which exist in a state at any given time in virtue of their recognition or implication by law, custom, convention, practice or opinion’: *English Constitutional Ideas*, p.xix. He explicitly observed that ‘constitution’ should not be taken to mean ‘...parliamentary limited monarchy as understood from the nineteenth century’. Unfortunately, this significant re-appraisal of constitutional history had little impact on subsequent historiography and Chrimes himself seems not to have pursued it in his later work.

⁴³ Review article by G.L.Harriss, *E.H.R.*, lxxxvi (1971), 122-5, p.123. Also, see Hoyt, ‘Recent Publications’, p.361: ‘...the role of parliament is clearly as central for Wilkinson as it was for Stubbs’. Wilkinson himself explicitly stated that ‘...we shall not understand politicians of either the thirteenth or the fourteenth century until we put parliament back at the centre of their political life and struggles, where Stubbs and Hallam had it, and where there is more reason than ever to think that it belongs’: B. Wilkinson, ‘English Politics and Politicians of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries’, *Speculum*, xxx (1955), 37-48, p.44. Note that, as late as 1989, it was possible for a parliamentary historian to be accused of writing a whiggist interpretation of parliament’s history; see Michael Prestwich’s review of Butt’s *History of Parliament*, in *E.H.R.*, cv (1990), 125-7, p.127: ‘...in a cautious glorification of parliament, [Butt] sees [parliament] as having created the weapons with which

That gives the general picture; but exactly what implications have these methodological and conceptual difficulties had for the historiography of parliament? We have seen already that irreconcilable differences have occurred in accounts of the origin of the institution; but on a broader basis the reluctance of historians to commit themselves to an inclusive work on the medieval parliament has led to the production of numerous specialised and detailed studies which in turn has produced historiographical fragmentation. On a positive note, this has undoubtedly contributed enormously to a closer understanding of how the late medieval parliament functioned and much seminal work has been produced in short and narrowly based studies. This includes the work of Myers and Rayner on the petitioning process,⁴⁴ the researches of Wood-Legh, Lewis, Cam, Clarke and (later) Roskell⁴⁵ on the nature of representation, and the discussion by Richardson and Sayles on the king's ministers in parliament.⁴⁶ However, this has been at the expense of synthesis. In 1949 Antonio Marongui - writing as an outsider to the historiographical tradition - was to sum up the situation in a particularly penetrating way. He stated that,

The important fact to note is that in recent decades English parliamentary historiography - even of such distinguished exponents as H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles - has radically changed its approach [from the Stubbsian model] and adapted to Maitland's criterion of "describing, not explaining". In order to avoid the dangers of premature synthesis or excessive value judgements, this more recent school of historiography has gone to the other extreme and has dedicated itself to researches to extreme erudition and merit, but for the most part so minute and fragmentary as to seem at times remote or impenetrable... The road is not merely strewn with natural difficulties, but is rendered treacherous by a long series of detailed studies, for the most part lacking in any logical links and difficult to pull together into an overall view.⁴⁷

Marongui was describing a trend which was to continue well after this date whereby the main preoccupation of parliamentary historians was to uncover the technicalities of the assembly - how it functioned, who its members were, what sort of procedure occurred during a

political liberty could be defended'.

⁴⁴ A.R. Myers, 'Parliamentary Petitions in the Fifteenth Century', *E.H.R.*, ccvii (1937), 385-404, 590-613, repr. in *idem*, *Crown, Household and Parliament in Fifteenth Century England* (London, 1985), pp.1-44 ; D. Rayner, 'The Forms and Machinery of the "Commune Petition" in the Fourteenth Century', *E.H.R.*, lvi (1941), 198-233, 594-70.

⁴⁵ Only a selection of the works of these historians are cited here: K.L. Wood-Legh, 'Sheriffs, Lawyers and Belted Knights in the Parliaments of Edward III', *E.H.R.*, xlvi (1931), 372-88; *idem*, 'The Knights' Attendance in the Parliaments of Edward III', *E.H.R.*, xlvii (1932), 398-413; H. Cam, 'Borough Representation in Richard II's Reign', *E.H.R.*, xxxix (1924), 511-25; *idem*, 'The Relation of English Members of Parliament to their Constituencies in the Fourteenth Century', in *idem*, *Law-Finders and Law-Makers in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1962); N.B. Lewis, 'Re-election to Parliament in the reign of Richard II', *E.H.R.*, xlvi (1933), 364-94; M.V. Clarke, *Medieval Representation and Consent* (London, 1936); Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*; and *idem*, *The Commons and their Speakers*.

⁴⁶ See chapters vi, xvii and xxii in Richardson and Sayles, *The King's Parliament*.

⁴⁷ A. Marongiu, *Medieval Parliaments: A Comparative Study*, trans. S.J. Woolf (London, 1968), pp.77-8.

parliamentary session and so on. His criticism was levelled at the inherent paradox which this approach created: on the one hand, many specialised studies were uncovering more and more aspects of parliament's activity, but on the other hand, the broader picture was increasingly being swamped with the detail, or to use Namier's metaphor, historians were increasingly losing 'sight of the wood for their concentration on the leaves of the trees'.⁴⁸

This, it seems, was a trend affecting not just the history of parliament but medieval political history in general. By the 1970s K.B. McFarlane felt compelled to complain in more general terms that,

...we have failed to do what it is the duty of every generation of historians to do, namely to rewrite the broad outlines of our subject in the light of those specialised subjects which are our prime concern.[Furthermore]...the studies which have revealed [the 'Stubbsian framework's'] ramshackle character have for the most part been narrow and specialist; they have discredited it without putting anything coherent in its place. This failure to substitute anything for it *as a whole* has produced utter confusion...The Stubbsian framework...has collapsed. But it has been replaced by anarchy.⁴⁹

McFarlane's solution to this so-called 'anarchy' came in the form of a highly influential and, for the study of parliament, a highly damaging, corrective. Following in the footsteps of the illustrious Sir Lewis Namier, he urged historians to remember that 'constitutional history was concerned with men' and that, by implication, it was a misconception '...to write the history of institutions apart from the men who worked them'.⁵⁰ He further stated that at the centre of late medieval high politics was not a conflict of interest between tyranny and liberty (ie. between the king and parliament), but a community of interest between the king and nobility.⁵¹ In other words, the key to an understanding of the operation of medieval government - according to McFarlane - lay not in uncovering the workings and operation of the institutions of central governmental (the most prominent of which was parliament), but rather in '...the detailed study of English society in the age of bastard feudalism, through the careers, estates and finances of the nobility; complemented by the careful reconstruction of the workings of

⁴⁸ Cited in Powell, 'After "After McFarlane"', p.3, note 17.

⁴⁹ McFarlane, *Nobility of Late Medieval England*, pp.279-80.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.280. E. Powell has pointed out that it is to Sir Lewis Namier and the publication of his book, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (London, 1929), that the origins of this new framework for political history can be found; Powell, 'After "After McFarlane"', p.2.

⁵¹ McFarlane, *Nobility of Late Medieval England*, pp.113-4, 119-21; *idem*, 'Parliament and Bastard Feudalism', pp.16-17.

patronage'.⁵²

It would be an exaggeration to suggest that McFarlane singlehandedly dismantled the traditional institution-oriented medieval historiography of the post-war years, but, without a doubt, the decline of this sort of scholarship in the 1960s and 1970s - including that done on the late medieval parliament - coincided with a period that saw a proliferation of work using Namierite/McFarlanite principles.⁵³ Admittedly there were benefits for parliament. Perhaps the most important was the dramatic surge in the interest shown in the lives of MPs and their position in local politics.⁵⁴ J.S. Roskell was in large part responsible for a whole new school of parliamentary history based on his seminal monograph *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422* where the workings of parliament at the centre were placed in the context of the sort of men who actually travelled to the institution from the localities. Under his supervision, at Nottingham University, studies of the 'representation' of selected counties were produced on a systematic basis using the new prosopographical and biographical methodologies that he had adopted in his own work.⁵⁵ Indeed, the idea of exploring the nature of parliamentary representation through the scrutiny of MPs' careers gained added impetus right across the whole historiographical board culminating, in the early 1980s, with the publication of three sets of History of Parliament Trust volumes, doubling in three years what had been produced over the past fifty.⁵⁶ During this period, work was also progressing on the latest series of volumes to be published, in 1993, which cover the years from 1386 to 1421 and

⁵² This is the summary of the fundamentals of the McFarlane agenda as given by Edward Powell in, 'After "After McFarlane"', p.1. It was the '...want of psychological penetration' which McFarlane identified as the second great shortcoming of Stubbs and '...the prevailing vice of English medievalists' - the first being the 'de-personalisation' of institutions; *Nobility of Late Medieval England*, pp.280-82.

⁵³ See Richmond, 'After McFarlane'. See also Powell's comments on the effects of McFarlane on historiography: E. Powell, *Kingship, Law, and Society: Criminal Justice in the Reign of Henry V* (Oxford, 1989), pp.1-9.

⁵⁴ Note, however, the criticism of Sayles on this approach to the history of parliament. He stated that '...the dynamic history of an institution cannot be learned from compiling biographies of members of the House of Commons', *The King's Parliament*, p.18.

⁵⁵ Those theses supervised by Roskell included; J.G. Bellamy, 'The Parliamentary Representatives of Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire in the Reign of Richard II', University of Nottingham, M.A. thesis (1961); E.L.T. John, 'The Parliamentary Representation of Norfolk and Suffolk, 1377-1422', University of Nottingham, M.A. thesis (1959); A. Rogers, 'The Parliamentary Representation of Surrey and Sussex, 1377-1422', University of Nottingham, M.A. thesis (1957); M.G. Webb, 'The Parliamentary Representation of Warwickshire and Leicestershire, 1377-1422', University of Nottingham, M.A. thesis (1961). Other work that followed in Roskell's footsteps included F.A. Clifford, 'The Parliamentary Representation of Northamptonshire and Rutland', University of Manchester, M.A. thesis (1967); I.J.T. Driver, 'The Knights of the Shire for Worcestershire, 1377-1421', Liverpool University, M.A. thesis (1962); A. Goodman, 'The Parliamentary Representation of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, 1377-1422', Oxford University, B. Litt. Thesis (1965) and A. Wade, 'The Parliamentary Representation of Essex and Herts, 1377-1422', University of Manchester, M.A. thesis (1967).

⁵⁶ P.W. Hasler, ed., *The House of Commons, 1558-1603*, History of Parliament Trust, 3 vols. (London, 1981); S.T. Bindolf, ed., *The House of Commons, 1509-1558*, History of Parliament Trust, 3 vols. (London, 1982) and B.D. Henning, ed., *The House of Commons, 1660-1690*, History of Parliament Trust, 3 vols. (London, 1983). The other three sets were published in 1936, 1964 and 1970.

which have a direct bearing on the content of this thesis.⁵⁷

Nevertheless, these new research developments could not disguise the fact that the medieval parliament was rapidly falling from the premier position which it had hitherto occupied at the top of the historiographical agenda. In 1973, G.L. Harriss reviewed Fryde and Miller's collection of studies on the English parliament and commented that, '...It is indicative of the current swing away from parliamentary studies that, apart from...two essays, the first volume comprises the work of a generation which flourished in the quarter century from 1925 to 1950'.⁵⁸ It was the locality, and in particular, the now ubiquitous 'gentry' or 'county community' that provided the cutting edge of research into medieval political history. By the 1980s the medieval parliament itself, though not entirely ignored, increasingly came to be seen in terms of the light which it could shed, through parliamentary elections, on patterns of local office-holding and structures of gentry or landed power.⁵⁹ Parliament, as an institution of central government, was pushed to the background and in its place the essential dynamic of the late medieval constitution was seen to lie in the localities, in the relations between the landed élites and the crown. Parliament had almost become incidental to medieval political history, mentioned here and there where its proceedings were particularly significant but rarely given attention in its own right. The problem of the historiographical fragmentation of work on parliament had therefore not been resolved; rather, it had simply been shelved as the attention of historians refocused on other issues, controversies and debates.

McFarlane's legacy for the study of parliament was not all negative, however, and parliament has not, of course, been totally ignored in the past two decades. Besides his far-reaching dictum that 'constitutional history is concerned with men', McFarlane also insisted, as a corollary to this, that constitutional history '...is not something distinct from political history; it *is* political history'.⁶⁰ This remark represented, perhaps unwittingly,⁶¹ a small life-

⁵⁷ J.S. Roskell, L. Clark, and C. Rawcliffe, eds., *The House of Commons, 1386-1421*, History of Parliament Trust, 4 vols. (Stroud, 1993).

⁵⁸ G.L. Harriss, *E.H.R.*, lxxxviii (1973), 169-70, p.169. Also note that the first three chapters of the second volume of *Historical Studies*, relating to the late medieval period, were written before 1964.

⁵⁹ For example, see S. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England: The Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1991), pp.109-67; N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: the Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981), pp.120-8 and S. Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry in the Fifteenth Century*, Derbyshire Record Society, viii (1983), pp.112-3.

⁶⁰ McFarlane, *Nobility of Late Medieval England*, p.280.

⁶¹ McFarlane's statement was quite an open-ended one in that its meaning hinged on the definition of what exactly 'politics' was. For McFarlane, 'politics' was primarily shaped by men and their needs, which led him to focus his attention on the motivation of the nobility which, in turn, he saw in terms of patronage - a concept of limited use to an institution like parliament: see especially McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights*, p.226. Nevertheless, the notion of making constitutional history worthwhile by basing it on the analysis of politics has as much relevance to the study of an institution like parliament, as it does for the study of the nobility, and it is in this context that McFarlane's quotation should be seen.

line for the study of parliament as an institution at the centre. By immersing it in the politics of the day, by allying it with the political events and personalities that shaped each particular session and *vice versa*, rather than concentrating on the more ‘abstract constitutionalism’⁶² practised in the past, historians recognised that here was a way of continuing research on the medieval parliament without deserting the principles and standards laid down by McFarlane and his successors. Inevitably, when viewed in purely political terms, the so-called ‘crisis parliaments’ of the late Middle Ages have lent themselves most easily to further scrutiny and discussion, and studies of this type have proved to be one of the most enduring aspects of more recent medieval parliamentary historiography. George Holmes took this approach to its logical extreme by devoting a whole monograph to just one parliament: the Good Parliament of 1376. In justifying his methods, Holmes argued that,

With the exception of M.V. Clarke,... Tout and other historians have shown little interest in the political events of the period, in the cause of the political crisis [of 1376], and in the issues which divided the antagonists; the parliament interested them primarily as a stage in a linear and abstract evolution of political forms...[This] study has treated the Good Parliament as an event, a focus of political interests, passions, and influences, not as a stage in a linear development of institutions.⁶³

The great appeal of ‘crisis parliaments’ was that because they tended to occupy a prominent place in the affairs and concerns of national politics, historians were able to concentrate unashamedly on the institution without running the risk of over-emphasising its importance and consequently being labelled whigs. Moreover, such assemblies normally marked periods of great innovation and readily discernible change. Thus, the Good Parliament stands out as a high-water mark for the Commons’ outspoken criticism of the government, the first recorded activity of the Commons’ Speaker and the emergence of the process known as impeachment;⁶⁴ the parliamentary crisis of 1340-1 has been identified as the point where the Commons

⁶² McFarlane’s description of traditional constitutional history was ‘...that far from helpful abstraction’; *Nobility of Late Medieval England*, p.1.

⁶³ G. Holmes, *The Good Parliament* (Oxford, 1975), pp.2-3, 195.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*; Butt, *History of Parliament*, pp.337-51; B. Wilkinson, *Constitutional History of Medieval England, 1216-1399*, 3 vols. (London, 1947-58), ii, ch.vi; Ormrod, *Edward III*, pp.35-8 and pp.93-4; J.S. Roskell, ‘Sir Peter de la Mare’ *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, ii (1958), 24-37, repr. in *idem*, *Parliament and Politics in Late Medieval England*, 3 vols. (London, 1981-3), ii, pp.1-14. For literature specifically on impeachment, see Holmes, *The Good Parliament*, esp. pp.100-34; T.F.T. Plucknett, ‘The Origin of Impeachment’, *T.R.H.S.* 4th ser., xxiv (1942), 47-71; *idem*, ‘The Impeachments of 1376’, *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., i (1951), 153-64; M.V. Clarke, ‘The Origin of Impeachment’, in F.M. Powicke, ed., *Oxford Essays in Medieval History presented to H.E. Salter* (Oxford, 1934), pp.164-89, repr. in M.V. Clarke, *Fourteenth Century Studies* (Oxford, 1937), pp.242-71.

‘emerged as a political force in their own right’;⁶⁵ the Merciless Parliament of 1388 has been noted as one of ‘the most discreditable and vindictive Parliaments in English history’;⁶⁶ and it has been said of the early assemblies of Henry IV’s reign that the ‘...controversies between the king and his parliaments...[were] some of the most severe of all those of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries’.⁶⁷

How far the concentration on ‘crisis parliaments’ does justice to the institution as a long-term phenomenon is a debatable point; Holmes himself vindicated his methodology by castigating the ‘evolutionary’ emphasis previous historians had placed on the Good Parliament at the expense of detailed research and analysis. This is one side of the coin. But, on the other side, the Good Parliament, like all other ‘crisis parliaments’, was by its nature an extremely unusual assembly and cannot be taken as representative of what the late medieval parliament was about in general. The discussion of a particularly turbulent or outspoken parliament has hazards of its own for, as G.O. Sayles has warned, such an approach means that ‘...we are in danger of having a distorted picture of what the Commons in parliament were there for...’.⁶⁸ Thus, ordinary or mundane sessions of the late medieval parliament are just as valuable for the light they shed on what was typical of this institution as ‘crisis parliaments’ are for the light they shed on what was unusual or different. Moreover, dismissing an evolutionary approach is all very well but we should not lose sight of the fact that each individual parliament represented just one link in a whole chain of assemblies that stretched right across the late medieval period. Parliament may have met on an *ad hoc* basis but, by the mid-fourteenth century, it was an established and continuous aspect of the late medieval constitution; showing how the institution developed and changed over an extended period of

⁶⁵ Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, p.514. It is interesting that almost a quarter of this book, which covers a hundred years of parliamentary development, is devoted to just the crisis of 1340-1. Other discussion of this episode includes N.M. Fryde, ‘Edward III’s Removal of his Ministers and Judges, 1340-1’, *B.I.H.R.*, xlviii (1975), 149-161; G. Lapsley, ‘Archbishop Stratford’; B. Wilkinson, ‘The Protest of the Earls of Arundel and Surrey in the Crisis of 1341’, *E.H.R.*, xlvi (1931), 177-193. For a summary of this crisis, see Ormrod, *Edward III*, pp.11-15; Butt, *History of Parliament*, pp.274-297.

⁶⁶ Butt, *History of Parliament*, p.398. See also A. Steel, *Richard II* (Cambridge, 1962), pp.141-79; A. Rogers, ‘Parliamentary Appeals for Treason in the Reign of Richard II’, *American Journal of Legal History*, viii (1964), 95-124, pp.105-17; A. Goodman, *The Loyal Conspiracy, The Lords Appellant under Richard II* (London, 1971); A. Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility* (London, 1973), pp.87-120. The most recent account can be found in N. Saul, *Richard II* (London, 1997), pp.176-204.

⁶⁷ A. Rogers, ‘Henry IV, the Commons and Taxation’, *Mediaeval Studies*, xxxi (1969), 47-70, p.44. See also A.L. Brown, ‘The Commons and the Council in the Reign of Henry IV’, in Fryde and Miller, eds., *Historical Studies*, ii, pp.31-61; A. Rogers, ‘The Political Crisis of 1401’, *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, vii (1968), 85-96; J.L. Kirby, ‘Councils and Councillors of Henry IV, 1399-1413’, *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., xiv (1964), 35-65; J.S. Roskell, ‘Sir Arnold Savage of Bobbing’, *Archaeologia Cantiana*, lxx (1956), 68-83, repr. in *idem*, *Parliament and Politics*, ii, pp.65-80; J.S. Roskell, ‘Sir John Tiptoft Commons’ Speaker in 1406’, in *idem*, *Parliament and Politics*, ii, pp.107-50; Pollard, ‘Lancastrian Constitutional Experiment Revisited’, pp.103-19.

⁶⁸ Sayles, *The King’s Parliament*, p.18.

time is of equal value to the detailed investigation of a single isolated session.

* * *

In recent years, there has been a growing sense of dissatisfaction with the continuing influence of the McFarlane agenda on medieval historiography. As one of the most outspoken critics of this agenda, Edward Powell has warned against its tendency to reduce politics to patronage.⁶⁹ ‘The concept of patronage...’, Powell says, ‘...is by itself a comparatively blunt analytical instrument, which McFarlane, that most skilled of historical surgeons, would have deplored’.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, Powell continues, its widespread application to the interpretation of medieval politics by subsequent historians has caused ‘...a wholesale diversion of research away from constitutional theory and the institutions of central government...[with the result that] the assumption has taken root...that constitutional issues are peripheral to our understanding of the period’.⁷¹ McFarlane’s original suggestion that political structures and ideas were shaped by men and their needs, now faces the counter suggestion that men and their needs were equally shaped by ideas and political structures.⁷² In other words, to understand the constitution simply in terms of patronage is to assume that constitutional principles and political institutions had little relevance to medieval society. Such an assumption, Powell asserts, is nonsense.⁷³ Using as his starting point the ideas put forward by Quentin Skinner in the latter’s critique of the historiography of eighteenth-century politics,⁷⁴ Powell argues that ‘...exploring the values and principles of the political culture of late medieval England’ should form the basis of a ‘new constitutional history’.⁷⁵ These ‘values and

⁶⁹ ‘It is “patronage” which has been the leitmotif of the post-McFarlane revival of late medieval history...this prevailing trend of historiography threatens to reduce our view of the late medieval polity to a shallow, two dimensional image, devoid of ideological and constitutional content’: Powell, *Kingship, Law and Justice*, p.5. Powell’s views are summarised in his article ‘After “After McFarlane”’.

⁷⁰ Powell, *Kingship, Law and Justice*, p.6.

⁷¹ Powell, ‘After “After McFarlane”’, p.9.

⁷² This is not a new idea; the work of Chrimes, in 1936, on England in the fifteenth century can be viewed quite justifiably as the forerunner to this modern approach to ‘constitutional’ history. In his introduction to chapter 2, on parliament, he wrote, ‘We shall not be very concerned with what parliament in fact *did* during the fifteenth century, nor to any great extent with its relations to other parts of the governmental system. What we shall try to discuss, in some detail, is how parliament was in fact being *thought of*, as an institution, by the men of the century. We shall be discussing, not so much parliament itself, as parliament’s image in men’s minds’; Chrimes, *English Constitutional Ideas*, p.66.

⁷³ Powell was not alone in condemning such an approach; as Colin Richmond said, ‘Men were not Pavlovian dogs, jumping at the chance of a fee, a rent charge, a stewardship here, a parkership there’: Richmond, ‘After McFarlane’, p.57.

⁷⁴ Q.R.D. Skinner, ‘The Principles and Practice of Opposition: The Case of Bolingbroke vs Walpole’, in N. McKendrick, ed., *Historical Perspectives: Studies in English Thought and Society* (London, 1974), pp.93-128: ‘...the explanation of political action essentially depends on the study of political ideology’: p.128.

⁷⁵ For this and the following see Powell, ‘After “After McFarlane”’, pp.8-13.

principles', he suggests, must include, '...not merely such matters as the inalienability of the royal prerogative or the necessity of parliamentary consent to taxation, but also...[amongst others] the advice given to rulers in the "mirrors of princes" literature...horoscopes of Kings...the aristocratic code of honour' and (most importantly for Powell) the investigation into 'medieval legal institutions and the processes of the law'.

So where does parliament fit into this new scheme? Initially, the signs are encouraging. One of the most promising predictions made by Powell was that the newly defined constitutionalism would go far to resolving the long-term deadlock between the old pre-1970s tradition of seeing late medieval political history in the rather arid context of the institutions of central government, and the more recent McFarlanite view with its emphasis on human motivation, local power structures and dynastic fortune.⁷⁶ That this reconciliation is at all possible, is proved quite conclusively by John Watts' thesis and recently published monograph on the English constitution in the reign of Henry VI.⁷⁷ Watts discarded the approach which considered only the 'outward' manifestations of political power, and instead based his study on a conceptual level; that is, he examined the literature and language of the nobility in order to gain an understanding of how they thought medieval government should work. He also considered the rôle that a king was expected to play in the political life of the realm, not '...simply as a man, but [as] a public institution'.⁷⁸ The word 'expected' is perhaps central to an understanding of Watts' approach, for the focus of his enquiries is a comparison of the ideals and principles of political society about how it *expected* medieval government to work, with the nature of the structures of government - at both a central and local level - as they existed in reality. Watts suggests that the failure of the latter to meet the expectations and assumptions of the former lay at the root of the mid-fifteenth century dynastic crisis. He is thus able to get beyond the causal explanations of 'weak kingship' or an 'over-mighty nobility' for Henry VI's usurpation, to a position where he can claim quite confidently that the cause of this crisis was truly 'constitutional'.⁷⁹

Since Watts' main concern was with the breakdown of Henry VI's polity in which the king and nobility were the prime movers, little attention, justifiably, is given to

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.12.

⁷⁷ J. Watts, 'Domestic Politics and the Constitution in the Reign of Henry VI, c.1435-61', Cambridge University, Ph.D. thesis (1990); *idem*, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge, 1996)

⁷⁸ *Idem*, 'Domestic Politics', p.12, see the Introduction (pp.1-15) for a general account of his approach to the subject.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.391.

parliament.⁸⁰ In the new scheme for constitutional history, however, the exclusion of parliament seems more general and, arguably, far less justified. For Powell, the key to an understanding of the exercise of royal authority lay in the ‘...interaction between bureaucracy and patronage’ which in itself is not particularly contentious; but from here, he goes on to identify the medieval legal system as the crucial context in which these two socio-political forces should be viewed.⁸¹ He states in the introduction to his book on criminal justice in the reign of Henry V, that:

Since political authority in the middle ages was characteristically expressed in terms of jurisdiction, it was through the legal system that royal power was formally conveyed to the localities. On a more mundane level, law embodied the customs and traditions of society, and provided the means whereby social relationships were ordered and the ownership of land - the primary economic resource - was regulated.⁸²

We are told elsewhere by Christine Carpenter that, ‘For landowners the key area of government was the law that defended their property...’ and that ‘...the search for their attitudes and beliefs seems to be the most urgent task for historians of late medieval English politics’.⁸³ Parliament is more explicitly relegated in her most recent work on the fifteenth century constitution where it is stated that in the ‘...business of representing the realm to the king, parliament was less important than has often been alleged’, and it was not in parliament but ‘...in the shires...that the real importance of the gentry lay’.⁸⁴

So much for parliament. In the new constitutional history, the revival of ‘institutional’ studies comes high up on the agenda, yet one of the most significant of these medieval institutions, and, ironically enough, the supreme high court of the realm - parliament - is conspicuous by its absence. It may well be that by the fifteenth century, with which Powell and Carpenter are primarily concerned, parliament no longer occupied the prominent position

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p.12: ‘Because it is with the relationship between the crown and nobility which this dissertation is chiefly concerned, parliament receives much less discussion...’. In his book, Watts justifies the exclusion of parliament on the grounds that, ‘It was not strictly part of the government and its representativeness was highly formal and specialised’; *Henry VI*, p.82.

⁸¹ Powell, ‘After “After McFarlane”’, p.12-13; *idem*, *Kingship, Law and Justice*, pp.1-9.

⁸² *Idem*, *Kingship, Law and Justice* pp.6-7.

⁸³ Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992), pp.2-3. Note Carpenter’s comments in her conclusion: ‘...the real litmus-paper reign is that of Richard II, which cries out for constitutional treatment, especially an examination of the king’s dealings with the localities, for it is apparent that, even in the 1380s, Richard was trying to establish the kind of rule by “law” that was to be the norm by the sixteenth century.’; p.637. Other work of Carpenter’s which emphasises both the central position of law, and the importance of local politics, to the late medieval constitution, includes, ‘Law, Justice and Landowners in Later Medieval England’, *L.H.R.*, i (1983), 205-37; ‘Gentry and Community in Medieval England’, *J.B.S.*, xxxiii (1994), 340-80; ‘Political and Constitutional History: Before and After McFarlane’, in R.H. Britnell and A.J. Pollard, eds., *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society* (Stroud, 1995), pp.175-206, see esp. pp.196-7.

⁸⁴ C. Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution in England, c. 1437-1509* (Cambridge, 1997), pp.37, 45.

in high politics that it had done previously, but if this were the case (as it appears to have been),⁸⁵ there seems little reason why such an agenda should then be imposed on the late Middle Ages in general. The medieval constitution was, indeed, concerned with questions of law and property, but these did not form the absolute 'essence' of the late medieval constitution any more than justice formed the absolute 'essence' of the medieval parliament.⁸⁶ Such reductionism serves little purpose in uncovering the true nature of what constituted the polity and if anything, it positively encourages the continued obscurity and uncertainty surrounding parliament's rôle within it.

* * *

In the light of the relative neglect of parliament following the implementation of the McFarlane agenda, together with recent calls by current historians for a new constitutional history that sidelines central institutions, there is clearly a need to reassert the place of parliament in the late medieval polity. This thesis aims to go some way towards achieving this goal by investigating the nature and activity of parliament between 1369 and 1421. In the following study I acknowledge the fact that parliament was attended by borough representatives and that parliamentary business sometimes concerned mercantile or urban issues, but the primary focus of the investigation lies with the landed élites who were present at the institution - the king, the magnates and the gentry (or knights of the shire). This is essentially a study about how landed society operated within the context of the late medieval parliament. Within this framework, the thesis attempts to be as inclusive as possible taking into account the multi-faceted and multi-layered nature of the institution. Thus, it is not simply a study about medieval politics but incorporates important new interpretations about the

⁸⁵ See B.P. Wolffe, *Henry VI* (London, 1981), p.215; 'During the first half of its existence, to 1449, the Lancastrian dynasty had had remarkably little trouble from parliaments....[w]ith the exception of an awkward initial five or six years'. For Edward IV's reign see C. Ross, *Edward IV* (London, 1974), p.341: 'The reign of Edward IV is traditionally regarded as one of the least constructive and inspiring phases in the history of the English parliament. If we employ the traditional yardstick - the degree of initiative and activity shown by the Commons - this remains largely true'. However, the view of the diminishing of parliament's importance in the fifteenth century has been best elucidated by B. Wilkinson when he referred to, '...the loss [in 1422] by the Commons of most of the political initiative which they had held intermittently between 1376 and 1422 and which they were not to regain for more than two centuries', Review Article, *Speculum*, xxxi (1956), 401-3, p.402.

⁸⁶ It is worth suggesting that the conclusions reached by Powell and Carpenter have been influenced, to a certain extent, by the limitations of their subject matter. It seems questionable, for example, that Powell directs us towards a new and general constitutional history based on jurisdiction and law, when he himself acknowledges that his particular interest in this subject stems from his being '...a legal historian concerned to set the workings of the law in their social context': 'After "After McFarlane"', p.12. Similarly, since Carpenter's main area of concern appears to be with local gentry society, where the politics of land-holding formed the substance of social interaction, it should come as no surprise that 'law' is also considered by this historian to be the defining factor in the medieval constitution.

organisation of parliament, the way it functioned and the way in which it was perceived by contemporaries.

The period between 1369 and 1421 has been selected for two reasons. Firstly, fifty years is more than sufficient time for judgements to be made as to what was typical or untypical and what was new or well-established in the procedures or type of personnel who attended parliament. Such a time span enables generalisations to be made and broad historical trends to be identified without running the risk of using too narrow a basis of evidence or choosing an atypical parliament. Secondly, this particular fifty year period has been chosen because it marked one of the most significant points in the development of the English parliament, certainly in the medieval context. The period *before* 1369, and particularly the reign of Edward III, could be said to have marked a formative stage in parliament's history when the institution was still essentially finding its feet and establishing for itself a recognised place in the polity; the Commons in particular had only emerged as a permanent element of the institution in the 1320s and, apart from the crisis of 1340-1, were still fairly timid in the parliamentary setting.⁸⁷ *After* 1421, and for most of the remainder of the fifteenth century, parliament receded in terms of its rôle in high politics and by the time of the Yorkist kings, its meetings had become comparatively rare and infrequent.⁸⁸ Between these periods, however, parliamentary activity was not only extremely intensive, with the assembly being summoned on a regular and consistent basis, but, especially in the reigns of Richard II and Henry IV, its proceedings were often pivotal to the course and nature of national politics. This was undoubtedly a high-point in the rôle of parliament in the kingdom's affairs and it therefore promises to be one of the best and most rewarding periods in which to analyse the development and characteristics of the institution. The last years of Edward III's reign have been included because 1369 marked an important juncture in the history of parliament when the resumption of hostilities between England and France heralded the beginning of a prolonged period of heavy and consistent extraordinary taxation.⁸⁹

The structure of the thesis reflects my concern to consider the broad issues.

⁸⁷ This period seems to have attracted the lion's share of attention from historians. This was noted by Myers who stated that, 'The birth and infancy of an institution often prove more attractive to historians than the years of its adolescence; and so it has been, on the whole, in the case of parliament'; 'Some Observations on the procedure of the Commons in dealing with bills in the Lancastrian Period', *University of Toronto Law Journal*, iii (1939), pp. 51-73, repr. in *idem, Crown, Household and Parliament*, pp.45-67.

⁸⁸ See above, note 85.

⁸⁹ Note that although 1369 marked the beginning of hostilities, it was not until 1371 that parliament first granted direct taxation.

There are three main parts. The first, comprising chapters 2-4, considers parliament as it operated at the 'centre', when the king, Lords and Commons met to discuss the affairs of the realm. Thus, in chapter 2, parliament is examined from the perspective of the crown where I assess its record in gaining parliamentary taxation, its control of statutory legislation and the importance of the king's personality on parliamentary proceedings. Chapter 3 looks at parliament from the perspective of the Lords. Here, the discussion focuses on the 'professional' element in parliament as well as on the question of the Lords' leadership of the Commons and their participation in the financial matters of parliamentary sessions. Finally, chapter 4 investigates parliament from the perspective of the Commons, focussing primarily on the knights of the shire. This chapter relies heavily on the results of an extensive prosopographical survey which is principally based on the biographical material contained in the recently published History of Parliament Trust volumes (1386-1421), but also draws on my own research for the period between 1377 and 1385.

The second part of the thesis - chapters 5-7 - considers parliament as an essentially 'local' phenomenon. The aim of this section of the thesis is to demonstrate that parliament was not only a prominent feature of central government and administration but that its activity could also have important implications on life in the locality by acting as a two-way channel of communication between the crown and local communities and individuals. Chapter 5 addresses the issue of county elections and focusses, in particular, on the procedure and personnel of elections, as well as the criteria necessary for election itself. Chapter 6 moves on to consider parliament as a forum for the redress of private individual or group complaints. This discussion offers a significant reappraisal of the place of private petitioning in the late medieval parliament. The final chapter of Part II attempts to illuminate the impact and effects of statutory legislation in the localities. The remainder of the thesis - Part III - consists of a more substantial eighth chapter in which I assess the contemporary perception of the place of parliament in the polity. This chapter consciously diverges from the more traditional quantitative methods adopted up to this point by relying on the textual appreciation and qualitative assessment of chronicle and other 'unofficial' sources which recorded the activities of the late medieval parliament.

The purpose of the thesis is not simply to synthesize the considerable body of secondary material which already exists on the late medieval parliament but also to combine a re-reading of the traditional sources of parliament, the presentation of new evidence and the exploitation of prosopographical methodology to produce a substantially new and revisionist interpretation of the place of parliament in the late medieval polity.

PART I: PARLIAMENT AT THE CENTRE

CHAPTER 2: THE CROWN AND PARLIAMENT

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to reassert the preeminence of the place of the king - or crown - in parliament. This is a theme which has been picked up by a number of historians, most notably G.O. Sayles, F.W. McKenna and G.R. Elton, each of whom has been at pains to emphasise that the late medieval English parliament was the *king's* parliament; it came into existence and continued to flourish throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries because of the will of the king, not because of the power of the Commons.¹ Whilst this important corrective has not gone unnoticed in recent historiography, it still awaits a broadly based consideration in its own right.² The intention of this chapter is to go some way towards this goal by addressing in detail three principal themes: firstly, the crown's success in gaining taxation from parliament; secondly, the absolute control it exercised over the legislative process; and thirdly, the critical factor which the king's personality could have on the nature and course of parliament. There are a number of issues which have a relevance to the crown in parliament but these are better addressed in other parts of the thesis. They include the influence on the Commons of bastard feudal ties with the king (chapter 3); the rôle of the king's ministers in parliament (chapter 2), and the effectiveness of royal legislation in the localities (chapter 7).

i) THE CROWN AND PARLIAMENTARY TAXATION³

The opening of the Hundred Years War early in Edward III's reign, and with it the imposition of regular parliamentary taxation on the population, was one of the most important factors which elevated the status and rôle of the Commons in the late medieval parliament. The Romano-canonical doctrine of 'necessity', which stated that taxation could

¹ G.O. Sayles, *The King's Parliament of England* (London, 1975), pp.3-20, 109-36; J.W. McKenna, 'The Myth of Parliamentary Sovereignty in Late-Medieval England', *E.H.R.*, xciv (1979), 481-506; G.R. Elton, "The Body of the Whole Realm": Parliament and Representation in Medieval and Tudor England', in *Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics*, ii (Cambridge, 1974), pp.19-61.

² G.L. Harriss, 'The Management of Parliament', in *idem*, ed., *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (Oxford, 1985), pp.137-58; W.M. Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III: Crown and Political Society in England, 1327-1377* (London, 1990), pp.63-8; *idem*, 'Edward III's Government of England, c.1346-1356', University of Oxford, D.Phil thesis (1984), ch. v.

³ The following discussion should be read in reference to Table 1.

be levied only with the assent of the representatives of the community, furnished the Commons with an unprecedented opportunity to influence the politics of the realm.⁴ Some historians have interpreted this development as heralding a period in which the emergence of the Commons as a political force in their own right went hand in hand with a corresponding degree of erosion in the authority and power of the crown.⁵ More recently, however, the record has been set straight.⁶ It has been pointed out that the *quid pro quo* for the crown was that so long as the case for urgent 'necessity' could be proved (ie. that taxation was needed to ensure the good and safety of the kingdom) there was actually very little the Commons could do to resist the king's demands for taxes.⁷ If the king was bound to seek the assent of the Commons for raising a subsidy, then the Commons were bound to grant it if it was in urgent need. The following section illustrates this point by briefly summarising the record of the crown in gaining extraordinary taxation in the period between 1369 and 1421.

Historians are broadly agreed that the 1370s saw a marked deterioration in the relations between crown and political community in parliament.⁸ In part, this view could be explained by the momentous events of the Good Parliament of 1376 which tend to cast a far-reaching shadow across the decade as a whole as if they typified all the parliamentary proceedings of Edward III's latter days. It might also be explained by a tendency amongst historians to assume that once hostilities had resumed between England and France in 1369, the atmosphere between the king and the Commons automatically transformed from one of harmony to one of conflict and tension. War meant direct taxation, and direct taxation, it is supposed, meant confrontation between the king (who demanded it) and the Commons (who provided it). In fact, the significance of the Good Parliament of 1376 lay in the very contrast it presented to the four parliaments which preceded it and the one, in October 1377, which

⁴ G.L. Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance in Medieval England to 1369* (Oxford, 1975), p.512.

⁵ M. McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century, 1307-1399* (Oxford, 1959), p.221; M.H. Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1973), pp.158-9, 163.

⁶ Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, pp.3-48, 314-20; *idem*, 'War and the Emergence of the English Parliament, 1297-1360', *Journal of Medieval History*, ii (1976), 35-56, pp.38-9; Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III*, pp.64-5.

⁷ The doctrine of necessity is defined and discussed by Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, pp.3-48. Michael Prestwich has challenged the importance assigned by Harriss to the principle of necessity in the thirteenth century but the former's opinions do not affect the period under discussion here; see M. Prestwich, *English Politics in the Thirteenth Century* (London, 1990), pp.115-6, 127-8.

⁸ For example, note C. Given-Wilson's assertion that, 'What needs to be emphasised is the sharp contrast between the political atmosphere of the 1360s and that of the 1370s' and his belief that a '...period of external peace, internal harmony, and relatively low taxation [ie. in the 1360s]...was shattered by the renewal of the war with France in 1369'; C. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance in England 1360-1413* (London and New Haven, 1986), p.23. See also J.S. Roskell, *The Impeachment of Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, in 1386* (Manchester, 1984), p.14-5 and R. Butt, *A History of Parliament: The Middle Ages* (London, 1989), pp.329-35.

TABLE 1: PARLIAMENT, 1369-1421

- A. = Duration of indirect taxation
 B. = Date when taxation was granted in parliament
 C. = Number of common petitions
 D. = Number of statutes

| YEAR & PLACE OF PARLIAMENT | DATE OF SESSIONS | LENGTH | TAXES GRANTED: DIRECT | TAXES GRANTED: INDIRECT | A. | B. | C. | D. |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|-----|----|
| 1369 WESTMINSTER | 3 JUNE-11 JUNE | 9 DAYS | NO | WOOL SUBSIDY | 3 YEARS | 7 JUNE | 12 | 1 |
| 1371 WESTMINSTER | 24 FEB.-29 MAR. | 34 DAYS | PARISH SUBSIDY | NO | N/A | 28 MAR. | 35 | 4 |
| 1372 WESTMINSTER | 3 NOV.-24 NOV. | 19 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 2 YEARS 1 YEAR | 23 NOV. | 32 | - |
| 1373 WESTMINSTER | 21 NOV.-10 DEC. | 20 DAYS | TWO FIFTEENTHS & TWO TENTHS | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 2 YEARS 2 YEARS | 29 NOV. | 22 | 2 |
| 1376 WESTMINSTER | 28 APRIL-10 JULY | 74 DAYS | NO | WOOL SUBSIDY | 3 YEARS | - | 140 | - |
| 1377 WESTMINSTER | 27 JAN.-2 MAR. | 35 DAYS | POLL TAX | NO | N/A | BEFORE 22 FEB | 61 | 6 |
| 1377 WESTMINSTER | 13 OCT.-29 NOV.? | 54 DAYS | TWO FIFTEENTHS & TWO TENTHS | NO | N/A | 28 OCT. | 69 | 11 |
| 1378 GLOUCESTER | 20 OCT.-16 NOV. | 28 DAYS | NO | WOOL SUBSIDY POUNDAGE | ½ YR 1 YEAR | - | 39 | 8 |
| 1379 WESTMINSTER | 24 APRIL-27 MAY | 33 DAYS | GRADUATED POLL TAX | WOOL SUBSIDY | 1 YEAR | 27 MAY | 30 | 3 |
| 1380 WESTMINSTER | 16 JAN.-3 MAR. | 48 DAYS | ONE & A HALF FIFTEENTHS & ONE & A HALF TENTHS | WOOL SUBSIDY | 1 YEAR | - | 14 | 3 |
| 1380 NORTHAMPTON | 5 NOV.-6 DEC. | 32 DAYS | POLL TAX | WOOL SUBSIDY | 1 YEAR | - | 25 | 2 |
| 1381 WESTMINSTER | 3 NOV.-13 DEC. 27 JAN.-25 FEB. | 71 DAYS | NO | WOOL SUBSIDY | 4 YEARS | 25 FEB. | 33 | 16 |
| 1382 WESTMINSTER | 7 MAY-22 MAY | 16 DAYS | NO | TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 2.5 YRS | 21 MAY | - | 5 |
| 1382 WESTMINSTER | 6 OCT.-24 OCT. | 19 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH | NO | N/A | 18 OCT | 31 | 13 |
| 1383 WESTMINSTER | 23 FEB.-10 MAR. | 16 DAYS | NO | NO | N/A | - | 10 | 5 |
| 1383 WESTMINSTER | 26 OCT.-26 NOV. | 32 DAYS | HALF A FIFTEENTH & HALF A TENTH | NO | N/A | BEFORE 16 NOV | 27 | 16 |
| 1384 SALISBURY | 24 APRIL-27 MAY | 34 DAYS | HALF A FIFTEENTH & HALF A TENTH | NO | N/A | AFTER 9 MAY | 5 | - |
| 1384 WESTMINSTER | 12 NOV.-14 DEC. | 33 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH | NO | N/A | - | 17 | 5 |
| 1385 WESTMINSTER | 25 OCT.-6 DEC. | 48 DAYS | ONE & A HALF FIFTEENTHS & ONE & A HALF TENTHS | WOOL SUBSIDY | 1 YEAR | - | 28 | 5 |

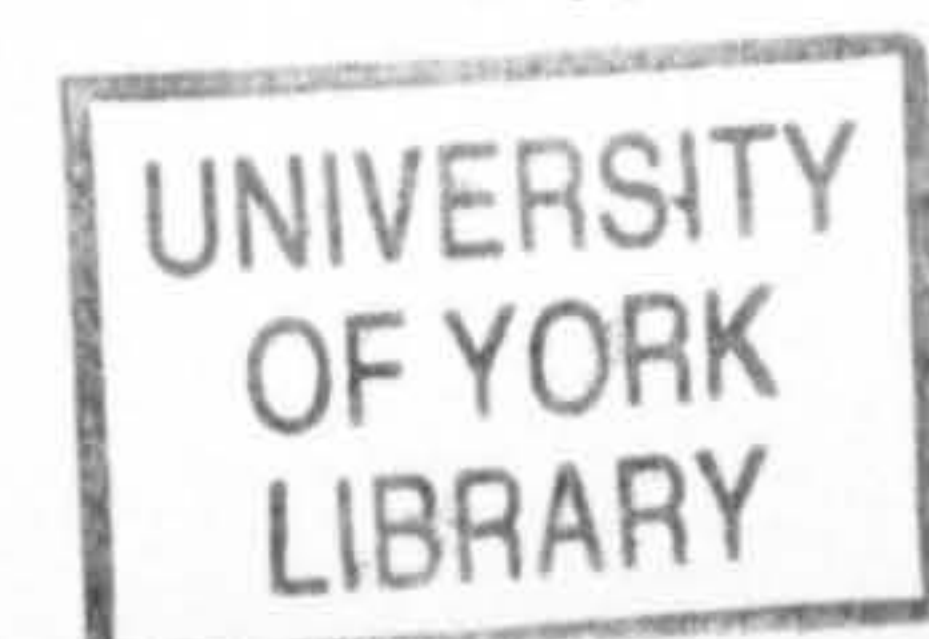
| YEAR & PLACE OF PARLIAMENT | DATE OF SESSIONS | LENGTH | TAXES GRANTED: <i>DIRECT</i> | TAXES GRANTED: <i>INDIRECT</i> | A. | B. | C. | D. |
|----------------------------------|--|----------|---|---|------------------------|---------|----|----|
| 1386 WESTMINSTER | 1 OCT.- 28 NOV. | 59 DAYS | HALF A FIFTEENTH & TENTH | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 4 MONTHS 1 YEAR | - | 15 | 1 |
| 1388 WESTMINSTER | 3 FEB.- 20 MAR. 13 APR.- 4 JUNE | 100 DAYS | HALF A FIFTEENTH & TENTH | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 1 YEAR 1 YEAR | 10 MAR. | 25 | 11 |
| 1388 CAMBRIDGE | 9 SEPT.- 17 OCT. | 39 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH | ?WOOL SUBSIDY SUBSIDY ON MERCHANDISE | ?1 YEAR 6 MONTHS | - | ? | 16 |
| 1390 WESTMINSTER | 17 JAN.- 2 MAR. | 45 DAYS | NO | WOOL SUBSIDY SUBSIDY ON WINE & MERCHANDISE | 10 MONTHS 10 MONTHS | 2 MAR. | 25 | 24 |
| 1390 WESTMINSTER | 12 NOV.- 3 DEC. | 22 DAYS | NO | WOOL SUBSIDY SUBSIDY ON WINE & MERCHANDISE | 3 YEARS 3 YEARS | 3 DEC. | 20 | 12 |
| 1391 WESTMINSTER | 3 NOV.- 2 DEC. | 30 DAYS | HALF A FIFTEENTH & HALF A TENTH | NO | N/A | 2 DEC. | 25 | 12 |
| 1393 WINCHESTER | 20 JAN.- 10 FEB. | 22 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 3 YEARS 3 YEARS | - | 14 | 6 |
| 1394 WESTMINSTER | 27 JAN.- 6 MAR. | 39 DAYS | NO | NO | N/A | N/A | 25 | 13 |
| 1395 WESTMINSTER | 27 JAN.- 15 FEB. | 20 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH | NO | N/A | - | 4 | - |
| 1397 WESTMINSTER | 22 JAN.- 12 FEB. | 22 DAYS | NO | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 5 YEARS 3 YEARS | >3 FEB. | 3 | 6 |
| 1397/8 WESTMINSTER SHREWSBURY | 17 SEPT.- 29 SEPT. 27 JAN.- 31 JAN. | 18 DAYS | ONE & A HALF FIFTEENTHS & ONE & A HALF TENTHS | WOOL SUBSIDY | LIFE | 31 JAN. | 8 | 9 |
| 1399 WESTMINSTER | 6 OCT.- 19 NOV. | 51 DAYS | NO | WOOL SUBSIDY | 3 YEARS | 15 OCT. | 70 | 20 |
| 1401 WESTMINSTER | 20 JAN.- 10 MAR. | 50 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH | TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 2 YEARS | 10 MAR. | 58 | 24 |
| 1402 WESTMINSTER | 30 SEPT.- 25 NOV. | 57 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 3 YEARS 2.5 YRS | 24 NOV. | 85 | 35 |
| 1404 WESTMINSTER | 14 JAN.- 20 MAR. | 66 DAYS | INCOME TAX | NO | N/A | ?20 MAR | 30 | 15 |
| 1404 COVENTRY | 6 OCT.- 13 NOV. | 39 DAYS | TWO FIFTEENTHS & TWO TENTHS LAND TAX | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 2 YEARS 2 YEARS | 12 NOV. | 16 | 4 |
| 1406 WESTMINSTER | 1 MAR.- 3 APR. 25 APR.- 19 JUNE 13 OCT.- 22 DEC | 161 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 1 YEAR 1 YEAR | 22 DEC. | 41 | 18 |

| YEAR & PLACE OF PARLIAMENT | DATE OF SESSIONS | LENGTH | TAXES GRANTED: DIRECT | TAXES GRANTED: INDIRECT | A. | B. | C. | D. |
|----------------------------|---|---------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------|----------|----|----|
| 1407 GLOUCESTER | 20 OCT.- 2 DEC. | 44 DAYS | ONE & A HALF FIFTEENTHS & ONE & A HALF TENTHS | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 2 YEARS 2 YEARS | 2 DEC. | 30 | 10 |
| 1410 WESTMINSTER | 27 JAN.- 15 MAR. 6 APR.- 9 MAY | 81 DAYS | ONE & A HALF FIFTEENTHS & ONE & A HALF TENTHS | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 2 YEARS 2 YEARS | 8 MAY | 32 | 9 |
| 1411 WESTMINSTER | 3 NOV.- 19 DEC. | 46 DAYS | INCOME TAX | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 1 YEAR 1 YEAR | ?19 DEC | 24 | 7 |
| 1413 WESTMINSTER | 14 MAY- 9 JUNE | 72 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH | WOOL SUBSIDY TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 4 YEARS 1 YEAR | 9 JUNE | 14 | 10 |
| 1414 LEICESTER | 30 APR.- 29 MAY | 30 DAYS | NO TAX ASKED FOR | TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | 3 YEARS | 28 MAY | 24 | 8 |
| 1414 WESTMINSTER | 19 NOV.- 7 DEC. | 18 DAYS | TWO FIFTEENTHS & TWO TENTHS | NO | N/A | ?20 NOV. | 13 | 6 |
| 1415 WESTMINSTER | 4 NOV.- 17 NOV. | 13 DAYS | OUTSTANDING FIFTEENTH & TENTH ADVANCED | WOOL SUBSIDY & TONNAGE & POUNDAGE | LIFE LIFE | 17 NOV. | 4 | 1 |
| 1416 WESTMINSTER | 16 MAR.- 8 APR. 10 MAY- 4 JUNE | 48 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH ADVANCED | NO | N/A | - | 26 | 8 |
| 1416 WESTMINSTER | 19 OCT.- 18 NOV. | 30 DAYS | TWO FIFTEENTHS & TWO TENTHS | NO | N/A | - | 9 | 8 |
| 1417 WESTMINSTER | 16 NOV.- 17 DEC. | 31 DAYS | TWO FIFTEENTHS & TWO TENTHS | NO | N/A | 17 DEC. | 7 | 1 |
| 1419 WESTMINSTER | 16 OCT.- 13 NOV. | 28 DAYS | ONE & A THIRD FIFTEENTH & ONE & A THIRD TENTH | NO | N/A | 13 NOV. | 8 | 2 |
| 1420 WESTMINSTER | 2 DEC.- 18 DEC. | 16 DAYS | NO | NO | N/A | N/A | 16 | 3 |
| 1421 WESTMINSTER | 2 MAY- 23 MAY | 21 DAYS | UNRECORDED GRANT | NO | N/A | - | 14 | 12 |
| 1421 WESTMINSTER | 1 DEC.- 8 DEC. | 7 DAYS | ONE FIFTEENTH & ONE TENTH | NO | N/A | 1 DEC. | 15 | 11 |

followed. In 1376, the crown was refused a grant of a fifteenth and tenth⁹ and the agenda of parliament itself was completely taken out of the latter's hands and determined by the Lower House in conjunction with a group of disaffected noblemen.¹⁰ In contrast, between 1369 and 1373 and in Edward III's last parliament the Commons not only proved far from parsimonious

⁹ Although, as Ormrod has pointed out, even this refusal should not be overstated, for it was made in the context of a period of official truce between England and France between 1375 and 1377 (as a result of the Treaty of Bruges), thus effectively removing the crown's theoretical basis to call on parliament for a lay subsidy. Despite their refusal, the Commons still stated that they would have been willing to aid the king '...pur aucunes chargeantes bosoignes'; Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III*, p.165; *RP*, ii. 322.9.

¹⁰ For a description of this assembly, see G. Holmes, *The Good Parliament* (Oxford, 1975), pp.100-49; Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III*, pp.35-38.



but at no point did they appear to use, or even threaten to use, their hold over extraordinary taxation to swamp parliamentary business with their own agenda.

The parliament of 1369 was, in many ways an extremely unusual assembly in that its main purpose was to endorse Edward III's resumption of the French royal title.¹¹ No direct taxation was requested, but, as if to compensate for this, the wool subsidy was granted for no fewer than three years.¹² It was in the following parliament that the Commons' commitment to the war was first put to the full test. W.M. Ormrod has shown that in terms of the amount raised, the parliament of 1371 produced what was probably one of the most successful lay subsidies in the whole of the late medieval period.¹³ It is estimated that just under £50,000 was paid into the exchequer from the Parish Subsidy which compares to £38,000 which a standard fifteenth and tenth could be expected to raise.¹⁴ In 1371, the war had not yet turned for the worse, but even after it did, in 1372,¹⁵ the Commons displayed no reluctance to contribute to the financial costs incurred by foreign expeditions and home defence. In the parliament of November that year, a full fifteenth and tenth was granted along with a renewal of the wool subsidy and tonnage and poundage and in 1373 no fewer than two fifteenths and tenths were granted alongside the other grants of indirect taxation.¹⁶ It has been estimated that between 1369 and 1375, the crown enjoyed a total income of £690,000 from extraordinary taxation.¹⁷

As far as the agenda of these parliaments goes there is also fairly conclusive evidence showing that the Commons did not engage in the sort of hard bargaining over the

¹¹ *RP*. ii. 299-302.

¹² Direct taxation in the form of a lay subsidy was not granted because the crown did not ask for it. Harriss suggests that this was because no military action was envisaged for the immediate future; *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, p.469.

¹³ W.M. Ormrod, 'An Experiment in Taxation: The English Parish Subsidy of 1371', *Speculum*, lxiii (1988), 58-82.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.80. See also E.B. Fryde, 'Parliament and the Revolt of 1381', in *Liber Memorialis Georges de Lagarde: Studies Presented to the International Commission for the History of Representative and Parliamentary Institutions*, xxxviii (Louvain and Paris, 1970), pp. 83-4. See also E.B. Fryde, 'Introduction to the New Edition', in C. Oman, *The Great Revolt of 1381*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1969), pp.xxii-xvi

¹⁵ G. Holmes identifies this year as the turning point in the conflict because of the loss by the English of Poitou, Saintonge, and Angoumois as well as the defeat of English naval forces at La Rochelle; Holmes, *The Good Parliament*, pp.21-22. See also A. Curry, *The Hundred Years War* (London, 1993), p.79.

¹⁶ *RP*. ii. 310, 317. The gross yield arising from the fifteenths and tenths granted in these two parliaments amounted to £113,540; J.W. Sherborne, 'The Cost of English Warfare with France in the Later Fourteenth Century', *B.I.H.R.*, 1 (1977), p.141. The fact that the Commons themselves requested not to be collectors of the two fifteenths and tenths granted in 1373 would seem to indicate their acknowledgement of the burden of taxation they had granted; *RP*. ii. 317.12. This was not, of course, the first time that the Commons made this request; see 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), p.82.

¹⁷ Sherborne, 'Cost of English Warfare', pp.140-2. Significantly, Sherborne estimates that from 1369 to 1375 total expenditure on war was £634,900.

redress before supply which has commonly been accredited to them in the fourteenth century.¹⁸ It has been assumed that when grants of taxation were delayed until the last day of parliament this signalled that the Commons were deliberately linking taxation and common petitions (which were answered at this point) so as to extract as many concessions from the crown as possible. In 1369, 1372, 1373 and October 1377, however, the grant of taxation was made *before* the last day of parliament, and sometimes over a week before the end of the session.¹⁹ This appears to indicate that Edward III had not lost his touch when it came to prioritising the king's business in parliament (ie. the discussion of taxation) before all other business was considered. Indeed, this is demonstrated quite explicitly by the fact that in 1371 not all common petitions were actually addressed in parliament and even those which were held over to the council meeting at Winchester later in the year, were not all answered.²⁰ The confidence the crown displayed in the 'management' of parliamentary proceedings in the early 1370s was also highlighted in 1373 when it was quite blatantly stated at the beginning of the assembly that '*...toutes maneres de Petitions & autres singulers Busoignes demoergent en suspens tant que ceste [the charge given to the Commons concerning what grant they would make] soit mys a bon fyn & exploit*'.²¹

If historians have tended to play down the financial success of the crown in the later years of Edward III's reign, the same could also be said of the early years of his successor. Other issues, besides this, have tended to dominate historiography. These include: the disgruntlement of the Commons over the course of the war; their increasing desire to reduce the amount of taxation being levied; their mistrust and suspicion of how the crown was spending parliamentary taxation; and the nature and consequences of the experimental poll taxes which were levied during these years.²² The advent of a minority council undoubtedly encouraged the Commons to retain the assertiveness that they had displayed in the Good

¹⁸ Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, p.505; W.M. Ormrod, *Political Life in Medieval England, 1300-1450* (London and Basingstoke, 1995), p.35-36.

¹⁹ See Table 1. It is worth making the point that if grants were made *before* the end of parliament, when the answers to petitions were read out, the chances of a link being made between redress and supply were considerably reduced. It is possible, therefore, that historians have overemphasised the extent to which the crown and community 'bargained' with each other at least in the point in time.

²⁰ *RP*. ii. 304.10-13; Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III*, p.66.

²¹ *RP*. ii. 316.4.

²² A.B. Steel, *Richard II* (Cambridge, 1941), pp.37-57; McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, pp.406-7; Fryde, 'Introduction to the New Edition', p.xvii; *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, ed. R.B. Dobson, 2nd edn. (London, 1983), pp.99-149; Fryde, 'Parliament and the Revolt', pp.76-79; J.J.N. Palmer, *England, France, and Christendom, 1377-99* (London, 1972), pp.9-10; J. G. Edwards, *The Second Century of the English parliament* (Oxford, 1979), pp.27-31; A. Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility* (London, 1973), pp.33-57; *idem*, 'Richard II and the Hundred Years War', in J. Taylor and W. Childs, eds., *Politics and Crisis in Fourteenth Century England* (Gloucester, 1990), p.123; N.Saul, *Richard II* (London, 1997), pp.49-50.

Parliament and one possible consequence of this was that grants of taxation *were* now delayed until the last day of parliament when the responses to common petitions were read out.²³ Nevertheless, if we leave aside all the disagreements and political wrangling which occurred in parliament at this time, and concentrate purely on the crown's record of taxation, a picture very different from one of confrontation and opposition emerges.

Above all, this is shown by the response of the political community to the urgent need in the 1370s to reform the nature of direct taxation. Until this point lay subsidies had normally been collected in the form of a standard fifteenth and tenth which was collected according to fixed assessments made in 1334 on town and village communities.²⁴ The renewal of war with France in 1369, and with it, the need for new direct taxation, highlighted to the crown how outdated this system was; the passage of time and, particularly, the huge social and economic upheaval caused by the Black Death, rendered the original quotas of 1334 obsolete with the result that some impoverished and depopulated communities were now having to pay more than other communities which had escaped relatively unscathed.²⁵ This was not, however, purely a crisis in *crown* finance. It is true, of course, that it was the king who no longer had an efficient and effective system of direct taxation to fill the coffers of the exchequer, but it must be stressed that it was a crisis which was responded to by the political community in general - not just by the king. The Parish Subsidy of 1371, together with the poll taxes of January 1377, 1379 and November 1380 were joint-stock enterprises which saw the king, Lords and Commons *working together* in order to overcome the failings of the conventional fifteenth and tenth.²⁶ There was no division of interest here; parliament as a whole recognised the need for reform and parliament as a whole responded to this need. One of the major incentives for the Commons to support new ways of raising extraordinary revenue

²³ As the examples from the 1370s prove, G.L. Harriss would seem to be a little premature in his assertion that this important procedural principle had been won by the end of the 1360s; *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, pp.504-5. In all the parliaments of Richard II's reign - and beyond - where the date of the subsidy is recorded, only a handful of sessions occurred when the grant was actually made before the last few days of the session. In Richard II's reign this happened in the parliaments of October 1383 and the Merciless parliament of 1388. This latter assembly was to show just how fixed this procedure had become because both the Lords and Commons protested to the king that all parliamentary business should be completed before the subsidy came into effect '*as was the custom*'; *RP*. iii. 244.11. Interestingly, the grants enjoyed by Henry V in the parliament of 1415, which included indirect taxation for life, were made just over half way through the session indicating, perhaps, the euphoria of the political community in the king's military success. The assembly of December 1421 opened with a grant of taxation, but this was probably a deferred grant from the previous parliament held in May; Harriss, 'Management of Parliament', p.151.

²⁴ J.F. Willard, *Parliamentary Taxes on Personal Property, 1290 to 1334* (Cambridge, Mass., 1934), pp.5-6; Ormrod, *Political Life*, p.91.

²⁵ See W.M. Ormrod, 'The Politics of Pestilence: Government in England after the Black Death', in W.M. Ormrod and P.G. Lindley, eds., *The Black Death in England* (Stamford, 1996), pp.159-67.

²⁶ For these subsidies see Ormrod, 'Experiment in Taxation'; *The Peasants' Revolt*, pp.99-149; Fryde, 'Parliament and the Revolt', pp.76-9; *idem*, 'Introduction to the New Edition', pp.xii-xxi.

stemmed from the increasing hostility they felt towards the emergence of a prosperous and flourishing peasant community which had benefited from favourable conditions in the post-Black Death economy.²⁷ This sentiment is shown to good effect by the fact that it was the Commons, rather than the king or Lords, who opted for the most severe type of levy in November 1381 - the third and most infamous of the poll taxes - when they had the choice of other less exacting subsidies, including a standard fifteenth and tenth.²⁸ This poll tax was intended to raise the huge sum of £100,000 (the equivalent of over two and a half fifteenths and tenths) within the space of just one year.

That the Commons were less antagonistic to the principle of taxation than much of current historiography would suggest, is also supported by a fresh analysis of their actions in the early 1380s. The consensus is that the Revolt put an end to the generosity of the Commons, who *refused* to grant taxation in three out of the four following parliaments (these being the assemblies of 1381, May 1382, and February 1383).²⁹ This is an opinion based on the dubious and unsupported assumption that the crown had actually sought direct taxation from these parliaments in the first place. It also presupposes that only the Commons were worried about the implications of imposing further lay subsidies on a hostile and rebellious population. In the case of 1381, there is no evidence indicating that the crown sought direct taxation from the Commons; this assembly met primarily to settle the realm after the momentous upheaval of the summer and this intention was reflected in the content of the chancellor's opening speech as well as in the more detailed 'rehearsal of the causes' which was made shortly afterwards.³⁰ The principal objective of the summons to the parliament of May 1382 was to make arrangements for the collection of the wool subsidy granted in 1381 and also to make provision for the king's expected absence on an expedition abroad.³¹ Interestingly, as if to stress that there was no other hidden agenda, it was emphasised by the chancellor in this assembly that parliament had been summoned for these reasons and '*...pur nule autre cause*'.³² As far as the parliament of February 1383 was concerned, again no direct taxation was

²⁷ Ormrod, 'Politics of Pestilence', pp.163-5.

²⁸ *RP*. iii. 89.12-90.13; *The Peasants' Revolt*, pp.115-6.

²⁹ See Palmer, *England, France*, pp.9-10; Tuck, 'Richard II and the Hundred Years War', p.123; *idem*, 'Nobles, Commons and the Great Revolt of 1381', in R.H. Hilton and T.H. Aston, eds., *The English Rising of 1381* (Cambridge, 1984), pp.194-212, p.208.

³⁰ *RP*. iii. 98.2, 99.8.

³¹ *RP*. iii. 122.3. There are also reasons to suppose that this assembly was actually an adjournment of the previous session; see N.B. Lewis, 'Re-election to Parliament in the Reign of Richard II', *E.H.R.*, xlviii (1933), 364-94, p.388, note 4. See also my discussion in chapter 6, pp.175-6.

³² *RP*. iii. 122.3.

requested, but in this case it was because the assembly had met in order to discuss the allocation of the fifteenth and tenth which had been granted just five months previously in October 1382.³³ As on the other two occasions, there is no evidence to suggest that the crown's plea for a lay subsidy was rejected by the Commons.

All in all the period between 1369 and 1389 saw many turbulent assemblies but, crucially, it did not see the crown left high and dry financially speaking. So long as a state of war lasted, and so long as the realm faced threats to its security, the Commons did not shirk their responsibility to provide the necessary resources for the defence of the kingdom. This is not to say that the Commons liked taxation or that they displayed an enthusiasm for the war against France; simply, it is to suggest that they had an obligation to respond to the king's need for money, and that they consistently met it. The record speaks for itself: apart from the interruptions of 1376 and the immediate aftermath of the Peasants' Revolt, the crown enjoyed continuous direct taxation between the opening of hostilities in 1369 and the truce of 1389. If this was a particularly uninspiring part of the Hundred Years War for the English, it was not because parliament failed to provide the necessary resources to prosecute it satisfactorily. In the five parliaments before the Peasants' Revolt the crown managed to raise the considerable sum of £467,000, which was comparable to any amount which Edward III or Henry V was able to raise in a similar span of time.³⁴ Nor should the wool subsidy go without mention, for this provided the crown with an almost unbroken supply of extraordinary taxation no matter what the state of international relations was.³⁵ Indeed, it is interesting to see that at times when direct taxation was not granted, the wool subsidy appears to have been used by the Commons as a way of compensating the crown for its reduced income: in 1369, 1376, 1381, for example, and in several parliaments beyond this period (November 1390, January 1397, and 1399) the subsidy was granted for far longer than seems to have been typical.

Not surprisingly, the truce of 1389 saw a dramatic fall in the incidence of direct taxation; but it was only a *fall* - not a complete cessation. In the parliaments of 1391, 1393,

³³ *RP*. iii. 144.3.

³⁴ Sherborne, 'Costs of English Warfare', p.149. It is interesting how Harriss uses this period as a benchmark to measure the generosity of parliament under Henry V; 'Management of Parliament', pp.145-6.

³⁵ G.L. Harriss has demonstrated that this was a development dating to the 1360s when, despite the Treaty of Brétigny, the Commons renewed their grants of the wool subsidy (albeit at a reduced rate) in the parliaments of 1362, 1365, 1368 and 1369, thus effectively converting it into a permanent peacetime levy; Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, pp.467-69. The only break in the supply of indirect taxation to the king between 1369 and 1421 happened in the parliament of 1385 when the Commons suspended the subsidy for just over a month; J.J.N. Palmer, 'The Parliament of 1385 and the Constitutional Crisis of 1386', *Speculum*, xlvii (1971), 477-90, p.486. A useful summary of the record of indirect taxation at the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries can be found in J.S. Roskell, L. Clark, and C. Rawcliffe, eds., *The House of Commons, 1386-1421*, History of Parliament Trust, 4 vols. (Stroud, 1993), i, pp.119-24.

1395 and September 1397, the Commons provided the crown with lay subsidies not so much for the defence of the realm as to offset the diminution of revenue caused by the 'structural crisis in royal finance'.³⁶ G.L. Harriss and Alan Rogers have discussed this development in detail and little can really be added, except to re-emphasise that this was a remarkable concession to the crown.³⁷ Not only was the king enjoying what amounted to permanent indirect taxation, but now this was being supplemented by grants of direct taxation, all of which were subsidising 'non-extraordinary' expenditure. Harriss emphasises that this was not a permanent development but this makes the grants no less significant in the way they highlighted how entirely compromised the traditional definition of 'necessity' had become by the late fourteenth century. The 1390s made a mockery of the idea that extraordinary taxation could be granted only for extraordinary reasons, for the crown was enjoying lay subsidies, wool subsidies and the newfangled tonnage and poundage, all at a time of relative international harmony.³⁸ Indeed, it was a measure, perhaps, of just how flexible the Commons had become over what constituted the king's or the kingdom's urgent necessity that Richard contemplated and put into practice every late medieval king's dream of permanent extraordinary taxation (in the form of the wool subsidy for life).

Viewed in purely financial terms, Henry IV's reign must be considered one of the most significant, and arguably one of the most successful (for the crown) in the late Middle Ages. This success can be measured in two ways. Firstly, Henry was granted consistently heavy taxes from 1401 until the end of his reign in which he received a total of eight fifteenths and tenths, an income tax granted specifically by the Lords in October 1404,³⁹ and two unprecedented income taxes on land in January 1404⁴⁰ and 1411. The king also received the wool subsidy for the duration of the reign, and from 1399 to 1404, this was actually collected at the higher rate of 50s. a sack, instead of the standard rate of 43s. 4d. After 1402, crown revenue from taxation never fell below £75,000 per annum, and was probably nearer £90,000 on the occasions when fifteenths and tenths were granted.⁴¹ All this, we should remember, occurred in a period when war with France was, at least theoretically, in a state of abeyance.⁴²

³⁶ Harriss, 'Theory and Practice in Royal Taxation: some observations', *E.H.R.*, xlvii (1982), 811-19, p.819.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.812-814; *idem*, 'Thomas Cromwell's "New Principle" of Taxation', *E.H.R.*, xliii (1978), 721-738, pp.723-6. See also A. Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons and Taxation', *Mediaeval Studies*, xxxi (1969), 47-70, pp.49-50.

³⁸ See W.M. Ormrod, 'Finance and Trade under Richard II', in A. Goodman and J.L. Gillespie, eds., *Richard II: Power and Prerogative* (forthcoming).

³⁹ See Chapter 3, pp.92-3.

⁴⁰ See Chapter 4, p.115.

⁴¹ K.B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972), pp.94-5.

⁴² Curry, *Hundred Years War*, pp.89-94.

Secondly, despite initial opposition from the Commons, Henry succeeded in applying a considerable proportion of this extraordinary revenue to the day-to-day running costs of royal government.⁴³ Perhaps more significantly, though, this opposition soon receded and from January 1404 the Commons were specifically and openly allocating part of their lay subsidies to the ordinary expenses of the royal household.⁴⁴ This culminated in Henry IV's last parliament when the proceeds from the income tax were placed entirely at the king's free disposal.⁴⁵ In general, this reign saw one of the worst financial crises for the crown in the late Middle Ages but the response of parliament, far from demonstrating the crown's inherently weak position in the polity, illustrated just how much the king could rely on it to help him out of difficulty. If there was weakness in this reign it was on the part of the Commons who, despite their many attempts to instigate economy in government expenditure, ended up conceding '...a principle for which they had fought long and hard for decades, indeed for centuries'.⁴⁶

Under Henry V, huge success in war brought with it a corresponding degree of generosity from the Commons; they not only granted lay subsidies with remarkable liberality but the wool subsidy was freely granted to the king for his lifetime. Henry V's achievements in the area of parliamentary taxation should not be overstated, however; lay subsidies, though very heavy, were not collected during his reign at an unprecedented level⁴⁷ and the lifetime's supply of indirect taxation really only formalised an arrangement which had been followed more or less consistently since the 1360s. More importantly, unlike his two predecessors, Henry V struggled to secure direct taxation after peace had been negotiated between England and France in May 1420. G.L. Harriss has shown that in May 1421 there was an unrecorded confrontation between the king and the Commons over the principle of peacetime levies and that it was the king who was forced to step down.⁴⁸ Indeed, after the grant of a fifteenth and tenth in December 1421, there was a gap of seven years before the Commons once again provided the crown with direct taxation. Henry V had effectively confounded the precedent set by Richard II in the 1390s, when direct taxation was granted during a period of truce, and the

⁴³ In his unpublished PhD. thesis, Rogers suggests that in the course of Henry's reign, 'never less than a quarter and frequently more than a third of the nation's resources were engaged in the royal household'; 'The Household of Henry IV', University of Nottingham, Ph.D. thesis (1966), p.378.

⁴⁴ Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, pp.129-30.

⁴⁵ *RP*. iii. 648-9.10; '...pur ent disposer & ordeigner a la frank volunte de n[ost]re S[eigneu]r le Roy...'.
⁴⁶ Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, p.141.

⁴⁷ A useful comparison is given by W.M. Ormrod, 'The Domestic Response to the Hundred Years War', in A. Curry and M. Hugh, eds., *Arms, Armies and Fortifications in the Hundred Years War* (Woodbridge, 1994), pp.90, 92.

⁴⁸ Harriss, 'Management of Parliament', pp.149-51.

precedent set by his father in the 1400s, when a proportion of the lay subsidy was openly and consistently allocated to the household. It is ironic, perhaps, that of the four reigns which have been discussed in this analysis, it was under Henry V that the move towards permanent peacetime direct taxation had its most serious set-back.⁴⁹

The Commons' stubbornness in the early 1420s should not obscure the consistency of their financial generosity in the preceding fifty years.⁵⁰ Nor should it detract from the extreme flexibility shown by the Lower House to the circumstances in which extraordinary taxation could be levied. This flexibility highlighted the fact that taxation was not perceived by contemporaries as the king's money, to be spent merely for the benefit of the king; rather, it was a resource which was entrusted to the crown to be spent on the needs and in the interests of the kingdom. It was, in other words, *public finance*.⁵¹ This is why we should be careful in assuming that taxation automatically became the focus of conflict and tension between the crown and the Commons. If there was a genuine need for a subsidy, it was as much in the interests of the political community, as it was in the interests of the king, for parliament to grant it: at times of war, the question was not if, but how much, taxation the Commons would grant. What particularly marks the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries out, however, is that this period represented a highwater mark in the crown's ability to persuade the Lower House that an insolvent monarchy was just as valid a reason for a grant of extraordinary taxation, as was a defenceless realm. In this sense, parliamentary taxation was as much a manifestation of the power of the crown in parliament as much as it was the power of the Commons.

ii) THE CROWN AND LEGISLATION⁵²

Current attitudes towards late medieval legislation have been shaped primarily by the ideas of a handful of historians working earlier in this century. The work of Professor Gray, who looked at the contribution of the Commons in legislative matters, is particularly

⁴⁹ *Idem*, 'Theory and Practice in Royal Taxation', pp.815-6.

⁵⁰ Ormrod suggests that the level of taxation at the end of the fourteenth century represented '...something of a ceiling of sustainability beyond which the English state could no longer reach'; W.M. Ormrod, 'The West European Monarchies in the Later Middle Ages', in R. Bonney, ed., *Economic Systems and State Finance* (Oxford, 1995), pp.123-60, p.148.

⁵¹ This, of course, is the theme of Harriss' volume, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, esp. pp.509-17. See also his article, 'Political Society and the Growth of Government in Late Medieval England', *P&P*, cxxxviii (1993), 28-57. esp. pp.41-6; Ormrod, *Political Life*, pp.94-5.

⁵² A discussion of the numerical distribution of statutes enacted in the period between 1369 and 1421, with accompanying graph (Graph 5), can be found in Chapter 7, pp.201-3.

worthy of note, if only because his flawed conclusions spurred later historians to make a far more detailed and careful study of the subject.⁵³ Gray's fundamental mistake, as his greatest critic, S.B. Chrimes, put it, was '...to contemplate the existence of a struggle between the government and the commons for the right to initiate legislation...[where] the existence of this struggle...[was] to be found nowhere save in the author's mind'.⁵⁴ Elsewhere in his book, Chrimes described the situation as he saw it: statutes were, in fact, the result of a process of consultation between the political community and the government, where the former presented their grievances via common petitions, and the latter, through the council in parliament, selected which ones would then become new law.⁵⁵ This, reduced to its bare essentials, represents what is now the consensual view of the legislative process in late medieval England.⁵⁶

One of the main reasons Chrimes wrote his critique of Gray's work was to restore the 'balance of power' in statutory procedure by reducing the elevated position in it which Gray had allocated to the Commons. In part, this was achieved simply by dismissing the notion of the Commons attempting to wrest control of the legislative process from the crown. Chrimes demonstrated that they neither had the power nor, indeed, the inclination to do this. His case was made all the more effective, however, by the extremely important, but unfortunately only very fleeting, reference to the actual 'control' of the process by the crown itself. As he pointed out, 'If there really had been popular control of legislation, it would hardly be necessary for Professor Gray to record the rejection of large numbers of commons' bills by the king (or government) and Lords'.⁵⁷ Elsewhere, Chrimes also pointed out that it was not until 1432 that statutes began to be enacted 'by authority of parliament'; before this date all legislation was enacted solely in the name, and by the authority, of the king.⁵⁸ Rather than take the subject any further, however, Chrimes left the matter here and, indeed, very little has changed today.⁵⁹ Although few historians would dispute the preeminence of the crown or council in making legislation, the tendency is still to see the process in terms of what the

⁵³ H.L. Gray, *The Influence of the Commons on Early Legislation: A Study of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, Mass., 1932).

⁵⁴ S.B. Chrimes, *English Constitutional Ideas in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1936), pp.236-249.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.218-231.

⁵⁶ See A.L. Brown, *The Governance of Late Medieval England, 1272-1461* (London, 1989), pp.215-224; Ormrod, *Political Life*, p.37.

⁵⁷ Chrimes, *Constitutional Ideas*, p.239.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.101-4.

⁵⁹ Although note the comments by Sayles, *The King's Parliament*, pp.116-7; G.R. Elton, "'The Body of the Whole Realm": Parliament and Representation in Medieval and Tudor England', in *idem, Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics*, ii (Cambridge, 1974), pp.19-61, esp. pp.29-30.

Commons wanted and what the Commons achieved, as if they were of equal importance to the crown in choosing new statutes.⁶⁰ We still have no detailed investigation of what the ‘control of legislation’ by the crown entailed and it is this which the following discussion attempts to achieve in the context of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.

By way of preliminaries, however, it is necessary to stress that the crown did not view common petitions or statutes with natural hostility. This may seem an obvious statement to make, especially in reference to the views of Chrimes, but recent work has tended to play down the point by emphasizing the notion of the Commons *bargaining* with the crown over the redress of grievances, as if redress itself was a process entered upon unwillingly by the crown.⁶¹ Besides passing over the king’s traditional obligation to dispense justice in parliament,⁶² this association of statutes with royal concessions obscures the very important advantages that their derivative common petitions (and common grievances generally) provided for the crown;⁶³ namely, a mechanism with which it could accurately gauge the public mood in the shires and which could, if necessary, prompt royal action there. It is worth remembering that this very process formed a major part of the original vision of parliament by Edward I, who actively encouraged petitioning precisely in order to facilitate more vigorous royal government in the shires.⁶⁴ In our period, a good example of this in practice comes in the parliament of 1381 where the crown specifically stated that the cause of the summons was ‘...que amendment soit fait toutes partz ou defaultes notable sont trevez en dit Gouvernement [of the realm]’, and to this end, the Commons were invited to ‘...se advisassent bien & diligeaument de cestes matires, & des remedes que lour sembloit sur celles a ordener’.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ This could be attributed to two extremely important and influential articles written on the procedure of common petitioning; A.R. Myers, ‘Parliamentary Petitions in the Fifteenth Century’, *E.H.R.*, lii (1937), 385-404, 590-613, and D. Rayner, ‘The Forms and Machinery of the “Commune Petition” in the Fourteenth Century’, *E.H.R.*, lvi (1941), 198-233, 549-570. See also McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, p.194, ‘...legislation is, of course, founded on justice and even before the accession of Edward III, it was beginning to be founded on the *petitiones des communes*’; Ormrod, *Political Life*, p.37, ‘...statutes came more and more to incorporate the crown’s responses to common petitions’; Sayles, *The King’s Parliament*, p.115, ‘...under Edward III, legislation originated from below, being founded upon the petitions of the Commons’. Note the absence of any discussion of legislation in the chapter headed, ‘The Place of Parliament in the King’s Government’ in the recent History of Parliament Trust volumes; Roskell *et al*, eds., *The House of Commons*, i, pp.6-17.

⁶¹ Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, pp.257-8, 365-75, 502-8; Ormrod, *Political Life*, p.36-7.

⁶² H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, ‘Parliaments and Great Councils in Medieval England’, *L.Q.R.*, lxxvii (1961), 213-236, 401-426, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (London, 1981), ch.xxvi. For a general discussion of this obligation see J. Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge, 1996), pp.21-3, 56-7, 96-101.

⁶³ It also reverts to Gray’s crude quantitative assessment of the number of common petitions made into statutes, an assessment so conclusively dismissed by Chrimes in *Constitutional Ideas*, pp.236-43.

⁶⁴ Maddicott, ‘Parliament and the Constituencies’, pp.64-68; G.L. Haskins, ‘The Petitions of Representatives in the Parliaments of Edward I’, *E.H.R.*, liii (1938), 1-20. See also the discussion by J.C. Holt, ‘The Prehistory of Parliament’, in Davies and Denton, eds., *The English Parliament*, esp. pp.3-6, 22-3.

⁶⁵ *RP*. iii. 98.2, 99.8b. It should also be noted that Richard ordered sheriffs to re-elect the same men to the parliament of May 1382 as had attended the parliament of 1381 in order that the administrative and judicial measures suggested in the wake of the Peasants’ Revolt would be better instigated; Lewis, ‘Re-election to Parliament’, p.386.

Furthermore, once a statute had been accepted and promulgated, it was, like parliamentary taxation, binding on *all* the king's subjects.⁶⁶ The value of *this* for the crown need hardly be stressed; statutory law represented the king's most effective instrument whereby he could enforce his authority, at least by word, across the nation as a whole.⁶⁷ Promulgation itself also served as a useful 'public relations' exercise; it highlighted in market squares throughout the kingdom that here was the crown listening and acting on the Commons' grievances.⁶⁸ These points need not be laboured further. They simply provide a context in which the legislative process might be seen through the eyes of the king.

a/ 'Official' Statutes

One of the consequences of a historiography which is oriented almost exclusively towards the importance of the Commons, and the common petition, is that little regard has been paid to the alternative source from which statutes might have emanated: the crown itself. This could have happened in two ways. Firstly, the crown could have created the pretence of popularly inspired legislation either by 'planting' common petitions as if they were the products of the Lower House, or, more realistically, by getting sympathetic MPs to give their backing to a royal policy by forwarding and promoting it as a common petition.⁶⁹ In the latter case, it is possible that the Speaker of the Commons could have played a vital rôle in promoting a royal agenda as an agenda of the Commons.⁷⁰ Neither of these scenarios is really quantifiable but it is unlikely that they occurred very often because the second way a statute could originate from the crown was far more straightforward; the crown could instigate

⁶⁶ The best description of the theory of statutory legislation is provided by Chrimes, *Constitutional Ideas*, pp.192-218.

⁶⁷ The advantages to be gained by such dissemination were fully realised in May 1382 when the schedule for the grant of taxation made in this parliament was put into statutory form. Presumably the crown, ever sensitive after the Peasants' Revolt, wished to publicise the consent that had been given to the grant (ie. it was made by the Commons as representatives of the whole community of the realm) as well as emphasise the common obligation which fell on the community for its levying; *RP*. iii. 124.15, *SR*. ii. 24-5.iii.

⁶⁸ J.R. Maddicott, 'The County Community and the Making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth Century England', *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., xxviii (1978), 27-43, pp.33-4.

⁶⁹ This is a scenario which has been suggested by Sayles, *The King's Parliament*, p.117. Interestingly this was a charge which was levelled against Richard II in the so-called 'Record and Process' of 1399. It read '...that he craftily arranged for a petition to be put forward by the commons in parliament that he should...be granted the right to enjoy the same liberties as any of his predecessors; *RP*. iii. 419.34. Given-Wilson suggests that this may have been a reference to an incident remarked on in the *Westminster Chronicle* in 1392 where it was recorded that '...the king was accorded full power to rule his kingdom as he pleased for all the time to come'; *Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1400*, ed. C. Given-Wilson (Manchester, 1993), p.178. Since there was no parliament in 1392, it is probable that the chronicler was referring to a request made by the Commons in 1391 that, '...le Roi soit & estoise aussi Frank en sa Regalie, Liberte, & Dignite Roiale en son temps, come ascuns de ses nobles Progenitours...'; *RP*. iii. 286.13.

⁷⁰ See J.S. Roskell, *The Commons and their Speakers in the English Parliament* (Manchester, 1965).

legislation simply by unilateral enactment, with no input from the Lower House whatsoever. At best, the existence in the late fourteenth century of what will be termed ‘official statutes’ has been treated equivocally⁷¹ and at worst, their existence has been ignored almost altogether.⁷² This probably stems from the widespread belief that legislation proposed by the crown (or by the Lords) was a phenomenon confined either to the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth centuries, when statutes mainly took the form of government-inspired legal codes,⁷³ or to the period from the mid-fifteenth century onwards, and especially during the reigns of the Yorkist kings, when the crown increasingly proposed legislation in the form of a ‘bill’ which was referred to the Commons for their approval.⁷⁴

The exclusion of so-called ‘official statutes’ from historical writing is all the more puzzling given the fact that one of the most far-reaching pieces of legislation in the fourteenth century, the Ordinance of Labourers of 1349, and the resulting statute of 1351, appears to have been primarily a product of royal government, rather than of deliberation by the Commons.⁷⁵ A reading of the secondary material covering the period between 1388 and 1390 also reveals how much input the crown could exercise - independently of the Commons - in the formulation of new legislation.⁷⁶ Richard II was to take this control to its logical extreme in the last parliament of his reign when he enacted a whole series of statutes which were almost certainly made without reference to the wishes of the broad political community.⁷⁷ In fact,

⁷¹ For example, although Chrimes criticised Gray’s comparison between them and ‘commons’ petitions’, he did not question the validity of the comparison in the first place. He did say elsewhere, however, ‘...one does not feel too confident about the existence of these official bills’; *Constitutional Ideas*, p.238 and p.239-40. The only historian, to my knowledge, who has looked in any detail at what he describes as ‘royal legislation’ is Harriss, ‘Management of Parliament’, p.154-5.

⁷² For example, see Edwards, *Second Century*; *idem*, *The Commons in Medieval Parliaments* (London, 1957); Sayles, *The King’s Parliament*; Brown, *The Governance of Late Medieval England*; Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i; Ormrod, *Political Life*.

⁷³ See T.F.T. Plucknett, *Statutes and their Interpretation in the First Half of the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1922), esp. p.21; H.M. Cam, ‘The Legislators of Medieval England’, Raleigh Lecture, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, xxxi (1945), repr. in *idem*, *Law-Finders and Law-Makers in Medieval England* (London, 1964), pp.132-58, esp. pp.133-4; H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, ‘The Early Statutes’, *L.Q.R.*, 1 (1954), 201-223, 540-571, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament*, ch. xxv.

⁷⁴ Gray referred to these as ‘official bills’; *Influence of the Commons*, pp.54-69. See also A.R. Myers, ‘Parliament, 1422-1509’, in Davies and Denton, eds., *The English Parliament*, pp.141-84, esp. pp.178-180; Ormrod, *Political Life*, p.37.

⁷⁵ J.F. Baldwin, *The King’s Council in England during the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1913), p.319; B.H. Putnam, *The Place in Legal History of Sir William Shareshull, Chief Justice of the King’s Bench 1350-61* (Cambridge, 1950), pp.52-54; *idem*, *The Enforcement of the Statute of Labourers* (New York, 1908), p.2; H.G. Richardson, ‘The Commons and Medieval Politics’, *T.R.H.S.*, 4th ser., xxviii (1945), 211-45, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament*, ch.xxiv, p.31.

⁷⁶ J.A. Tuck notes that, ‘Two clauses of the Statute of Cambridge do not seem to have been based on Commons’ petitions: the clause forbidding the defamation of peers, and that forbidding the dumping of sewage on the streets of a town’; ‘The Cambridge Parliament, 1388’, *E.H.R.*, lxxxiv (1969), 225-43, p.240. R.L. Storey examines in detail the process by which the statute against liveries was enacted after the parliament of January 1390 and concludes that, ‘...the order restricting to secular peers the right to grant liveries was not a statute of [this] parliament....it was an ordinance made in the “great council”’; ‘Liveries and Commissions of the Peace, 1388-90’, in F.R.H. Du Boulay and C.M. Barron, eds., *The Reign of Richard II: Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (London, 1971), pp.131-52, p.145.

⁷⁷ *RP*. iii. 351.18-353.28; *SR*. ii. 94-110. For the atmosphere of this parliament see C. Given-Wilson, ‘Adam Usk, the Monk of Evesham, and the Parliament of 1397-8’, *H.R.*, lxvi (1993), 329-335; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.375-81.

throughout the period between 1369 and 1421, and in far less tumultuous circumstances, official statutes cropped up on a regular basis. They did not form a substantial part of all legislation enacted in these years but their existence is, nevertheless, a reminder of where the real power in parliament lay. 'Official statutes' can be identified either by the absence of a corresponding entry in the parliament roll to a derivative common petition, or, if there is an entry in the parliament roll, by the unusual wording and form that the entry took.

In the parliament of 1369, for example, one of the expedients made in preparation for the renewal of war against France was the enactment of a statute which declared the removal of the Staple from Calais to England.⁷⁸ That this was essentially a government inspired measure, quite detached from whatever the Commons wished to do, is indicated by the parliament roll which stated that, '...it was said and shown to the Lords and Commons that, by reason of the war, the wool staple should be removed...'.⁷⁹ In other words, this was a declaration, not a petition. Proof of the official origin of the statute is provided by subsequent complaints by the Commons in 1372, 1373 and 1376 when they claimed, erroneously as it happened, that the Calais staple had been set up on the authority of parliament (ie. by statute) and that it should not have been removed in 1369 *without their consent*.⁸⁰ The ordinance⁸¹ of 1372 which banned lawyers from attending parliament was also official in nature.⁸² It has generally been assumed that this measure derived from a common petition,

⁷⁸ SR. i. 390.i.

⁷⁹ RP. ii. 301.24.

⁸⁰ T.H. Lloyd, *The English Wool Trade in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1977), pp.220-2. A summary of the position of the Calais Staple in the second half of the fourteenth century is provided by W.M. Ormrod, 'The English Crown and the Customs, 1349-63', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., xl (1987), 27-40, esp. 38. His views are summarised in *idem*, *The Reign of Edward III*, pp.193-4.

⁸¹ The use of the word 'ordinance' raises some interesting - and difficult - questions about their status and position, relative to statutes. The historiographical tendency has been to view them as separate entities. Chrimes spoke of the difference lying in '...the distinction between permanence and impermanence, between legislative and executive...', and he went on to elaborate this by stating that the essential difference lay '...in the respective degrees which they were expected to modify the common law and to be applicable to the ordinary routine of the courts'; *Constitutional Ideas*, pp.248-9. A.L. Brown suggests that whereas statutes could only be made in parliament, ordinances '...were less solemn and more administrative in character..[they] might be made in parliament or with the authority of parliament but [they were] more often made by the King and Council'; *Governance of Late Medieval England*, p.219. Between 1369 and 1421 there are many examples in the parliament roll which indicate that there was a clear understanding that statutes and ordinances referred to different things. These included occasions when the Commons asked for an ordinance to be 'upgraded' to a statute, when the term 'ordinance' was used to refer to an act of parliament which was of limited duration, or when the term 'ordinance' was used to refer to an action taken specifically by the king and council without the involvement of the Commons. See RP. ii. 319.21, 23, 370.63; iii. 42.42, 44.54, 45.60, 48.77, 63.b, 65.46, 66.54, 81.28, 82.34, 83.39-40, 174.26, 212.28, 266.30, 267.34, 305.23, 319.33, 638.48; iv. 147.30, 31. At the same time, however, there are just as many, if not more, instances where the terms 'statute' and 'ordinance' were used interchangeably, sometimes even within the same sentence; RP. ii.313.41, 318.18, 368.46; iii. 18.64, 20.78, 44.56, 46.65, 64.40, 65.46, 137.27, 138.31, 139.41, 141.52, 161.45, 164.60, 201.22, 212.25, 213.39, 266.29, 268.38, 272.52,53, 280.21, 330.10, 478.110,114, 495.34,496.36,38, 497.40, 501.59, 506.78, 507.81, 592.106, 593.110, 594.114, 595.116, 598.131, 618.50, 636.ii,iv,v, 659.30, 659.iii,iv,v, 662.38, 664.42; iv. 11.34, 12.xvi, 19.14, 20.18. On the basis of this inconsistency, therefore, and its suggestion that the two terms had not yet become completely distinct, no great significance will be attached in this thesis to the use of either 'ordinance' or 'statute' to describe parliamentary legislation.

⁸² RP. ii. 310.13; SR. i. 394.

despite the fact that in the parliament roll it is recorded quite separately from the petitions.⁸³ Elsewhere in the thesis it is argued that the crown had far more of a motive for enacting such legislation than did the Commons⁸⁴ but at this stage it is worth pointing out that, like the removal of the Staple in 1369, it too was recorded as a declaration or pronouncement: it began with the statement that ‘...une Ordenance faite en mesme le Parlement, en manere q’ensuyt’, and its official origin would seem to be further indicated by the imperative form of the concluding clause which read, ‘Mes voet le Roi, q[ue] Chivalers & Serjantz des meulz vanes du paies soient retournez desore Chivalers en Parlementz...’.

In 1378 the crown was responsible for a series of four statutes. Again, they appear on the parliament roll not as a list of petitions, but as a series of statements or edicts in which the subject matter of the statute is asserted, rather than proposed. This is wholly incongruent with the supplicatory nature of the common petitions which precede them. Rather than ‘[i]tem, suppliant les Co[m]mun[es]’, for example, two start with the phrase, ‘Item, est ordene & establi...’, and the other two begin, ‘Item, pur ce que..[reason given]..Ordene est & establi..’.⁸⁵ Three of these examples concerned, respectively: the reassertion and enforcement of the statute for the prevention of forestalling (the original legislation was enacted in 1351);⁸⁶ the freedom of merchants from Italian states, and elsewhere, to sell their merchandise throughout the kingdom; and penalties to be incurred by mariners who left their service without informing their superiors. The fourth statute asserted that Urban VI should be recognised as the legitimate pope. In this latter case, it is arguable that the Commons would never have aspired to influence foreign policy in such a blatant manner and, indeed, their subservience in this decision appears to be confirmed by the fact that it was stated, ‘Et a ce [the support Urban VI] faire s’accorderent toutz les Prelatz, Seigneurs & Co[m]mun[es] en le Parlement’. Similarly, a fifth example, which laid rights and regulations for other foreign merchants selling their produce within the realm was prefaced with the statement: ‘..le Roi...de l’assent des Prelatz, Ducs, Countes, Barons, & de la Commune de son Roialme, ad ordenez &

⁸³ K.L. Wood-Legh, ‘Sheriffs, Lawyers, and Belted Knights in the Parliaments of Edward III’, *E.H.R.*, xlvii (1932), 398-413, p.374, note 1; Rayner, ‘Forms and Machinery of the “Common Petition”’, p.193; Maddicott, ‘Parliament and the Constituencies’, p.76; Brown, *Governance of Late Medieval England*, p.193; C. Rawcliffe and L. Clarke, ‘Introduction’, *Parliamentary History*, ix (1990), 233-42, p.237. The only suggestion of dissent against this view can be found in J.S. Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422: English Society and Parliamentary Representation under the Lancastrians* (Manchester, 1954), p.3. However, the consensus view has been re-adopted in Roskell *et al.*, eds., *The House of Commons*, i, pp.55-6.

⁸⁴ See chapter 6, p.184.

⁸⁵ *RP.* iii. 48.75-78; *SR.* ii. 8.ii, iii, iv, vii.

⁸⁶ *SR.* i. 315-6.

establiz etc...'.⁸⁷ Finally, in this same parliament the crown enacted a statute providing punitive measures against those who '...told slanderous lies of the great men of the realm'.⁸⁸ There is no record of this item of business in the parliament roll and we might, with reasonable confidence, assume that John of Gaunt was behind it, following his experience in the previous parliament of October 1377 when he had been forced to respond to rumours concerning his intentions on the crown.⁸⁹

In 1381, parliament enacted a whole series of administrative reforms concerning the exchequer.⁹⁰ The first of these statutes was clearly prompted by a common petition which had requested that contracts for military service should be put in writing,⁹¹ but it was followed by four additional measures aimed at reforming exchequer procedure, all of which were almost certainly inspired by the crown independently of the Commons.⁹² Again, as in previous examples, the crucial difference in the style of diplomatic makes them stand out: rather than being addressed to the king, they begin with a set of introductory imperatives such as: 'Et auxint voet le Roi...'. The following parliament of May 1382 saw further official legislation which can only have originated from the crown because in this parliament no common petitions were presented at all.⁹³ One of them, which stipulated that everyone should obey the king's summons to parliament (hardly a subject to be raised by the Commons) began with the words, 'Item, le Roi voet & comande, & est assentuz en Parlement par les Prelats, Seigneurs, & Communes, que toutes singulers Persones & Communaltees q'aueront desore la summonce de Parlement, viegnent desenavant as Parlement [in the accustomed manner]'.⁹⁴ In this case, the Commons appear to have been consulted over the matter but in another case (a statute against the preaching of heresy) the Commons complained in the following assembly that it, '...ne fuist unques assentu ne grante par les Communes, mes ce que fuist parle de ce, fuist sanz assent de lour; Qe celui Estatut soit annienti...'.⁹⁵ The king assented to this plea but, interestingly, nothing was entered on the statute roll.

Other more isolated examples include three statutes - one dating to 1379, one

⁸⁷ *RP.* iii. 47.74; *SR.* ii. 6-8.

⁸⁸ *SR.* ii. 9.v.

⁸⁹ *RP.* iii. 5.12-14; Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.34-5; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.27-8.

⁹⁰ *SR.* ii. 21-22.x-xiv.

⁹¹ *RP.* iii. 118.98.

⁹² *RP.* iii. 118-9.99-102; *SR.* ii. 22.xi-xiv.

⁹³ *SR.* ii. 23-26; see Table 1.

⁹⁴ *RP.* iii. 124.16.

⁹⁵ *RP.* iii. 141.53. This refers to *RP.* iii. 124.17. This case was discussed by Lewis, 'Re-election to Parliament', p.386.

to 1385 and the other to January 1390 - all of which concerned highly specialised matters to do with the common law.⁹⁶ None left any mark on the parliament roll. Had lawyers amongst the MPs initiated this legislation one would assume that their efforts would have been recorded (anonymously) amongst the common petitions, but because this was not the case, responsibility for the statutes probably lay with the contingent of royal lawyers present at parliament as a result of personal summonses. In January 1390, the Commons asked that all the business done in the Cambridge Parliament of 1388 should be upheld and maintained.⁹⁷ The king accepted the request but made an exception of ‘...un article p[er]anal touchant Justices de la Pees’. Without any recorded prompting from the Commons, the crown then proceeded to ‘fine-tune’ the original statute by providing additional powers to JPs to enable them to assess the wages of craftsmen and labourers, taking into account localised conditions.⁹⁸ In the following parliament the crown’s legislative concerns lay with economic issues and the resulting statutes seem, for the most part, to have been entirely its own responsibility. Six statutes were noted in the parliament roll as quite separate items of business from the common petitions.⁹⁹ The preamble to these statutes read, ‘Accordez est en ycest Parlement par assent de tout le Parlement’ and, in the statute roll, ‘Our Lord the King...hath ordained and established, by the assent of...parliament’. At no point are the Commons said to have *asked* for these reforms. A seventh statute, which restricted the export of tin from the town of Dartmouth, is omitted from the parliament roll altogether and it is, perhaps, not without significance that in 1391 the Commons singled it out for complaint and succeeded in having it repealed.¹⁰⁰ In 1394, the king, ‘...with the advice of the Lords spiritual and temporal’ (but with no mention of the Commons) clarified a statute made in 1355 concerning erroneous judgements made by the Mayor, Sheriffs and Aldermen of London.¹⁰¹ And, in January 1397, after three common petitions were presented to parliament (one of which was made into a statute)¹⁰² there followed a statement to the effect that ‘...the king with assent of the Prelates, Lords and Commons and for the tranquillity and peace of his realm has made certain statutes and ordinances’.¹⁰³ Altogether six statutes were enacted from the proceedings of this parliament - the remaining

⁹⁶ *SR.* ii. 12.iii, 38.iii, 65.xvi.

⁹⁷ *RP.* iii. 268.38.

⁹⁸ *SR.* ii. 63.viii.

⁹⁹ *RP.* iii. 278.6-11; *SR.* ii. 76-7.i-vi.

¹⁰⁰ *SR.* ii. 77.vii; *RP.* iii. 295.48; *SR.* ii. 81.viii.

¹⁰¹ *RP.* iii. 317.26; *SR.* ii. 91.xii.

¹⁰² *RP.* iii. 344-5.34-6; *SR.* ii. 93.v.

¹⁰³ *RP.* iii. 345.37.

five followed this passage, all of them were recorded in the parliament roll as statements of (royal) intent rather than as requests from the Lower House.¹⁰⁴

Richard II's Lancastrian successors also demonstrated a capacity to initiate legislation independently of the Commons; in 1399 Henry IV confirmed an earlier official statute of 1378 with yet another official statute which guaranteed the freedom of foreign merchants to buy and sell in England;¹⁰⁵ in 1407, the crown ordained that foreigners should contribute to direct taxation;¹⁰⁶ and in 1411, the crown initiated legislation which imposed a reduction in the weight of English coins, thus counteracting the outflow of English bullion abroad as well as preventing the importation of debased currency, including the so-called the 'Gally Half pence'.¹⁰⁷ None of these three examples left any mark on the parliament roll and none, therefore, can reasonably be assumed to have had any input from the Commons. There are fewer examples for Henry V's reign, although it is generally accepted that the great legislative programme of the Leicester parliament of April 1414 was brought about primarily as a result of royal initiative.¹⁰⁸ This particular assembly saw the enactment of several key statutes including the statute against Lollards and the statute against the breaking of Truces.¹⁰⁹ In the light of the Commons' complaint in this parliament that statutes were being amended without their assent, it would appear that Henry V went to unusual lengths to gain the Commons' approval for this legislative programme, for the statutes were included amongst the common petitions with the exact words which were used when they were eventually promulgated. Despite this apparent consultation, the Statute of Truces was soon watered down in October 1416 as a result of a Commons' complaint that its punitive measures were too harsh.¹¹⁰

b/ The Crown's Strategies of Control

So, we have seen that it was, indeed, possible for the crown to use the statutory process for its own purposes. Clearly, its hands were not tied by some hard and fast rule that

¹⁰⁴ *RP.* iii. 345.37-41; *SR.* ii. 92-4. i-iv, vi.

¹⁰⁵ *SR.* ii. 118.xvii.

¹⁰⁶ *SR.* ii. 161.vii.

¹⁰⁷ *SR.* ii. 168.vi. See C.H.V. Sutherland, *English Coinage, 600-1900*, 2nd edn. (London, 1982), pp.85-6.

¹⁰⁸ E. Powell, *Kingship, Law, and Society: Criminal Justice in the Reign of Henry V* (Oxford, 1989), pp.168-94; *idem*, 'The Restoration of Law and Order', in Hariss, ed., *Henry V*, pp.53-74, esp. pp.63-5.

¹⁰⁹ *RP.* iv. 22-26. These statutes were preceded with a statement to the effect that they were made by the king with the assent of the Lords spiritual and temporal, at the request of the Commons.

¹¹⁰ *RP.* iv. 105.31; *SR.* ii. 198-9.vii.

all new statutes must derive from the grievances of the people in the form of common petitions. The Commons needed the crown to effect new law but the crown did not necessarily need the Commons to do the same. Again, it should be stressed that this did not mean that the two were in competition with each other, for even when the Commons proposed new legislation - and an overwhelming number of statutes *were* derived from common petitions - the crown's control over what eventually was promulgated was still undisputed and total. This can be demonstrated in four ways, three of which - the crown's capacity to reject, amend and repeal statutes - will be discussed, respectively, in this chapter. The fourth - how the impact of legislation in the locality hinged on the crown's commitment actually to enforce it there - will be considered in chapter 7.

The Rejection of Statutes

Firstly, the crown retained a fundamental right to block any legislation it wished to, simply by refusing or rejecting a common petition. This may seem an obvious point to make, but rarely has it received more than a passing reference. Indeed, the lack of coverage given to this aspect of petitioning can be shown by the fact that it is commonly understood that there was only one standard formula used by the crown to state that a petition had been rejected and that this was the phrase, 'Le Roy s'advisera'.¹¹¹ In the period between 1369 and 1421 this phrase was undoubtedly used fairly frequently but, compared to the total number of common petitions presented altogether, the number of cases is by no means overwhelming and could, if anything, imply that the failure of petitions was actually relatively rare.¹¹² In fact, there was a whole plethora of techniques which the crown could use to state the same negative outcome to a petition. Many rejections, for instance, simply elaborated this initial formula by vaguely promising that the king would be advised but 'by his council' and/or 'by his Lords'.¹¹³ Some petitions were fobbed off with the response that statutes already in existence should be 'held and guarded'.¹¹⁴ A slight variant of this was that legislation was already in place which covered

¹¹¹ For example, see Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III*, p.66.

¹¹² *RP*. iii. 24.101, 66.52, 96.46, 137.28, 139.38, 140.48, 163.52, 163.55, 202.30, 213.36, 270.43, 294.39, 295.47, 296.51, 308.34, 319.33,36, 440.133,134, 441.136, 140, 442.145, 468.51, 498.45, 502.64, 539.59, 540.65, 542.75, 554.46-48, 599.134, 614.33,34,36, 615.39, 617.46-7, 618.51, 621.55, 627.29, 644.67, 660.31, 661.32, 662.36, 664.42, 665.46, 666.48.

¹¹³ *RP*. ii. 304.15, 305.17, 307.36, 311.18, 312.23,28,29, 320.32, 334.73, 336.89, 349.154, 366.28, 367.33,35; iii. 20.73,25,110, 42.41,42, 45.61, 46.64,67-9, 62,34, 63.36, 81.30, 94.34, 96.48, 138.30, 139.42,44, 162.46, 201.22,24, 210.19-23, 213.38, 222.25, 265.27, 266.29, 294.41, 306.28, 468.50, 479.115, 497.42, 503.69, 593.110, 597.126.

¹¹⁴ *RP*. ii. 312.30, 313.35, 332.57, 334.70,74, 336.84, 337.93, 3411.117, 357.193, 357.194; iii. 15.46, 17.55, 18.60, 20.79, 23.96, 115.76, 146.15, 174.26, 212.25, 213.31,39, 222.22, 281.26,28, 296.50, 322.50, 444.151,153, 470.60, 471.65,70, 473.79, 499.50, 502.63, 505.73, 507.81, 539.60, 540.61, 541.72, 542.74, 554.47, 556.55, 600.135, 625.24.

the subject matter contained within the petition.¹¹⁵ Others were rejected because they proposed changes to what was already said to be established ‘custom and practice’.¹¹⁶ Sometimes the crown rejected a petition because its content was considered to be too specific to warrant the attention of parliament, and was accordingly directed elsewhere, such as to the chancery or the exchequer.¹¹⁷ And another related reason was that the grievance was really a matter for the common law.¹¹⁸ Not all rejections took on the appearance of a polite, but firm, refusal. Those which were considered directly to threaten the interests of the crown, or the realm, were often responded to in equally direct terms, with phrases like: ‘the king does not wish to depart from his ancient right’; ‘the king will do as he pleases’; or ‘the petition would greatly damage the community’.¹¹⁹ Finally, on a handful of occasions, most notably in the last years of Edward III’s reign, the crown simply postponed its response to a petition by promising to address the issue in the next parliament.¹²⁰ For all intents and purposes this amounted to a refusal since rarely, if at all, were such promises actually honoured.

The Amendment of Statutes

Secondly, the crown was under no obligation to enact a statute which faithfully reproduced, word for word, the content of the original common petition. In a good many cases, statutes were hybrids, combining the original grievance of the common petition with a certain amount of input (or editing out) on the part of the crown. So-called amendments were, first and foremost, designed to ensure that the final draft of a statute conformed exactly with royal interests. They could be of particular use to the crown if it wished to promote itself as a vigorous legislative body that *appeared* to be responding to the needs and demands of the

638.49, 640.54, 642.61, 664.43.

¹¹⁵ *RP.* ii. 306.30, 308.38,39, 308.45, 312.22, 319.24, 320.33, 357.195, 197-8, 368.40-1, 371.67; iii. 17.56, 20.78, 20.80, 23.93, 24.105, 42.43, 43.46, 81.31, 82.34, 94.35-7, 96.47, 117.90, 138.31, 139.41, 140.47, 1611.43, 173.23, 201.21,23,26, 222.21, 223.28, 282.35, 305.24, 319.32, 330.8,10, 344.34; iv. 19.69.

¹¹⁶ *RP.* ii. 300.16, 301.22, 306.26, 307.35, 313.39, 319.21, 336.85, 350.155, 368.38,45, 370.57; iii. 21.84, 23.94, 43.47, 44.55,57, 64.43,45, 82.36, 116.87, 118.93-4, 161.61, 200.19, 212.24,26, 266.30, 281.29, 295.44, 318.30, 330.9.

¹¹⁷ *RP.* ii. 311.21, 313.34, 332.59, 335.81, 337.92, 347.140-1, 348.145,148, 351.160, 352.172, 347.141, 353.178, 354.179,181,183, 366.30, 371.68; iii. 25.106, 116.81, 160.40, 161.44, 163.50,51, 164.58, 280.21,23, 290.28, 293.37, 306.26, 318.29, 319.35, 345.36, 444.150, 445.158, 597.123,124.

¹¹⁸ *RP.* ii. 350.158,159, 356.191; iii. 321.44, 440.130,132, 444.152, 502.66,67, 507.79, 508.83, 541.69, 596.120, 598.128,131, 646.72.

¹¹⁹ *RP.* ii. 308.44, 312.27, 319.27, 320.29, 343.128, 366.29, 367.34, 368.43, 369.52, 371.69; iii. 19.71-2, 44.49,51, 62.31, 115.74, 147.16, 267.33, 441.138, 475.97, 476.100-2, 501.57, 502.65, 505.74, 541.71.

¹²⁰ *RP.* ii. 305.25, 306.25, 307.36, 308.40, 334.77, 336.89, 342.123, 342.127; iii. 66.55, 174.25, 272.55, 307.30, 495.34, 501.58, 510.106-7, 511.112, 662.35; iv. 21.19. In the parliament of 1394 the Commons actually complained that an issue delayed from the last parliament (*RP.* iii. 307.30) had yet to be addressed. Even so, the crown still refused to act on this complaint; *RP.* iii. 318.30.

political community, when in practice its responsiveness was more illusory than real. The importance of amendments from a purely interpretative point of view is that they highlight the danger of simply counting the number of statutes enacted within one particular parliament in order to assess how receptive the crown was to the needs of the political community: what was asked for, and what was eventually promulgated, were not necessarily the same thing. Once again, it was H.L. Gray who provided a lot of the groundwork in this area and in this case Chrimes, and others, have recognised the validity of his conclusions.¹²¹ Gray concentrated his discussion on the famous common petition of the Leicester parliament of 1414 where the Lower House bitterly complained that without seeking their consent, the king was altering the general tenor of their petitions before having them enacted into statutes.¹²² The parliament of 1413 had seen ten statutes enacted altogether of which Gray estimated that no fewer than six diverged considerably from their original common petitions. Chrimes agreed with Gray that this was an isolated incident; ‘...so far from being a climax to a long antecedent striving, [the complaint of 1414] was elicited by [the] unusual occurrences which had taken place in the preceding parliament of 1413’.¹²³

An indication that this may not have been entirely the case is provided by Thomas Walsingham who, during Richard II’s reign, posed the following question: ‘...of what use are statutes in parliament...[for]...the king and his privy council habitually alter and efface what has previously been established [there]?’.¹²⁴ This is one of the few contemporary remarks we have on the effectiveness and standing of legislation in late medieval society and it clearly indicates, in a very direct manner, the crucial rôle the crown was perceived to play in determining the process. In the immediate context though, the significance of this passage lies in the fact that it related to the late fourteenth century - at least two decades before the supposed aberration of the parliament of 1413.¹²⁵ In fact, as Walsingham’s observation suggests, amendments to statutes which had derived from common petitions, though not prolific, were nevertheless fairly frequent throughout the period which this thesis discusses. In Richard II’s first parliament, for example, a series of common petitions was submitted

¹²¹ Gray, *Influence of the Commons*, pp.261-278; Chrimes, *Constitutional Ideas*, p.236.

¹²² *RP*. iv. 22.22.

¹²³ Chrimes, *Constitutional Ideas*, p.160.

¹²⁴ *Historia Anglicana, 1272-1422*, ed. H.T. Riley, Rolls Series, xxviii, 2 vols. (London, 1864), ii. p.48.

¹²⁵ Walsingham included this comment amongst his writings for the year 1381. It has been suggested that his history was written up within three or four years of the events he recorded; A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, II, c.1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London, 1982), p.124.

which concerned the conduct of the king's ministers.¹²⁶ Only one, which specifically targeted members of the royal household, seems to have made an impact on the statute roll.¹²⁷ Interestingly, however, this statute, nevertheless, made no mention of the household and simply criticised the principle of corruption in general, thus completely nullifying the main thrust of the original petition's demand.¹²⁸ In the same parliament, the Commons petitioned that no sheriff or escheator be returned within three years of a term in the same office; the resulting statute stated that sheriffs *only* would be subject to this restriction.¹²⁹ The Commons' request in November 1380, for a blanket pardon to those responsible for escaped felons, met with similar selectivity; the pardon would not extend to escapes made fraudulently; it would not exempt those already judged; and letters patent would not be given away but *purchased* in chancery by those who wished to have them.¹³⁰

In October 1383, January 1390 and November 1390, statutes were enacted from common petitions which had intended JPs to take a prominent rôle as the agents of law enforcement. In all three cases, however, their involvement was either excluded, or greatly diminished. Thus, in 1383, the Commons asked that JPs '...aient poair d'enquerre de toutes tielx grevances & oppressions ensi faitz par les...Purveours, & de les punir'.¹³¹ This was one of a series of common petitions in the second half of the fourteenth century complaining about the abuse of the king's purveyors,¹³² and, as on other occasions, the king was careful in this case not to concede any measure that would seriously impede the running of the household; he ignored the plea for the empowerment of JPs and simply elaborated the terms already contained in the original Statute of Purveyors of 1362, adding the superfluous concession that '...the damaged party [should] have recourse to the common law if he wishes'.¹³³ In January 1390, the Commons had been anxious to limit the jurisdiction and encroachments of the courts of Chivalry and Admiralty;¹³⁴ again, it was requested that JPs should '...have the power to enquire of those [ie. Admirals] who do to the contrary'.¹³⁵ And again, this vital means to ensure

¹²⁶ *RP*. iii. 15-16.47-50.

¹²⁷ *RP*. iii. 16.49.

¹²⁸ *SR*. ii. 3.ix.

¹²⁹ *RP*. iii. 24.104; *SR*. ii. 4.xi.

¹³⁰ *RP*. iii. 96.49; *SR*. ii. 16.ii.

¹³¹ *RP*. iii. 158.30; *SR*. ii. 33.viii.

¹³² See C. Given-Wilson, 'Purveyance for the Royal Household, 1362-1413', *B.I.H.R.*, lvi (1983), 145-163; *idem*, *The Royal Household*, pp.111-113.

¹³³ *SR*. ii. 33.viii.

¹³⁴ Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, p.150.

¹³⁵ *RP*. iii. 269.41.

enforcement - at least in the minds of the Commons - was omitted.¹³⁶ In November of the same year, the Commons proposed a number of important measures designed to ensure their continued supervision of the commissions of the peace;¹³⁷ however, the statute merely confirmed the legislation of the Cambridge Parliament and, despite the king's reassurance, little else was done actually to carry out these measures.¹³⁸ Another petition presented in the parliament of October 1383 requested that the king revise past 'ordinances' which had restricted the distribution of benefices to aliens but which had also contained the proviso that the king could give them to whomever he wished.¹³⁹ Remarkably, the response and resulting statute, whilst appearing to affirm this request, nevertheless, still retained the qualification that the king might give licence '*...au Cardinall*' de Naples, *ou autre speciale persone*, a qi le Roy soit pur speciale cause tenuz' (my italics).¹⁴⁰ Finally, in January 1390, the Commons petitioned that the steward and marshal of the royal household should not usurp the jurisdiction of any man on pain of loss of office forever.¹⁴¹ The reply, and resulting statute, simply placed a geographical limitation on these officers' powers and made no mention of an individual's right for protection against his encroachments.¹⁴²

The rest of the 1390s saw comparatively little legislation inspired by the Commons,¹⁴³ so that it is with Henry IV that we need to resume the survey. Gray considered this reign to be a turning point for the Commons because '*...the accession of the Lancastrians accelerated and completed an existent movement towards the triumph of popular legislation*'.¹⁴⁴ This assertion was based on the fact that '*...under the Lancastrian Kings, almost no statutes were enacted that did not arise from Common Bills*'.¹⁴⁵ Stripped of its 'Stubbsian' overtones, this view has prevailed. There is general consensus that under Henry IV, the input by the Commons into legislation became noticeably more consistent than had been the case previously, and that it was not 'tainted' by government interference.¹⁴⁶ However, Gray's

¹³⁶ SR. ii. 62.v. Note that a similar petition in 1391 dropped the mention of JPs; RP. iii. 291.30.

¹³⁷ RP. iii. 279.17.

¹³⁸ SR. ii. 77.xi. Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace', p.149. See also, S. Walker, 'Yorkshire Justices of the Peace, 1389-1413', *E.H.R.*, cviii (1993), 281-313.

¹³⁹ RP. iii. 163.54.

¹⁴⁰ SR. ii. 34.xii.

¹⁴¹ RP. iii. 267.34.

¹⁴² SR. ii. 62.iii.

¹⁴³ See below, p.58.

¹⁴⁴ Gray, *Influence of the Commons*, p.261.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁶ B. Wilkinson, *Constitutional History of England in the Fifteenth Century (1399-1485)* (London, 1964), p.280; Chrimes, *Constitutional Ideas*, p.243.

conclusions are again open to question. The oversight on this occasion was that his assessment of the reign did not cover the first years of Henry's period in power.¹⁴⁷ If he had included them, he might have noticed a request by the Commons dating to the parliament of January 1404 which paralleled very closely their common petition of 1414.¹⁴⁸ Amongst a number of issues raised by the Commons' Speaker, Sir Arnold Savage, was one that requested that,

...s'il enbosoigne declaration d'aucun Estatut, ou q'ascun Estatut serroit abbregez ou enlargisez, que tiel Estatut purra estre monstrez as ditz Communes, aufyn q'ils ent purroient avoir information, & sur ceo avoir lour entencion & assent, come il ad este usez par devant.¹⁴⁹

It would appear that from the beginning of his reign Henry IV had engaged in the same process of 'editing' statutes that both Richard II and Henry V had done. In 1399, for example, a petition asked that grants made by the king should be repealed, and that future grants should not be made without the advice of the council.¹⁵⁰ The king replied that it was his good intention to be advised by his council (but failed to mention whether this extended to the making of grants) and he further decreed that those wishing to receive such grants should state their value in their petition (hardly what was being asked for!).¹⁵¹ In another petition, the crown imposed a fine when it was specifically requested that there should not be one.¹⁵² In another, it was asked that collectors and controllers of the customs should not be in office for more than one year; the resulting statute stipulated only that they were not to be in office for 'term of life or of years'.¹⁵³ To a petition which asked for the repeal of a statute imposing penalties on the mayor and sheriff of London (because it was made against 'the tenure and effect of Magna Carta'), the crown merely lessened the mandatory nature of these penalties and completely ignored the request for the statute's repeal.¹⁵⁴ And a petition asking for clearance of obstacles from rivers was effectively rendered obsolete by the crucial omission, in the response and statute, of a clause which specified the width of a river under which these obstacles had to be removed.¹⁵⁵

In 1402 amendments came thick and fast. In one petition the Commons asked

¹⁴⁷ Gray's analysis of amendments covered the following parliaments only: 1383, 1391, 1406, 1407, 1410, 1411 and all of Henry V's parliaments; *Influence of the Commons*, p.276.

¹⁴⁸ See above, p.45.

¹⁴⁹ *RP*. iii. 523.9.

¹⁵⁰ *RP*. iii. 433.98.

¹⁵¹ *SR*. ii. 113.vi.

¹⁵² *RP*. iii. 445.156; *SR*. ii. 114.ix.

¹⁵³ *RP*. iii. 439.129; *SR*. ii. 116.xiii.

¹⁵⁴ *RP*. iii. 442.146; *SR*. ii. 117.xv.

¹⁵⁵ *RP*. iii. 438.122; *SR*. ii. 115.xii.

that certain Commissioners could be discharged of their oaths in the exchequer, that Commissions could not be issued without authorization of the Privy Seal and that Justices of Assize should have the power to take the oath by writ *Dedimus potestatem*; in reply, the king simply reaffirmed that the chancellor would enjoy his full powers as he had done previously.¹⁵⁶ Another petition requested that nobody under the age of twenty-one should be able to enter a religious order; the response and statute declared that nobody under the age of *fourteen* could do so, unless he had parental consent.¹⁵⁷ Another asked the king not to grant away royal lands of deceased tenants-in-chief, but to keep the revenue for the exchequer; the king promised to refrain from making gifts, ‘...sinon a ceux que les deservont come meulx y semblera au Roy & son Counseill’.¹⁵⁸ One petition asked that the Mayor of London should be able to do the job of the alnager; the crown, however, insisted that it would ordain ‘...une [*sic*] homme sufficient pur ensealer les draps’, and, significantly, it reserved the forfeitures arising from misconduct for itself.¹⁵⁹ Finally, the Commons petitioned that a statute which was made in January 1390, concerning shoemakers, be annulled; the crown’s response was to accede to the petitioners’ demands but only for the period up until the next parliament (‘Le Roy le voet, pur le mattre assaie tan q’a proschien Parlement’).¹⁶⁰

Gray looked at the parliaments for the rest of the reign.¹⁶¹ It would appear from his analysis that Henry IV took heed of the complaint made by the Commons in January 1404 because, with one or two exceptions, statutes corresponded fairly closely with common petitions. This was a period when the Commons in general seemed to be taking a keener interest in the mechanism of record taking within parliament, so the king may have been especially careful how statutes related to their antecedent common petitions.¹⁶² The point, however, is that the petition in 1414 was *not* a ‘blip’ on the historical landscape and that Henry V was doing nothing in the parliament of 1413 that his two predecessors had not done, in varying degrees, in the course of their reigns. The deviation of statutes from the tenor of common petitions was not new. Indeed, this explains why the Commons in 1414 did not ask that amendments cease altogether; their request was only that amendments should be made with the assent of parliament. The fact that even this principle was not conceded by the king

¹⁵⁶ *RP*. iii. 498.44; *SR*. ii. 135.ix.

¹⁵⁷ *RP*. iii. 502.62; *SR*. ii. 138.xvii.

¹⁵⁸ *RP*. iii. 495.31; *SR*. ii. 133.iv.

¹⁵⁹ *RP*. iii. 496.36; *SR*. ii. 134.vi.

¹⁶⁰ *RP*. iii. 495.34; *SR*. ii. 142.xxxv.

¹⁶¹ Gray, *Influence of the Commons*, pp.266-70.

¹⁶² See chapter 8, p.250.

demonstrates how far the crown's right to regulate or 'edit' statutory legislation had established itself as accepted parliamentary procedure.¹⁶³ As Chrimes summed it up: 'There is little doubt that [the 1414 petition] left the king as free as ever to *amend* petitions before enactment without obtaining [the Commons'] assent, so long as such amendments did not amount to contradiction'.¹⁶⁴ And, indeed, the evidence for the rest of Henry V's reign would seem to confirm this, since the crown continued to incorporate changes in statutes, albeit relatively minor ones, without any indication that the Commons' assent had been sought.¹⁶⁵ This, it should be noted, was in addition to a new tactic developed by Henry V of placing time-limits on the duration of certain statutes, thus providing the crown with an even greater degree of flexibility in its handling of the legislative process.¹⁶⁶

The Repeal of Statutes

The third indication of how the crown could control the legislative process was that, even when a statute had been enacted, it was not beyond the reach of the king if he wished to repeal it independently, and against the wishes, of the Commons. Again, this challenges the very foundation of historical consensus which advocates that statutes occupied a dimension above that of the crown, that they belonged to the 'people' who alone had the power to disregard those which were felt to be against their interests.¹⁶⁷ In reality, however, the life of a statute depended almost exclusively on the continued good will of the crown. We need look no further than the two 'set-piece' parliamentary episodes of the fourteenth century - the crisis of 1340-1 and the Good Parliament of 1376 - to see this at work. On both these occasions, political expediency had resulted in the crown agreeing to certain legislation which, once parliament had finished, was simply annulled without any process of consultation with the political community whatsoever.¹⁶⁸

Such unilateral repeals were not, however, limited to major constitutional

¹⁶³ See Chrimes, *Constitutional Ideas*, pp.162-3.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.162-3.

¹⁶⁵ Gray, *Influence of the Commons*, pp.281-7.

¹⁶⁶ *RP*. iv. 77.26, 84.47, 103.25, 148.36, 146.27, 154.15-16, 18-22.24-6; *SR*. ii. 192.ii, 195.viii, 196.iv, 206.v-vi, 210.ii-x. The large number of statutes with a time limit in December 1421 was no doubt due to the King's impending absence in France. Although all the responses to the above quoted petitions for this parliament specified a time limit, only two of the resulting statutes did likewise.

¹⁶⁷ For example, see Brown, *Governance of Late Medieval England*, p.220.

¹⁶⁸ For 1340-1 see Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, p.306; for the Good Parliament see McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, pp.394-5; Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.30-1.

crises. In 1385, for example, the Commons presented a petition asking that all statutes and ordinances not repealed by parliament should be held and guarded.¹⁶⁹ The king replied that he wished it, ‘...forspris l’Estatut des Justices & Barons de l’Exchequer fait au darrein Parlement. Lequele, a cause q’il est trop’ dure, & embosoigne declaration, le Roi voet q’il soit de nul force tan q’il soit declarez par Parlement’. In other words, the king was doing precisely what the Commons were petitioning against: repealing a statute without the clear sanction of parliament.¹⁷⁰ This same contrariness on the part of the crown was shown in the next parliament when the Commons requested that a statute regulating the conduct of Justices of the King’s Bench should be firmly enforced, notwithstanding any repeal.¹⁷¹ The crown replied ‘Et si voet le Roi, q[ue] l’Estatutz ent faitz, si b[ie]n des Justices come des Barons de l’Eschequer, soient adnullez et voides...’ - although this was not given statutory sanction. In November 1390, the annulment of legislation by the crown was less explicit. The Commons complained of ‘...l’orrible & abhominable vice’ of Usury and requested that past statutes made against this practice be upheld and newly promulgated in the cities, towns and boroughs of the realm.¹⁷² The crown responded that such statutes would be reviewed and, if they were found to be ‘bones & honestes’, they would be affirmed accordingly. Nothing, in fact, was done. This seems to indicate that the crown no longer recognised that this legislation was in force.

In 1393 the statute roll recorded the confirmation of only part of a statute of January 1390 which had imposed limitations on the ease with which charters of pardon could be granted.¹⁷³ The later statute confirmed, in principle, that such charters should not be granted too readily but it then went on to state that, ‘...by the Assent of the Lords in this present Parliament, and at the Prayer of the Commons, [the king] hath ordained and granted, that the Residue of the said Article be wholly out, repealed and annulled’. This ‘residue’ was the part of the original statute which had given the legislation teeth by imposing graded fines on all defaulters, whether they were king’s officials who had failed to keep accurate records of cases, or individuals who had actually gained the pardon itself. Interestingly, despite what the new statute said, there is no record on the parliament roll that the Commons had participated in the ‘softening up’ of this legislation and the suspicion arises that it was a fabrication on the part

¹⁶⁹ *RP*. iii. 210.18.

¹⁷⁰ *SR*. ii.38.i.

¹⁷¹ *RP*. iii. 222.24. See also Maddicott, ‘Law and Lordship: Royal Justices as Retainers in Thirteenth and Fourteenth-Century England’, *P&P Supplement*, iv (1978), p.79.

¹⁷² *RP*. iii. 281.24.

¹⁷³ *SR*. ii. 86.vi; *RP*. iii. 268.36.

of the crown in order to create the pretence of legislation which had popular support.¹⁷⁴ At the very least, this reminds us that both the statute roll and the parliament roll were government documents which did not necessarily record events as accurately as they might have happened in reality.¹⁷⁵

Henry IV also demonstrated a capacity to repeal legislation irrespective of the wishes of the Commons. In January 1404, legislation made at the request of the Commons ordained that alien merchants should sell their produce within a quarter of a year.¹⁷⁶ In October, this statute was repealed with the words, 'Our Lord the king seeing the said Ordinance hurtful and prejudicial, as well for himself as for the realm, as for merchants aliens and strangers, by the advice and assent aforesaid [of parliament]...hath ordained that the said Ordinance be utterly repealed'.¹⁷⁷ Strong suspicion of crown connivance can also be attached to the repeal in the same parliament of part of a statute which had forbidden the granting of royal gifts and grants to the Queen and the Prince of Wales.¹⁷⁸ Although this modification was presented amongst the common petitions, it was, nevertheless, recorded in imperative form and ran contrary to all that the Commons had hoped to achieve in terms of economizing royal revenue in previous parliaments.¹⁷⁹ Finally, in 1407, a statute regulating the measure of cloth was repealed by the crown with no corresponding reference in the parliament roll.¹⁸⁰

Such examples of government repeals are, admittedly, sparse. But then the whole basis of the legislative process ensured that, at best, only a tiny minority of statutes were ever enacted which the crown did not fully endorse. In any case, if this did occur - if the crown faced overwhelming pressure to make legislation of which it did not wholly approve - repealing such legislation represented very much a last resort. A far easier course of action, and certainly one which was far less damaging in terms of the crown's 'public relations', was to enact the statute but omit any measure designed to ensure its actual enforcement in the localities. This was the fourth, last, and ultimately, the most effective area of control which the

¹⁷⁴ This interpretation gains added weight when it is considered that in the late 1380s and early 1390s the Commons had pressed hard the more effective enforcement of law and order in the locality. See Tuck, 'The Cambridge Parliament', pp.234-9; Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace', pp.131-52; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.262-9.

¹⁷⁵ Note that B.P. Wolffe has suggested that the crown misrepresented the acquiescence of the Commons to certain concessions attributed to them in the Coventry parliament of October 1404; *The Royal Demesne in English History* (London, 1971), p.83. See also Chapter 8, pp.247-50.

¹⁷⁶ *RP*. iii. 543.80; *SR*. ii. 145.ix.

¹⁷⁷ *SR*. ii. 150.iv.

¹⁷⁸ *RP*. iii. 557.58; *SR*. ii. 149.ii.

¹⁷⁹ For the background to this parliament see J.L. Kirby, *Henry IV of England* (London, 1970), pp.163-70; A.L. Brown, 'The Commons and the Council in the Reign of Henry IV', *E.H.R.*, lxxxix (1964), 1-30, esp. pp.39-42; Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons', pp.47-70.

¹⁸⁰ *SR*. ii. 160.vi.

crown exercised over statutes. It has been treated fully in chapter 7 of the thesis which considers the impact and effectiveness of late medieval legislation. For the present purposes, however, the situation is eloquently summed up by K.B. McFarlane who stated that ‘...many statutes were still-born because the king did not raise a finger to enforce them. He exercised his royal prerogative to dispense people from obeying them: it was not necessary to suspend or annul them; they could merely be neglected’.¹⁸¹

iii) THE KING’S PERSONALITY AND PARLIAMENT

Just as the king’s character was of fundamental importance to the running of late medieval government in general, so too, his personal input could be crucial in shaping and influencing the nature of parliament. Parliament itself did not, of course, depend on the person of the king in order to function (as the period of Edward III’s dotage and Richard II’s nonage between 1372 and 1381 bears witness), but when the king did assume royal authority, the effects on the institution were usually far-reaching and quite distinctive. Constraints of space means that only two periods - the 1390s and Henry IV’s reign - will be discussed in any great detail here. In a sense, however, these represent the most promising periods because Edward III’s age and illness, together with Richard II’s youth, meant the monarch had a negligible effect on parliament prior to the 1390s (or, perhaps more accurately, before the mid-1380s), and the researches of G.L. Harriss on the management of parliament by Henry V, leaves little that might be added for the period from 1413 onwards.¹⁸²

a/ Richard II

Richard’s attitude towards parliament in the 1390s was undoubtedly shaped by his experiences of the institution in the preceding decade. This may seem an obvious point to make, but its full implications have rarely been explored by historians looking at parliament from 1389 onwards. The consensual view seems to be that the 1390s (at least until 1395) was a period which saw relative accord between king and parliament¹⁸³ - a situation caused, no

¹⁸¹ McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights*, p.100.

¹⁸² Harriss, ‘Management of Parliament’, pp.137-58.

¹⁸³ In reference to Richard’s government from 1390, McKisack said that, ‘This atmosphere of harmony was never wholly lost during the next six years’: *The Fourteenth Century*, p.466. See also Stubbs, *Constitutional History*, ii, 506-13; T.F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England*, 6 vols. (Manchester, 1920-33), iii, 473-9; Steel, *Richard II*, pp.180-216. Alan Rogers questions this assumption, but only on the basis of the conditions attached to the grants

doubt, by the reduced financial burden imposed by the crown on the Commons, as a result of long-term peace.¹⁸⁴ The apparent harmony has also been linked into the king's desire to win back the support of the political community by responding to the more serious grievances of the Commons - concerning the abuse of livery, the control of labour and wages and the enforcement of the statute of provisors - between the Cambridge Parliament of 1388 and the parliament of January 1390.¹⁸⁵

No doubt, the collapse of the Appellant regime and the subsequent re-establishment of Richard's personal authority in May 1389¹⁸⁶ produced a stability of sorts, but we should be careful in assuming from this that his relationship with parliament transformed into one of harmony and respect. By any standards, the years 1385-1388 had seen the most serious of challenges to the king's authority (short of usurpation itself) and the fact that this dissent had been conducted within the forum of parliament with the consent and, at times, with the active participation of the Commons themselves, is something that we cannot assume Richard simply forgot once he resumed power after these years.¹⁸⁷ The recalcitrance of parliament in the period between 1385 and 1388 would have been enough for any king to harbour resentment, but for a king of Richard II's personal disposition and personality,¹⁸⁸ the existence of a grudge must be considered highly likely indeed.

The best insight into Richard II's dealings with parliament in the 1390s is provided by the questions he put to the judges in August 1387.¹⁸⁹ These questions arose directly out of Richard's reaction to the events of the so-called 'Wonderful Parliament' of 1386, when his chancellor, Michael de la Pole, was impeached, and Richard himself was forced to accept the appointment of a commission of government, which effectively ruled in

of taxation during the period, 'Henry IV, the Commons', pp.50-1. More recently, historians see the years 1394-5 as the turning point in Richard's relations with the political community, but little reference is made to his relations with parliament until 1397; Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.143-153; Butt, *History of Parliament*, pp.413-4; Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, p.25. Richard II's most recent biographer, Nigel Saul, talks of relations between king and parliament 'straining' from the middle years of the decade; *Richard II*, p.256.

¹⁸⁴ For example, see Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.133-8.

¹⁸⁵ Tuck, 'Cambridge Parliament', pp.234-238; Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace', pp.131-52; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.262-5.

¹⁸⁶ Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, p.137; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.199-204.

¹⁸⁷ Note Given-Wilson's comments that Richard II was preoccupied in the 1390s by an overwhelming desire to avenge his friends who had been condemned in the Merciless parliament of 1388; *Chronicles of the Revolution*, pp.12-13.

¹⁸⁸ See Steel, *Richard II*, p.41-2, 203-4; J.S. Roskell, *The Impeachment of Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, in 1386* (Manchester, 1984), pp.20-1; S. Walker, 'Richard II's Views on Kingship', in R.E. Archer and S. Walker, eds., *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England. Essays Presented to Gerald Harriss* (London, 1995), pp.49-63; and Saul, *Richard II*, especially his comments on Richard's narcissism, pp.459-462.

¹⁸⁹ For this paragraph see S.B. Chrimes, 'Richard II's Questions to the Judges, 1387', *L.Q.R.* lxxii (1956), 365-390.

the king's name for over a year.¹⁹⁰ Their purpose was to provide the legal and doctrinal basis from which Richard could reassert his authority over and above the Lords Appellants.¹⁹¹ The fact that he was not given the chance to do so, at least in 1387, should not detract from the enormous significance of what amounted to an unprecedented statement by the king himself of the parameters of the royal prerogative. Most of the questions related in one way or another to parliament and included the following assertions: that statutes could be made only with the king's free will; that parliaments could only be dissolved as and when the king pleased; and that officials and judges could be impeached within parliament only with the king's agreement. Perhaps the most significant question, however, was the sixth which asked '...whether the king ought to have control of parliament [*regimen parliamenti*], and indeed to control proceedings, so that...[his] articles [rather than the articles of the Lords and Commons] ought to be proceeded with first'.¹⁹² The reply to this question was '..[t]hat the king should have the control of the matter, and thus successively in respect of all other articles touching parliament until the end of parliament'. All these questions, but particularly the sixth, were stating in as explicit a way as possible the fundamental point that (in the mind of the king) parliament existed and functioned primarily to expedite his wishes.

Although our concern is with the 1390s it is important to point out that the assertion by Richard II of his *regimen parliamenti* in 1387 may not necessarily have been born simply from the immediate context of the events of 1386.¹⁹³ It is quite possible that his questions to the judges were fuelled by a much longer-term resentment at the way in which parliament had persistently sought to influence and restrict the way he governed.¹⁹⁴ From the beginning, Richard's experience of the institution must have been shaped by the distrust and suspicion which existed between the crown and political community over the former's record of expenditure.¹⁹⁵ The Commons' insistence on the appointment of War Treasurers between 1377 and 1390, to oversee the allocation of parliamentary subsidies, effected a crisis in household finance which cannot have failed to have had a negative impact on the young king.¹⁹⁶ This, it is worth remembering, was at a time when neither household expenses nor

¹⁹⁰ Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.104-6, 111-10; Roskell, *Impeachment of Michael de la Pole*, pp.49-55; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.157-175.

¹⁹¹ McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, p.449.

¹⁹² Chrimes, 'Richard's Questions', p.378.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp.371-382; McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, pp.448-9.

¹⁹⁴ See Roskell, *Impeachment of Michael de la Pole*, p.33. Note also Given-Wilson's comment that 'By 1385-6 he [Richard] was clearly exasperated at the repeated criticisms of the commons', *The Royal Household*, p.113.

¹⁹⁵ Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.1-32.

¹⁹⁶ Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, p.139.

annuities were particularly excessive so Richard would have had good reason to feel aggrieved at the treatment the crown was receiving from the Commons. It did not take long for controversy to focus more sharply on the person of the king himself; during the course of the 1380s parliamentary criticism shifted from a concern over the rôle of the continual council, whilst the king was a minor, to concern over the function and composition of the royal household when the king began to take a more active rôle within it.¹⁹⁷ By 1385, this disquiet had developed into outright opposition to the extravagance of the royal household and the parliament of this year took the first direct steps to regulate royal expenditure.¹⁹⁸ Such interference, and the resulting humiliation attached to it, can only have served to emphasise to Richard the inadequacy of his own political power compared to the power of parliament, and this in turn can only have increased his hostility to the concept that the English monarchy should rule with a sensitivity to the interests and wishes of the commonality, or their representatives, gathered at parliament.

If the desire to 'tame' parliament by bringing it firmly under the crown's control was ingrained in Richard's consciousness by the time he recaptured the initiative in the Cambridge Parliament of 1388, this would make an understanding of the 1390s that bit easier. Political expediency induced Richard to flirt with the political community between 1388 and 1390, but, thereafter, for the first time in his reign, Richard had a free hand to shape parliament as *he* wished.¹⁹⁹ By closely examining parliament in this decade, there is a strong case to be made that Richard attempted to put into practice the agenda disclosed by his questions to the judges in 1387. The implementation of this agenda was heralded in the January parliament of 1390 when the king's ministers were ceremoniously dismissed, only to be restored to their offices the following day. This bizarre spectacle was not designed to induce a sense of confidence in the crown's good intentions; it was a carefully orchestrated political statement intended not only to signify a definite break with the past, but also to indicate the beginning of a new era in which the king would never again have his prerogative impaired by the actions of parliament.²⁰⁰ In a sense it represented the *fait accompli* to the previous decade where

¹⁹⁷ Roskell, *Impeachment of Michael de la Pole*, pp.30-35; Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, pp.113-121; McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, p.437 and Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.90-101.

¹⁹⁸ Palmer, 'Parliament of 1385'; Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, p.99-100.

¹⁹⁹ Note the words purported to have been spoken by Richard when he announced his right to take on the responsibilities of ruling in 1389; Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History*, iii. p.454.

²⁰⁰ Interestingly, only a matter of weeks after this parliament the minutes of the council record that an ordinance was made relating to the mode of transacting business therein, which explicitly stated that business touching the king and the realm would be transacted before all other matters: *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England*, ed. N.H. Nicolas, 2 vols. (1834-7), i. p.18.

Richard II had, on more than one occasion, been forced into the humiliating position of protesting in parliament against encroachments on the royal prerogative.²⁰¹ Richard wanted to make it clear that parliament would never presume to have any influence over the king's officers again and, indeed, this was explicitly stated when he said '...que combien q'il avoit ses ditz Officers & Counseillers pur deschargez en Parliament & rechargez en ycell, il ne voleit que ce ferroit trait ne pris en ensample n'en consequence en temps a venir'.²⁰² Parliament was not to be allowed to forget that the tables had now turned, for in the following session, and in 1391, both the Commons and the Lords are recorded as praying that the king '...estoise aussi Frank en sa Regalie, Liberte, & Dignite Roiale en son temps, come ascuns de ses nobles Progenitours...furent enlour temps'.²⁰³

How far the Commons acted voluntarily and how far they were compelled by the 'management' of proceedings is open to speculation, but there is no denying that during the 1390s, the king did 'control' parliament and the king's articles were 'proceeded with first' during the parliamentary session. The charge in November 1390, for example, concerned the prospect of renewed hostilities with France and the necessary costs involved in such an eventuality; correspondingly, the issues which dominated the session were a series of measures ordained to safeguard the wool trade if war was renewed, together with a generous grant of a wool subsidy for three years whatever happened.²⁰⁴ In 1391, the charge highlighted the need to ordain remedies for the falling price of wool and it also drew attention to difficulties involved in the Statute of Provisors; accordingly, the proceedings mainly concerned changes in the wool staple and other measures affecting the wool market, as well as the Commons' agreement to the relaxation of the regulations concerning provisors.²⁰⁵ Similarly, the business of the parliament of 1393 kept very close to the stated purpose of the session which was to be the raising of money for the costs of 'war, truce or peace' and the further modification to the statute of provisors.²⁰⁶ The same situation prevailed in 1394, where (besides some private petitions) the dominant feature of this assembly was the discussion of peace negotiations with France.²⁰⁷ In 1395, the *only* business recorded in the parliament roll, between the appointment

²⁰¹ *RP*. iii. 165, 224.35, 258.7.

²⁰² *RP*. iii. 258.7.

²⁰³ *RP*. iii. 286.12. See also *RP*. iii. 279.15.

²⁰⁴ *RP*. iii. 277-279.

²⁰⁵ *RP*. iii. 284-6.

²⁰⁶ *RP*. iii. 300-4. The crown also initiated a modification to the statute concerning foreign priors in England; *RP*. iii. 301.7.

²⁰⁷ *RP*. iii. 309-18.

of the receivers and triers and the answers given to the common petitions, was the grant of direct taxation itself.²⁰⁸ Indeed, there was perhaps no clearer indication of this increasing element of control than in the ability of the crown in 1395 actually to extract this taxation at a time when the traditional appeal to necessity had been almost entirely removed by formal peace with France.²⁰⁹ That a decisive shift had occurred in the tactical advantage enjoyed by crown and community respectively is shown in the fact that, whereas in the 1380s the Commons had often made their grant of taxation dependent on the willingness of the crown to grant general pardons or an exemption from trailbaston proceedings, now it was the crown which, in 1391 and 1393, used the threat of *withholding* these concessions to extract a grant from the Lower House.²¹⁰

If the business of the crown was beginning to predominate within parliament, conversely, the business or interests of the Commons began to fade to the background. In 1395 only four common petitions were presented to parliament and for the first time in ten years no legislation at all was enacted.²¹¹ Whilst the lack of statutes could feasibly be explained by the absence of the king in Ireland and the council's reluctance to act without royal authority, explanation for the lack of petitions is not so clear-cut. Certainly, the king's absence cannot have been a factor because in the following parliament, when the king was present, even fewer common petitions were recorded (just three) and the number increased only slightly in Richard's last parliament of September 1397 when eight were presented. Clearly a trend had developed: in the last three parliaments of Richard II's reign the average number of common petitions presented was just 5, whereas in the three consecutive parliaments prior to 1395, the average was 21. Either this considerable downturn reflected the fact that the Commons were content with their lot and really had nothing to complain about or request (which seems highly implausible), or else they were being actively discouraged from compiling petitions and sending them to the king and council for consideration.

Three factors may be suggested in support of this latter scenario. Firstly, despite an evident increase in the number of king's retainers that were being returned to parliament in the 1390s,²¹² it is evident that Richard was still intent on ruling parliament with an iron fist, stamping out any sign of dissent by the Commons and certainly not putting up with frank and

²⁰⁸ *RP*. iii. 330.6.

²⁰⁹ See above, pp.30-1.

²¹⁰ *RP*. iii. 286.11, 303.12; G.L. Harriss, 'Theory and Practice', p.813, note 34.

²¹¹ *RP*. iii. 330-331.

²¹² See chapter 4, pp.109-14.

open discussion. Even to his supporters in parliament an element of fear and insecurity may have been decisive factors in stifling independent activity by the Commons. Traditionally this menacing atmosphere has been illustrated by the king's extreme reaction to the petition of Thomas Haxey in January 1397,²¹³ and his encirclement of the following parliament in September with his Cheshire archers.²¹⁴ In addition to these examples, another incident in the latter parliament illustrated very effectively what sort of political climate prevailed at the time. This was the murder by John Haukeston of William Laken, an esquire of Henry Bolingbroke, earl of Derby. According to a petition presented to the king by Haukeston he, and an accomplice called Robert Kendale, '...killed [Laken] in the presence of the king and the whole parliament'.²¹⁵ The fact that Haukeston is described as a knight of the county of Chester (although Gillespie states that he was definitely not a member of Richard's infamous archers);²¹⁶ the fact that Kendale is described elsewhere as a 'king's servant' and was evidently in favour with the crown;²¹⁷ the connection of Laken with Bolingbroke whose position in the polity was looking increasingly uncertain and threatened;²¹⁸ and the somewhat bizarre wording of the petition itself which made no attempt at all to excuse the actions of the guilty party: all these things hint of at least some sort of royal complicity.²¹⁹ If the incident was not stage-managed by the king, then it certainly seems to have played into his hands, for the pardon he granted Haukeston by letters patent just over a month later sent a clear and deliberate message to parliament and the country at large, that crimes could be committed - even in the presence of the king himself - which could go unpunished so long as the perpetrators were acting in accordance with the wishes of the king.²²⁰

Secondly, the closer management of the Commons by Richard II may have

²¹³ *RP*. iii. 430.90; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.368-70; A.K. McHardy, 'Haxey's Case, 1397: The Petition and the Presenter Reconsidered', in J.L. Gillespie, ed., *The Age of Richard II* (Gloucester, 1997), pp.93-114.

²¹⁴ Saul, *Richard II*, p.375; Given-Wilson, 'Adam of Usk, the Monk of Evesham', pp.329-35.

²¹⁵ *SC* 8/249/12437 (1397).

²¹⁶ J.L. Gillespie, 'Richard II's Cheshire Archers', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, cxxv (1974), pp.59-80, p.38, note 138. No further light is shed on Haukeston in Gillespie's later article, 'Richard II's Archers of the Crown', *J.B.S.*, xviii (1979), 14-29, or in M.J. Bennet, *Community, Class and Careerism: Cheshire and Lancashire Society in the Age of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Cambridge, 1983).

²¹⁷ *C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p.556. In 1391 the king had granted Kendale the close of Morton in Inglewood forest, which was subsequently revised to the annual payment of £8 by Edward, duke of Albemarle who had received the grant in his place; *C.P.R.*, 1388-92, p.469.

²¹⁸ For Laken's connection to Bolingbroke, see S. Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity 1361-1399* (Oxford, 1990), p.220.

²¹⁹ The petition tells us that Haukeston refused to answer the charges brought against him before the king's council; that he and Kendale had lain in wait on the king's highway to ambush Laken; and that they had 'feleonosement occist et murdrist' Laken by stabbing him in his leg and back.

²²⁰ *C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p.427. The murder took place on 22 September 1397 and the pardon was granted just over a month later on 25 October.

mitigated against the generation of large numbers of common petitions from the Lower House. On the one level, this 'management' might be seen in terms of the growing number of royal annuitants that were being returned to parliament in the 1390s;²²¹ but on a far more effective level the king's influence on the proceedings in the Lower House may have been transmitted via the Commons' Speaker. From 1393, this office was filled by one of the king's most active and experienced retainers, his councillor Sir John Bussy.²²² There can be no doubt that Bussy played an absolutely pivotal rôle in steering the king's agenda past the Commons in the two parliaments of 1397 and there is no reason to doubt that with the king's authority behind him, he might also have actively suppressed items of common business which threatened to distract the Commons from the issues which the crown wished them to address.²²³

Thirdly, common petitions may simply have fallen victim to vigorous administrative selectivity where those which were considered to be too time-consuming or contentious simply were not considered by the king and council.²²⁴ The whole tenor of Richard's questions to his judges was that parliament's primary function was to serve the interests of the king - those of the community came second. By the mid-1390s Richard may have felt sufficiently secure to put this principle into practice with the result that common petitions occupied an ever diminishing status in the business of parliament, ending up, in 1398, by their exclusion from proceedings altogether. In this year Richard took the unprecedented step of appointing a committee to consider common petitions outside parliament because parliament itself had been too busy attending to his affairs.²²⁵ The king's setting up of this committee was as clear a statement as any that he had achieved his aim of subjugating the 'articles' of the Commons to his own royal 'articles'. Indeed, this is further demonstrated by the fact that none of the six statutes enacted in January 1397 derived from common petitions and only five out of the twenty enacted in the following parliament came from this source.²²⁶

Finally, it is worth adding that it may not have been just the Speaker who

²²¹ For the presence of the king's affinity in parliament see chapter 4, pp.109-14.

²²² J.S. Roskell, 'Sir John Bussy of Hougham', *Lincolnshire Architectural and Archaeological Society*, vii (1957), 27-45, repr. in *idem*, *Parliament and Politics in Late Medieval England*, 3 vols. (London, 1981-3), ii, pp.45-63.

²²³ Saul, *Richard II*, pp.376-8. See also his biography in Roskell *et al.*, eds., *The House of Commons*, ii, pp.449-54.

²²⁴ This has been suggested in relation to the reign of Henry V; '...the smaller number of common petitions may also suggest closer royal surveillance, an unofficial vetting to eliminate those that were otiose or unacceptable', Harriss, 'Management of Parliament', p.154.

²²⁵ J.G. Edwards, 'The Parliamentary Committee of 1398', *E.H.R.*, xl (1925), 321-333, repr. in Fryde and Miller, eds., *Historical Studies*, i, pp.317-28.

²²⁶ For the parliament of January 1397, see *SR*, ii, 92-4, statutes i-vi. For the parliament of September 1397 see *SR*, ii, 94-110. Statutes xvi-xx originated from common petitions. Note Saul's remarks that the adoption by Richard of the title 'prince' in the 1390s, '...sought to underline...the king's *independent* law-making capacity' (my italics); 'Richard II and the Vocabulary of Kingship', *E.H.R.*, cx (1995), 854-77, pp.863-4.

organised proceedings on the behalf of the king in the Lower House. Interestingly, following Richard II's last parliament, the clerk of the Commons, John Scarborough, petitioned the crown for an annuity of £10.²²⁷ The timing of this supplication, the confidence with which Scarborough presented his case and the fact that the annuity was eventually granted, suggest very strongly that this clerk had performed an extremely important rôle for the king in the parliament of September 1397 as well as, perhaps, in the other parliaments of the 1390s.²²⁸ Richard's long-term plans for parliament are, of course, unknown but it may be significant that it was at this point, from the mid-1390s, that he chose to build the new and grandiose Great Hall of the Palace of Westminster where parliament usually gathered.²²⁹ Perhaps this was a very deliberate attempt by the king to demonstrate in stone and mortar what he had shown in his handling of petitions and legislation; namely, that this was a royal institution controlled and shaped by the crown.

b/ Henry IV²³⁰

If Richard II viewed parliament as a threat and challenge to his prerogative, and treated it with an according degree of disdain and disrespect, the reign of his successor saw a very different relationship develop between the king and the institution. Under Henry IV, parliament was not so much a threat to the king's position, as it was a lifeline for it. Henry came to the throne promising a new political order in which he would 'live of his own' and in which parliamentary taxation would be reduced to a bare minimum. Within a year or so, however, events were to prove how unrealistic this pledge had been; rebellion in Wales, border raids from Scotland, instability in Ireland and threats to Calais, together with the burgeoning costs of the royal household and a greatly expanded royal affinity, placed a demand on the financial resources of the crown which was impossible to meet simply from the ordinary or

²²⁷ SC 8/223/11124. See also H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, 'The King's Ministers in Parliament, 1307-1327', *E.H.R.*, xlvii (1932), 194-203, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (London, 1981), ch.xvii, p.396, note 3; A.F. Pollard, 'The Mediaeval Under-Clerks of Parliament', *B.I.H.R.*, xvi (1938-9), 65-87, pp.67-73. See also my discussion of the clerk of the Commons in chapter 3, p.73.

²²⁸ *C.P.R.*, 1396-99, p.427. The response to the petition, dated at Bristol to 24 March 1398, records that assent was given by the king: Edmund, bishop of Exeter (chancellor); Guy, bishop of St. Davids (treasurer); the dukes of York, Aumerle, Surrey and Exeter; John, marquess of Dorset; the earls of March, Salisbury, Worcester and Wiltshire (all of whom comprised the king's council); and John Bussy, Henry Grene, John Russel, Richard Chelmswick, Robert Teye and John Golafre (who were said to be present on the behalf of the commons of parliament).

²²⁹ R.A. Brown, H.M. Colvin and A.J. Taylor, eds., *History of the King's Works*, 3 vols. (London, 1963), i, pp.527-33.

²³⁰ It is hoped that a fuller treatment of parliament under Henry IV will shortly be published by the present author as part of the proceedings of the fifteenth century colloquium held at Huddersfield, September 1997.

hereditary revenue of the royal demesne.²³¹ The financial support of parliament was imperative because without it these military obligations would not have been met. Moreover, without parliamentary taxation Henry would have had far less money from royal lands, and particularly the duchy of Lancaster, to spend on his royal affinity; and without his affinity it is debatable whether he could ever have survived the many internal rebellions against him including, of course, the battle of Shrewsbury in 1403.²³²

Parliament may have represented Henry's salvation but this has not stopped the vast majority of past and current historians from portraying the day-to-day interaction between the king and Commons in an essentially negative light. Traditionally, Henry IV's disposition in parliament has been characterised in two complementary ways. On the one hand, he and the Commons are seen to have been locked in some major constitutional conflict over the extent to which the crown could extract money from parliament and spend it on the 'ordinary' expenditure of the king, such as the royal household.²³³ In this prevailing 'confrontational' model, the Commons are regarded as having formed an 'opposition' to the crown, operating in a political climate which was both hostile and polemical. On the other hand, the dependency of the crown on the willingness of the Commons to fund its ever burgeoning expenses has prompted historians - in the context of parliament - to portray Henry as an essentially feeble king.²³⁴ This in turn has led to the belief that what has been termed the king's 'unusually conciliatory attitude in parliament'²³⁵ reflected the innate weakness of his position there.

Since the first of these viewpoints is addressed in chapter 4,²³⁶ our concern here is to consider exactly what Henry's bearing within the institution was. Are we right in attributing his 'conciliatory attitude' in parliament to his embattled position there or was it motivated by other less immediate reasons? From a purely political point of view, Henry had good reason to treat parliament very differently and in a far more tolerant way than Richard II had done. Political necessity, and, in particular, his dubious status as a usurper, meant that Henry *had* to be sensitive to the needs and interests of the commonalty in a way which

²³¹ Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, pp.226-34; Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons', pp.45, 55-8.

²³² Note Simon Payling's assertion that '...it was the gentry of the north midlands...who put [Henry] on the throne [and] it was they who kept him there in 1403', *Political Society in Lancastrian England: the Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1991), pp.134-7.

²³³ Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons', p.44; Kirby, *Henry II*, p.257; McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights*, p.93; P. McNiven, 'The Problem of Henry IV's health', *E.H.R.*, c (1985), 747-772, p.771; Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, p.27.

²³⁴ For example Kirby, *Henry II*, p.256-7; Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, p.114; A.B. Steel, *Receipt of the Exchequer, 1377-1485* (Cambridge, 1954), pp.104-5.

²³⁵ Brown, 'The Commons and the Council', p.31.

²³⁶ See below, pp.115-9.

Richard, or any other 'natural' successor to the throne, need hardly have contemplated. If Henry tolerated blunt criticism and frank discussion in parliament it was, at least in part, a conscious political gambit aimed at enhancing his reputation as a king who was fulfilling his royal obligation to rule with close reference to the wishes and demands of the commonalty.²³⁷ In other words, there was considerable political mileage to be gained by contrasting his own 'good' kingship with the autocratic and tyrannical tendencies of his predecessor. The classic statement of this in practice was the so-called 'Record and Process' of 1399.²³⁸ On the surface this document comprised a series of charges against the misrule and tyranny of Richard II but its sub-text was a Lancastrian political manifesto designed to win the backing of the population with a programme outlining the high-principled nature of Henry's future kingship. The fact that parliament featured so prominently in the Record and Process indicated both the widespread revulsion at the treatment it had suffered at the end of the previous reign and the pressure Henry must have felt to be seen to restore its rights and dignity in the polity.²³⁹

It would be totally wrong, however, to suggest that Henry's attitude to parliament was shaped purely, or even primarily, by a cynical desire to win popular support. We cannot possibly hope to understand the actions and motivations of this king without first appreciating the almost immeasurable significance of his being a nobleman prior to 1399. It seems, frankly, incredible that this period of his life rarely receives any attention when historians attempt to account for his style of kingship later on.²⁴⁰ Yet the fact that Henry was not brought up imbued with a sense of his own divine kingship cannot be ignored, either in the context of his handling of parliament, or royal government in general. His experience before the usurpation was of a chivalric nobleman surrounded by a group of close and trusted retainers, and we can be sure that it was honour, loyalty and comradeship which endeared these men to Bolingbroke, not the deference and sycophancy that most other kings would have been exposed to from an early age.²⁴¹ By 1399, Henry had had at least ten years of adult life which would have been shaped primarily by the day-to-day running of his estates²⁴² and the winning

²³⁷ For recent discussion on the subject and references, see Watts, *Henry VI*, pp.16-39, esp. pp.28-9.

²³⁸ *RP*. iii. 415-53; *Chronicles of the Revolution*, pp.168-89.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, charges, 1,8,15,17,19,29 and 31.

²⁴⁰ There are a few exceptions to this. In the context of parliament see A.J. Pollard, 'The Lancastrian Constitutional Experiment Revisited: Henry IV, Sir John Tiptoft and the Parliament of 1406', *Parliamentary History*, xiv (1995), pp.103-19, esp. p.116. Note also the comments of Alan Rogers and A.L. Brown who stated that, with regard to Henry IV's treatment of royal finances and the Great Seal respectively, the king ruled his kingdom much as a magnate ruled his estates; Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons', p.55; A.L. Brown, 'Authorization of Letters under the Great Seal', *B.I.H.R.*, xxxvii (1964), p.154.

²⁴¹ For the best, and only detailed, account Henry's earlier life see Kirby, *Henry IV*, pp.28-59.

²⁴² R. Somerville, *The History of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1265-1603* (London, 1953), pp.120-132; Kirby, *Henry IV*, p.17.

for himself of a Europe-wide reputation for chivalric prowess achieved, at least in part, by his two crusades to Prussia in the early 1390s.²⁴³ Arguably, the management of his own affairs would have developed in Henry a head for business-like discussion, deliberation and decision-making and his undoubted success in the field of chivalry would have demanded organisation, application and energy.

As to his political outlook Henry's involvement with the Lords Appellant in 1388 is undoubtedly the most significant factor to take into account.²⁴⁴ In effect, by joining forces with the Appellants, Henry was lending support to an opposition movement which regarded parliament as an essential constitutional counterbalance to royal misgovernment and excessiveness²⁴⁵ - traits which Henry himself would fall victim to just a decade later when he was arbitrarily dispossessed by Richard II of his rightful inheritance and then exiled abroad.²⁴⁶ Part of Henry's motivation for supporting the Appellants may have lain in the fact that as heir to the duchy of Lancaster estates, he was also closely associated with the cult of Thomas of Lancaster. The importance of this was the emphasis which the cult placed on the interests of the 'common weal' being the true end of politics.²⁴⁷ James Sherborne has argued that Henry's original intention in 1399 had been to cast himself in the tradition of Thomas of Lancaster by becoming Steward of England and ruling with the consent of parliament.²⁴⁸ He also postulates that in so doing, Henry had a working knowledge and respect for the *Modus Tenedi Parliamentum*.²⁴⁹ All these factors suggest that Henry's experience as a nobleman had taught him that parliament could not be treated simply as an extension of the king's prerogative in an atmosphere reminiscent of the royal court, but rather, that parliament should be managed in a business-like spirit where cooperation, plain speaking and constructive criticism were the order of the day. Thus, his unusually conciliatory attitude was both a political and a *personal* reaction to the reign of Richard II. Neither he himself, nor the political community in general,

²⁴³ F.R.H. Du Boulay, 'Henry of Derby's Expeditions to Prussia 1390-1 and 1392', in Du Boulay and Barron, eds., *The Reign of Richard II*, pp.153-72. It should be noted that Henry was the only late medieval English king to have travelled as far as Jerusalem in the course of his life time.

²⁴⁴ Goodman, *Loyal Conspiracy*; McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century* pp.454-61.

²⁴⁵ See chapter 8, pp.257-63.

²⁴⁶ *Chronicles of the Revolution*, pp.18-24; C. Given-Wilson, 'Richard II, Edward II and the Lancastrian Inheritance', *E.H.R.*, cix (1994), 553-71; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.394-402.

²⁴⁷ J.M. Theilmann, 'Political Canonization and Political Symbolism in Medieval England', *J.B.S.*, xxix (1990), 241-66, pp.250-2; S. Walker, 'Political Saints in Later Medieval England', in R.H. Britnell and A.J. Pollard, eds., *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society* (Stroud, 1995), pp.77-106. Also see below, pp.258-9.

²⁴⁸ J. Sherborne, 'Perjury and the Lancastrian Revolution of 1399', *Welsh History Review*, xiv (1988), 217-41, pp.222-4.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.223.

wished for a return to the days when the Commons dared not speak out for fear of retribution.

This is the light in which we should see Henry's endorsement of what amounted to a policy of 'free speech' in parliament when, in 1399, he personally annulled Richard II's laws of treason on the grounds that, whilst this legislation remained, there was '...no man which did not know how he ought to behave himself, to do, to speak, or say, for doubt of such pains [contained in the statute]'.²⁵⁰ Throughout the first half of his reign, in parliament as well as in other contexts,²⁵¹ this commitment to plain speaking was constantly put to the test: in 1401, the Commons petitioned the king requesting him not to listen to any unauthorised debates, to which the king replied,

...that his wish was that the Commons should have deliberation and advisement so that they could commune on and treat about all their own business between themselves, in order to bring [parliament] to a better end and conclusion.²⁵²

Later in the same session Henry accepted the Commons' plea that they should be pardoned if they had spoken disrespectfully of the royal estate.²⁵³ In January 1404 the king again granted the Commons leave '...to complain about the governance of our Sire the King...', and this on top of their request that the Lords should also speak their minds freely - to which Henry is reported to have replied that this was, in any case, what parliament was for.²⁵⁴ And, in 1406, the Commons asked to be excused if they had spoken words that were against the 'honour and profit of the king'. Henry replied, '...the king gladly accepts their excuses, and holds and reputes [the Commons] as his loyal lieges'.²⁵⁵ He also agreed later in the same parliament not to give credence to any reports of discussion that were critical of the crown.²⁵⁶

That all these were genuine statements and not, as has been previously argued, merely political expedients, is both supported by, and explains, the rôle of the Speakers in Henry's parliaments. In the past this rôle has been confused; historians have been unable satisfactorily to explain how the Commons, depicted as an opposition to the king, could have been led by Speakers who were high-ranking royal knights or esquires whose favour at court

²⁵⁰ *RP.* iii. 426.70.

²⁵¹ For example, in 1401, the chancellor of Oxford University, Philip Repingdon, wrote a long letter to Henry complaining that the country was torn apart by division, misrule and a general contempt for law and justice. Nevertheless he remained an intimate of Henry IV, was made Bishop of Lincoln in 1405 and retained a place in the royal household; cited by Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, p.190.

²⁵² *RP.* iii. 456.11; trans. in Wilkinson, *Constitutional History of England*, pp.299-300.

²⁵³ *RP.* iii. 466.46.

²⁵⁴ *RP.* iii. 523.8; C.M. Fraser, 'Some Documents Relating to the Hilary Parliament of 1404', *B.I.H.R.*, xxxiv (1961), 192-200, p.194.

²⁵⁵ *RP.* iii. 569.17.

²⁵⁶ *RP.* iii. 572.30.

never suffered for their actions.²⁵⁷ The nomination *by the crown* of Speakers such as Tiptoft and Savage epitomised the spirit of openness and tolerance which Henry promoted at the beginning of his reign. They were not acting as crown agents in parliament as Sir John Bussy had done in the 1390s, nor were they the opponents of crown interests; they were simply the best qualified and most appropriate men to represent the critical views of the Commons.

To gain a full picture of the atmosphere of parliament under Henry IV we must obviously take into account the discussion in chapter 4 on the composition of the Commons. Nevertheless, at this early stage, enough has been said to suggest that virtually every aspect of the attitude of Henry to parliament contrasted sharply with the attitude of Richard II and that in doing so, the nature of parliament under these two kings was very different indeed. Whereas Richard feared parliament and its potential to inhibit his authority, Henry treated the institution as an intrinsic and legitimate part of the late medieval constitution. Whereas Richard increasingly attempted to exclude the institution from having any input into the governance of the realm, Henry, out of personal conviction and political practicality, sought its cooperation and support. Whereas Richard never appeared comfortable with frank discussion and constructive criticism during parliament's proceedings, Henry positively encouraged meaningful debate in the Lower House. Whereas Richard II appeared to remain aloof from deliberations, relying on his chancellor to represent his views during a parliamentary session, Henry stands out as a monarch who was not content to sit on the sidelines as discussion went on before him, but often entered it in his own right.²⁵⁸ Henry did not run away from parliament when things got tough, as Richard had done in 1386,²⁵⁹ but stayed put, defending the crown's record on some occasions,²⁶⁰ and skilfully working out compromises to suit all parties in parliament,²⁶¹ on other occasions. In essence, Richard II never trusted parliament and viewed it with a corresponding degree of hostility; Henry IV considered the institution vital to his interests and with it entered into a relationship based on mutual interest and mutual respect.

²⁵⁷ For example, see Roskell, *The Commons and their Speakers*, pp.100-1.

²⁵⁸ This can be measured by the number of occasions when the two kings are recorded in the parliament rolls as having spoken personally (eg. with a phrase like, '...par son bouche propre') during parliamentary proceedings. In the period between 1401 and 1406, Henry's speech was recorded in this way on no fewer than eleven separate occasions, whereas under Richard II, only three occasions have been identified throughout the whole reign: (Richard II) *RP*. iii. 24.99, 224.35; (Henry IV) *RP*. iii. 456.14, 459.27, 460.32,33,35, 487.13,15b, 524.10,11b, 525.16, 549.20, 572.31.

²⁵⁹ Saul, *Richard II*, p.158.

²⁶⁰ Note, for example, the running debate he was reported as having with the Commons' Speaker in January 1404; Fraser, 'Some Documents', p.194.

²⁶¹ This is a reference to the famous 'Bill' produced by Henry in the Long Parliament of 1406 which was an attempt to assuage the anxieties of the Commons over the conditions in which his council would serve, whilst retaining the confidence and his councillors actually to serve; Brown, 'Commons and Council', pp.42-50.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has demonstrated that the crown's ascendancy in parliament was not a matter of whether the king was a strong and popular monarch - as Edward III or Henry V were. As an expedient of royal government the late medieval English parliament served the interests of the monarchy no matter who sat on the throne. This has been shown by assessing, from the point of view of the crown, the two most important functions of parliament at this time: taxation and legislation. In the case of taxation, the king could rely on the political community to provide the necessary financial resources not only to help him honour his coronation oath to defend the realm, but also, often to make up for any shortfall in the ordinary revenue of the crown. Parliament was not an impediment for the king, financially speaking; rather, it was an instrument by which the king could pool the nation's resources for his own ends. In the case of legislation, it has been demonstrated that whilst the Commons undoubtedly participated in the process, statutes were first and foremost products of the crown, having passed through a vigorous process of selection, amendment, and sometimes repeal in order to ensure that what eventually was promulgated in the name of the king, conformed principally to his interests. Finally, the importance of the crown in parliament is demonstrated by the huge influence the king's personality could have on the nature of its proceedings. Thus, we have seen how very different parliament was in the last decade of Richard II's reign and during the reign of Henry IV; primarily, this was a result of the *king's* political outlook, not that of the Commons, the Lords or the country at large.

CHAPTER 3: THE LORDS AND PARLIAMENT

INTRODUCTION

...historians...have persistently ignored the fact that parliament was a trinity. At best the House of Lords has been treated as a kind of constitutional longstop or a compliant managerial tool wielded by the Crown; at worst it has received a cursory nod of recognition before being consigned to oblivion.

These were the opening words to a book on the *Tudor* Lords, but the passage might just as well have been describing the coverage and status of the Lords in the late medieval parliament.¹ Topics such as taxation, legislation, common petitions and the Commons' membership have dominated historiography on the late medieval parliament with the result that we still await a full treatment of the Upper House in its own right.² Indeed, it is a fitting indictment of the current state of historical writing on this subject that two of the most influential articles on the medieval Lords have portrayed them in an essentially negative light: K.B. McFarlane sought to emphasise how little influence the Upper House exercised over the agenda of the Commons; and J.S. Roskell demonstrated that many Lords who were summoned to parliament simply did not bother to turn up.³ This chapter aims to go at least part way towards filling the historiographical lacuna.⁴ The following discussion is divided into three parts: the first considers the place of the Lords in royal government; the second analyses the relationship between the Lords and the Commons; whilst the third asserts the rôle which the Lords took in discussing and deciding grants of taxation. The subject of 'bastard feudal' connections between the Lords and knights of the shire is discussed in the context of county elections in chapter 5.

¹ M.A.R. Graves, *The House of Lords in the Parliaments of Edward VI and Mary I: An Institutional Study* (Cambridge, 1981), p.1.

² The only monograph on the medieval Lords is J.E. Powell and K. Wallis, *The House of Lords in the Middle Ages: A History of the English House of Lords to 1540* (London, 1968).

³ K.B. McFarlane, 'Parliament and Bastard Feudalism', *T.R.H.S.*, 4th ser., xxvi (1944), 53-79, repr. in *idem, England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays* (London, 1981), pp.1-21; J.S. Roskell, 'The Problem of the Attendance of the Lords in Medieval Parliaments', *B.I.H.R.*, xxix (1956), 153-204, repr. in *idem, Parliament and Politics in Late Medieval England*, 3 vols. (London, 1981-3), i, ch.ii. Roskell's findings on the attendance of the bishops have been followed up and endorsed by R.G. Davies, 'The Attendance of the Episcopate in English Parliaments, 1376-1461', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, cxxix (1979-81), 30-81.

⁴ See the comments of G.O. Sayles, *The King's Parliament of England* (London, 1975), pp.124-131; and H.G. Richardson, 'The Commons and Medieval Parliaments', *T.R.H.S.*, 4th ser., xxviii (1945), 21-45, repr. in H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (London, 1981), ch.xxiv.

i) THE LORDS AND ROYAL GOVERNMENT

In chapter 2 it was argued that the essential *raison d'être* of the late medieval parliament was to serve as an instrument of royal government. Inasmuch as the Commons presented petitions (which mostly, but not always, formed the basis of legislation) and granted taxation, there is a limited sense in which they could be said to have participated in this government;⁵ they fulfilled a self-styled rôle as the 'petitioners and demanders'⁶ in parliament, making suggestions and airing grievances which could effect how the realm was governed. But we should be in no doubt that the real source of power and authority in parliament lay within the Upper House. This was where the king and the great men of the realm gathered to discuss, amongst other business, the proposals put forward by the Commons, and crucially it was here that the actual decisions and policies which affected the governance of the realm were made. Whereas the Lower House was little more than a 'talking shop', it was within the Lords that the real business of parliament was conducted: this was where private and common petitions were addressed and given answers; where legislation was framed (including the official legislation discussed in the last chapter); where matters of foreign and domestic policy were agreed on; and where trials and legal cases received consideration and final judgement.

The Upper House was well suited to its function as the expedient of royal government. Many of its members were directly involved in the governance of the realm either by their membership of the king's council and/or their association and connections with the royal court. The presence of the chancellor, treasurer and high ranking members of the king's household ensured that the Lords had direct access not only to the key departments of royal government, but also to the knowledge and expertise of these top ranking officials themselves. Whilst the high rate of absenteeism may have negative implications in terms of the motivation of the Lords to attend parliament, it did, nevertheless, mean that the Upper Chamber was a more manageable and relatively intimate gathering numbering perhaps as few as thirty or forty members with a core made up of the king's councillors.⁷ Such a small and compact group of men, well used to dealing with the affairs of the realm, must have facilitated considerably the efficient dispatch of parliamentary business and must have represented a stark contrast to the

⁵ G.L. Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance in Medieval England to 1369* (Oxford, 1975), p.508.

⁶ The Commons described themselves in these terms in 1399; *RP*. iii. 427.79. In April 1414 they referred to themselves as '...as well Assentirs as Peticioners...'; *RP*. iv. 22.22.

⁷ Roskell, 'Problem of Attendance', *passim*.

chaotic and unwieldy nature of the Lower House which, by the end of the fourteenth century, contained over 250 members.⁸ Moreover, unlike the Lower House, the membership of the Lords was, for all intents and purpose, fixed. This continuity in membership can only have added to a more professional approach to the affairs of parliament and, unlike the Commons, little time and energy would have been spent familiarising large numbers of new members with the institution's procedures and functions.

However, it was not just their number or composition which set the Lords at an advantage in formulating common policy and achieving consensus. *Hierarchy* must also have been a factor of considerable importance, particularly when contentious issues formed a part of the agenda. Whilst it is true that there is evidence suggesting that the Lords were sometimes invited to voice their opinions individually,⁹ it is difficult to believe that this indicated the existence of the principle of equality in the procedure of the Upper House. On the contrary, the attention that was increasingly paid in the Lords at the end of the fourteenth century to the question of seating arrangements (ie. who sat nearest the king) suggests that there was a strict order of precedence in the Upper House which must surely have extended to the respective influence individuals could bring to bear on discussion.¹⁰ This may have been a crucial factor in explaining why many Lords, and particularly those of the rank of baron or banneret, chose not to attend the Upper Chamber, for their influence on proceedings may have been so negligible as not to warrant the sort of time and expense which parliamentary attendance involved.¹¹ Nevertheless, with power arranged in the form of an allegorical pyramid and with the king at its apex, this surely meant that there was little chance of policy deadlock in the Lords. Again this would have contrasted sharply with the experience of the Lower House, filled as it was with MPs who came to parliament invested, in theory, with equal *plena potestas*.¹² The inefficient use of time caused by prolonged discussion, debate and lobbying

⁸ A.L. Brown, 'Parliament, c.1377-1422', in R.G. Davies and J.H. Denton, eds., *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (Manchester, 1981), pp.109-40, pp.116-8. The description of proceedings in the Lower House by the author of *Richard the Redeless*, though exaggerated, probably captures fairly accurately the ineffectiveness of much of what went on there; see *The Piers Plowman Tradition*, ed. H. Barr (London, 1993), pp.130-3.

⁹ Powell and Wallis, *The House of Lords*, pp.365, 367, 423; A.R. Myers, 'A Parliamentary Debate of the Mid-Fifteenth Century', *B.J.R.L.*, xxii (1938), 1-17, repr. in *idem*, *Crown, Household and Parliament in Fifteenth Century England* (London, 1985), pp.69-85; W.H. Dunham, 'Notes from the Parliament at Winchester, 1449', *Speculum*, xvii (1942), 402-15; A.R. Myers, 'A Parliamentary Debate of 1449', *B.I.H.R.*, li (1978), 78-83, repr. in *idem*, *Crown, Household and Parliament*, pp.87-92.

¹⁰ Powell and Wallis, *The House of Lords*, pp.390,397,414,423,427,437.

¹¹ Roskell, 'Problem of Attendance', p.199.

¹² See J.G. Edwards, 'The *Plena Potestas* of English Parliamentary Representatives', in F.M. Powicke, ed., *Oxford Essays in Medieval History presented to H.E. Salter* (Oxford, 1934), pp.141-54, repr. in E.B. Fryde and E. Miller, eds., *Historical Studies of the English Parliament*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1970), i, pp.136-49. Note that the superior status of London

must have been far more typical of proceedings in the Lower House than it was in the Lords where the making of policies and decisions ultimately rested with the king.

The clerical organisation of the Lords and the presence within it of a professional corps of judges and lawyers is the clearest indication that parliament in general and the Lords specifically, fulfilled a vital function as an instrument of late medieval government. In particular, it was the professional expertise of chancery which ensured not only that the actual proceedings of parliament ran smoothly for the crown, but also that parliament met in the first place and that its MPs were paid once the session had ended. It was a clerk of the crown, for example, who was responsible, under the authority of the chancellor, for issuing the writs which summoned a parliament, for making up a list of those who were to attend it and for issuing writs *de expensis* at the close of proceedings.¹³ Other snippets of information suggest that the clerk of the crown also performed important secretarial tasks during the session: in October 1377, Geoffrey Martin, 'Clerc de la Coroune' is recorded as having made a record of the judgement against John, Lord Guernei and delivered it '...en ce present Roule par sa main propre';¹⁴ in January 1380 he '...baillez en escrit pur enrouler es Roules de cest Parlement' an act declaring the murder of ambassadors to be treason;¹⁵ and in the Merciless Parliament of 1388 we can infer that his organisational skills were utilised by the Lords Appellant who acknowledged him at the end of the assembly.¹⁶

The efficiency of the Lords, however, must have rested to a far greater extent on the competence and conscientiousness of the clerk of parliament because his duties were by far the most important of all the chancery clerks present in the institution.¹⁷ They began before parliament met with the scrutiny of the writs of personal summons, taking into account any recent deaths or noble creations. At the start of the assembly he was responsible for making proclamation against the bearing of arms in parliament and he also read out the names of the receivers and auditors of (private) petitions.¹⁸ One of his principal duties during

amongst the cities and boroughs was denoted by its unique position in sending four representatives to parliament rather than the standard number of two; see C. Barron, 'London and Parliament in the Lancastrian Period', *Parliamentary History*, ix (1990), 343-367, p.343.

¹³ A.F. Pollard, 'Fifteenth-Century Clerks of Parliament', *B.I.H.R.*, xvi (1937-8), 137-61, p.138.

¹⁴ *RP*. iii. 12b.

¹⁵ *RP*. iii. 75.18.

¹⁶ *RP*. iii. 245.21.

¹⁷ For discussion of the clerk of parliament see H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, 'The King's Ministers in Parliament, 1327-77', *E.H.R.*, xlvii (1932), 377-97, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament*, ch. xxii, see pp.377-9; Pollard, 'Fifteenth Century Clerks of Parliament', pp.137-61; *idem*, 'The Clerical Organization of Parliament', *E.H.R.*, lvii (1942), 31-58; *idem*, 'Receivers of Petitions and Clerks of Parliament', *E.H.R.*, lvii (1942), 202-26.

¹⁸ *RP*. iii. 150.6.

parliament was to deal with *common* petitions, forwarding them to the king and council as well as reading out their replies at the end of the session. It is possible that he also supervised the filing of private petitions once they ceased to be enrolled after the 1330s. Finally, throughout the proceedings he was also in charge of compiling, or at least overseeing, the compilation of the parliament roll which was itself, of course, a chancery record. As a sidenote, it is interesting and significant to see how both the parliament roll and the clerk were termed ‘of parliament’ when, in reality, both pertained specifically to the Upper House: the roll was primarily a record of the proceedings and decisions taken by the Lords sometimes, but not always, with the involvement of the Commons; and the clerk, as a government official, was naturally located where this governance was exercised and where his administrative duties and organisational skills were needed most. It is ironic that whereas contemporaries tended to use the word ‘parliament’ when ‘the Lords’ might have been more appropriate, in modern historiography the tendency is to use the word ‘parliament’ to describe work whose main concern is actually with ‘the Commons’ - the term ‘History of Parliament Trust’ being the most notable illustration.¹⁹

The clerk of parliament was also commonly appointed as one of the receivers of petitions along with a handful of other chancery clerks, including the master of the rolls.²⁰ The receivers are generally considered to have lost their former utilitarian function by the third quarter of the fourteenth century because it is supposed that a decline in the number of private petitions being presented to parliament left them with little business to deal with.²¹ Richardson and Sayles argue that by the end of Edward III’s reign their practical rôle of handling petitions had been replaced by an emphasis on the ceremonial; that the receivership was nothing more than an honorary office reserved for the most senior clerks of chancery.²² As we shall see in chapter 6, however, there is strong evidence to refute this interpretation and uphold the

¹⁹ For the most recent set of volumes, see J.S. Roskell, L. Clarke and C. Rawcliffe, eds., *The House of Commons, 1386-1421*, History of Parliament Trust, 4 vols. (Stroud, 1993). It is interesting to note Linda Clark’s reminder that K.B. McFarlane had insisted that the biographies of the parliamentary peerage should be included in the volumes he was proposing to write in the 1950s which were to cover Edward III’s reign. Unfortunately McFarlane’s withdrawal from the project prevented this idea from taking off; L. Clark, ‘Magnates and their Affinities in the Parliaments of 1386-1421’, in R.H. Britnell and A.J. Pollard, eds., *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society* (Stroud, 1995), p.154, note 72. G.R. Elton alluded to the irony of the situation when he described the ‘History of Parliament Trust [as] being something of a misnomer’; ‘Studying the History of Parliament’, in *idem, Studies in Tudor and Stuart Politics and Government: Papers and Reviews 1946-1972* (Cambridge, 1974), ii, p.6. Other secondary work which could be accused of taking the history of the Commons as the history of parliament includes: J.G. Edwards, *The Second Century of the English Parliament* (Oxford, 1979); Richardson and Sayles, *The English Parliament*; Roskell, *Parliament and Politics*; R. Butt, *A History of Parliament: The Middle Ages* (London, 1989).

²⁰ Pollard, ‘Receivers of Petitions and Clerks of Parliament’, pp.205-6.

²¹ For references to the decline in private petitions, see chapter 6, pp.164-5.

²² Richardson and Sayles, ‘King’s Ministers’, p.382.

continuing importance of the private petition in the late medieval parliament. This being the case, the receivers would still have had an important job to do and, as A.F. Pollard has postulated, their duties may have stretched well beyond simply 'receiving' petitions to actually selecting those considered most appropriate for the attention of the auditors.²³

The organisational skills and influence of the chancery had extended into the Lower House by 1363, when evidence for the appointment of a 'clerk of the Commons' is first recorded.²⁴ It was a comment, perhaps, on the respective status and rôles of the two houses that the Commons received the services of a chancery clerk who was paid only an eighth of the sum enjoyed by the clerk of parliament and who was often described as merely the latter's 'under-clerk'.²⁵ Richardson and Sayles suggest that the appearance of the clerk of the Commons was linked to the emergence of the common petition, but since the latter occurred at least thirty years previously this connection seems somewhat tenuous.²⁶ We would be safer perhaps in assuming that it was a mid-fourteenth century development and that it may have been linked to a desire by the crown to introduce extra efficiency and expertise into the Lower House so that the business of parliament could be more speedily dispatched. The difficult economic and social circumstances following the Black Death and the need for effective legislation in these areas may well have been an important catalyst in this process.²⁷ Since the clerk of the Commons had no hand in the compilation of the parliament roll we cannot know for certain what his precise function was in the Lower House but we can guess that he had played an important rôle in giving technical advice on the layout, wording and presentation of common petitions.²⁸ The access he is likely to have provided to the records of government, including, of course, the records of parliament itself, may also have been an extremely valuable aspect of his presence amongst the Commons.²⁹

All these clerks were managed and directed by the chancellor who sat in the Lords *ex officio*. As first officer of state, a member of the king's council, the head of chancery and the effective head of the system of equitable jurisdiction it was only natural that the chancellor assumed the most prominent rôle in parliament as the chief organiser of the

²³ Pollard, 'Receivers of Petitions', pp.202-3 and note 3.

²⁴ Richardson and Sayles, 'King's Ministers', p.396. The careers of the clerks of the Commons have been discussed by A.F. Pollard, 'The Mediaeval Under-Clerks of Parliament', *B.I.H.R.*, xvi (1937-8), 137-161.

²⁵ Pollard, 'Clerical Organization', p.42.

²⁶ Richardson and Sayles, 'King's Ministers', p.396.

²⁷ See Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, pp.509-17.

²⁸ See G.P. Cuttino, 'King's Clerks and the Community of the Realm', *Speculum*, xxix (1954), 395-409, esp. p.406.

²⁹ The subject of the Commons' access to the parliament rolls has been discussed in Chapter 8, p.250, note 90.

assembly in general and as the king's spokesman (with one or two exceptions)³⁰ in particular. Although the evidence is less than forthcoming, we can reasonably assume that the duties of the chancellor were time-consuming, onerous and continuous throughout the session until he delivered the closing address thanking MPs for their attendance and (in most cases) their grant of taxation. His most important duty, however, is likely to have been the delivery of the opening speech at the beginning of parliament which explained the cause of the parliamentary summons and set out the royal agenda for the forthcoming session. This, it should be stressed, was no mere ceremonial exercise. Although, as we have seen, the Commons rarely ignored outright a royal plea of necessity, they did retain the fundamental right to regulate the *amount* of taxation granted and this crucial variable could well have hinged on how skilful the chancellor was in presenting the crown's record of governance and persuading the Commons of the need for generous supply. The opening statement was also an opportunity for the crown to remind the Commons that they were present at parliament primarily to see to the business of the king which they were encouraged to dispatch with all possible haste and diligence.³¹ Across the period from 1369 to 1421, the style, content and length of the opening speeches of the chancellor varied considerably and in most cases these factors related directly to the circumstances which surrounded the crown's need for financial aid.

In the last years of Edward III's reign, for example, the chancellor's speeches were relatively short and they rarely directly mentioned the crown's need for a parliamentary grant. This may have been a symptom of the confidence of the crown set against the relative tractability of the Commons³² - a point illustrated by the fact that in 1373 the chancellor was able to inform the Commons that all '*...maneres de Petitions & autres singulers Busoignes*' would remain in suspense until they had addressed the charge given to them: namely taxation.³³ However, the advent of Richard II's minority, together with suspicions of misappropriation of supply and the mishandling of the war, pushed the crown onto the defensive. This was reflected in the increased length and general tone of the opening speeches to parliament which not only elucidated in far greater detail the reasons why a parliamentary grant was needed but also emphasised the assiduity with which the crown had applied previous extraordinary aid to

³⁰ In October 1377, 1399 and 1401, the chancellor did not make the opening speech; see Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, p.18.

³¹ For example, see *RP*. ii. 363.12, iii. 4.6, 88.4, 166.4, 454.2b, 485.2b, 522.1b.

³² See the discussion in chapter 2, pp.26-7.

³³ *RP*. ii. 316.4.

legitimate costs.³⁴ Twice, in 1379 and January 1380, the chancellor chose to preempt possible criticism of the crown by ending his opening speech with an invitation to the Commons to scrutinize the records of expenditure which had been specially provided by exchequer officials.³⁵ In the 1390s, the tone shifted once more. Lengthy expositions justifying the reasons for summoning parliament were now a thing of past and the king's need for taxation began to be asserted with increasing assertiveness and assurance. In one of the shortest opening speeches of the period, in 1393, the chancellor boldly stated that whether there was war, truce or peace, the king still had great 'Charges & Costages' which he expected the Commons to meet.³⁶ Under Henry IV, increased tension over taxation forced the crown back on the defensive and again the opening speeches reverted to the form of a detailed exposition on the precarious state of the kingdom's defences and the absolute need for the Commons to be generous with their aid. Even an apologetic element crept in: in 1401 William Thirning, Chief Justice of the Common Bench, opened parliament by declaring that it was not the king's intention to burden his people with taxation unless there was 'notable cause'; and in October 1404, the chancellor, Henry Beaufort, bishop of Lincoln, asked the Commons that '...they should not marvel that another assembly had been summoned so shortly after the previous one'.³⁷ In the 1410s, a popular and successful monarch on the throne made the job of opening parliament far easier and this was reflected in the fact that for the first time in the period, the chancellor was able to begin an assembly (March 1416) with an exposition of the domestic and foreign achievements of the king to date.³⁸ As in the early 1370s and 1390s, the relative smoothness of parliamentary proceedings in the 1410s was indicated by the brevity of the opening speech and the directness with which the crown outlined its agenda for the session.

If the chancery personnel were mostly responsible for providing the organisational framework in which the Lords and indeed, parliament as a whole, could operate, it was the presence of personally summoned legal experts which really signified the executive rôle that the institution played. In the earlier part of the fourteenth century this 'official' legal element numbered as many as forty individuals, but by Richard II's reign there were between

³⁴ See for example the parliament of October 1377, where Archbishop Sudbury referred to the '...grante Necessitee, q[ue] ne touche soulement luy mesmes einz vous touz...'; *RP*. iii. 4.6.

³⁵ *RP*. iii. 56.7, 71.5.

³⁶ *RP*. iii. 300.1.

³⁷ *RP*. iii. 454.2b, 545.1a.

³⁸ For the rôle of Henry Beaufort, Henry V's chancellor between 1413 and 1417, see G.L. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort: A Study of Lancastrian Ascendancy and Decline* (Oxford, 1988), pp.70-72, 86-7; G.L. Harriss, 'The Management of Parliament', in *idem*, ed., *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (Oxford, 1985), pp.157-8.

eight and fourteen.³⁹ Their composition had also become more uniform; whereas under Edward III it was not uncommon for royal ambassadors or military captains to be summoned personally for their expert knowledge, in the period between 1369 and 1421 the body of professional men who received personal summons was almost entirely limited to top ranking lawyers.⁴⁰ Typically, these included the Chief Justice of the Common Bench, Justices of the Common and King's Bench, the Chief Baron of the Exchequer, King's Sergeants at Law and possibly one or two canon lawyers.⁴¹

Above all else, it was in the audience of common petitions and the drafting of new or revised legislation that this small and élite body of legal experts really came into their own. This can be deduced from the fact that they were summoned to be present in the specific context of the king and his council - where common petitions and legislation were dealt with - *not* amongst the Lords in general.⁴² Their primary purpose in parliament was to guide and assist the crown in the legislative business of parliament and although evidence of a direct kind is unfortunately lacking for the period between 1369 and 1421, cases from an earlier period would seem to suggest that these judges and 'learned counsel' could sometimes exercise considerable influence over the way in which common petitions were handled and statutes framed.⁴³ The judges were also appointed to the two committees set up to deal with private petitions: one dealing with petitions from England, Ireland, Wales and Scotland; and the other with petitions from Gascony and other 'foreign parts'.⁴⁴ The bulk of the membership of these committees comprised the spiritual and lay peerage but the fact that from 1378 a quorum had to be fixed on the number of peers who attended suggests that the lion's share of work was really done by the judges, together with the chancellor, treasurer and the steward and chamberlain of the royal household, who were appointed to assist the auditors at the beginning of parliament.⁴⁵

³⁹ A.L. Brown, *The Governance of Late Medieval England, 1272-1461* (London, 1989), p.184.

⁴⁰ W.M. Ormrod, 'Edward III's Government of England, c. 1346-1356', University of Oxford, D.Phil thesis (1984), p.143.

⁴¹ *Report from the Lords' Committees...for All Matters Touching the Dignity of a Peer*, 4 vols. (Parliamentary Papers, 1820-9), iv. pp.644-851. They have been identified using *Select Cases in the Court of the King's Bench under Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V*, ed. G.O. Sayles, Selden Society, lxxxviii (London, 1971), Appendix iv.

⁴² *Reports from the Lords' Committees...*, *passim*.

⁴³ E.L.G. Stones, 'Sir Geoffrey le Scrope (c. 1280 to 1340), Chief Justice of the King's Bench', *E.H.R.*, lxi (1954), 1-17, esp. pp.10-12; B.H. Putnam, 'Chief Justice Shareshull and the Economic and Legal Codes of 1351-1352', *University of Toronto Law Journal*, v (1943-5), 251-83; *idem*, *The Place in Legal History of Sir William Shareshull* (Cambridge, 1950), pp.52-4.

⁴⁴ For the size of these committees and the number of receivers appointed to them, see chapter 6, Table 7.

⁴⁵ Richardson and Sayles, 'King's Ministers', p.386.

It is noticeable that the Chief Justice of the King's Bench and Chief Baron of the Exchequer were only ever appointed to the 'British' committee in the period between 1369 and 1421. This may have reflected the relative distribution of the workload and in particular, the fact that higher authority was needed to deal with the more numerous 'native' petitions that were presented to parliament as compared to the 'foreign' ones. It is interesting to note that the appointments of the spiritual and lay peerage, honorary though they may have been,⁴⁶ also tended to place the more senior and powerful individuals of the polity within the 'British' committee; it was on this panel, for example, that John of Gaunt, the earls of Northumberland, Arundel and Warwick and the Archbishop of Canterbury served, almost without exception, during Richard II's reign. The preference given to the 'British' committee even appears to have stretched as far as the receivers whose most senior members, including the master of the rolls, were also appointed to the panel dealing with this particular business.⁴⁷ In addition to a disparity in the status of the two committees, the appointments of the judges also highlighted a consistency in their respective membership. For example, Robert Belknapp, Justice of the Common Bench, was appointed on the 'British' committee on fifteen out of sixteen occasions between 1376 and 1386 whereas Roger Fulthorp, also a Justice of the Common Bench, served solely on the Gascon committee on eleven occasions in the same time-span.⁴⁸ The uniformity of this membership may have reflected the practical advantages to be gained by the specialisation of an individual in one of the two regions to which the petitions pertained. Again, despite their apparent disinterest in this business it is interesting to note that this arrangement also extended to the peerage: between 1369 and 1397, the dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester, the earls of Arundel, Northumberland, Warwick, Kent and Derby, Guy, Lord Brian, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops of London, Winchester, Salisbury and Ely were all, with varying frequency, appointed predominantly to the 'British' committee.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* Richardson and Sayles are the main proponents of the idea that the committees of auditors were appointed mainly for ceremonial purposes by the end of the fourteenth century. Insofar as this applies to the spiritual and lay lords this may well have been true although, as we shall see in chapter 6, there are strong reasons to question whether the committees in their entirety were redundant by the late fourteenth century.

⁴⁷ Pollard, 'Receivers of Petitions', p.204.

⁴⁸ Bealknapp served on the Gascon committee in February 1383; see *RP.* ii. 321.6, 363.17; ii. 4.9, 34.13, 56.10, 72.8, 89.7, 99.6, 123.7, 133.6, 145.7, 151.9, 167.7, 185.8, 215.4, 215.4. For Fulthorp, see *RP.* ii. 322.7, 363.17; iii. 4.10, 34.4, 57.11, 99.6, 123.8, 133.7, 151.10, 185.9, 216.5.

⁴⁹ There were 28 parliaments between 1369 and 1399 (excluding the Cambridge parliament of September 1388 for which there is no parliament roll). John of Gaunt is recorded as a member of an auditing committee on 22 occasions, all them 'British' panels; the figure for Gloucester is 6 out of 8; Arundel, 27 out of 27; Northumberland 13 out of 15; Warwick, 19 out of 22; Kent, 11 out of 14; Derby, 4 out of 4; the Archbishop of Canterbury, 25 out of 25; the bishop of London, 24 out of 24; the bishop of Winchester, 24 out of 24; the bishop Salisbury, 19 out of 21; the bishop of Ely, 21 out of 21; Guy, Lord Brian, 13 out of 14; and the abbot of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, 16 out of 19.

In the same period the Archbishop of York, the earls of Buckingham, Stafford and Suffolk, and the bishops of Chester, St. David's, Hereford, Durham and Exeter were mainly appointed to the Gascon panel.⁵⁰

The attendance of legal assistants was of particular value for the Upper House not only for the expertise they possessed in dealing with the petitionary process (thereby allowing the titled Lords to get on with other more pressing matters) but also for the fund of knowledge they had on matters of law in general. In 1378, for example, '...les Justices & autres gentz de loy de la Terre, q[ue] scievant b[ie]n...' were on hand to assist the Lords in their ruling that no clergymen should enjoy immunity from prosecution for debt, trespass or any other cause whatsoever.⁵¹ In 1378, the executors of Edward III had put '...une certaine question [to the] Justices, Sergeantz, & les autres gentz du Loy...';⁵² and in January 1380 the matter was again considered by the royal lawyers including, significantly, four sergeants of law who had not been named in the writs of summons to that parliament.⁵³ Other occasions include January 1380 when '...les Justices en presence du Roi...& les Seign[eu]rs' had agreed to an act which declared that the murder of Ambassadors was to be treason; when the sergeants and Justices of both Benches were consulted in 1385 about an illegal entry made into a manor within the liberty of the duchy of Lancaster;⁵⁴ in 1390, when the king charged his Justices to see that surety was made to the earls of Gloucester and Warwick;⁵⁵ in 1406 when the Justices along with the Lords and Commons were requested to advise the king of how the realm could best be purged of 'male Goverance';⁵⁶ and in 1410 when, in response to a petition by the Commons asking for the prorogation of the Assizes, the king was reported to have agreed '...eue deliberation & advys ovesque les Seigneurs & les Justices'.⁵⁷ It was a measure of the importance attached to their presence in parliament that in 1394 the royal lawyers were the

⁵⁰ The Archbishop of York was a member of the Gascon committee on 13 out of 13 occasions (out of a total of 28 parliaments); Buckingham recorded a figure of 10 out of 10; Stafford, 13 out of 18; Suffolk 8 out of 10; the bishop of Chester, 14 out of 14; the bishop of St. Davids, 8 out of 9; the bishop of Hereford, 19 out of 21; the bishop of Durham, 16 out of 19; and the bishop of Exeter, 9 out of 11. The exceptions to this identification with one or the other committee include the earl of Salisbury who was on the 'British' panel 11 times and the Gascon panel 12 times; the Abbot of Waltham Abbey, 12 and 10 respectively; the earl of Cambridge, 7 and 5 respectively; John, Lord Cobham, 7 and 10 respectively; and the abbot of Glastonbury, 6 and 7, respectively.

⁵¹ *RP*. iii. 37.28.

⁵² *RP*. iii. 60.25.

⁵³ *RP*. iii. 61.26; *Report from the Lords' Committees...*, iv. 682-4. They were John Holt, David Hanmer, Walter Clopton and John Middleton and are recorded as king's sergeants in *Select Cases of the king's Bench*, lxxxviii, Appendix iv.

⁵⁴ *RP*. iii. 205.15.

⁵⁵ *RP*. iii. 287.12.

⁵⁶ *RP*. iii. 102.28; 579.56.

⁵⁷ *RP*. iii. 623.11.

fourth party, in addition to the king, Lords and 'valliant knights', who gave assent to the peace treaty with France.⁵⁸

The discovery amongst the P.R.O. class SC 8, of a series of private petitions from Robert Lincoln, clerk of the king's chapel, is a useful reminder that the king was also surrounded in parliament by various other lesser personnel and household servants.⁵⁹ These particular petitions date to the early 1380s and in each, Lincoln complained that he had been 'maliciously' arrested during a recent parliament (by one Henry Burton) which had prevented him from fulfilling an assignment '...enfourmer mesme n[ost]re Sire le Roi et ses communes du meillour exploit des ascuns secretz busoignes p[ur] profit du lui et de son Roialme'.⁶⁰ Lincoln was clearly being employed as a messenger and his close association with the king may account for his particular responsibility in conveying 'secret business'. However, it is unlikely that he was the only individual assigned to relatively unimportant and therefore unrecorded duties during a parliamentary session.⁶¹ Similarly, it is hard to believe that the clerk of parliament and the various other chancery clerks mentioned above represented the *only* clerical or secretarial element within parliament because the senior position these men occupied in chancery meant that they had many other junior clerks under them whose services they could call on to help with the more mundane aspects of parliamentary organisation.⁶² Whilst parliament was in session it was the focus of royal government and, as such, was probably attended by many more minor government functionaries than is suggested by the surviving evidence.

Finally, before ending this discussion, it is worth adding that medieval

⁵⁸ RP. iii. 315.16.

⁵⁹ See C. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance in England 1360-1413* (London and New-Haven), p.176. Lincoln is described as clerk of the chapel in *C.P.R., 1391-96*, pp.189, 230, 289 and as king's clerk in *C.P.R., 1381-85*, p.488; *1385-89*, p.526; and *1391-96*, p.473.

⁶⁰ SC 8/122/6056, 6057, 6059.

⁶¹ The dispersed layout of the institution (when held at Westminster), for example, must have necessitated the employment of more than just Robert Lincoln to convey business between the Lower and Upper Houses as well as the other departments of government located at the Palace of Westminster. For the layout of the late medieval parliament, see R.A. Brown, H.M. Colvin, and A.J. Taylor, *History of the King's Works: The Middle Ages*, 2 vols. (London, 1963), i, plan 3. A useful discussion of the location of the Commons and the Lords at Westminster can be found in Edwards, *The Second Century*, pp.4-16.

⁶² Many of the clerks discussed so far were drawn from amongst the twelve senior clerks of the chancery, sometimes described as 'Masters of Chancery'; Richardson and Sayles, 'King's Ministers', p.382. Each of these had serving under him three other clerks, except for the Master of the Rolls who had six. The clerks of the crown each had two assistants allocated to them. This meant that if there were six receivers in one parliament and five of them were Masters of the Chancery whilst the sixth was the Master of the Rolls, there was altogether a pool of some twenty-seven clerks available to deal with private petitions. Tout estimates that in total the Chancery in 1400 contained 120 clerks and it seems reasonable to assume that a large proportion of these would have been on hand to assist in the more mundane tasks of the parliament. This is cited and discussed by J.H. Fisher, 'Chancery and the Emergence of Standard Written English in the Fifteenth Century', *Speculum*, lii (1977), 870-899, p.877.

governance was not just about procedure and personnel; it was also about image and presentation. A meeting of the most powerful men of the realm in parliament clearly presented an ideal opportunity for the king to reinforce his status and authority through the use of ceremony, symbolism, dress and indeed, through the actual layout of the Upper Chamber itself. The famous Wriothesley depiction of the Tudor Lords in 1523 is probably the most accurate representation we have of what the late medieval Lords would have looked like.⁶³ With the king seated prominently on his throne dressed in the robes of state and holding the royal sceptre - symbol of power and authority - this scene shows that parliament was a great occasion for the king to display all the regalia and trappings associated with his royal status. His position at the head of the chamber, looking out over the rows of spiritual and lay lords seated before him, as well as over the officials and clerks of government busying themselves with the proceedings of parliament, signified in a very visual and unambiguous manner his position as the supreme head of the polity. Anyone attending the Lords, whether as member of the nobility or a knight of the shire or burgess in a delegation from the Commons, could have been left in no doubt that this was the heart of a royal institution which functioned and was organised primarily to see to the king's business.

ii) THE LORDS AND THE COMMONS

With a membership comprising the king, the social, political and ecclesiastical élites of the realm, the top-ranking officials of royal government and a body of professional bureaucrats and legal assistants, the Lords was the focal point of power, authority and expertise in parliament. It represented, in a very real sense, the nucleus of the institution; whilst the Lords occupied centre stage, the Commons inhabited the periphery or wings, being invited to participate in the important business of the realm only if and when their services were required. This situation did not, of course, materialise instantaneously but, by the beginning of Richard II's reign, was the legacy of over a century and a half of parliamentary development in which, it is worth remembering, for the first hundred years or so the Lords had constituted the *only* element of parliament - the Commons achieved a permanent status only in the 1320s.⁶⁴ Today,

⁶³ See Powell and Wallis, *The House of Lords*, plates xx and xxi. For a discussion of these see pp.555-6. These pictures correlate reasonably closely to the description given by Thomas Favent, *Historia sive Narracio Mirabilis Parliamenti*, ed. M. McKisack, Camden Society, 3rd ser., xxxvii (1926), pp.14-5.

⁶⁴ For the traditional rôle of the Lords see W.A. Morris, 'Magnates and Community of the Realm in Parliament, 1264-1327', *Mediaevalia et Humanistica*, i (1943), 58-94; Sayles, *The King's Parliament*, pp.100-3; G.L. Harriss, 'War and the emergence of the English Parliament, 1297-1360', *J.M.H.*, ii (1976), 35-56, pp.43-5; M. Prestwich, 'Parliament and the

nobody would seriously dispute that the late medieval Commons held an inferior position to the Lords, both from a social and a procedural point of view, but the question of how far their subservience went or how far they could act 'independently' of the Upper House is still very much open to debate.⁶⁵ Opinion would seem to be divided between an older school of thought, headed by such distinguished scholars as H.G. Richardson, H.M. Cam and J.E. Neale, who asserted that leadership and direction of policy permeated downwards from the Upper House, and a revisionist school led by the equally respected K.B. McFarlane, who championed the Commons' ability for independent action by arguing that '...it is difficult to believe that [MPs] still felt any great awe in the presence of the king and Lords [by Edward III's reign]'.⁶⁶

In two areas at least the deference of the Commons to the Lords is fairly uncontested. Firstly, when parliament became a judicial tribunal in which important men - or women - faced trial and judgement, it was always within the Lords that this process occurred and it was only the Lords who could exercise judgement in the cases. The fundamental principle that peers should be tried only by their fellow peers was explicitly recognised by the Commons and vigorously defended by the Lords themselves. During the momentous events of 1399, for example, the Commons clearly felt out of depth, for they requested that they be excused passing judgement on Richard II stating that '...les juggementz du Parlement appertiegnent seulement au Roy et as Seigneurs, et nient as Communes'.⁶⁷ In January 1404 the Lords themselves affirmed the principle by asserting that '...le Juggement app[er]tient a eux tant seulement; & puis lue & entendue mesme la Petition [from the earl of Northumberland pleading clemency] devant le Roy & les ditz Seign[eu]rs, mesmes les Seigne[eu]rs, come Piers du Parlement as queux tielx Juggementz appertiegnent de droit'.⁶⁸ This objection, it should be noted, was not against the encroachment of the Commons on the Lords' judicial function, but

community of the realm in fourteenth century England', *Historical Studies*, xiv (1981), 5-24, pp.5-6; J.R. Maddicott, 'Parliament and the Constituencies, 1272-1377', in Davies and Denton, eds., *The English Parliament*, p.5; S. Payling, 'The Widening Franchise: Parliamentary Elections in Lancastrian Nottinghamshire', in D. Williams, ed., *England in the Fifteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 1987), p.174.

⁶⁵ As Christine Carpenter has recently put it, 'A lot has been written, on the whole inconclusively, about how far the Commons were independent of the Lords or merely their lobbying fodder...'; C. Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution in England, c.1437-1509* (Cambridge, 1997), p.45.

⁶⁶ H.G. Richardson, 'John of Gaunt and the Parliamentary Representation of Lancashire', *B.J.R.L.*, xxii (1938), 175-222, esp.p.199; H.M. Cam, 'The relation of English members of parliament to their constituencies in the fourteenth century: a neglected text', repr. in *idem*, *Liberties and Communities in Medieval England* (London, 1944), pp.223-35, esp. p.152; J.E. Neale, 'The commons' privilege of free speech in parliament', in R.E. Seaton-Watson, ed., *Tudor Studies* (London, 1924), pp.257-86, esp.262-3; McFarlane, 'Parliament and Bastard Feudalism', p.12; and see also his 'Annexe' entitled 'An Early Paper on Crown and Parliament in the Later Middle Ages', in *idem*, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), pp.287-97.

⁶⁷ *RP*. iii. 427.79. See also the discussion by B. Wilkinson, 'The Deposition of Richard II and the Accession of Henry IV', *E.H.R.*, liv (1939), 215-39, repr. in Fryde and Miller, eds., *Historical Studies*, i, pp.329-53, p.337.

⁶⁸ *RP*. iii. 524.11b.

against the king's justices in parliament who had been intended by Henry IV to address Northumberland's case on their own. In isolation, the fact that the peerage were the judges in parliament may seem rather inconsequential; but placed in the context of the events between 1376 and 1399 when so much of parliament's time was taken up with the 'show trials' of disgraced courtiers and other royal advisers, the point assumes enormous significance.⁶⁹ The process known as impeachment undoubtedly gave the Commons an opportunity to participate in these trials but we should be clear that their outcome, and the fate of the accused, depended entirely on the prevailing attitudes within the Upper Chamber.⁷⁰

The Commons also appear to have deferred quite readily to the Lords on matters concerning 'foreign policy'.⁷¹ This is not to say that the Lower House was not involved in such decisions, for it was clearly in the interests of the crown to secure their assent in order to ensure compliance over future grants of taxation.⁷² However, the Commons never *made* these decisions, which were for the most part left to the Lords. At the resumption of hostilities with France in 1369, for example, it was the prelates who appear to have made the decision that Edward III should resume the title of king of France;⁷³ and in 1399 it was only the lay peers who were involved in the decision to go to war with Scotland.⁷⁴ Moreover when, in 1394, the Lower House was charged by the king to offer their 'advice and counsel' on certain articles which were to form the basis of a peace treaty between Richard II and Charles VI, it was replied that '...les ditz Commune unques ne oserunt entreprendre de conseiller de treiter de si haute & chargeante matire: desqueux...les ditz Communes sont outrement deschargez...'.⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Between 1376 and 1399 there were trials in the parliaments of 1376, October 1377, October 1383, April 1384, 1386, February 1388, September 1397 and 1399.

⁷⁰ The crucial rôle of the Lords as the final arbiters in parliamentary trials has most commonly been ignored in discussion of the Good Parliament of 1376 which is usually portrayed as witnessing an attack on the court party instigated and carried through primarily by the Commons; see G. Holmes, *The Good Parliament* (Oxford, 1975), *passim*; Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household* pp.146-160; W.M. Ormrod, 'Edward III and his Family', *J.B.S.*, xxvi (1987), 398-442, p.417, note 66. In addition to general histories on the period, the following works are particularly relevant to parliament as a tribunal in our period: T.F.T. Plucknett, 'The Impeachments of 1376', *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., i (1951), 153-164; *idem*, 'State Trials under Richard II', *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., iii (1952), 159-171; *idem*, 'Impeachment and Attainder', *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., iii (1953), 145-158; M.V. Clark, 'The Origin of Impeachment', in Powicke, ed., *Oxford Essays in Medieval History*, pp.164-89, repr. in M.V. Clarke, *Fourteenth Century Studies* (Oxford, 1937), pp.242-71; C.D. Ross, 'Forfeiture for Treason in the Reign of Richard II', *E.H.R.*, lxxi (1956), 560-575; J.S. Roskell, *The Impeachment of Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, in 1386* (Manchester, 1986); A. Rogers, 'Parliamentary Appeals of Treason in the Reign of Richard II', *American Journal of Legal History*, viii (1964), 95-124; Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, ch.vii, pp.69-76.

⁷¹ See the discussion in Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, pp.103-16.

⁷² This strategy was revealed quite explicitly in 1394 when the Commons were reminded by the crown, '...coment la Guerre fuist comence par assent du Parlement, & partant ils sont tenez d'eider a la dite Guerre si meillour issue n'aveigne.'; *RP*, iii. 309.1.

⁷³ *RP*, ii. 299.3, 300.8.

⁷⁴ *RP*, iii. 427-8.

⁷⁵ *RP*, iii.315.16-17.

This abdication of responsibility mirrored developments a decade previously when, in April 1384, the Commons had told the king that he and his council should alone determine how best to negotiate peace with France.⁷⁶ Even in the early 1380s, when the great debate took place in parliament over whether Gaunt's expedition to Castile or Despenser's crusade to Flanders was the better course of action, the Commons' participation was far less conspicuous than has sometimes been asserted.⁷⁷ Not only does the parliament roll indicate that the fault line lay principally between members of the Lords, rather than between the Upper and Lower Houses, but this is supported by the 'unofficial' accounts given by some chroniclers of this period.⁷⁸ If there was a division in parliament over foreign policy it appears to have centred, for the most part, between the spiritual and lay peerage attending the Lords.⁷⁹ In February 1383, the Commons displayed their characteristic hesitancy over the matter when they stated that '...ceste leur Charge de le pasage nostre Sire le Roy, ne l'Ordinance de son Viage, ou de nul autre grant Viage a faire, soleit ne doit appartenir a la Commune einz au Roy mesmes & as Seigneurs du Roialme, come lour semble'.⁸⁰

Trials and decisions over foreign policy constituted only a fraction of the total number of issues which parliament addressed; so what sort of relationship was there between the two houses on other matters? If by the phrase 'independent action' we mean that the Commons had the capacity to pursue a political agenda which was discernibly different, and very probably in opposition to, the agenda of the Upper House, we might expect to find the records of the medieval parliament littered with clashes between the Lords and Commons over various issues. Certainly, this is the impression given by Carol Rawcliffe who argues '...that

⁷⁶ *RP*. iii. 170.16.

⁷⁷ M. McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century, 1307-1399* (Oxford, 1959), p.430; A. Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility* (London, 1973), p.89; Butt, *History of Parliament*, p.383; Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, p.106. Note the more measured account by N. Saul, *Richard II* (London, 1997), pp.101-7.

⁷⁸ In 1381 the parliament roll said there was a '...grant disputisation & altercation' in the Lords over this subject; *RP*. iii. 114.66, 140.46. Thomas Walsingham said that the parliament of February 1383 witnessed much 'tergivisation' and 'altercation' amongst the members of the Upper House; *Historia Anglicana, 1272-1422*, ed. H.T. Riley, Rolls Series, xxviii, 2 vols. (London, 1864), ii. p.84. And the Monk of Westminster noted that '...churchmen and temporal lords alike, by their astonishing squabbles among themselves, almost nullified the effect of the parliament [of April 1384].'; *The Westminster Chronicle, 1381-1394*, ed. and trans. L.C. Hector and B.F. Harvey (Oxford, 1982), pp.66-7. See also the comments by Richardson, 'John of Gaunt and the Parliamentary Representation', pp.199-200.

⁷⁹ It should be noted that since the beginning of Richard II's reign Gaunt had roused great hostility from the Church: in 1377, for example, he placed extreme pressure on the prelates to make a subsidy; he was also heavily implicated with the heretical teachings of John Wycliffe; and was closely involved in the famous breach of sanctuary at Westminster in 1378; see J.W. Dahmus, *William Courtenay Archbishop of Canterbury 1381-1396* (London, 1966), p.19. It should also be pointed out that in 1382, the two most outspoken critics of Gaunt from amongst the Commons were Sir Peter and Sir William Courtenay, brothers of William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury. The Archbishop had very personal reasons to oppose the interests of Gaunt for the latter had allegedly threatened to drag Courtenay through the streets of London as a result of his instigation of the trial of John Wyclif; M. Aston, *Thomas Arundel: A Study of Church Life in the Reign of Richard II* (Oxford, 1967), p.149.

⁸⁰ *RP*. iii. 145.9.

“altercacyon bytwyne the lordys and the comyns” was by no means unusual...’ in the late Middle Ages.⁸¹ In the period covered by this thesis, however, there were in fact only two notable occasions when the Upper and Lower Houses appeared to have been neatly divided into two opposing camps pursuing conflicting political programmes. The first of these concerned the alleged abuses by the nobility of livery and maintenance which culminated in the strikingly anti-noble parliament of January 1390.⁸² This assembly saw the government pledge far-reaching legislation against maintenance and it also witnessed the exclusion of noblemen from the commissions of the peace (a measure which the Commons quickly sought to reverse in the following parliament). The other major flashpoint occurred in October 1404 when certain unnamed parliamentary knights proposed a general act of resumption in which the king could re-acquire all the lands which he had held in absolute possession since 1366.⁸³ According to Walsingham this provoked general outrage amongst the lay and spiritual peerage and the knights were soon compelled to backdown.⁸⁴ Other than these examples, there were no further instances where the Commons are recorded to have acted either against individual members of the peerage, groups of them, or the peerage as a whole, without the support of other Lords or, indeed, of the crown itself. This, it should be noted, includes the Good Parliament of 1376 when the Commons could depend on the support of a sizeable contingent of Lords in their attack against the court party.⁸⁵

This general situation suggests two conclusions. The first is that within parliament there must have existed a huge reserve of common ground between the Lords and the Commons which facilitated cooperation between them rather than confrontation. If the Commons did not display much of a capacity to pursue a political programme in opposition to the Lords this was because it was rarely needed - on most occasions common interests in the Upper and Lower Chambers created common agendas. This confirms the broad thesis of G.L.

⁸¹ C. Rawcliffe, ‘Parliament and the Settlement of Disputes by Arbitration in the Later Middle Ages’, *Parliamentary History*, ix (1990), 316-42, p.329.

⁸² See 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: Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (London, 1971), pp.131-52; N. Saul, ‘The Commons and the Abolition of Badges’, *Parliamentary History*, ix (1990), 302-15; and J.A. Tuck, ‘The Cambridge Parliament, 1388’, *E.H.R.*, lxxxiv (1969), 225-43, esp. pp.234-36.

⁸³ J.W. Dahmus, ‘Henry IV of England: An Example of Royal Control of the Church in the Fifteenth Century’, *Journal of Church and State*, xxiii (1981), 35-46. For an account of the October 1404 parliament which extended the programme to include a general act of resumption, see B.P. Wolffe, ‘Acts of Resumption in the Lancastrian Parliaments, 1399-1456’, *E.H.R.*, lxxiii (1958), 583-613, p.587.

⁸⁴ *Historia Anglicana*, ii. pp.264-7.

⁸⁵ For the divisions within the nobility at this time see C.C. Bayley, ‘The Campaign of 1375 and the Good Parliament’, *E.H.R.*, lv (1940), 370-83; Tuck, *Richard II*, pp.21-2; McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, pp.384-6; Holmes, *Good Parliament*, pp.149-55; Ormrod, ‘Edward III and his Family’, pp.417-8.

Harriss who has argued that the economic and social dislocation caused by the Black Death in the second half of the fourteenth century caused the landed classes in general to rally behind each other and use parliament as an instrument to further common proprietary interests.⁸⁶ It also lends credence to the remark often made that common attitudes between the two houses sprang from the fact that the social and economic standing of some of the lower-status lords was hardly distinguishable from that of some of the more eminent members of the parliamentary knights.⁸⁷ Finally, as we shall see in chapter 5, large numbers of parliamentary knights had connections with members of the peerage, which must also have fostered a considerable degree of empathy between the two houses. To emphasise all these points it should be noted that the Lords continued to have an input into common petitions right up to the 1370s⁸⁸ and that this was paralleled, in the context of the spiritual peerage, by the presentation in parliament of clerical *gravamina* which had originated from the proctors and lesser clergy of the Church.⁸⁹

The lack of confrontation between the Lords and the Commons also suggests, more controversially perhaps, that the Commons recognised and accepted that they held an inferior position in parliament relative to the members of Upper House. It should be stressed that this is not to say that the Commons were merely the ciphers of the Lords or that their rôle was passive in the parliamentary setting. Nor is it to deny that the Commons could display considerable initiative in parliament, developing and maintaining their own agendas in common petitions and elsewhere. Simply, it is to contextualise the late medieval parliament in a society where deference to status was still one of the most important principles guiding political actions.⁹⁰ Arguably, this basic hierarchical principle, together with the landed possessions of the Lords and the wealth and influence these conferred, meant that they automatically occupied a position in parliament which the Commons would have respected and would, for the most part, have deferred to. This interpretation can be supported by a brief consideration of the phenomenon of 'intercommuning' committees in the late fourteenth and

⁸⁶ Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*, pp.516-7.

⁸⁷ McFarlane, 'Parliament and Bastard Feudalism', pp.13-15; J.S. Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422: English Society and Parliamentary Representation under the Lancastrians* (Manchester, 1954), pp.79-82; C. Rawcliffe and L. Clarke, 'Introduction', *Parliamentary History*, ix (1990), 233-42, p.236.

⁸⁸ H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, 'The Parliaments of Edward III', *B.I.H.R.*, viii (1930), 65-77 and ix (1931), 1-18, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament*, ch. xxii, p.10.

⁸⁹ See W.R. Jones, 'Bishops, Politics, and the Two Laws: The *Gravamina* of the English Clergy, 1237-1399', *Speculum*, xli (1966), pp.209-45 and J.H. Denton, 'The Clergy and Parliament in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries', in Davies and Denton, eds., *The English Parliament*, pp.88-108, esp. pp.97-9.

⁹⁰ This important point has been made by Brown, 'Parliament, 1377-1422', p.139; and Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, p.104.

early fifteenth centuries. These were formal meetings held during parliament between a small group of MPs from the Lower House and representative elements from each of the estates of the Upper Chamber. Between 1373 and 1407 no fewer than twelve intercommuning committees are recorded on the parliament rolls.⁹¹

McFarlane used these meetings to highlight what he saw as a display of initiative by the Commons; this he contrasted with an apparent indifference by the Lords who, he said, had no enthusiasm to ‘...influence opinion and direct action in parliament’.⁹² J.G. Edwards considered the inconsistency of the Lords’ membership of intercommuning committees to indicate that they could not have taken much of a lead during the resulting proceedings.⁹³ To establish the true circumstances behind intercommuning, however, we would do well, perhaps, to accept at face value what the parliament rolls tell us: namely, that at times the Commons either felt insufficient or unable to implement their ‘charge’ without seeking the advice and counsel of representatives from the Upper House. This was certainly the way the crown viewed such consultations. In 1373 the chancellor commanded the Commons to return to the Painted Chamber in Westminster Palace in order that ‘...ils feusent pres des Grantz que seroient en la Blanche Chambre, en cas q’ils vorroient avoir leur Avys & Conseil sur la matire & causes a eux purposez’.⁹⁴ More importantly though, it was also the viewpoint taken by the Commons. In October 1377 we are told that they requested an intercommuning committee because of ‘...l’arduite de leur charge, & le feblesce de leurs poairs & sens’;⁹⁵ in 1381, it was because ‘...les matires touchent moelt hautement l’estat du Roialme, & partant busoignent grantement de ent leur [the Lords’] advis’;⁹⁶ in October 1382 they stated that because of the ‘...moelt haute & chargeante matire, a ce que leur sembloit, ils firent requere as Seign[eu]rs de Parlement, d’avoir assignez a eux...’;⁹⁷ and in February 1383, the Commons asked for consultation because the charge ‘...a eux donez touchast si hautement & si pres l’estat de leur Sire lige’.⁹⁸ This ‘official’ perspective of the parliament roll is confirmed by the unofficial

⁹¹ These were the parliaments of 1373, 1376, January & October 1377, 1378, 1381, October 1382, February 1383, April 1384, 1402, January 1404 and 1407: *RP*. ii. 316.4-5, 322.8, 363-4.18; iii. 5.11-12, 36.23, 100.13-14, 134.14, 145.8, 167.9, 486.10-11, 524.10 and 610.18. For intercommuning earlier in the century, see W.N. Bryant, ‘Some Earlier Examples of Intercommuning in Parliament’, *E.H.R.*, lxxxv (1970), 54-8.

⁹² McFarlane, ‘Parliament and Bastard Feudalism’, p.2, note 3.

⁹³ J.G. Edwards, *The Commons in Medieval English Parliaments* (London, 1957), pp.6-20, esp. p.14.

⁹⁴ *RP*. ii. 316.4.

⁹⁵ *RP*. iii. 5.11.

⁹⁶ *RP*. iii. 100.13.

⁹⁷ *RP*. iii. 134.14.

⁹⁸ *RP*. iii. 145.8.

account of the Good Parliament provided by the *Anonimale Chronicle* which recorded Peter de la Mare as saying, 'We [the Commons] are so simple of wit and of wealth that we cannot redress such matters without the counsel of wise folk [ie. an intercommuning committee]'.⁹⁹ De la Mare's comments had been prompted by another knight of the shire who remarked that '...it would be well to discuss with the lords before presenting the grievance [of the Commons] to the king'.

Thus it was the need for reassurance, advice and information - on the part of the Commons - which explains the existence of intercommuning committees. Though the parliament rolls do not record the deliberations of these meetings, we can deduce that in the early 1380s and in 1402 the Commons sought advice on matters to do with foreign policy; that in the late 1370s and 1404 they were concerned to glean information about the state of royal finances and the defence of the realm; that in 1376 they wished to be guided in their attack on the court party; and that in 1373 and January 1377, it was the crown that instigated intercommuning committees in order to give the Commons a 'helping hand' in making grants of taxation. However, our best insight into the matters that were discussed in intercommuning committees - and therefore the purpose that lay behind them - comes in a surprisingly neglected document brought to light by Richardson and Sayles.¹⁰⁰ It consists of a series of 'articles' that were discussed in a hitherto unknown committee which met in the parliament of 1399. This evidence shows very clearly that the Commons were keen to 'test the water' on certain issues, some of which were particularly sensitive in the light of the recent usurpation, before committing themselves on a more formal basis before the king and council.¹⁰¹ Though the parliament of 1399 was obviously an unusual assembly, there is no reason to suppose that the basic context in which this intercommuning committee met was any different from the other instances that are recorded on the parliament roll: these were occasions which brought into sharp focus the essential disparity that existed in the respective status, influence and rôles of the Upper and Lower Houses in the late medieval parliament.

⁹⁹ *The Anonimale Chronicle, 1333-81*, ed. V.H. Galbraith (Manchester, 1927), quotation from *English Historical Documents 1327-1485*, ed. A.R. Myers (London, 1969), p.118. The resulting intercommuning committee is recorded in *RP*. ii. 322.8.

¹⁰⁰ H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, 'Parliamentary Documents from Formularies', *B.I.H.R.*, xi (1934), 147-62, pp.155-8, repr. in *idem, The English Parliament*, ch.xxiii.

¹⁰¹ It was during this meeting of the intercommuning committee, for example, that the Commons appear to have first voiced their concern not to be involved in judgements rendered in parliament - a protest which was also entered on the parliament roll; *RP*. iii. 427.79. There was also discussion of the duke of Brittany's claim to the earldom of Richmond and also on the status and responsibilities of the Prince of Wales.

iii) THE LORDS AND TAXATION

a/ Grants and Grievances

The Commons may have deferred to the Lords on many issues, but taxation must surely have remained firmly and exclusively an activity confined to the Lower House. After all, it is now an historical common-place that the late medieval Commons retained a fundamental right either to grant or refuse taxation and if they did not much use this right, they were primarily responsible for the campaigns against excessive financial exactions and the misappropriation of supply by the crown.¹⁰² To read into this, however, that parliament was neatly split into two camps, with the Commons pursuing one financial agenda and the Lords and king pursuing another, is to risk oversimplifying what was an extremely complicated and changeable situation. At least until the mid-1390s, the input of the Lords into the conventional grants of fifteenths and tenths could well have been considerable. This is suggested by the fact that before 1395 grants of taxation were recorded in the parliament roll as being made by the ‘Lords and the Commons’ as if they were equal partners in the tax-granting process.¹⁰³ It was only after 1395 that the schedule changed and stated that subsidies were made by the ‘... Communes, *par assent* des Seign[eu]rs Espirituelx & Temporelx’ (my italics).¹⁰⁴ What exactly the earlier phrase implied is difficult to say, but it probably meant that the Commons were making the grant on behalf of the community of the realm whilst the Lords, as was specified in 1369, were making it on behalf of themselves (‘...p[ur] eux’).¹⁰⁵ The point, though, is that *both* were said to be participating in the process; that a parliamentary subsidy was, in effect, the result of a partnership between the Upper and Lower Chambers of parliament. This raises the intriguing possibility that throughout most of the fourteenth century the chancellor’s speeches at the beginning of parliament, where the crown’s need for money was usually spelled out, may have been intended as much for the assembled Lords as for the Commons. Indeed, this is suggested in 1378 when Richard le Scrope, Steward of the Household, charged the ‘Seign[eu]rs, Prelatz, & autres Peres’ of the realm, along with the Commons, to consider how the expenses for the defence of the realm could be met with the least burden to the

¹⁰² The classic work on the parallel emergence of taxation and the Commons is Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance*. A useful summary of some of the main themes in this book is provided in *idem*, ‘War and the Emergence of the English Parliament’, pp.35-56. See also Edwards, *The Second Century*, pp.17-43.

¹⁰³ Brown, ‘Parliament, c.1377-1422’, p.125; Edwards, *The Second Century*, p.36.

¹⁰⁴ *RP*. 330.6b.

¹⁰⁵ *RP*. ii. 300.10.

people.¹⁰⁶

However, we have more than simply this change in the formula to suggest a more active rôle by the Lords in fiscal matters before 1395. Between 1371 and November 1380, a number of experimental subsidies were tried in order to increase the revenue from direct taxation, and in each of them there is evidence suggesting a close working partnership between the Lords and Commons. For example, the first of these taxes, the Parish Subsidy of 1371, had arisen only after it had been ‘...tretez, parlez, & debatur par entre les Grantz & Communes’.¹⁰⁷ This levy was to prove one of the most innovative and effective of all the taxes that were raised in the fourteenth century but it was marred, at least initially, by a gross exaggeration of the number of parishes that existed in England.¹⁰⁸ The responsibility for this mistake almost certainly rested with the Lords and Commons (as opposed to the government or crown)¹⁰⁹ and at least two historians have gone further by suggesting that it could only have arisen had the Commons disregarded their local knowledge and deferred to the (misplaced) judgement of the Lords.¹¹⁰ According to the *Anonimale Chronicle* the first poll tax of January 1377 was not thought up by the Commons but was suggested to them by the chancellor in his opening address to the assembly.¹¹¹ Moreover, as the parliament roll indicates, the Commons appear to have been uncertain about this charge, for the crown appointed an intercommuning committee specifically in order to set them straight on the matter. We are told that the Commons were urged,

...coment l'en purroit avenir a les Despenses que l'en y faut mettre de necessitee, a plus en haste & meins desaise ou grevance au poeple...Et sur ce furent assignez en Parlement les Prelatz & Seignour souz escritz d'aler a meismes les Communes, de estre en lour aide, & comuner avec eux des dites choses pur lour greineur information d'ycelles.¹¹²

By its very nature the second poll tax of 1379 *must* have had input from the Lords, for its rates of payment were carefully graduated according to social status and, as such, extended to the

¹⁰⁶ *RP*. iii. 34.15b.

¹⁰⁷ *RP*. ii. 304.6. See also W.M. Ormrod, ‘An Experiment in Taxation: The English Parish Subsidy of 1371’, *Speculum*, lxxiii (1988), 58-82.

¹⁰⁸ Ormrod suggests that the figures were based on those contained in Ranulf Higden’s *Polychronicon*; *ibid.*, p.61.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.61-2.

¹¹⁰ H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, ‘The Commons and Medieval Politics’, *T.R.H.S.*, 4th ser., xxviii (1945), 21-45, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament*, ch. xxiv, p.44.

¹¹¹ *Anonimale Chronicle*, p.100. For the grant see *RP*. iii. 364.19 and McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, p.396.

¹¹² *RP*. ii. 363.18.

very highest members of the prelacy and nobility.¹¹³ Needless to say, the Commons could hardly have imposed this subsidy on an unwilling and uncooperative Upper House. In fact, the contribution of the Lords is indicated directly by the actions of the chancellor who charged them (in addition to the Commons) ‘...que vous par vous mesmes...adviser diligeaument, coment, al meindre grevance, desaise, & charge, de vous touz & de son bon people...[a subsidy]...purront plus aisement estre levez [for the honour of the king and for the rites of his coronation and the realm]’.¹¹⁴ The final and most notorious poll tax granted in November 1380 shows in the clearest possible way how the Commons submitted to the authority of the Lords. Rather than address the issue of taxation themselves they were recorded as having ‘...requested that the prelates and lords would commune by themselves on the matter and indicate the means by which...such a tolerable sum could be levied’.¹¹⁵ The Lords duly obliged by offering to the Commons the choice of three different taxes,¹¹⁶ but even here it appears that the Commons simply deferred to the Upper House for they opted for the poll tax which the Lords had already marked down as their preferred choice.¹¹⁷ In effect, therefore, the poll tax which led to the Peasants’ Revolt of 1381 was a subsidy chosen by the Lords and merely assented to by the Commons. Finally, the Monk of Westminster suggested a leading rôle for the Upper House in the conventional parliamentary grant of 1385 when one and a half fifteenths and tenths were granted, much of it for Gaunt’s expedition to Spain: according to this chronicler, ‘After listening to the duke’s promises, the king and remaining nobles of the realm, with the common’s consent, generously granted him what he asked’.¹¹⁸

Clearly, at least until the end of the fourteenth century, the Lords were not passive onlookers whilst taxation was discussed in parliament. Nor for that matter were they necessarily unsympathetic to the fiscal agenda of the Commons. If, in the late 1370s and 1380s, the Commons wished for the level of taxation to be reduced and for the burden to be more equitable, there is no evidence suggesting that this was not also the aim of the Lords

¹¹³ *RP*. iii. 57.13-17; *Anonimale Chronicle*, pp.126-9, trans. in *The Peasants’ Revolt of 1381*, ed. R.B. Dobson, 2nd edn. (London, 1983), pp.105-111; McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, p.405; A. Steel, *Richard II* (Cambridge, 1962), pp.50-53; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.46-7.

¹¹⁴ *RP*. iii. 56.6.

¹¹⁵ *RP*. iii. 89.12; trans. in *The Peasants’ Revolt*, p.115. See also McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, p.407 and Saul, *Richard II*, pp.55, 57.

¹¹⁶ *RP*. iii. 89.13. In addition to the poll tax, they suggested a standard levy of a fifteenth and tenth and a novel form of internal sales tax. For the latter, see W.M. Ormrod, ‘Finance and Trade under Richard II’, in A. Goodman and J.L. Gillespie, eds., *Richard II: Power and Prerogative* (forthcoming).

¹¹⁷ *RP*. iii. 89-90.13.

¹¹⁸ *Westminster Chronicle*, pp.143-4.

too.¹¹⁹ We should remember, for example, that it was the Lords who agreed to, and perhaps even inspired, the poll tax of January 1377 which extended the liability of payment to members of their own estate; and it was the Lords, *not* the Commons,¹²⁰ who in November 1380 claimed that ‘...les Dismes & Quinzimes si sont moelt grevouses par plusours maneres a la povre Commune...’.¹²¹ The Lords’ sensitivity to the plight of the population and the risk of further insurrection - concerns which have traditionally been attributed solely to the Commons - is further demonstrated by the unique contribution they made to the conventional grant of a fifteenth and tenth in October 1382.¹²² The schedule recording this grant said specifically that it had been made on the behalf of ‘...touz Ducs, Conts, Barons, Baneretz, Chivalers, & Esquiers & de toutz autres seculers Seigneurs des Maniors, Villes & autre Lieux parmy le Roiaume’. It was to raise the same amount of money as a standard fifteenth and tenth and special emphasis was placed on it being a ‘one off’ payment made ‘...de lour doun’. Moreover, it was specified as being expressly ‘...en supportation, aide, & relevement de la povre co[mmun]e, laquelle lour semble est ore plus feoble & plus povre q[ue] grant piece ne fuist p[ar] devaunt’. This was an unprecedented act on the part of the Lords and highlighted a number of important points. Firstly, it showed the gravity of the financial situation following the Peasants’ Revolt and the extreme level of fear that there must have been *generally* over the possibility of further rebellion; secondly, it demonstrated the willingness of the Lords to reach into their own pockets when circumstances made this an absolute necessity; thirdly, it highlighted the capacity for financial co-operation between the Lords and Commons in the face of common adversity; and lastly, it implied that the general population had *three* years of respite - or at least of reduced financial hardship - rather than two before the full burden of parliamentary taxation was once again resumed.

That there was far more consensus in Richard II’s early parliaments than has previously been suggested¹²³ can also be illustrated by the fact that the Commons consistently turned to members of the Lords, rather than to men from within their own ranks, to instigate

¹¹⁹ J.A. Tuck is the strongest proponent of the view that the Lords and Commons were somehow locked in a struggle over the nature and extent of taxation in the early years of Richard II’s reign; see ‘Nobles, Commons and the Great Revolt of 1381’, in R.H. Hilton and T.H. Ashton, eds., *The English Rising of 1381* (Cambridge, 1984), pp.194-212, esp. pp.209-10.

¹²⁰ Tuck, ‘Nobles, Commons and the Great Revolt’, p.203.

¹²¹ *RP*. iii. 90.13. Arguably W.M. Ormrod is overly cautious in reserving judgement on the authorship of this remark; W.M. Ormrod, ‘The Politics of Pestilence: Government in England after the Black Death’, in W.M. Ormrod and P.G. Lindley, eds., *The Black Death in England* (Stamford, 1996), p.164, note 50.

¹²² For what follows see *RP*. iii. 134.15. The grant is recorded in *C.F.R., 1377-83*, pp.335-40. The only historian who seems to have noticed the unusual form of this grant is R. Virgoe, ‘The Parliamentary Subsidy of 1450’, *B.I.H.R.*, lv (1982), 125-38, p.126.

¹²³ For example, see Tuck, ‘Nobles, Commons and the Great Revolt’, pp.208-10.

reform and supervise the expenditure of royal government. This is an important point to make, not least because it demonstrates how much the Commons depended on the sympathy of the Lords to get things done within royal government. Thus, in 1379, the Commons requested the appointment of a committee of magnates to examine the financial state of the realm;¹²⁴ in the following parliament they requested that ‘...certaines Seigneurs & autres de la Terre surveoir les Despenses de l’Hostiel nostre Sire le Roi, & les Revenues de la Terre coment ils furent despenduz’;¹²⁵ and in January 1380 the Commons again asked for a commission of, ‘...certains Prelatz, Seigneurs, & autres des plus suffisantz, loialx, & sages del Roialme d’Engleterre’ to examine the expenses of the household.¹²⁶ It is interesting too, to see that the Commons’ programme of government reform in the parliament of 1381 was drawn up only after consultation with members of the Upper House; the parliament roll tells us, ‘Qe sur les Charges a eux donez ils [the Commons] avoient diligeamment co[mun]ez avec les Prelates & Sires a eux sur ce donez’, and they had decided that if the governance of the realm was not hastily amended ‘...mesme le Roialme ferra oultrement perduz & destrit pur toutz jours’.¹²⁷

The phraseological change in the schedules recording grants of taxation from the mid-1390s onwards probably signalled a hardening in the attitude of the Commons towards their right to act as the sole arbiters in granting subsidies. The famous incident of 1407, when the Commons objected so strongly to the Lords’ preemptive suggestion of the form of taxation they should grant, would seem to confirm this.¹²⁸ Nevertheless, this did not herald a period in which the Commons monopolised *all* grants of parliamentary taxation or, indeed, where only they expressed concern about where it was spent. In Henry IV’s reign, three special direct taxes were levied which, in the spirit of the 1382 grant, extended liability to include the most senior members of landed society. Two were the income taxes of January 1404 and 1411.¹²⁹ These appear to have been joint enterprises on the part of both the Lords and the Commons in an

¹²⁴ *RP*. iii. 57.12; Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, p.44.

¹²⁵ *RP*. iii. 93.28.

¹²⁶ *RP*. iii. 73.13.

¹²⁷ *RP*. iii. 100.13. The trend in historiography is to see this agenda as the product solely of the Commons; see *The Peasants’ Revolt*, ed., Dobson, p.325. W.M. Ormrod, ‘The Peasants’ Revolt and the Government of England’, *J.B.S.*, xxix (1990), 1-30, pp.23-24; Mckisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, p.442; Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.55-6.

¹²⁸ *RP*. iii. 611.21.

¹²⁹ For the 1404 tax, which was deliberately not recorded on the parliament roll, see *Continuatio Eulogii in Eulogium Historiarum sive Tempois*, ed. F.S. Haydon, Rolls Series, ix, 3 vols. (London, 1863), iii, pp.399-400, repr. in *Select Documents of English Constitutional History 1307-1485*, ed. S.B. Chrimes and A.L. Brown (London, 1961), pp.212-14; *Historia Anglicana*, ii, p.260 (for translations of both accounts see B. Wilkinson, *Constitutional History of England in the Fifteenth Century (1399-1485)* (London, 1964), p.305-6); *C.F.R.*, 1399-1405, pp.251-64. For the 1411 grant see *RP*. iii. 648.10; *C.P.R.*, 1408-1413, pp.378-81; H.L. Gray, ‘Incomes from Land in England in 1436’, *E.H.R.*, xlix (1934), 607-39, p.608.

attempt to assist the Lancastrian regime at a time of extreme financial pressure (note, however, that in both cases the Commons retained their new rôle as the *granters* of the tax whilst the Lords remained simply the assenters).¹³⁰ The other levy was the unique land tax of October 1404 which, this time, *was* granted specifically by ‘...les Seign[eu]rs temporelx pur eux, & les Dames temporelx’.¹³¹ Those who possessed lands worth more than five hundred marks a year were expected to contribute 20s. per £20 to be levied in December 1404 and in June 1405. The use of the phrase ‘pur eux’ implied that this was a grant limited to only the secular members of the Lords and that it did not include non-peers with a landed income of more than five hundred marks. This underlined the fact that the Lords represented only themselves in parliament and could not act or grant taxation on the behalf of others, as the Commons were entitled to do. It should be added that in addition to its economic function this particular levy may also have served an important social agenda: setting the threshold at 500 marks was sufficiently high as to exclude a significant minority of the less wealthy nobility and, as such, it is possible that the tax was partly designed as a way of delineating a ‘premier league’ of élite nobility within the broader ranks of the peerage as a whole.¹³²

Taken together, these taxes fell into what was fast becoming a tradition whereby, at times of particularly acute financial crisis, the whole political community in parliament felt an obligation to support the crown directly with their own financial resources.¹³³ The consequences of crown insolvency were therefore no longer felt solely by the peasantry and the lower orders of society but were extending a significant way into the landed élites and the peerage themselves. This should be enough to suggest that the Lords, just as much as the Commons, were keen to see crown finances in a healthy state of affairs and that they would not have been averse to pointing this out to the king if the situation warranted it. Under Henry IV this is illustrated by the evidence of the parliament of January 1404 in which the Lords produced a lengthy programme of reform urging the king that the royal household ‘...purroit estre mys en bone & moderate Governance, dont les Costages purroient estre supportez des

¹³⁰ The author of the *Eulogii* states that ‘...the commons wearied by the delay granted [the tallage]’; Walsingham speaks of those ‘who conceded it and those who aided in the said tallage’ which could refer to the respective rôles of both Houses. In 1411 the parliament roll records that the grant was made by the ‘poveres Communes, p[ar] assent suis dit [ie. the Lords]’. (For refs. see preceding note).

¹³¹ *RP.* iii. 546.9b; *C.F.R.*, 1399-1405, pp.289-292; J.L. Kirby, *Henry IV of England* (London, 1970), p.175.

¹³² The income tax returns of 1436 indicate that no fewer than 27 out of 66 members of the nobility enjoyed an income of *less* than £333 per annum (ie. 500 marks) and would therefore not have been eligible for payment; Gray, ‘Incomes from Land’, pp.614-18. See also T.B. Pugh and C.D. Ross, ‘The English Baronage and the Income Tax of 1436’, *B.I.H.R.*, xxvi (1953), 1-28.

¹³³ For the other income taxes of the fifteenth century see Virgoe, ‘Parliamentary Subsidy of 1450’, p.27.

Revenues de Roialme ovesque autres charges necessaires'.¹³⁴ Though historians have tended to concentrate almost exclusively on the input of the Commons into this and the other parliaments of the reign,¹³⁵ it should be remembered that in January 1404 it was to the Lords, rather than the Commons, that the Archbishop of Canterbury first spelled out '...l'entention mesme n[ost]re S[i]r[e] le Roy touchant sa governance'.¹³⁶ It was also to the Lords that the king first mentioned and accepted the need for War Treasurers to ensure the correct allocation of parliamentary subsidies.¹³⁷ Indeed, it should be pointed out that in the following parliament the appointment of new Treasurers, one of whom was a Lord himself, was so successful that Rogers states that it led to 'a complete breakdown of government finances'.¹³⁸ Financial crisis did not therefore automatically entail parliamentary division; concerns to ensure that the crown was provided with sufficient funds to meet its extraordinary needs, that taxation was equitable and did not cause social unrest, and that it was not misused once it had been levied, could clearly emanate as much from the Lords as they did from the Commons.

b/ Parliament and Convocation

In addition to participation in the discussion over lay taxation, the *spiritual* peers within the Lords were also, of course, directly involved in the levying of clerical taxation. Strictly speaking, these latter subsidies were the responsibility of the convocations of Canterbury and York and would appear, therefore, to fall beyond the scope of the present discussion.¹³⁹ However, parliament and convocation were closely connected and one of the most important factors which linked them, besides a common membership, was the frequency and extent of the extraordinary taxation levied in both types of assembly. In large part, this connection was made possible by the crown's deliberate policy of summoning meetings of convocation (via the archbishops) so that they met either during parliament or shortly after parliament had ended. This can be seen in Table 2 which shows that out of thirty-nine

¹³⁴ *RP*. iii. 527.26.

¹³⁵ See for example, A.L. Brown, 'The Commons and the Council in the Reign of Henry IV', *E.H.R.*, lxxxix (1964), 1-30, repr. in Fryde and Miller, eds., *Historical Studies*, ii. pp.31-60; J.L. Kirby, 'Councils and Councillors of Henry IV, 1399-1413', *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., xiv (1964), 35-65; and A. Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons and Taxation', *Mediaeval Studies*, xxxi (1969), 47-70.

¹³⁶ *RP*. iii. 528-9.33.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*

¹³⁸ Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons', p.63.

¹³⁹ The classic work on convocations is by D.B. Weske, *Convocation of the Clergy* (London, 1937)

Canterbury convocations between 1369 and 1421, no fewer than twenty-three ran concurrently, or partly concurrently, with parliament and a further nine met within a month or so after parliament had ended. Out of thirty-seven meetings of the York convocation only four met during parliament, but no fewer than twenty-seven met shortly afterwards.

The reason for this concurrence was very simple: whatever taxation parliament granted, convocation was expected to match. To a large extent this strategy was successful. Table 2 indicates that between 1369 and 1421, parliament granted direct taxation on thirty-seven occasions; on thirty-one occasions this was then followed by a clerical grant from the convocations of York and Canterbury. The number increases to thirty-four if the Canterbury convocation is considered by itself. This pattern clearly shows that if the crown could secure direct taxation from parliament then it had also, in effect, secured subsidies from the clergy. Moreover, it is also evident that some kind of equivalence was made between a fifteenth and tenth granted by parliament and a tenth granted by convocation: on no fewer than fifteen occasions the Canterbury convocation granted a subsidy which directly corresponded to the level of lay subsidy granted in parliament. In October 1377, October 1416 and 1417, for example, two fifteenths and tenths from parliament were matched by two clerical tenths; in September 1397 and 1407, one and a half lay fifteenths and tenths were matched by one and a half clerical tenths; and in September 1388, 1395, 1406, and May 1421, one fifteenth and tenth granted by parliament was matched by an equivalent sum from the Canterbury convocation. Grants made by the York convocation paralleled lay fifteenths and tenths on eleven occasions.

Though William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury, took great pains in the 1380s to emphasise that the Commons had no right to make parliamentary taxation conditional on an equivalent sum to be made by convocation, it is quite clear that the two were very closely linked indeed.¹⁴⁰ Possibly, his protests stemmed not from an objection to the principle of 'linkage' but from an objection to the idea that terms could be formally dictated to the Church by a section of the population who were not themselves directly affected by clerical taxation. In other words, the spiritual peers were quite happy to make the link so long as it was done in a representative way, through the members of the Church rather than through members of the Lower House. In a sense, however, the real significance of this connection lies in the implication that a major part of the discussion and negotiation that took place over

¹⁴⁰ These protests were made in November 1380, October 1383, April 1384, November 1384 and 1385; Weske, *Convocation of the Clergy*, pp.73-4.

clerical taxation actually occurred when the spiritual peers were gathered in parliament, *before* either of the two convocations had met.¹⁴¹ If the extent of clerical taxation was effectively decided by the extent of parliamentary taxation, it is difficult to see that any other process took place. Certainly, from a contemporary point of view, it is interesting that chroniclers invariably recorded that clerical taxation had been made in parliament, rather than in convocation; far from a procedural oversight, this may simply have reflected the underlying reality of the situation and the fact that convocation merely assented to decisions which had already been made.¹⁴²

This scenario raises some interesting questions about the attitude of the spiritual peers towards taxation and the possible bearing this had on the broader parliamentary debates over the nature of crown finance and expenditure. Briefly, there are two ways of viewing this. The first is to see them as essentially crown agents who the king could rely on, in parliament as well as in convocation, to support and meet his financial needs.¹⁴³ The effective control enjoyed by the crown by the end of the fourteenth century over appointments to bishoprics and archbishoprics ensured that the king exercised considerable influence over, and could therefore command great loyalty from, the key individuals who were responsible for deciding the extent of clerical taxation.¹⁴⁴ This is shown to good effect by the famous Canterbury convocation of 1370 in which the proctors and lower clergy were repeatedly asked by Archbishop Whittlesey, and a delegation of nine other bishops, to agree to a triennial tenth.¹⁴⁵ In the end the grant was made, but it still did not have the endorsement of all the lower clergy who had effectively been overridden by the prelates in the desire of the latter to satisfy the requirements of the crown. The accommodation shown by the episcopacy to the king is further highlighted by the crucial rôle the convocations played in supplying generous grants of taxation to Henry IV. As Rogers states, the ‘...real significance of [clerical] taxes compared with the lay subsidies [under Henry IV] was the relative ease with which their grant could be secured and the freedom with which

¹⁴¹ See R.G. Davies, ‘The Attendance of the Episcopate in English Parliaments, 1376-1461’, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, cxxix (1985), 30-81, p.46.

¹⁴² See chapter 8, pp.245-6.

¹⁴³ A.K. McHardy, ‘Clerical Taxation in Fifteenth-Century England: The Clergy as Agents of the Crown’, in B. Dobson, ed., *The Church, Politics and Patronage in the Fifteenth Century* (Gloucester, 1984), 168-92.

¹⁴⁴ See, for example, L.R. Betchermann, ‘Appointments to Bishoprics in the Lancastrian Period’, *Speculum*, xli (1966), 397-419; and Dahmus, ‘Henry IV of England: An Example of Royal Control’, pp.35-46. For the rôle of archbishops in this period, see Dahmus, *William Courtenay*, pp.161-86; P. McNiven, *Heresy and Politics in the Reign of Henry IV: The Burning of John Badby* (Woodbridge, 1987), pp.118-35; Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, pp.68-90.

¹⁴⁵ M.V. Clarke, *Medieval Representation and Consent* (London, 1936), p.28-9; Weske, *Convocation of the Clergy*, pp.163-4.

they could be used'.¹⁴⁶

On the other hand, we should be cautious in assuming that the clerical element in parliament was always in tune with the financial agenda of the crown. We should remember that not all the clergy who attended parliament were necessarily high-ranking spiritual peers; the continued presence in the Upper House of proctors of the clergy may well have been the source for a more questioning or critical approach to the crown's financial demands than the episcopacy may have offered.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, the fact that the crown felt it necessary, on occasion, to send delegations of royal 'commissioners' to address meetings of convocation suggests either that the bishops were not capable of persuading the lower clergy to agree to clerical taxation, or that the episcopacy itself required further cajoling in this respect.¹⁴⁸ Nor should we assume that convocation *always* acquiesced to the demands made by the crown; under Henry IV, the convocation of York became increasingly intransigent in the face of repeated demands for clerical subsidies and, in 1407 and 1411, this convocation made a grant only after reconvening for a second session.¹⁴⁹ The rebellion of Archbishop Scrope in 1405, in which the excessive taxation of the Church was cited as one of the main grievances against the regime, highlighted how much resentment and criticism clerical taxation under Henry IV had generated.¹⁵⁰ Though this king retained the loyalty of the great proportion of his episcopacy, it is hard to believe that there was not some disquiet over the continuously heavy burden being placed on the Church at this time. Indeed, in a very indirect way, the bishops and archbishops gathered at parliament had very strong motives to press Henry IV for more economy in his expenditure, for so long as the laity felt under financial pressure in the 1400s, the Church faced repeated calls for ecclesiastical disendowment.¹⁵¹

Clerical taxation could clearly become a source of friction between the clergy, who were keen to defend their privileges and independence, and the Commons, who regarded

¹⁴⁶ A. Rogers, 'Clerical Taxation under Henry IV, 1399-1413', *Historical Research*, xlvii (1973), 123-144, p.141. See also the discussion of I.R. Abbott who has shown how, after an interval of three years, Henry IV decided to enforce the payment of the second half of a tenth granted by the York convocation in May 1399; I.R. Abbott, 'Taxation of Personal Property and of Clerical Incomes, 1399 to 1402', *Speculum*, xvii (1942), 471-98.

¹⁴⁷ See A. McHardy, 'The Representation of the English Lower Clergy in Parliament During the Late Fourteenth Century', in D. Baker, ed., *Sanctity and Secularity: the Church and the World*, Studies in Church History, x (Oxford, 1973), 97-107.

¹⁴⁸ Clake, *Medieval Representation*, pp.28-9; Weske, *Convocation of the Clergy*, pp.126, 128, 130, 136-7, 139, 163; Rogers, 'Clerical Taxation', pp.127, 136.

¹⁴⁹ Rogers, 'Clerical Taxation', pp.134-5, 137.

¹⁵⁰ P. McNiven, 'The Betrayal of Archbishop Scrope', *B.J.R.L.*, liv (1971-2), 173-213, pp.181-2

¹⁵¹ Rogers, 'Clerical Taxation', pp.129, 131, 140; E.F. Jacob, 'The Canterbury Convocation of 1406', in T.A. Sandquist and R. Powicke, eds., *Essays in Medieval History presented to B. Wilkinson* (Toronto, 1969), 345-53.

the Church as a source of untapped wealth which the crown ought to exploit more fully. Nevertheless, the existence of clerical taxation as part of the financial agenda which parliament dealt with must, to an extent, have strengthened the common ground between the Upper and Lower Houses over some of the basic questions which taxation raised at this time. Though they may have been motivated for different reasons, it is entirely plausible that both the spiritual lords and the Commons would have actively pressed the crown to reduce the financial burden if they were feeling pressure from below (ie. from convocation or from the constituencies). It is also possible, given that the financial burden was directly linked with expenditure, that there was a convergence in attitudes towards the desirability of economy in the royal household and the other 'ordinary' costs incurred by the crown.¹⁵² Whatever the extent of consensus on these issues, clerical subsidies add an important additional perspective to the underlying point that taxation was not an issue necessarily confined only to the Commons but was truly parliamentary in scope, involving members from the Lower House as well as many of the peers who attended the Upper Chamber.

CONCLUSION

The central position which the Lords occupied in the late medieval parliament has now been clearly established. It was within the Upper House that the political and professional élites of the realm gathered - including the king - and it was here that the focus of authority, power and expertise lay during a parliamentary session. If parliament was an instrument of royal governance, then it was specifically within the Lords that this governance was exercised. This depended not only on the presence of the king's key advisors and councillors but also on a corps of professional bureaucrats and lawyers who, together, ensured that the machinery of parliament worked smoothly and efficiently. Whilst the Commons may not have been the 'lobbying fodder'¹⁵³ of the Upper House, neither were they an independent political force in opposition to it. Deference to status and common political and social perspectives mitigated against the sort of rampant division between the two houses that has often formed the basis, almost automatically, of historical writing on the medieval parliament. Nowhere better is this illustrated than in the area of parliamentary taxation, which was as much a force for unity of action in parliament as it was for disunity.

¹⁵² For example, see Rogers, 'Clerical Taxation', *passim*.

¹⁵³ This phrase is used by Carpenter, *Wars of the Roses*, p.45.

TABLE 2: TAXATION IN PARLIAMENT AND CONVOCATION

| <u>PARLIAMENT</u> | | <u>TAXATION</u> | | <u>CONVOCAATION OF CANTERBURY</u> | | <u>CONVOCAATION OF YORK</u> | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| <u>DATE</u> | <u>INDIRECT</u> | <u>DIRECT</u> | <u>INDIRECT</u> | <u>DATE</u> | <u>GRANT</u> | <u>DATE</u> | <u>GRANT</u> |
| 1369 | 3 June - 11 June | - | Wool sub. | 1370 | 21 Jan. - ? | 1370 | 4 Feb. 1/10 |
| 1371 | 24 Feb. - 29 Mar. | Parish sub. | - | 1371 | 12 Apr. - 3 May | 1371 | 10 July - ? Parish Sub. |
| 1372 | 3 Nov - 24 Nov. | 1/15 & 1/10 | Wool sub. & Tun. | - | - | - | - |
| 1373 | 21 Nov. - 10 Dec. | 2/15 & 2/10 | Wool sub. & Tun. | 1373 | 1 Dec. - 7 Dec. | 1374 | 6 Feb. 1/10 ¹ |
| 1376 | 28 April - 10 July | - | Wool sub. | - | - | - | - |
| 1377 | 27 Jan. - 2 Mar. | poll tax | - | 1377 | 3 Feb. - ? | 1377 | 15 Apr. - ? poll tax |
| 1377 | 13 Oct. - 29 Nov. | 2/15 & 2/10 | - | 1377 | 9 Nov. - 5 Dec. | 1377 | 1 Dec. - 4 Jan. 2/10 |
| 1378 | 20 Oct. - 16 Nov. | - | Wool sub. & Tun. | - | - | - | - |
| 1379 | 25 April - 27 May | poll tax | Wool Sub. | 1379 | 9 May - ? | 1379 | 29 Apr. - 20 June poll tax |
| 1380 | 16 Jan. - 3 Mar. | 1½/15 & 10 | Wool sub. | 1380 | 4 Feb. - 29? Feb. | 1380 | 4 Apr. - ? spec. sub. ⁴ |
| 1380 | 5 Nov. - 6 Dec. | poll tax | Wool sub. | 1380 | 1 Dec. - ? | 1381 | 10 Jan. - ? poll tax ⁵ |
| 1381 | 4 Nov. - 13 Dec. 27 Jan. - 25 Feb. | - | Wool sub. | - | - | - | - |
| 1382 | 7 May - 22 May | - | Tun. | - | - | - | - |
| 1382 | 6 Oct. - 24 Oct. | 1/15 & 1/10 | - | 1382 | 18 Oct. - 26 Nov. ⁶ | 1382 | 15 Dec. - ? x2 ½ 1/10 |
| 1383 | 23 Feb. - 10 Mar. | - | - | 1383 | 13 Jan. - 21 Jan. | 1383 | 28 Jan. - ? ←2 nd ½ 1/10 ⁸ |
| 1383 | 26 Oct. - 26 Nov. | ½ 1/15 & 10 | - | 1383 | 2 Dec. - ? | 1384 | 23 Jan. - ? ½ 1/10 |
| 1384 | 24 April - 27 May | ½ 1/15 & 10 | - | 1384 | 20 May - ? | 1384 | 8 July - ? ½ 1/10 |
| 1384 | 12 Nov. - 14 Dec. | 2/15 & 2/10 | - | 1384 | 1 Dec. - 19 Dec. | 1385 | 2 Jan. - ? 1/10 |
| 1385 | 20 Oct. - 6 Dec. | 1½ 1/15 & 10 | Wool sub | 1385 | 6 Nov. - 7 Dec. | 1385 | 14 Jan. - ? ←2 nd ½ 1/10 ¹⁰ |

PARLIAMENTCONVOCAATION OF
CANTERBURYCONVOCAATION OF
YORK

TAXATION

| PARLIAMENT | | CONVOCAATION OF CANTERBURY | | CONVOCAATION OF YORK | | | | | |
|------------|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|-------|-------------|------------------------|
| DATE | TAXATION | DATE | GRANT | DATE | GRANT | | | | |
| | DIRECT | INDIRECT | | | | | | | |
| 1386 | 1 Oct. - 28 Nov. | ½ 1/15 & 10 | Wool sub. & Tun. | 1386 | 3 Dec. - ? | 1/10 | 1386 | 12 May - ? | x2½ 1/10 ¹¹ |
| 1388 | 3 Feb. - 20 Mar. 13 Apr. - 4 Jun. | ½ 1/15 & 10 | Wool sub. & Tun. | 1388 | 26 Feb. - 14 Mar. | ½ 1/10 | 1388 | 25 Apr. - ? | ½ 1/10 ¹² |
| 1388 | 9 Sept. - 17 Oct. | 1/15 & 10 | Wool sub. & sub. on merch. | 1388 | 12 Oct. - 20 Oct. | 1/10 | 1389 | 26 Mar. - ? | 1/10 ¹³ |
| 1390 | 17 Jan. - 2 Mar. | - | Wool sub. & sub. on merch. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1390 | 12 Nov. - 3 Dec. | - | Wool sub. & sub. on merch. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1391 | 3 Nov. - 2 Dec. | ½ 1/15 & 10 | - | 1391 | 9 Dec. - ? | ½ 1/10 | 1391 | 4 Dec. - ? | ½ 1/10 |
| 1393 | 20 Jan. - 10 Feb. | ½ 1/15 & 10 | Wool sub. & Tun. | 1393 | 24 Feb. - ? | ½ 1/10 ¹⁴ | 1393 | 17 Mar. | 1½ 1/10 ¹⁵ |
| 1394 | 27 Jan. - 6 Mar. | - | - | 1394 | 13 May - 21 May | ½ 1/10 | 1394 | 3 Dec. - ? | ½ 1/10 ¹⁶ |
| 1395 | 27 Jan. - 15 Feb. | 1/15 & 1/10 | - | 1395 | 5 Feb. - 18 Feb. | 1/10 | 1395 | 2 Mar. - ? | ½ 1/10 ¹⁷ |
| 1397 | 22 Jan. - 12 Feb. | - | Wool sub. & Tun. | 1397 | 19 Feb. - 26 Feb. | ½ 1/10 ¹⁸ | - | - | - |
| 1397/8 | 17 Sept. - 29 Sept. 27 Jan. - 31 Jan. | 1½ 1/15 & 10 | Wool sub. | 1397 | Mar. 2 - ? | 1½ 1/10 & 15 | 1397 | 10 Oct. - ? | ½ 1/10 |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1399 | 12 May | 1/10 ¹⁹ |
| 1399 | 6 Oct. - 19 Nov. | - | Wool sub. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1401 | 20 Jan. - 10 Mar. | 1/15 & 1/10 | Tun. | 1401 | 26 Jan. - 11 Mar. | 1½ 1/10 | 1401 | 26 July - ? | 1/10 |
| 1402 | 30 Sept. - 25 Nov. | 1/15 & 1/15 | Wool Sub. & Tun. | 1402 | 21 Oct. - 27 Nov. | 1½ 1/10 | (1402 | Summer | 1/10 - 1399 grant) |
| 1403 | 6 Oct. - ? | ½ 1/10 | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1404 | 14 Jan. - 20 Mar. | Income Tax | - | 1404 | 6 May - ? | 1/10 & spec. subsidy ²⁰ | 1404 | 2 June - ? | 1/10 |
| 1404 | 6 Oct. - 13 Nov. | 2/15 & 2/10 & Lord's tax | Wool sub. & Tun. | 1404 | 24 Nov. 28 Nov. | 1½ 1/10 | 1404 | 11 Dec. - ? | 1/10 |

PARLIAMENTCONVOCAATION OF
CANTERBURYCONVOCAATION OF
YORK

| DATE | TAXATION | | GRANT | DATE | GRANT | |
|------|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|------|---------------|----------------------|
| | DIRECT | INDIRECT | | | | |
| 1406 | 1/15 & 1/10 | Wool sub. & Tun. | 1/10 & spec. subsidy ²² | 1406 | 12 July - ? | 1/10 & spec. subsidy |
| 1407 | 1 ½ 15 & 10 | Wool sub. & Tun. | 1 ½ 1/10 & 15 | - | - | - |
| - | - | - | - | 1408 | 10 Dec. - ? | 1/10 |
| 1410 | 1 ½ 15 & 10 | Wool sub. & Tun. | 1 ½ 1/10 & 15 | 1410 | 23 May | 1/10 |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1411 | Income Tax | Wool sub. & Tun. | ½ 1/10 | 1412 | 20 Jan. - ? | ½ 1/10 |
| 1413 | 1 ½ 15 & 10 | Wool sub. & Tun. | 1/10 | 1413 | 27-8 July - ? | 1/10 |
| 1414 | - | Tun. | - | - | - | - |
| 1414 | 2/15 & 10 | - | 2/10 | 1415 | 9-11 Jan. - ? | 2/10 |
| 1415 | 2 nd 15 & 10 | Wool sub. | 2/10 ²⁴ | 1415 | 16 Nov. - ? | 1/10 ²⁵ |
| 1416 | 1/15 & 1/10 | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1416 | 2/15 & 2/10 | - | 2/10 | 1417 | 12 Jan. - ? | 1/10 |
| 1417 | 2/15 & 2/10 | - | 2/10 ²⁶ | 1418 | 20 - 26 Jan. | 1/10 |
| 1419 | 1 ⅓ 1/10 & 15 | - | spec. subsidy ²⁷ | 1420 | 13 - 18 Jan | ½ 1/10 |
| 1420 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 1421 | deferred 1/15 & 10 | - | 1/10 | 1421 | 22 Sept. - ? | 1/10 |
| 1421 | 1/15 & 10 from previous parliament | - | - | - | - | - |

* * *

Notes and Sources for Table 2

1. See W.M. Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III, Crown and Political Society 1327-1377* (London, 1990), Table 2, p.205.
2. E 359/15.
3. This was 16d. in the mark on all assessed benefices, royal free chapels included; 16d. in the mark on $\frac{2}{3}$ of the estimated value of benefices not assessed; and 2s. in the mark from certain listed persons.
4. As note 3.
5. *C.F.R.*, 1377-83, p.252.
6. *C.F.R.*, 1377-83, p.346.
7. E 359/15. Note that the second half tenth was granted on condition that the king proceed abroad, and was not in fact collected.
8. *C.F.R.*, 1377-83, pp.362-3. This may not have been collected.
9. Second half was conditional on the king proceeding abroad.
10. *C.F.R.*, 1383-91, p.125.
11. E 159/162 Recorda Trinity.
12. E 159/164 Recorda Trinity.
13. *C.F.R.*, 1383-91, p.288. The second half of this subsidy and the one granted by the Canterbury convocation was not collected because the king did not proceed abroad.
14. *C.F.R.*, 1391-99, p.79.
15. Half a tenth was granted unconditionally, the other two were on condition that the king went to Scotland, Ireland, or France. They were not collected.
16. *C.F.R.*, 1391-93, p.143.
17. *C.F.R.*, 1391-93, p.150.
18. E 359/15.
19. Richard II was deposed before this grant could be paid but, as Abbot has demonstrated, Henry IV 'discovered' the grant in the summer of 1402 and decided to enforce its payment; I.R. Abbott, 'Taxation of Personal Property and of Clerical Incomes, 1399 to 1402', *Speculum*, xvii (1942), 471-98, pp.480-1.
20. This was 2s. in the £ from unassessed benefices worth more than 100s; McHardy, 'Clerical Taxation', p.183.
21. E.F. Jacob, 'The Canterbury Convocation of 1406', in T.A. Sandquist and R. Powicke, eds., *Essays in Medieval History presented to B. Wilkinson* (Toronto, 1969), p.349.
22. This was '...6s. 8d. from every chaplain, stipendiary or salaried...from every chaplain or warden of chantries, and from every other beneficed person unaccustomed to pay the tenth, and also from all other vicars or others beneficed in cathedral or collegiate churches'; McHardy 'Clerical Taxation', p.183.
23. This is not recorded by Rogers but is by McHardy; 'Clerical Taxation', p.184.
24. Assessed benefices and on unassessed benefices worth £10 p.a. and more; McHardy, 'Clerical Taxation', p.184.
25. E 359/17.
26. As note 10.
27. These were a/ Moiety on all assessed benefices and on unassessed benefices worth £10 p.a. and more and b/ 6s. 8d. from every chantry and unbeneficed chaplain whose income or stipend was 7 marks p.a. and more or 40s. p.a. plus food; McHardy, 'Clerical Taxation', pp.184-5.

CHAPTER 4: THE COMMONS

INTRODUCTION

Of all the elements which comprised the late medieval parliament, the Commons have received by far the most thorough and extensive coverage. Seemingly no stone has been left unturned by post-war historians, some of whom, including J.S. Roskell, J.G. Edwards, G.L. Harriss and Richardson and Sayles, have spent a considerable proportion of their careers analysing the composition or activity of the Lower House. With such a volume of distinguished work already in print, and with such a vast area to cover, this chapter clearly cannot hope to address every aspect of the late medieval Commons or revise everything which has been said previously. Some avenues of research, such as the 'crisis parliaments' of 1376, 1386 and February 1388,¹ the Speakers of the Commons² or the rôle of the Lower House in Richard II's deposition,³ are by now so well trodden as to require, at most, only a passing reference. Nevertheless, a fresh approach to the subject is now possible with the publication in 1993 of the History of Parliament Trust volumes which provide biographies of the MPs who attended parliament between 1386 and 1421.⁴ Analysing the composition of the Commons and its effect on the nature and proceedings of the medieval parliament is not, of course, a new approach,⁵ but these volumes do provide the basis for this type of investigation to be undertaken on an unparalleled scale, both chronologically and thematically. Appendix 1 of this thesis contains an extensive prosopographical survey of parliament using, for the most part, the biographical information provided by the History of Parliament Trust.⁶ The intention of this chapter is to synthesise the material within the Appendix and discuss the more significant and pertinent findings that emerge from it. The following discussion has been divided into three main areas: in the first, an attempt is made to explain the incidence of taxation in the 1390s and

¹ For general accounts and further references see, G. Holmes, *The Good Parliament* (Oxford, 1975); N. Saul, *Richard II* (London, 1997), pp.148-204.

² J.S. Roskell, *The Commons and their Speakers in the English Parliament* (Manchester, 1965).

³ G. Lapsley, 'The Parliamentary Title of Henry IV', *E.H.R.*, xliv (1934), 423-49, repr. in *idem*, *Crown, Community and Parliament in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1951), pp.273-340; B. Wilkinson, 'The Deposition of Richard II and the Accession of Henry IV', *E.H.R.*, liv (1939), 215-39, repr. in E.B. Fryde and E. Miller, eds., *Historical Studies of the English Parliament*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1970) i, pp.329-53.

⁴ J.S. Roskell, L. Clark, and C. Rawcliffe, eds., *The House of Commons, 1386-1421*, History of Parliament Trust, 4 vols. (Stroud, 1993).

⁵ See for example J.S. Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422: English Society and Parliamentary Representation under the Lancastrians* (Manchester, 1954).

⁶ A more detailed statement of the methodology employed in this survey can be found in Appendix 1.

1400s in terms of the links which existed between members of the Commons and the crown; the second discusses how patterns of attendance may have affected parliamentary business; and the third considers changing trends in the office-holding and status of the knights of the shire across the period.

i) THE BURGESSES

Before starting this discussion, however, a brief word should be said about the place of the burgesses in parliament. The tendency for the parliament rolls to describe the activity of the Lower House in terms of what the 'les Communes' did or said makes it rather difficult to distinguish between the respective rôles of the burgesses and the knights of the shire in parliament. There is, nevertheless, sufficient evidence to indicate that the inferior social position of the burgesses relative to the knights translated into an inferior position both politically and procedurally within parliament itself. Most of the evidence for this disparity has already been brought to light in other secondary material.⁷ It has been pointed out, for example, that knights were paid twice as much as the burgesses for parliamentary attendance;⁸ that no burgess became a Speaker of the Commons until the sixteenth century;⁹ that the Speaker himself was probably chosen by the knights of the shire;¹⁰ that the knights tended to dominate most of the parliamentary committees appointed in the period, including, possibly, intercommuning committees with the Lords;¹¹ that regulations about county elections were different and more demanding than those for boroughs;¹² and that contemporary chroniclers and poets spoke either in terms of the Commons or the knights of the shire but rarely, if at all,

⁷ The standard work is M. McKisack, *The Parliamentary Representation of the English Boroughs During the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1932), ch. vii, esp. p.120. See also Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*, pp.30-1; G.O. Sayles, *The King's Parliament of England* (London, 1975), pp.120-1; A.L. Brown, 'Parliament 1377-1422', in R.G. Davies and J.H. Denton, eds., *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (Manchester, 1981), p.121. A very good recent summary has been provided in Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, pp.40-54

⁸ These were fixed in 1327 at 4s a day for a knight and 2s for a burgess; H.M. Cam, 'The Community of the Shire and the Payment of its Representatives in Parliament' in *idem*, *Liberties and Communities in Medieval England* (London, 1963), p.237.

⁹ Roskell, *The Commons and their Speakers*, p.vii.

¹⁰ J.S. Roskell, 'The Medieval Speakers for the Commons in Parliament', in *idem*, *Parliament and Politics in Late Medieval England*, 3 vols. (London, 1981-3) i, ch.iv, p.39, note 6.

¹¹ Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, pp.49-52. In addition to the examples given in these volumes also note that in 1386 the king was reported to have demanded a delegation of '...forty knights from amongst the more experienced and better qualified of the commons...[my italics]' to express to him the wishes of the Lower House as a whole; *Knighton's Chronicle, 1337-1396*, ed. and trans. G.H. Martin (Oxford, 1995), pp.354-5.

¹² Brown, 'Parliament 1377-1422', p.121. See also Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, esp. p.59 and note 19.

specifically mentioned the burgesses.¹³ Richardson and Sayles have also suggested that higher status was conferred on the knights of the shire by virtue of the fact that, whilst they sat on wooden benches, the burgesses had to stand.¹⁴ Moreover, it is notable and significant that all the surviving evidence pointing to the ‘packing’ of parliament, either by the king or by noblemen, concerns the manipulation and interference of *county* elections rather than borough elections.¹⁵

The parliament roll is not in fact completely devoid of distinctions between the burgesses and knights, and the few that are given in the period between 1369 and 1421 simply confirms the impression of the dominant status of the latter over the former. In 1381, for example, the clerk of parliament listed the elements which constituted parliament, mentioning first the temporal lords, then the shire knights and then the judges of parliament.¹⁶ The burgesses and citizens were not mentioned directly but were probably included in the rather ignominious final category of ‘touz autres Estatz’. Something of the distribution of power within the Commons is hinted at in the granting of the unusual tenth and fifteenth of the parliament of October 1382 which extended liability to include the lay lords.¹⁷ There are no indications that this taxation did not also apply to the inhabitants of towns and cities, yet the schedule recording the grant stated that it had been made *only* by the temporal lords, knights and esquires and other ‘secular lords of manors, towns and other places in the realm’; no mention was made of the citizens or burgesses. The implication was that they fulfilled only a secondary rôle in granting direct taxation in parliament.¹⁸ Other occasions where the knights were singled out included the affirmation of the peace treaty in 1394, which was recorded as having been assented to by ‘...le Roy, Seign[eu]rs, vaillantz Chivalers, & Justices...’,¹⁹ and in

¹³ McKisack, *Parliamentary Representation of English Boroughs*, p.122; Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, pp.49-50. In a rather less than a complimentary context the author of *Richard the Redeless* castigated the inefficiency and incompetence of the Commons but did so by appearing to concentrate on the ‘knyghtis of the comunete’ as if they were the key element that determined how effective the Lower House was; *The Piers Plowman Tradition*, ed. H. Barr (London, 1993), pp.130-33.

¹⁴ H.G. Richardson, ‘The Commons and Medieval Politics’, *T.R.H.S.*, 4th ser., xxviii (1945), 21-45, repr. in H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (London, 1981), ch. xxiv, p.38, note 2.

¹⁵ For the evidence of the manipulation of county elections by the crown see below, pp.110-11, 117-18. For the absence of connections between borough representatives and magnates, see L. Clark, ‘Magnates and their Affinities in the Parliaments of 1386-1421’, in R.H. Britnell and A.J. Pollard, eds., *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society* (Stroud, 1995), pp.127-53, p.136.

¹⁶ *RP*. iii. 100.16.

¹⁷ *RP*. iii. 134.15. See chapter 3, p.91.

¹⁸ This situation is corroborated by an episode dating to 1426 when the mayor of Bishop’s Lynn asked the merchants of the town to offer bribes to the knights of the shire in order to limit the size of any grant that was made to the crown; McKisack, *Parliamentary Representation of English Boroughs*, p.131.

¹⁹ *RP*. iii. 315.16.

1397, when only the knights of the shire were called upon by Richard II to take an oath of allegiance.²⁰ Finally, in 1399, it is interesting to note that one of the deposition articles stated that it was specifically the responsibility of the 'knights of the community' (*Milites Comitatum*) to represent the grievances of the realm to the king.²¹

In comparing the burgesses and the knights we should not, however, be misled into thinking that both elements necessarily attended parliament for the same reasons. Whilst the knights of the shire were not ignorant of economic issues, the burgesses, as the leading members of urban and mercantile communities, not surprisingly assumed a natural position in parliament as the main lobbying group and principal source of expertise on mercantile and trade matters. They may well have been joined in these concerns by the contingent of representatives from the Cinque Ports (usually numbering fourteen) who were selected by the constable of Dover castle to attend parliament, by command of the king.²² The sheer volume of common petitions and resulting statutes concerning trade and other issues relating to towns and cities indicates not only that the burgesses had developed an influential collective voice in parliament by the end of the fourteenth century but that parliament itself had developed into a widely recognised and highly valued forum for the redress of urban grievances. More recently, a consensus has begun to emerge that *private* petitioning may have been an even stronger motivation for boroughs to send representatives to parliament; and as we shall see in chapter 6, there is a huge body of evidence within the P.R.O. class of Ancient Petitions which goes far in supporting this hypothesis.²³

During the proceedings of parliament the burgesses were no doubt on hand to advise the knights on mercantile issues if called on to do so, but it was to the crown that their experience and expertise was probably most valued. This is illustrated very clearly in the early 1380s when, in the parliament of 1381, the merchants were specifically assigned to find some

²⁰ *RP*. iii. 356.41.

²¹ *RP*. iii. 420.36. In this connection, note the observation of A.R. Myers that occasionally private petitions were addressed specifically to the knights of the shire rather than to the Commons as a whole; 'Parliamentary Petitions in the Fifteenth Century', *E.H.R.*, lxxv (1937), 385-404, 590-613, repr. in *idem*, *Crown, Household and Parliament in Fifteenth Century England* (London, 1985), pp.1-44. p.15.

²² See, for example, *Reports from the Lords' Committees...for All Matters Touching the Dignity of a Peer*, 4 vols. (Parliamentary Papers, 1820-9), iv. pp.700, 703, 706, 710, 713, 720, 723, 726, 735, 738, 740, 743, 748; *Return of the Name of Every Member of the Lower House of Parliament...1213-1874*, 2 vols. (Parliamentary Papers, 1878). i. *passim*.

²³ W.M. Ormrod, *Political Life in Medieval England, 1300-1450* (London and Basingstoke, 1995), pp.46-7; J.R. Maddicott, 'Parliament and the Constituencies, 1272-1377', in Davies and Denton, eds., *The English Parliament*, pp.69-70, 76-7. The premium placed by boroughs on petitioning in parliament has been used R. Horrox to explain the influx of 'outsider' gentry or lawyer MPs into urban constituencies in the fifteenth century; 'Urban Patronage and Patrons in the Fifteenth Century', in R.A. Griffiths, ed., *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1981), pp.145-66. p.158. See also chapter 6, pp.170-93.

way of resolving the problems of deflation, the destruction of the navy and the illegal export of money from the realm.²⁴ In the following parliament of May 1382 another special mercantile committee was appointed, this time to discuss a loan to finance an intended royal expedition to France.²⁵ It should also be pointed out that between these two assemblies a far larger delegation of the kingdom's leading merchants had been summoned, together with four knights of the shire, to discuss the same question (their failure to agree led directly to the summoning of the May 1382 parliament).²⁶ These latter committees - and the subjects they discussed - provide a useful reminder that it was not simply the advice but also the wealth of these merchants that benefited the crown.

It is, perhaps, in recognition of the fact that the burgesses cannot be written off as irrelevant to the Commons that attention is now beginning to focus more seriously on exactly how, as either petitioners or advisors, the representatives of the cities and towns may have used parliament and how they might have effected its agenda.²⁷ Nevertheless, on the basis that the knights of the shire were the dominant element within the Lower House, I have chosen in this chapter to concentrate the discussion principally on the composition and activity of this group. The knights' superior social standing, their greater participation in the regional administration of the realm, and their closer connections with members of the peerage and, indeed, with the king himself, meant that it was they who generally dictated the political sympathies, policies and agenda which came to be adopted in the name of all the Commons and it is to them, therefore, that our attention will now focus.

²⁴ *RP*. iii. 102.28.

²⁵ *RP*. iii. 123.10.

²⁶ This meeting was referred to by the chancellor in his opening speech to the parliament where he spoke of an assembly of '...diverse merchants, both aliens and denizens, primarily from London'; *RP*. iii. 122.3b. I have recently discovered an ancient petition which almost certainly contains the names of the merchants summoned to this meeting; SC 8/125/6224-5. Since this document has never before come to light and since it is particularly significant in revealing which of the 'pluis suffisantz' individuals, as well as which towns, were considered to be important enough for inclusion, it is worth listing who was summoned, where they came from and whether or not they had been returned to either the parliaments of 1381 or May 1382 (it is interesting in this latter respect that parliamentary attendance was evidently not the vital qualification). They were, in the order they were recorded: William Walworth (London); John Philpot (London, 1381); Nicholas Brembre (London); Thomas Graa (York); John Halderley (London, 1381); Thomas Beaupyne (Bristol/Southampton, May 1382); Robert Sutton (Lincoln, May 1382); Hugh Crane (Winchester, 1381); Steven Hayme (Winchester); Robert Werbetton (London); Walter Bixton (Norwich, 1381); Hugh Fastolf (London, 1381); John Shadworth (London); William Venour (London); Henry Mulsho (Northampton); William Bishopdale (Newcastle, 1381); William Baret (London, 1381); Henry Vanner (London); William More (London); Elys Spelly (Bristol, 1381); William Heyberare (Gloucester); John Organ (London); Robert Wilford (Exeter, 1381); Richard Bosoun (Exeter, 1381); Geoffrey Stylling (Ipswich, May 1382); John Keep (Bishop's Lynn, 1381); and Robert Bont (Salisbury, 1381). The knights of the shire assigned to them *did* serve in both parliaments and were: Sir William Wingfield (Suffolk); Sir John Dauntsey (Wiltshire); Sir John Hoches (Wiltshire); and Sir Robert Percy (Yorkshire).

²⁷ See for example A.J. Pollard, 'The Lancastrian Constitutional Experiment Revisited: Henry IV. Sir John Tiptoft and the Parliament of 1406', *Parliamentary History*, xiv (1995), 103-119. Note also the research by C.D. Liddy, 'The Relationship between Civic elites and the Crown, 1350-1400', University of York, D.Phil. (forthcoming).

ii) TAXATION AND THE KING'S AFFINITY: THE PROSOPOGRAPHICAL EVIDENCE

In chapter 2, I discussed the record of the crown in gaining supplies of taxation from the Commons.²⁸ Although, in general, it was shown that the crown was remarkably successful in securing grants of taxation, it was suggested that the really significant period was between 1389 and 1413 when, despite a lull in the war with France, the crown maintained an almost uninterrupted supply of income from direct subsidies. In the 1390s Richard II not only continued to be granted a regular supply of indirect subsidies, including the consistent levying of tonnage and poundage, but he also received direct taxation, in the form of four and a half fifteenths and tenths.²⁹ The fact that some of this direct taxation was specified as being levied for the purposes of 'apparelling the king honourably' for his meeting with Charles VI shows the extent to which the Commons were willing bend the rules in order to accommodate the financial requirements of the crown.³⁰ Under Henry IV there was more of a need to finance the defence of the realm, but a significant proportion of the money that was granted to the king was still allocated specifically to the ordinary costs of the king's household.³¹ The significance of this lay in the fact the Commons not only continued to grant Henry impressive amounts of taxation in the full knowledge of this misappropriation but that, in the end, they formally (if temporarily) conceded that this could be done quite legitimately.³² This section seeks to gain a closer understanding of *why* the Commons adopted such a flexible and co-operative attitude to parliamentary taxation.

It seems best to answer this question by addressing the two periods separately and by looking first at the situation in the 1390s. Harriss and Rogers have written most extensively about taxation in this decade and they have reached a consensus that the levying of these grants can best be explained in terms of a struggle between the crown and political

²⁸ See above, pp.21-33.

²⁹ These and the grants of Henry IV's reign have been tabularised in Table 1. For a discussion of the lay taxes of this decade see G.L. Harriss, 'Thomas Cromwell's "New Principle" of taxation', *E.H.R.*, xliii (1978), 721-38 and *idem*, 'Theory and Practice in Royal Taxation: some observations', *E.H.R.*, xlvi (1982), 811-19, pp.813-4. For tonnage and poundage, see W.M. Ormrod, 'Finance and Trade under Richard II', in A. Goodman and J.L. Gillespie, eds., *Richard II: Power and Prerogative* (forthcoming).

³⁰ *RP*. iii. 285.10; 301.11.

³¹ A. Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons and Taxation', *Mediaeval Studies*, xxxi (1969), 47-70, *passim*.

³² C. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and King's Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance in England 1360-1413* (London and New Haven, 1986), p.141.

community.³³ Harriss sums this perspective up when he states that the 1390s witnessed a 'running battle' or '...an obscure battle of will...[which saw] the crown attempting to secure peacetime and perhaps permanent taxation and the Commons striving to defend the principle of extraordinary need...'.³⁴ Elsewhere in this thesis, it has been argued that by the 1390s Richard II had developed an innate distrust and suspicion of the place of parliament in the polity, but we should not assume that this attitude, or the king's record of taxation in this decade, indicated that proceedings in parliament were marked by confrontation between the crown and political community.³⁵ At least in the early part of the decade, the relationship between the Commons and the crown was a fairly constructive one. The instigation of a remarkably anti-magnate programme by the Commons in the Cambridge Parliament of 1388 which attacked the excesses of livery and maintenance and, in July 1389, saw the exclusion of all the nobility from the commissions of the peace, signalled in a very explicit way their rejection of the period of Appellant rule.³⁶ More importantly it indicated their renewed faith and confidence in the authority and power of the king. As for Richard II, he went out of his way to respond to the aspirations of the political community and cultivate support there.³⁷ This applied not only to his willingness to act on the issues of maintenance and law and order, but also to his determination to conclude peace with France.³⁸ Although conceived, in part, to lessen the dependency of the crown on the financial resources of parliament, this latter policy was also designed to curry favour with a tax-wearied population and it is an indication, perhaps, of how well-judged it was that the charge of negotiating a dishonourable peace was *not* levelled against Richard II in the 'Record and Process' of 1399.³⁹

If there was one lesson that Richard had learned from the troubled first half of

³³ Harriss, 'Thomas Cromwell's "New Principle"'; *idem*, 'Theory and Practice'; Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons', pp.50-1.

³⁴ Harriss, 'Theory and Practice', p.814.

³⁵ See chapter 2, pp.53-61. For the question of how popular Richard II's government was at the end of his reign see C. Barron, 'The Deposition of Richard II', in J. Taylor and W. Childs, eds., *Politics and Crisis in Fourteenth Century England* (Gloucester, 1990), pp.133-6. See also T.F. Tout, *Chapters in English Administrative History*, 6 vols. (Manchester, 1920-33), iii, pp.473-9; A. Steel, *Richard II* (Cambridge, 1948), pp.180-216.

³⁶ J.A. Tuck, 'The Cambridge Parliament, 1388', *E.H.R.*, lxxxiv (1969), 225-43, pp.234-5; R.L. Story, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace, 1388-90', in F.R.H. Du Boulay and C.M. Barron, eds., *The Reign of Richard II: Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (London, 1971), pp.131-52; J.M.W. Bean, *From Lord To Patron: Lordship in Late Medieval England* (Manchester, 1989), pp.203-5; N.E. Saul, 'The Commons and the Abolition of Badges', *Parliamentary History*, ix (1990), 302-15.

³⁷ See chapter 2, pp.53-4.

³⁸ J.J.N. Palmer, 'The Anglo-French Peace Negotiations, 1390-1396', *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., xvi (1966), 81-94; *idem*, *England, France and Christendom 1377-99* (London, 1972), esp. pp.138-9; A. Tuck, 'Richard II and the Hundred Years War', in Taylor and Childs, eds., *Politics and Crisis*, pp.117-31; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.205-34.

³⁹ *Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1400*, ed. C. Given-Wilson (Manchester, 1993), pp.168-9.

his reign, it was that conflict between the crown and parliament could only detract from his dignity and his personal authority. In the early 1390s there is evidence that, besides 'wooing' the Commons with a popular agenda, the king also began a programme of transforming the *composition* of the Commons in order to secure a more compliant and sympathetic assembly. Richard II was the first medieval king systematically to recruit members of the gentry in the localities and one of the results of this was that from January 1390 there was a significant increase in the number of king's retainers (ie. knights of the chamber, king's knights, king's esquires and royal annuitants) who were returned to parliament.⁴⁰ Traditionally, it has been argued that this was an accident of the king's broader recruitment policy - that the men joining the retinue also happened to hold prominent positions in local society and were therefore likely, in any case, to be elected to parliament.⁴¹ Yet, we should remember that in the Merciless Parliament of 1388 Richard had demonstrated an explicit, if rather ham-fisted, understanding of the importance of securing a core of loyal followers in the Commons to promote royal interests there. Richard had issued writs of summons which openly ordered sheriffs to return knights of the shire who were 'in debatis modernis magis indifferentes'.⁴² As this was the first really manifest evidence of a late medieval king attempting to 'pack' parliament in order to influence its proceedings, it is not unrealistic to assume that this was a strategy that stayed in Richard's mind once he had regained his authority a year later and was in a better position to make it work more effectively.

The broad geographical spread of the recruitment into his affinity,⁴³ whilst probably part of a much larger programme for winning over the localities, nevertheless significantly increased the potential number of gentry retainers who were eligible for parliamentary election, and this point may not have been lost on the king and his advisors when it came to choosing suitable candidates. It is interesting in this regard to note the new procedure for the appointment of sheriffs that the Monk of Westminster recorded in 1389.⁴⁴ As the principal royal official in the shires and as both the presiding and returning officer of

⁴⁰ C. Given-Wilson, 'The King and the Gentry in Fourteenth-Century England', *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., xxxvi (1987), 87-102, pp.94-5; *idem*, *The Royal Household*, pp.214-226; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.365-9.

⁴¹ Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, p.247.

⁴² *Historia Anglicana, 1272-1422*, ed. H.T. Riley, Rolls Series, xxviii, 2 vols. (London, 1864), ii, p.161; A.J. Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility* (London, 1973), p.112. Given-Wilson has also pointed out the possibility of electoral interference in the parliament of October 1383 when three king's knights were discharged from taking their seats shortly before the assembly met; *The Royal Household*, pp.246-7.

⁴³ Given-Wilson, 'The King and the Gentry', p.94.

⁴⁴ *The Westminster Chronicle 1381-1394*, ed. and trans. L.C. Hector and B.F. Harvey (Oxford, 1982), p.404.

county elections, the sheriff was the key individual who could quite feasibly return men to parliament who were the king's choice.⁴⁵ It may be significant therefore that the Monk of Westminster stated that in 1389 sheriffs were now appointed directly by the king and his privy council instead of by the treasurer and other officers of state.⁴⁶ This could well have indicated, amongst other issues, that the king was keen to ensure personally that the key local figures overseeing county elections were men whose loyalty and sympathy could be guaranteed.⁴⁷

Coincidentally, the parliament of January 1390, for whose elections these sheriffs would have been responsible, clearly marked a break with the past (see Graph 1);⁴⁸ whereas the two parliaments of 1388 had seen just seven and four king's retainers returned to parliament respectively, in the two parliaments of 1390 the figure rose to twelve on both occasions and from this point onwards, with the exception of 1395 (when the king and most of his retinue were in Ireland) the trend was most definitely upwards. Whereas the average number of king's retainers in the eight parliaments prior to January 1390 was just eight, in the eight parliaments from this point onwards the average was almost double this, at seventeen. Clearly it was not a dramatic transformation but corresponded to the gradual and cumulative growth of the royal affinity itself. What is interesting though is that the size of the king's affinity in parliament seemed to correlate directly with the general atmosphere of the institution's proceedings and the way in which Richard II himself approached it. In the early part of the decade, twelve members of the affinity may not have been enough for the king to be confident that he could handle parliament as he wished, so his approach to it was characterised by a receptiveness to the aspirations of the political community. However, as the number of king's retainers in parliament grew, so too the relationship between the king and the Commons altered. By the mid-1390s, as we have seen in chapter 2, the Commons were increasingly toeing the royal line.⁴⁹ This point was demonstrated by the fact that whilst taxation continued to be granted, the number of common petitions fell dramatically from 1395, thus reducing the onus on the crown to provide concessions by way of 'lubricating' the tax-granting process. In short, the mood of the Commons had shifted from sympathy for the king, to co-

⁴⁵ S. Payling, 'The Widening Franchise: Parliamentary Elections in Lancastrian Nottinghamshire', in D. Williams, ed., *England in the Fifteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 1987), pp.167-85, pp.168-70; Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, ch.vi, pp.67-8. See also the discussion in chapter 5, pp.149-51.

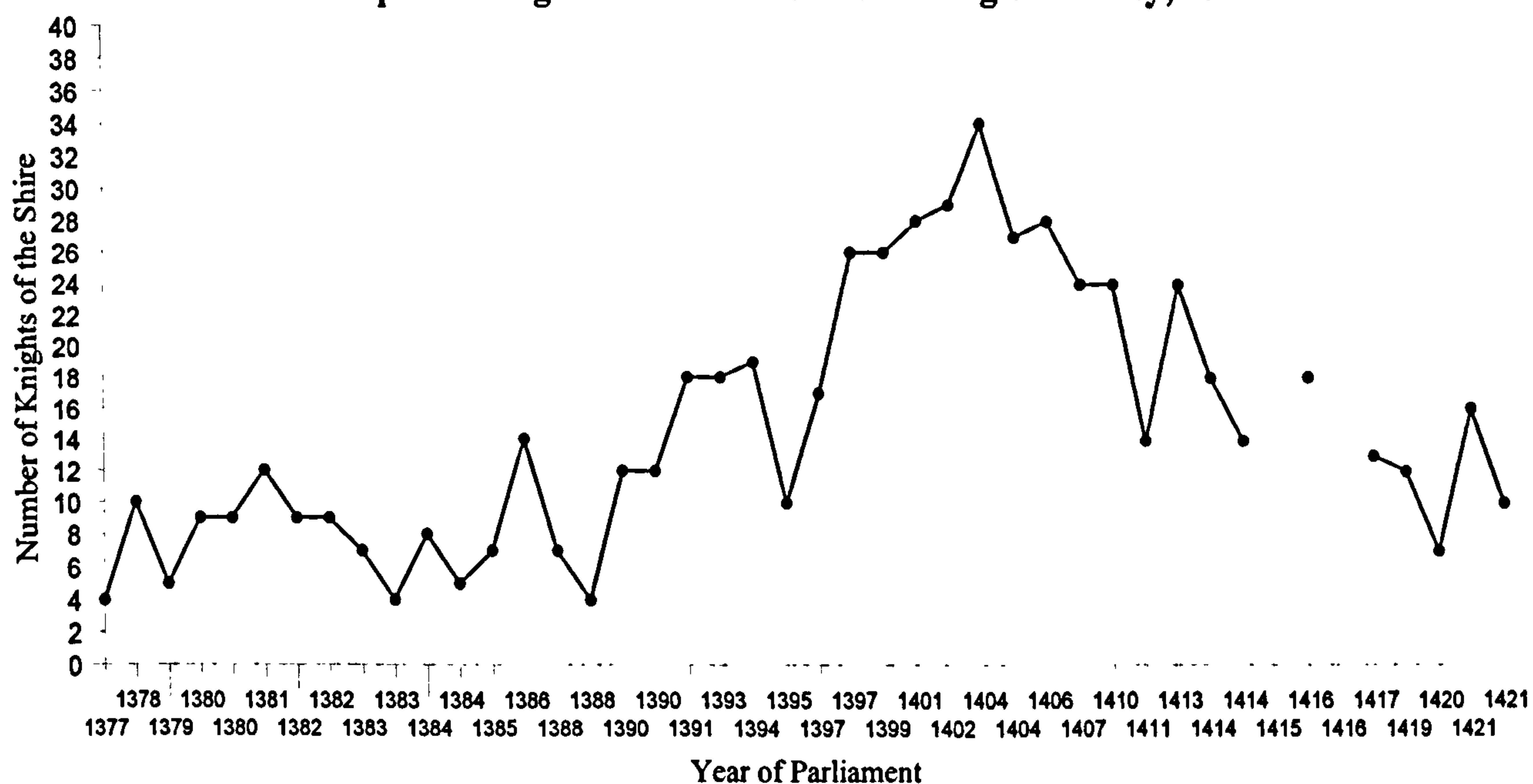
⁴⁶ The chancery rolls provide no indication as to whether this new practice continued throughout the 1390s.

⁴⁷ Note, however, that Storey rejects this scenario in, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace', pp.142-3.

⁴⁸ The information contained within this graph and the other graphs of this chapter is tabularised in Appendix 1.

⁴⁹ See chapter 2, pp.57-8.

Graph 1: Knights of the Shire in the King's Affinity, 1377-1421



operation and virtually unquestioning support for his political programme (the case of Thomas Haxey notwithstanding); the king's attitude to the Lower House had changed from a policy of appeasement to one of careful management and assertiveness. Neither, it should be stressed, was born out of conflict or struggle, but from the creation of closer and stronger links between the crown and political community.

Richard's last parliament brought to fruition the advantages of his retaining policy. Again, there is evidence that this was achieved by interference with the shrievalty. In the deposition articles of 1399 it was alleged that Richard had secured a compliant assembly by appointing sympathetic sheriffs to return the king's supporters to parliament⁵⁰ and this was supported by Thomas Walsingham who claimed that the knights of the shire were elected '...not by the community as custom demands, but by the royal will'.⁵¹ Certainly, the composition of the Commons made it extremely unlikely that Richard would have faced much opposition to his increasingly authoritarian agenda; amongst the knights of the shire there were some twenty-six fee'd retainers and servants, not to mention over a dozen associates of the Counter-Appellants who controlled the proceedings of this parliament with the king.⁵²

⁵⁰ *Chronicles of the Revolution*, p.59.

⁵¹ Thomas Walsingham, 'Annales Ricardi Secundi et Henrici Quarti', *Johannis de Trokelowe et Anon Chronica et Annales*, ed. H.T. Riley, Rolls Series, xxxviii, 7 vols. (London, 1863), iii. p.209.

⁵² This parliament has also been analysed in Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, Appendix C3.

Moreover, fourteen knights of the shire were specifically named and wholly implicated in the acts of this assembly; eight were appointed (outside parliament) to survey the confiscated lands of the Lords Appellant⁵³ and six joined the Counter-Appellants to discuss the charges brought against Henry Bolingbroke, duke of Hereford (they were also part of the committee appointed to deal with the business which had been left over at the end of the session).⁵⁴ The pattern of election also suggests crown interference in September 1397.⁵⁵ An unusually high number of re-elected MPs *and* parliamentary novices indicated, perhaps, that the king was anxious to see the return not only of men who had proven their loyalty in the previous assembly, but also of men who did not normally serve in parliament but whose loyalty now made them particularly valued by the king in the institution. The fact that eight of the re-elected MPs and ten of the novices were members of the king's affinity appears to underline this point.⁵⁶ Finally, it was a measure, perhaps, of where the real political sentiment lay in September 1397 that only four members elected to this assembly were subsequently returned to the following parliament in 1399 when Henry IV had seized the throne.⁵⁷

Arguably, the idea that the Commons as a whole were coerced into conforming to Richard II's 'despotic' agenda in his last parliament was nothing but a Lancastrian propaganda ploy designed to obscure the fact that Richard actually came to enjoy considerable support from the Lower House in his attack on the former Lords Appellant.⁵⁸ From the details of their careers and personal associations, a significant proportion of the total number of knights of the shire present - perhaps over half - could be said to have been positively committed to the anti-Appellant programme of this session. Of the remainder a handful may have spoken up against the proceedings but the vast majority, either out of a sense of self-preservation or self-interest, probably chose to implicate themselves by offering, at the very least, their tacit support. Interestingly, out of the ten individuals who might be expected to have

⁵³ These were Thomas Hasilden II, Peter Tilliol, Hugh Courtenay, John Skydemore, Gerald Heron, Thomas Brooke, Nicolas Carew II and William Bagot; *C.P.R., 1396-1399*, pp.307-8.

⁵⁴ These were John Bussy, Henry Green, John Russel, Richard Chelmswick, Robert Teye, and John Golafre; *RP*, iii. 373.89.b; *Chronicles of the Revolution*, p.87; J.G. Edwards, 'The Parliamentary Committee of 1398', *E.H.R.*, xl (1925), 321-333, repr. in Fryde and Miller, eds., *Historical Studies*, i, pp.316-28.

⁵⁵ See below, Graph 2.

⁵⁶ See Appendix 1. It is also acknowledged that the high incidence of novices may have been the result of a reluctance by the more regular attenders to be returned to a parliament that was widely expected to witness a major political crisis.

⁵⁷ The personnel who attended both the 'assembly' of 30 September in which Richard II resigned the throne, and the 'parliament' beginning 6 October, were the same. The parliament had been summoned on 30 September by Henry IV as king and the 'deposition assembly' had been summoned in August by Henry, as earl of Derby, but in the name of Richard II; see H.G. Richardson, 'Richard II's Last Parliament', *E.H.R.*, lii (1937), 39-47, pp.46-7; and *idem*, 'The Elections to the October Parliament of 1399', *B.I.H.R.*, xvi (1937-8), 137-43.

⁵⁸ See the deposition articles, *Chronicles of the Revolution*, pp.168-89, esp. p.178.

offered the most resistance to the king, having obtained royal pardons for their association with the Lords Appellants, no fewer than six were now in the royal affinity and three of them were the notorious trio, Bussy, Bagot and Green.⁵⁹

It was this broad swathe of support which the king could rely on in 1397-8 that explains why Richard, earl of Arundel was alleged to have declared, ‘...where be those faithful commons?...[for they] are not here?’⁶⁰ What it does not explain is why, despite this level of support, Richard II *still* chose to surround the assembly with his Cheshire archers.⁶¹ Possibly, this indicated the state of the king’s mind and in particular the acute and irrational sense of insecurity that he felt at this juncture, despite the fact that parliament contained a strong body of his supporters.⁶² It may also have been symptomatic of a slightly different motivation by the king to display in a very tangible and melodramatic way the power and authority that he could now wield over his subjects irrespective of the fact that in parliament he now enjoyed their full support. Alternatively, since the most notable concession by the Commons in this assembly was the grant of the wool subsidy for the period of the king’s life-time, and since the influence by the crown of parliamentary elections appears not to have extended to the boroughs, it is just possible that the presence of the archers was not so much for the benefit of the knights of the shire, but was for the burgesses; they were the group on whom permanent indirect taxation was likely to have the most profound effect and it was the burgesses, therefore, who are likely to have offered the most resistance to such a scheme.

In general, by the late fourteenth century, it could be said that the English monarchy had fully come to appreciate the advantages to be gained by influencing the membership of the knights of the shire through electoral manipulation. It should be stressed that this is not to furnish the knights of the shire with an authority or power over the crown which they clearly did not possess. Nor is it to say that the presence of the king’s retainers in parliament could necessarily always swing things for the crown - as the large number in the parliament of 1386 demonstrates. It did, however, signify an awareness by the king that it was possible to ‘mould’ the Lower House to make life for the crown as comfortable as possible both in terms of the Commons’ political agenda and in terms of their willingness to make generous grants of taxation.

⁵⁹ See Appendix 1.

⁶⁰ *The Chronicle of Adam Usk, 1377-1421*, ed. and trans. C. Given-Wilson (Oxford, 1997), pp.28-9.

⁶¹ C. Given-Wilson, ‘Adam Usk, the Monk of Evesham, and the Parliament of 1397-8’, *H.R.*, lxvi (1993), 329-35.

⁶² A useful summary of the theories surrounding Richard’s behaviour at the end of his reign can be found in Saul, *Richard II*, pp.462-5.

Under Henry IV, the need for a politically sympathetic Lower House that was predisposed to grant taxation to the crown was even greater than it had been under Richard II. Henry faced considerable expenses simply dealing with the rebellion in Wales and the other military threats on the kingdom's periphery but added to this was the absolute necessity of securing his position *within* England's borders by creating and maintaining what amounted to the largest royal affinity of the late Middle Ages.⁶³ Without parliament, these expenses could not have been met and without his affinity it is unlikely that Henry could have survived the many rebellions which challenged his position in the first half of his reign.⁶⁴

We have seen already that the Commons responded positively to Henry's financial needs.⁶⁵ Indeed, it is worth stressing again that it was no half-hearted response; in addition to the remarkably high level of taxation granted in these years, as well as the concession made over its application to non-extraordinary expenses, the Commons went one step further and granted, in January 1404 and in 1411, two special income taxes which deliberately extended the basis of liability to the land-owning gentry - the very class to which most knights of the shire themselves belonged.⁶⁶ Again, the question which has never really satisfactorily been answered is *why* the Commons proved to be so co-operative? This question assumes far greater poignancy when we consider that the relationship between Henry IV and the Commons, especially in the first half of his reign, has almost invariably been depicted in terms of conflict, opposition and acrimony.⁶⁷ If this were the case, why did the Commons accede to the crown's financial needs in such a generous and creative manner? Indeed, how was Henry able to secure this funding when he has so often been depicted as approaching the institution from a position of inherent weakness, or, as his only modern biographer has put it,

⁶³ Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons', p.45; Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, pp.226-34.

⁶⁴ See for example, the comments of S. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England: the Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1991), p.136.

⁶⁵ See chapter 2, pp.31-2.

⁶⁶ For the 1404 grant, which was deliberately not recorded on the parliament roll, see *C.F.R., 1399-1405*, pp.251-64; *Continuatio Eulogii in Eulogium Historiarum sive Temporis*, ed. F.S. Haydon, Rolls Series, 3 vols. (London, 1863), iii, pp.399-400, repr. in *Select Documents of English Constitutional History 1307-1485*, ed. S.B. Chrimes and A.L. Brown (London, 1961), pp.212-214. For the 1411 subsidy, see *RP.* iii. 648.10; *C.P.R., 1408-1413*, pp.378-81; H.L. Gray, 'Incomes from Land in 1436', *E.H.R.*, xlix (1934), 607-39, p.608.

⁶⁷ J.L. Kirby, *Henry IV of England* (London, 1970), p.257; K.B. McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights* (Oxford, 1972), p.93; A.L. Brown, 'The Commons and the Council in the Reign of Henry IV', *E.H.R.*, xxxix (1964), 1-30, repr. in Fryde and Miller, eds., *Historical Studies*, ii. pp.31-60; Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons', p.44; P. McNiven, 'The Problem of Henry IV's health', *E.H.R.*, c (1985), 747-72, p.771; Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, p.27; E. Wright, 'Henry IV, the Commons and the Recovery of Royal Finance in 1407', in R.E. Archer and S. Walker, eds., *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England: Essays Presented to Gerald Harriss* (London, 1995), pp.65-81, esp. pp.65-9. For the one dissenting voice amongst this broad consensus see Pollard, 'The Lancastrian Constitutional Experiment', pp.103-19.

as ‘...a petitioner, almost begging for money...’?⁶⁸

The answer, as in the 1390s, lies in the composition of the Commons - or more specifically, in the knights of the shire. Graph 1 shows very clearly that the period from 1399 to 1406 saw an unprecedented number of king’s retainers returned to parliament, unequalled (except for Richard II’s last parliament) in the whole of the period between 1377 and 1421. In the first six parliaments of Henry IV’s reign an average of no fewer than twenty-eight members of the royal affinity was present in parliament. The high-point came in January 1404 when as many as thirty-four retainers were returned: this amounted to almost half the total number of knights of the shire altogether. We can be certain that these men would have fully represented the interests of the king in the assembly by supporting and forwarding his political and financial agenda there.

However, we should not assume that the receipt of an annuity or retaining fee were the only marks indicating who was loyal to the king. The usurpation had effectively divided political society into those individuals the new Lancastrian king could trust and looked to for service and support, and those whose loyalties were in doubt and whose service was therefore ignored or passed over. Many of the offices and commissions which were distributed in the early years of Henry IV’s reign, therefore, were filled by men whose very appointment indicated that they too were committed to the survival of the Lancastrian regime. Arguably, these included the appointment of an individual to an office in the duchy of Lancaster, to an office in central government or to the shrievalty; membership of the commission of May 1402 which was set up to suppress treasonous rumours and make proclamation of Henry’s intention to govern well;⁶⁹ participation in suppressing rebellion; membership of either one or both of the meetings of the Great Council in 1401 and 1403; and finally, on a slightly different level, the familiarity of an individual with a royal councillor or courtier.⁷⁰ If we add to our survey this more inclusive set of criteria, the sizeable minority that Henry could rely on in parliament in terms of his affinity becomes what amounted to an overwhelming majority. Taking the three most critical parliaments of Henry IV’s reign - the assemblies of 1401, January 1404 and 1406 - the number of ‘loyal’ knights of the shire amounted to 59 out of total of 74 in 1401, 62 out of 73 in January 1404 and 51 out of 74 in 1406. This was typical of the first half of the reign;

⁶⁸ Kirby, *Henry II*, p.257.

⁶⁹ *C.P.R., 1401-1405*, pp.126-9.

⁷⁰ The names of those summoned to these meetings are listed in *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England*, ed. N.H. Nicholas, 7 vols. (London. 1834-7). i, pp.155-64, ii, pp.85-9. This category applies only to the parliaments of January 1404 and 1406.

parliament was overwhelmingly Lancastrian both in its composition and, we can assume, in its political outlook.

Arguably, this remarkable level of partisanship within parliament goes a long way towards explaining its record in granting taxation to the king in the 1400s. Since the majority of the careers of the knights of the shire were inextricably linked with the fortunes of the king, a refusal by the Commons to grant sufficient funds would not only have endangered the position and authority of Henry IV, but in doing so would also have jeopardised the position of the shire knights themselves, most of whom had benefited and were continuing to benefit from the change in the dynasty. This interdependency was not some incredible fluke which happened to play into the hands of the king but was symptomatic of a deliberate policy by Henry of 'packing' parliament on a scale which far exceeded that even of his predecessor. Henry had, after all, been present - as a member of the Lords - in the parliament of 1397-8 and so was well aware of the possibilities presented to the crown if county elections were manipulated to its advantage. The evidence that Henry himself employed this strategy comes in several parts. Firstly, we have the evidence of contemporary or near-contemporary chroniclers. For example, John Hardyng claimed that one of the central grievances the Percies had against Henry in 1403 was his order that sheriffs manipulate county elections in order that men favourable to the Lancastrian cause would be returned to parliament.⁷¹ For the parliament of October 1404, the anonymous author of the *Continuatio Eulogii* reported that '...the king ordered that no one who was skilled in law should come to [parliament]' - a claim which is supported by the wording of the election writ - and he also added that the king '...notified the sheriffs as to which knights and protectors of the communities he wished to have sent to it'.⁷² Even the pro-Lancastrian chronicle of Thomas Walsingham claimed that the central grievance of Archbishop Scrope in 1405 was that the king had prevented the free election of the knights of the shire to parliament.⁷³

Secondly, the interference of the sheriffs in county elections is confirmed by a common petition presented in 1406 which complained that county elections were being made out of the 'affection' of the sheriffs (we may suppose that its authors were not beneficiaries of

⁷¹ *Chronicle of John Hardyng*, ed. H. Ellis (London, 1812), p.353.

⁷² *Continuatio Eulogii*, iii, p.402; *Report from the Lords' Committees*, iv. p.792.

⁷³ Walsingham, *Annales*, pp.391, 403. See also *Continuatio Eulogii*, iii. p.406. Note, however, that McNiven dismisses the accuracy of this allegation in his article 'The Betrayal of Archbishop Scrope', *B.J.R.L.*, liv (1971-2), 173-213, p.184.

this practice).⁷⁴ It was as a result of this petition that the first major legislation regulating election procedure was enacted which limited the scope for shrieval connivance by specifying that election returns now had to be endorsed by the suitors of the county court.⁷⁵ The fact that Henry agreed to this statute may indicate that by 1406 the increased stability of the regime reduced the need to secure favourable election returns, but it may also have indicated the influence of the Prince of Wales who was not only present on the council which ratified the legislation at the end of this assembly but also presided over the parliament of 1410 when it was given teeth by the inclusion of a statutory fine.⁷⁶ Thirdly, local studies into the personnel of the shrievalty under Henry IV have shown that the crown was particularly careful to appoint trusted and loyal supporters of the king as part of a broad programme to win control of the shires for the Lancastrian regime.⁷⁷ Recently, Douglas Biggs has estimated that almost 55 per cent of the sheriffs appointed under Henry IV were either king's retainers or men receiving fees from the duchy of Lancaster.⁷⁸ Doubtless the figure would have been even greater had our more inclusive definition of 'loyalty' been used. Either way it is clear just how feasible it would have been for the king or his agents to impress on these men the importance of ensuring that parliament was filled with shire knights who were sympathetic to the king's financial needs.

The idea of a packed parliament under Henry IV fits in very well with the argument put forward in chapter 2 concerning the personality of the king and its bearing on parliamentary proceedings.⁷⁹ If, as was argued, the king displayed an usually informal and familiar attitude with the Commons during parliament, this may not have been attributable purely to his noble upbringing but also to the fact that he was surrounded in the assembly with his supporters and close friends. This sense of community was shown no more effectively than in the fact that for the first time in almost thirty years the king, Lords and Commons dined together in a feast laid on by Henry after the parliament of 1402.⁸⁰ In essence, Henry IV's countenance in parliament indicated a king who was not frightened for his position or protective

⁷⁴ *RP*. iii. 601.139.

⁷⁵ *SR*. ii, 156.xv; Payling, 'Widening Franchise', pp.168-70.

⁷⁶ *SR*. ii. 162.i.

⁷⁷ Payling, *Political Society*, pp.119-29; C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992), p.366.

⁷⁸ D. Biggs, "'Then you perceive the body of our kingdom": The royal affinity of Henry IV, 1399-1413', University of Minnesota, Ph.D thesis (1996), p.326.

⁷⁹ See above, pp.61-6.

⁸⁰ *RP*. iii. 493.b; Kirby, *Henry II*, p.149. The previous occasion this had happened was after the Good Parliament in 1376; W.M. Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III: Crown and Political Society in England, 1327-1377* (London, 1990), p.196.

of his royal dignity, as Richard II had been in the 1390s, but a king who felt secure in the knowledge that parliament was there to buttress his regime and ensure his own personal well-being.

This was no delusion. For all the attention historians have placed in the past on the Commons representing an 'opposition' to the king, the agenda of the Lower House at this point was actually very limited indeed. Its one and overriding concern was to limit the amount of money that Henry IV was spending on the ordinary costs of the royal household.⁸¹ This was a concern which stemmed from a wish to strengthen the Lancastrian regime rather than undermine it; the Commons wished to secure the political *status quo*, not change it. Thus, in direct contrast to the reigns of Henry's two predecessors, as well as his grandson Henry VI, the Commons never countenanced any serious imposition on the king's authority and they never questioned who he chose to surround himself with at court.⁸² Henry IV took the management of parliament to new and arguably unsurpassed heights. With so much hinging on the assembly's willingness to make grants of taxation, one would hardly have expected him to do less. Yet his reputation as a weak and feeble king tends to obscure this remarkable achievement. Beneath the criticism and heated debate, parliament under Henry IV was about as closely attuned to the needs of the crown as it could be, and this was in no small measure due to the success of the king in manipulating and shaping the composition of the Commons to suit these needs.

iii) PATTERNS OF ATTENDANCE

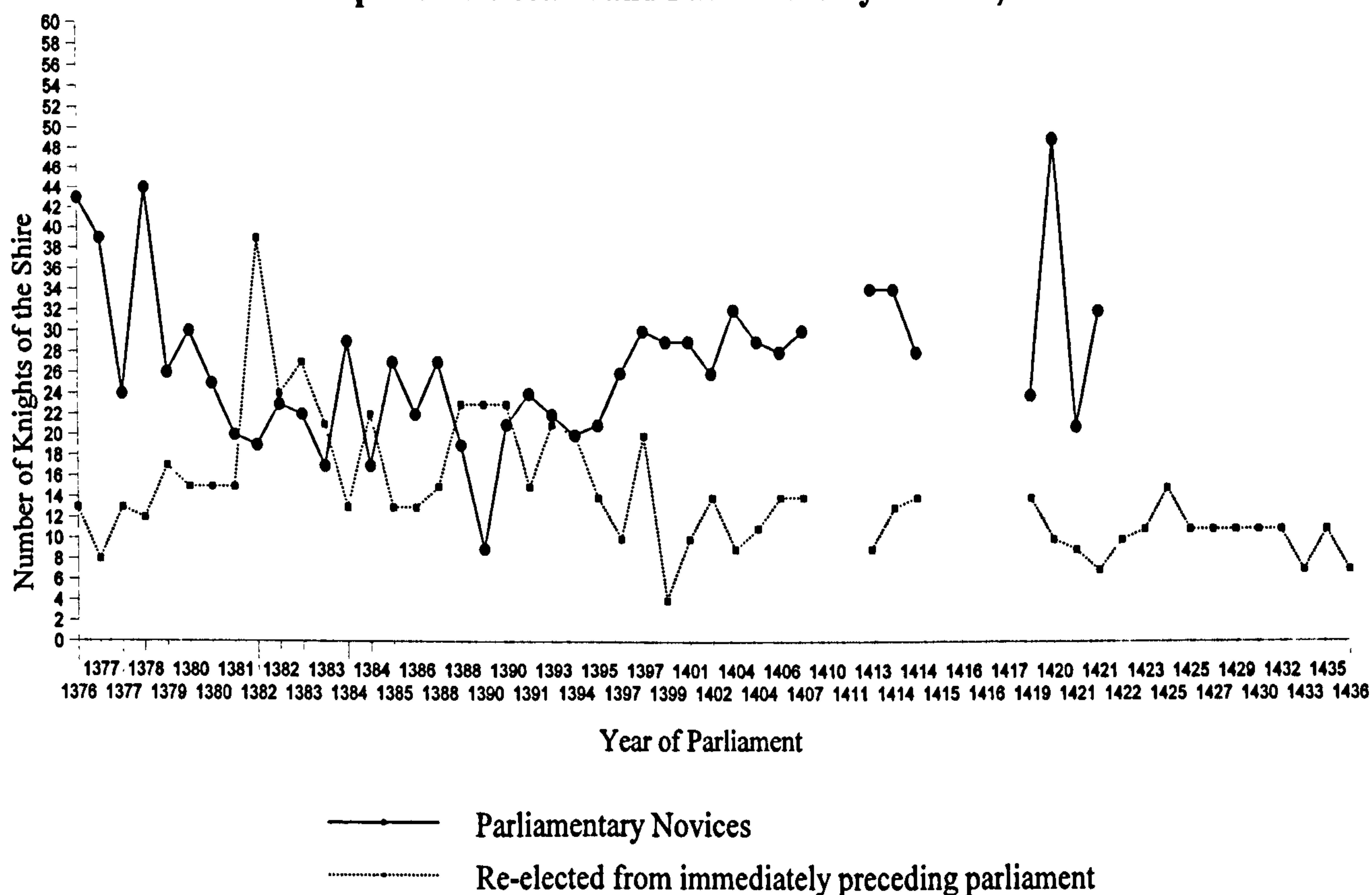
J.R. Maddicott has suggested that there was a link between the amount of taxation parliament granted and the readiness of county communities to re-elect the knights of the shire who had actually made the grant.⁸³ He argues that in the 1340s, when taxation was high, county communities were relatively reluctant to 'reward' their representatives with re-election, but in the 1360s, when there was a ten-year respite from direct taxation, the incidence

⁸¹ The nature of the Commons' grievances has been analysed and discussed in most detail by Brown, 'Commons and Council', *passim*.

⁸² For example, the Good Parliament in 1376, the period of Appellant Rule in which the Commons were fully implicated, and the parliament of 1450; see Holmes, *Good Parliament*; Saul, *Richard II*, esp. pp.148-204; R.A. Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI: the Exercise of Royal Authority, 1422-1461* (London, 1981), esp. pp.308-10.

⁸³ Maddicott, 'Parliament and the Constituencies', pp.61-87, see pp.82-3. He uses the statistics in K.L. Wood-Legh, 'The Knights' Attendance in the Parliaments of Edward III', *E.H.R.*, xlv (1931), 398-413, pp.406-7.

Graph 2: Re-election and Parliamentary Novices, 1376-1436



of re-election increased.⁸⁴ The evidence contained in Graph 2, which covers the period between 1369 and 1421,⁸⁵ suggests that for this later period there was not in fact any discernible relationship between re-election and taxation. For example, the 1390s was the nearest equivalent decade to the 1360s in the sense that it too witnessed a significant decrease in the amount of taxation that parliament was granting, yet there was no corresponding increase in the number of MPs re-elected, and if anything, the trend was in the opposite direction.⁸⁶ Similarly, in the first half of Richard II's reign, taxation was being granted by the Commons at one of the highest levels in the late Middle Ages but the re-election of knights of the shire, far

⁸⁴ 'Re-election' in this context, and in the context of the following discussion, means individuals who were returned to parliament having attended the *immediately preceding assembly*.

⁸⁵ The figures arrived at in this graph are derived from Appendix 1. Re-election in Richard II's reign has already been investigated by N.B. Lewis in his article 'Re-election to Parliament in the Reign of Richard II', *E.H.R.*, xlviii (1933), 364-94, p.366, although there are discrepancies between his figures and mine. I have also incorporated the figures for re-election up to the parliament of 1436 provided by Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*, p.39. An analysis of re-election in the period between 1386 and 1421 is provided in Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, Appendices D1 and D2 but it does not distinguish between knights and burgesses.

⁸⁶ I would therefore disagree with the interpretation of Lewis made by W.M. Ormrod, 'Agenda for legislation, 1322-c.1340', *E.H.R.*, cv (1990), 1-33, p.18, note 3.

from diminishing, actually increased and it was not until the eighth parliament of the reign - the assembly of October 1382 - that the figure fell. If the patterns of re-election did register the reaction of county communities to the imposition of heavy taxation, one would expect there to have been a fairly severe response following the grant of the poll tax in November 1380 - arguably one of the most exacting and certainly the most disastrous of all the late medieval subsidies to be levied. Yet, in the following parliament of 1381, the number of re-elected knights of the shire remained unchanged. Furthermore, the parliament of January 1404 granted an income tax which would have directly affected the landowning classes involved in the election process, but the incidence of re-election, though diminutive in any case, nevertheless increased in the following parliament of October 1404. Conversely, in February 1383 and November 1390 no direct taxation was levied yet, in these cases, the levels of re-election actually fell quite significantly.

It is possible that this discrepancy between the findings of Maddicott and the results contained in Graph 2 indicates that by the late fourteenth century an important shift had occurred in local attitudes to the imposition of taxation. Whereas in the middle decades of the century there may still have been a degree of resentment in the localities when heavy taxation was voted by parliament, by the 1370s the apparent absence of the connection between grants and re-election may have indicated a resignation and acceptance that subsidies would be levied no matter who was returned to parliament. In other words, by the time of Richard II's reign the principle of *plena potestas* not only allowed MPs a free hand to bind the wider community to the decisions that were made at parliament, but it also allowed them to make these decisions without fear of recrimination.⁸⁷ This development may have been another factor which supports the hypothesis advanced by G.L. Harriss about the changing nature of parliament after the Black Death; local political communities were no longer intent on urging their representatives to resist taxation to the best of their ability, but in a new political climate in which parliament increasingly focussed the interests of a united proprietary class, MPs travelled to the centre with a far greater understanding that taxation was a necessary and quite legitimate part of the late medieval constitution.⁸⁸ Their concern was no longer to resist the actual principle of direct taxation but rather to ensure that, having been levied, it was then spent on the areas for which

⁸⁷ For a discussion of this principle see J.G. Edwards, 'The *Plena Potestas* of English Parliamentary Representation', in F.M. Powicke, ed., *Oxford Essays in Medieval History presented to H.E. Salter* (Oxford, 1934), pp.141-54, repr. in Fryde and Miller, eds., *Historical Studies*, i, pp.136-49; G. Post, *Studies in Medieval Thought: Public Law and the State, 1100-1322* (Princeton, N.J., 1964), pp.92-102, 108-27.

⁸⁸ G.L. Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance in Medieval Parliament to 1369* (Oxford, 1975), pp.516-7.

it had been intended.⁸⁹ Arguably, such an agenda was far less likely to have had an impact on the eligibility of an individual for re-election.

The patterns of re-election at parliament thus appear to have had little relevance to the specific issue of taxation; but according to N.B. Lewis, who looked closely at the nature of parliamentary attendance under Richard II, it actually had very little bearing on the activity and proceedings of parliament as a whole.⁹⁰ He stated that ‘...re-election and repeated election were neither greatly valued nor of very much influence at the end of the fourteenth century’.⁹¹ To the first of these assertions, that re-election was not valued by contemporaries, a handful of cases prove the exception to Lewis’s rule. Ironically, Lewis himself pointed out the case of May 1382 when the crown made a point of issuing writs of summons requesting sheriffs to return to parliament men who had been present in the previous assembly of 1381.⁹² There can be little doubt that this was an expediency intended to aid the efficient and speedy dispatch of business in the May parliament, which had met primarily to discuss how the grant of the previous assembly should be spent.⁹³ Graph 2 shows the extent to which this request was complied with: the number of re-elected knights in this assembly soared to no fewer than thirty-nine individuals, over half the total number present altogether and by far the greatest number of the period. From the perspective of the Commons there are hints that re-election was of considerable importance at the end of this decade, in the two parliaments of 1390. The first of these, in January, was particularly exceptional, for not only was there an extremely respectable number of re-elected shire knights present, but the number of parliamentary novices was also at an all-time low. This meant that parliamentary experience in general was almost universal amongst the elected knights: only nine of their number had never before been to an assembly. The most likely explanation for this situation is that county communities had been eager to send to parliament their most experienced and knowledgeable representatives because in the previous parliament, held at Cambridge in 1388, the king had openly promised that the issue of liveries and maintenance would be addressed and remedied in the following assembly; the pattern of election probably reflected a widespread desire in the shires for the Commons to be as well

⁸⁹ This point has recently been made by C. Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution in England, c.1437-1509* (Cambridge, 1997), p.32.

⁹⁰ Lewis, ‘Re-election to Parliament’, p.394.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp.386-8.

⁹³ *RP.* iii. 122.3.

qualified as possible for the expected 'showdown' with the Lords in the forthcoming session.⁹⁴

The assemblies of 1378 and 1420 also reveal noticeable aberrations within the broader picture. On these occasions significant numbers of parliamentary novices were returned. It is, of course, possible to read too much into statistics, especially since the election of large numbers of novices appears to have been fairly standard practice at the end of Edward III's reign, but it is worth speculating that the high numbers in these two parliaments were linked to the fact that neither assembly made a grant of direct taxation. This hypothesis becomes more plausible when it is considered that, almost certainly in 1378 and most probably in 1420, it was known *at the time of election* that the forthcoming assembly would not be considering a direct subsidy.⁹⁵ Could the predominance of novice attenders at these two parliaments indicate that county communities were less concerned to send parliamentary veterans - or parliamentary veterans themselves were less motivated to attend - at times when direct taxation was not to be foremost on the parliamentary agenda? Conversely, parliamentary experience may well have gained an added premium when taxation *was* due to be granted and when variables, such as the level at which it was to be levied and the conditions that were to be attached, required discussion and familiarity with procedure and precedents. In this connection it is interesting to see how the numbers of novices dropped dramatically in the parliament of May 1421 when taxation was, apparently, granted.⁹⁶

The second of Lewis's assertions was that re-election and parliamentary experience in general had very little bearing on what was actually transacted during parliament; that there was no obvious relationship between the continuity of parliamentary membership and the continuity of parliamentary business. This is a particularly difficult aspect of the late medieval parliament to measure. Since we do not know the identity of the MPs who proposed subjects in the Commons we cannot know whether it required twenty, ten or even just one MP to be returned to parliament consecutively for an issue to be pursued from one assembly to the next. Indeed, taken to an extreme it may not even have required *any* re-elected MPs for the same subject to be raised again and again, for certain issues may have formed part of a much

⁹⁴ Tuck, 'Cambridge Parliament', p.235; Storey, 'Liveries and Commission of the Peace', p.135; Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, p.136; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.200-1.

⁹⁵ In October 1377, two tenths and fifteenths had been granted which still, in theory, had a year to run when the parliament of 1378 met. In 1420, Henry V had made a point of calling parliament without requesting a grant from it; G.L. Harriss, 'The Management of Parliament', in *idem*, ed. *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (Oxford, 1985), p.149-50.

⁹⁶ Harriss argues that the Commons made an unrecorded and deferred grant in this assembly; *ibid.*, p.151. It should be pointed out, in the light of discussion later on, that the return of experienced men could equally have been due to the return of the king in parliament after his prolonged absence abroad; see below, pp.136-7.

broader and more inclusive discourse which most members of the gentry or urban élites could participate in without necessarily having attended parliament previously. Lewis analysed the subject on a short-term basis by attempting to identify continuity of business in selected parliaments where the incidence of re-election was high. The inconsistencies of his findings led to his essentially negative conclusion. If, however, we look at the relationship on a longer-term basis the inconsistencies disappear and a pattern of sorts emerges.

Graph 2 shows that in the 1380s and first part of the 1390s, the proportion of parliamentary novices decreased noticeably whilst the number of re-elected members generally grew. On average, between January 1380 and November 1390, a remarkable 53 knights of the shire, almost three quarters of those actually attending, had parliamentary experience. This compares with an average figure of 39 between 1371 and 1379, 44 between 1361 and 1369 and 45 between 1399 and 1407.⁹⁷ The 1380s was, in fact, the first prolonged period in parliament's history where the number of parliamentary novices was frequently less than the number of parliamentary re-elections.⁹⁸ We should not read anything into this other than the fact that parliament was being summoned on a far more regular and frequent basis than it had been hitherto. Even so, it is difficult to believe that the increase in parliamentary experience did not have at least some effect on the nature of the Commons' activity in these years, especially as this connection has been demonstrated in an earlier period - in the 1320s - when levels of experience were not nearly so consistently high.⁹⁹ It is tempting, for example, to argue that the ability of the Commons to sustain the campaign against what they perceived to be the mismanagement of royal finances and the corruption of royal officials - a campaign waged for the most part between 1377 and the late 1380s - was to some extent bolstered by the accumulated knowledge and experience of the knights in these assemblies.¹⁰⁰ (Equally, though, it could be argued that the outspokenness of the Lower House was due to the king's minority and the vacuum of power at the centre).

A stronger case, however, can be made out of the subject matter of the common petitions of this period, for (more than any other in the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries)

⁹⁷ For the earlier periods, see Wood-Legh, 'The Knight's Attendance', Table I, cols. C & D.

⁹⁸ For Edward I and II, see J.G. Edwards, 'The Personnel of the Commons in Parliament under Edward I and Edward II', in A.G. Little and F.M. Powicke, eds., *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Thomas Frederick Tout* (Manchester, 1925), ch.xvi, repr. in Fryde and Miller, *Historical Studies*, i. pp.150-67, see Table A, cols. 3 & 4. For Edward III, see Wood-Legh, 'The Knight's Attendance', Table I, cols. C & D.

⁹⁹ Ormrod, 'Agenda for Legislation', pp.17-24.

¹⁰⁰ See Tuck, *Richard II*, pp.33-57; Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, esp. pp.121-30

this short span of years saw a remarkable number of 'multiple agendas' being doggedly pursued by the Commons from one parliament to the next. Even allowing for a broad based awareness of these subjects outside parliament it is hard to believe that there was not some link connecting their unusual recurrence with the equally unusual levels of parliamentary experience at this time. One of the most important and significant of these campaigns was against the excesses of livery and maintenance which gained particular momentum after the Peasants' Revolt in 1381. Maddicott states that '...the Commons returned to...[this] same subject, often with more specific requests, in almost all the Parliaments of the mid-1380s' and, at least in relation to the retaining of the king's justices, he further suggests that this campaign was not without some success.¹⁰¹ Given-Wilson has also demonstrated that the on-going struggle of the Commons to regulate the extent and scope of royal purveyance became particularly vigorous during the period between 1377 and the late 1380s.¹⁰² The same could also be said of the concerns of the Commons to restrict the rights and freedoms of foreigners, particularly in relation to their ability to acquire benefices.¹⁰³ Other issues frequently cropping up at this time included persistent attempts to ensure the free passage of merchandise on rivers (an agenda instigated, perhaps, by the burgesses in parliament),¹⁰⁴ and also a concern to ensure that the crown appoint men of sufficient wealth and status as sheriffs in the localities and that this office was held for no more than one consecutive year.¹⁰⁵ None of the matters presented by the Commons in the 1380s was unique to that one decade, but what marked this period out was that such issues were pursued with more vigour, more regularity and more consistency than at virtually any other time in the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries.

All this, of course, presupposes that the Commons were actually responsible for compiling common petitions in the first place. It goes without saying that it is no good attempting to make links between patterns of attendance and the business of parliament when a large proportion of the latter, at least in terms of the common petitions, were the product of

¹⁰¹ *RP*. iii. 23.92, 83.38, 265.27, 307.31; *Westminster Chronicle*, pp.40-1. For particular discussion of this subject in the 1380s see J.R. Maddicott, 'Law and Lordship: Royal Justices as Retainer in Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century England', *P&P Supplement*, iv (1978), esp. pp.61-69; Bean, *From Lord to Patron*, pp.202-8; Saul, 'The Commons and Abolition of Badges', *passim*.

¹⁰² *RP*. iii. 15.46; 26.116; 47.73; 100-1.17; 104.34; 115.76; 146.15; 158.30; 200.16; 213.31. See also C. Given-Wilson, 'Purveyance for the Royal Household, 1362-1413', *B.I.H.R.*, lvi (1983), 145-163; *idem*, *The Royal Household*, pp.111-113.

¹⁰³ *RP*. iii. 19.67, 20.77, 82.37, 95.44, 117.91, 138.31, 141.51, 162.49, 162.54, 221.21. Those petitions against aliens were: *RP*. iii. 19.68, 21.91, 64.40, 96.46, 221.22, 246.26.

¹⁰⁴ *RP*. ii. 305.18, 346.134; iii. 46.65, 282.34, 371.84, 438.122, 475.97, 499.51, 641.58; iv. 8.21, 114.19, 132.16.

¹⁰⁵ *RP*. ii. 308.39, 313.33, 334.74; iii. 22.89, 96.47, 173.23, 201.25, 210.18, 280.18, 339.13, 419.30; iv. 10.28, 148.36.

the localities and were merely forwarded by the knights and burgesses at the centre. It is quite true that originally this *is* how the common petition had come to be presented.¹⁰⁶ In the early fourteenth century it was the intervention of chancery clerks, who began to identify local petitions which pertained to the common interest, which represented the first stage in the development of the common petition. At this point such petitions really were, for the most part, the products of the localities - hence the now well established truism that 'common' denoted the content of the petition rather than its point of origin.¹⁰⁷ Subsequently, however, the Commons took control of the procedure with the result that the process became muddled; whilst some petitions continued being forwarded from the localities others were being drafted by the knights and burgesses themselves *during* the parliamentary session. Thus, Chrimes was able to use inverted commas when describing the 'Commons' petition of 1414, and Harriss similarly referred to the 'Commons' petitions of 1340-1¹⁰⁸ - these were petitions produced by the parliamentary Commons themselves. The problem, however, lies in being able to identify the balance between the input of the locality and the input of the centre. If anything, the tendency has been to stress the productivity of the former, whilst assigning to the Commons little more than an intermediary rôle. Rayner and Richardson and Sayles were noticeably reluctant to associate the common petition with the Commons themselves, and to some extent more recent historians have followed suit.¹⁰⁹

The parliament of January 1390 appears to offer some clarification on this point. During the assembly thirty-five common petitions were presented and duly recorded on the parliament roll. Uniquely, after the twenty-first petition a short phrase, repeating almost verbatim the words used at the beginning of the petitions, was inserted. It read: 'Plese a tres excellent & tres redoute S[i]r[e] le Roy. En relievement & supportation de ses povres

¹⁰⁶ For what follows see Myers, 'Parliamentary Petitions', pp.1-44; D. Rayner, 'The Forms and Machinery of the "Common Petition" in the Fourteenth Century', *E.H.R.*, lvi (1941), 198-233, 549-70; G.L. Haskins, 'Three Early Petitions of the Commonalty', *Speculum*, xii (1937), 314-18; Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III*, p.61; and *idem*, 'Agenda for Legislation', 1-30.

¹⁰⁷ For example, see Myers, 'Parliamentary Petitions', pp.23-32; S.B. Chrimes, *English Constitutional Ideas in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1936), pp.244-5; Rayner, 'Forms and Machinery', pp.204-5.

¹⁰⁸ Chrimes, *English Constitutional Ideas*, p.159; G.L. Harriss, 'The Commons' Petitions of 1340', *E.H.R.*, cccix (1963), 625-54.

¹⁰⁹ Rayner, 'The Forms and Machinery', pp.567-70; H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, 'The Parliaments of Edward III', *B.I.H.R.*, viii (1930), 65-77, and ix (1931), 1-18, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament*, ch. xxi, see pp.7-12. For the direction taken by subsequent historiography, see J.G. Edwards, *The Second Century of the English Parliament* (Oxford, 1979), p.45, note 3. Note the description by G.L. Harriss of the Commons as '...the *vehicle* for petitions [my italics]'; 'The Medieval Parliament', Review Article, *Parliamentary History*, xiii (1994), 206-26, p.210.

Communes, granter les Petitions souz escriptz'.¹¹⁰ This was no oversight or scribal error on the part of the clerk of parliament, but appears to have been deliberately inserted to mark a break between 'central' and 'local' common petitions. For example, the fourteen petitions following the passage could all quite conceivably have originated from particular communities or interest groups outside parliament. They fall into two groups. On the one hand there were half a dozen examples which specifically mentioned the geographical region to which the grievance pertained: thus, one petition was from '...the poor merchants and craftsmen of cloth in the county of Norfolk'; one was from '...the poor men of the town of Gosford'; another concerned the boundaries of Lincolnshire; one made an appeal on the behalf of the '[p]oor lieges of the counties of Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmorland'; whilst another involved the counties in the Welsh Marches seeking legislation against the incursions of the Welsh.¹¹¹ On the other hand, the remaining petitions in this 'local' group consisted, for the most part, of supplications about such specialised and particular economic issues as to make it highly likely indeed that they were the products of small minority mercantile interests working parliament for their own ends. These included a petition that shoemakers should not be tanners of leather; that cloths of Ray should be sold at their accustomed length and breadth; and that the Statute of Weights and Measures should be held and guarded.¹¹²

The substance of the petitions in the group preceding the phrase was discernibly different. For one thing, there are no references to specific regions or communities and there is not the same sort of specialisation in economic issues that can be found in the latter examples. Economic issues do crop up but they were broad and more inclusive concerns such as a request for the removal of the Wool Staple to Calais, that the Statute of Labourers should be more effectively enforced, and an allegation of corruption against the Clerk of the Market of the Household.¹¹³ In general, they were matters one could well imagine being discussed by the Commons gathered in the Lower House before then being drafted as formal written supplications. This process probably accounts for many of the other examples in the group. These include: two petitions against the abuse of livery and maintenance; a request that the king should have a maximum of twenty-four sergeants-at-arms serving him; that the ordinances

¹¹⁰ *RP.* iii. 270.45. A comparison with the original parliament roll confirms that the editors of the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* accurately reproduced what the clerk of parliament wrote down; see C 65/49 membrane 3.

¹¹¹ *RP.* iii. 270.46, 271.47, 51, 272.54, 56.

¹¹² *RP.* iii. 271.48, 49, 272.52.

¹¹³ *RP.* iii. 268.37, 268.38, 267.35.

touching the jurisdiction of the Steward and Marshal of the Household be kept; that the chancellor should not make an ordinance which infringed the common law without the assent of parliament; that charters of pardon needed closer supervision, having been granted too easily in the past; and that the Pope should not send into England any sentence or excommunication.¹¹⁴

The contrast between the two groups is further highlighted by the apparent repetition in the first set of petitions of the supplication concerning weights and measures.¹¹⁵ Whereas the 'local' petition was short and relatively unsophisticated, the 'central' petition was far longer and more elaborate, containing a reference to Magna Carta and other 'Ordenances & Estatutz' as well as a request for an exemption for the county of Lancaster. Arguably, these were details which could only have been incorporated after discussion and investigation at the centre. Interestingly, whilst the 'local' petition met with a curious and somewhat evasive response from the crown, the 'central' petition was accepted and repeated word for word in a resulting statute.¹¹⁶ Indeed, it is a comment, perhaps, on the respective status of these two types of common petition that out of the twenty-four statutes enacted in this parliament no fewer than fourteen derived from 'central' common petitions and just six originated from 'local' common petitions (of the remaining four, three were 'official' statutes and one derived from an enrolled private petition from the Bishop of Lincoln).¹¹⁷

The parliament of January 1390 demonstrates that a high proportion of common petitions could quite feasibly have been the product of the Commons themselves acting in concert at the centre. This provides firm evidence for the rôle of parliament in creating an opportunity for local men to come together at the 'centre' in order to articulate common grievances and work out common solutions via formal written supplications to the crown. The unusual pattern of attendance in January 1390 may well have contributed to the vigorous activity of the Commons during this session, but we should not assume that the high output of 'central' common petitions was untypical of parliament as a whole. Arguably, the pendulum has swung too far towards underestimating the level of input the Commons had in common petitions, and in this sense patterns of attendance in general could, indeed, have had an impact

¹¹⁴ *RP.* iii. 265.27, 266.29, 265.28, 267.34, 266.30, 268.36, 270.44.

¹¹⁵ *RP.* iii. 270.42.

¹¹⁶ *SR.* ii. 63.ix.

¹¹⁷ See *SR.* ii. 61-75. The statutes from 'central' petitions were: ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, viii, ix, xvi, xvii and the four statutes between pp.68-75. The statutes from 'local' common petitions were: i, x, xi, xii, xiii and xiv. The 'official' statutes were: xv, xix and xx. The statute derived from a private petition was xviii.

on the tone and consistency of the Commons' agenda from one parliament to the next. As to the petitions that originated in the localities, their presentation as *common* petitions suggests the petitioners had successfully persuaded the Lower House to adopt and forward their supplications in the name of the commonalty as a whole. As we shall see in chapter 6, the content of many 'local' common petitions was virtually identical to ordinary private petitions; this suggests that the critical factor in achieving their common status was not, in fact, their content (which in many cases, as we have seen, was very specialised) but was instead dependent on the lobbying power which could be brought to bear in the Lower House. To this extent our definition of what a 'common petition' was ought perhaps to undergo further refinement from the Myers/Rayner line; it was not simply content, but also a petition's appeal to the Lower House which determined its presentation in this particular form.

iv) OFFICE-HOLDING AND STATUS

The extent to which MPs held local offices has been discussed in the constituency surveys contained within the History of Parliament Trust volumes.¹¹⁸ In each of the 135 constituencies covered, figures are provided showing how many of the MPs between 1386 and 1421 either served as justices of the peace and sheriffs or were appointed on various other *ad hoc* commissions. This information is invaluable for the comparisons which can be made between patterns of office-holding in constituencies across the kingdom. It also sheds valuable light on how office-holding changed within the relevant constituency across the period covered by the volumes. Nevertheless, gaps still remain in our understanding of the relationship between attendance at parliament and other local offices.¹¹⁹ In particular, whilst we now have a breakdown of office-holding on a constituency level, there are still questions to be asked about the experience of MPs from the perspective of parliament itself. That is, how does the pattern of office-holding break down in terms of a single session of parliament when all the representatives of these constituencies came together? What was the cumulative level of experience the MPs brought with them to parliament, and did this change over time? Moreover, the idea that there existed a *cursus honorum* in the sequence with which men took up their offices, whilst occasionally touched on in the context of gentry studies, has never received

¹¹⁸ Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i.

¹¹⁹ These limitations were hinted at by Harriss in his review of the volumes when he stated that '...readers of these surveys will have to work hard to extract any overall conclusions...'; 'The Medieval Parliament', p.214.

systematic and broad-ranging analysis on a national level. Tables 3 and 4 summarise the results of an investigation which attempts to shed more light on the issues raised by these questions.

Table 3 indicates the relationship between parliamentary representation and appointments to the shrievalty. Since the ordinance of 1372 forbade the election of a sheriff as a knight of the shire during his term of office¹²⁰ - a measure which appears for the most part to have been adhered to¹²¹ - this table uses as its criterion whether or not a shire knight was a sheriff at any time before or after the first day of the parliament to which he had been elected. On average, almost exactly a third (33.4 per cent) of the returns made in the period between 1377 and 1421 saw the election of individuals who had served as a sheriff at some point previously. By any standards this was more than a respectable figure and indicates that parliament normally contained a very solid body of men who had occupied the most senior administrative position in the locality and had faced all the responsibilities and difficulties which went with it. From a different perspective, the presence of so many 'ex-sheriffs' in parliament also meant that a significant number of shire knights had been specifically chosen by the crown in the past to act as its principal administrative agents in the localities; if nothing else, this implied that the former would not have been unfamiliar to the departments of central government and even the king and council themselves. As regards a possible *cursus honorum*, this can be worked out by combining the first and third categories in Table 3 (ie. 'sheriff in the past, *after* first return as MP' and 'sheriff in the future') and comparing them with the second category (ie. 'sheriff in the past, *before* first return as MP'). Again, if we measure this in terms of returns, as distinct from knights of the shire - many of whom obviously attended parliament more than once - a fairly conclusive picture emerges. On average, almost 39 per cent conformed to the sequence whereby parliamentary attendance preceded appointments to the shrievalty, compared to 15 per cent in which individuals were appointed as sheriff before their first parliament. This pattern confirms the observations made in the context of gentry studies that normally men were elected *first* as MPs and then appointed *subsequently* as sheriffs.¹²²

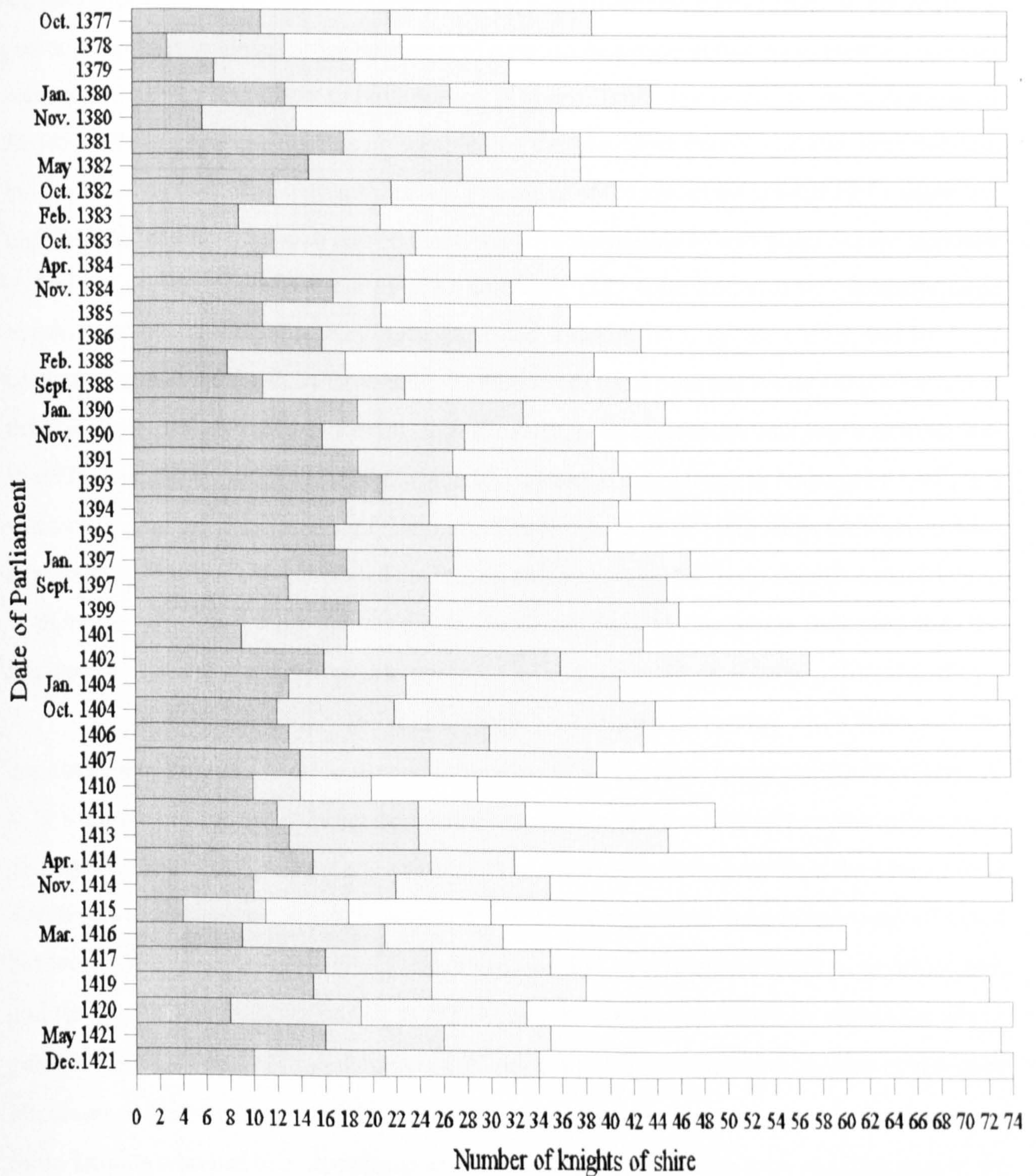
There are one or two interesting aberrations to the general picture which deserve comment. Firstly, the parliaments of 1378 and 1420 saw some of the lowest numbers of ex-sheriffs elected to parliament between 1377 and 1421 (barring those whose returns are

¹²⁰ RP. iii. 310.13.

¹²¹ Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, Appendix B4.

¹²² For example, see Payling, *Political Society*, p.114; N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981), pp.127-8.

Table 3: Sheriffs and Knights of the Shire, 1377-1421



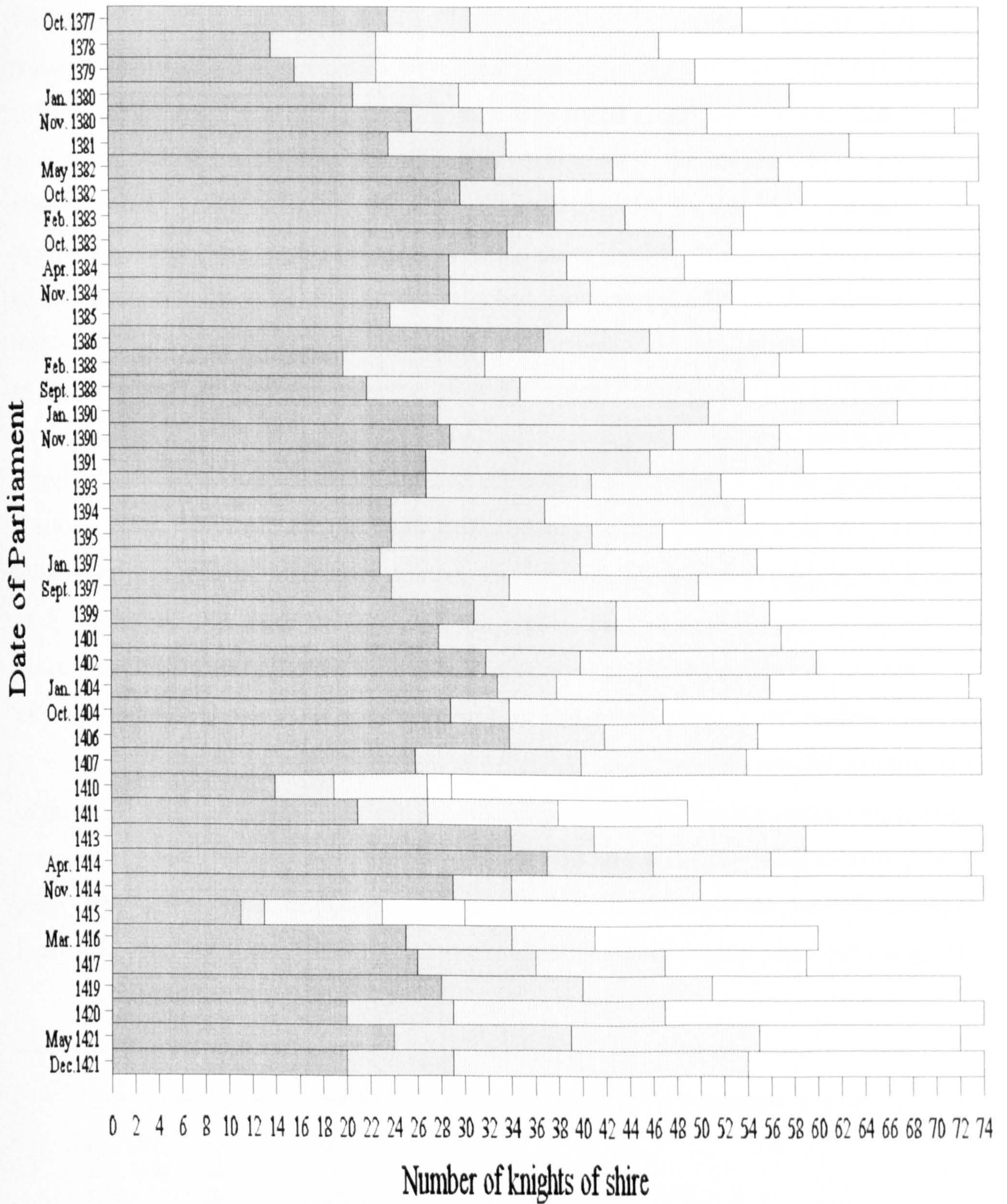
- Sheriff in the Past, after return as MP
- Sheriff in the Past, before return as MP
- Sheriff in the Future
- Never Sheriff

substantially incomplete). The fact that these parliaments also coincided with almost the highest turnout of parliamentary novices suggests that the two were somehow linked. In particular, it provides further evidence for the existence of a *cursus honorum* in that parliamentary novices were evidently far less likely to have served as sheriff (and *vice versa*, as the parliament of January 1390 demonstrates). It is noticeable that the Merciless Parliament also attracted less ex-sheriffs than the norm; perhaps this was indicative of the anti-court agenda of the assembly and the tendency for men who had connections with the regime to stay away. At the opposite end of the scale, the parliaments of 1381 and May 1382 were attended by unusually large numbers of ex-sheriffs; this may have indicated a desire both by the crown and by local communities to send the more experienced members of local political society to parliament in the aftermath of the Peasants' Revolt. Significantly, both assemblies saw twice as many ex-sheriffs returned than the parliament which had agreed to the poll-tax in November 1380; this was a comparatively inexperienced assembly. Finally, the peak of 1402 offers the least obvious explanation. However, since most of the individuals in question had been sheriffs under Richard II, it is possible that their attendance in large numbers at this point indicated that the Lancastrian regime was beginning to open out to broader sections of local political society.

Table 4 shows the relationship between parliamentary attendance and the commissions of the peace. It is arranged differently to the previous table because JPs *were* able to be returned to parliament during their service on the commissions. Therefore, the information displayed shows: firstly, how many knights of the shire were serving as JPs at the time of their attendance at parliament; secondly, how many had been appointed to a commission in the past but were not serving at the time of their return; thirdly, how many were yet to be appointed; and finally, how many never served as JPs. Again, the proportions are high: across the whole period from 1377 to 1421, an average of 37 per cent of the returns saw knights of the shire attending parliament who were *concurrently* serving as JPs. If we add to this the returns of those knights who had been appointed as JPs sometime in the past, a total of 52 per cent of the returns accounted for knights who had had some experience on the commissions of the peace. Interestingly, the fluctuations in this table shadow fairly closely the fluctuations in Table 3; the parliaments of 1378, February 1388 and 1420 saw relatively small numbers of JPs or ex-JPs being returned to parliament, whereas there were higher numbers in the parliaments following the Peasants' Revolt as well as in the early 1390s and early 1400s.

The question of *when* JPs were appointed in relation to their first election to

Table 4: JPs in Parliament, 1377-1421



JP during parliament
 JP in the past, and possibly in the future
 JP in the future
 Never served as a JP

parliament cannot be answered just with the information contained in Table 4 but requires further analysis of its first two categories. This has been done taking as a representative sample the eight parliaments that met in the 1390s. It has been calculated that 32 per cent of the returns to these parliaments were of knights of the shire who attended parliament before first serving as JPs.¹²³ Combined with the returns of knights yet to serve on the commission (18 per cent), almost exactly a total of 50 per cent of the returns accounted for knights of the shire who attended parliament first *before* being appointed to a commission of the peace. Just 25 per cent of the returns accounted for shire knights who had first served as a JP. In other words there is very clear evidence of a *cursus honorum* in which, like the sheriffs, service on the commissions of the peace normally *followed* an election to parliament.¹²⁴ Given the results of both these surveys it is quite possible, as both Payling and Saul have suggested, that sessions of parliament provided central government with an opportunity to become familiar with potential candidates for local office.¹²⁵ If this were the case it raises interesting questions about the motivation of some MPs in seeking parliamentary election. There is certainly enough to suggest that in some cases attendance at parliament may simply have represented a means to a greater end; that an election presented the opportunity for an individual to establish connections and to 'network' at the centre with a view to securing a lucrative or prestigious office in the locality.

Taken together, the extent to which MPs were appointed to the commissions of the peace and the shrievalty, as well as to the escheatorship (which accounted for a smaller yet equally consistent minority of knights), illustrated how relatively compact the circle of gentry was that occupied the principal offices in the localities. More to the point, the extent of local office-holding highlighted the vast amount of political and administrative knowledge that

| ¹²³ | MP then JP | JP then MP | JP in future | Never JP | Total Number of Returns |
|----------------|------------|------------|--------------|----------|-------------------------|
| Jan. 1390 | 29 | 22 | 16 | 7 | 74 |
| Nov. 1390 | 24 | 24 | 9 | 17 | " |
| 1391 | 28 | 20 | 13 | 13 | " |
| 1393 | 24 | 17 | 11 | 22 | " |
| 1394 | 20 | 17 | 16 | 21 | " |
| 1395 | 21 | 19 | 6 | 28 | " |
| Jan. 1397 | 24 | 14 | 16 | 20 | " |
| Sept. 1397 | 20 | 13 | 16 | 25 | " |
| | — | — | — | — | — |
| total | 190 | 146 | 103 | 153 | 592 |
| % | 32% | 25% | 18% | 25% | 100% |

¹²⁴ This was also the pattern found by Payling, *Political Society*, p.115. See also J.S. Roskell, 'The Parliamentary Representation of Lincolnshire During the Reigns of Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V', *Nottinghamshire Medieval Studies*, iii (1959), 53-77, repr. in *idem, Parliament and Politics*, i, ch.v, p.61.

¹²⁵ Payling, *Political Society*, p.114; Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, p.128.

the Lower House contained during a meeting of the parliamentary Commons.¹²⁶ This, it should be pointed out, was in addition to the other miscellaneous offices which a large proportion of MPs held and which are indicated in Appendix 1. Clearly, parliament was not the occasion for a meeting between the governors (in the Lords) and the governed (in the Commons), for this was truly a gathering of the political community in which an extremely high proportion of its members (in both Houses) were linked by a common participation in the broader governance of the realm.

Turning now to the status of the knights of the shire, it is evident that during Henry V's reign, if not earlier, the type of men who were being elected for the counties underwent a marked and decisive change. G.L. Harriss has highlighted the decrease in numbers of belted knights being returned to parliament in this period, combined with a noticeable increase in the numbers of lawyers attending.¹²⁷ The extent of this shift can be seen in Graph 3, which shows that in 1386 a clear majority of the knights of the shire were knights by rank whereas there was only a negligible number of lawyers present. As the period progresses, however, the number of belted knights can clearly be seen to decline whilst after 1406 the number of lawyers began to rise. By 1420, the latter outnumbered the former for the first time in the period. The History of Parliament volumes also indicate a dramatic increase, after 1399, in the number of individuals who graduated from representing borough constituencies to being returned by shire constituencies; between 1380 and 1399 there were just ten instances, whereas between 1400 and 1420 there were no fewer than forty.¹²⁸ This suggested that, if there had ever been a neat social divide between the gentry representing counties and townsmen representing boroughs, the blurring of this division accelerated dramatically at the beginning of the fifteenth century. All this, together with the attendance of a greater proportion of parliamentary novices (see Graph 2) leads to the unmistakable conclusion that by the second decade of the fifteenth century there was, as Harriss puts it, '...an opening up of parliament to a wider class'.¹²⁹

Whilst a reluctance by individuals to take up knighthood may have accounted for some of this change,¹³⁰ there must have been more immediate factors at play to have produced such a relatively sudden transformation. In seeking to identify these shorter-term

¹²⁶ See also the discussion by Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*, pp.84-88.

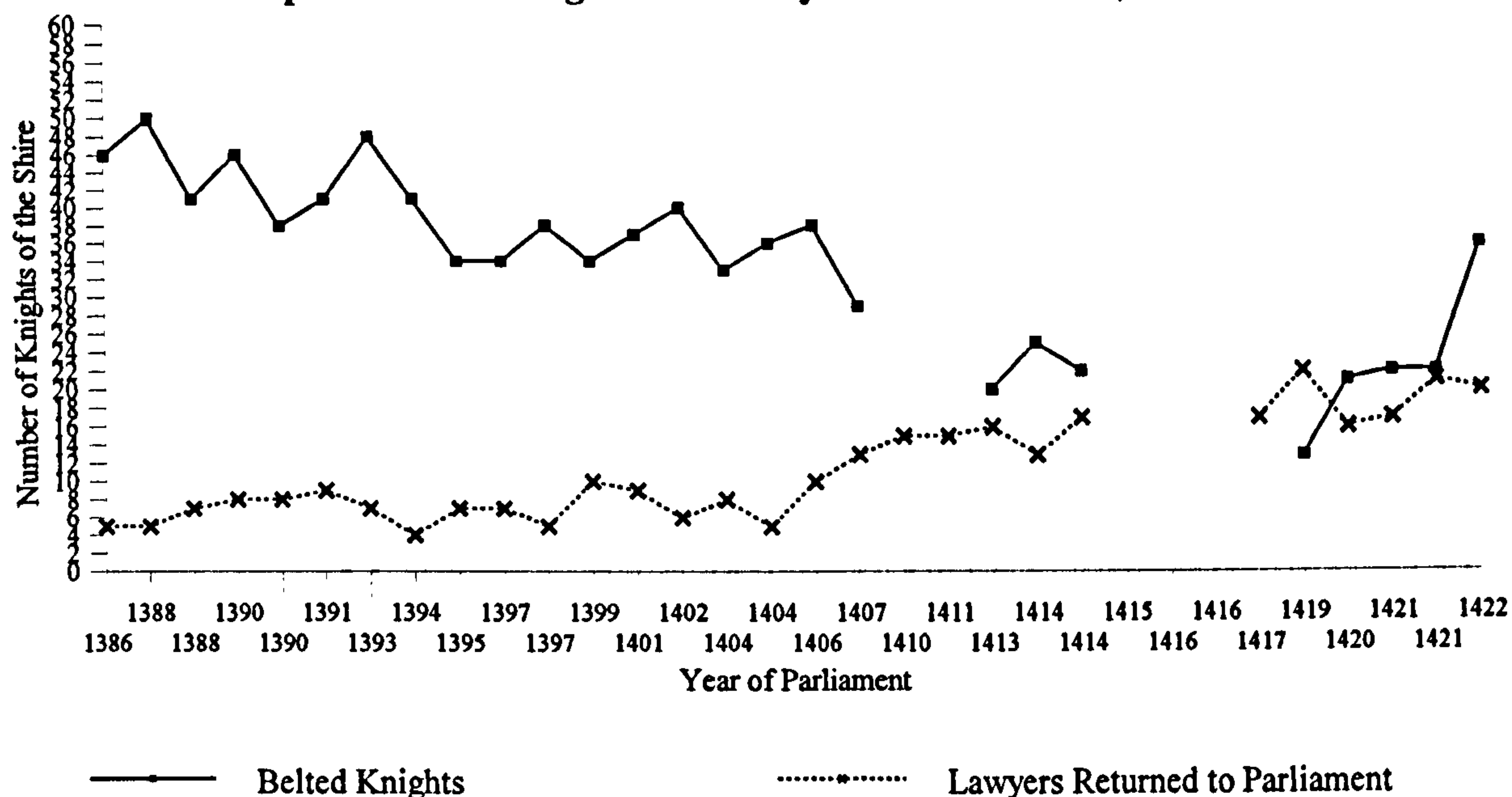
¹²⁷ Harriss, 'The Medieval Parliament', pp.215-6.

¹²⁸ Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, Appendix D5.

¹²⁹ Harriss, 'The Medieval Parliament', p.218.

¹³⁰ For discussion and further references see M. Powicke, *Military Obligation in Medieval England: A Study in Liberty and Duty*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1996), pp.178-81; Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, pp.55-65.

Graph 3: Belted Knights and Lawyers in Parliament, 1386-1422



factors, one is inevitably drawn to Henry V's military campaigns in France and the possibility that the traditional county élites who normally went to parliament were now too preoccupied to attend because of their service in the king's armies. Certainly, in May 1421, there is an indication that military service was taking its toll on local office-holding because the Commons requested that the statute which had limited to one year the term that sheriffs and escheators could serve, be relaxed because of '...pestilence diverses dedeinz le Roialme, come par les guerres dehors'.¹³¹ Yet, whilst there may have been the odd occasion, such as during the Agincourt campaign of 1415 or even the Normandy campaign of 1417, when local political élites were, indeed, depleted, military service cannot possibly account for the changed composition of *all* the parliaments of the reign since not all occurred when major military expeditions were in progress.¹³² Two other explanations can be suggested to better account for the change.

Firstly, in five out of the eleven parliaments of Henry V's reign the king was

¹³¹ *RP*. iv. 148.36.

¹³² The numbers involved in Henry V's armies are outlined in Anne Curry's paper on 'English Armies in the Fifteenth Century', in A. Curry and M. Hughes, eds., *Arms, Armies and Fortification in the Hundred Years War* (Woodbridge, 1994), pp.39-68, esp. Fig. 3.1. In 1415 and 1417, Henry managed to raise armies each comprising roughly three thousand men-at-arms and six thousand archers. Payling suggests that the Agincourt campaign may have had some effect on the number of suitable candidates for the shrievalty because the choice of sheriffs had to be put back a month in 1415 to allow the return of men from France; Payling, *Political Society*, p.139. Also note Susan Wright's comment that '...enthusiasm for war could still be high and so it was from Derbyshire in 1415. Many gentry were represented, while, for example, six of those families knighted in our period sent the head of the family [to fight]...and two also sent the eldest son', in *The Derbyshire Gentry in the Fifteenth Century*, Derbyshire Record Society, viii (1983), p.8.

absent in France and the assembly was placed either under the control of John, duke of Bedford or Humphrey, duke of Gloucester.¹³³ Arguably, this had a profound effect on the way in which parliament was perceived by prospective MPs. With the king absent, it is possible that the assembly no longer had the same appeal or attraction to contemporaries as it may have done formerly and many of the old parliamentary guard may now have thought twice before committing themselves to the long and arduous journey that parliamentary attendance involved. Not only did the absence of the king (and a large proportion of the nobility) mean that the opportunities had diminished for local men to 'network' and attract the patronage of the great but also, on a more straightforward basis, it meant that parliament was far less of a state occasion and thus, arguably, far less attractive to men wishing to experience the ostentation of royal power at first hand. On a more practical level, the king's absence from parliament may also have led to the belief that without the personal intervention of royal authority, the grievances of the Commons were far less likely to be resolved decisively; they would simply be rejected or else put on hold until the king could address them at a later date. This is supported by the fact that at least until 1419 there was a very definite correlation between the number of statutes and common petitions on the one hand, and the presence of the king on the other; when the king was away their number was comparatively small, but when he attended, the volume of legislation enacted and the number of common petitions presented picked up notably.¹³⁴ Thus, local communities may have been less intent to send their more prominent residents to represent their views at parliament when the king was absent and, indeed, these individuals themselves may no longer have felt the same urge to take on this responsibility.

The king's absence did not count for everything, however, for even in the parliaments that he attended the traditional parliamentary élites *still* chose to stay away. The second explanation, therefore, concerns the broader nature of parliament at this time and, in particular, the widespread perception that the institution was no longer predisposed to respond to the grievances and wishes of the wider political community. Harriss eloquently sums up the atmosphere of parliament at this time when he states that '...Henry V had no time for parliament as a talking-shop; he saw it as a tool of government, for furthering his own plans'.¹³⁵ Henry V succeeded in taking the efficacy of the institution to new and unparalleled heights. Parliamentary sessions were unusually short, the number of common petitions, in general, were

¹³³ Henry V did not attend the parliaments of 1415, 1417, 1419, 1420 and December 1421.

¹³⁴ See Table 1.

¹³⁵ Harriss, 'Management of Parliament', p.145.

fewer than in preceding or following parliaments and the king's business (namely the discussion and granting of taxation) was, with the exception of his last parliaments, dispatched with all haste and apparent co-operation by the Commons. Harriss even suggests that the smaller number of common petitions may have been symptomatic of an unofficial 'vetting' by the crown of those which were deemed to be 'otiose or unacceptable'.¹³⁶ In short, parliament under Henry V took to new levels its rôle as an instrument of royal authority and if election was not as sought after as it had been previously, this must have been because many of the more prominent men in the locality did not wish to waste their time 'rubber stamping' business in parliament which was primarily geared towards the interests of the king.

As a postscript to this discussion it should be pointed out that the decline in the status of the knights of the shire appears, at least in the short term, to have been only a temporary development. We must await the next series of the History of Parliament Trust volumes covering Henry VI's minority before any firm conclusions can be reached but, if the parliament of 1422 is any indication, there was a dramatic reversal in this trend which saw belted knights once again being returned to the assembly in significant numbers: higher, in fact, than in any parliament since 1406.¹³⁷ Perhaps this was a symptom of the shift of political focus away from France and back into the arena of parliament in which the nature and course of the royal government was now in large part being discussed and held to account by the political community. Finally, one of the more intriguing developments in the fifteenth century was the displacement of the urban élites representing the boroughs by 'outsider' lawyers and gentry.¹³⁸ It may well turn out that Henry V's reign proved the catalyst in this process by opening out the 'parliamentary experience' to a much broader section of late medieval (landed) society which readily accepted borough representation when the traditional élites reclaimed their place as the county representatives in the 1420s.

CONCLUSION

Perhaps the most important point to emerge from the foregoing discussion is that the composition of the knights of the shire was not some random or chance occurrence but

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p.154.

¹³⁷ Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*, p.92.

¹³⁸ McKisack, *Parliamentary Representation of English Boroughs*, pp.113-15; Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*, p.141; K.N. Houghton, 'Theory and Practice in Borough Elections to Parliament during the later fifteenth century', *B.I.H.R.*, xxxix (1966), 130-40, pp.138-9; Horrox, 'Urban Patronage', pp.158-61.

reflected the needs and policies either of the county communities, which relied on them for representation at the centre, or of the crown, which could derive considerable advantage by moulding the membership of the Lower House to suit its needs. We have seen how both Richard II and Henry IV gave unprecedented attention to the membership of the Commons, thus ensuring political support and a steady and generous supply of extraordinary taxation. Such manipulation was as much a tribute to the management skills of these two kings as it was an indication of the inherent political instability that dogged their regimes and forced them, perhaps unwillingly, to take such unorthodox action. It was a measure of the popularity and success of Henry V that he enjoyed even greater political support and financial concessions from the Commons without, apparently, having to resort to this sort of electoral interference. We have also seen how the membership of the Commons could change and fluctuate in terms of the levels of parliamentary experience, the extent of office-holding and the sort of status MPs held in medieval society. This was a symptom of the essentially organic nature of parliament. It showed not only that the business of parliament could affect and change the nature of representation but that the nature of representation could also affect the temperament and agenda of parliament itself. It also raises interesting questions about the ability of the localities to respond and adapt to these changes. This is perhaps an appropriate note to turn our attention away from the centre and now look more closely at the impact of parliament in the shires.

PART II: PARLIAMENT IN THE LOCALITIES

CHAPTER 5: COUNTY ELECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

S.J. Payling began his highly influential article on the widening franchise of the fifteenth century by stating that ‘...much remains obscure and uncertain about election procedures in medieval England’.¹ This was not so much a comment about the failings of his fellow scholars as it was a reference to the extremely limited nature of the records pertaining to late medieval parliamentary elections. As with the other ‘formal’ or official records of parliament, the election returns recorded only the end result without dealing with how the election was actually transacted. Thus, information on the conduct of elections is limited to the *Paston Letters* and ‘...the occasional *ex parte* descriptions of electoral malpractice found amongst the plea rolls of the king’s bench and the exchequer of pleas’.² These limitations are reflected in the content of most of the secondary literature on the subject.³ The only other contemporary source shedding light on electoral procedure is a series of parliamentary statutes enacted in the first half of the fifteenth century. This legislation is discussed in detail elsewhere,⁴ but briefly it consisted of: the statute of 1406, which laid down that the names of electors should henceforth be recorded on election returns and that elections should be held ‘freely and indifferently’ without interference from the sheriff;⁵ the statute of 1413, which asserted that all MPs should be resident in the constituency they were representing;⁶ the famous

¹ S. Payling, ‘The Widening Franchise: Parliamentary Elections in Lancastrian Nottinghamshire’, D. Williams, ed., *England in the Fifteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 1987), pp.167-85, quotation from p.167.

² *Ibid.*

³ For the use of the Paston Correspondence to shed light on county elections see K.B. McFarlane, ‘Parliament and Bastard Feudalism’, *T.R.H.S.*, 4th ser., xxvi (1944), 53-67, repr. in *idem, England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays* (London, 1981), pp.1-21, esp. pp.4-11. For disputed and contested elections, see C.H. Williams, ‘A Norfolk Parliamentary Election, 1461’, *E.H.R.*, xl (1925), 79-86; R. Virgoe, ‘Three Suffolk Parliamentary Elections of the Mid-Fifteenth Century’, *B.I.H.R.*, xxxix (1966), 185-196; R. Virgoe, ‘The Cambridgeshire Election of 1439’, *B.I.H.R.*, xlvi (1973), 95-101; J.G. Edwards, ‘The Huntingdonshire Parliamentary Election of 1450’, in T.A. Sandquist and M.R. Powicke, eds., *Essays in Mediaeval History Presented to Bertie Wilkinson* (Toronto, 1969), pp.383-95; C. Carpenter, ‘The Beauchamp Affinity: A Study of Bastard Feudalism at Work’, *E.H.R.*, xcvi (1980), 514-32, pp.528-9.

⁴ Payling, ‘The Widening Franchise’, pp.167-175; J.S. Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422: English Society and Parliamentary Representation under the Lancastrians* (Manchester, 1954), pp.1-27. The most recent account of election practice during the period that this thesis covers can be found in J.S. Roskell, L. Clark and C. Rawcliffe, eds., *The House of Commons, 1386-1421*, History of Parliament Trust, 4 vols. (Stroud, 1993), i, pp.55-68. See also the pioneering work of Ludwig Riess, whose account of electoral procedure still has much relevance to current theory; L. Riess, *The History of the English Electoral Law in the Middle Ages*, trans. K.L. Wood-Legh (repr. Cambridge, 1940), pp.78-83.

⁵ *RP.* iii. 601.139; *SR.* ii. 156.xv. In 1410, at the request of the Commons, a statutory fine was incorporated into this legislation: *RP.* iii. 641.59; *SR.* ii. 162.i.

⁶ *RP.* iv. 8.20; *SR.* ii. 170.i.

statute of 1429-30 which limited the electorate to those with 40s. per annum in freehold land and asserted that elections were to be decided by 'majority rule';⁷ and, finally, the statute of 1445-6 which specified that knights of the shire should be of the rank of knight, esquire or gentleman, but not yeomen or of lesser status.⁸ Notwithstanding the limitations of the evidence, the subject of county elections has many areas which would repay careful and detailed investigation. To this end, the following discussion is divided into three parts: the first examines the election returns on a quantitative basis; the second considers the personnel and procedure of a county election itself; and the third explores some of the criteria which made individuals eligible for election to parliament.

I/ THE ELECTION RETURNS: QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT

The statutory ruling of 1406, whereby electors were to be named on election returns, was a measure aimed principally at ensuring that sheriffs could no longer return knights of the shire to parliament without the input of the county community. Instructing the sheriff to provide a list of electors was an effective way for the crown to be certain that an election had actually occurred and that some form of collective decision-making or assent had taken place in the choice of MPs. As the first major legislation of the late medieval period which regulated election procedure, this was clearly a watershed in historical terms and demonstrated, amongst others factors, the increasing premium that county communities were beginning to attach to the representative quality of their knights of the shire. However, the statute of 1406 has equally significant implications for the *historiography* of late medieval elections; whereas before this date our knowledge of the process is more or less limited to the names of the two knights of the shire, their sureties and the sheriff, after 1406 the listing of the electors affords us a much greater insight into the composition of the county court at election time. Of course, the extra names do not shed light on the conduct of elections, but compared to the almost non-existent evidence of the fourteenth century, their presence on the election returns represents a significant step forward. Indeed, it would not be an exaggeration to say that the history of parliamentary elections can really only begin from 1406 when the historian is at last given a glimpse of who attended such occasions.

⁷ *RP.* iv. 350.39; *SR.* ii. 243-4. See also J.G. Edwards, 'The Emergence of Majority Rule in English Parliamentary Elections', *T.R.H.S.*, 5th Ser., xiv (1964), 175-96.

⁸ *RP.* v. 115-6; *SR.* ii. 340-2.xiv.

This breakthrough in source material is something of a double-edged sword, however, for there are a number of important interpretative problems which confront the historian when scrutinising the post-1406 returns. This is best illustrated by an examination of Table 5 which shows the number of electors recorded in the period between 1406 to 1422. At first sight, it would appear that we have a useful means of comparing the relative size of the county electorate across the kingdom, but this possibility founders on one fundamental methodological problem with the evidence; namely, that it does not necessarily account for the *total* number of electors present at an election.⁹ This is indicated by the fact that on a number of returns, especially those whose lists of names was fairly short, a phrase such as 'aliorum', 'multos alios' or 'plures al de Com[itatibus]' was added to show that many other individuals had been present but had not actually been recorded.¹⁰ This showed that the purpose of recording electors was not to provide an exhaustive list of all those who attended but simply for the sheriff to provide evidence that the county community had been consulted. To this end, most sheriffs probably considered it necessary to record only the most prominent individuals who had turned up.¹¹ Thus, what Table 5 shows is not the comparative size of the county electorate so much as the degree of fastidiousness with which sheriffs across the kingdom chose to record the attendance level at their county's parliamentary election.

That administrative 'style' may have been the all-determining factor in the way elections were recorded is suggested by the similarities which existed in the returns of counties which shared the same sheriff. No two elections can have been identical, yet several of the 'twin shires' displayed a consistency in the form of their returns which can really only be explained in terms of the common administrative customs and procedures which pertained to them both by reason of their joint sheriff. For instance, it can be of no-coincidence that invariably, when one county within a joint bailiwick recorded the presence of coroners during an election, so too did its sister county. This happened on roughly half a dozen occasions in the case of Norfolk and Suffolk, Oxfordshire and Berkshire, and Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire. It is also noticeable that the number of electors regularly correlated in twin shires. This suggested that

⁹ See Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, p.62, note 61.

¹⁰ This is a point made in relation to the Lincolnshire county elections by Alan Rogers in his article 'The Lincolnshire County Court in the Fifteenth Century', *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, i (1966), 64-78, p.65. I have identified this or a similar phrase as being used in the returns of the following counties: Essex, Hertfordshire, Northumberland, Derbyshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Surrey, and Sussex (1407); Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Warwickshire (1411); Cornwall, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Shropshire and Surrey (1413); Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Warwickshire (November 1414); Westmorland, Surrey, Sussex, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire (1415); Lancashire (1419); Bedfordshire and Herefordshire (May 1421); Lancashire (December 1421); Northumberland and Surrey (1422); see C219/10-12.

¹¹ See Payling, 'The Widening Franchise', p.175; and Rogers, 'The Lincolnshire County Court', pp.69-76, p.65.

the sheriff was applying the same standard of secretarial thoroughness to the two elections. Thus, in the case of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, there were five occasions when the number of electors in both counties correlated exactly and there were a further two occasions where the difference was just one.

Just as it is difficult to draw any hard and fast conclusions about the comparative size of the electorate in different counties, so too, attempting to explain aberrations in the record of a single county is an exercise open to many pitfalls. It has been suggested that the greater the number of electors, the more chance there was that there was a contested election.¹² However, without the corroboration of other evidence it is impossible to state with certainty that this was the case. In 1410, for example, the election return of Oxfordshire recorded the presence of no fewer than 190 electors; clearly this was out of character for a constituency which rarely had a recorded attendance of more than twenty.¹³ But did this indicate a contest or simply the extra conscientiousness of the sheriff who presided over this particular election? It is interesting that Berkshire, which shared its sheriff with Oxfordshire, also recorded an unusually high attendance in the election of 1410; so, unless there were contests in both constituencies at the same time, it is quite likely that the inflated number was simply the result of different record-keeping practices by this particular sheriff. The same could also be said of Essex and Hertfordshire in 1422 when both counties sent returns which contained an unusually high number of recorded electors compared to their past record. In this case, as indeed with the Oxfordshire and Berkshire elections, rather than a contested election, the large number of electors may simply have reflected the *true* figure of attendance at the county court rather than the reduced and 'vetted' list which appears to have been adopted as the more conventional practice.

It is clear that a simple quantitative assessment of named electors is an exercise of limited historical value. However, if we extend the basis of the discussion to include a statistical analysis of the incidence of attendance (ie. how many electors were recorded on one or more occasion) the ground is slightly firmer. Such an investigation would allow us to judge whether elections attracted the interest of a regular county electorate or whether they were more open affairs drawing men from a broad and more diffuse pool of county residents. Table 6 sets out the attendance records at elections in seven selected counties between 1407 and 1422. In most of these counties, with the exception of Cumberland and Westmorland, it can be seen that an extremely high proportion of electors attended an election only once during this

¹² Payling, 'The Widening Franchise', p.175.

¹³ This unusual return has been commented on in Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, p.563.

TABLE 6: EXPERIENCE OF ELECTORS, 1407-1422

| COUNTY | Number and % of electors named once, twice, etc.. | | | | | | | No. of parls. |
|---------|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| | x1 No./ (%) | x2 No./ (%) | x3 No./ (%) | x4 No./ (%) | x5 No./ (%) | x6 No./ (%) | x7 No./ (%) | |
| Beds. | 47 (61) | 11 (15) | 7 (9) | 5 (7) | 5 (7) | 1 (1) | - | 9 |
| Cumb. | 26 (45) | 17 (30) | 9 (16) | 1 (2) | 1 (2) | 3 (5) | - | 6 |
| Derbs. | 101 (61) | 29 (17) | 18 (10) | 14 (8) | 3 (2) | - | - | 12 |
| Norfolk | 45 (54) | 22 (27) | 8 (10) | 5 (6) | 2 (3) | - | - | 8 |
| Sussex | 62 (68) | 10 (12) | 9 (8) | 8 (8) | 1(1) | 2 (2) | - | 10 |
| Warws. | 73 (78) | 13 (14) | 4 (4) | 3 (3) | - | - | 1 (1) | 11 |
| Westm. | 31 (45) | 12 (17) | 6 (9) | 8 (12) | 2 (3) | 5 (7) | 5 (7) | 10 |

period. Warwickshire produced an exceptional number with a remarkable 78 per cent of its recorded electorate apparently attending on only a single occasion. The remaining four counties were perhaps more typical in that between 54 per cent and 68 per cent of their electors attended just once. At the same time, however, each of these latter counties could also boast of a fairly respectable minority who attended on a more regular basis. In Bedfordshire, Derbyshire and Sussex, for example, between 10 and 15 per cent attended elections on four or more occasions between 1407 and 1422 (ie. 11, 14 and 11 electors respectively).¹⁴ In Norfolk, whilst a relatively large number of men attended either once or twice (81 per cent or 67 men out of 92), there were still seven electors who attended on four or more occasions. Finally, at the opposite end of the scale, certainly in comparison to Warwickshire, lie Westmorland and Cumberland; whereas in all the other counties single attenders accounted for well over half the electorate, only in Cumberland and Westmorland did they constitute less. Westmorland is further set apart by the fact that no fewer than 20 electors (27 per cent of its recorded electorate) attended an election on four or more occasions and no fewer than ten were noted on six occasions or more.

On the basis of this rather brief summary it is clear that in general there was a solid core of men who regularly attended elections but that they were completely outnumbered by an amorphous mass who turned up only once or a couple of occasions. This may have indicated that for the vast majority of electors, their presence at an election may have been

¹⁴ The existence of a compact body of electors who regularly attended county elections is confirmed by the History of Parliament Trust volumes which, besides these three counties, also talks in the same terms about Cornwall, Hampshire, Huntingdonshire and Rutland; Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, pp.294, 414, 444, 572-3.

incidental to other business for which they were attending the county court - perhaps as suitors discharging their legal duties. Alternatively, it may have indicated that large numbers turned up to specific elections either to lend their support to a particular candidate - as happened in mid-fifteenth century Nottinghamshire¹⁵ - or to promote a particular aspect of business relating to parliament (ie. a petition) that would not have required their attendance again. Westmorland and Cumberland appear to have proved the exceptions to the rule. The more compact electorate of these counties may have been a symptom of how sparsely populated the region was compared to the rest of England and the fact that the number of *potential* electors was therefore greatly diminished.¹⁶ Recently, Richard Gorski has suggested that the three most northerly counties of England developed a distinct sense of regional identity based on their isolation from central government, their proximity to the hostile border with Scotland and their shared cultural and linguistic heritage.¹⁷ Assuming this to be the case, it is possible that county elections may also have been particularly valued in this region for the opportunity they presented to the shire community for collective discussion about the threats and problems which their geographical position presented. As we shall see in chapter 6,¹⁸ the northern counties were especially prolific in presenting petitions in parliament which complained of their plight, so it is quite feasible that more of a premium was placed by this electorate on regular attendance at the county court where these supplications were probably drafted.

ii/ THE ELECTION RETURNS: PERSONNEL AND PROCEDURE

The county electorate between 1407 and 1421 was composed principally of the lesser or minor gentry who were resident within the shire. The election returns rarely record the presence of more than a handful of dubbed knights; sometimes there were one or two, but commonly there was none at all. In general, the electors that *were* named did not belong to the county 'élite' who were appointed as sheriffs, escheators and JPs and few of them were actually elected as knights of the shire themselves. Instead, they were drawn from a level below this, from a large circle of relatively obscure freeholders, many of whom may have been appointed to the lesser administrative positions of the shire such as bailiffs of hundreds or coroners, but

¹⁵ Payling, 'The Widening Franchise', pp.183-5.

¹⁶ J.C. Russell, *British Medieval Population* (Albuquerque, 1948), p.313.

¹⁷ My thanks to Richard Gorski of the University of Hull who very kindly sent me a copy of his paper read at a political culture seminar at York University entitled, 'A North-South Divide? The Northern Sheriffs of Fourteenth-Century England'.

¹⁸ See below, pp.181-2, notes 54 and 59.

who tended to steer clear of the more prominent county offices. This situation has been alluded to in various county studies - most notably by Christine Carpenter on Warwickshire,¹⁹ J.S. Roskell on Lancashire,²⁰ J.G. Edwards on Huntingdonshire²¹ and Roger Virgoe on East Anglia²² - but only with the publication of the History of Parliament Trust volumes has it been possible to establish beyond any reasonable doubt that this was more or less a nationwide phenomenon.²³ A glance at the ultimate or penultimate paragraphs of the constituency surveys contained within these volumes will confirm the fact that, in general, the electors came from '...the lower ranks of the gentry' or that '...in nearly all cases these witnesses [to the election returns] were comparatively obscure figures'.²⁴

Did this mean that the lesser gentry were effectively deciding who would represent the county at parliament? It has to be said that in the context of the period between 1407 and 1422 this is not as improbable as it may seem. In chapter 4 it was argued that the general absence in this period of the traditional county élites in parliament indicated a marked decline in the prestige and importance attached to parliamentary service.²⁵ It is possible, therefore, that their lack of interest in attending parliament might also have extended to a general apathy towards the election process as a whole - that the gentry élite were prepared to let the smaller landowners and freeholders get on with an election relatively unhindered. In a sense, however, this misrepresents what the term 'election' and 'elector' meant in the late medieval setting. There is now a historical consensus that in most cases 'elections' did not involve the members of a county court exercising the democratic principle by casting their votes and choosing from a pool of rival candidates; rather, it is more likely to have seen the electors simply endorsing or giving their assent to two candidates that had been picked and agreed on previously.²⁶ Elections in the modern sense of the word, where voting took place, were extremely rare in the fifteenth century not least because it was in the interests of the county community to avoid this process if at all possible; voting usually followed contests and contests entailed division within local political society which could result in riots and the breaking of the

¹⁹ C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992), p.342.

²⁰ J.S. Roskell, 'The Knights of the Shire of the County Palatine of Lancaster, 1377-1460', *Chetham Society*, new ser., xcvi (1937) pp.21-3.

²¹ Edwards, 'Huntingdonshire Parliamentary Election', p.387.

²² R. Virgoe, 'The Crown, Magnates, and Local Government in Fifteenth-Century East Anglia' in J.R.L. Highfield and R. Jeffs., eds., *The Crown and Local Communities: England and France in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1981), p.81-2.

²³ This therefore undermines Carpenter's suggestion that the predominance of the lesser gentry at elections was limited essentially to the midland counties; *Locality and Polity*, p.342.

²⁴ Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i. These are the descriptions of the electorates for Dorset and Sussex.

²⁵ See chapter 4, pp.135-8.

²⁶ Payling, 'The Widening Franchise', p.176.

peace. Moreover, contests could also be extremely costly to the participants, both materially and in the risk of loss of honour if defeated. It was therefore far better all round if the choice of candidates had been decided long before the county court actually sat.²⁷ In this sense, the predominance of electors who belonged to the lesser or minor gentry of the shire, the relatively small size of the recorded electorate and its high turnover of personnel can best be explained by the fact that usually the rôle of electors was little more than perfunctory, simply rubber-stamping a choice that had been made elsewhere and at another time.

The absence of the gentry élite at county elections and in the county court ties in with the rather broader development of local political institutions.²⁸ In the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries the county court appears to have held a preeminent place in the shires as the focus of county affairs and politics.²⁹ It is, however, generally recognised that this status declined over the course of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries until, by the sixteenth century, most of the social and political functions formerly discharged by the shire 'moot' were now being fulfilled by the quarter sessions and assizes. Thus, whereas Maddicott attributed a central rôle to the shire court in the life of the early fourteenth century 'county community', by the Tudor period, Hassel Smith was able to assert that the quarter sessions now served '...as focusses for a county's aspirations'.³⁰ Identifying the major staging posts in this long-term shift has proved to be less easy. Maddicott suggested that '...by 1400 the waning of the "shire moot" had not gone very far...' and is generally upbeat about the rôle of the county court as the principal channel of communication from the locality to parliament. 'The county court [in the fourteenth century]' he asserts, 'stood more closely than before at the centre of the county's political life'.³¹ However, this view is clearly difficult to square with the evidence of the election returns which, from 1407 onwards, show unequivocally that so far as the leading gentry of the shire were concerned, the county court was most definitely *not* the focal point of their political life in the shire. The decline of the county court had evidently set in some time previously, possibly in the third quarter of the fourteenth century when the commissions of the peace were

²⁷ S. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England: The Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1991), pp.160-1. Prearranged 'selections' and the reasons why this occurred have also been discussed in detail in the context of the Tudor period; see J.E. Neale, *The Elizabethan House of Commons* (London, 1949), p.69; and more recently, M. Kishlansky, *Parliamentary Selection, Social and Political Choice in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1986), p.17.

²⁸ These developments have usefully been summed up by C. Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community in Medieval England', *J.B.S.*, xxxiii (1994), 340-80, esp. pp.347-9.

²⁹ R.C. Palmer, *The County Courts of Medieval England* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1982); J.R. Maddicott, 'The County Community and the Making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth-Century England', *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., xxviii (1978), 27-43, pp.28-9. For a less positive view, see M.C. Prestwich, *English Politics in the Thirteenth Century* (London, 1990), pp.49-58.

³⁰ A. Hassell Smith, *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk, 1558-1603* (Oxford, 1974), p.110; Maddicott, 'The County Community', p.29.

³¹ *Ibid.*

provided with judicial powers, but possibly even earlier.³²

We should be cautious, however, in assuming, as some historians have done, that the quarter sessions automatically became the venue where the leading landowners of the county came together to decide who would be returned to parliament.³³ Although, undoubtedly, quarter sessions would have been an ideal occasion for such arrangements to have been made, the close study of the record of attendance on such occasions in Nottinghamshire, East Anglia, Warwickshire and Yorkshire at the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries has shown that only a minority of the shire élite actually sat as justices and that most of the work was really done by smaller land-owners and lawyers.³⁴ The conundrum can be explained, perhaps, by acknowledging that interaction between members of the gentry did not necessarily take place only on a formal institutional basis. Recently, it has been pointed out that other informal and less well-documented gatherings of leading gentry families ‘...based around family celebrations and other feasts, tournaments and hunting parties, or property and other legal transactions...’ could just as easily have been the occasion for arranging elections as peace commissions and other more structured meetings were.³⁵ Indeed, it need not have taken an actual meeting between local landowners to communicate intentions regarding a forthcoming election. A letter of John Paston to his brother in 1472, for example, in which the latter was advised not to put himself forward as a candidate for election, is evidence showing that *written* communication could be just as effective in thrashing out where everyone stood before an election took place.³⁶ There were not overwhelming numbers of gentry whose status afforded them a leading rôle in deciding county elections, so we should not overstate how difficult it could have been for an amicable settlement to be reached relatively easily in advance of election day.

The sheriff himself was also, of course, a key figure in the county election. As the principal agent of the crown in the shires and as the presiding and returning officer of county elections, he was clearly in a position to exert considerable influence over who was

³² The classic work on this subject is B.H. Putnam, ‘The Transformation of the Keepers of the Peace into the Justices of Peace, 1327-1380’, *T.R.H.S.*, 4th ser., xii (1929), 19-48.

³³ See Payling, ‘The Widening Franchise’, p.177 and Maddicott, ‘County Community’, p.41.

³⁴ S. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England: The Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1991), pp.174-80; P.C. Maddern, *Violence and Social Order: East Anglia 1422-1442* (Oxford, 1992), pp.61-4; Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, pp.267-72; S. Walker, ‘Yorkshire Justices of the Peace, 1389-1413’, *E.H.R.*, cviii (1993), 281-311. See also the references and discussion in G.L. Harriss, ‘Political Society and the Growth of Government in Late Medieval England’, *P&P*, cxxxviii (1993), 28-57, p.48 and note 50.

³⁵ W.M. Ormrod, *Political Life in Medieval England, 1300-1450* (London and Basingstoke, 1995), pp.50-1. See also the discussion in Carpenter, ‘Gentry and Community’, pp.367-80.

³⁶ *The Paston Letters*, ed. J.G. Gairdner, 6 vols. (London, 1904), repr. in 1 vol. (Gloucester, 1983), v, p.149. Also, note Payling’s citation of the *Paston Letters* where, in 1455, the duke of Norfolk had canvassed opinion over his two proposed parliamentary candidates; Payling, ‘The Widening Franchise’, p.177.

returned to parliament. We have seen this already in chapter 4 where it was suggested that both Richard II and Henry IV carefully vetted appointments to the shrievalty in order to secure a compliant and co-operative Commons.³⁷ Indeed, the faith these kings placed in their sheriffs to return 'suitable' men is shown explicitly by the dispatch of election writs in February 1388 and October 1404 specifying what sort of MPs the crown wished to see elected (in 1388 they were to be men 'in debatis modernis magis indifferentes' and in 1404 they were not to be lawyers).³⁸ Such instructions would hardly have been sent if sheriffs were perceived to have been merely passive onlookers in the electoral process.

Besides royal interference, there is other evidence indicating the crucial rôle of sheriffs in sending MPs to parliament. Table 10 in chapter 7 shows that prior to the ordinance of 1372 a remarkable number of individuals effectively returned themselves to parliament having been sheriff at the time of the county election; in the 1360s, for instance, it was quite common for between nine and twelve sheriffs to engage in this practice, which was between a third and a half of the total number of sheriffs appointed by the crown.³⁹ Evidently, parliamentary representation appears to have been a widely recognised 'perk' of an appointment to the shrievalty and even after 1372 this direct link between the two offices continued, albeit at a reduced rate.⁴⁰ There is evidence too, that sheriffs could exploit their position by returning close acquaintances or members of their own families to parliament. As Linda Clark has pointed out, it was not unusual to find sheriffs returning brothers, uncles, sons and other more distant family relatives during their tenure of office.⁴¹ This was most definitely the case with John Arundel II, for example, who, despite having no lands in Devon, was elected for that county in 1414 in an election presided over by his father as sheriff.⁴² Whilst much of the manipulation of elections by sheriffs may not have been against the wishes of the county community, it is worth remembering that the first legislation in the late Middle Ages relating to the conduct of

³⁷ See chapter 4, pp.110-11, 117-18.

³⁸ For 1388 see *Historia Anglicana, 1272-1422*, ed. H.T. Riley, Rolls Series, xxviii, 2 vols. (London, 1864), ii, p.161. For 1404, see *Report from the Lords' Committees...for All Matters Touching the Dignity of a Peer*, 4 vols. (Parliamentary Papers, 1820-29), iv, p.78; *Continuatio Eulogii in Eulogium Historiarum sive Temporis*, ed. F.S. Haydon, Rolls Series, ix, 3 vols. (London, 1863), iii, p.402.

³⁹ See also K.L. Wood-Legh, 'Sheriffs, Lawyers, and Belted Knights in the Parliaments of Edward III', *E.H.R.*, xlvi (1931), 372-88, pp.372-6.

⁴⁰ Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, pp.179-81.

⁴¹ L. Clark, 'Magnates and their Affinities in the Parliaments of 1386-1421', in R.H. Britnell and A.J. Pollard, eds., *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society* (Stroud, 1995), pp.127-153, p.133. The following MPs are suggested in Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, ii-iv, as having been returned as a result of the electoral management of the sheriff: Hugh Erdeswyk, Derbyshire, 1419; John Halle II, Sussex, May 1421; Sir Thomas Radcliffe, Lancashire, May 1421; Ralph Hussey, Nottinghamshire, 1419; Richard Shirburne, Lancashire, 1420; John Booth I, Lancashire, 1420; Thomas Arundel, Cornwall, 1419; and Henry Hoghton, Lancashire, 1399.

⁴² Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, p.340.

elections - the statute of 1406 - was enacted primarily to reduce the overbearing power which the sheriff could exercise at election time.⁴³ This statute was preceded by, but was not necessarily directly related to, the notorious case of the Rutland election of January 1404 where the Commons had complained in parliament about the false returns made by the sheriff of Rutland.⁴⁴ Both developments highlighted how strong an influence a sheriff could have in determining the representation of a county community.

The minor gentry are therefore unlikely to have been responsible for choosing candidates for parliamentary election even in the period between 1407 and 1422; in general, this was an activity confined to the leading landowners of the county and included, to a greater or lesser extent, the input and intervention of the sheriff himself. The fact that the theoretical franchise was set so low in 1429-30 suggests that this state of affairs was widely accepted in political society; parliament would hardly have enacted a statute which effectively disenfranchised the shire élite by providing the vast number of men who held 40s. p.a. in freehold land with an equal say in who was to be returned.⁴⁵ Rather, the statute was a clever legislative calculation which, whilst preserving the representative quality of parliament by appearing to involve most of the people who paid parliamentary taxation and parliamentary wages, nevertheless had little effect on the monopoly that the shire élite held over who went to parliament.⁴⁶ The only time when freeholders are likely to have made any impact on the election process, other than simply validating the election return, was when consensus had broken down amongst this élite and the election itself became a contest between several competing candidates. Payling has demonstrated that on these occasions a form of quasi-democracy was implemented in which the prospective MPs mobilized as many of the freeholders of the county as possible to vote for them in an organised ballot.⁴⁷ This was clearly a time when freeholders could have considerable importance to an election's outcome and in the case of mid-fifteenth century Nottinghamshire, Payling has shown that the sheer weight of

⁴³ *RP*. iii. 601.139; *SR*. ii. 156.xv. For examples in the fourteenth century of sheriffs illegally manipulating election returns see Reiss, *English Electoral Law*, pp. 52-3, 57-8.

⁴⁴ *RP*. iii. 530.38. For an account of this incident, see Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, p.61, note 27.

⁴⁵ Payling estimates that according to the 1429-30 criterion there were over 600 men in Nottinghamshire who were eligible to 'vote' in county elections; 'The Widening Franchise', p.174.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, pp.178-85. It is, however, interesting to note the extremely unusual election indenture sent by Lancashire for the parliament of May 1413; C 219/11/1. What made it so distinctive was that it was an indenture between the sheriff, Ralph Stanley, and just *one* of the two knights of the shire - John Stanley, his son - elected for the coming parliament. Furthermore, whereas conventional election indentures included the names of the electors within the paragraph of prose which recorded the outcome to the election, this document *listed* the names and also included the seals with which the electors had recorded their assent. Whilst this may not have been the rough poll list that Payling identified for Nottinghamshire in 1460, the inclusion of just one MP - when two were quite evidently elected - as well as the existence of the actual seals of the electors themselves does suggest that some form of voting may have taken place and that a similar record was produced, but is now lost, for the other MP, John Asheton II.

numbers could win the day for a candidate with less political or social status than his rival. Nevertheless, contests were extremely rare and so far as we know, they were non-existent in the period between 1407 and 1422 - a fact which might have been indicative of the reduced premium placed on parliamentary service at this time.⁴⁸

Before writing the freeholders off completely, however, it is worth remembering that county courts not only produced knights of the shire but were also, in all probability, the venue in which petitions in the name of the county were drawn up to be presented by the knights at parliament.⁴⁹ The implication of the election returns, in which the leading gentry appear to have stayed away, is that it was the *lesser* gentry or small land-holders of the county who were primarily responsible for articulating and compiling these grievances for presentation at parliament.⁵⁰ If this were the case it is a useful reminder that a 'county community' was not necessarily entirely synonymous with the gentry élite who filled the principal local offices and held the most land. This point gains particular weight when we consider that many members of this élite possessed estates and had family connections *outside* the borders of the county in which they resided. Some, of course, also held positions of responsibility in central government which would also have focussed their attention elsewhere.⁵¹ In short, the gentry of more limited means who attended elections and whose interests focussed more sharply *within* the borders of the county were just as likely, if not more so, to have constituted the 'community of the shire' and, correspondingly, to have drafted petitions in its name. Further research is needed before definite conclusions can be reached, but many electors might also have been the authors of individual petitions, attending the county court in order to have them forwarded by their representatives at parliament. Thus, the opportunities presented by the petitioning process, both on a county and a personal level, may have been more of an incentive for freeholders to attend county elections than the election itself. For them, the county court probably represented the major conduit through which royal or government intervention could be secured in local affairs, whereas for the gentry élite, who had political status and connections, there were other, perhaps more effective, avenues available to secure similar action.⁵²

⁴⁸ See chapter 4, pp.134-8.

⁴⁹ Maddicott, 'The County Community', p.29. For discussion of 'county petitions' see chapter 6, pp.181-3.

⁵⁰ This point has been made by Ormrod, *Political Life*, p.50.

⁵¹ The existence of a 'county élite' has been questioned by Carpenter in her article, 'Gentry and Community', pp.344-52.

⁵² Note Carpenter's suggestion that in terms of '... local everyday issues...the nobility would have been the channel of communication [between the centre and the localities]...'; *ibid.*, p.364, note 106.

iii/ THE CRITERIA FOR ELECTION

a/ Magnates and County Elections

The debate surrounding the extent to which magnates controlled and influenced county elections has a long pedigree stretching back to the monograph on electoral law written by Reiss in 1884.⁵³ Reiss's contention that the shire elections were dominated and controlled by the great men of the shire who proposed candidates that were merely approved by the county court, carried the day in the earlier part of this century and won the backing, amongst others, of H.G. Richardson and Helen Cam.⁵⁴ This orthodoxy was challenged by the highly influential article by K.B. McFarlane on 'parliament and bastard feudalism' which asserted the presence in late medieval England of an independent-minded gentry who vigorously defended their right to elections free from the interference and meddling of the local aristocracy.⁵⁵ Recently, a more measured approach has been adopted which was summed up by Patricia Jalland, who stated that, before a complete picture is obtainable, '...the electoral returns need to be studied for many regions throughout the entire [fifteenth] century'.⁵⁶ This was the task to which Linda Clark not long ago applied herself, using the huge body of biographical information contained in the recently published History of Parliament Trust volumes which cover the period between 1386 and 1421.⁵⁷ Clark offers some extremely valuable synthesis on this material but hedges her bets somewhat by concluding, on the one hand, that generally '...the parliamentary returns...reveal no hint of an interest on the part of the aristocracy in the outcome of elections' whilst, on the other hand, asserting that 'interdependence' characterised the relationship between the Lords and Commons and that the former could place extreme value in having their supporters attend the Lower House.⁵⁸

As Clark herself pointed out, one of the great problems involved in addressing this question is the lack of available sources.⁵⁹ There are rarely any documents which shed light on whether the aristocracy deliberately set out, and were able, to influence who was returned

⁵³ Reiss, *English Electoral Law*, *passim*.

⁵⁴ H.G. Richardson, 'John of Gaunt and the Parliamentary Representation of Lancashire', *B.J.R.L.*, xxii (1938), 175-222, esp. p.199. See also H. Cam, 'The Relation of English Members of Parliament to their Constituencies in the Fourteenth Century', *S.I.C.*, iii (1939), repr. in *idem*, *Liberties and Communities in Medieval England* (London, 1944), pp.223-35.

⁵⁵ McFarlane, 'Parliament and Bastard Feudalism', *passim*.

⁵⁶ P. Jalland, 'The Influence of the Aristocracy on Shire Elections in the North of England 1450-70', *Speculum*, xlvii (1972), 483-507. See also A.L. Brown, *The Governance of Late Medieval England, 1272-1461* (London, 1989), p.198 and Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*, pp.24-7.

⁵⁷ Clark, 'Magnates and their Affinities'.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.130, 147.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.127.

to parliament. Those that do exist, principally the *Paston Letters* dating from the mid-fifteenth century and some election returns dating from the early fourteenth century, far from resolving the issue, have simply generated more controversy and debate. McFarlane, for example, interpreted the *Paston Letters* as evidence indicating an assertive gentry who were able to withstand the machinations of the nobility; but, as Roskell has shown, they could just as easily be used to indicate 'the extent to which...shire elections were amenable to the influence, open or indirect, of local magnates'.⁶⁰ Added to this, of course, is the difficult question of how typical the experience of Norfolk's elections were of the country as a whole.⁶¹ The problem of typicality also undermines the evidence of the early fourteenth century. On the one hand, Maddicott and Payling chose to regard the election returns of 1297 and 1322, as well as evidence from a shrieval election of 1338, as indicators that county courts were dominated by the aristocracy acting either in person or through their attorneys.⁶² On the other hand, J.S. Illsley regarded these examples as untypical of a period which generally saw the local gentry as the dominant element on these occasions.⁶³

One possible way round these problems, and one of the methods adopted by Clark, is to see how many MPs had connections with local magnates, with the view to assessing how patron-client relationships may have unduly affected the outcome to shire elections. However, this approach has fundamental interpretative and methodological difficulties of its own. In the first place, how does one define 'connection'? How closely associated with a magnate did an MP have to be in order for his 'political independence' to be cast in doubt? Clark defined 'connection' in rather narrow terms; her concern appears to have been specifically with those MPs who were retained by a magnate and who were therefore members of his affinity.⁶⁴ But judging the extent to which MPs may have associated themselves with the interests of local lords is an exercise open to interpretation and could, as I have done in Appendix 1, be judged on more inclusive grounds. My assessment of the extent of connections between knights of the shire and magnates suggests a rather more extensive picture than the one Clark has outlined in her article; according to my criteria between forty and fifty shire knights in each parliament had some form of discernible link with a magnate (ie. a lay or spiritual lord) in most of the period between 1377 and 1421, although towards the end of this

⁶⁰ Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*, p.22.

⁶¹ The methodological difficulties involved in studying the *Paston Letters* have been noted, with references, by Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, p.8.

⁶² Maddicott, 'The County Community', pp.30-2; Payling, 'The Widening Franchise', pp.171-3.

⁶³ J.S. Illsley, 'Parliamentary Elections in the Reign of Edward I', *B.I.H.R.*, xlix (1976), 24-40.

⁶⁴ Clark, 'Magnates and their Affinities', pp.134-5.

time-span the number dropped to between thirty and forty knights.⁶⁵

How we interpret these figures is even more of a problem than defining the term 'connection'. What we can be sure of is that they show the considerable extent of social and political interaction that existed between a large proportion of the knights of the shire and the Lords at parliament.⁶⁶ They indicate that the political community which gathered at this institution was even more cohesive than historians have been prepared to suggest in the past. Crucially, however, they do *not* shed light on what happened at a county election. They provide no evidence that magnates imposed their own candidates on the county court or even nominated them for the electorate merely to endorse. Indeed, there is no suggestion from these figures that magnates took any interest in elections at all. In short, there is no need to read anything sinister into the fact that so many knights of the shire were connected to a patron; this situation was simply a manifestation of the peculiar dynamics of medieval society in which it was common practice for local men to associate themselves with their social superiors.

In order to take the debate forward it is necessary, perhaps, to turn away from the conduct of elections - for which direct evidence is clearly lacking - and ask, in more general terms, what magnates would have gained by actively ensuring that their own candidates would be returned to parliament by the county community. When approached from this perspective it quickly becomes obvious that if the principal motivation behind electoral manipulation was to influence the way in which parliament functioned or the policies which it adopted, there was not, in fact, any reason for the local aristocracy to take such action, particularly if it meant overriding local sentiment. In the first place, it is doubtful whether any magnate had the capacity to send to parliament enough of his supporters to make any notable impact on the direction of policy which came to be adopted by the Lower House. Arguably, this is one of the reasons why there is no evidence that John of Gaunt - one of the most powerful noblemen in the late Middle Ages - undertook any systematic policy of 'packing' parliament with his own supporters.⁶⁷ It has been estimated that in the last quarter of the fourteenth century there were generally between 5 and 10 of his retainers in parliament which, though a respectable showing, was hardly an overwhelming majority that could have dictated policy to the Commons as a whole.⁶⁸ If the vast landed resources of Gaunt produced, at most, only a dozen or so followers

⁶⁵ Note that this endorses Roskell's opinion that '...those of the shire Knights who were without seigneurial attachments, either of interest or of kinship, were few and far between'; Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*, p.68.

⁶⁶ For a similar remarks see S.M. Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry in the Fifteenth Century*, Derbyshire Record Society, viii (1983), p.93.

⁶⁷ J.V. Wedgwood, 'John of Gaunt and the Packing of Parliament', *E.H.R.*, xlv (1930), 623-5.

⁶⁸ S. Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity 1361-1399* (Oxford, 1990), pp.238-42.

in parliament,⁶⁹ this shows how unlikely it would have been that other members of the nobility, with far fewer shires under their lordship, could realistically have considered 'packing' parliament for their own ends. The only occasion when this might feasibly have been done was when there were a sufficient number of the nobility acting in concert to produce a confederation of support within the Lower House, as happened in the Wonderful Parliament of 1386 and the Merciless Parliament of 1388.⁷⁰ In reality, packing parliament with the view to influencing its actions demanded such huge resources and such widespread influence that it was really only the crown which could contemplate such a policy. Indeed, it is worth pointing out that the only occasion when the duchy of Lancaster lands *were* consciously used as a basis for securing support in parliament was when they were linked to the royal demesne and the duke of Lancaster was also king of England.⁷¹

Secondly, it was one thing for magnates to lack the resources in order to make electoral interference a worthwhile activity, but this assumes that they would have wished to engage in such practice in the first place. Arguably, there has been a tendency in recent historiography to credit the Commons with a power of intervention in the parliamentary setting which they simply did not possess. Are we really to suppose that the Lords viewed the Commons as the key factor in ensuring that the business of parliament was transacted in accordance with their own interests and wishes? Did the Commons really enjoy this sort of power in parliament? Clearly they did not in January 1377, for John of Gaunt succeeded in reversing all the popular acts of the Good Parliament with only a slightly greater number of his supporters present than there had been in the Good Parliament itself.⁷² Gaunt did not need the endorsement of the Commons to achieve these things; his status and position in the polity were enough in themselves. As we have seen in Part I of this thesis, the true focus of power and government in parliament did not lie in the Lower House but with the king, and it was to him, arguably, that magnates would have looked in order to secure for themselves favourable rulings and decisions. Why would a magnate go to the trouble of interfering with county elections with a view to returning a handful of MPs who might intervene on his behalf when, as a member of the Lords, he not only had automatic and direct access to the king (which MPs did not) but also possessed the superior political and social status to ensure that his influence would have carried

⁶⁹ The figures provided by Walker increase a little if, instead of retainers, we count all known associates of Gaunt in parliament; see Appendix 1.

⁷⁰ M.V. Clark, 'The Lancastrian Faction and the Wonderful Parliament, in *idem*, *Fourteenth Century Studies* (Oxford, 1937), pp.36-52; J. Leyland, 'Knights of the Shire in the Parliament of 1386: A Preliminary Study of Factional Affiliations', *Medieval Prosopography*, xi (1988), 89-103. For 1388, see Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, Appendix C1.

⁷¹ See chapter 4, pp.115-19.

⁷² Wedgwood, 'John of Gaunt', pp.623-5; Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, p.236.

far further?⁷³ Moreover, though McFarlane may have overstated his case, he did nevertheless make a valid point that the gentry were not the puppets of their lords and would not necessarily have represented their views either effectively, enthusiastically or even at all, at parliament.⁷⁴ Finally, it has been suggested that the Commons performed a vital rôle in forwarding private petitions to the king and council on the behalf of the Lords⁷⁵ but, as we shall see in chapter 6, the grounds for this belief are questionable in the extreme and the Lords are very unlikely indeed to have relied on the Lower House in this way.⁷⁶

Despite these arguments it would be a risky strategy to assert that the nobility took no interest whatsoever in who was returned to parliament. Clearly, in the *Paston Letters* and elsewhere, there is evidence to the contrary.⁷⁷ Rather than explaining this interest in terms of a desire to influence what was happening at the centre, arguably it is better accounted for by local considerations and, in particular, the effect county elections could have in reinforcing or challenging local hierarchies. The key may well lie in Carpenter's assertion that '...an election was an acid test of a magnate's local worth'.⁷⁸ Thus, for some magnates (but not necessarily all) it may have been a matter of some pride to affirm their preeminent position in a county by securing the return of individuals associated with, and sympathetic to, their interests. This explains why John, Lord Tiptoft, for instance, disrupted the Cambridgeshire election of 1435 because the expected return of MPs who were supported by his adversary, Sir James Ormond, represented an affront to his local standing in the shire.⁷⁹ It was precisely to avoid turning the election into this sort of trial of strength that the dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk agreed between themselves to nominate one candidate each in the Norfolk election of 1472.⁸⁰ In general, instances of direct magnate interference in shire elections must, to an extent, have been related to the frequency with which their lordship was challenged in the locality. On this basis it would be reasonable to say that such occurrences were relatively few and far between; not many counties contained resident nobility whose preeminent position as the leading landowner was

⁷³ The idea that magnates would have set out to interfere with elections in order to influence policy at the 'centre' also challenges the 'new constitutional history' which emphasises that the localities were run primarily by the interaction between the nobility and king; J. Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge, 1996), esp. p.101; C. Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution in England, c.1437-1509* (Cambridge, 1997), p.37.

⁷⁴ McFarlane, 'Parliament and Bastard Feudalism', *passim*.

⁷⁵ A.R. Myers, 'Parliamentary Petitions in the Fifteenth Century', *E.H.R.*, lii (1937), 385-404, 590-613, repr. in *idem*, *Crown, Household and Parliament in Fifteenth Century England* (London, 1985), pp.1-44, esp. pp.14-20.

⁷⁶ See chapter 6, pp.197-9.

⁷⁷ For example, members of the local aristocracy were involved in each of the Norfolk elections (ie. 1450, 1455, 1461, 1470 and 1472) discussed by McFarlane in his article, 'Parliament and Bastard Feudalism', pp.4-11.

⁷⁸ Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, pp.385-6.

⁷⁹ Virgoe, 'Cambridgeshire Election'.

⁸⁰ *Paston Letters*, v. p.149.

under threat. In most cases magnates probably ignored elections, either because most of the leading gentry were connected to them and were likely to be elected in any case, or else because they simply did not attach any political significance to the outcome.

b/ The Geo-politics of Parliamentary Elections

High social standing, important connections, administrative experience and political competence were likely to have been very important factors in the eligibility of individuals for parliamentary election. However, there is also the possibility that some attention was paid to where, within the county, a prospective knight of the shire resided. Although this idea has been dealt with at length in the context of the seventeenth century, in the medieval period there are only one or two tantalizing references to the possibility of this *modus operandi*.⁸¹ J.S. Roskell, for example, studied in depth the nature of parliamentary representation in Lincolnshire between 1377 and 1422 and showed that some form of 'geographical rotation' could have been in place, given that it was usual for the two knights of the shire to be chosen from the different 'parts' of the county (Lindsey, Kesteven and Holland).⁸² Christine Carpenter made a more explicit reference in her discussion of the Warwickshire county election in 1428. She suggested that,

Lying behind a reluctance to elect [the earl of] Warwick's candidates...may have been a certain amount of resentment in east Warwickshire...at the way the last election, had gone. Normally one of the representatives came from this part of the county, but in 1426 both had been from the area west of Warwick.⁸³

How typical of the medieval period was this apparent link between eligibility for election and geographical location?

A satisfactory answer to this question clearly depends on the positive identification of the principal or permanent residence of the shire knight within the county. The survey which has been undertaken in this chapter - the results of which constitute Appendix 2 - is wholly grounded in the information provided by the History of Parliament Trust volumes so, in a sense, this is a problem which relates to the organisation and methods employed by the editors of these volumes. Although it is not stated explicitly, there seems little reason to doubt that where, in these volumes, an MP's name is followed by a place name (eg. Sir William Bagot

⁸¹ Kishlansky, *Parliamentary Selection*, esp. p.26.

⁸² J.S. Roskell, 'The Parliamentary Representation of Lincolnshire during the Reigns of Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, iii (1959), 53-77, repr. in *idem*, *Parliament and Politics in Late Medieval England*, 3 vols. (London, 1981-3), i, ch.v.

⁸³ Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, p.385.

of Baggington), this indicates the actual residence of that MP in the county in question (in the case of Bagot, he lived at Baggington in Warwickshire). This is the premise which underpins Appendix 2. Indeed, a search through the actual biographies of randomly selected MPs would seem to vindicate this assumption since, in a good many cases, the biographical notes state explicitly that the MP's chosen place of residence was also the location which accompanied his name in the heading to his entry.

The results of the survey can be split into two groups according to the size of the county involved. In the smaller to medium sized-ones, it is possible to see some sort of pattern in the dispersal of knights of the shire amongst the hundreds of the county (or the equivalent administrative sub-division). Warwickshire, for example, was divided into four hundreds; in twenty-two out of twenty five elections between 1386 and 1421 knights of the shire were chosen from different hundreds of the county. The three exceptions were in 1393, when Sir William Bagot and John Catesby were both from the hundred of Knightlow; 1401, when Sir Thomas Burdet and Sir Alfred Trussel were both from the hundred of Barlichway; and in December 1421, when Sir John Cockayne and John Chetwynd were from Hemlingford. Sussex was divided into six Rapes running from north to south along the entire length of the county. Out of twenty-eight elections for which the residences of both MPs are known, just three witnessed the return of men from the same Rape; these were 1386, 1399 and 1413. Despite the fact that elections in Sussex were generally held at the county court at Chichester (which is situated in the extreme south-west corner of the county) there is no evidence for the dominance of this region in electing MPs; Pevensey, at the extreme east, had the most knights of the shire elected to parliament (fifteen in total), Hastings came second (with thirteen), whilst Chichester was a close third (with twelve). In Hertfordshire there were eight hundreds. Out of twenty-eight elections, there was just one occasion - the election for the parliament of 1419 - when the MPs came from the same hundred. Finally, Rutland, the smallest county in the kingdom, was divided into five hundreds. Out of twenty-five elections there were no occasions when the knights came from the same hundred.⁸⁴ Apart from the hundred of Martinsley, which accounted for four knights, the distribution was fairly even too; nine came from Wrangdike and for Alstoe, East and Oakhamsoke; the numbers were sixteen, fifteen and fifteen respectively.

In counties with many hundreds, the pattern of residence must be seen in broader regional terms. Thus, in Oxfordshire, a clear division appears to have been made between the Thames Valley region in the south and the hilly uplands of the Cotswolds in the

⁸⁴ There were occasions, such as in January 1388 and November 1390, when the knights of the shire possessed manors within the same hundred but on these occasions one of them always had another residence elsewhere in the county.

north; in twenty-one out of twenty-five elections the county court at Oxford returned one man from each of these two regions. In Nottinghamshire, it was also rare for shire knights to be chosen from the same area of the county - this happening on only three occasions out of twenty-seven elections - and the same can also be said of Herefordshire where virtually all the regions of the county sent at least one MP to parliament and on only a single occasion did one area produce both. This was not, however, an entirely universal situation for in the two largest counties in the survey the geographical dispersal of MPs was not nearly so pronounced. In Devon, much of which was sparsely populated, the northern and eastern parts tended to dominate until Henry IV's reign. After 1407, the north was evidently eclipsed by six MPs from the southern sea board, who formed a partnership with the gentry from the east, where the county town of Exeter lay. In Norfolk, the south-western part of the county failed to put forward any candidates for parliament, whilst the representation itself was dominated by men who lived in the general vicinity of Norwich or who came from the northern or south-central parts of the shire.

In seven out of the nine counties surveyed, therefore, knights of the shire do appear to have been dispersed widely across the shire; usually no two individuals serving at the same parliament came from the same administrative sub-unit. It is not possible to state with any degree of certainty that this was contrived. As some of the leading landowners of the county the dispersal of the knights of the shire may simply have been a natural consequence of the distribution of their estates which were, in any case, unlikely to have been concentrated in just one area. Nevertheless, there *were* some particularly good reasons for promoting this 'dispersion' policy and we should at least be open to the possibility that it had a bearing on who was elected. For example, the selection of MPs from across the county may well have been calculated to prevent regions from feeling isolated and detached from the parliamentary system and therefore, perhaps, less willing to contribute to the subsidies which their non-resident or non-local MP bound them to at parliament.⁸⁵ The fairly regular condition that the Commons attached to their grants of taxation in the fourteenth century, in which they absolved themselves from the responsibility for collecting subsidies, is proof that taxation could be an extremely sensitive issue in the locality, particularly when it was heavy.⁸⁶ The tax-collectors themselves, many of whom, as minor gentry, fulfilled the rôle of electors at the county election, may well have been a considerable force to reckon with if their task in the locality was hindered by the

⁸⁵ J.G. Edwards, 'The *Plena Potestas* of English Parliamentary Representatives', in F.M. Powicke, ed., *Oxford Essays in Medieval History presented to H.E. Salter* (Oxford, 1934), pp.141-154, repr. in E.B. Fryde and E. Miller, eds., *Historical Studies of the English Parliament*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1970), i, pp.136-49.

⁸⁶ See Maddicott, 'Parliament and the Constituencies', pp.82-3; Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, pp.144-7.

discontent fostered by the 'unrepresentative' nature of the shire's MPs. Thus, although the sheriffs and leading gentry of the shire chose who would be returned to parliament, the acceptability of this choice to the local population, including the tax-collectors, may have been an important consideration in this decision-making process.

However, the burden of taxation may have been less of a potential source of friction than was the collection of the wages for the knights of the shire themselves. Helen Cam has suggested that '...the usual method [for the payment of these wages] seems to have been to divide the sum among the different hundreds of the county, assessing each hundred at so much, and then to assess each village within the hundred at its contributory quota'.⁸⁷ From the complaints of MPs who failed to receive their wages, of sheriffs who could not collect them and of the shires themselves that the burden was unevenly and unfairly distributed, it is clear that this too, was a contentious subject.⁸⁸ It is possible that the willingness of communities to pay these wages was linked quite closely to the advantages they perceived themselves to be having from parliamentary representation; namely, access to central government via private or community petitions. Although bailiffs of hundreds and other freeholders were present at the county court at the time of elections, it may have been felt that the only way of really ensuring that the advantages of the parliamentary system were widely felt and that people were more willing to pay MPs' wages was to make sure that most regions within a county sent a local landowner to parliament on a relatively frequent basis. The bailiffs of the hundreds were normally assigned by the sheriff to collect the wages of the knights of the shire and their presence in the county court at the time of an election, as well as on other occasions, was clearly an opportune moment for the sheriff to ascertain the prevailing mood within the locality and assess the need to arrange the outcome to future elections accordingly.

It is important to end by stressing that if 'geographical rotation' was consciously undertaken in counties when the choice of MPs was considered, it was, nevertheless, only one of many other factors which were taken into consideration in the process. Clearly, it was not always at the top of the agenda, as is shown by the presence in parliament of knights who had attended on a consecutive basis over a period of many years or of knights who actually came from outside the constituency they were representing.⁸⁹ If an individual was particularly highly regarded or powerful; if he had important connections at the centre which could lubricate the

⁸⁷ Cam, 'The Community of the Shire and the Payment of its Representatives in Parliament', in *idem*, *Liberties and Communities*, p.239. The method for collecting wages for the knights of the shire was laid down in statutory form in the parliament of 1444-5; *SR*. ii. 336.7.x.

⁸⁸ L.C. Latham, 'Collection of the Wages of the Knights of the Shire in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', *E.H.R.*, xlviii (1933), 455-64.

⁸⁹ See Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i, Appendix B3.

reception given to local or private petitions; or if he had shown himself to be an experienced and valuable asset in the parliamentary context: these were all considerations which could easily have outweighed the location of his residence in a county.

CONCLUSION

The dangers presented by historians concentrating merely on contested elections parallel the problems encountered by focussing only on the 'crisis' parliaments of a particular age; neither is particularly representative of what happened in the normal course of events. This chapter has attempted to analyse the county election as a general phenomenon, seeking to elucidate in as much detail as the evidence allows what a 'typical' election may have involved in the early fifteenth century. It has been suggested that although democracy may have played a part in some contested elections, in the vast proportion of cases it was the rule of the minority, perhaps even the sheriff on his own, rather than the rule of the majority, that effectively decided the outcome to the process. If, as Payling suggests, the county franchise was widening in the course of the fifteenth century there is no evidence to suggest that this process had begun before the reign of Henry VI; MPs came from, and were *selected by*, the leading gentry of the shire. Similarly, though on occasion, local magnates may have directly involved themselves in the election process, particularly if it had a bearing on local power structures, in general they tended not to, either because the most eligible candidates for election were already in their circle of acquaintances, or because most magnates did not hold much store by the outcome to an election in the first place. Finally, the choice of candidates may have been the preserve of the gentry élite, but the election returns clearly indicate that a far greater number of people from the localities were witnesses to this aspect of parliamentary activity. It has been suggested that one of the reasons for this broader interest was the opportunity that parliament offered for petitioning; and it is to this area, and particularly the private petition, that our attention will now turn.

CHAPTER 6: PARLIAMENT AND THE PRIVATE PETITIONER

INTRODUCTION

For those with a fairly broad knowledge of the history and, indeed, the historiography of the late fourteenth-century parliament, it may seem surprising that this chapter focusses on an aspect of the business of parliament which, apparently, had all but disappeared by the mid-fourteenth century. Yet, despite the fact that the idea of a terminal decline in private petitioning has formed a central foundation of modern historiography and has never, to my knowledge, been challenged, it may not be as watertight as previously thought. This chapter summarises the findings of an extended period of research undertaken at the Public Record Office; the scrutiny of the extant original petitions repositied there, and the discovery of other related material, suggests that an important revision is now needed in our understanding of the place of the private petition in the late medieval parliament.

i) BACKGROUND

Before considering the new evidence, it is important to set the scene by outlining what is known of the development of the private petition and how it has been portrayed by modern historians. The private petition came to the fore during Edward I's reign when, in an effort to extend the crown's knowledge of affairs in the localities and to keep tabs on his own officials there, the king invited his subjects to submit their complaints in petitionary form to parliament.¹ At first, Edward intended handling this new business personally, but the new procedure was to prove so popular that very soon, around 1290, special committees of 'auditors' or 'triers' were set up in parliament in order to shoulder the main burden.² In the

¹ For the following paragraph see 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), pp.61-87; L. Reiss, *The History of English Electoral Law in the Middle Ages*, trans. K.L. Wood-Legh (repr. Cambridge, 1940), pp.3-7; G.L. Haskins, 'Three Early Petitions of the Commonalty', *Speculum*, xii (1937), 314-18 and *idem*, 'The Petitions of Representatives in the Parliaments of Edward I', *E.H.R.*, liii (1938), 1-20; J.F. Baldwin, *The King's Council in England during the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1913), p.322; A.F. Pollard, *The Evolution of Parliament* (London, 1920), pp.117-20. The most recent summary of the development of the petition can be found in W.M. Ormrod, *Political Life in Medieval England, 1300-1450* (London and Basingstoke, 1995), pp.33-7.

² There were two committees; up to 1355, one dealt with petitions for England and the other with petitions from Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Gascony, the Isles and other foreign parts; after 1355, one dealt with petitions for England, Ireland, Wales and Scotland, and the other for Gascony and other overseas possessions. See R.A. Griffiths, 'The English Realm and

early fourteenth century a gradual change occurred in the form of petitioning in parliament: the clerks of parliament increasingly began to distinguish between the original private petitions whose content pertained to the private complaints and requests of individuals or small groups, and other petitions which they identified as 'common petitions' because they concerned matters which were of general or common interest to the realm as a whole.³ By the 1320s common petitions came to be supported and sometimes actually drafted by the knights and burgesses at parliament who then sent them, via the clerk of parliament, direct to the king and council, thereby bypassing the panels of auditors.

Up to this point the story is fairly straightforward but what happened to the private petition subsequently? One thing is beyond dispute: by the 1330s, if not before, common petitions had established a position and status in parliament that was far superior to that of the private petition. Edward III's initiation of hostilities with France, and with it, the implementation of heavy and consistent taxation, inflated the importance of the common petition as the principal outlet for the complaints and demands of an increasingly outspoken community gathered at parliament. Indeed, the common petition not only provided the Commons with the means to voice collective opinion but soon it was to become the basis of virtually all new legislation that the king enacted. Its ascendancy over and above the private petition was confirmed in the 1330s when the clerk of parliament stopped enrolling private petitions on the parliament roll and replaced them with the growing numbers of common petitions which were now being presented in parliament;⁴ henceforth, private petitions were handed to the receivers and entered *in bundellis petitionum in parlamenti* by the receivers.⁵

There can be no question, therefore, that the private petition was increasingly sidelined, but many historians have taken the process one step further by implying that they virtually ceased to be part of parliamentary business altogether. Despite the cautionary words

Dominions and the King's Subjects in the Later Middle Ages', repr. in *idem, King and Country, England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1991), p.53, note 82. See also the discussion in chapter 4, pp.76-7.

³ A.R. Myers, 'Parliamentary Petitions in the Fifteenth Century', *E.H.R.*, lii (1937), 385-404, 590-613, repr. in *idem, Crown, Household and Parliament in Fifteenth Century England* (London, 1985), pp.1-44; D. Rayner, 'The Forms and Machinery of the "Commune Petition" in the Fourteenth Century', *E.H.R.*, lvi (1941), 198-233, 549-70; Haskins, 'Three Early Petitions'; W.M. Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III: Crown and Political Society in England 1327-1377* (London, 1990), p.61; and *idem*, 'Agenda for Legislation, 1322-c.1340', *E.H.R.*, cv (1990), 1-33.

⁴ F.W. Maitland, 'Introduction to Memoranda de Parlamento, 1305', repr. in E.B. Fryde and E. Miller, eds., *Historical Studies of the English Parliament*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1970), i, 91-135, esp. p.115, hereafter cited as *Memoranda de Parlamento*.

⁵ This is the view of Hale, cited by Maitland, *Memoranda de Parlamento*, p.115, note 2. See also Rayner, 'Forms and Machinery', p.232.

of Maitland,⁶ there is a widespread assumption that the private petition was an aspect of parliamentary activity more or less limited to the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries; that by the mid-fourteenth century it had almost become an irrelevance to the institution. Richardson and Sayles, for example, stated that ‘...for the latter part of [Edward III’s] reign there are no rolls of parliamentary [private] petitions, and if the chancery rolls are any guide the stream of petitions has become tenuous’.⁷ Sayles was to write independently that,

...it is..evident that [by the early 1330s] the stream [of private petitions] had been reduced to a trickle. The salient characteristic of the parliaments of Edward I - that is, the comprehensive dispensation of justice to all who sought it - had withered. We do not know clearly why this happened.⁸

J.S. Roskell was more explicit. He argued that,

...by the end of Edward III’s reign the main concern of the king had changed; it had come to be that of attempting to insist that the Commons should collectively be primarily interested in the settlement of the king’s business in parliament and in the discovery and expression there of the local attitude to governmental policy, and not individually in the exploitation of the opportunity a parliament afforded for the prosecution of their private concerns.⁹

More recently, A.L. Brown, speaking of the development of parliament over the course of the fourteenth century, stated that,

When parliament was an opportunity for the king, councillors, *curiales* and officials to meet and sort out problems - as well as consult about great matters - the private petition, though a nuisance, had its place; when it became an assembly of the kingdom, common business drove it out.....¹⁰

Elsewhere, Brown asserts that by Richard II’s reign private petitioning ‘...was an ancient but now relatively unimportant part of parliament’.¹¹

These assumptions, though mistaken, are perhaps understandable when placed

⁶ Maitland wrote ‘We still have every reason to believe that such petitions were still presented, for large quantities of them still exist, and some of them have been printed...’; *Memoranda de Parlamento*, p.115.

⁷ H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, ‘The Parliaments of Edward III’, *B.I.H.R.*, viii (1930), 65-77 and ix (1931), 1-18, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (London, 1981), ch.xxi, see part ii, pp.3-4. Also see their comments in ‘The Commons and Medieval Politics’, *T.R.H.S.*, xxviii (1945), 21-45, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament*, ch. xxiv, p.34.

⁸ G.O. Sayles, *The King’s Parliament of England* (London, 1975), p.110.

⁹ J.S. Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422: English Society and Parliamentary Representation under the Lancastrians* (Manchester, 1954), p.3.

¹⁰ A.L. Brown, ‘Parliament, c. 1377-1422’, in Davies and Denton, eds, *The English Parliament*, pp.109-140, quotation from p.217.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.122. Brown acknowledges that, ‘Thousands of original private petitions presented to the king in parliament survive...’, but this statement is not put into the context of a specific period and may simply refer to the large number of private petitions pertaining to the reigns of Edward I and Edward II which are printed in the parliament roll; p.161. G.L. Harriss is notably more circumspect in his assessment of private petitions, stating that, ‘Parliament long continued to be the venue for such petitions.....[b]ut this aspect of parliament’s work declined’; G.L. Harriss, ‘The Formation of Parliament, 1272-1377’, in Davies and Denton, eds., *The English Parliament*, pp.29-60, quotation from p.49.

in the context of the considerable methodological problems which face anyone attempting to unravel the development of the private petition in the late Middle Ages. The originals of the petitions are, for the most part, to be found in the P.R.O. collection of records that we know as Ancient Petitions, catalogued under class mark SC 8. This is an entirely artificial class born out of a disastrous reorganisation of the records between 1824 and 1853 which saw the complete destruction of the bundles of private petitions which the medieval chancery clerks had compiled after each parliament.¹² In their place the petitions were separated into individual items and arranged alphabetically according to the name of the petitioner. With the subsequent addition of material from a whole range of other departments of medieval government, modern historians have inherited a vast archive containing upwards of 16,000 individual documents whose only index is an alphabetical one, printed in the 1920s, as part of the P.R.O. Lists and Indexes series.¹³ Needless to say, whilst this arrangement may be useful for the study of specific individuals or locations, it makes the task of identifying which petitions were specifically parliamentary, and how many were presented in one particular assembly, virtually impossible.¹⁴ This was not all, however. The reorganisation of the original bundles also entailed the separation of the petition from their original warrants, which effectively removed the means by which petitions could be dated. The efforts of subsequent P.R.O. staff in the 1890s and 1920s have gone some way towards repairing this damage, but the dating of the petitions remains highly problematic and, in many cases, very imprecise. The only serious attempt to overcome these twin problems of identification and dating was made by Richardson and Sayles, who advocated a search through the calendars of chancery rolls to establish how many chancery instruments had a warranty note which specifically indicated that it originated 'by petition in parliament'.¹⁵ It is important to point out, however, that this system is inherently flawed: not only does it rest on the assumption that all private petitions resulted in a response from the crown, but it assumes that this response always took the form of a chancery instrument. As we

¹² A useful summary of the vicissitudes of the class of Ancient Petitions is provided by R.L. Atkinson and H.C. Maxwell-Lyte in their 'Report (1924) on Ancient Petitions', in *Index of Ancient Petitions*, Lists and Indexes, i (repr. 1966), pp.2-9.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ The severe limitations of this source material are shown by the fact that the only major works to have been undertaken on Ancient Petitions are those which use a geographical area as the basis for the selection of particular examples; in other words, their provenance to a particular department of government is, for most part, left unaddressed. See *Ancient Petitions Relating to Northumberland*, ed. C.M. Fraser, Surtees Society, clxxi (Durham and London, 1961); *Calendar of Ancient Petitions Relating to Wales*, ed. W. Rees (Cardiff, 1975); and P. Connolly, 'Irish Material in the class of Ancient Petitions (SC8) in the Public Record Office London', *Analecta Hibernica*, xxiv (1987), 1-106.

¹⁵ Richardson and Sayles, 'The Parliaments of Edward III', pt. ii, p.3, first part of note 6.

shall see, such examples, far from representing the typical outcome to private petitions, were really quite rare and, as such, they comprised only a fraction of the overall total.

So, what evidence can be brought to bear in order to throw light on an area of parliamentary activity that has long been shrouded in obscurity? How can we challenge the orthodox interpretation which dismisses the private petition as an irrelevance after c.1350? Before introducing the fresh material from the P.R.O., a number of important objections to the orthodoxy can be made straight away just on the basis of the evidence that we already have to hand. In the first place, if private petitions faded so much by the mid-fourteenth century, this raises awkward questions about why, as Table 7 shows, the machinery for dealing with them remained intact well into the fifteenth century. It is true that the peerage may not have been assiduous attenders of these committees (hence the fixing of a quorum in 1377), but can their continued appointment in such large numbers be attributed merely to 'the growth of ceremonial in parliament' as Richardson and Sayles have suggested?¹⁶ Exactly how could the appointment to an apparently obsolete and unused committee convey a sense of privilege and status? Indeed, what were the receivers doing if not handling petitions, and why were the chancellor, treasurer and the steward and chamberlain of the household assigned to be of assistance to the committees if there was little practical business to be done?

Secondly, how plausible is the theory that parliament lost its attraction as the forum in which individual grievances could be redressed? Again, it is quite true that the council and particularly the chancery expanded the scope of their jurisdiction during this period, but we should be cautious in assuming that they developed powers which were entirely equal or compatible to those of parliament.¹⁷ The advantages which this latter institution possessed in dealing with private supplications remained throughout the late medieval period and continued to be valued by contemporaries.¹⁸ For example, though private petitions were never assured

¹⁶ H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, 'The King's Ministers in Parliament, 1327-1377', *E.H.R.*, xlvii (1932), 377-897, pp.385-6, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament*, ch.xxii.

¹⁷ Baldwin, *King's Council*, pp.241-54; *Select Cases before the King's Council 1243-1485*, ed. I.S. Leadam and J.F. Baldwin, Seldon Soc., xxxv (1918); M. Avery, 'The History of the Equitable Jurisdiction of Chancery Before 1460', *B.I.H.R.*, xlii (1969), 129-44 and *idem*, 'An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Court of Chancery under the Lancastrian Kings', *L.Q.R.*, lxxxvi (1970), 84-97. See also the references in G.L. Harriss, 'Political Society and the Growth of Government in Late Medieval England', *P&P*, cxxxviii (1993), 28-57, p.36, note 23. Note Sayles' later objection to the notion of the chancery stealing business from parliament and his revised idea that the explanation lies in '...the widespread use of petitions, otherwise called bills, to obtain justice in central and local courts of justice throughout England...'; *The King's Parliament*, p.110.

¹⁸ These advantages have been alluded to by Maitland, *Memoranda de Parlamento*, p.lxix; Richardson and Sayles in their 'Introduction' to *Rotuli Parliamentorum Anglie Hactenus Inediti*, ed. *idem*, Camden Soc., 3rd ser., li (1935), pp.ix-x; Baldwin, *King's Council*, p.327. More recently Carol Rawcliffe has highlighted the importance that the late medieval parliament held up as a forum for the settlement of private disputes, though it is noticeable that she avoids making any quantitative assessment of this type of business; C. Rawcliffe, 'Parliament and the Settlement of Disputes by Arbitration

**TABLE 7 - NUMBERS OF RECEIVERS AND AUDITORS APPOINTED IN
PARLIAMENTS BETWEEN 1369 AND 1421**

Bold = England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales.
Normal = Gascony and other foreign parts.

| Year of Parliament | Receivers | | Auditors | | Year of Parliament | Receivers | | Auditors | |
|--------------------|-----------|---|-----------|----|--------------------|-----------|---|-----------|----|
| 1369 | 3 | 3 | 22 | 16 | 1399 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 12 |
| 1371 | 4 | 3 | 22 | 17 | 1401 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 12 |
| 1372 | 4 | 3 | 23 | 16 | 1402 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 12 |
| 1373 | 5 | 2 | 17 | 10 | 1404 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 12 |
| 1376 | 5 | 4 | 25 | 22 | 1404 | 3 | 3 | 10 | 12 |
| 1377 | 4 | 4 | 23 | 18 | 1406 | 3 | 3 | 12 | 12 |
| | | | | | 1407 | 3 | 3 | 12 | 12 |
| | | | | | 1410 | 3 | 3 | 12 | 12 |
| 1377 | 4 | 4 | 29 | 24 | 1411 | 3 | 3 | 12 | 12 |
| 1378 | 4 | 4 | 25 | 23 | | | | | |
| 1379 | 4 | 5 | 23 | 21 | | | | | |
| 1380 | 4 | 5 | 20 | 18 | 1413 | 3 | 3 | 12 | 12 |
| 1380 | 4 | 5 | 15 | 16 | 1414 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 8 |
| 1381 | 4 | 4 | 18 | 17 | 1414 | 3 | 3 | 24 | 16 |
| 1382 | 4 | 4 | 18 | 11 | 1415 | 3 | 3 | 11 | 9 |
| 1382 | 4 | 4 | 17 | 12 | 1416 | 3 | 3 | 13 | 6 |
| 1383 | 4 | 4 | 13 | 12 | 1416 | 3 | 2 | 13 | 7 |
| 1383 | 5 | 4 | 17 | 17 | 1417 | 3 | 2 | 10 | 6 |
| 1384 | 4 | 4 | 11 | 9 | 1419 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 5 |
| 1384 | 4 | 4 | 18 | 18 | 1420 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 5 |
| 1385 | 4 | 3 | 19 | 16 | 1421 | 3 | 2 | 8 | 5 |
| 1386 | 4 | 3 | 19 | 11 | 1421 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 5 |
| 1388 | 4 | 3 | 16 | 9 | | | | | |
| 1388 | - | - | - | - | | | | | |
| 1390 | 4 | 3 | 19 | 12 | | | | | |
| 1390 | 4 | 4 | 19 | 11 | | | | | |
| 1391 | 4 | 4 | 17 | 12 | | | | | |
| 1393 | 3 | 4 | 15 | 12 | | | | | |
| 1394 | 3 | 3 | 15 | 12 | | | | | |
| 1395 | 3 | 2 | 15 | 11 | | | | | |
| 1397 | 3 | 4 | 16 | 15 | | | | | |
| 1397 | 4 | 4 | 21 | 15 | | | | | |

the personal attention of the king, the fact that the king was nearly always present in parliament - which was not the case either in the council or in chancery - cannot be underestimated when assessing contemporary attitudes to this institution. It is worth remembering that one of the defining characteristics of private petitions was that they were resorted to only after all other

ordinary processes for settlement had been exhausted and when the king's personal attention was especially sort after. Arguably, parliament, as the highest court of the realm, represented the best opportunity for individuals to secure royal grace in these circumstances. On a more practical level, the limited duration of parliament also ensured that answers to grievances could be provided - one way or another - within a relatively short span of time.¹⁹ In an age when the judicial system was not noted for its speedy dispatch of business, this must also have been an extremely positive point in favour of parliament.

Thirdly, although private petitions ceased to be enrolled after the 1330s, the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* still indicates the presence of this type of petition well into the second half of the century. This is shown by the existence of separate lists of petitions entitled *Petitiones in Parlamento*.²⁰ These were private petitions which the editors of the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* had selected from amongst the undisturbed collections of petitions found either within the Tower of London ('Ex Originalibus in Turri London') or from the manuscript collections of Sir Mathew Hale ('Ex MSS. M. Hale, Mil') at the end of the eighteenth century. Moreover, even within the recorded proceedings of parliament there are indications of the continuing existence of private petitions late into the fourteenth century. In 1371, for example, a common petition was presented in parliament which made a clear distinction between petitions which had been presented '...par severalles Persones, Villes ou Countees', and those which had been presented, '...par les Communes suisdites de lour Grevances'.²¹ In 1373 the king was recorded to have wished 'qe autres singulers persones qe voleient mettre avant lour Petitions, q'ils les meissent avant et deliverassent as Clercs a ceo atitelez antre cy et Joedy prochein...'.²² Later in the same parliament, when the Commons asked that '...les Petitions de chescun Droit dont remedie ne poet estre suy en nul autere Court mes en Parlement, q'elles soient ore en ceste present Parment acceptez', they were answered, 'Ce q[ue] touche singulere persone soit monstre en especiale, et les S[i]r[e]s se aviseront'.²³ As late as January 1397, it was recorded that '...le Roi avoit ordenez et assigne certains Clercs pur resceivre Petitions especialx des causes et matiers appurtenantes a Parlement, et certains Seigneurs pur trier et respondre

¹⁹ See the comments made by Richardson and Sayles in their 'Introduction', *Rotuli Parliamentorum Angliae Hactenus Inediti*, p.x.

²⁰ See *RP.* iii. 30-1, 50-4, 69-70, 126-31, 175-83, 225-7, 253-6, 274-6, 297-9, 324-8, 447-8, 480-2, 483-4, 512-21, 560-6; iv. 27-33, 55-61, 87-93, 158-62, 163-5.

²¹ *RP.* ii. 304.16.

²² *RP.* ii. 316.7.

²³ *RP.* ii. 318.14.

a mesmes les Petitions en manere acustume',²⁴ and in the following parliament a special committee was appointed to discharge '...diverses peticions si bien pur especialx persones come autres...'.²⁵

Finally, how do we correlate the opinion that, on the one hand, private petitions more or less disappeared by the mid-fourteenth century with, on the other hand, the fact that by the first few decades of the fifteenth century they had apparently reappeared, but in the guise of petitions which had been endorsed or 'sponsored' by the Commons?²⁶ What happened in the intervening period? Are we to believe that there was a gap of about fifty years in which virtually no private petitions were sent to parliament, and that 'sponsored' private petitions simply materialised out of nothing? Conversely, if no ordinary private petitions were presented to parliament after c.1350 did this mean that winning the support of the Commons was the *only* way in which an individual or small group could have a grievance redressed in parliament after this date?

ii) PRIVATE PETITIONS IN PARLIAMENT: THE EVIDENCE

a/ Illingworth's Notebook

The momentous methodological problems involved in the study of private petitions, together with the dubious historiographical assessment of their place in late medieval history, can now be addressed directly. The evidence comes in three parts, but the most important is a very small hand-written notebook that can be found in the Public Record Office under the class mark PRO 31/8/189. It was written in 1804 by an antiquarian called William Illingworth,²⁷ one copy was sent to the then current Speaker of the House of Commons, and the other, presumably the one which now survives, must eventually have found its way to the P.R.O. Illingworth's notebook represents a significant advance in the possibilities for analysing the incidence of private petitioning in the late medieval parliament. Its enormous value lies in

²⁴ *RP*. iii. 337.2.

²⁵ *RP*. iii. 368.74. See also J.G. Edwards, 'The Parliamentary Committee of 1398', *E.H.R.*, xl (1925), 321-333, repr. in Fryde and Miller, eds., *Historical Studies*, i, see esp. pp.317-19.

²⁶ Myers, 'Parliamentary Petitions', pp.14-20. 'Sponsored' private petitions are discussed below, pp.193-200.

²⁷ A useful account of his career is provided in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. S. Lee (London, 1891), vol. xxviii, pp.415-6. It was in his capacity as a sub-commissioner on public records (appointed between 1800 and 1805) that he must have come to write this notebook. In 1805 he was appointed to the post of deputy keeper of the records in the Tower which he appears to have held until 1819 when he was passed over for promotion and resigned. This was his last formal connection to the Record Commission and he appears to have ended his days a rather neglected and unfulfilled man.

the fact that Illingworth approached the subject *before* the drastic reorganisation of the archive between 1824 and 1853. The notebook is approximately forty pages long and is entitled 'Notes on Parliamentary Records'. There is a subheading which reads, 'Endorsed Petitions in Parlamento'. Within these pages Illingworth catalogues what, undoubtedly, appears to be the undisturbed archive of extant bundles of private petitions presented in some - but not all - parliaments in both the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries up to 1460. He provides the regnal year to which the bundle belonged and, most significantly, he records how many individual petitions were contained within one bundle, thus indicating how many were presented in parliament. In addition to this crucial information, other items which interested Illingworth were added to his notes and included comments on the style of address by a petitioner, the form of some responses by the crown to selected, but unspecified, petitions, and the occasional reference to a particular case that caught his eye. For the sake of clarity I have tabulated the information contained within Illingworth's notebook for the years between 1377 and 1421 (see Table 8, column one). It can be seen from this table that although his bundles do not form a complete series for the period, there is enough information here to change dramatically our understanding of what happened to private petitions once they ceased to be enrolled after the 1330s .

Before turning our attention to the period covered by this thesis, it is worth briefly touching on what Illingworth records for the reigns prior to this. As it happens, only a fraction of his book deals with the years before Richard II's reign; one page for Edward I, three for his son and just two for his grandson. He also failed to record the number of petitions that many of the bundles contained. Nevertheless one point of interest does emerge. For the parliament of 1321 Illingworth noted that there was a bundle containing 280 petitions, but underneath he remarked that only 163 were printed in the *Rotuli Parliamentorum*. This neatly illustrates what Richardson and Sayles showed for the parliament of 1318: namely, that when private petitions were enrolled before the 1330s, only those petitions which were dealt with by the auditors of parliament were included; those that received no answers or were diverted to other departments of government were simply omitted (in the case of 1318, these amounted to no fewer than 117 petitions).²⁸ In other words, *bundles* of petitions appear to have recorded the total number presented in parliament whereas enrolled private petitions and the corresponding entries in the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* listed only a selected minority. Illingworth

²⁸ *Rotuli Parliamentorum Anglie Hactenus Inediti*, pp.64-80.

**TABLE 8: Private Petitions Recorded by William Illingworth and
Sir Francis Palgrave, 1377-1421**

Note: In column one, the heading 'Total' represents the number of private petitions in two or more bundles which Illingworth recorded for *one* regnal year; it is provided so that a correlation can be made with Palgrave, who organised his work only in regnal years. Numbers in bold indicate where the figures of Illingworth and Palgrave correlate exactly, or very nearly.

| <u>Column One: Illingworth</u> | | | | | <u>Column Two: Palgrave</u> | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------|------------------|------------|-----------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Parliament | Regnal Year | Bundle Number | No. of Petitions | Total | PRO Class | Regnal Year | No. of Petitions |
| Richard II | | | | | | | |
| Oct. 1377 | 1 | 1 | 49 | | 31/7 106 | 1 | 49 |
| 1379 | 2 | 1 | 37} | | | | |
| 1378 | 2 | 2 | 68} | 105 | 31/7 106 | 2 | 105 |
| 1381 | 5 | 1 | 12 | | 31/7 107 | 5 | 62 |
| May 1382 | 5 | 2 | 106 | | 31/7 108 | 5 | 97 |
| Oct 1383 | 7 | 1 | 36} | | | | |
| Apr. 1384 | 7 | 2 | 25} | | | | |
| Nov. 1384? | 7 | 3 | 31} | 92 | 31/7 109 | 7 | 93 |
| Feb. 1388 | 11 | 1 | 43 | | - | - | - |
| Sept. 1388 | 11 | 2 | 110 | | 31/7 110 | 11 | 110 |
| Jan. 1390? | 13 | 1 | 27} | | | | |
| Nov. 1390 | 13 | 2 | 29} | 56 | 31/7 111 | 13 | 62 |
| 1391 | 15 | 1 | 29 | | 31/7 111 | 15 | 53 |
| 1394 | 17 | 1 | 50 | | 31/7 112 | 17 | 62 |
| Henry IV | | | | | | | |
| 1399 | 1 | 1 | 10 | | - | - | - |
| 1402? | 3 | 1 | 26 | | 31/7 113 | 3 | 18 |
| Jan 1404? | 4 | 1 | 30 | | 31/7 113 | 4 | 5 |
| Oct. 1404 | 6 | 1 | 14 | | 31/7 113 | 6 | 3 |
| 1406 | 7 | 1 | 12 | | 31/7 113 | 7 | 11 |
| Henry V | | | | | | | |
| Apr. 1414 | 2 | 1 | 19 | | - | - | - |
| Nov. 1414 | 2 | 2 | 12 | | 31/7 114 | 2 | 11 |
| 1415 | 3 | 1 | 16(48?) | | - | - | - |
| May 1421 | 9 | 1 | 30 | | 31/7 114 | 9 | 31 |
| Dec. 1421 | 9 | 2 | 15 | | - | - | - |

directly supports this by stating that,

On the greatest part of all the above Petitions, [these were five bundles including the one cited above, and one of an uncertain year containing 3-400 petitions (perhaps the parliament of 1318?)] to which answers appear to have been given, there is this Endorsement "Irr" - purporting that these petitions had been enrolled on a Roll of Petitions.

This might also have been the case in 1335, when a bundle containing 35 petitions was recorded by Illingworth, and only 22 printed in the *Rotuli Parliamentorum*.

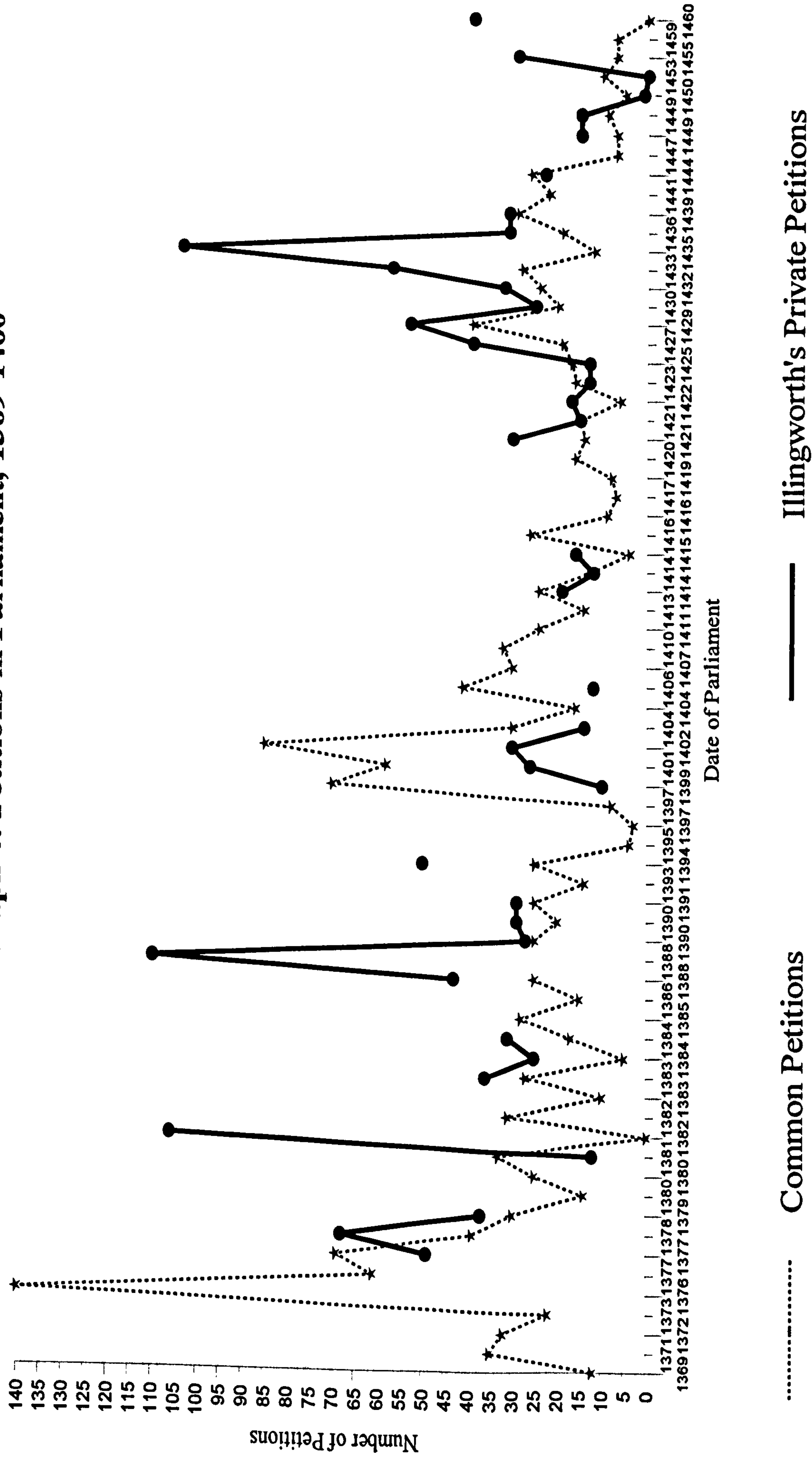
On a more general level it is especially noticeable how thinly Illingworth covers Edward III's reign. Recently, Professor Mark Ormrod attempted a reappraisal of private petitions under this king and concluded that, although there was strong circumstantial evidence for their prevalence throughout the reign, the chances of actually proving this are remote because many of the original bundles had been either 'stolen, irreparably damaged or permanently misplaced' - even before the seventeenth century.²⁹ This is a view which the lack of coverage within Illingworth's notebook unfortunately appears to vindicate. Indeed, it is interesting to note that one of the last comments Illingworth made was that there could be found in a 'closet' in the Wakefield Tower, in the Tower of London, 6 or 7 bundles of petitions addressed to the 'king and council in parliament during the reigns of Edward I, II and III [which] contain many hundreds; and have not hitherto been noticed'. This, and the fact that we know that approximately 6000 'parliamentary petitions' (*sic*)³⁰ were subsequently discovered in 1805, in the White Tower, suggests that many of the petitions from Edward III's reign could well be lost, but purely in the sense that they are no longer identifiable from amongst the other categories of documents within the class of Ancient Petitions.

The real significance of Illingworth's book rests with the later period and is encapsulated in Graph 4, which compares the number of private petitions with the number of common petitions presented to parliament in the period between 1369 and 1460. (Henry VI's reign has been included for the sake of interest). To appreciate the enormous significance of what this graph shows, we must remember that it covers the years when the private petition had apparently all but disappeared, having been almost entirely eclipsed by the ascendancy of the common petition. This graph indicates that although the private petition was not as prevalent

²⁹ W.M. Ormrod, 'Going off the Record: Private Petitioning in Fourteenth-Century Parliaments' - a paper read at the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, July, 1997.

³⁰ This is how Richardson and Sayles describe them in their 'Introduction' to *Rotuli Parliamentorum Anglie Hactenus Inediti*, p.xxvi.

Graph 4: Petitions in Parliament, 1369-1460



..... Common Petitions

———— Illingworth's Private Petitions

as it was under Edward I or Edward II, nevertheless, it was still a factor of considerable importance in the business of the late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century parliament. Remarkably, it had not only survived its relegation off the parliament roll, but the number of private petitions being presented in parliament was regularly surpassing the number of common petitions throughout the late medieval period. The average number of common petitions between 1369 and 1421, for example, was 27; the average number of private petitions - in the twenty-four parliaments where figures are available - was no fewer than 34. On only one occasion in this period - in the Good Parliament of 1376 - did the number of common petitions surpass the one hundred mark. Yet this happened on no fewer than *three* occasions for private petitions: once in the parliament of May 1382; once in the Cambridge parliament of 1388; and again in 1435.

Besides a straightforward comparison of the numbers of the two types of petition, the graph also provides us with a fascinating insight into the relative fluctuations of the private and common petitions across the period. Of course, we will never know for certain why some parliaments attracted more petitions than others, but in some cases the prevalence of petitioning is sufficiently suggestive as to warrant at least a few informed guesses. It might, for example, shed new light on the perplexing assembly of May 1382, as some uncertainty exists as to whether this was simply an adjournment of the previous parliament of 1381. Although N.B. Lewis ultimately rejected the suggestion, he did, nevertheless, point out that the primary objective of the summons to the 1382 parliament was to ‘...expedite the collection of the subsidy voted the previous November’, and he also remarked that the king had attempted to return, as far as possible, the same men who had attended the 1381 session.³¹ Added to this was the fact that no additional taxation was asked for or granted in 1382, no common petitions were presented and, perhaps, most strangely of all six common petitions presented in October 1382 consistently referred to both the previous two assemblies as ‘le darrein parlement’.³² That the two parliaments were in some way linked could be further supported by the bizarre fluctuation that Illingworth records in the numbers of common and private petitions: in 1381 there were 33 common petitions and 12 private petitions, but in May 1382, they numbered zero and 106 respectively. This disparity may well have indicated that most private concerns had been put off in 1381 because of the urgency and tension that must have dominated the proceedings in the aftermath of the Peasants’ Revolt. If true, it is possible that the parliament of May 1382 met,

³¹ N.B. Lewis, ‘Re-election to Parliament in the Reign of Richard II’, *E.H.R.*, xli (1926), 364-94, p.388, note 4.

³² *RP*. iii. 137.27, 138.29, 138.32, 138.34, 138.36, 141.52.

at least in part, so that this postponed business could now be dealt with. It is interesting in this regard that the personnel who were appointed as receivers in these two parliaments were identical, though in the assemblies preceding and following there were changes.

The reception of private petitions (as well as common petitions) may therefore have depended on what was happening at the 'centre', but this did not just involve the crown intervening in the process; petitioners themselves appeared, on occasion, to respond to developments in 'high politics'. The large number of private petitions presented in the first parliaments of Richard II's reign, for example, could well have reflected an increased sense of expectation by petitioners for a more favourable response to their grievances as a result of the change of government. The Cambridge parliament of 1388 saw the highest known peak of private petitions between 1369 and 1460 - a situation that was surely linked to the breakdown in law and order which occurred under the Appellant regime and the widespread perception that the king was now willing to address and resolve the grievances of the political community.³³ In contrast, under Henry IV and Henry V far fewer private petitions appear to have been presented. Was this indicative of the preoccupation of the political community, as in 1381, with crucial matters of state? In Henry IV's case, with the regime fighting for its survival in the first half of the reign, private business in parliament may simply have been swamped by public concerns about the kingdom's defence, royal expenditure and, in 1406, the king's health.³⁴ The downturn in numbers of private petitions under Henry V paralleled a similar development that was occurring with the number of common petitions and may have been another indication that most people's minds were focussed primarily on events across the Channel - if for no other reason than that the king was there.³⁵ The reign of Henry VI is beyond the remit of the present discussion, but attention should be drawn to the peak of 1435, when no fewer than 104 private petitions were presented in parliament. It is possible that this upsurge indicated a broad-based response in the country to the determined campaign to restore law and order which had been

³³ J.A. Tuck, 'The Cambridge Parliament, 1388', *E.H.R.*, lxxxiv (1969), 225-42; R.L. Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace, 1388-90', in F.R.H. Du Boulay and C.M. Barron, eds., *The Reign of Richard II: Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (London, 1971), pp.131-52, esp. pp.134-6; N. Saul, *Richard II* (London, 1997), pp.199-202.

³⁴ The standard works of parliament under Henry IV are A. Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons and Taxation', *Mediaeval Studies*, xxxi (1969), 47-70; A.L. Brown, 'The Commons and the Council in the Reign of Henry IV', *E.H.R.*, lxxxix (1964), 1-30, repr. in Fryde and Miller, eds., *Historical Studies*, ii, pp.31-60. It is interesting that on three occasions in Henry IV's reign, the chancellor ordered parliament to attend to the business of the king before seeing to singular or private matters; see below, p.181, note 51.

³⁵ This is discussed in more detail in chapter 4, pp.135-8. The best summary of parliament under Henry V is provided by Harriss, 'The Management of Parliament', in *idem.*, ed., *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (Oxford, 1985), pp.137-58.

launched by both the Commons and the duke of Bedford in the previous parliament of 1433.³⁶ Conversely the down-turn in the number of private petitions in the late 1440s and early 1450s could be accounted for by the increasingly chaotic and turbulent nature of domestic politics which was taking up parliament's time at this point.³⁷

Illingworth's notebook also sheds light on the nature of the *Petitiones in Parlamento* which were printed in the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* for the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Some doubt hangs over exactly what they represented. Whilst their identity as private petitions has never really been questioned, in the past it has been impossible to establish why their inclusion in the volumes was so unequal across time and why, when they were included, sometimes only a handful were recorded for one parliament.³⁸ In Richard II's reign, for example, whereas just two *Petitiones in Parlamento* have been entered for the parliament of 1386, five in October 1377 and six in 1391, the numbers in the parliaments of May 1382, April 1384 and September 1388 are fifteen, twenty-five and nineteen respectively.³⁹ The variability is shown to equal effect in Henry IV's reign when just nine *Petitiones in Parlamento* were recorded by the editors of the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* in 1401, compared to thirty-one in 1402.⁴⁰ Were these the total number of private petitions presented to parliament? The answer is most definitely no, for Illingworth seemed very conscious of the relationship between the eighteenth-century printed edition of the parliament rolls and the original bundles of petitions he was looking at, and routinely noted down that only a fraction of the total number of petitions that made up any single bundle had actually been printed.⁴¹ Some clue as to the system the editors of the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* used is suggested by the fact that all the printed *Petitiones in Parlamento* have answers or responses from the crown. Significantly, Illingworth counted 49 private petitions for the parliament of 1377 and noted that, of these, '...only 4 are printed - *those not answered are omitted*' (my italics).

³⁶ *RP*. iv. 419-80; R.A. Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI: The exercise of royal authority, 1422-1461* (London, 1981), p.146.

³⁷ The best summary is provided by B.P. Wolffe, *Henry VI* (London, 1981), pp.215-66.

³⁸ J.G. Edwards is the only historian to have addressed this question directly but his conclusions, are, at best, ambiguous; he does not make it clear what he means by 'enrolled' petitions in the late fourteenth century, and he provides no supporting evidence for his assertion that only those petitions were answered 'by the king by authority of parliament'; *The Second Century of the English Parliament* (Oxford, 1979), p.56.

³⁹ *RP*. iii. 225-7, 30-1, 297-99; 126-31, 175-83, 253-6.

⁴⁰ *RP*. iii. 480-2, 483-4, 512-21.

⁴¹ This indicates that Richardson and Sayles are mistaken in describing the petitions printed in the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* after the 1330s as forming 'bundles of petitions' since the numbers they provide are, in all probability, fractions of the total presented in parliament altogether; Richardson and Sayles, 'The Parliaments of Edward III', pt. ii, p.3, second half of note 6.

b/ Palgrave's Transcriptions

No matter how significant Illingworth's notebook is for the history of petitioning in parliament, it does only record *numbers* of petitions. Except for a handful of references jotted down rather cursorily, there is no real indication of who the petitioners were and what they were petitioning about. Moreover, we have no idea whether the style of petitions developed over time nor, in many cases, what proportion actually received answers from the crown. This brings us to the second part of the evidence and, in particular, a large collection of transcripts of parliamentary petitions which was undertaken by Sir Francis Palgrave between 1824 and 1827. These are arranged in a series of twenty-eight volumes each containing collections of petitions that have been arranged in regnal years and which are cross-referenced with their originals in the class of Ancient Petitions. It would appear that the volumes had been intended to form part of a new edition of the parliament rolls but because this project never materialised they have lain, for the most part forgotten, in the Public Record Office under class mark PRO 31/7.⁴² Treated in isolation, it is difficult to verify the provenance of these petitions (this may explain their neglect) but in conjunction with Illingworth's notebook there can be little doubt that both men were working on the same archive and, consequently, that Palgrave was, indeed, transcribing *parliamentary* private petitions.

Clearly, this is an assertion which is of immense significance and requires both clarification and proof before discussion continues any further. There are two ways of doing this. The first is a simple quantitative comparison between the two sets of records (see Table 8). This is complicated by the fact that whereas Illingworth counted the number of petitions within separate bundles, Palgrave's transcriptions were, as indicated already, organised into regnal years. This means that on the occasions when more than one parliament was summoned within a year, Palgrave's estimates have to be divided in order to correlate with Illingworth's figures (in the table, it can be seen that this has occurred in the regnal years of 1,2,7 and 13 Richard II). Admittedly there are discrepancies, which could have many different explanations, but enough of the figures correspond exactly, or to within a handful, to make it highly unlikely indeed that they were not looking at the same documents.

The second way of proving the link between Illingworth and Palgrave lies with the occasional references Illingworth made to specific cases that caught his attention. I have

⁴² Richardson and Sayles, 'Introduction', in *Rotuli Parliamentorum Anglie Hactenus Inediti*, p.xxvi.

counted about twenty examples in which the name of a petitioner and/or the content of a petition - as noted by Illingworth - corresponded exactly with a transcript of a petition that Palgrave had assigned to the same parliament (or regnal year, if appropriate). For example, Illingworth mentioned a petition which concerned, as he put it, ‘..the writs of Capias et Exigent in certain cases’. It seems to have caught his attention because it was addressed from the Commons. This he dated to 1378 and in the corresponding entry by Palgrave there is the full transcript of a petition, from the Commons, mentioning exactly this subject.⁴³ For the parliament of 1394, Illingworth noted a petition by John Banbery (*sic*) which had been addressed *to* the Commons. The petition was apparently marked, ‘Soit p[ar]le a S[ire]s’ and then ‘accordez et assentuz’. Correspondingly, this petition was transcribed in full by Palgrave for the 1394 parliament, where we learn that it was from John Banbury of Bristol who was complaining about incursions from the Welsh.⁴⁴ During Henry IV’s reign, in the parliament of January 1404, Illingworth notes petitions from Thomas Pomeroy, Leonard, Abbot of Newenham and Nicolas Pontingham, all of which have corresponding transcripts in Palgrave’s volumes.⁴⁵ And, finally, in Henry V’s reign, Illingworth details no fewer than seven private petitions presented to the parliament of May 1421, of which six can definitely be traced amongst Palgrave’s transcriptions for the same regnal year.⁴⁶

With reasonable certainty, therefore, it can be assumed that Palgrave does provide the transcripts of complete series of private petitions presented to specific parliaments in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Needless to say, this opens out the subject far more than if we simply had the numbers given to us by Illingworth. We are now in a position not only to quantify, but also to assess the *complexion* of, a part of the business of the late medieval parliament which has, hitherto, remained almost completely hidden from us. Perhaps the most basic question is what sort of people were utilising parliament for the settlement of their own individual concerns? Some idea of this can be gained from a rather crude categorisation of the identity of the petitioners in two selected parliaments. For example, out of a total of 49 private petitions presented in the parliament of October 1377,⁴⁷ 17 (34 per cent) were presented by named individuals and concerned, for the most part, litigation over disputed

⁴³ PRO 31/7/106. The reference for the Ancient Petition is SC 8/102/5057.

⁴⁴ PRO 31/7/112; SC 8/96/4758.

⁴⁵ PRO 31/7/115; SC 8/22/1078, 126/6261, 135/6718.

⁴⁶ PRO 31/7/114; SC 8/24/1157, 1158, 1159, 1161, 144/7167.

⁴⁷ The following petitions can be found transcribed in PRO 31/7/106.

lands, manors and titles: 3 (6 per cent) were presented by members of the peerage - John, earl of Hereford, William, earl of Salisbury, and Margaret, Countess of Norfolk; 4 (8 per cent) came from religious establishments or persons; 11 (22 per cent) came from groups of residents from urban centres, including the burgesses of Calais, the mariners and burgesses of Dartmouth, the fish sellers of London, the Mayor and bailiffs of Newcastle, and separate supplications from the 'communes' of Portsmouth, Norwich and Great Yarmouth; and 8 (16 per cent) were presented in the name of 'county communities'. These latter included petitions from 'the king's lieges' of Cumberland, Northumberland and Westmorland; the 'communes' of Essex and Hertfordshire; of Staffordshire, Salop and Derbyshire; and of Devonshire. Finally, there were two particularly unusual petitions: one from Alice Pope of London who complained of debts owed to her as a victualler of the household of Alice Perrers; and another addressed to the king from '...ses liges si biens pieres de son roialme', asking for an age limit on boys taking religious orders. At the other end of the period, in the parliament of December 1421,⁴⁸ 30 private petitions were presented, of which 15 (50 per cent) came from named individuals; 2 (6 per cent) were from members of the peerage - Thomas, earl of Salisbury and William, Lord Clinton; 1 (3 per cent) from an abbey and priory; 2 (6 per cent) from the 'communes' of groups of counties - in this case, Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmorland, and Cornwall and Devon; and finally 8 (26 per cent) from or for urban interests which included Oxford, Bristol, Colchester, London, Truro and Melcombe.

That the interests of individual petitioners predominated amongst this business is perhaps of no great surprise given that these were *private* petitions, but what is more notable is the high level of input from the communities of urban centres. In both the above parliaments, towns and cities sent by far the most 'community' petitions and a look at the extant petitions across the period as a whole confirms that their prominence was fairly typical. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss in any detail the relationship between parliament and urban centres, but this finding provides useful material for those seeking to emphasise how corporate identities developed within urban communities and how parliament itself could go a long way towards the articulation of this self-identity.⁴⁹ The broad geographical distribution of the towns in these petitions also serves to demonstrate how the influence of parliament spread right across

⁴⁸ See PRO 31/7/114.

⁴⁹ Although the provenance of some of petitions which have been used is open to question, there is still some useful discussion on this subject by M. Rose, 'Petitions in parliament under the Lancastrians from, or relating to, towns', London University, M.A. thesis (1926).

the kingdom and represented as much hope for the mayor and bailiffs of Newcastle, for example, as it did to the inhabitants of Truro or Norwich. Clearly, in the purely urban context, Palgrave's transcriptions demonstrate that the late medieval parliament was not some regional assembly serving the interests of London; it really was there for the kingdom as a whole. Finally, with such a comparatively large number of private petitions coming from specific urban communities who, for the most, sent their own MPs to parliament, this confirms what has already been suggested in other secondary work, that particular attention must have been paid by the boroughs to elect MPs who could represent their local concerns most effectively at the 'centre'.⁵⁰

As for the shire knights themselves, we are now in a position to assess exactly how many of their number attended parliament primarily to forward local interests or their own individual concerns. It has long been suspected that this was an important motivation for parliamentary attendance, particularly in light of the occasional insistence by the crown that the Commons should discard their private business and concentrate on the more important matters of state; but there has been little chance of actually proving this.⁵¹ The evidence of Palgrave's transcriptions, together with additional examples that I have identified amongst the class of Ancient Petitions,⁵² throws important new light on the subject. In the first place, it would seem that in certain counties, or groups of counties, a premium was, indeed, placed on the ability of the two elected knights to forward the grievances of the shire at parliament.⁵³ These included counties in the Scottish and Welsh marches (complaining about enemy incursions, lawlessness and poverty),⁵⁴ those adjoining Chester (complaining about lawlessness),⁵⁵ those complaining

⁵⁰ M. McKisack, *The Parliamentary Representation of the English Boroughs during the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1932), pp.133-6; Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III*, p.187-8; *idem*, *Political Life*, pp.46-7; Maddicott, 'Parliament and the Constituencies', pp.69-70, 76-7.

⁵¹ Note the remark made in 1401 by William Thirning, Chief Justice of the Common Bench, that '...coment devaunt ces heures pluseurs des Seigneurs & Communes venuz par som[m]ons au Parlement, ont este plus entendantz pur leur singulers & especialx bosoignes q[ue] pur la commune profit & aide du Roialme.'; *RP*. iii. 454.2b. See also *RP*. iii. 167.4, 485.2b, 522.1b.

⁵² Since this is a particularly important issue, I have extended the range of material beyond Palgrave's transcriptions to include additional examples of private petitions presented to parliament in the period between 1369 and 1421. The methodology I have employed to identify these examples is discussed in section 'c' of this chapter. To distinguish between the two sources, petitions from Palgrave's transcriptions have been italicised.

⁵³ For the most part we must infer that knights took on the responsibility of representing the views of their county community but in one case, in the parliament of 1378, this is made explicit. Here, a private petition complaining of Welsh incursions was recorded as being presented by the king's '...lieges chivalers Walter Peverose et John Elesford chivalers p[ur] cest p[ar]lement de Counte de Hereford et Robert de Whyteneye viscont de mesme le conte...'; PRO 31/7 106; SC8 107/5303.

⁵⁴ SC 8/107/5307 (1377), 101/5303 (1378), 101/5307 (c.1377), 46/2260 (c.1377), 226/11263 (c.1381), 129/6441 (Feb. 1383), 130/6477 (c.1384), 339/15953 (c.1401), 306/15295 (1415 or 1417-9), 130/6459 (1421).

⁵⁵ SC 8/139/6906 (1377), 139/6922 (Sept. 1388), 142/7062 (Hen. IV).

about shrieval fee farms,⁵⁶ Kent (on the eligibility of those contributing to the wages of knights of the shire),⁵⁷ and Devon or Cornwall (on the 1327 Charters of Stannaries).⁵⁸

Just exactly what 'forwarding' involved can be explained by the existence of many *common* petitions which were identical, or virtually identical, to these examples of private petitions. This situation suggested that winning the support and backing of the Commons to 'upgrade' or convert private petitions into common ones was the all-important factor for MPs charged with representing their constituencies' grievances at parliament. This probably did not stem from a desire to see the grievance result in legislation, although obviously this would have been a bonus; rather, it derived from the fact that by converting a private petition into a common petition a constituency ensured that its grievance would bypass the auditors and receive the direct attention of the king and his council. A large proportion of these so-called 'upgraded' petitions came from blocs of counties adjoining the Scottish or Welsh Marches as well as those near to the Principality of Chester.⁵⁹ In all probability the knights of the shire from these areas used parliament as a venue to formulate a common regional agenda. It is possible that the process began with the knights of one county actively seeking at parliament to recruit the knights of adjoining counties in order to add greater weight to their own particular grievance.

One would like to be able to account for the varying fortunes of county community petitions by stating that the form of their presentation depended on how much influence MPs wielded amongst the Commons. If this is true it is hard to prove with the available evidence, for there is no obvious explanation why, on some occasions, single counties or groups of counties presented their grievances as a common petitions when, on other occasions, they were articulated merely as private petitions. This is shown to good effect by the twin shires of Essex and Hertfordshire which, in addition to their private petitions about excessive fee farms, also presented eight common petitions on the same subject between 1377

⁵⁶ SC 8/109/5405, Essex and Herts. (1377), 139/13031, Notts. and Derbs. (c.1377), 139/6935, Somerset and Dorset (May 1382), 139/6941, Surrey and Sussex (May 1382), 139/6931, Somerset and Dorset (Sept. 1388), 139/6948, Surrey and Sussex (Sept. 1388), 258/12866, 109/5448, Essex and Herts. (?1410), Notts. and Derbs. (Date unknown). See also the discussion by W.M. Ormrod, 'The Politics of Pestilence: Government in England after the Black Death', in W.M. Ormrod and P.G. Lindley, eds., *The Black Death in England* (Stamford, 1996), p.169, note 65.

⁵⁷ SC 8/119/5921 (c.1377), 19/905 (1378).

⁵⁸ SC 8/14/656 (1377), 101/5029 (1377), 107/5324 (Sept. 1388). For further discussion on this subject see L.F. Salzman, 'Mines and Stannaries', in J.F. Willard, W.A. Morriss and W. Duncan, eds., *The English Government at Work, 1327-1336* (Cambridge, Mass., 1950), pp.67-104, esp. pp.88-104.

⁵⁹ For common petitions from these areas between 1377 and 1399 see *RP*. iii. 42.42, 42.44, 46.65, 62.32, 63.38, 80.28, 81.30, 139.39, 139.44, 200.22, 269.46, 272.56, 280.23, 307.34.

and 1401.⁶⁰ Although on five of these occasions at least one of the four MPs for these counties was a member of the king's affinity and might therefore have been able to wield influence in the Lower House, such an explanation is more problematic for the remaining three occasions when all four representatives were relatively insignificant men politically speaking.⁶¹ Perhaps the eloquence and persuasiveness of an MP, together with the relative pliability of the Commons at a particular point in time were just as important factors. Common and private petitions from counties crop up on a fairly frequent basis, but compared to the total number of shires that sent representatives, the number is really relatively insignificant. The fact that in the parliaments of October 1377, 1378 and 1379 private petitions in the name of counties numbered only nine (out of a total of 105) illustrates this point quite effectively. Indeed, it is further underlined by the fact that in these same parliaments no fewer than 26 private petitions were presented by towns indicating, perhaps, how much more lobbying must have been done by urban representatives in parliament compared to the county representatives.

As for individual concerns, the evidence is even more conclusive. In the nineteen parliaments covered by Palgrave between 1377 and 1421, I have been able to identify just ten examples where knights of the shire presented private petitions on their own behalf.⁶² Even allowing for additional examples of shire knights identified in the History of Parliament Trust volumes as being returned to parliament 'to pursue personal business', the proportion is still negligible compared to the total number who were returned.⁶³ With the exception of the most northerly counties of England, where the opportunity for individual petitioning could well have

⁶⁰ *RP*. iii. 19.73, 45.59, 94.38, 140.49, 211.19, 321.47, 330.7, 469.57.

⁶¹ In the parliaments of November 1380, 1385, 1394, 1395 and 1401, at least one shire knight from these two counties was a royal annuitant; in October 1377, 1378 and October 1382 virtually none of the shire knights held any offices of note and none had connections to the king; see Appendix 1.

⁶² These were Sir John Dauntsey (Wiltshire, 1379), PRO 31/7/106, SC 8/107/5307, 5314; Sir John Roches (Wiltshire, February 1383), PRO 31/7/109, SC 8/138/6878; Sir John Annesley (Nottinghamshire, September 1388), PRO 31/7/110, SC 8/107/5320; Sir John White (Norfolk, September 1388), PRO 31/7/110, SC 8/146/7266; Sir John Delves (Staffordshire, January 1390), PRO 31/7/111; Robert Worsley (Lancashire, 1391), PRO 31/7/111, SC 8/146/7276; Sir William Culwen (Westmorland, 1394), PRO 31/7/112, SC 8/21/1049; John Cobham (Kent, 1394), PRO 31/7/112, SC 8/119/5934; Thomas Chaucer (Oxfordshire, November 1414), PRO 31/7/114, SC 8/23/1135; and finally, Sir Humphrey Stafford II (Dorset, May 1421), PRO 31/7/114, SC 8/141/7022.

⁶³ The following men are described by J.S. Roskell, L. Clarke and C. Rawcliffe, eds., *The House of Commons, 1386-1421*, History of Parliament Trust, 4 vols. (Stroud, 1993), ii-iv, as attending parliament for personal reasons: Thomas Aylesbury (Buckinghamshire, 1391); William Curwen (Westmorland, 1394); John Styvecle (Huntingdonshire, January 1397); John Knyvet (Huntingdonshire, September 1397); William Threlkeld (Westmorland, 1402); Sir Robert Leybourne (Westmorland, October 1404); Robert Veer (Leicestershire, October 1404); William Bewley (Cumberland, 1413); Richard Wharton (Westmorland, April 1414); Sir John Middleton (Northumberland, April 1414); William Leigh (Cumberland, April 1414); William Flete (Hertfordshire, November 1414); John Lancaster I (Cumberland, March 1416); Robert Lisle (Northumberland, 1417); Thomas Urswyk (Lancashire, May 1421); Richard Restwold II (Cumberland, May 1421); Sir Richard Stanhope (Nottinghamshire, December 1421).

been an inducement for men to make the long journey south,⁶⁴ it is possible that the relatively low number of cases reflected the fact that county communities were reluctant to elect and pay men to spend time at parliament on their own private affairs. It may also have been indicative of the leading political position that most knights of the shire held within the county and the fact that this position probably mitigated against the sort of victimisation and powerlessness that most individual petitioners claimed to seek deliverance from at parliament.⁶⁵ On the other hand it may simply have reflected the fact that most knights of the shire went to parliament principally to attend to the national or the 'common' business of the realm. The apparent priority given to these matters, over and above both narrow localised issues and individual petitions of self-interest, reinforces the notion that by the end of the fourteenth century the concept of national identity and, indeed, national responsibility had very much established itself in the minds of the MPs who attended parliament.

If there was a group within the Commons which concentrated more than any other on the private or individual business of parliament, it must surely have been the lawyers.⁶⁶ We are provided with a very clear confirmation of this in 1372 with the ordinance which forbade the return to parliament of individuals involved in the legal profession.⁶⁷ Although, in the past, it has been assumed that this measure derived from a common petition, it is better explained as an 'official' measure in which the crown wished to remove the disruptive legal element within the institution who were considered to be focussing too much attention on presenting private or *singulare* business.⁶⁸ The fact that lawyers continued to be returned to parliament after this statute had been promulgated would seem to confirm that it was not a

⁶⁴ Note how many examples in the previous two footnotes concern MPs from Cumberland, Westmorland, Northumberland and Lancashire. See also the comments by H.G. Richardson, 'John of Gaunt and the Parliamentary Representation of Lancashire', *B.J.R.L.*, xxii (1938), 175-222, p.192.

⁶⁵ This is an idea that has been picked up in the previous chapter in relation to the attendance at the county court by the shire élite; see chapter 5, pp.146-52. A useful discussion of the sort of men (or women) who petitioned parliament - and their lack of power and authority in the locality - is provided by Rawcliffe, 'Settlement of Disputes', p.318.

⁶⁶ Roskell *et al*, *The House of Commons*, i. Appendix B2. Now that we have evidence for the continuing strength of private petitions under Henry VI, it is worth speculating that this was, at least in part, linked to the large numbers of lawyers who attended parliament from the end of Henry V's reign onwards.

⁶⁷ *RP*. ii. 310.13; *SR*. i. 394.

⁶⁸ For references see chapter 2, p.39, note 83.

measure widely supported in the Lower House.⁶⁹ It is noteworthy too that the ordinance itself was limited only to banning lawyers from being returned as knights of the shire. As W.M. Ormrod has argued, this indicated ‘...a widespread acceptance that urban representatives in parliament were entitled and expected to do business for their constituency’.⁷⁰ It also, of course, implied that the crown expected the knights of the shire to concentrate *their* attention on the business of the realm.

Lawyers probably had as much input at the beginning of the petitioning process (the drafting), as they did at the end of it (the presentation in parliament). Most of the theories on the mechanics of composing petitions have been written in the context of chancery bills, but since the procedure is very unlikely to have been any different for parliament, the discussion can be equally applied to the petitions presented there. Traditionally it had been thought that ‘bills’ were the product of chancery clerks who produced them in a standardised style and format in response to more informal supplications or verbal complaints by the petitioners themselves.⁷¹ Recently this orthodoxy has been challenged by Tim Haskett who has argued, quite convincingly, that the many stylistic inconsistencies of extant chancery bills can only be explained by their composition in different localities.⁷² Haskett points to the provincial lawyer as the most likely candidate for the compilation of these bills. The latter’s knowledge of legal matters, his probable familiarity with the forms and language of the chancery and his undoubted presence at the county court, especially at election time, made him well suited to the task of drafting petitions on behalf of local people.⁷³

⁶⁹ Roskell *et al*, *House of Commons*, i, Appendix B2. For the return of lawyers under Henry VI, including those non-resident in the constituencies they were representing, see J.C. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament: Register of the Ministers and of the Members of Both Houses, 1439-1509* (London, 1938), pp.lxxxiii-lxxxvi. See also R. Horrox, ‘Urban Patronage and Patrons in the Fifteenth Century’, in R.A. Griffiths, ed., *Patronage, The Crown and The Provinces* (Gloucester, 1981), pp.145-166, esp. pp.158-61; Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*, p.141; McKisack, *Parliamentary Representation*, pp.113-15; K.N. Houghton, ‘Theory and Practice in Borough Elections to Parliament during the later fifteenth century’, *B.I.H.R.*, xxxix (1966), 130-40, pp.138-9.

⁷⁰ Ormrod, *Political Life*, p.46.

⁷¹ J.H. Fisher, who also supports this idea, provides references in his article, ‘Chancery and the Emergence of Standard Written English in the Fifteenth Century’, *Speculum*, lii (1977), 870-899, p.877, note 19.

⁷² T.S. Haskett, ‘County Lawyers?: The Composers of English Chancery Bills’, in P. Birks, ed., *The Life of the Law: Proceedings of the Tenth British Legal History Conference, Oxford, 1991* (London, 1993), pp.9-23.

⁷³ For the presence of lawyers at county courts see J.R. Maddicott, ‘The County Court and the Making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth-Century England’, *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., xxviii (1978), 27-43, p.37; R.C. Palmer, ‘County Year Book Reports: the Professional Lawyer in the Medieval County Court’, *E.H.R.*, xci (1976), 776-98. It has been suggested elsewhere, notably by Myers in ‘Parliamentary Petitions’ pp.2-5, that professional scribes and other nonofficial scribes were employed in drafting petitions. This may not necessarily be incompatible with the research of Haskett, since lawyers may have been more prevalent in the country where scribes were more common in towns - Myers’ example comes from London. See also C. Liddy, ‘A Study of Ancient Petitions from the City of York between the Reigns of Edward II and Richard II’, University of York, M.A. thesis (1994), p.32, where the city’s common clerk has been identified as responsible for compiling petitions.

Assuming this to be the case, there are two points which can be made to qualify this hypothesis in the context of parliament. Firstly, whilst the compilation of petitions in the locality may have been general practice, it evidently did not account for *every* supplication that was made in parliament. We have seen already that petitions compiled in the name of a bloc of counties or a region - whether they were private or common - most probably were discussed and articulated at parliament which provided the best opportunity for the representatives of many different constituencies to interact with each other. In addition, there are other specific examples of private petitions whose content suggests very strongly that they were compiled at the centre rather than in the localities. In 1421, for example, Sir William Fulthorp complained that John, earl of Salisbury ‘...ad fait peticion devaunt les co[mun]es de cest p[re]sent parlement’ concerning the restoration of his inheritance after the forfeiture suffered by the earl’s father under Henry IV.⁷⁴ Clearly, Fulthorp could only have petitioned after parliament had started and his awareness of the assembly’s proceedings suggests very strongly that he was also actually present or in the vicinity of parliament itself; his petition could therefore easily have been compiled by a chancery clerk. Secondly, the fact that most petitions were probably written in the locality should not imply that the petitioners themselves stayed away from parliament or that MPs - particularly the shire representatives - were burdened with numerous supplications to present on the behalf of others once they were at the assembly. Lobbying was probably an extremely important aspect to the petitioning process and there can have been no more effective way of ensuring a successful outcome than for a petitioner to be present at parliament to press their own case personally.

One further comment we can make on petitioners concerns those petitions which were said to have been compiled, somewhat paradoxically, by the Commons. These were the supplications of small minority groups who wished to emphasise the importance of their grievance by suggesting its general applicability.⁷⁵ In the parliament of October 1383, for example, this tactic was used in a private petition which was said to be from ‘les Comunes de...Roialme’, who requested that certain leaders of the Peasants’ Revolt should be treated as convicted felons to set an example for others.⁷⁶ Such petitions, although not unheard of, were nevertheless rare throughout the period between 1369 and 1421. There is, however, one exception: the Cambridge parliament of September 1388 in which I have counted no fewer than

⁷⁴ SC 8/111/5524. See also, SC 8/122/6056-7, 6059; 146/7269, 7271; 63/3111; 147/7342; 122/6093.

⁷⁵ See Rayner, ‘Forms and Machinery’, pp.201-5.

⁷⁶ SC 8/20/970; *RP*. iii. 175.no.i.

seventeen examples of private petitions addressed from the Commons. There is no clear explanation why this should have been the case. Clearly the Cambridge parliament was a particularly outspoken and vigorous assembly in which, from the little we know, the practice of retaining was attacked and new and far reaching labour legislation was conceded, but this hardly explains the aberration.⁷⁷ Perhaps it was indicative of the ground-swell in public opinion against the Appellant regime; the perceived failings of their period in power might have forced people to think, more 'so than they normally would, in national terms, so as to stress how unpopular the status quo was to them. The mystery becomes even greater when we note that one petition was divided into two parts, one from the 'pouvre Co[mmun]e' complaining about maintenance, and the other, from 'les Seignours et Co[mmun]es de...Roialme', complaining about law suits and pleas which were pending in the King's court.⁷⁸ The juxtaposition of these two social groupings on the same petition - whether or not they represented the two parliamentary Houses or medieval society in general - certainly challenges the belief that the contentious issue of maintenance neatly divided political society into two opposing camps.

The final area which Palgrave's transcripts shed light on is the nature and record of the responses given to private petitions. In September 1388, a private petition was presented to parliament which read,

A n[ost]re Sire le Roy et son sage conseil supplient touz les Seignours et Co[mmun]es de son roialme d'Ingletteree qil soit ordeigne en cest p[re]sent p[ar]lement q[ue] toutes les billes especiales q[ue] sont ou s[er]ront donez en cest p[ar]lement q[ue] ne p[ur]ront estre endorsez ou responduz devant le dep[ar]tir du p[ar]lement p[ar] brieftee du temps, soient endose et reponduz bien toust en ap[re]s p[ar] c[er]teins S[i]r[e]s a ce assignex et yce fait soit tenuz si forcible et si valable et de mesme l'effect come autres billes du p[ar]lement et come faite en pleyn p[ar]lement et ensi soit fait en touz autres p[ar]lement en temps avenir.⁷⁹

This was one of several supplications made in the late fourteenth century which suggested that the crown was extremely lax in providing answers to petitions before the end of a parliamentary session.⁸⁰ Interestingly, whereas in previous petitions the Commons had asked that grievances be addressed before the close of parliament, in this supplication the request was simply that petitions should be addressed in the first place and that if done outside parliament, that the

⁷⁷ Tuck, 'Cambridge Parliament', esp. p.227.

⁷⁸ PRO 31/7/110, no.31; SC 8/101/5096.

⁷⁹ PRO 31/7/110, no.40.

⁸⁰ Edwards, *Second Century*, pp.52-3; Rayner, 'Forms and Machinery', p.223. For the neglect of petitions in parliament in early fourteenth century, see J.G. Edwards, "'Justice" in Early English Parliaments', *B.I.H.R.*, xxvii (1954), 35-53, p.43.

decision should hold as much force as if they had been addressed during proceedings. A straightforward analysis of the answers given to the petitions transcribed by Palgrave confirms the impression that the crown did not regard the provision of such replies as being its uppermost priority during an assembly. Unlike common petitions which, for the most part, always received an answer - even if it was a standard formulaic rejection such as 'le Roi s'advisera'⁸¹ - the number of *private* petitions with answers was negligible. Occasionally an explicit rejection was written, such as, for example, 'ce nest pas bille de p[ar]lement', and more commonly 'sue a co[mmun]e lei', but by far the majority simply appear to have been ignored.

To give some idea of this high 'attrition' rate of private petitions in parliament we should note that of the 49 petitions presented in October 1377, only 4 were given recorded responses and not all of these, it should be pointed out, necessarily resulted in a successful outcome. In 1378, out of a total of 68 petitions, 18 received written replies and in 1379, out of 37 petitions, 8 had replies. Taking these three parliaments together, only 19 per cent of petitions received any form of reply. This seems to have been more or less typical of the period: only 29 (26 per cent) of the 110 petitions presented in September 1388 received an answer; 19 (30 per cent) out of 62 petitions in 1394 had a recorded reply; 5 out of the 18 (27 per cent) was the figure for 1402; and 8 out of 31 (25 per cent) were replied to in May 1421. Whatever else this proves, it shows how deeply unrepresentative Richardson and Sayles' survey of chancery warrants was, and it has a similar bearing on the *Petitiones in Parlamento* that were printed in the *Rotuli Parliamentorum*.

Interestingly, there is a significant deviation from this broad trend in the early 1390s. In the two parliaments of 1390, there were altogether 62 private petitions, of which 29 received answers; and in 1391, out of a total of 53 petitions, 17 were replied to. The proportion receiving answers for all three parliaments was exactly 40 per cent, double that for the group of parliaments at the beginning of the reign and certainly a good deal better than was typical of the remainder. Moreover, it is noticeable, when looking through these latter replies, that a substantial number are positive; commissions are granted, disputes are resolved favourably, action is promised on certain matters and special consideration is pledged on others. Could this have been symptomatic of Richard II's drive in the early 1390s to recapture the support and confidence of the political community after the débâcle of the late 1380s? He certainly demonstrated a willingness to respond to the grievances contained within common petitions in

⁸¹ For this and the other phrases used by the crown to reject a common petition see chapter 2, pp.43-4.

the early 1390s,⁸² and it would appear that this was complemented by a parallel policy of promoting his kingship as one that also responded to the grievances of his *individual* subjects. The numbers involved were admittedly small, but as a public relations exercise, they may have been quite sufficient to influence the whole atmosphere of parliament and, in turn, the reception the king received in the country at large.

c/ Petitions Addressed to Parliament

The case for a reconstructed history of the private petition from the end of the fourteenth century onwards has now been made, but one further piece of evidence can be added to complete the picture. If we accept the figure given by Atkinson and Maxwell, that there were approximately nine and a half thousand private petitions extant in 1890,⁸³ we must also accept that the material Illingworth and Palgrave were dealing with was only a fraction of this overall total - perhaps about a third. The reason for this is probably that they both ignored the further 6000 'parliamentary petitions' which were discovered in the Tower of London in 1805-6⁸⁴ - Illingworth was a year too early to include them in his notebook and by the time Palgrave came on the scene, between 1824 and 1827, they had already been separated and arranged in alphabetical order (this occurred between 1822 and 1824). Given the huge methodological difficulties outlined in the first section of this chapter one could be forgiven in thinking that these petitions will remain forever lost amongst the now miscellaneous collection of Ancient Petitions, but, as this third part of the evidence will show, this is not necessarily the case.

The key lies in the form of the address of private petitions from the late fourteenth century onwards. For the reigns of Edward I and Edward II, and for most of the reign of Edward III, petitions presented in parliament were indistinguishable from petitions which were presented to other departments of government. As a general rule, they were addressed either to the king on his own or to the king and his council.⁸⁵ No mention, in other words, was made of their parliamentary provenance. From the evidence of Palgrave's transcriptions, however, an interesting change can be seen to have occurred by the time of Richard II's reign. In these parliaments a fair proportion of petitions were addressed not only

⁸² See Chapter 2, pp.53-4.

⁸³ Atkinson and Maxwell, 'Report on Ancient Petitions', p.3.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p.2.

⁸⁵ Haskins, 'Petitions of Representatives', p.6.

to the king by himself, or the king and his council, but to the king and his council/Lords, *in parliament*.⁸⁶ Typically, the address would read as follows, 'A n[ost]re tres excellent Sire le Roi et son tresage counsell de ceste p[re]sent p[ar]lement' or 'A nostre tresgracious seigneur le roi et autres seigneurs de son gracious parlement'. For what ever reason, it appears that many petitioners had chosen to indicate directly that their supplications were being made within the context of parliament. A survey of Palgrave's transcriptions shows that the new practice had become fairly well established by the time Richard II succeeded to the throne; from 1377 to 1421, between 40 and 70 per cent of the total number of petitions presented made mention of parliament in the opening address. If there was a trend, it was upwards; whilst most parliaments of Richard II's reign saw around 50 per cent of private petitions address parliament directly (the one exception was the parliament of October 1377 which had a figure of just 4 per cent), from the 1390s, this increased to between 60 and 80 percent, with the last parliament of our period, the parliament of May 1421, recording no fewer than 83 per cent of its petitions as specifically addressed to parliament.

The full historical implications of this changed diplomatic will be addressed in due course but for the moment it must be pointed out how useful this new style of address is for the light it sheds on the 'lost' parliamentary petitions kept in the P.R.O. In essence, we have the capability of identifying at least some of the petitions presented in parliaments which have not been included in Palgrave's transcriptions. The dating is, as we have seen, somewhat problematic, but it is sufficient to indicate roughly the period in which petitions were presented and is certainly adequate for identifying which reign they belonged to. Having trawled through the whole class of Ancient Petitions, therefore, noting down those presented between 1369 and 1421 which mentioned parliament in their opening address, I have been able to identify a further 247 private petitions. These can be broken down into the four different reigns: there were 62 in the last seven years of Edward III's reign; 109 in Richard II's reign; 49 in Henry IV's reign; and just 8 in Henry V's reign. If we accept that approximately half of petitions in parliament in this period actually mentioned the institution in their address, we can perhaps double this figure and suggest as a provisional total that there are extant somewhere in the region of 500 private petitions presented to parliament in this period, *in addition* to those identified by Palgrave. Although we cannot divide these petitions amongst those parliaments not included in Palgrave's

⁸⁶ Baldwin noted that there were private petitions which mentioned parliament in their opening address but he implied that such examples were presented from an early stage in the history of the private petition; *King's Council*, pp.328-9.

transcriptions (since some bundles of petitions may simply have been destroyed) these extra examples simply reinforce the overall picture of the health and vitality of the private petition in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Indeed, this impression is positively affirmed if we combine this speculative total with the total number of private petitions that Palgrave recorded between 1377 and 1421: in all, no fewer than 1,270 private petitions were presented in some fifty parliaments - and this, it should be stressed, is only a proportion of how many must have been presented altogether.⁸⁷

Besides its methodological implications, the emergence of the new form of address has particular historical significance for it shows how the status and distinctiveness of parliament was increasing as the fourteenth century progressed. Clearly, petitioners no longer considered the assembly to be entirely synonymous with the king and his council for it had gained an identity in its own right and one which appears to have been widely recognised and highly respected. Indeed, as we have seen, the distinction sometimes went even further than this when petitioners substituted the term 'council' for the term 'lords in parliament', indicating that the Upper House was gaining an identity of its own too. It is hard to be precise about exactly when the practice first emerged. Certainly, there are no examples from amongst the 159 *Petitiones in Parlamento* which have been printed in the *Rotuli Parliamentorum* for the two parliaments of 1348.⁸⁸ On the basis that the examples I have identified suddenly seemed to pick up from the mid 1370s onwards, I would tentatively pinpoint the development to the 1360s, where just a handful of examples have been discovered.⁸⁹

Coincidentally, the third quarter of the fourteenth century was a period which had begun with an important change in the way the crown dealt with petitions and there may well be an important link between the two. In the aborted parliament of 1349, the king had proclaimed that those with grievances of a routine matter should take them not to parliament, but to the chancery, where a suitable remedy would be found.⁹⁰ Those with matters touching the king's grace were supposed to hand their petitions to the Keeper of the Privy Seal.

⁸⁷ Up until 1890 it appears that the class we know as Ancient Petitions was composed almost exclusively of private petitions proper - that is, petitions presented in parliament. It was only after this date that the inclusion of other documents muddled the whole class up. Until this point it has been estimated that the class of Ancient Petitions was composed of no fewer than '9,563 Parliamentary Petitions'. On this basis therefore, I have identified approximately a ninth of the total number of extant private petitions to the period between 1369 and 1421. See Atkinson and Maxwell, 'Report on Ancient Petitions', p.3.

⁸⁸ *RP*. ii. 175-89, 205-24.

⁸⁹ Note that Baldwin pinpoints the later years of Edward III as the period when private petitions increasingly made a distinction between the lords of parliament and the council; *The King's Council*, p.329.

⁹⁰ Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III*, p.222, note 105.

Although these were exceptional circumstances, historians are generally agreed that this marked the point after which the chancery, and other departments of government, took over much of the private business that parliament had dealt with previously.⁹¹ In the past, this theory has been used to back the idea of the decline of the private petition, but here, it could be a way of explaining why petitioners felt the need to specify the context in which their grievance would be heard. Perhaps the new address indicated an awareness by the petitioner of the alternative routes along which their grievances could travel and it may have been an anxiety on their part, to ensure that it was in parliament that their petition would be heard, that the practice of specifying the institution took off. This would have gained added importance if the petitioners themselves did not present their supplications personally in parliament but had to rely on intermediaries to do it for them. Such an explanation would also, of course, support the idea that parliament was a *preferred* forum for the private petition, not a declining or rejected one.

The change in address was also part of a much broader change in the diplomatic used by the petitioner from the mid-fourteenth century onwards. Under Edward I and Edward II petitions were almost entirely functional in their style and layout; they addressed the king directly; the grievance was stated in as short a manner as possible; and there might have been a very short plea at the end. By the end of Edward III's reign, petitions had not only, as a general rule, become longer, but the language used and the general style was far more elaborate and deferential.⁹² The king was now coming to embody certain characteristics, as indeed, was his council and/or the Lords in parliament. This is illustrated by a petition of 1378 which, in a form that was fairly typical, read: 'A nostre tresexcellent et tresgracious Sire nostre Sire le Roy et tressages Sires de son gracious parlement'. Myers suggests that the increasing use of elaborate language in petitions reflected the fact that it was becoming more difficult for a suppliant to secure an answer to his or her petition.⁹³ There is no proof for this and in any case, it oversimplifies the process of consideration and judgement which each individual petition inevitably went through. Instead, I would prefer to see this development as indicative of the projection of the ideals and qualities of kingship by the late fourteenth century monarchy into the locality and into the minds of petitioners. This was especially the case for Richard II under

⁹¹ It was from the late fourteenth century that bills to the chancery survive in great numbers; T.S. Haskett, 'The Presentation of Cases in Medieval Chancery Bills', in W.M. Gordon, ed., *Legal History in the Making* (London, 1991), pp.11-28, p.11. See also the comments of Harriss, 'The Formation of Parliament', pp.49-50.

⁹² Baldwin, *The King's Council*, pp.331-2.

⁹³ Myers, 'Parliamentary Petitions', pp.2-3; and *idem*, 'Parliament, 1422-1509', in Davies and Denton, eds., *The English Parliament*, p.167.

whose rule such language really became prominent in private petitions and, as Nigel Saul has pointed out, in a more general context too.⁹⁴ The fact that the petitioners themselves responded to this new trend, suggests a growing awareness on their part of the importance of language, not necessarily to secure a favourable response to their supplication, but simply to conform to a more elaborate convention. As such, petitions from Richard II's reign display a far more sophisticated and skilled body of petitioners than is suggested by examples taken from earlier in the fourteenth century

iii) 'SPONSORED' PRIVATE PETITIONS

The form and style of the addresses of private petitions underwent one further extremely important stage of development in the period from 1369 to 1421. This was the increasing tendency for petitioners to direct their supplications to the Commons - rather than to the king and council - in an attempt to persuade them to intercede on their behalf by securing a favourable response to their grievance.⁹⁵ The advantage of winning the 'sponsorship' of the Commons for a private case lay in the fact that, like a more conventional common petition, it by-passed the receivers and auditors and was forwarded directly for the consideration of the king and council. A.R. Myers, who first brought to light this development, suggested that it arose out of the '...increasing difficulty in securing an answer to a [private] petition'.⁹⁶ Given the evidence already cited on the extremely high rejection rate of private petitions, this appears to be a perfectly satisfactory explanation. With parliament the focus of so much political turbulence in the last quarter of the fourteenth century and the first decade of the fifteenth century, one can well understand why private business may increasingly have been pushed aside and why petitioners themselves may have sought alternative routes to gain the attention of the king.

As far as the emergence of this new procedure goes, the thesis of Myers will undoubtedly withstand the test of time. There is, however, room for further refinement. Firstly, we should begin, perhaps, by establishing that the one fundamental characteristic of 'sponsored'

⁹⁴ N. Saul, 'Richard II and the Vocabulary of Kingship', *E.H.R.*, cx (1995), 854-77.

⁹⁵ Myers, 'Parliamentary Petitions', pp.14-20 and *idem*, 'Parliament, 1422-1509', pp.167-8; Rayner, 'Forms and Machinery', pp.213-5.

⁹⁶ Myers, 'Parliamentary Petitions', p.14.

private petitions was that they were enrolled on the parliament roll, separate from the common petitions and quite distinct from ordinary private petitions which were filed into separate bundles from the 1330s onwards. Their enrollment indicated the contact they had had both with the clerk of parliament, who was responsible for compiling the parliament roll, and the king and council who would have treated them in the same way they dealt with common petitions. Enrollment also indicated that they had successfully won the backing of the Commons, whilst those which were not enrolled indicated that they had not. This latter point is worth stressing because Myers failed to make the connection; he assumed that it was enough for a private petition merely to be addressed to the Commons to indicate that it had successfully won their support. He did not recognise that the address was simply an *appeal* and that it was not a statement of where the petition actually ended up; thus, whereas some private petitions which were addressed to the Commons nevertheless failed to win their backing and remained as ordinary 'private petitions' to be handled by the receivers and auditors, others which were *not* addressed to the Commons could still find themselves entered on the parliament roll. In short, although a new procedure had undoubtedly emerged by the end of the fourteenth century, it was enrollment rather than the form of the address which indicated its nature and extent.

This can be clarified by a closer look at the sponsored private petitions for Henry IV's reign. Myers pointed out that just six out of fifty-seven such petitions contained an address that incorporated the Commons. He implied from this that the remainder went to the receivers and auditors who dealt with them as conventional private petitions.⁹⁷ In fact, there is overwhelming evidence proving that these remaining fifty-one petitions, irrespective of the fact that they were not addressed to the Commons, nevertheless by-passed the receivers and auditors and were forwarded direct to the king and the council. One of Myers' mistakes was that in his concentration on the form of a petition's address he ignored the preambles which often accompanied them and which often indicated their special status. In 1400, for example, a sponsored petition which itself did not mention the Commons, was introduced, presumably by the clerk of parliament, in this manner: '...les Communes d'Engleterre baillerent en Parlement une Petition pur Phelippe nadgaires compaigne Robert de Veer Duc d'Ireland en les paroles ensuent...'.⁹⁸ In 1407, another petition was prefaced with: '...les Communes baillerent au Roy une Petition en la fourme q'enseute....'⁹⁹ and, in the same parliament another petition

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.400.

⁹⁸ *RP.* iii. 460.36.

⁹⁹ *RP.* iii. 627.34.

began, ‘...les Communes baillèrent en Parlement a n[ost]re Sire le Roy une Petition el noun de William Doyly...’.¹⁰⁰ In addition to these, I have counted ten further examples in which similar introductions were given.¹⁰¹

The distinctive quality of these private petitions is indicated in other ways. In 1404, for example, the countess of Kent sought the reconfirmation of a grant made to her deceased husband. The parliament roll recorded,

Sur quele Petition lue et entendue devaunt le Roy et les Seigneurs en Parlement, acorde se prist par entre la dite Contesse et le Cont de Kent q’or est, devaunt le Roy mesmes, come p[ar] une cedula ent fait, et liveree p[ar] le Roy mesmes au clerk du Parlement.¹⁰²

The personal attention given to this petition by the king and the Lords was hardly the sort of treatment that ordinary private petitions were given, sent, as they were, merely to committees of auditors. Indeed, its special status is no better illustrated than in the fact that we are told that it was actually handed by the king, *in person*, to the clerk of parliament in order to be enrolled. The involvement of the king is indicated on a number of other occasions. In one we are told that a petition was granted by ‘...le Roy de l’advys des Seigneurs et a l’instance et prier des Communes en Parlement’;¹⁰³ in another, that ‘...Le Roy, de l’advis et assent des Seigneurs Espirituelx et Temporelx, et de les Communes d’Engleterre ad ottroiex ceste Petition en plein Parlement’;¹⁰⁴ whilst in another which was addressed to the ‘...tres sages Sires, Chivalers et Communes de cest present Parlement’ we are told that ‘...il feust dit a dit [petitioner] p[ar] n[ost]re dit Sire le Roy...’ - and the response followed.¹⁰⁵ Finally, in 1411, Henry IV is recorded as having responded to a ‘sponsored’ private petition by personally dealing with a dispute between Robert Tirwit and Lord Roos in which he himself engaged in the questioning of the two rival parties.¹⁰⁶

Given the basic flaw in Myers’ understanding of ‘sponsored’ private petitions, his estimation of the extent to which this procedure developed from the mid-fourteenth century onwards requires a certain amount of revision. Table 9 shows how many private petitions in reality by-passed the receivers and auditors and were sent direct for consideration by the king

¹⁰⁰ *RP*. iii. 633.43.

¹⁰¹ *RP*. iii. 464.41, 529.36, 610.19-20, 629.36, 630.37, 632.40, 633.42, 655.19-20.

¹⁰² *RP*. iii. 535.50.

¹⁰³ *RP*. iii. 537.53b.

¹⁰⁴ *RP*. iii. 550.25.

¹⁰⁵ *RP*. iii. 628.35.

¹⁰⁶ *RP*. iii. 649-50.12.

TABLE 9: 'SPONSORED' PRIVATE PETITIONS, 1369-1421

| Parliament | No. of petitions | Ref. in <i>Rot. Parl.</i> | Parliament | No. of petitions | Ref. in <i>Rot. Parl.</i> |
|------------|------------------|---------------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| 1369 | - | - | 1399 | 3 | iii. 430.91 - 432.92 |
| 1371 | - | - | 1401 | 8 | iii. 460.36 - 465.43 |
| 1372 | - | - | 1402 | 8 | iii. 487.17 - 492.27 |
| 1373 | - | - | Jan. 1404 | ? | iii. 526.22 - 538.54 |
| 1376 | - | - | Oct. 1404 | 20 | iii. 549.24 - 554.45 |
| Jan. 1377 | - | - | 1406 | ? | iii. 583.62 - 585.64 |
| | | | 1407 | 2 | iii. 610.19 - 611.21 |
| Oct. 1377 | 3 | iii. 7.28 - 9.33 | 1410 | 8 | iii. 627.34 - 634.43 |
| 1378 | 3 | iii. 38.31 - 42.37 | 1411 | 7 | iii. 649.12 - 658.24 |
| 1379 | 1 | iii. 59.19 - 61.26 | | | |
| Jan. 1380 | 3 | iii. 75.19 - 80.25 | 1413 | 1 | iv. 6.16 |
| Nov. 1380 | - | - | Apr. 1414 | 1 | iv. 17.12 - 19b. |
| 1381 | 3 | iii. 105.43 - 111.62 | Nov. 1414 | 4 | iv. 36.15 - 49b. |
| May 1382 | - | - | 1415 | 4 | iv. 67.7 - 68.10 |
| Oct. 1382 | - | - | Mar. 1416 | 9 | iv. 72.15 - 76b. |
| Feb. 1383 | - | - | Oct. 1416 | 7 | iv. 99.15 - 102.21 |
| Oct. 1383 | - | - | 1417 | 3 | iv. 111.15 - 113.16 |
| Apr. 1384 | 2 | iii. 168.11 - 173.21 | 1419 | 2 | iv. 119.14 - 120b. |
| Nov. 1384 | - | - | 1420 | - | - |
| 1385 | - | - | May 1421 | 11 | iv. 130.12 - 145b. |
| 1386 | - | - | Dec. 1421 | 2 | iv. 151.11 - 153.12 |
| Feb. 1388 | - | - | | | |
| Sept. 1388 | - | - | | | |
| Jan. 1390 | 6 | iii. 258.10 - 262.17 | | | |
| Nov. 1390 | - | - | | | |
| 1391 | 7 | iii. 286.16 - 290.25 | | | |
| 1393 | 5 | iii. 302.13 - 304.20 | | | |
| 1394 | 4 | iii. 314.13 - 318.27 | | | |
| 1395 | 1 | iii. 331.11 | | | |
| Jan. 1397 | - | - | | | |
| Sept. 1397 | 6 | iii. 360.55 - 368.68 | | | |

and council. It shows that the practice started fairly abruptly at the beginning of Richard II's reign, that it was fairly sporadic for the next decade or so, but that it then began to pick up in the 1390s and from then on it was a fairly consistent feature of parliamentary business. This growth in the actual procedure is shadowed by an increase in the number of private petitions which were addressed to the Commons. In other words, there was a direct relationship between supply and demand. This can be illustrated by Palgrave's transcriptions, which indicate that a trickle of petitioners began seeking the intercession of the Commons in the 1370s and 1380s; but that the trend really took hold in the early fifteenth century and especially under Henry V. In November 1414, for example, 5 out of 11 private petitions were addressed specifically to the

Commons; and in May 1421, 10 out of 31 adopted the new style of address.¹⁰⁷

The fact that there was not a wholesale change in the way petitioners addressed their supplications provides a further clue as to how this new procedure worked. In particular, it suggests that some process of selection was in place, marking out those petitions which were deemed to be worthy of the attention of the king. After all, if all it took for a petition to be dealt with by the king and council, rather than the auditors, was for the petitioner to address it to the Commons, why did everybody not jump on the bandwagon? The answer may be found, at least in part, by the fact that an extremely high proportion of sponsored private petitions were presented by members of the peerage. Their dominance of the new procedure can be seen most strikingly in the parliament of January 1404, when half of the twelve private petitions which were subsequently enrolled originated from titled individuals. These were the countess of Huntingdon, Lady Despenser, the duke of York, the earl of Somerset, the countess of Kent and, finally, Queen Joan of England herself.¹⁰⁸ In 1421, five out of eleven petitions were from peers: Henry, Bishop of Winchester, Anne, Countess of Stafford, Thomas Montague, earl of Salisbury, Lucy, wife of Edmund late earl of Kent and Beatrice wife of Thomas, late earl of Arundel.¹⁰⁹ In fact, from the time that sponsored petitions began to appear in 1377, the peerage retained a regular and noticeable presence amongst these types of petitions. William Montague, earl of Salisbury, for example, was responsible for five examples during the reign of Richard II, four of these being in the first four parliaments of the reign.¹¹⁰ It should also be noted that the Prince of Wales petitioned parliament in this manner in October 1404, and the Queen, for a second time, in 1410.¹¹¹

This development has some interesting implications. On the one hand the advent of sponsored private petitions and the preeminence of the peerage in the new procedure - particularly at its inception¹¹² - suggests that it could well have been a manifestation of the

¹⁰⁷ This can also be seen in Myers' survey of *Petitiones in Parlamento* which he described as 'printed unenrolled petitions'. He notes that there were just 2 in Richard II's reign which were addressed to the Commons, 9 in Henry IV's reign and 29 in Henry V's reign; 'Parliamentary Petitions', p.16. See also his paper, 'Some Observations on the Procedure of the Commons in Dealing with Bills in the Lancastrian Period', *University of Toronto Law Journal*, iii (1939), 51-73, repr. in *idem, Crown, Household and Parliament*, pp.45-67.

¹⁰⁸ *RP*. iii. 532-535.

¹⁰⁹ *RP*. iv. 130-143.

¹¹⁰ *RP*. iii. 7.28, 38.31, 59.19, 75.19, 342.26.

¹¹¹ *RP*. iii. 549.24, 632.41.

¹¹² In the parliaments between 1377 and January 1380 there were ten enrolled petitions. Excluding the four from the earl of Salisbury, there was one from John Cobham, son of the earl Marshal, one from Lady Neville of Essex, and one from John, earl of Pembroke and William la Zouche. The three remaining petitions were from William Windsor, Sir Philip Darcy and William Fitz Hugh, goldsmith of London.

increasing sense of exclusivity that the Upper House was asserting by the end of the fourteenth century.¹¹³ At a time when the gap between the Lords and Commons was increasingly being closed, in terms of their respective wealth and economic well-being,¹¹⁴ this procedural innovation may have been one way of emphasising the distinctiveness and privileges enjoyed by members of the Upper House in contrast to those of the Lower House. This was a gradual development: right up until the end of the fourteenth century some members of the peerage still presented private petitions in the traditional manner. Besides John of Gaunt, who presented several private petitions in parliament in the course of Richard II's reign,¹¹⁵ there is a particularly interesting reference by Walsingham concerning an unsuccessful attempt by Henry IV in 1399 to persuade the committee of auditors to accept a private petition of Michael de la Pole for the restoration of his father's possessions.¹¹⁶ But, by the time of Henry V's reign, there are no examples of private petitions that were presented by the nobility and were not then enrolled on the parliament roll. This indicates how well established the channel had become for the airing of their grievances in parliament.

On the other hand, the involvement of the peerage goes some way towards explaining why many sponsored petitions were *not* in fact addressed to the Commons. In Henry V's reign there were just 7 petitions which fell into this category, but significantly, *all* these examples were petitions from, or for the interests of, the nobility.¹¹⁷ This suggests that 'sponsored' private petitions from the peerage were not, in fact, sponsored at all but were handed straight to the clerk of parliament for the consideration of the Upper House directly. If not, are we to suppose that members of the Lords went to the Commons as supplicants, relying on the latter to forward their grievances for the consideration of the king? Can the Queen of England really have sought the intercession of the Commons in her petition of January 1404?¹¹⁸ Recent historians have tended to accept that this was the case but is arguable that both scenarios are, to say the least, highly unlikely indeed.¹¹⁹ In reality, there was no need to involve

¹¹³ Brown 'Parliament, c.1377-1422', pp.113-6.

¹¹⁴ Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422*, pp.79-82.

¹¹⁵ SC 8/94/4678-9, 121/6047.

¹¹⁶ 'Annales Ricardi Secundi et Henrici Quarti', *Johannis de Trokelowe et Anon Chronica et Annales*, ed. H.T. Riley, Rolls Series, xxviii, 7 vols. (London, 1866), iii, p.312.

¹¹⁷ *RP*. iv. 17.12, 37.17, 40.24, 75.15, 100.16, 130.12, 138.a. These petitions were from Thomas, earl of Salisbury, Henry Percy, son of the earl of Northumberland, John, duke of Bedford, a petition concerning the Duchy of Lancaster, John son of John Holland, late earl of Huntingdon, the wife of Thomas late earl of Arundel and Anne, Countess of Stafford.

¹¹⁸ *RP*. iii. 532.45.

¹¹⁹ Edwards, *Second Century*, p.63; Harriss, 'The Management of Parliament', p.155; A.L. Brown, *The Governance of Late Medieval England, 1272-1461* (London, 1989), pp.222-3; L. Clark, 'Magnates and the Affinities in the Parliaments

the Commons when, as members of the Lords, peers presenting petitions already had direct access to the king and his council. Indeed this access is suggested by a petition presented in the parliament of 1402, where we are told that ‘...une Petition feust baille en Parlement par George de Dunbarre Counte de la Marche d’Escoce, quelle feust lue devaunt le Roi et les Seign[eu]rs...’¹²⁰ It is true that not all peers chose this independent approach. Some, like the earl of Salisbury in 1421, may well have valued the support, implicit or otherwise, that the mention of the Commons may have brought him, but it is doubtful whether he *depended* on this support to gain the personal attention of the king.¹²¹

If we can assume that, by virtue of their rank, the petitions of the peerage automatically bypassed the receivers and auditors, the remainder of the sponsored private petitions almost certainly relied on the Commons to be advanced in this way. It is difficult to generalise about the character of these remaining petitions but it is possible that they can be accounted for by a mixture of popular appeal and the success with which individuals or groups lobbied the Commons for support. Clearly, Thomas Haxey managed to attract sympathy amongst the Commons in 1397, when his private supplication came to be enrolled on the parliament roll; and the Lower House also backed him in his appeal in 1399, when he asked for the reversal of the judgement made against him by Richard II.¹²² It is likely that in 1402, the Commons’ partisanship towards the Lancastrian cause accounted for the support they lent John Holt and William Burgh who also asked for reversals in judgements made against them by Richard II.¹²³ By the far the largest non-noble grouping which secured ‘sponsored’ private petitions in parliament was London. In Henry V’s reign no fewer than nine private petitions pertaining to the interests of the city were enrolled on the parliament roll.¹²⁴ This was the best indication, perhaps, of the power and potential that lobbying in parliament could have for the petitioner, for the proximity of the assembly to the city (when it met at Westminster) meant that the important citizens were on hand to ‘grease the wheels’ of the petitionary process by pressuring the Commons, by exploiting their connections with the crown or by offering bribes

in the Parliaments of 1386-1421’, in R.H. Britnell and A.J. Pollard, eds., *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society* (Stroud, 1995), p.142; Ormrod, *Political Life*, p.35.

¹²⁰ *RP*. iii. 492.27.

¹²¹ *RP*. iv. 141-2.21.

¹²² A.K. McHardy, ‘Haxey’s Case, 1397: The Petition and the Presenter Reconsidered’, in J.L. Gillespie, ed., *The Age of Richard II* (Gloucester, 1997), pp.93-114; *RP*. iii. 430.90.

¹²³ *RP*. iii. 491.25.

¹²⁴ *RP*. iii, 536.51b; iv. 36.15, 39.21, 67.7-8, 73.18, 75.22, 101.17, 119.14, 132.16.

and incentives to the clerks who handled this business.¹²⁵

CONCLUSION

This chapter has established the private petition as an enduring and consistent feature of parliamentary business throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Although intended only as a preliminary study, enough has been said seriously to undermine the accepted view that by c.1350 private petitions ceased to have any relevance to the proceedings and activity of the late medieval parliament. Such revisionism has far-reaching implications for our understanding of the nature of the institution and of contemporary attitudes towards it. Clearly, the view that the fourteenth century witnessed a progression whereby parliament discarded its former rôle as the forum for the transaction of private business and moved on to deal with 'bigger' issues such as national taxation, common petitions and statutory legislation, is an inaccurate assessment of the development of the assembly. Whilst undoubtedly acquiring new prominence in the governance of the realm, parliament in the late fourteenth century and beyond never lost its ancient function as a place where individuals or small minority groups could air their grievances and seek redress. The significance of this should not be measured simply in terms of the number of petitions which were taken and presented in parliament, but also in terms of the much broader awareness there must have been in the shires - even by people who did not send petitions - that parliament was as much a court available for private redress as it was a place where the affairs of state were considered and dealt with. The great irony, of course, is that Richardson and Sayles, the unerring advocates of the 'judicial' function of parliament in the early fourteenth century, failed to appreciate this point and therefore underestimated how important this characteristic was to remain *throughout* the late Middle Ages.

¹²⁵ See C.M. Barron, 'London and Parliament in the Lancastrian period', *Parliamentary History*, ix (1990), 347-67.

CHAPTER 7: STATUTORY LEGISLATION

INTRODUCTION

The previous two chapters have considered parliament in an essentially local context by looking at the nature of shire elections and the continuing importance of the local or private petitioner in the assembly. Having already considered legislation from the point of view of the crown in chapter 2,¹ we may now continue the theme of parliament as a local phenomenon by seeking to uncover the nature of legislation from the point of the view of the constituencies or, in more general terms, the localities. The following discussion aims to analyse the *impact* of legislation on late medieval society. In particular, this chapter will attempt to highlight the factors which determined how effective or ineffective a statute could be, whether these factors changed over the period between 1369 and 1421, and what the dynamics of statutory enforcement were in the locality. One area which will not be covered in any great detail is the mechanics of the actual promulgation of statutes which has been adequately discussed in other work.²

i/ QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT

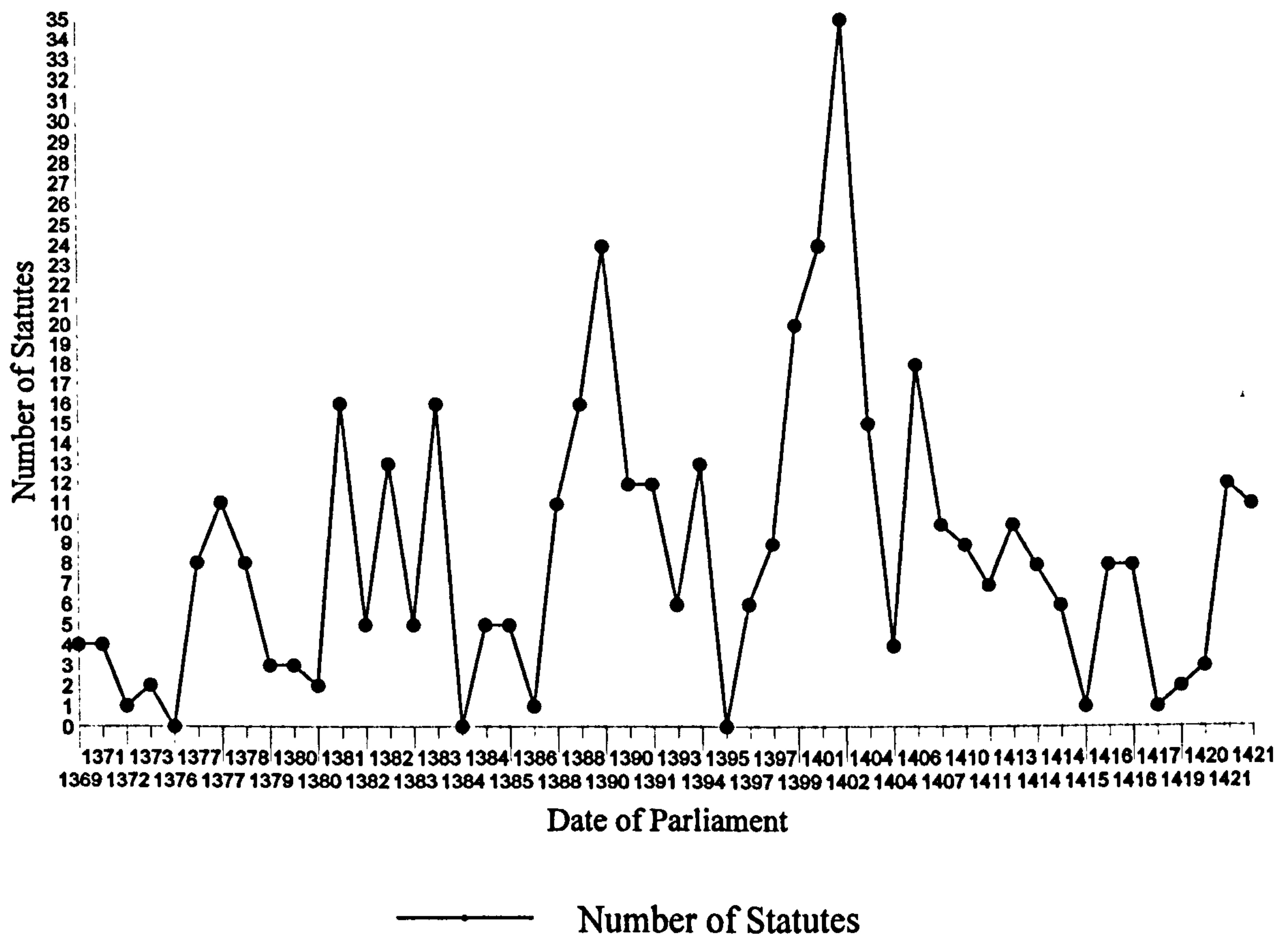
To set the scene it would be useful, first of all, to provide some sort of numerical analysis of the statutes enacted between 1369 and 1421. This has been done by counting the separate clauses noted down and numbered by the chancery clerk in the statute rolls (these divisions are reproduced in the printed edition). The results are presented in Graph 5. W.M. Ormrod has argued, in the context of Edward III's reign, that fluctuations in the number of statutes enacted by the crown were linked to the changing political climate of the day.³ Interestingly though, whereas Ormrod concluded that '...most of the parliamentary legislation of Edward III's reign occurred during periods of relative calm', Graph 5 shows that in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries the opposite was the case. The two peaks in the graph - between September 1388 and November 1390 and in the early years of Henry IV's

¹ See chapter 2, pp.33-53.

² J.R. Maddicott, 'The County Community and the Making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth-Century England', *T.R.H.S.*, 5th ser., xxviii (1978), 27-43, pp.33-6.

³ W.M. Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III: Crown, and Political Society in England 1327-1377* (London, 1990), p.167.

Graph 5: Statutes Enacted Between 1369 and 1421



reign - were not periods noted for their political tranquillity; on the one hand, Richard II was emerging from the traumatic period of the Appellant rule and, on the other hand, Henry IV was struggling to assert the legitimacy of his position as a usurper king.

Given these circumstances it could be said that the enactment of such a volume of legislation was a direct response by both kings to the uncertainty of their political situation. In particular, it may have been aimed to shore up the Commons' support by promoting the crown as one that took positive action to respond to popular grievances and aspirations. With the promulgation of statutes in county courts and market places across the kingdom such a message would naturally have been transmitted to a far wider audience than simply those gathered at parliament and this may well have been an important factor influencing the legislative output. Alternatively, the unusually high number of statutes in both these periods may have had nothing to do with crown policy but may simply have reflected the state of lawlessness and disorder at the time.⁴ These two peaks came shortly after two particularly

⁴ The link between petitioning in parliament and the failings of central authority has been made by C. Carpenter, 'Law, Justice and Landowners in Later Medieval England', *L.H.R.*, i (1983), 205-37,

turbulent periods in 'high politics' and they may have represented a reaction by the political community to the restoration of a semblance of order and stability in the polity. The increased number of common petitions presented in parliament at the same time (from which most of the statutes derived) highlighted that this legislation was just as much the result of an increased *demand* by the Commons for the redress of their grievances, as it was the result of deliberate crown policy (see Table 1 and Graph 4).

In contrast, parliaments where relatively few statutes were enacted tended to coincide with periods which saw relative political stability at the 'centre'. No more than four statutes were enacted in each of the parliaments from 1369 to 1373, for example - in 1372 only an 'official' ordinance was made which was not even enrolled on the statute roll.⁵ The mid-1390s also saw a noticeable down-turn in the amount of legislation enacted, culminating in the parliament of 1395 when no statutes whatsoever were made; Richard II's absence in Ireland was obviously the main reason for this, but this in itself was indicative of the relative political harmony that existed at this point in time.⁶ Under Henry V, the number of statutes was also relatively small; again, this was a period characterised by a state of relative harmony in domestic politics and a general consensus within the political community over the war with France.⁷ All in all, this pattern suggests a direct link between the amount of legislation that parliament enacted and the relative security of the regime which controlled this legislation. Thus, between 1369 and 1421, the less secure a king felt, the more legislation he tended to enact, whereas when his authority increased the volume of legislation appears to have dropped.

Whilst maintaining the underlying validity of the above summary, we should be aware of the dangers inherent in reading too much into a quantitative assessment of statutory legislation. In the first place, as we have seen in chapter 2, not all statutes necessarily derived from common petitions; a significant minority were drafted and enacted solely at the instigation of the crown and therefore had little direct bearing on the wishes and aspirations of the constituencies and the MPs representing them. Whilst 'official' statutes did not normally account for much legislation, there were occasions when they appeared in such large numbers as to distort quite seriously the impression that the crown was responding positively to the grievances of the commonalty: in November 1390, for example, over half of the twelve statutes

⁵ SR. i. 62.vi.

⁶ N. Saul, *Richard II* (London, 1997), pp.235-92.

⁷ G.L. Harriss, 'The Management of Parliament', in *idem*, ed., *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (Oxford, 1985), pp.153-4.

enacted were of ‘official’ origin.⁸ Secondly, the method of calculating the numbers of statutes, based on their division into clauses, sometimes misrepresents the true level of legislative output by parliament. To say that only one statute was enacted in the parliament of 1386, for example, could obscure the fact that this was actually an extremely extensive, detailed and broad-ranging piece of legislation that set out the parameters of royal government for the whole of the following year.⁹ Conversely, there were statutes, such as the series enacted in the parliament of 1401 against the Welsh, which were barely a sentence long.¹⁰ Thirdly, too much emphasis on the number of statutes enacted, compared to the number of common petitions presented, obscures the fact that not all common petitions automatically had legislation as their desired end. Arguably, when the sheriffs of Essex and Hertfordshire complained of the excessive fee farm they were having to pay, they did not necessarily wish to see the issue resolved on the statute roll, but would have been just as happy for a solution to be found within the exchequer where the fee farms were calculated, charged and received.¹¹

If a quantitative analysis has drawbacks simply from the point of view of counting statutes, assessing their impact in the localities presents other equally troublesome methodological problems. Above all, the nature of the evidence means that in only a tiny minority of cases can the implementation and effect of a statute be measured in a straightforward way. One such example is the ordinance of 1372 which laid down that sheriffs could not be elected to parliament during their term in office.¹² The impact of this legislation can be measured quite easily simply by comparing the number of MPs who were sheriffs before its enactment with the number afterwards. Table 10 shows that in the decade prior to 1372, up to a dozen MPs were sheriffs at the time of their election, whereas the custom dropped off sharply once the regulation was in place.¹³ In 1368, another statute relating to sheriffs was enacted, this time declaring that they should serve for only one year.¹⁴ Again, the task of measuring its effectiveness is made comparatively simple; Table 11 indicates that whereas in the 1350s and 1360s it was fairly common for sheriffs to hold consecutive terms, after the statute,

⁸ See chapter 2, p.41.

⁹ SR. ii. 39-43, i. See also W.M. Ormrod, ‘Government by Commission: The Continual Council of 1386 and English Royal Administration’, *Peritia*, x (1996), 303-321, esp. pp.307-9; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.161-3.

¹⁰ SR. ii. 128-9, xvi-xx.

¹¹ For references, see chapter 6, p.182, note 56.

¹² SR. i. 62.vi.

¹³ K.L. Wood-Legh, ‘Sheriffs, Lawyers, and Belted Knights in the Parliaments of Edward III’, *E.H.R.*, xlvi (1931), 372-88, pp.372-6.

¹⁴ SR. i. 389.ix.

**TABLE 10: THE NUMBER OF KNIGHTS OF THE SHIRE ATTENDING
PARLIAMENT WHILST SERVING AS SHERIFF, 1361-1385**

Names in **bold** indicate that the MP effectively returned himself to Parliament.

| Parliament | MP | Shire | Shrievalty | Date of Office |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1361 24 Jan. - 18 Feb. | Robert Morton | Notts | Notts & Derbs | 20 Dec. 1360 - 23 Nov. 1361 |
| | Thomas Moigne | Gloucs | Gloucestershire | 21 Nov. 1360 - 20 Nov. 1363 |
| | Roger Elmmerrugg | Oxon | Oxon & Berks | 21 Nov. 1360 - 20 Nov. 1362 |
| | John Lodelow | Salop | Salop | 12 May 1359 - 4 Aug. 1361 |
| | John Potenhale | Hants | Hampshire | 21 Nov. 1360 - 10 Aug. 1361 |
| | John Musard | Staffs | Staffordshire | 18 Nov. 1351 - 15 Apr. 1361 |
| | Henry Threlkeld | Westm | Westmorland | 29 Sept. 1360 - 17 Sept. 1365 |
| 1362 13 Oct. - 17 Nov. | Robert Tilliol | Cumb | Cumberland | 10 Dec. 1361 - 20 Nov. 1362 |
| | Thomas Moigne | Gloucs | Gloucestershire | 21 Nov. 1360 - 20 Nov. 1363 |
| | Nicholas Styvecle | Hunts | Cambs & Hunts | 18 Oct. 1361 - 5 Nov. 1371 |
| | Thomas Sancto Omero | Norf | Norf & Suffolk | 21 Nov. 1360 - 24 Aug. 1364 |
| | Roger Woderington | Northu | Northumberland | 10 Dec. 1361 - 20 Nov. 1362 |
| | Roger Elmmerrugg | Oxon | Oxon & Berks | 21 Nov. 1360 - 20 Nov. 1362 |
| | Thomas Hampton | Hants | Hampshire | 10 Aug. 1361 - 17 Nov. 1365 |
| Henry Sturmy | Wilts | Wiltshire | 21 Nov. 1360 - 16 Nov. 1366 | |
| 1363 6 Oct. - 30 Oct. | Christopher Moriceby | Cumb | Cumberland | 20 Nov. 1362 - 16 Nov. 1366 |
| | Richard Bingham | Notts | Notts & Derbs | 20 Nov. 1362 - 20 Nov. 1363 |
| | John de hale | Dorset | Dorset | 20 Nov. 1362 - 10 Nov. 1364 |
| | Nicholas Styvecle | Hunts | Cambs & Hunts | 18 Oct. 1361 - 5 Nov. 1371 |
| | Richard Wydville | Northants | Northamptonshire | 20 Nov. 1362 - 27 Nov. 1368 |
| | Richard Horsleye | Northumb | Northumberland | 20 Nov. 1362 - 28 Jan. 1364 |
| | Roger Cotesford | Oxon | Oxon & Berks | 20 Nov. 1362 - 15 Jul. 1365 |
| | John Stoke | Salop | Salop | 22 Oct. 1362 - 30 Oct. 1363 |
| | Robert Grendon | Staffs | Staffordshire | 20 Nov. 1362 - 20 Nov. 1363 |
| | Henry Threlkeld | Westmor | Westmorland | 29 Sept. 1360 - 17 Sept. 1365 |
| | Henry Sturmy | Wilts | Wiltshire | 21 Nov. 1360 - 16 Nov. 1366 |
| Thomas Musgrave | Yorks | Yorkshire | 20 Nov. 1362 - 13 May 1366 | |
| 1365 20 Jan. - 17 Feb. | William Beaufou | Rutland | Rutland | 22 Oct. 1363 - 8 Oct. 1369 |
| | Roger Cheyne | Salop | Salop | 30 Oct. 1363 - Mich. 1365 |
| 1366 4 May - 11 May | Christopher Moriceby | Cumb | Cumberland | 20 Nov. 1362 - 16 Nov. 1366 |
| | Robert Twyford | Derbs | Notts & Derbs | 10 Nov. 1364 - 16 Nov. 1366 |
| | John Tracy | Gloucs | Gloucestershire | 20 Nov. 1363 - 27 Nov. 1368 |
| | Nicholas Styvecle | Hunts | Cambs & Hunts | 18 Oct. 1361 - 5 Nov. 1371 |
| | William Haulay | Lincs | Lincolnshire | 20 Nov. 1363 - 27 Nov. 1368 |
| | Richard Wydville | Northants | Northamptonshire | 20 Nov. 1362 - 27 Nov. 1368 |
| | William Beaufou | Rutland | Rutland | 22 Oct. 1363 - 8 Oct. 1369 |
| | Phillip Lutteley | Staffs | Staffordshire | 10 Nov. 1364 - 27 Nov. 1368 |
| John Weyville | Sussex | Surr & Suss | 6 Dec. 1365 - 16 Nov. 1366 | |
| 1368 1 May - 28 May | Sampson de Strelleye | Notts | Notts & Derbs | 16 Nov. 1366 - 27 Nov. 1368 |
| | John Oliver | Essex | Essex & Herts | 16 Nov. 1366 - 9 June 1368 |
| | John Tracy | Gloucs | Gloucestershire | 20 Nov. 1363 - 27 Nov. 1368 |
| | Nicholas Styvecle | Hunts | Cambs & Hunts | 18 Oct. 1361 - 5 Nov. 1371 |
| | Thomas Morieux | Norf | Norf & Suffolk | 16 Nov. 1366 - 27 Nov. 1368 |
| | Richard Wydville | Northants | Northamptonshire | 20 Nov. 1362 - 27 Nov. 1368 |

| | | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| | Roger Elmmerugg | Oxon | Oxon & Berks | 17 Nov. 1365 - 27 Nov. 1368 |
| | William Beaufou | Rutland | Rutland | 22 Oct. 1363 - 8 Oct. 1369 |
| | Peter Brugge | Hants | Hampshire | 16 Nov. 1366 - 5 Nov. 1369 |
| | Phillip Lutteley | Staffs | Staffordshire | 10 Nov. 1364 - 27 Nov. 1368 |
| | Andrew Sakeville | Sussex | Surr & Suss | 16 Nov. 1366 & 27 Nov. 1368 |
| 1369 | Edmund Cheyne | Somerset | Somerset | 27 Nov. 1368 - 28 Nov. 1370 |
| 3 June - | John Poyntz | Gloucs | Gloucestershire | 27 Nov. 1368 - 5 Nov. 1369 |
| 11 June | Richard de la Bere | Heres | Herefordshire | 27 Nov. 1368 - 28 Nov. 1370 |
| | John Henxteworth | Herts | Essex & Herts | 27 Nov. 1368 - 22 Jan. 1370 |
| | John Ipre | Lancs | Lancashire | 23 Apr. 1361 - Mich. 1370 |
| | Thomas Fulnetby | Lincs | Lincolnshire | 27 Nov. 1368 - 18 Aug. 1372 |
| | Richard Holdych | Norf | Norf & Suffolk | 27 Nov. 1368 - 5 Nov. 1369 |
| | Roger Cotesford | Oxon | Oxon & Berks | 27 Nov. 1368 - 5 Nov. 1369 |
| | William Beaufou | Rutland | Rutland | 22 Oct. 1363 - 8 Oct. 1369 |
| | William Carles | Salop | Salop | 1 May 1369 - Mich. 1369 |
| | Ralph Thirbarn | Surrey | Surr & Suss | 27 Nov. 1368 - 31 Jan. 1371 |
| 1371 | Adam Parning | Cumb | Cumberland | 27 Nov. 1368 - 5 Nov. 1371 |
| 24 Feb. - | Roger Belers | Notts | Notts & Derbs | 27 Nov. 1368 - 5 Nov. 1371 |
| 18 Feb. | Thomas Chandos | Heres | Herefordshire | 28 Nov. 1370 - 5 Nov. 1371 |
| | Nicholas Styvecle | Hunts | Cambs & Hunts | 18 Oct. 1361 - 5 Nov. 1371 |
| | Edmund Thorpe | Norf | Norf & Suffolk | 5 Nov. 1369 - 5 Nov. 1371 |
| | John Perton | Staffs | Staffordshire | 10 Jan. 1370 - 5 Nov. 1371 |
| 1372 | John Ragoun | Beds | Beds & Bucks | 3 Nov. - 24 Nov. 1372 |
| 3 Nov. - | John Cheyne | Bucks | Beds & Bucks | 5 Nov. 1371 - 12 Nov. 1372 |
| 24 Nov. | William Pappeworth | Cambs | Cambs & Hunts | 5 Nov. 1371 - 12 Dec. 1372 |
| | John Denton | Cumb | Cumberland | 5 Nov. 1371 - 12 Dec. 1372 |
| | Richard Grey | Notts | Notts & Derbs | 5 Nov. 1371 - 12 Dec. 1372 |
| | John Clifford | Gloucs | Gloucestershire | 5 Nov. 1371 - 12 Dec. 1372 |
| | John Botiller | Lancs | Lancashire | 25 Nov. 1371 - 17 Nov. 1374 |
| | Richard Herthill | Warws | Warws & Leics | 5 Nov. 1371 - 12 Dec. 1372 |
| | Gilbert Wace | Oxon | Oxon & Berks | 5 Nov. 1371 - 12 Dec. 1372 |
| | John Wittlesbury | Rutland | Rutland | 24 Jan. 1372 - 12 Dec. 1374 |
| | John Gresely | Staffs | Staffordshire | 5 Nov. 1371 - 12 Dec. 1372 |
| 1373 | John Mautby | Norf | Norf & Suff | 7 Nov. 1373 - 9 Dec. 1374 |
| 21 Nov. | John Verdon | Staffs | Staffordshire | 7 Nov. 1373 - 12 Dec. 1374 |
| 10 Dec. | | | | |
| 1376 | none | | | |
| Jan 1377 | none | | | |
| Oct 1377 | none | | | |
| 1378 | none | | | |
| 1379 | none | | | |
| Jan 1380 | none | | | |
| Nov 1380 | none | | | |
| 1381 | John Thorp | Gloucs | Gloucestershire | 1 Nov. 1381 - 24 Nov. 1382 |
| 4 Nov. - | John Sapy | Worcs | Worcestershire | 10 Nov. 1377 - Mich. 1382 |
| 25 Feb. | | | | |
| 1382 | John Thorp | Gloucs | Gloucestershire | 1 Nov. 1381 - 24 Nov. 1382 |
| 7-22 May | | | | |
| 1382 | John Sapy | Worcs | Worcestershire | 13 Nov. 1377 - Mich. 1382 |
| 6-24 Oct | | | | |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|---|
| 1383 23 Feb. - 10 Mar. | Thomas Fitznicol | Gloucs | Gloucestershire | 24 Nov. 1382 - 1 Dec. 1383 |
| 1383 26 Oct. - 26 Nov. | Thomas Fitznicol | Gloucs | Gloucestershire | 24 Nov. 1382 - 1 Dec. 1383 |
| 1384 12 Nov. - 14 Dec. | Robert Dykeswell Henry English John Birmingham Roger Chaumbre Edward Acton William Wabal Robert Notbourn Walter Stirkland | Beds Cambs Warws Northants Salop Staffs Surrey Westmor | Beds & Bucks Cambs & Hunts Warws & Leics Northamptonshire Salop Staffordshire Surr & Suss Westmorland | 11 Nov. 1384 - 20 Oct. 1385 11 Nov. 1384 - 20 Oct. 1385 11 Nov. 1384 - Mich. 1385 11 Nov. 1384 - 20 Oct. 1385 11 Nov. 1384 - 20 Oct. 1385 11 Nov. 1384 - 20 Oct. 1385 11 Nov. 1384 - 20 Oct. 1385 23 Sept. 1384 - 13 Jul. 1389 |
| 1385 20 Oct. - 6 Oct. | John Calvely | Warws | Warws & Leics | Mich. 1385 - 18 Nov. 1386 |

1386-1421, see J.S. Roskell, L. Clark and C. Rawcliffe, eds., *The House of Commons, 1386-1421*, History of Parliament Trust, 4 vols. (Stroud, 1993), i, pp.179-81.

TABLE 11: SHERIFFS AND THE STATUTE OF 1368

| | Column 1: no. of sheriffs 1348-68 | Column 2: no. of sheriffs 1369-89 |
|-------------------|--|--|
| Beds & Bucks | 10 | 19 |
| Berks & Ox | 10 | 21 |
| Cambs & Hunts | 10 | 19 |
| Cornwall | 14 | 21 |
| Cumberland | 14 | 20 |
| Derbs & Notts | 16 | 21 |
| Dorset & Somerset | 12 | 22 |
| Essex & Herts | 19 | 24 |
| Gloucs | 10 | 24 |
| Hampshire | 9 | 19 |
| Herefordshire | 13 | 23 |
| Kent | 17 | 22 |
| Lancs | 4 | 9 |
| Leics & Warws | 4 | 22 |
| Lincolnshire | 6 | 21 |
| Norfolk & Suffolk | 13 | 20 |
| Northants | 9 | 20 |
| Northumberland | 9 | 18 |
| Rutland | 8 | 17 |
| Shropshire | 9 | 22 |
| Staffordshire | 10 | 24 |
| Surrey & Sussex | 14 | 19 |
| Westmorland | 12 | 6 |
| Wiltshire | 5 | 18 |
| Worcestershire | 4 | 7 |
| Yorkshire | 15 | 21 |

the practice virtually came to an end and the turnover of sheriffs occurred more or less annually.¹⁵ Other statutes which are as easily assessed, but indicate a less positive impact on the status quo, include the other part of the ordinance of 1372 which forbade the return of lawyers to parliament;¹⁶ the statutes of 1330 and 1362 requiring annual parliaments;¹⁷ and the statute of January 1390 which asserted that there should be a maximum of thirty sergeants-at-arms in the royal household.¹⁸

Unfortunately, by far the majority of statutes were more open-ended than the above examples and are consequently far less prone to a quantitative analysis. Possibly the only way of measuring the impact of these statutes is to trawl through the judicial records for evidence of infringement, but even this exercise has underlying difficulties. In the first place, judicial records are notoriously difficult to interpret, particularly in terms of their bearing on statutory legislation.¹⁹ For example, how would we interpret the existence of a great many cases where a statute was recorded as having been broken? Would we see this as indicating that the statute was being enforced tightly and vigorously, in which few individuals got away with the offence, or would we regard this infringement as evidence that the statute was being broken with consummate ease? Conversely, would a lack of indictments indicate that a statute was widely respected and generally observed, or could it be accounted for by the fact that the legislation was hopelessly out of touch and so generally disregarded that little effort was expended to bring offenders to account? In the second place, and perhaps more fundamentally, judicial records might be able to tell us about infringement, but they can never tell us about *acquiescence* to legislation which is equally important in assessing its impact. To state the obvious, statutes did not automatically generate defiance in the population and they could well have had a profound effect on the way in which 'obedient' subjects conducted themselves without necessarily leaving any mark on the judicial records. There are clearly a number of important difficulties involved in a quantitative assessment of the impact of legislation and it is with these in mind that I have chosen to adopt a more impressionistic approach to the subject

¹⁵ See also the discussion by N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981), pp.110-11.

¹⁶ SR. i. 394; J.S. Roskell, L. Clark and C. Rawcliffe, eds., *The House of Commons, 1386-1421*, History of Parliament Trust, 4 vols. (Stroud, 1993), i, Appendix B2.

¹⁷ SR. i. 265.xiv; 374.x; see also Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III*, p.67.

¹⁸ SR. ii. 62.vi; C. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance in England 1360-1413* (London and New Haven, 1986), p.55.

¹⁹ See the discussion by C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992), Appendix 4.

in the rest of the chapter relying less on numbers and statistics and more on the qualitative evidence contained within common petitions and, indeed, within the statutes themselves.

ii/ STATUTORY LEGISLATION: HENRY V

Henry V's approach to parliament was marked by a calculated business-like efficiency, but whereas most historians usually choose to portray this in terms of his record in gaining taxation, it can also be shown in the way in which he used the assembly's legislative function for his own interests.²⁰ Undoubtedly, it was the restoration of law and order that represented one of Henry's most pressing needs when he came to power in 1413.²¹ He therefore used the occasion of his second parliament, held at Leicester in May 1414, to initiate a far-reaching programme of law enforcement in the localities. The word 'initiate' is absolutely crucial, for the desire to restore law and order, which had for so long been a theme cropping up in common petitions, was now a top priority for the king as well.²² This was indicated, at least initially, in three ways: firstly, in the venue of parliament - held in the Midlands where disorder was most rampant; secondly, in the chancellor's speech which stated that the chastisement of malefactors was to be a central concern of the assembly;²³ and thirdly, and perhaps most significantly, in the presence at Leicester, of the King's Bench which had uprooted itself from Westminster for the first time since 1390 in order to deal directly with the disorder.

However, it was in the legislative activity of parliament that the king's determination to stamp his authority in the localities was most obviously displayed. This can be seen by four particularly important statutes which were enacted in the Leicester parliament.²⁴ One was the Statute of Lollards which was a direct response to Oldcastle's rebellion earlier in the year.²⁵ This legislation was not political posturing; the statute embodied a crucial alliance between spiritual and secular authorities in which Lollardy was made into a treasonable offence and the Lollards themselves, having now become the focus of popular hatred, were forced

²⁰ Harriss, 'The Management of Parliament', pp.137-58.

²¹ E. Powell, *Kingship, Law, and Society: Criminal Justice in the Reign of Henry V* (Oxford, 1989), pp.121-228; *idem*, 'The Restoration of Law and Order', in Harriss, ed., *Henry V*, pp.53-74.

²² See Carpenter, 'Law, Justice and Landowners', p.228.

²³ *RP*. iv. 15-6.1.

²⁴ *RP*. iv. 22.23-26.26; *SR*. ii. 178-87.vi-ix.

²⁵ *SR*. ii. 181.vii.

underground.²⁶ It was a measure of the commitment of Henry V to the enforcement of this statute that the preamble to commissions of the peace was amended so that the investigation of heresy was now to become an additional duty expected of the JPs in the localities (the last time such modification had occurred was in 1390 when the enforcement of the Statute of Livery had been incorporated).²⁷ Another statute enacted in this parliament was the Statute of Truces.²⁸ Again, the resolve of the crown to enforce this legislation was shown by the fact that its infringement was also classified as high treason. Although there are no records of individuals incurring such a penalty, the mere threat of the punishment was evidently enough to ensure compliance because in October 1416 a common petition was presented which complained that, for fear of conviction, many men dared not make any reprisals against foreign seamen who attacked their ships.²⁹ The other two statutes bolstered the programme of law enforcement in the localities: the first represented an attempt to secure the enforcement of the statute of 1411 against riots by ensuring that the suppression of this disorder would become another part of the routine work of the JPs; and the second provided stricter measures to crack down on this activity which included the summary conviction of any rioter who failed to appear at chancery to answer charges brought against him by a complainant.³⁰

It would, of course, be absurd to suggest that these statutes were representative of *all* the legislation enacted during the reign of Henry V. Nevertheless, they did very much set the tone for the reign in that most of Henry V's legislation tended to represent clear statements of policy by the crown rather than half-measures designed merely to placate or appease public opinion. For most of his reign Henry V had the full support of the political community at parliament so he did not need to waste time passing statutes that he had no intention of implementing or enforcing in the localities. Arguably, this was demonstrated by the king's willingness to utilise the JPs as a means of enforcement.³¹ We have seen this already in the context of the Statute of Lollards, but it also surfaced in other legislation, including a statute of 1413 in which the crown finally agreed to the Commons' request that JPs should be

²⁶ Powell, *Kingship, Law, and Society*, pp.141-65; J.A.F. Thomson, *The Later Lollards 1414-1520* (Oxford, 1965), pp.8-19.

²⁷ R. Sillem, 'Commissions of the Peace, 1380-1485', *B.I.H.R.*, x (1932-1933), 81-104, pp.84-5.

²⁸ *SR*, ii. 178.vi.

²⁹ *RP*. iv. 105.31; *SR*. ii. 198-9.

³⁰ *SR*. ii. 184-187.

³¹ For a contrast see Richard II's response to common petitions asking for the empowerment of JPs: chapter 2, pp.46-

empowered to enquire into the malpractices of purveyors of the royal household.³² Although complaints against illegal purveyance did not disappear altogether, it is noticeable that they dropped off markedly under Henry V compared to the period between 1371 and 1413.³³ The faith Henry V placed in his JPs is also illustrated by his response in the following parliament to a common petition which complained about the continuing violation by peasants and artisans of the labour laws of 1351 and the Statute of Cambridge of 1388.³⁴ Quite clearly, the king genuinely wished to reassert these statutes in the localities because he responded by ordering that all copies of legislation enacted before his reign on labour conditions be sent to sheriffs for renewed proclamation in the counties.³⁵ More significantly, perhaps, JPs were given unprecedented summary powers to examine suspected offenders under oath without a jury and it was ordered that copies of the legislation should be sent to them ‘...to remain with such Justices...for the better putting of the foresaid Statutes and Ordinances in due execution’.³⁶ This was the first time since 1362 that JPs had been specifically required to conduct their business with reference to particular statutory legislation.³⁷

It has to be admitted that there *were* some common petitions that criticised the ineffectiveness of legislation under Henry V. These included two complaining about the impediment of river traffic due to the illegal erection of mills and dykes; two referring to the unreasonable fee farms charged to sheriffs; and another complaining that aliens still remained within the country contrary to statutory law.³⁸ It is important to point out, however, that all these complaints concerned statutes which had been made by Henry V’s predecessors - mostly by Henry IV, but in the case of the obstruction of river traffic, dating back to Magna Carta.³⁹ ‘Inherited’ statutes were a phenomenon which every late medieval king - including Henry V - had to contend with when succeeding to the throne and if some of these statutes were neglected this was not necessarily a great blemish on the king’s record. Indeed, it is quite possible that some kings felt no obligation at all to enforce statutes made by their predecessors, some of which may not have corresponded with their own agenda or their own political priorities.

³² *RP.* iv. 14.42; *SR.* ii. 174.x; Sillem, ‘Commissions of the Peace’, pp.90-1; C. Given-Wilson, ‘Purveyance for the Royal Household, 1362-1413’, *B.I.H.R.*, lvi (1983), 145-63; *idem*, *The Royal Household*, pp.111-13.

³³ *RP.* iv. 14.42, 81.38.

³⁴ *RP.* iv. 20.18.

³⁵ *SR.* ii. 176-7.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ *Proceedings Before the Justices of the Peace in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries Edward III to Richard III*, ed. B.H. Putnam (London, 1938), p.xxxii.

³⁸ *RP.* iv. 8.21, 114.19; 78.29, 103.23; 79.32.

³⁹ *SR.* i. 6-7.

Certainly, Henry V's response to the complaints about the obstruction of rivers was distinctly unco-operative, as was his reaction to the petitions about the shrievalty.⁴⁰ Only the request for the removal of aliens was positively addressed, and this must have been because their expulsion suited Henry's own needs at this time.⁴¹

It was a measure, perhaps, of just how tight Henry V's control of parliamentary legislation was, that the only occasions when the Commons referred to *his* statutes, were when they were seen to be having an important and noticeable impact on the status quo. One occasion was in 1416 when the Statute of Truces was requested to be moderated and the other happened in 1420 when the Commons asked that a statute of 1419, which had provided measures to prevent false indictments from occurring in Lancashire, be extended both geographically and chronologically.⁴² In summary, Henry V's reign may have seen relatively few statutes enacted compared to other reigns but his tight control of the institution and the range of business it dealt with, together with the king's determination to create the right conditions for his absence abroad, meant that in general the statutes that were enacted usually made an important impact on the areas they were intended to address.

iii/ STATUTORY LEGISLATION: RICHARD II AND HENRY IV

a/ The Crown's Perspective

Like Henry V, Richard II and Henry IV faced complaints about the ineffectiveness of 'inherited' legislation. Under Richard II, dissatisfaction was expressed in particular over statutes concerning economic measures or matters to do with the Church. In the former case, there were petitions complaining about the failure of the statute of 1373 which regulated the assize of cloth;⁴³ the statute of 1360-1 which asserted that there should be one standard measure throughout the realm;⁴⁴ and the Statute of Purveyors enacted in 1362.⁴⁵ In the case of the Church there were petitions concerning the Statute of Mortmain of 1279;⁴⁶ the

⁴⁰ The petitions on river obstruction met with an unconvincing affirmation of 'the statutes made already' and one of the petitions on the shrievalty was answered 'Le Roy soi avisera', whilst the other was answered that procedure would remain 'as it always had been'.

⁴¹ *SR*. ii. 193.iii.

⁴² *RP*. iv. 127.24; *SR*. ii. 201.i.

⁴³ *SR*. i. 395.i; *RP*. iii. 81.32, 158.30.

⁴⁴ *SR*. i. 365.vi; *RP*. iii. 291.31.

⁴⁵ *SR*. i 371.ii; *RP*. iii. 15.46, 26.116, 46.72, 83.38, 100-1.17, 104.34, 115.76, 146.15, 158.30, 200.16, 213.31.

⁴⁶ *SR*. i. 51; *RP*. iii. 291.32.

Statute of Provisors of 1351;⁴⁷ and the statute of 1371 which prohibited the Church from seeking tithes from the sale of wood.⁴⁸ If nothing else, these and other references showed the importance that must have been attached, both by the Commons and indeed by the constituencies themselves, to the preservation of, and access to, records of past statutes.⁴⁹ There was clearly an awareness within the political community of a legislative tradition which had to be consulted if common petitions were to be presented in a proper context in parliament. Under Henry IV similar themes and complaints about 'inherited' legislation cropped up but, interestingly, rather than dragging his feet, this king displayed a far more constructive attitude compared to his predecessor or successor. In at least three major areas Henry IV attempted to address issues which had been longstanding sources of complaint by the Commons in the fourteenth century; in 1399 and 1401, for example, fresh statutes were passed imposing more stringent regulations limiting the giving of liveries;⁵⁰ in 1402 legislation was passed which appears to have made substantial concessions to the Commons over the appropriation of churches;⁵¹ and in the same parliament a commission with statutory authority was set up to enquire into all breaches of the legislation against the obstruction of rivers.⁵² Under Henry IV, it would appear that some 'inherited' legislation provided an ideal opportunity for political capital to be made by contrasting the co-operation and receptiveness of the Lancastrian regime with the obstructionist attitude of Richard II.

As we have seen, however, the true measure of the character of legislation in a reign lay not in the criticisms of the Commons about legislative 'legacies', but in the feedback they provided on statutes made by the king in power. Significantly, under both Richard II and Henry IV, the Commons not only complained about old legislation but also levelled criticism against recent statutes. In October 1377, for example, an ordinance was made which decreed that all foreign clerics from countries then at war with England should leave the realm before

⁴⁷ *SR.* i. 316-8; *RP.* iii. 117.19, 138.31.

⁴⁸ *SR.* i. 393.iii; *RP.* iii. 43.47.

⁴⁹ For the keeping of statutes, ordinances and other proclamations in the locality, see Maddicott, 'The County Community', p.36.

⁵⁰ *SR.* ii. 113.vii, 129.xxi. Henry's legislation went a good deal further than the original statute of 1390 by excluding the critical get-out clause that liveries could be worn by individuals if they were retained by a lord for life. Much has been written on this subject but see in particular; R.L. Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace, 1388-90', in F.R.H. Du Boulay and C.M. Barron, eds., *The Reign of Richard II: Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (London, 1971), pp.131-52; J.M.W. Bean, *From Lord To Patron: Lordship in late medieval England* (Manchester, 1989), pp.202-8; N. Saul, 'The Commons and the Abolition of badges', *Parliamentary History*, vol. ix (1990), 302-15.

⁵¹ *SR.* ii. 136.xi.

⁵² *Ibid.*, xii.

Candlemas.⁵³ In 1379 the Commons complained that this had not been carried out and that many foreigners still remained within the realm 'to the great peril of the people'.⁵⁴ In October 1382 the Commons also complained about the continuing violation of a statute made in 1381, which had simplified the procedure by which individuals could be discharged of fines at the exchequer.⁵⁵ In 1393, criticism was levelled against a statute made in the previous parliament which attempted to set the scale of weights and measures according to the standard fixed by the exchequer in 1352.⁵⁶ Evidently the government had failed to take action in this respect for the Commons pointed out that the marshalsea of the household was still operating on a different scale to the one used by the exchequer. Also in 1393, the Commons complained about the non-enforcement of the Statute of Liveries of 1390 in which, they claimed, diverse craftsmen and other men of small status continued to wear liveries and badges in spite of the statutory prohibition.⁵⁷ The modified statute was later criticized by Thomas Haxey in 1397 for being completely ineffective.⁵⁸ Finally, in 1394, the Commons bitterly complained that the number of sergeants-at-arms still exceeded the statutory limit set in January 1390 and asked '...la dite Ordinance mettre en execution'.⁵⁹

There are hints here that not all the statutes enacted by Richard II necessarily had his full commitment to their enforcement. This is not to say that they were passed against the wishes of the crown but simply that their implementation may have been of secondary importance to the political advantages that could be gained by *appearing* to concede to the Commons' demands if, in reality, nothing much was really going to be changed. Henry IV showed this with his high-principled legislation against liveries, for it was soon to become apparent that the statutes of 1399 and 1401 were merely political gestures with little or no real substance; in 1406 the Commons complained that 'many bannerets, knights and esquires' were still rampaging the countryside unrestrained by any statutory law.⁶⁰ If Henry lived to regret his

⁵³ *RP.* iii. 22.91.

⁵⁴ *RP.* iii. 64.40.

⁵⁵ *RP.* iii. 141.52; *SR.* ii. 21.ix.

⁵⁶ *RP.* iii. 306.25; *SR.* ii. 79.iv. See W.M. Ormrod, 'The English Crown and the customs, 1349-63', *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., xl (1987), 27-40.

⁵⁷ *RP.* iii. 307.31. For the lack of prosecutions see Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace', pp.131,147.

⁵⁸ *SR.* ii. 84.iv. Strangely, both Post and Story assert that no statute was enacted in 1393: Bean, *From Lord to Patron*, p.204; Storey 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace', p.147. For Haxey see *RP.* iii. 339.13; A.K. McHardy, 'Haxey's Case, 1397: The Petition and the Presenter Reconsidered', in J.L. Gillespie, ed., *The Age of Richard II* (Gloucester, 1997), pp.93-114.

⁵⁹ *RP.* iii. 318.31; *SR.* ii. 62.vi. See also Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household*, p.55.

⁶⁰ *RP.* iii. 600.137.

concessions over liveries, he must have felt similarly over another piece of legislation enacted in 1399 which finally promised to address the problem of excessive shrieval fee farms.⁶¹ Again, this appeared to be little more than political expediency for on no fewer than four occasions in the course of Henry's reign (1406, 1407, 1410, and 1411) the Commons complained that the statute of 1399 had not been put into practice, and that sheriffs continued to be charged an unreasonable amount in the exchequer '...en grand destruction des Viscountz...& oppression des Communes des ditz Contees'.⁶² It was a measure, perhaps, of the exasperation felt by the Commons that in 1406 their demand for the implementation of the statute was put in such blunt and direct terms: 'Pleise mettre le dit Estatut en oevere'.

These examples show that statutes were worth little more than the parchment they were written on if they did not have the full backing of the king in their implementation. If the crown was not fully committed to a piece of legislation, either because it was intended to be little more than a political expedient, or because it was too politically sensitive, or just too difficult to enforce effectively, there was very little the Commons could do. The discretionary power the king possessed when it came to implementing or suppressing statutes is highlighted most effectively in the last years of Richard II's reign when the king quite blatantly granted a large number of pardons and licences to individuals who had either breached the Statute of Provisors or who wished to accept a provision by the pope against its mandate.⁶³ There were, however, more subtle methods a king could employ to weaken the impact of a statute. Perhaps the most important and most common was simply to reduce the severity of the punitive measures which were incorporated within legislation against potential offenders. The logic behind this was very simple: the less severe a penalty, the less of a deterrent it was and therefore the more chance that the statute would be broken. Though Henry V was not adverse to amending the penalties suggested by the Commons, it is noticeable how much of a feature this was of legislation under Richard II and Henry IV.⁶⁴ At an extreme level there were occasions in these latter reigns when the crown entirely omitted any penalty whatsoever in legislation prompted by the Commons. This happened in January 1390 when three common petitions were presented in parliament which concerned, respectively, the malpractice of the court of the

⁶¹ SR. ii. 114.xi. See chapter 6, p.182, note 56 for references to past petitions and A. Gross, 'Langland's Rats: A Moralists' Vision of Parliament', *Parliamentary History*, ix (1990), pp.280-301, pp.297-8.

⁶² RP. iii. 592.106; 614.32; 635.46b; 659.30.

⁶³ Between 1396 and 1399, there were 34 licences or pardons granted by Richard II, compared to 7 between 1391 and 1395; *C.P.R., 1391-1396*; *C.P.R., 1396-1399, passim*.

⁶⁴ For Henry V's reign see RP. iv. 10.28, 20.17, 21.20; SR. ii. 171.iv, 176.iii, 177.v; Gray, *Influence of the Commons*, pp.261-6.

constable and marshalsea, the jurisdiction of the steward and marshal of the king's household, and the jurisdiction of the admirals of the high seas.⁶⁵ Each petition suggested that if wrongdoing was discovered on the part of any of these officers, they should be fined and lose their office. All three petitions were enacted into legislation but the suggested reprimands were completely ignored.⁶⁶ Similarly, in the parliaments of 1401 and 1402, four statutes were enacted which also completely left out the sanctions suggested by the Commons.⁶⁷ The subjects that they covered were: the unreasonable fees charged by clerks of the king's bench; suggested fines for breaking the statute against liveries; the excessive number of attorneys not learned in law; and a request that no steward, bailiff or minister of lords of franchises should act as attorney within that franchise.

By simply lessening the penalty, however, the crown could just as easily minimise the effect of a statute. In January 1404, for example, in the light of an assault made by John Savage on Thomas Brook, knight of the shire for Somerset, the Commons stated that in order to set an example for the future, a sentence of treason should be imposed for the murder of an MP, the loss of a limb for assault and imprisonment of a year for detaining him without his consent.⁶⁸ The resulting statute fell well short of this by providing a penalty only for assaults and this was limited simply to double damages to the victim and a fine to the king.⁶⁹ The same 'dilution' occurred in 1402 when a petition asked that labourers who worked by the week or on feast days should be fined 20s. and also - this was the crux of the petition - that their *employers* should be made to pay the same fine.⁷⁰ The response and the statute, however, ordained measures only against the labourers, entirely omitting any reference to their employers and thus almost completely nullifying the effect of the legislation.⁷¹ A slightly different perspective on the same process is provided by a petition in the same parliament complaining about the misconduct of the king's searchers in his ports.⁷² This time the Commons' suggested penalty of the loss of office was actually outdone by the crown's response to the petition which added imprisonment and a fine to be made to the king. However, when the petition came to be enacted into a statute, the reference to imprisonment mysteriously disappeared, suggesting,

⁶⁵ *RP*. iii. 265.26, 267.34, 269.41.

⁶⁶ *SR*. ii. 61.ii, 62.iii, 62.v.

⁶⁷ *RP*. iii. 472.74, 477.110, 504.71, 504.72, 497.43, 501.60; *SR*. ii. 123.x, 129.xxi, 138.xviii, 139.xix,

⁶⁸ *RP*. iii. 542.78.

⁶⁹ *SR*. ii. 144.vi.

⁷⁰ *RP*. iii. 502.60.

⁷¹ *SR*. ii. 137.xiv.

⁷² *RP*. iii. 510.109.

perhaps, that it had been merely hyperbole designed to appease the Commons whilst they were physically present at parliament to press their case.⁷³

We should not underestimate the effect that the presence or absence of punishment in statutes could have on their enforcement in the localities or, indeed, on administration at the centre. If the crown was sensitive to the issue, so too were the Commons who frequently linked the ineffectiveness of legislation to the weakness of the prescribed penalty. Thus, in response to the alleged failure of the statute of 1381, which had attempted to reform procedure in the exchequer, the Commons requested that ‘...le dit Estatut soit tenuz sur grant peyne’.⁷⁴ Interestingly, the ‘grant peyne’ was not specified by the Commons and although the crown apparently accepted its general purport (with the words ‘Le Roi le voet’), it was *not* then subsequently re-enacted as a modified statute. In November 1384, the Commons petitioned the king about an ‘ordinance’ made in February 1383 which had implemented measures for the defence of the Scottish marches by the owners of castles there.⁷⁵ The Commons clearly felt that this ordinance lacked teeth, for they pointed out that ‘...En quele ordinance n’estoit nulle peine establee as contrevenantz d’icelle’. They then requested that the king should, ‘...ordeigner en cest cas covenable peine’; but the crown rejected it by conceding only that such lords would be charged ‘...de garder leurs Chastelx en manere come ils soleient devant ces heures en temps de guerre’. In 1391, the Commons requested that ‘une peyne soit mys en certain en cest present Parlement as countrevenantz de l’Estatut & Ordeignances’ concerning the conduct of the constable of Dover castle.⁷⁶ The reply was deliberately evasive, ignoring the request for punitive measures, but promising remedy to those who sued the king for redress. Again in 1391, as well as in 1393, common petitions complained about the ineffectiveness of certain statutes (one concerned the use of the standard measure of wine and the other dealt with the conduct of the councils of Lords and Ladies) and both specifically stated that this was due to the fact that ‘...nulle peine est limite en mesme l’Estatut’.⁷⁷ In these cases the crown’s response was actually favourable because the Commons suggested modification of the old statutes *were* incorporated into new legislation.⁷⁸ In 1401, the Commons’ complaint against clergy who prevented the sale of timber was accompanied by a

⁷³ SR. ii. 142. xxi.

⁷⁴ RP. iii. 141.52.

⁷⁵ RP. iii. 146.14, 200.20.

⁷⁶ RP. iii. 290.28.

⁷⁷ RP. iii. 291.31, 305.22.

⁷⁸ SR. ii. 79. iv, 83. ii.

demand for 'peine' to be ordained in parliament - a request that was refused.⁷⁹ In the following parliament the Commons asked that 'certein peyne a limiter en cest present Parlement' regulating the actions of household victuallers⁸⁰ and finally, in 1410, they complained that the statute made in 1406,⁸¹ establishing the manner in which sheriffs should organise county elections, '...ne fuist ordine ne mys null Peyne sur les Viscontz s'ils facent ascuns Retournes encountre le tenure du dit Estatuit'.⁸² Both these petitions were taken up by the crown and re-enacted into legislation with the punitive measures included.⁸³

The picture of the enforcement of statutory legislation is clearly not a uniform one. Whilst some statutes were, indeed, solemn declarations of government policy which were intended to have an important and lasting impact on the status quo, others appear to have been enacted purely out of political convenience; they were intended to do little more than placate public opinion. Arguably, this uncertainty over the status of legislation created a profound sense of insecurity and, indeed, confusion on the part of the Commons as to which statutes the crown fully endorsed, which had been made redundant through subsequent modification⁸⁴ and which ones had simply lapsed through the passage of time. In theory, of course, a statute could not fall into desuetude,⁸⁵ but the existence of large numbers of 'confirmatory' petitions, where all that the Commons asked for was that a particular statute should be confirmed or ratified and held in full force, proves that in practice things were rather different.⁸⁶ These so-called confirmatory petitions showed that the Commons - and presumably the communities that they represented - were well aware of the fact that statutes were open to royal interpretation,⁸⁷ that the willingness of the crown to enforce legislation could fluctuate over time, and that some statutes could have an unofficial 'expiry date' whereby the crown simply discarded those which it no longer needed, or felt compelled by public opinion, to enforce. The inconsistency of the

⁷⁹ *RP.* iii. 470.59.

⁸⁰ *RP.* iii. 508.85.

⁸¹ *SR.* ii. 156.xv.

⁸² *RP.* iii. 641.59.

⁸³ *SR.* ii. 140.xxv, 162.i.

⁸⁴ It is in this light, perhaps, that we should understand the concern of the Commons when, in 1411, with a hint of exasperation, they complained to the king about 'les obscurez paroles & ambiguities faitz en les ditz Estatuitz [concerning ray cloth]; & auxi considerant le graund nombre des Estatuitz faitz en temps de E[ward III]...en temps R[ichard II]...& en temps n[ost]re S[ir]e le Roy q'or est'; *RP.* iii. 664.44.

⁸⁵ This has been discussed by S.B. Chrimes, *English Constitutional Ideas in the Fifteenth Century*, (Cambridge, 1936), pp.265-79.

⁸⁶ For example, on the Statute of Purveyors, see *RP.* iii. 47.73, 115.76, 146.15, 158.30. On the conduct of sheriffs and escheators within shire communities, see *RP.* iii. 159.34, 173.23, 201.25, 280.18.

⁸⁷ This is a subject which has been dealt with in detail for an earlier period by T.F.T. Plucknett, *Statutes and their Interpretation in the First Half of the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1922).

crown's attitude to the implementation of different statutes must inevitably have led to an inconsistency in the way local communities acquiesced to them. Confirmatory petitions may therefore have served not only to remind the crown of its obligation to enforce a particular statute, but also to remind people in the localities - through fresh promulgation - of a statute's continued existence and their duty to conform to it. This is why most confirmatory petitions were accompanied by phrases such as '...a sur ce faire declaration du dit Estatut', or '...il [the statute] est mester & necessaire d'estre meulz declarez', or '...q[ue] cell Estatut poet tielment estre declare'.⁸⁸ Thus, the only way some statutes could acquire permanence was through their regular re-enactment by the crown.

b/ The Perspective of the Political Community

Where statutory legislation concerned the reform of administration at the level of central government or the appointment of crown officials in the localities (for example, sheriffs or escheators), its implementation was clearly almost entirely in the hands of the crown. However, the effective enforcement of many other statutes depended for the most part on the co-operation and commitment of the men who had initiated them in the first place - the MPs at parliament and the constituents in the localities. Thus, if *these* statutes proved ineffective, this could be as much a reflection of the attitudes and disposition of the political community as it could the half-hearted support of the king.

This can be explained, at least initially, by the fact that the effectiveness of a particular statute could often hinge on how united the Commons were in seeing it properly implemented. It is easy to regard common petitions as the manifestation of a united Commons working in concert to produce demands which pertained to the interests of the whole community - to the *common* interest. This, after all, is what distinguished common petitions from private petitions, which concerned individual or private interests. In reality, however, the situation was not quite so straightforward. It is hard to believe, for example, that the campaign waged against liveries and maintenance in the 1380s and 1390s attracted the support of *all* the members of the Lower House, many of whom, as Appendix 1 illustrates, were themselves closely connected to patrons through personal indentures or other employment. Indeed, one of the reasons why the legislation passed against maintenance proved so impotent must have been

⁸⁸ *RP.* iii. 281.26, 212.25, 294.42.

because it simply did not have the full and unreserved support of the whole Lower House. Likewise the common petition of 1406, which complained that county elections were being unduly manipulated by sheriffs cannot have received the full backing of the Commons, for many of the knights of the shire present in this assembly undoubtedly derived considerable benefit from just this sort of practice.⁸⁹ The fact that the exploitation of the shrievalty at election time continued well after 1406, albeit on a reduced scale, goes some way to supporting this point.⁹⁰

Evidently, parliament could become the focus of conflicting interests in which different pressure groups competed with each other to capture the support of the crown in order to enact legislation which served their own interests. This is shown in a more explicit way by a dispute between the mayor, aldermen and commonalty of London, on the one hand, and the fishmongers of the city (who were accused of extortion) on the other hand. The dispute was thrashed out in detail before the king and the Lords in the parliament of October 1382.⁹¹ In this assembly the fishmongers appear to have lost the initiative, for a statute was passed which restricted their right to sell certain fish within the city boundaries.⁹² In the next but one parliament, however, the situation had reversed; this time the fishmongers appeared victorious for they succeeded in having this statute annulled in addition to other statutes which had placed limitations on the sale of wine.⁹³ This was not the end of it, though. In 1399 a petition from the Commons, probably at the instigation of the Londoners, requested that the original statute of October 1382 should be 'en sa force', notwithstanding the letters patent issued by Richard II during his expedition to Ireland,⁹⁴ or, for that matter, the statute's revocation in 1383. This time, perhaps because the crown wished to win the favour and support of the Londoners, it backed these petitioners, stating that the legislation of 1382 should now be 'fermement tenuz & gardez'. Parliament was also the venue for a dispute between the shoemakers and cordwainers of the realm, on the one hand, and the tanners of leather on the other. In January 1390, the latter had succeeded in winning the support of the Commons who managed to get a statute enacted against shoemakers and cordwainers tanning leather.⁹⁵ In 1395, however, the

⁸⁹ *RP.* iii. 601.139; *SR.* ii. 156.xv; S. Payling, 'The Widening Franchise: Parliamentary Elections in Lancastrian Nottinghamshire', in D. Williams, ed., *England in the Fifteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 1987), pp.167-85, esp. pp.167-70. See also the discussion in chapter 4, pp.117-8.

⁹⁰ See chapter 5, p.150, note 41.

⁹¹ *RP.* iii. 141-3.

⁹² *SR.* ii. 28.xi.

⁹³ *RP.* iii. 161.45; *SR.* ii. 34.xi. The statutes on wine appear to be *SR.* ii. 18.iv and 28.vii.

⁹⁴ *RP.* iii. 444.149.

⁹⁵ *RP.* iii. 271.48; *SR.* ii. 65.xii.

tables had turned; this time the shoemakers and cordwainers had won the sympathy of the Commons who duly requested that the statute of 1390 be annulled.⁹⁶ Although on this occasion they were not successful (perhaps because of Richard II's absence in Ireland) a similar request was made in the parliament of 1402 which fared a little better; the statute was duly annulled but only until the following parliament.⁹⁷

There are further examples of statutory reversals and, whilst some of them may have been due to the fact that the Commons had simply changed their minds,⁹⁸ we should be open to the possibility that they too, signified the fluctuating fortunes of different pressure groups from one parliament to the next. In October 1382, for example, the Commons complained that a statute made in the previous parliament (actually the parliament of 1381) forbidding the export of merchandise in foreign ships '...semble as ditz Co[mun]es trop damageous', and asked that it be modified to include foreign ships where English ones were not available.⁹⁹ In April 1384 the Commons requested that the Statute of Rapes - enacted at their own behest in October 1382 - should be repealed because it was 'trop dure & redde Loy as liges n[ost]re dit S[eigneu]r le Roy'.¹⁰⁰ In February 1388, the Commons criticized a statute made in the parliament of October 1382 which laid down that all sessions of the assizes should be held in the principal towns of the county.¹⁰¹ Again, they stated that this legislation 'ad este damageous al poeple es plusours Countees' and demanded its revocation.¹⁰² In 1393 the 'Communes de...Cite de Londres' requested that a statute made in the previous assembly concerning the selling of meat in the city, be modified because, as it stood, the legislation had caused '...grant Chierete des Chares...a tres grant & importable damage a toute la Communalte d'icelle, & a toutz autres illoq[ue]s repairantz'.¹⁰³ Finally, two acts of the parliament of 1406, both of which had been prompted by the Commons, were annulled at the request of the

⁹⁶ *RP*. iii. 330.10.

⁹⁷ *RP*. iii. 495.34; *SR*. ii. 142.xxxv.

⁹⁸ One of the most blatant examples of the Commons changing their minds was in 1410 when they asked that a petition they had presented earlier in the assembly, requesting a modification to the statute *De heretico comburendo*, should be withdrawn; *RP*. iii. 623.12. This case is discussed by A.R. Myers, 'Some Observations on the Procedure of the Commons in Dealing with Bills in the Lancastrian Period', *University of Toronto Law Journal*, iii (1939), 51-73, repr. in *idem*, *Crown, Household and Parliament in Fifteenth Century England* (London, 1985), pp.45-67, esp. pp.54-55.

⁹⁹ *RP*. iii. 127.37; *SR*. ii. 18.iii, 28.viii.

¹⁰⁰ *RP*. iii. 174.26, 139-40; *SR*. ii. 27.vi; J.B. Post, 'Sir Thomas West and the Statute of Rapes', *B.I.H.R.*, lv (1980), 24-30.

¹⁰¹ *RP*. iii. 247.33; *SR*. ii. 27.v.

¹⁰² *SR*. ii. 55.xi.

¹⁰³ *RP*. iii. 306.27; E.L. Sabine, 'Butchering in Mediaeval London', *Speculum*, viii (1933), 335-53, esp. pp.348-9; *idem*, 'City Cleaning in Mediaeval London', *Speculum*, xii (1937), 19-43, esp. p.42.

Commons in the following parliament of 1407. The first was a statute regulating the measure of cloth of ray¹⁰⁴ and the second concerned alleged impositions on the principality of Chester.¹⁰⁵

These examples serve as an important reminder that statutes were not necessarily broad-ranging and inclusive acts of government but could just as easily serve minority interests as a result of the lobbying of small pressure groups. Under Richard II and Henry IV this ‘hijacking’ of legislation by minority concerns was as good a measure as any that the crown was not directing or leading the political community in legislative programmes. Instead, it was itself being directed and being led, sometimes by the Commons as a whole, and sometimes by particularly vocal minority groups within the Commons. The ability of these pressure groups either to persuade the crown to turn their ‘pet projects’ into statutory law, or else to annul legislation that they considered to be a threat to their interests, highlighted a certain degree of malleability inherent in the political authority of these two kings. Though they did not enact legislation against their will, there is a definite sense in which a lack of strong political leadership allowed statutes to become the tool of local faction. This was a situation which clearly contrasted with Henry V’s reign where, as we have seen, apart from the Statute of Truces, there were no petitions which attempted to reverse legislation that had already been enacted. Henry V and his ministers had too tight a grip of the institution to allow the legislative agenda to serve any interests except his own.

Many of these points are brought together by the fate suffered by the Statute of Gloucester of 1378.¹⁰⁶ This statute was, in effect, a broad-ranging commission set up in response to a common petition that asked the crown to bring to justice ‘...diverses malfaisours en diverses Countees de Roialme, [who] par confederacies & faux alliances entre eux mesmes sont si grantz malveis extorsions as povres gentz en pays’.¹⁰⁷ Accordingly, the crown agreed that certain ‘...valiant Persons, Lords or other’ should be appointed and have the power to arrest offenders and rioters and commit them to gaol, without bail, until the arrival of the king’s justices. On the face of it, this was an extremely constructive and imaginative response to the recurring problem of lawlessness in the localities, but, in the event, the commission never got off the ground. In the following parliament of 1379 the Commons presented another petition, this time complaining that the commission ‘...semble a les dites Co[mun]es tres-horrible &

¹⁰⁴ *RP*. iii. 598.129; *SR*. ii. 154.x, 160.vi.

¹⁰⁵ *RP*. iii. 616.45.

¹⁰⁶ *SR*. ii. 9-10. vi.

¹⁰⁷ *RP*. iii. 42.44.

perillouse pur les bones gentz & loialx p[ar]my le Roialme...[and that it was]..overtement encontre le Grande Ch[art]re, & diverses Estatutz ent faitz en temps des Progenitours n[ost]redit S[eigneu]r lige...'. At the end of this they requested '...q[ue] ceste horrible & grevouse Ordinance soit repelle au present'.¹⁰⁸ Since there is no further evidence shedding light on the commission, it is difficult to know what the sub-text of the request was; but in a sense the real significance of the episode lies in the remarkable volte-face the Commons had displayed between two assemblies separated by just six months. Indeed, there are few better examples of how inconsistent and fickle the legislative agenda of the Commons could be. It highlighted how changes in circumstances, attitudes and, perhaps, most important of all, *personnel* could transform the political outlook of the Lower House in an extremely short space of time. Equally, if not more important, however, was the fact that the crown actually acquiesced to the Commons' demand and had the Statute of Gloucester annulled. *This* was no better a measure of the extreme pliancy of the crown and the fact that political considerations were quite evidently being given priority above the need to keep the peace - a situation which was to contrast with the attitude of Henry V.

The commission of 1378 and its subsequent revocation brings us to the much broader question of the Commons' attitude to law and order. Christine Carpenter has highlighted the central paradox that lay at the heart of this attitude; on the one hand local communities looked to parliament in order to instigate measures aimed at keeping the king's laws, but on the other hand, this aspiration was undermined by an equal desire to maintain local independence from external royal interference.¹⁰⁹ Undoubtedly the wish for local self-determination was a factor of considerable importance in shaping the inconsistencies of the Commons' agenda and could well have accounted for their rejection of the Statute of Gloucester. Arguably, however, a far greater element shaping this paradox was simply the fact that many of the MPs travelling up to parliament were law breakers themselves and were not actually too keen to see their own questionable activities curtailed by the creation of an efficient judicial system. Thus, in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries the Commons frequently complained about the prevalence of crime and disorder in the localities - more so, perhaps, than we have recently been led to believe.¹¹⁰ Yet, it was not unusual for the Commons

¹⁰⁸ *RP*. iii. 65.46.

¹⁰⁹ Carpenter, 'Law, Justice and Landowners', pp.225-31.

¹¹⁰ *RP*. iii. 5.16, 21.92, 42.44-5, 62.32, 63.35, 81.30, 139.39, 139.44, 139.47, 200.22, 265.27, 280.23, 307.31, 307.34, 318.29, 445.159, 474.94, 476.110, 497.43, 539.57, 541.67, 559.157, 616.42, 660.38. My definition of petitions complaining of lawlessness is as inclusive as possible and therefore more references are included than have been cited in the more

also to ask for pardons from the crown for exactly the sort of crimes and social disorder which these other petitions - and some statutes - were directed against. These pardons, when granted, were enacted into statutory legislation and promulgated across the country in exactly the same way as standard legislation was disseminated.

In January 1377, for example, by way of demonstrating the favour of the king 'in his jubilee year', Edward III granted a broad-ranging pardon for all manner of misdemeanours ranging from negligence in keeping felons securely imprisoned, to felony itself.¹¹¹ This apparently generous exercise of royal grace did not derive from a desire by the crown to appease the very lower orders of society; it arose directly from a request by the Commons that they should be pardoned and released of '...chateux de felons & futifs, eschaps des prisons, amerciementz des murdres, conspiracies, confederacies, champ[er]ties, & toutes maneres des felonies, trespas, mespriseons, necligences, ou ignorances...'.¹¹² In the following parliament, the Commons complained that this pardon had been undermined by the ministers and judges of the exchequer and they therefore sought confirmation of it in another statute - which was duly enacted.¹¹³ The Commons' attitude to effective peace-keeping hardly inspired confidence by their petition in November 1380 which requested that all those responsible for the escape of felons and malefactors be included within a fresh pardon.¹¹⁴ Interestingly, the Commons had requested this as part of a much more wide-ranging general pardon based on the ones granted in 1362 and January 1377, but the crown refused this broader concession on the grounds that it '...semble q[ue] ce ne serroit mie profitable pur le bone government del Roialme; qar il durroit griendre baudour as mesfesours de mesprendre'.¹¹⁵

The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 also reveals some surprising insights into the attitude of the Commons to law and order. In the parliament of 1381, shortly after the uprising, it was the Commons, or a section of them, who requested the king to pardon '...the evil people who had risen during the said disturbance, of the treason and felony they had then committed'.¹¹⁶ The parliament rolls indicate that the crown granted a general amnesty to the

limited survey by Carpenter in 'Law, Justice and Landowners', p.228, note 141.

¹¹¹ *SR*. i. 396-7.

¹¹² *RP*. ii. 364.24, no. iii.

¹¹³ *RP*. iii. 24.103; *SR*. ii. 4.x.

¹¹⁴ *RP*. iii. 96.49; *SR*. ii. 16.ii.

¹¹⁵ For the earlier statutes, see *SR*. i. 376-77, 396-7.

¹¹⁶ *RP*. iii. 103.30, translated in *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381*, ed. R.B. Dobson, 2nd edn. (London, 1970), pp.331-2.

Note that in the very next petition the Commons actually asked for more powers for the commissioners who were trying '...les grantz Robberies & Larsyns en diverses Countees de Roialme plus q[ue] unq[ue]s ne soloient'.

rebels, but it appears not to have been given statutory sanction until October 1382.¹¹⁷ In this latter parliament the Commons presented another petition in which they complained that those individuals who wished to seek a charter of pardon for their involvement in the revolt did not have the power to do so; again, it was the Commons who requested ‘une Pardon general de Treason de le rumour suis dit’.¹¹⁸ In February 1383, they asked that ‘la Pardon grantez au darrain Parlement a ceux qi leverent encontre n[ost]re S[eigneu]r le Roi & sa Pees soit enlargiz, entant q[ue] nule persone soit excepte del dite Pardon’.¹¹⁹ They also asked that a time limit should be imposed on recriminations, stating that henceforth, nobody should be indicted of involvement in the rebellion apart from those who had been excluded in the general pardon. Finally, in 1384, the Commons again complained that individuals suing for a pardon were being hindered in the process by the Treasurer and Barons of the Exchequer to the ‘great cost and damage’ of the former.¹²⁰

Clearly, the idea of parliament closing ranks in the face of social revolution sits somewhat uncomfortably with the attitude which the Commons consistently displayed in common petitions in the early 1380s. It would appear that the central concern of the communities that sent representatives to parliament was *not* to see vigorous government action in the localities, but to secure a reassurance from the crown that retribution would be both limited as well as measured. They did not want to entrap rebels and criminals in a revitalised criminal justice system, but instead, they wished to safeguard the autonomy of local communities and prevent the encroachment on them of royal officials.¹²¹ It was this absence of a strong desire by the Commons for heavy-handed retribution that might explain why many victims of the suppression of the rebellion, rather than the victims of the rebellion itself, looked to parliament to seek redress for wrongs that had allegedly been done to them.¹²² These petitioners realised that their grievances were likely to strike a chord with MPs whose main concern was to see the end of the judicial process against the rebels.

In January 1390, the Commons’ nonchalant attitude towards lawlessness

¹¹⁷ *RP*. iii. 103.32; *SR*. ii. 29.xiii. In 1381, statutory sanction was given only to a pardon for those who had repressed the rebels, not the rebels themselves; *SR*. ii. 20.v.

¹¹⁸ *RP*. iii. 139.43.

¹¹⁹ *RP*. iii. 147.17; *SR*. ii. 30.iii.

¹²⁰ *RP*. iii. 202.29.

¹²¹ See Saul, *Richard II*, pp.79-80.

¹²² *SC* 8/102/5088, 139/6925, 139/6949, 264/13178, 266/13262, 113/56308. 98/4885. This last petition is particularly interesting in that it was said to be presented on the behalf of ‘les pove[re]s comuners’ - an indication, perhaps, of the lowly status of the petitioners.

underwent a significant transformation. With not a little bit of audacity, they petitioned the crown, complaining that in the past royal pardons had been granted far too easily ‘...a graunt confort de toutz Malefesours’.¹²³ This was another classic illustration of the double standards inherent within the political outlook of the Lower House and it is difficult to believe that the irony of the request was lost on its members. Indeed, given the status of those who were perceived as comprising the principal market for pardons, it is quite probable that the petition was self-consciously aimed by the Commons at their own landowning class which had been all too ready to demand such concessions from the crown on previous occasions. The petition suggested that if any duke or archbishop attempted to cover up offences by suing for a pardon he should be fined £1000; any bishop or earl was to incur a fine of 1000 marks; abbots, priors, barons or bannerets 500 marks; and clerks, bachelors ‘...& chescun autre de meyndre estate, de quele estate ou condition q’il soit’ was to pay 200 marks and endure a year’s imprisonment. That the petitioners had correctly identified who benefited most from pardons, and that the punitive measures they suggested represented a serious threat to these beneficiaries, is indicated by the fact that in 1393 these measures were entirely revoked.¹²⁴ How far the Commons lay behind this latter move is open to question since there is no trace of such a request amongst the common petitions or other business recorded on the parliament roll. However, according to the modified statute of 1393, it was the Commons who instigated the change because they ‘...have perceived great Grievance of this Ordinance [of 1390] for that many People for Malice have indicted divers Persons of [crimes] where in Truth there was no such cause’. This may have been true, but a more plausible explanation is that it was simply an excuse to restore the ability of the landed élites to breach the terms of the statute without facing the prospect of a hefty financial penalty.

That the suppression of lawlessness in the localities was not at the top of the Commons’ agenda was indicated in even starker terms by the fact that in 1391 and 1393 the Commons granted direct taxation on the understanding that trailbaston proceedings would be remitted in the shires.¹²⁵ This highlighted how the Commons placed far greater premium on restricting the interference of the ‘centre’ in their local affairs, than they did on the effective enforcement of law and order there. It also showed that the crown could exploit this agenda in order to induce the Commons to make more generous supplies of taxation. Certainly, this

¹²³ *RP*. iii. 268.36; *SR*. ii. 68.i; *Historia Vitae et Regni Ricardi Secundi*, ed. G.B. Stow (Pennsylvania, 1977), p.131.

¹²⁴ *SR*. ii. 86.vi.

¹²⁵ *RP*. iii. 286.11, 303.12; G.L. Harriss, ‘Theory and Practice in Royal Taxation: some observations’, *E.H.R.*, xlvii (1982), 811-19, p.813, note 34.

appears to have been the case in 1397 when Richard II used the promise of a general pardon as an incentive for the Commons to make their unprecedented grant for life of the wool subsidy, in addition to a generous supply of direct taxation.¹²⁶ This was clearly intended as a gesture for the knights of the shire and burgesses to take back home with them by way of offsetting the remarkable financial concession which they had made at parliament. Significantly, this general pardon was the one act of the 1397-8 parliament which the Commons requested in 1399 should *not* be annulled.¹²⁷ The Commons sought a fresh general pardon in the parliament of January 1404, again asking that those responsible for ‘...toutz maners de Tresons, Insurrections, Felonies, & Trespasses’ be acquitted.¹²⁸ It is interesting to note that in this case, the Commons asked that the pardon be proclaimed within a month of the end of parliament. This suggests that in the past, the crown had been a little lax in following up the business of parliament once the Commons had returned to the localities. It may also have indicated that MPs were anxious to associate themselves with the concession by having it announced as soon after their return from parliament as possible.¹²⁹ Finally, it should be added that Henry V granted three general pardons in the course of his reign (in 1413, November 1414 and October 1416) each ‘purchased’ by the Commons with generous supplies of taxation.¹³⁰

One cannot but wonder what sort of message was being sent back into the localities as a result of the fickleness and inconsistency shown by the Commons to the question of law and order and, indeed, to statutory legislation in general. Particularly under Richard II and Henry IV, it is likely that it led directly to a lessening of the status and prestige of statutory legislation both within the political community as well as outside it. If the perception of contemporaries was that a statute was not the result of strong and decisive royal leadership, but was the outcome of a factional struggle within the Lower House; if they also considered that legislation could easily be annulled (no matter how good it was for the country as a whole) so long as lobbying was sufficiently strong; and if the attitude of the Commons to an issue as important as law and order displayed, at best, indifference, it is difficult to avoid any other conclusion.

¹²⁶ *RP*. iii. 369.77; *SR*. ii. 106.xv. According to the parliament roll the pardon was conceded only after the Commons had conceded their grant of taxation; *RP*. iii. 368.75.

¹²⁷ *RP*. iii. 473.78; *SR*. ii. 125.xiii.

¹²⁸ *RP*. iii. 544.84; *SR*. ii. 147.xv.

¹²⁹ For discussion on this aspect of parliament see 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), pp.61-87.

¹³⁰ *RP*. iv. 6.17-8; 35.11, 40.23; 96.9, 96.12; *SR*. ii, 199.vii; Harriss, ‘Management of Parliament’, p.151; Powell, ‘The Restoration of Law’, p.67-8.

iv/ THE JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

Who exactly were the enforcers of statutory legislation and what was their record in this respect? A considerable part of the burden of enforcement fell, in theory, on the shoulders of the JPs, a large proportion of whom, as we have seen in chapter 4, also formed the membership of the Commons - or at least the knights of the shire. Given the general tenor of the discussion so far, which has highlighted how the interests of the crown and community could sometimes diverge, it is, perhaps, important to point out that the development of the JPs in the fourteenth century represented a classic example of crown and community working together in parliament to produce mutually beneficial measures for the running of affairs in the localities.¹³¹ Recent scholarship has established that the emergence of a decentralised system of royal justice whereby JPs were provided with powers of hearing and determining cases of felony, responded both to the interests of the crown which faced increasingly unmanageable pressure on its central law courts and also to the interests of the local gentry who were, as we have seen, keen to preserve their sense of independence from oppressive royal commissions.¹³² Common to both parties was a desire to see the rule of law and order imposed as efficiently as possible on the *lower* orders of society who were not represented at parliament. The emergence of the JPs thus symbolised a partnership between the crown on the one hand and the political community on the other; the fundamental rôle of parliament in cementing this partnership was highlighted by the inclusion of the 'peace' statutes in the preamble to each commission of the peace issued by the crown from the mid-fourteenth century onwards. These were the Statute of Winchester (1285), the statute of Northampton (1328), and the statute of Westminster (1361), all of which provided the JPs with the legislative sanction necessary for their rôle as law-enforcers in the localities.¹³³

Besides their peace-keeping rôle, JPs were increasingly called upon to uphold

¹³¹ B.H. Putnam, 'The Transformation of the Keepers of the Peace into the Justices of the Peace', *T.R.H.S.*, 4th ser., xii (1929), 19-48.

¹³² A.J. Verduyn, 'The Attitude of the Parliamentary Commons to Law and Order under Edward III', Oxford University, D.Phil. thesis (1991); *idem*, 'The Politics of Law and Order during the Early Years of Edward III', *E.H.R.*, cviii (1993), 842-67; E. Powell, 'The Administration of Criminal Justice in Late-medieval England: Peace Sessions and Assizes', in R. Eales and D. Sullivan, eds., *The Political Context of Law* (London, 1987), 49-59; A. Musson, *Public Order and Law Enforcement: The Local Administration of Criminal Justice, 1294-1350* (Woodbridge, 1996), esp. pp.49-82. These are revised interpretations of the more traditional approach to the subject which sees the emergence of the JP as being the product of a struggle between crown and community; for a summary of this perspective see G.L. Harriss, 'Political Society and the Growth of Government in Late Medieval England', *P&P*, cxxxviii (1993), 28-57, pp.47-8; Ormrod, *Political Life in Medieval England, 1300-1450* (London and Basingstoke, 1995), p.113.

¹³³ Sillem, 'Commissions of the Peace' p.83.

additional legislation enacted in parliament. Perhaps the most important was the labour legislation promulgated in the aftermath of the Black Death in 1348-9. The full political implications of these statutory measures are summed up by G.L. Harriss who states that,

The sudden opportunity given to the poorer classes to secure higher wages and personal and tenurial freedom at the expense of their social betters rallied all ranks of the landlord class to a policy of legislative suppression. Almost overnight the Commons became the allies of King and Lords and their necessary agents for the enforcement of this policy in the shires.¹³⁴

This 'legislative suppression' was embodied in the Ordinance and Statute of Labourers dating to 1349 and 1351 respectively.¹³⁵ Between 1352 and 1359, the government entrusted the enforcement of the Statute of Labourers to separate commissions made up of Justices of Labourers; after 1359, however, the commissions of the peace took on the responsibility and from 1361 the Statute of Labourers was formally included with the 'peace' statutes in the preamble to each commission.¹³⁶ From 1390, these were further supplemented by the Statute of Cambridge which laid down further additional measures for the enforcement of the labour laws, including the setting up of local wage scales.¹³⁷

From the scattered survival of some peace rolls, it is clear that besides their concern for trespasses and felonies, JPs continued to deal with a large number of offences against the labour legislation until at least the end of the fourteenth century. Given the nature of the peace rolls, any numerical appreciation of their content must inevitably be treated with caution,¹³⁸ but it is still worth seeing what *proportion* of offences JPs were having to deal with which concerned breaches of these statutes. In the years 1385-6 and 1390-2, for example, the surviving rolls for Hampshire record that 33 per cent of the presentments were for 'economic offences'.¹³⁹ By far the majority of these concerned the violation of the Statute of Labourers and were specified in these terms. The same applies to the following counties. In Wiltshire, for the years 1383-4, 48 per cent of the presentments were for economic offences;¹⁴⁰ in

¹³⁴ G.L. Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance in Medieval England to 1369* (Oxford, 1975), p.516.

¹³⁵ *SR* i. 307-8, 311-13.

¹³⁶ B.H. Putnam, *The Enforcement of the Statute of Labourers during the First Decade after the Black Death* (New York, 1908); L.R. Poos, 'The Social Context of Statute of Labourers Enforcement', *Law and History Review*, i (1983), 27-52.

¹³⁷ Sillem, 'Commissions of the Peace', p.83; J.A. Tuck, 'The Cambridge Parliament, 1388', *E.H.R.*, lxxxiv (1969), 225-43, p.236.

¹³⁸ J.B. Post, 'Some Limitations of the Medieval peace rolls', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, iv (1973), 633-9.

¹³⁹ *Proceedings Before the Justices of the Peace*, p.232.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.397.

Lincolnshire, between 1381 and 1396 the figure was 20 per cent;¹⁴¹ in Essex, between 1377 and 1379, no less than 81 per cent of the presentments were for economic offences, of which 73 per cent specifically accounted for breaches of the labour laws;¹⁴² and in Warwickshire, between 1377 and 1397, 16 per cent of the presentments were economic offences.¹⁴³

The peace rolls clearly indicate that in many counties at the end of the fourteenth century JPs still took the task of enforcing the Statute of Labourers extremely seriously. Yet, whilst showing that enforcement did take place, we should recall the discussion at the beginning of the chapter and remember that these figures do not indicate that the Statute of Labourers was actually effective; the fact that cases continued to come before the JPs was, if anything, a remarkable testament to the complete and utter failure of both the crown and political community to stamp their joint authority on the lower orders of society. To use the words of Nora Ritchie,

...the process which they [the Statutes of Labourers] were intended to arrest proceeded steadily in spite of them, wages remained high, prices were still exorbitant, the old landlords were unable to maintain their position, and the break-up of the manor continued.¹⁴⁴

Responsibility for this failure must, to an extent, have rested with the type of men who were appointed to the commissions of the peace and, indeed, elected to parliament. As we have seen in relation to the petition of 1402 one possible reason for the continued defiance of the labourers and artisans was that the landowning class who wished to see the enforcement of the Statute of Labourers was also the class who did most to undermine it by *offering* excessive wages to those who would accept them.¹⁴⁵ This is yet another classic example of the conflicting and contradictory agenda of the political community; above all, it illustrated the discrepancy between what was discussed and agreed on as a matter of principle at parliament, and what actually happened, in practice, in the localities. To this end, it is noticeable that only a tiny minority of cases in all the peace rolls extant for our period featured the prosecution of employers rather than employees.¹⁴⁶

From 1380, JPs were given the authority to enquire into cases of livery and

¹⁴¹ *Some Sessions of the Peace in Lincolnshire 1381-1396*, ed. E.G. Kimball, Lincoln Record Society, i (1955), p.1.

¹⁴² *Essex Sessions of the Peace, 1351, 1377-79*, ed. E.C. Furber, Essex Archaeological Society, iii (1953), pp.38, 47.

¹⁴³ *Rolls of the Warwickshire and Coventry Sessions of the Peace, 1377-1397*, ed., E.G. Kimball, Dugdale Soc., xvi (1939).

¹⁴⁴ N. Ritchie, 'Labour Conditions in Essex in the Reign of Richard II', in E.M. Carus-Wilson, ed., *Essays in Economic History*, ii (London, 1962), pp.91-111, p.92.

¹⁴⁵ See above, p.216, note 70.

¹⁴⁶ *Proceedings Before the Justices of the Peace*, p.224.51

maintenance and from this point onwards these powers were also included in the enquiry clause of the commissions of the peace.¹⁴⁷ In 1393 and January 1397 JPs were specifically entrusted with the enforcement of two statutes against the wearing of livery by those of lesser estate than esquire and, in 1401, they became responsible for enforcing other elaborate limitations on the giving of livery. Despite all these measures, there are no examples of JPs dealing with cases of livery and maintenance in the peace rolls. In fact the only evidence we have for the enforcement of the statutes against livery and maintenance between 1369 and 1421 comes in the reign of Henry V when the visitation of the King's Bench in Staffordshire and Shropshire produced a whole crop of indictments.¹⁴⁸ Given that so few offenders were actually brought to account in the quarter sessions, this raises the intriguing question of why, in the first place, the Commons had insisted that JPs be responsible for enforcing these particular statutes?¹⁴⁹ Indeed, the question applies equally to another of the principal issues which preoccupied the Commons in this period; namely purveyance. In 1413 the Commons had won the major concession that JPs would have the power to enquire into the malpractices of the king's purveyors but they seemed strangely unconcerned that the resulting statute was not then formally added to the opening clauses of the peace commissions.¹⁵⁰

Perhaps these were other examples of the fickleness of the Commons in following through their parliamentary campaigns with effective action in the localities. In the case of the excesses of livery and maintenance, sensitivity to local lordship as well as complicity in the system itself probably mitigated against a major crackdown on the practice by local gentry communities. Purveyance is less easy to explain although Henry V's more vigorous control of his household expenditure may have reduced the urgency with which the Commons wished to pursue the matter. On a broader note, however, the apparent ineffectiveness of peace commissions may simply have been down to the fact that most of the leading local gentry who were appointed as JPs did not actually bother to turn up to the peace sessions in order to instigate the agenda they had so vigorously pursued at parliament.¹⁵¹ Their absence suggests that in seeking to empower the JPs, the concern of the knights of the shire was not to provide themselves with the principal peace-keeping and law-enforcing rôle in the localities but, more

¹⁴⁷ For this and what follows see Sillem, 'Commissions of the Peace', pp.84-5.

¹⁴⁸ Powell, *Kingship, Law and Society*, Appendix, Table A2.

¹⁴⁹ Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace', p.147.

¹⁵⁰ Sillem, 'Commissions of the Peace', pp.90-1.

¹⁵¹ S. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England: The Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire* (Oxford, 1991), pp.174-80; P.C. Maddern, *Violence and Social Order: East Anglia 1422-1442* (Oxford, 1992), pp.61-4; Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, pp.267-72; S. Walker, 'Yorkshire Justices of the Peace, 1389-1413', *E.H.R.*, cviii (1993), pp.281-311.

importantly, to ensure that royal justices and others of the king's ministers from the centre were kept out. In other words, local autonomy was the priority - the implementation of statutes came second.

CONCLUSION

Although some legislation of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries undoubtedly had a profound effect on the political life of England, it is difficult to escape a relatively negative conclusion if we are to regard the legislative process in its entirety. Until a professional police force came into being whose sole purpose was to enforce *all* existing legislation as effectively and in as uniform a way as possible, it was perhaps inevitable that statutes were vulnerable to becoming more political tools than authoritative and solemn legal codes. This chapter has demonstrated that, particularly under Richard II and Henry IV, statutes could not only become hostage to particular interest or lobbying groups, aiming to exploit the crown's pliability for their own ends, but that the crown itself could also undermine the statutory process by using it as a political instrument to achieve short-term support and popularity. Moreover, it has also been shown that an inherent contradiction existed in the actual implementation of legislation; on the one hand the crown and community worked together to promulgate new laws in the localities, but on the other both, for their own reasons, often sought to undermine the effectiveness and impact that the statutes actually had. Under Henry V many, but not all, these underlying flaws were ironed out by the careful supervision and input that the crown took in the legislative process. Indeed, the reign of Henry V provides a valuable counterbalance to the reigns of his two predecessors, for it illustrates that in the right circumstances and with the right handling, the late medieval legislative process *could* be a highly efficient and effective means for the crown to exercise its authority in the localities.

PART III: PARLIAMENT AND POLITICAL CULTURE

CHAPTER 8: PARLIAMENT AND POLITICAL CULTURE

INTRODUCTION

Having now discussed the nature and activity of parliament, both at the centre and in the localities, it is time to alter the methodological approach to the subject by considering the place of the assembly in the political culture of late medieval England. In its most simplistic form 'political culture', in the context of this chapter, means the way in which contemporaries perceived the nature and rôle of parliament in the polity. The following discussion self-consciously draws on the 'new constitutional history', advocated by historians such as Edward Powell and John Watts, in which uncovering the attitudes, principles and ideas of contemporaries is considered to be just as important in explaining political activity as the more traditional quantitative approach, based on 'hard facts and figures'.¹ As applied to parliament, this has been undertaken in two ways: firstly, by considering the coverage given to the institution both by chroniclers and in contemporary literature; and secondly, by focussing on the period between 1386 and 1388 to establish what could have motivated the opposition to Richard II in these years.²

From the outset it must be pointed out that the nature of the evidence means that we can only be concerned with the contemporary perception of parliament as it was *written down*. In a society where literacy and writing were still relatively élite preoccupations, we can only guess at the extent to which parliament cropped up orally in the songs, ballads and stories which circulated amongst local peasant or other communities and were handed down from one generation to the next without ever being committed to parchment.³ The chance survival of several 'political' songs including 'The Song Against the King's Taxes', which has been dated

¹ E. Powell, *Kingship, Law and Society: Criminal Justice in the Reign of Henry V* (Oxford, 1989) and his article, 'After "after McFarlane": The Poverty of Patronage and the Case for Constitutional History', in D.J. Clayton, R.G. Davies and P. McNiven, eds., *Trade, Devotion and Governance in Later Medieval History* (Stroud, 1994), pp.1-16; C. Carpenter, 'Political and Constitutional History: Before and After McFarlane', in R.H. Britnell and A.J. Pollard, eds., *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society* (Stroud, 1995), pp.175-206; J. Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge, 1996).

² Fairly systematic treatment of parliament in the chronicles has already been undertaken, particularly in respect to the reign of Richard II and his deposition by Henry Bolingbroke in 1399. See especially L.D. Duls, *Richard II in the Early Chronicles* (Paris, 1975), pp.29-70; J. Taylor, *English Historical Literature in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1987), pp.195-216; *Chronicles of the Revolution 1397-1400*, ed. and trans. C. Given-Wilson (Manchester, 1993). This chapter aims to steer a more thematic course through the sources without repeating what has already been discussed on the subject.

³ The rôle of memory in the Middle Ages is discussed by J. Coleman, *English Literature in History 1350-1400: Medieval Readers and Writers* (London, 1981), ch.4.

to the 1340s,⁴ as well as the casual reference by Thomas Walsingham to the fact that 'numerous songs were composed' about the deeds of Sir Peter de la Mare, Speaker in the Good Parliament of 1376,⁵ hints that parliament could well have been a prominent source of topical entertainment amongst the lower, illiterate orders of society. However, we can never know for certain. Insofar as this chapter is wholly dependent on sources which were the products of literate men living in a generally illiterate age, it seems necessary therefore to refine the outline of the following discussion even further by stating that it is specifically concerned to place parliament within the political culture of the *élite* at the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries.

I/ CHRONICLES: QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT

In 1926, T.F. Tout published an article entitled 'Parliament and Public Opinion' which remains, to this day, an extremely penetrating discussion on the nature of the 'unofficial' records of the late medieval parliament.⁶ Amongst the points which Tout made was that in the last quarter of the fourteenth century, contemporary⁷ chroniclers, as well as other writers gave unprecedented attention to the nature and course of proceedings in parliament. The Good Parliament of 1376 and the Merciless Parliament of 1388, he suggested, were the most widely written about parliaments in the whole of the late medieval period - and they were separated by only twelve years. In terms of what preceded the 1370s, Tout's assessment of parliament's 'coverage' by the chroniclers has been conclusively borne out by subsequent historians. In their analysis of the parliaments of Edward III, for example, Richardson and Sayles concluded that '...the chroniclers of Edward III were little interested in parliamentary affairs, and the occasions are altogether exceptional upon which they provide valuable information'.⁸ In general, coverage of parliament at this time tended to be limited to a statement of when and where the

⁴ *The Political Songs of England from the Reign of John to that of Edward II*, ed. T. Wright, Camden Society, old ser., vi (1840), pp.182-7; J.R. Maddicott, 'Poems of Social Protest in Early Fourteenth Century England', in W.M. Ormrod, ed., *England in the Fourteenth Century: Proceedings of the 1385 Harlaxton Symposium* (Woodbridge, 1986), pp.130-144.

⁵ *Chronicon Angliae, 1328-1388*, ed. E.M. Thompson, Rolls Series, lxiv (1874), p.392.

⁶ For this and the following paragraph see T.F. Tout, 'The English Parliament and Public Opinion, 1376-88', repr. in E.B. Fryde and E. Miller, eds., *Historical Studies of the English Parliament*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1970), i, pp.299-315.

⁷ 'Contemporary' in the context of this discussion means that events a chronicler described occurred within his lifetime.

⁸ H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, 'The Parliaments of Edward III', *B.I.H.R.*, viii (1930), 65-77 and ix (1931), 1-18, repr. in *idem*, *The English Parliament in the Middle Ages* (London, 1981), ch. xxi, quotation from p.71, and see Appendix 1 - 'Table of Parliaments of Edward III'. See also, the comments of J. Taylor, *English Historical Literature*, p.196 and *idem*, 'The Good Parliament and its Sources', in J. Taylor and W. Childs, eds., *Politics and Crisis in Fourteenth Century England* (Gloucester, 1990), p.85.

assembly took place, the amount of taxation that was granted and possibly a passing comment on an aristocratic creation that had been made during its proceedings.

Tout's analysis is further reinforced by Table 12, which emphasises the contrast between the coverage of parliament under Edward III (as shown by Richardson and Sayles) and the situation in the last quarter of the fourteenth century. More chroniclers covered parliament in this latter period than was ever the case for an equivalent number of years before the 1370s. Moreover, though Tout emphasised the 'crisis parliaments' of 1376 and 1388, it is evident that coverage of the institution was also generally far more consistent in the latter period than it had been previously; it was not just the major 'set piece' assemblies which attracted chroniclers' attention but also the more ordinary sessions of the time.⁹ As we shall see, the *volume* of coverage also increased so that the standard formula of 'date, place and amount of taxation granted', which characterised chronicle accounts of parliament in the early fourteenth century, gave way to far fuller treatment which included references to the discussion and debates which had actually occurred during its meeting. Of the principal late fourteenth century chroniclers who wrote about English politics only Froissart appears, for the most part, to have ignored the rôle played by parliament.¹⁰ Finally, table 12 also shows that the increased coverage of parliament in chronicles was a short-term phenomenon; from the middle of Henry IV's reign there was a notable decline in the amount of attention parliament received until, by the end of Henry V's reign, some parliaments were hardly mentioned at all; those that were often received little more than a passing reference.

Why, at the end of the fourteenth century, did parliament feature so frequently in chronicle sources? Tout suggested a link between the increase in parliamentary narratives and the growing importance of the institution within the late medieval polity but this was as far as his analysis went.¹¹ More recently, Gransden has suggested that the general revival of chronicles during the reign of Richard II was due to '...two traumatic events - the Peasants' Revolt and the deposition of Richard II'.¹² This brings us closer to the sort of analysis needed though obviously Gransden does not account for the specific context of parliament and seems to overlook the fact that for those chroniclers writing before 1399, only the Peasants' Revolt

⁹ Taylor's comment that '[b]etween the Good Parliament of 1376 and the Wonderful Parliament of 1386, parliament found relatively little space in the chronicles' therefore needs to be treated with caution; *English Historical Literature*, p.205.

¹⁰ Jean Froissart, *Oeuvres*, ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, 25 vols. (Brussels, 1867-77).

¹¹ Tout, 'Parliament and Public Opinion', esp. p.315.

¹² A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England, II, c. 1307 to the Early Sixteenth Century* (London, 1982), pp.162-3. See also Taylor, *English Historical Literature*, p.40.

TABLE 12: COVERAGE OF PARLIAMENT BY CHRONICLES, 1369-1421

| Parl. | Chronicle | Page Nos. | Parl. | Chronicle | Page Nos. |
|-------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1369 | <i>Hist. Ang.</i> | 307,309 | 1382 | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 70-1 |
| | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 63 | | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 355 |
| 1371 | <i>Anonimalle Chron.</i> | 67 | | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 28-9 |
| 1372 | <i>Hist. Ang. i</i> | 313 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 356 |
| 1373 | <i>Anonimalle Chron.</i> | 76 | | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 71 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang. i</i> | 316 | 1383 | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 84, 86 |
| 1376 | <i>Anonimalle Chron.</i> | 79-94 | | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 355 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang. i</i> | 321 | | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 34-7 |
| | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 68-103 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 356 |
| 1377 | <i>Anonimalle Chron.</i> | 100-1 | | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 76 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang. i</i> | 324 | 1383 | <i>Knighton</i> | 328-9 |
| | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 108-9, 111-13, 130-1 | | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 108-9 |
| 1377 | <i>Anonimalle Chron.</i> | 116 | | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 357 |
| | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 171 | | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 48-55 |
| | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 340 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 357 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 48 | | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 80 |
| 1378 | <i>Anonimalle Chron.</i> | 119, 122-4 | 1384 | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 112-3 |
| | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 211-12 | | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 359 |
| | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 345-7 | | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 66-85 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 52-3 | | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 81-2 |
| 1379 | <i>Anonimalle Chron</i> | 126-9,131,132 | 1384 | <i>Knighton</i> | 334-5 |
| | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 223-4 | | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 117-8 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 53 | | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 361 |
| 1380 | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 255-7 | | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 102-7 |
| | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 349 | | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 84-5 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 58 | 1385 | <i>Knighton</i> | 338-9 |
| 1380 | <i>Anonimalle Chron.</i> | 132-4, 151 | | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 139-41 |
| | <i>Chron. Ang</i> | 280 | | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 367 |
| | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 349-50 | | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 136-53 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 61 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 360-1 |
| 1381 | <i>Anonimalle Chron.</i> | 154-5 | | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 92-3 |
| | <i>Knighton</i> | 212-3 | 1386 | <i>Knighton</i> | 352-389 |
| | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 329-335 | | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 147-50 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 44-6 | | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 371-3 |
| | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 20-3 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 359-60 |
| | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 351 | | <i>Usk</i> | 8, 78 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 70 | | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 98-9 |
| 1382 | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 347 | 1388 | <i>Kirkstall</i> | 70-2 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 51, 63 | | <i>Knighton</i> | 430-3,442-50, 454, 456-504 |
| | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 26-7 | | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 173 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 71 | | <i>Chron. Ang.</i> | 379 |
| | | | | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 235-343 |
| | | | | <i>Favent</i> | n/a |
| | | | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 366-7 |
| | | | | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 106, 117-8 |

| Parl. | Chronicle | Page Nos. | Parl. | Chronicle | Page Nos. |
|--------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1388 | <i>Knighton</i> | 506-26 | 1399 | <i>Annales</i> | 251, 257, 285, 288, 312, 320-30 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 177 | | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 234 |
| | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 354-83 | | <i>Usk</i> | 70-1, 76-9, 82-5 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 120 | | <i>Dieulacres Chron.</i> | 205 |
| 1390 | <i>Knighton</i> | 536-8 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 384-5 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 195-6 | | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 157-62 |
| | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 410-31 | | <i>Great Chron. of London</i> | 54, 71-83 |
| | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 367, 370 | 1401 | <i>Annales</i> | 335 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 131 | | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 247 |
| 1390 | <i>Knighton</i> | 538 | | <i>Usk</i> | 8-9, 120-7 |
| | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 452-5 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 387-8 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 132 | | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 169 |
| 1391 | <i>Knighton</i> | 538 | 1402 | <i>Annales</i> | 349-50 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 203 | | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 254 |
| | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 480-3 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 395 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 132 | | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 175 |
| 1393 | <i>Knighton</i> | 548 | 1404 | <i>Annales</i> | 376-7, 378-81 |
| | <i>Annales</i> | 155 | | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 266 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 212 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 399-401 |
| | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 512-3 | 1404 | <i>Annales</i> | 391-4 |
| | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 368 | | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 264, 267 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 133 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 402 |
| 1394 | <i>Knighton</i> | 550 | 1406 | <i>Annales</i> | 418 |
| | <i>Annales</i> | 166, 169 | | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 273 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 214 | | <i>St. Alban's Chronicle</i> | 2-3 |
| | <i>Westm. Chron.</i> | 516-19 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 409 |
| | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 369 | 1407 | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 277 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 134 | | <i>St. Alban's Chronicle</i> | 27 |
| 1395 | <i>Knighton</i> | 550 | 1410 | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 282-3 |
| | <i>Annales</i> | 173-4, 182 | | <i>St. Alban's Chronicle</i> | 52-7 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 216 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 416-7 |
| | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 369 | | <i>Great Chron. of London</i> | 88-90 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 134 | 1411 | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 287 |
| 1397 | <i>Kirkstall</i> | 73-5 | | <i>St. Alban's Chronicle</i> | 59, 61 |
| | <i>Annales</i> | 195 | | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 419 |
| 1397-8 | <i>Kirkstall</i> | 75-83 | 1413 | <i>Usk</i> | 240-1, 244-5 |
| | <i>Annales</i> | 202-3, 208-9, 214, 219, 221-22 | | <i>St. Alban's Chronicle</i> | 69 |
| | <i>Hist. Ang.</i> | 222-3 | 1414 | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 300 |
| | <i>Usk</i> | 20-41, 48-9, 76-7 | | <i>St. Alban's Chronicle</i> | 81 |
| | <i>Continuatio Eulogii</i> | 373-377 | | <i>Usk</i> | 250-3 |
| | <i>Vita Ricardi Secundi</i> | 138-48 | | <i>Liber Metricus</i> | 102 |
| | <i>Great Chron. of London</i> | 48 | | <i>John Strecche</i> | 147 |

| Parl. | Chronicle | Page Nos. | Parl. | Chronicle | Page Nos. |
|-------|--|----------------------------------|-------|---|-----------------------|
| 1414 | <i>Usk</i> <i>St. Alban's Chronicle</i> | 252-3 83 | 1417 | <i>Usk</i> <i>St. Alban's Chronicle</i> <i>Liber Metricus</i> | 264-5 116-7 155 |
| 1415 | <i>Usk</i> <i>Liber Metricus</i> | 256-9 129, 131-35 | 1419 | - | - |
| 1416 | <i>Gesta Henrici</i> <i>Usk</i> <i>St. Alban's Chronicle</i> John Strecche | 114-131 262-3 100 154 | 1420 | - | - |
| 1416 | <i>Gesta Henrici</i> <i>Hist. Ang. ii.</i> <i>St. Alban's Chronicle</i> <i>Liber Metricus</i> | 176-81 317 102 143, 147 | 1421 | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> | 337 |
| | | | 1421 | <i>Hist. Ang. ii</i> <i>St. Alban's Chronicle</i> <i>Great Chron. of London</i> | 337 125 119 |

could qualify for her hypothesis. By fusing the views of Tout and Gransden, however, we arrive at something far nearer a viable explanation. At the end of the fourteenth century there was a general increase in the number of chronicles that were being written about contemporary politics and since much of the political drama of this time was being enacted on the parliamentary stage it was only natural that parliament itself featured strongly in these writings. In addition, it is possible that the status of parliament in the polity had matured sufficiently by the end of the fourteenth century for chroniclers to consider it more worthwhile and important to include the institution in their work. This gradual establishment of parliament into contemporary consciousness is illustrated by the fact that whilst Henry Knighton went to the trouble of recording even the most mundane assemblies of the 1380s and early 1390s, he made no mention at all of the hugely significant parliamentary crisis of 1340-1.¹³

Under Henry IV, coverage diminished somewhat, partly because some of the major chronicles of Richard II's reign had ceased (ie. the *Westminster Chronicle* in 1394,¹⁴ *Knighton's Chronicle* in 1395¹⁵ and the *Vita Ricardi Secundi* in 1402)¹⁶ but also because parliamentary politics was no longer dominated by wrangling between the nobility and the king; by the 1400s the assembly was now focussing on questions of royal finance which may not have attracted the same amount of interest. Under Henry V, with the conflict of France

¹³ *Knighton's Chronicle 1337-1396*, ed. and trans. G.H. Martin (Oxford, 1995), p.lvii.

¹⁴ *The Westminster Chronicle 1381-1394*, ed. and trans. L.C. Hector and B.F. Harvey (Oxford, 1982), p.521.

¹⁵ *Knighton's Chronicle*, p.553.

¹⁶ *Historia Vitae et Regni Ricardi Secundi*, ed. G.B. Stow (Pennsylvania, 1977), p. 175. A rough fifteenth-century translation of this chronicle can be found in *Polychronicon Ranalphi Higden*, ed. J.R. Lumby, Rolls Series, xlii, 9 vols. (London, 1882), viii, pp.446-518.

assuming centre stage, parliament continued to remain in the background; indeed, it is appropriate that the most detailed ‘unofficial’ account of parliament in this reign - in the *Gesta Henrici Quinti* - described the institution not as an end in itself, but as the means to a greater end, namely as a way of attracting further support for the war effort on the continent.¹⁷

ii/ CHRONICLES: THE DISCOURSE ON PARLIAMENT

The *Anonimalle Chronicle* is one of the best known chronicles of the late fourteenth century, certainly in terms of its treatment of parliament.¹⁸ Its singular importance in that context lies in the fact that it provides a unique account of the debates and procedures of the Commons in parliament. It is from the *Anonimalle Chronicle*, for example, that we learn that MPs stood at a lectern in order to address their fellow parliamentary colleagues and also, in 1376, it is from this chronicle that we first have a reference to the existence of the Commons’ Speaker.¹⁹ Nevertheless, for all its concentration on the activity of the Commons, the *Anonimalle Chronicle* actually displays an extremely conventional outlook in terms of its portrayal of the place of the Commons in parliament as a whole. Though its attention was directed to the knights of the shire, it conformed to a general contemporary perception that the Commons were a peripheral element in parliament and that it was the Lords which constituted the heart of the institution.²⁰ For example, in one place, the chronicler stated that ‘...les communes ses profrent d’entrer en parlement et vendrent al huse de parlement’.²¹ This suggested that they were physically removed from the institution and had to go to it in order to participate in its proceedings. More explicit statements of the distinction between the Commons and parliament were made elsewhere. Thus, we find descriptions of ‘...le graunt parlement avaut les ditz seignours’ and, later on, a report that ‘...les seigneurs entrèrent en leur parlement et le communes en le chapitre’.²²

In the eyes of this chronicler, then, parliament constituted a meeting between the magnates and king; the Commons, though necessary to make a ‘proper’ or full assembly,

¹⁷ *Gesta Henrici Quinti*, ed. and trans. F. Taylor and J.S. Roskell (Oxford, 1975), pp.123-31.

¹⁸ *The Anonimalle Chronicle, 1333-1381*, ed. V.H. Galbraith (Manchester, 1927), esp. pp.79-94.

¹⁹ Tout, ‘Parliament and Public Opinion’, pp.302-306; A.F. Pollard, ‘The Authorship and Value of the “Anonimalle” Chronicle’, *E.H.R.*, liii (1938), 577-605; G. Holmes, *The Good Parliament* (Oxford, 1975); Taylor, *English Historical Literature*, pp.198-205 and trans. in Appendix III; A. Goodman, ‘Sir Thomas Hoo and the Parliament of 1376’, *B.I.H.R.*, xli (1968), 139-49.

²⁰ See Pollard, ‘Authorship and Value’, p.587, note 1.

²¹ *Anonimalle Chronicle*, p.83.

²² *Ibid.*, p.90.

nevertheless stood formally outside it, entering only when their participation or aid was required. The *Anonimale Chronicle* recognised this but chose to concentrate on the Lower House; for the most part, however, other chroniclers (principally Thomas Walsingham,²³ Henry Knighton,²⁴ the Monk of Westminster,²⁵ the Monk of Evesham²⁶ and the author of the *Continuatio Eulogii*)²⁷ conformed to this rule by mentioning the Commons only when they had appeared in the Upper House in the presence of the king and Lords and only when their participation was judged to have some major effect or influence on proceedings there. Like the parliament rolls, the majority of chronicles recorded either the business of the Upper House or 'full' parliament but never the Commons on their own.²⁸ Moreover, as with the parliament rolls, most chroniclers were little interested in identifying the individual members of the Lower House, preferring instead simply to refer to them as 'the Commons', or, in the case of the Monk of Evesham, 'the laity'.²⁹ Only Walsingham appears to have been any more specific by referring to the 'knights of parliament'.³⁰ It was virtually unheard of for the burgesses to be distinguished in this way.³¹ Whilst it is true that two parliamentary activities associated with the Commons - taxation and statutes - were mentioned by chroniclers on a regular basis we should be careful in assuming that this derived from an innate interest in the actions of the Lower House. Both taxation and legislation were the two principal 'products' of the late medieval parliament which had a regular and significant effect in the localities and if they were referred to frequently, this probably stemmed from the fact that most chroniclers were on hand to see their implementation personally. This is a useful reminder that chroniclers tended to write from an essentially local perspective and that their view of parliament would have been

²³ See *Chronicon Angliae; Historia Anglicana 1272-1422*, ed. H.T. Riley, Rolls Series, xxviii, 2 vols. (London, 1863-4), i-ii; 'Annales Ricardi Secundi et Henrici Quarti', *Johannis de Trokelowe et Anon Chronica et Annales*, ed. H.T. Riley, Rolls Series, xxviii, 7 vols. (London, 1866), iii, hereafter to be cited as *Annales; The St. Alban's Chronicle 1406-1420*, ed. V.H. Galbraith (Oxford, 1937). For the relationship between the chronicles and other works by Walsingham see Duls, *Richard II in the Early Chronicles*, Appendix B. For a more detailed description of Thomas Walsingham's work see G.B. Stow, 'Richard II in Thomas Walsingham's Chronicles', *Speculum*, lix (1984), 68-102, esp. pp.82-3.

²⁴ *Knighton's Chronicle*.

²⁵ *The Westminster Chronicle*.

²⁶ *Vita Ricardi Secundi*.

²⁷ *Continuatio Eulogii* in *Eulogium Historiarum sive Temporis*, ed. F. S. Haydon, Rolls Series, ix, 3 vols. (London, 1863), iii.

²⁸ See chapter 3, p.72.

²⁹ For example see *Knighton's Chronicle*, p.338; *The Westminster Chronicle*, index, pp.552-3; *Continuatio Eulogii*, pp.349, 356, 360, 399. For the Monk of Evesham see *Vita Ricardi Secundi*, pp.48, 58, 71, 80, 85.

³⁰ For example, *Historia Anglicana*, ii, pp.63, 149; *Annales*, pp.320, 335; *Chronicon Angliae*, pp.130; *The St. Alban's Chronicle*, pp.2-3, 52,57.

³¹ The only exception in this period again appears to have been Walsingham who, in 1402, recorded that the clergy had granted a tenth and a half, the burgesses had granted a tenth and the 'community of the realm' (*regni communitate*) a fifteenth; *Historia Anglicana*, ii, p.254.

shaped, at least in part, by a corresponding bias towards those aspects of the institution's business that influenced life in the localities.

As to the business that occurred during a session of parliament, chroniclers were unanimous in assuming that it was the Lords that determined the course and nature of an assembly. This was an assumption stated quite explicitly by the Monk of Westminster who asserted that in the parliament of October 1383, '...churchmen and temporal lords alike, by their astonishing squabbles among themselves, almost nullified the effect of the parliament...'.³² Indeed, in the assembly of November 1384, he went one stage further by accrediting to the magnates the representative quality and function that, by the late fourteenth century, the Commons are supposed to have assumed. It was asserted that '...nothing which furthered the interests of the kingdom was done in this parliament because the Lords Temporal, whose business it is to speak up for the condition and welfare of the realm, were mutually antagonistic and at this time perpetually at odds'.³³ This was a remarkable restatement of the former rôle of the magnates in parliament as the mouthpiece of the 'community of the realm' and highlighted that in the eyes of at least one contemporary, albeit a clergyman, the promotion of common interests still depended exclusively on the prevailing political climate within the Upper House.³⁴ Echoes of this sort of attitude can be found in Henry Knighton's chronicle where he attributed the quashing of the charters of manumission in the parliament of 1381 solely to the king and Lords.³⁵ More significantly, perhaps, Knighton also ascribed the broad legislative programme of the Cambridge Parliament of 1388 to the 'insistence..[of the magnates]...to remove...abuses and impose a better order'.³⁶

Walsingham never said so explicitly, but a broad survey of the content of his remarks about parliament makes it clear that the principal focus of his interest lay with the 'magnate politics' of each assembly. Walsingham paid particular attention to parliaments where the Lords appeared to be divided or quarrelsome over certain issues. In his *Chronicon Angliae*, for example, the parliament of 1378 was represented as having concerned, almost exclusively, a struggle between Gaunt and the Archbishop of Canterbury over the designs of

³² *The Westminster Chronicle*, p.67.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.105.

³⁴ See M. Prestwich, 'Parliament and the Community of the Realm in Fourteenth Century England', *Historical Studies*, xiv (1981), 5-24, esp. pp.5-6 and W.A. Morris, 'Magnates and Community of the Realm in Parliament, 1264-1327', *Mediaevalia et Humanistica*, i (1943), 58-94. It should be noted, however, that in the parliament of April 1384, the Monk of Westminster spoke of '...those who had been elected by the Commons to attend the parliament to promote the general welfare of the kingdom', *Westminster Chronicle*, p.81.

³⁵ *Knighton's Chronicle*, pp. 211-12

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.508-9.

the former on the Church.³⁷ The parliament of November 1380, which was held at Northampton, was described as being against the wishes of the magnates and Londoners; but no mention was made of the attitude of the Commons.³⁸ In the following parliament, Walsingham gave more attention to the dispute between Gaunt and Northumberland than he did to the important measures instigated in that assembly in the aftermath of the Peasants' Revolt.³⁹ In the *Historia Anglicana*, Walsingham alluded to great 'tergiversation' and 'altercation' amongst the Lords in the parliament of February 1383 over whether a military expedition should be mounted against Flanders or Castile.⁴⁰ His account of the Salisbury parliament of 1384 concerned, almost exclusively, the charges levelled against Gaunt by a Carmelite monk;⁴¹ and in the November parliament of the same year he concentrated on Northumberland's condemnation in the assembly for his alleged negligence in defending Berwick against the Scots.⁴² Walsingham's bias towards the affairs of the Upper House can also be demonstrated by the nature of his account of the Good Parliament of 1376. Despite strong evidence suggesting that he derived much of his knowledge of this assembly from a member of the Commons, Sir Thomas Hoo, MP for Bedfordshire, Walsingham's account contains no references to the discussion or debates which occurred in the Lower House. Instead, his primary interest was in the actions (and failings) of Gaunt.⁴³ Indeed, something of Walsingham's inattentiveness to the affairs of the Commons is indicated by the fact that he mistakenly referred to them as sitting 'in capitulo Sancti Pauli' when, of course, he ought to have said the Chapter House of Westminster Abbey.⁴⁴

It need hardly be said, that not all the parliaments between 1369 and 1421 were dominated by the politics of the nobility. Some, such as the parliaments of 1385, 1401 and 1406, saw the Commons take a particularly prominent rôle in proceedings. Modern historians have been quick to see these assemblies as representing serious constitutional 'crises' for the

³⁷ *Chronicon Angliae*, pp.211-2.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.280.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.329,333.

⁴⁰ *Historia Anglicana*, ii, p.84.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, ii, pp.112-3.

⁴² *Ibid.*, ii, pp.117-8.

⁴³ *Chronicon Angliae*, pp.70-2; Goodman, 'Sir Thomas Hoo', pp.139-49; Pollard, 'Authorship and Value', p.597-8; Taylor, 'The Good Parliament', p.85. Walsingham's account of the Good Parliament is roughly translated in, 'Transcript of a Chronicle in the Harleian Library of MSS', *Archaeologia*, xxii (1829), pp.213-49.

⁴⁴ *Chronicon Angliae*, p.70.

king.⁴⁵ Yet, it was a measure of the focus of attention away from the Lower House that none of these parliaments attracted much comment in the chronicles.⁴⁶ In the case of 1385, for example, virtually all the chroniclers, including Walsingham, Knighton and the author of the *Continuatio Eulogii*, described the assembly simply in terms of the occasion when Richard made a number of significant elevations amongst the peerage; no mention was made of the Commons' far-reaching agenda for government and financial reform.⁴⁷ In the case of 1401, attention was given to the acrimony between the Commons and the spiritual lords over the question of clerical contributions to taxation, as well as to the enactment of the statute *de Heretico Comburendo*; but no mention was made of the Commons' attack on the size and composition of the king's household, or of their demands for better financial management.⁴⁸ Indeed, the only aspect of this assembly which the Monk of Evesham mentioned was that William Sawtry had been burnt for heresy during its meeting.⁴⁹ Remarkably, in 1406, parliament was hardly mentioned at all. Certainly, there is absolutely no hint from the chronicles that this assembly was '...the most important Parliament of the fifteenth century', as one historian has recently put it.⁵⁰ Adam Usk excluded the assembly from his writing altogether and the author of the *Continuatio Eulogii* and Walsingham make what is only a passing reference to the fact that the Commons withheld their grant of taxation.⁵¹ Indeed, it was indicative, perhaps, of the local perspective that chroniclers could have on the assembly that the only other comment Walsingham made was that the lengthy duration of the 1406 parliament was a disaster for the constituencies who had to pay MPs' wages.⁵²

The bias towards the affairs of the Lords reflected the fact that the chronicles were a product of a society in which deference to status and landholding translated - in the

⁴⁵ J.J.N. Palmer, 'The Parliament of 1385 and the Constitutional Crisis of 1386', *Speculum*, xlvii (1971), 477-90; A. Rogers, 'The Political Crisis of 1401', *Nottingham Medieval Studies*, vii (1968), 277-83; A.J. Pollard, 'The Lancastrian Constitutional Experiment Revisited: Henry IV, Sir John Tiptoft and the Parliament of 1406', *Parliamentary History*, xiv (1995), 103-19.

⁴⁶ Palmer states that in relating the events of the 1385 parliament, '...the chroniclers are not much more helpful than the official narrative'; 'The Parliament of 1385', p.478. Rogers comments that of the 1401 parliament '...there is no hint of controversy in contemporary chronicles'; 'Political Crisis of 1401', p.85. Finally, Pollard states that '...contemporary chroniclers...gave [the parliament of 1406] only cursory consideration'; 'Lancastrian Constitutional Experiment', p.106.

⁴⁷ *Historia Anglicana*, ii, pp.139-41; *Chronicon Angliae*, p.367; *Knighton's Chronicle*, p.339; *Continuatio Eulogii* p.360. The exception was *The Westminster Chronicle* which alone mentioned the demands of the Commons for the king to 'live of his own'; pp.137-149.

⁴⁸ *Historia Anglicana*, ii, p.247; *Continuatio Eulogii*, p.387.

⁴⁹ *Vita Ricardi Secundi*, p.169.

⁵⁰ Pollard, 'Lancastrian Constitutional Experiment', p.103.

⁵¹ *The Chronicle of Adam Usk, 1377-1421*, ed. and trans. C. Given-Wilson (Oxford, 1997); *Continuatio Eulogii*, p.409; *Historia Anglicana*, ii, p.273; *The St. Alban's Chronicle*, 2-3.

⁵² *Annales*, p.418.

parliamentary context - to an overriding emphasis on the activity and importance of the Upper House in parliament. It also indicated the simple reality (as discussed in chapter 3) that the Lords, rather than the Commons, was the focal point of power and decision-making in parliament and it was here, therefore, that interest was naturally focussed. Nevertheless, chroniclers were not representative of all late medieval society and there may have been other more practical reasons why the Upper House received the lion's share of their attention. In the first place, many of these writers were sponsored by patrons who were themselves members of the Lords or were at least members of the landed nobility.⁵³ The earls of Leicester and dukes of Lancaster, for example, were the patrons of Henry Knighton's home, the abbey of St. Mary of the Meadows in Leicester; both Adam of Usk and the *Continuatio Eulogii* were influenced by Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury (Usk was further patronised by Roger, earl of March); and Westminster Abbey was patronized by none other than Richard II himself.⁵⁴ Furthermore, even if a chronicler wrote purely for the consumption of the ecclesiastical establishment to which he belonged - and the evidence is that this was generally the case⁵⁵ - the most likely audience for the work would still have associated more closely with the Lords than they would the Commons. This audience could well have consisted of abbots or proctors who had attended the Upper House at some point in their careers; and for those who had not seen parliament at first hand, the Upper House would probably still have attracted more interest by virtue of the fact that this was where the spiritual lords were located.

Equally though, chroniclers may have been influenced by the *access* they had to parliament. Walsingham, for example, was very well placed to hear first hand accounts of the proceedings of the Upper House either through his own abbot, who would have received a writ of personal summons as a spiritual peer, or through a proctor, acting on the abbot's behalf if he chose not to attend parliament in person. The author of the *Continuatio Eulogii*, as well as Adam Usk, were both connected to the court of the Archbishop of Canterbury and were therefore in an ideal position to acquire information from the spiritual peers attending parliamentary sessions.⁵⁶ Professor Martin suggests that much of the information Knighton

⁵³ The exception was the *Anonimale Chronicle*, written at St. Mary's Abbey, York, which had no noteworthy secular patron at the end of the fourteenth century, a fact which might explain why the author felt able to concentrate specifically on the activity of the Lower House.

⁵⁴ See Gransden, *Historical Writing*, p.177-85. Also note that Thomas, duke of Gloucester possessed several historical works, including a *Polychronicon* and several other writings by Higden and Walsingham; see V.J. Scattergood, 'Literary Culture at the Court of Richard II', in V.J. Scattergood and J.W. Sherborne, eds., *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1983), p.34.

⁵⁵ For the audience of chronicles, see Taylor, *English Historical Literature*, p.53-6.

⁵⁶ Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp.158, 160.

used for his accounts of parliament derived from Henry Bolingbroke, earl of Derby, who was a regular attender of the Lords from the late 1380s onwards.⁵⁷ As regards the Monk of Westminster, it is possible that one of his principal sources was a clerk of parliament, John Scarle, who would have had an intimate knowledge of the proceedings of the Upper House where his main responsibilities lay.⁵⁸ The accounts of both Adam Usk and the Monk of Evesham of the parliament of 1397-8 are also now thought to have originated from a chancery clerk, perhaps another clerk of parliament, present in the Upper House during the proceedings.⁵⁹ It has also been speculated that Thomas Favent's account of the Merciless Parliament of 1388 derived from a political tract written by one of the two clerks of the crown, Geoffrey Martin, who was present in the Upper House during the session.⁶⁰ Finally, it is worth adding that the *Anonimale Chronicle* is also thought to have derived from an account of a chancery clerk although in this case it was John Scarborough who was a clerk of the Commons and thus privy to the deliberations and discussion of the Lower House.⁶¹

Thirdly, the fact that the majority of the chroniclers were either monks or friars or were in some other way closely connected to the Church⁶² meant that there must have been a personal tendency for them to focus on the Upper House where the spiritual peers met. This religious context is important for it also explains a disproportionate emphasis placed by most chroniclers on the ecclesiastical business dealt with by parliament. This bias can be demonstrated in three ways. Firstly, there is the fact that some chroniclers chose to record grants of taxation by the clergy *before* mentioning sums agreed to by the laity; this suggests that the former were accorded a superior status to the latter even though a clerical grant was worth considerably less than taxation granted by the Commons.⁶³ As a side note, it is interesting that clerical grants were often recorded as being made 'in parliament' even though, in theory, they were the responsibility of convocation; this could well have indicated that in

⁵⁷ *Knighton's Chronicle*, pp.lxix-lxx.

⁵⁸ *The Westminster Chronicle*, pp.xlvi-xlvi. For discussion of the office of clerk of parliament, see H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, 'The King's Ministers in Parliament, 1327-1377', *E.H.R.*, xlvi (1932), 377-97, repr. in *idem*, eds., *The English Parliament*, ch. xxii, see esp. p.380, note 4.

⁵⁹ C. Given-Wilson, 'Adam Usk, the Monk of Evesham, and the Parliament of 1397-8', *H.R.*, lxvi (1993), 329-335, p.333.

⁶⁰ Gransden, *Historical Writing*, p.160; Taylor, *English Historical Writing*, p.207. For the tract see, Thomas Favent, *Historia sive Narracio Mirabilis Parliamenti*, ed. M. Mckisack, Camden Society, 3rd ser., xxxvii (1926).

⁶¹ Pollard, 'Authorship and Value', pp.578-9; Taylor, *English Historical Literature*, pp.203-4 and *idem*, 'The Good parliament', p.88. For the office of Commons' Clerk, see Richardson and Sayles, 'King's Ministers', p.396, esp. note 3.

⁶² Although Adam Usk was a secular clerk, in 1368 he had taken holy orders, in 1381 he was made a papal notary and in 1387 he became a supernumerary lecturer in canon law; see Duls, *Richard II in the Early Chronicles*, p.215.

⁶³ *Continuatio Eulogii*, pp.356, 387, 395, 402, 409,416; *The Westminster Chronicle*, pp.48-9, 103-2; *Vita Ricardi Secundi*, pp.48, 58, 80, 85, 93,120, 134, 175; *Elmhami Liber Metricus de Henrico Quinto* in *Memorials of Henry the Fifth*, ed. C.A. Cole, Rolls Series, xi (London, 1858), p.102.

practice the spiritual peers agreed to a clerical grant in parliament before convocation met.⁶⁴ Secondly, the respective coverage given by chroniclers to the different legislation produced by parliament highlighted their interest in religious affairs. This can be seen by looking carefully at two chroniclers who wrote fairly consistently about parliament under Richard II - the Monk of Westminster and the author of the *Continuatio Eulogii*. Excluding its account of the Cambridge Parliament of 1388, the *Westminster Chronicle* referred to eleven statutes between 1381 and 1394 of which no fewer than six concerned religious legislation: these included the statute against benefices of October 1383,⁶⁵ the statute of priors enacted in 1385,⁶⁶ the statutes against provisors of September 1388, January 1390 and 1393,⁶⁷ and the statute of 1391 which restricted the conditions with which clergy could acquire land.⁶⁸ The picture is very similar for the *Continuatio Eulogii*. In this chronicle, nine statutes were mentioned between 1377 and 1411, of which five were religious statutes. These were two statutes said to have been enacted in the parliament of 1378, one recognising Urban VI as Pope and the other (probably dating to 1379) concerning the privileges of the Church;⁶⁹ three statutes concerning benefices, attributed to the parliaments of January 1380, February 1383 (this statute was actually enacted in the parliament of November 1383) and 1393 respectively;⁷⁰ the statute *de Heretico Comburendo* of 1401;⁷¹ and two unrecorded statutes of 1410, one concerning Lollardy and the other lands held by priests from the Church.⁷²

Finally, the chroniclers' personal bias towards ecclesiastical affairs is shown by the fact that on the few occasions when they ventured an opinion on a decision taken in parliament, invariably these concerned matters affecting the Church. Thus, the Monk of Westminster described the Statute against provisors in January 1390 as 'detestable' ('statutum

⁶⁴ In addition to the references in the previous note see also *Historia Anglicana*, i, 316, ii, 108, 114, 117, 212, 216, 254, 267, 273. This scenario has been suggested by R.G. Davies, 'The Attendance of the Episcopate in English Parliaments, 1376-1461', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, cxxix (1985), 30-81, p.43. It is also hinted in varying degrees in recent work on convocation during the reign of Henry IV. See A. Rogers, 'Clerical Taxation under Henry IV, 1399-1413', *B.I.H.R.*, xcvi (1973), 123-144; E.F. Jacob, 'The Canterbury Convocation of 1406', in T.A. Sandquist and M.R. Powicke, eds., *Essays in Medieval History presented to B. Wilkinson* (Toronto, 1969), 345-53; J.W. Dahmus, 'Henry IV of England: An Example of Royal Control of the Church in the Fifteenth Century', *Journal of Church and State*, xxiii (1981), 35-46. See also the discussion in chapter 3, pp.94-8.

⁶⁵ *Westminster Chronicle*, pp.54-5 and note 1; *SR*. ii. 35.xiv.

⁶⁶ *Westminster Chronicle*, pp.148-9; *SR*. ii. 39.iv.

⁶⁷ *Westminster Chronicle*, pp.355, 413, 513; *SR*. ii. 60.xv, 61.i, 84.v.

⁶⁸ *Westminster Chronicle*, p.483; *SR*. ii. 79.v.

⁶⁹ *Continuatio Eulogii*, pp.346-7; *SR*. ii. 11.vii, 12.i (1379).

⁷⁰ *Continuatio Eulogii*, pp.349, 356, 368; *SR*. ii. 14.iii, 34.xii, 84.v.

⁷¹ *Continuatio Eulogii*, p.387; *SR*. ii. 125.xv.

⁷² *Continuatio Eulogii*, p.417.

odiosum contra provisos’) ⁷³ and Knighton similarly described the statute of 1391, which limited the ownership of land by the clergy, as ‘A detestable enactment against the church’ (‘Exsecrabile statutum contra ecclesiam’). ⁷⁴ Indeed, on other occasions, comments could not be resisted about individuals in parliament whose agenda was perceived to have been a threat against the ecclesiastical establishment; Walsingham’s unfavourable depiction of Gaunt in parliament derived, at least in part, from the latter’s support of the heretic John Wyclif; the Monk of Westminster bitterly described Sir Ralph Basset as never having had ‘...a good word to say for the privileges of the church’ after the sanctuary at Westminster was violated in 1388; ⁷⁵ and John Capgrave could not resist a swipe at Sir John Cheyne whom he described as ‘an enemy to the church’ after his supposed involvement in the anti-clerical parliament at Coventry in 1404. ⁷⁶

We are provided with a further insight into the perspective of the chroniclers when we compare their coverage of parliament with the material which was included in the parliament roll. Such a comparison not only reveals something of the attitudes and interests of individuals who were viewing parliament from ‘outside’ the system, but has equal significance in revealing the principles with which the parliament roll itself was compiled. In particular, it reminds us that whereas the parliament roll was a government record and was therefore subject to the political sensitivities of the time, the chroniclers were less inhibited and were able, on occasion, to note down incidents which had conveniently been left off the parliament roll by the chancery clerks. For example, according to the parliament roll of October 1383 the main issue to crop up in this assembly was the impeachment of Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich, and the trial of his captains for their military failures on the continent. ⁷⁷ The Monk of Westminster placed an altogether different slant on the proceedings. His account, whilst including the trial of Despenser, went on to state that,

...in the course of this parliament a serious quarrel arose between the king and the lords temporal, because, as it seemed to them, he clung to unsound policies and for this reason excluded wholesome guidance from his entourage... They maintained that in former times the most illustrious of his royal predecessors had been ruled by the advice of their lords [with the result that] the realm of England was a land of plenty and brilliant prosperity. ⁷⁸

⁷³ *Westminster Chronicle*, pp.412-3.

⁷⁴ *Knighton’s Chronicle*, pp.538-9.

⁷⁵ *Westminster Chronicle*, pp.340-1.

⁷⁶ *Chronicle of England*, p.72.

⁷⁷ *RP*. iii. 149-58.

⁷⁸ *Westminster Chronicle*, pp.54-5.

Whether through scribal negligence, political complicity or because of a genuine belief that the episode had little relevance to the 'official' record, this dispute left no trace on the parliament roll. A similar discrepancy occurred in the following parliament of April 1384. This time, the parliament roll noted the chancellor's speech, the meeting of the intercommuning committee, the grant of taxation, an extensive suit by John Cavendish, fishmonger of London, and the common petitions.⁷⁹ However, the Monk of Westminster also added that there were '...astonishing squabbles amongst the Lords' and stated that Richard, earl of Arundel, made a speech which directly criticized the rule of the king, claiming there to be a lack of prudent government and '...a state of decay' in the country. We are reminded of the added human interest a chronicler could inject into what could otherwise be a rather dry narrative by the description of the king's response to this charge; allegedly Richard II '...scowled at the earl', turned '...white with passion' and retorted that, '...you lie in your teeth. You can go to the devil!'.⁸⁰ Again, there was no hint of this controversy in the official record of parliament.⁸¹

Tampering with or vetting the official account of parliament (assuming that the chroniclers' accounts were accurate) was not just the prerogative of the king, but was open to anyone who controlled the government machinery that organised and recorded a parliamentary session. Thus, in 1388, the Merciless Parliament was recorded on the parliament roll in a way which implied that all the actions of this assembly met with the full approval and complicity of the king.⁸² The roll also suggested that the political community was united in support of the agenda and rule of the Lords Appellant. However, the Monk of Westminster reported that the king '...offered a large number of different accounts in exculpation of Sir Nicholas [Brembre]' and that he was joined in this undertaking by the duke of York and the earls of Kent, Salisbury and Northumberland.⁸³ The *Westminster Chronicle* also referred to the 'opposition' which Gloucester, Arundel and Warwick faced from their fellow Appellants, Derby and Nottingham, over the fate of the king's favourites (this was an episode that was also alluded to by Walsingham and the Monk of Evesham);⁸⁴ it described the bad tempered argument between

⁷⁹ *RP*. iii. 166-173.

⁸⁰ *Westminster Chronicle*, pp.68-8.

⁸¹ Note also that the *Westminster Chronicle* mentioned a common petition against liveries which also appears to have been left off the parliament roll; *ibid.*, pp.80-3; A. Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility* (London, 1971), pp.93-4; R.L. Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace, 1388-90', in F.R.H. Du Boulay and C.M. Barron, eds., *The Reign of Richard II: Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (London, 1977), p.132; J.R. Maddicott, 'Law and Lordship: Royal Justices as Retainers in Thirteenth and Fourteenth-Century England', *P&P Supplement*, iv (1978), p.66; N. Saul, *Richard II* (London, 1997), p.82.

⁸² *RP*. iii. 229-45.

⁸³ For this and what follows, see the *Westminster Chronicle*, pp.307-43.

⁸⁴ *Historia Anglicana*, ii. p.174; *Vita Ricardi Secundi*, pp.117-8.

the duke of York and the duke of Gloucester over the judgement against Sir Simon Burley; and it also stated that ‘...despite the entreaties and arguments of the king and queen and other exalted persons...Burley was condemned by parliament.’⁸⁵ Henry Knighton was equally forthcoming about sensitive issues by incorporating into his account of the assembly a common petition which had evidently been suppressed from the parliament roll because it highlighted the considerable disquiet in the Lower House over the Appellants’ record of governance.⁸⁶ Even the semi-official account - the so-called ‘Record and Process’ - was noticeably less circumspect than the parliament roll by recording the numerous absences by the king during the assembly (a sign, perhaps, of his dissent) and the presence at parliament of the Appellants’ affinities, presumably in order to cajole those who were less willing to support their agenda.⁸⁷

These examples illustrate that in the late fourteenth century the tendency for parliament to become the stage for serious political controversy and altercation meant that the way in which the institution was actually recorded could often become a political act in its own right. It seems remarkable, for instance, that each of the assemblies of 1376, 1386, February 1388, 1397-8 and 1399 provoked political tracts which were designed to promote a particular angle or viewpoint of the parliamentary proceedings.⁸⁸ It is possible, given this political sensitivity, that chroniclers were partly motivated to record the activity of parliament fully aware of the inconsistencies and discrepancies that official accounts and propaganda pieces could sometimes show. The Monk of Westminster, for example, was not content to rely simply on the ‘Record and Process’ for an account of the Merciless Parliament of 1388, but provided a second description of the same episode based on his own understanding and interpretation of events. This awareness of ‘hidden agendas’ may also explain Adam Usk’s assertion that he was an eye-witness to the events of the parliament of 1397-8; he understood that this assembly was an extremely contentious one and wanted to assert the accuracy of his account over and

⁸⁵ *Westminster Chronicle*, p.330-1.

⁸⁶ For this and the following discussion see *Knighton’s Chronicle*, pp.442-51; and J.J.N. Palmer, *England, France and Christendom 1377-99* (London, 1972), pp.136-7.

⁸⁷ *Westminster Chronicle*, pp.280-96, and the editor’s discussion, pp.xlvi-li. The ‘Record and Process’ of 1388 was probably a rough draft of the proceedings of the parliament, compiled by John Burton, Keeper of the rolls of chancery, perhaps as a preliminary exercise before writing up the final copy of the parliament roll. For the presence of the Appellants’ affinities, see also, *Vita Ricardi Secundi*, p.117.

⁸⁸ *Anonimale Chronicle*, pp.79-97; *Knighton’s Chronicle*, pp.lxviii-lxix, pp.372-88; Favent, *Historia sive narracio*; Given-Wilson, ‘Adam Usk, the Monk of Evesham’, p.333; *Chronicles of the Revolution*, pp.168-89. For the dissemination of the ‘Record and Process’ of 1399 see C. Barron, ‘The Deposition of Richard II’, in Taylor and Childs, eds., *Politics and Crisis*, pp.133-4; G.O. Sayles, ‘The Deposition of Richard II: three Lancastrian narratives’, *B.I.H.R.*, liv (1981), 257-70.

above other descriptions by emphasising that it was based on first-hand knowledge.⁸⁹ Finally, it may not be a coincidence that at the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Commons began to take a keen interest in the way in which parliament was recorded: in 1401 they complained that a modification to the statute of provisors had been entered on the parliament rolls without their knowledge or their agreement and requested that the matter should be examined by the Lords;⁹⁰ in 1406 the Speaker of the Commons, Sir John Tiptoft, demanded that certain members of the Lower House be present ‘...a l’enactement et l’engrossement du Rolle de Parlement’;⁹¹ and in January 1404 and 1414 complaints were made that some statutes did not correspond with their derivative common petitions.⁹² It appears that the broader political community was also beginning to appreciate how much power the written word could have when it recorded contentious or controversial events.

iii/ PARLIAMENT IN CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

Langland’s *Vision of Piers Plowman* is the earliest literary text to focus on parliament in the period between 1369 and 1421 - it was written between 1362 and 1386. It was also one of the most influential and significant poems of the late Middle Ages; its contemporary popularity is highlighted by the fact that it has survived in over fifty texts, a number surpassed only by the *Canterbury Tales*.⁹³ The poet’s attitude to, and portrayal of, parliament, can be pinpointed to the prologue of *Piers Plowman* and, in particular, to the famous rat fable which Langland used as an allegory for the assembly. The rat fable essentially

⁸⁹ Adam Usk, p.20.

⁹⁰ *RP*. iii. 465.45. The king accepted this request but with the protestation that it should not happen as a matter of course. The question of access to the parliament roll, which this episode appears at first sight to concern, is a perplexing one. Note, however, the clause in the *Modus Tenendi Parliamentum* which reads: ‘The clerks of parliament shall not refuse anyone a transcript of his process, but shall supply it to everyone who asks for it, and they may charge at the rate of ten lines a penny, unless perhaps poverty is proved on oath, in which case let them charge nothing’, in *English Historical Documents, 1189-1327*, iii, ed. H. Rothwell (London, 1975), p.933. In support of what the *Modus* prescribes and as an explanation for the episode of 1401, it is possible that what Henry objected to was not the access to the records themselves, but the fact that a committee was set up composed of Lords Spiritual and Temporal to spend time on this request when they and the rest of parliament had more pressing business to attend to. More generally, if the Commons *did* lack access to the rolls of parliament, it seems unlikely that they would have insisted so frequently that agreements and decisions made in parliament be entered on the roll if they had little chance to verify this at a later date; see *RP*. iii. 15.47, 60-1, 204.10b, 237a, 285.8b, 302.11, 351.14, 441,141, 455.8b, 486.10, 569.13, 583.62, 578.48. It should also be noted that in 1406, Sir John Tiptoft spoke of the discharging of the war treasurers who were appointed in the previous parliament ‘come piert de record en Roll de Parliament’ as if this record was there for all to see and inspect; *RP*. iii. 577.44. Access to the records is also suggested by the fact that Lynn and Exeter paid to have a copy of the parliament roll of February 1388; M. McKisack, *The Parliamentary Representation of the English Boroughs during the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1932), p.145.

⁹¹ *RP*. iii. 585.65.

⁹² *RP*. iii. 523.9; iv. 22.22; H.L. Gray, *The Influence of the Commons on Early Legislation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1932), p.287; S.B. Chrimes, *English Constitutional Ideas in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1936), pp.160-1.

⁹³ J.A. Burrow, ‘The Audience of Piers Plowman’, *Anglia*, lxxv (1957), 373-84, p.374.

concerned a meeting of rats and mice who decided that they wished to place a bell on a cat so as to warn them of its presence. It has been suggested that the prologue of *Piers Plowman* was composed at the time of the Good Parliament of 1376 and that the cat represented either Edward III or John of Gaunt, that the mice and rats represented the Commons and that the prominent rat in the fable represented the Commons' Speaker, Sir Peter de la Mare.⁹⁴

Langland's portrayal of parliament was profoundly negative. As Anthony Gross recently asserted, 'To Langland those assembled in Parliament were in essence no more than a parasitic infestation, their wish to set themselves as "lordes oloft" who could freely "devour mens' malt" being inhibited only by the menacing influence of the cat'.⁹⁵ Bishop Brunton, who used the rat fable in a sermon delivered to convocation at the same time as the Good Parliament, attributed the failure of the rats and mice to bell the cat to their timidity. To Langland, however, it was due to their innate selfishness and inability to act in concert.⁹⁶ Langland was suggesting that the Commons were incapable of serving common interests or the 'comune profyt'; instead, their attendance at parliament was motivated purely by self-interest and greed as a result of which the institution was highly damaging to the welfare of the commonalty. In essence, Langland was expressing an extreme form of political conservatism based on the assertion that there was no such thing as representative government other than that found in the personal rule of the king. Thus, according to Langland, a king who ruled with the advice and input of parliament was far less likely to achieve the ideal of social and political harmony than a king who ruled independently and according to his own idea of law, justice and royal authority. If this increased the chances of royal tyranny, Langland believed that this was an inescapable hazard of the system that simply had to be endured. As E.T. Donaldson put it, 'the poet did not think that the removal or repression of an unjust ruler was one of the prerogatives of the unjustly ruled; rather, he seems to have thought that they should continue to "suffre" [and serve], even though their suffering might be acute'.⁹⁷ In short, according to Langland, the members of parliament were not to be trusted with any share of power; authority should be totally invested in the monarch, whose rule should be unquestioned and absolute.

One of the great achievements of Langland, besides *Piers Plowman*, was the

⁹⁴ The dating of Langland's version of the fable is further suggested by the fact that it was during this assembly that Thomas Brunton, Bishop of Rochester, delivered a sermon which also used the rat fable as its main text; E.H. Kellogg, 'Bishop Brunton and the Fable of the Rats', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association*, i (1935), 57-68; E.T. Donaldson, *Piers Plowman: The C-Text and its Poet* (New Haven, 1949), pp.113-16.

⁹⁵ A. Gross, 'Langland's Rats: A Moralists' Vision of Parliament', *Parliamentary History*, ix (1990), 286-287, p.293.

⁹⁶ See A.P. Baldwin, *The Theme of Government in Piers Plowman* (Cambridge, 1981), esp. pp.15-20.

⁹⁷ Donaldson, *Piers Plowman*, p.94.

founding of a literary tradition in which future poets looked to his work for stylistic guidance and inspiration. *Pierce the Ploughman's Crede*, *Richard the Redeless*, *Mum and the Sothsegger*, and *The Crowned King* - all written between 1393 and 1415 - form a substantial part of what has now become known as 'the *Piers Plowman* tradition'.⁹⁸ Significantly, however, despite the strong legacy of Langland's work, the later poets and particularly the author of *Richard the Redeless* (1399) and *Mum and the Soothsegger* (1409) did *not* adopt the perspective on parliament displayed in *Piers Plowman*. It is true that there were certain similarities between *Piers Plowman* and *Richard the Redeless*; the delightful depiction in the latter of the dull and useless knights of the shire, for example, who sat in parliament like 'a zero in arithmetic, marking a place but signifying nothing', eloquently captured the sense of complete worthlessness which Langland also attached to the Lower House.⁹⁹ Moreover, the description in *Richard the Redeless* of MPs who had 'ysoupid with Symond' and of others who cared more for the coin which the king owed them than for the well-being of the community, parallels very closely Langland's portrayal of the Commons as serving only their own interests and their own greed. Nevertheless, there was a fundamental difference. Whereas Langland dismissed parliament out of hand, the author of *Richard the Redeless*, though undoubtedly portraying parliament in a cynical and negative light, nevertheless was not questioning its fundamental place in the polity. The latter poem was intended both as a critique of the rule of Richard II as well as a treatise of advice aimed at the new king, Henry IV. Its unflattering portrayal of parliament stemmed from the belief that the tyranny and subsequent downfall of Richard II had been due, at least in part, to the failings of the official machinery of royal government - including parliament - which ought to have halted the king's lawlessness and his wilful extravagance. In other words, the poet was criticising parliamentary *practice* for failing to uphold - as he understood it - a basic parliamentary *principle*; namely, that the institution existed primarily to uphold, represent and defend the interests of the community of the realm against an oppressive monarch. Clearly, this assertion of the theoretical value of parliament lay in direct contrast to the views expressed by Langland.

Mum and the Sothsegger was written some ten years after Henry IV had seized the throne and probably by the same author of *Richard the Redeless*. We do not have the same rich description of parliament as in the earlier work, but similar themes do emerge. This poem revolved around a quest by the narrator to find out whether 'Mum' or a 'Soothsegger' was

⁹⁸ See *The Piers Plowman Tradition*, ed. H. Barr (London, 1993), esp. pp.1-8.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.132.

more profitable for the rule of a kingdom. Essentially, it depicted a struggle between those who would flatter and pander to the wishes of the king, and those who would tell the truth and give constructive criticism about the faults of his rule. At the end of the poem, the Soothseger wins the day and, as if to emphasise this, the narrator himself then opens a bag full of books which contain criticisms of contemporary problems and corruption.¹⁰⁰ It is clear that the *Mum and the Sothseger* had a moral undertone which was intended specifically for the Commons in parliament. Their rôle, the author asserted, was to speak up against the ills of the kingdom,

For [of] al the mischief and mysse-reule that in the royaulme groweth
Mvm hath be maker alle thees many yeres
And eek more, [a] moulede, I may wel aduowe;
And principally by parlement to proue hit I thenke,
When knightz for the comune been come for that deede,
And semblid forto shewe the sores of the royaulme
And spare no speche though thay spille shuld.¹⁰¹

As in *Richard the Redeless*, it was the ineffectiveness and corruption of the members of parliament which the poet implicitly attacks, not the institution of parliament itself. Similarly, the political vision espoused in this latter work rested on the basic belief that ‘...a strong monarch is...a king who listens to the grievances of his subjects [and] these must be voiced in the proper place, namely parliament’.¹⁰²

Though we must be open to the possibility that this divergence in opinion between Langland on the one hand, and the author of *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the Sothseger* on the other, was simply down to their personal disposition, equally, we should recognise that their work was also, in some degree, a product and reflection of the values and principles of the society to which they belonged. In this sense, the discrepancy in the portrayals of parliament may have indicated a broad shift in attitudes towards the institution over the two or three decades which separated the poems. Langland was of a generation which had really only ever known a strong and relatively successful monarchy in the person of Edward III. Though parliament had not always been compliant, in general, Edward III had successfully managed the institution and, for its own part, parliament had remained generally co-operative and supportive of his interests and agenda.¹⁰³ For many contemporaries, therefore, including Langland, the proceedings of the Good Parliament of 1376 may have come as quite a shock

¹⁰⁰ These have been outlined by V.J. Scattergood, *Politics and Poetry in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1971), pp.31-2.

¹⁰¹ *Piers Plowman Tradition*, p.177.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.26.

¹⁰³ The standard works are G.L. Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance in Medieval England to 1369* (Oxford, 1975); W.M. Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III: Crown and Political Society in England 1327-1377* (London, 1990).

and may not necessarily have been viewed favourably. Langland could well have represented a significant minority amongst the population who viewed the concept of 'popular politics', in which the Commons took a prominent rôle in the affairs of state (as they did in 1376), as a dangerous novelty which should be discouraged as strongly as possible. A generation later, however, in the 1400s, the reputation of parliament had evidently improved. Possibly, this was because the reign of Richard II had shown just what royal tyranny really entailed; the king's increasingly erratic behaviour at the end of his reign may have persuaded many contemporaries of the value of parliament in providing some form of institutional check against royal excessiveness. Langland, we should remember, had not experienced the full effects of arbitrary royal authority so this may have been more easy for him to dismiss than it was to those living at the end of the fourteenth century. It is also possible, of course, that the improved status of parliament was a reaction to the perceived financial extravagance of Henry IV in the 1400s and the crucial function parliament was fulfilling as the voice of public disquiet and dissent over this expenditure.¹⁰⁴

If there was a broad-based shift in the political perspective of contemporaries at the end of the fourteenth century, this is demonstrated very effectively by the career of John Gower, whose work underwent a discernible process of evolution over the course of his lifetime.¹⁰⁵ In one of his first works, the *Vox populi, vox Dei*, completed in 1377, Gower's views of medieval politics mirrored the outlook of his illustrious predecessor, Bracton, who had asserted that the dispensation of justice as well as respect for the law and personal property were the key factors making for successful kingship, and that if the king disregarded these qualities only God could punish him; the people simply had to endure it. Gower went only a little way beyond this in the *Confessio Amantis*, which was written in the 1380s; but it was not until the end of the century that his political views reached their final flowering with the *Cronica Tripertita* (1399-1401). As a Lancastrian propaganda piece, this latter work emphasised that popular and parliamentary opinion did, indeed, have a vital part to play in medieval politics. It was in the *Cronica Tripertita* that Gower came closest to asserting that the king was under both God *and* parliament. We can only speculate how much his acquaintances affected his political views, but it is worth noting that Gower was on very close

¹⁰⁴ The standard work on parliament under Henry IV is A. Rogers, 'Henry IV, the Commons and Taxation', *Mediaeval Studies*, xxxi (1969), 47-70; A.L. Brown 'The Commons and the Council in the Reign of Henry IV', *E.H.R.*, lxxxix (1964), 1-30.

¹⁰⁵ For this and what follows, see J.H. Fisher, *John Gower, Moral Philosopher and Friend of Chaucer* (New York, 1964), pp.104-112, 178-180.

terms with Sir Arnold Savage, who was Speaker for the Commons in the parliament of 1401.¹⁰⁶ Here was as good a source as any for Gower to acquire knowledge of, and a sympathy for, the rôle of parliament, and especially the Commons, as a bulwark against overbearing royal authority. The work of Chaucer also appears to have captured the general shift in contemporary attitudes to parliament, for he depicted the institution as no longer being attended by metaphorical vermin, but, as in the *Parlement of Foulys* (c.1380s), its membership now comprised birds.¹⁰⁷ It is interesting that in Chaucer's work even the lowest bird in his bird parliament had a right to voice an opinion and, perhaps more significantly, that Mother Nature, who represented the king, was shown to be governing 'by statute' and ruling by 'rightful ordenaunce', as if she had certain constitutional limitations placed on her authority.

We should be clear that it was not parliament as a whole that was undergoing a process of rejuvenation in the eyes of contemporaries but specifically the rôle of the Commons within it. Unlike the chroniclers, who, as we have seen, tended to concentrate on the aristocratic and ecclesiastical aspects of the institution, the literary works generally treated parliament from a layman's perspective and focussed, in particular, on the representative quality that was associated with the Lower House. In part, this may have reflected the contrast in authorship of the two types of work and the fact that the poets tended to be associated far less with the Church than were most of the chroniclers; Langland, though he had taken holy orders, was merely an acolyte and by all accounts appears to have assumed the lifestyle of a layman;¹⁰⁸ it has been suggested that the author of *Richard the Redeless* and *Mum and the Sothsegger* was a parliamentary clerk;¹⁰⁹ Gower was a lawyer;¹¹⁰ and Chaucer was a member of the gentry.¹¹¹ It may also have reflected the differing audiences of the two sources; whereas chroniclers were writing, for the most part, for noble patrons or their own ecclesiastical establishments, the readership of the alliterative poetry appears to have been made up principally of a mixture of educated clerks and newly prosperous and literate laymen.¹¹² Arguably their interest would have focussed more naturally on the activity and rôle of the

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p.111, note 94.

¹⁰⁷ *The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. L.D. Benson, 3rd edn. (Oxford, 1988), pp.383-6.

¹⁰⁸ N. Coghill, *Langland: Piers Ploughman*, Writers and their Work, clxxiv (London, 1964), pp.15-6.

¹⁰⁹ *Piers Plowman Tradition*, p.17.

¹¹⁰ Fisher, *John Gower*, pp.57-9.

¹¹¹ S. Sanderlin, 'Chaucer and Ricardian Politics', *The Chaucer Review*, xxii (1988), 175-184.

¹¹² Burrow, 'Audience of *Piers Plowman*', p.107; T. Turville-Petre, *The Alliterative Revival* (Cambridge, 1977), pp.40-7; A. Middleton, 'The Audience and Public of *Piers Plowman*', in D. A. Lawton, ed., *Middle English Alliterative Poetry and Its Literary Background* (Woodbridge, 1982), pp.101-23; *Piers Plowman Tradition*, p.7.

Commons in parliament, rather than the Lords. Thus, it was probably no coincidence that as the chronicles' coverage of parliament began to peter out by the end of the fourteenth century, the coverage in poems increased; this reflected the changing nature of parliament and the fact that under Henry IV the Commons' participation in parliamentary business was generally more prominent than the input by the nobility.

The increased exposure of the Lower House in literary works found its most elaborate expression in the Digby manuscript, which contains twenty-four anonymous poems probably written during the reigns of Henry IV and Henry V.¹¹³ At least seven of these poems alluded, either directly or indirectly, to the activity of different parliaments in this period and on each of these occasions the references were made specifically in the context of the Commons upholding and defending the interests of the realm. The detailed knowledge of the proceedings of parliament suggests that the poems were written either by somebody who was actually present amongst the Commons or, like the *Anonimale Chronicle*, by someone who had ready access to an accurate source. The tone is unmistakably sympathetic towards the Lower House. Indeed, in the third poem a view of the respective value of the Lords and Commons appears to offer a direct contrast to the perspective offered by the chroniclers; this poet argued that,

To wete if parlement be wys,
 the comoun profit wel it preues.
 A kyngdom in comouns lys,
 Alle profytes, and alle myscheues.
 Lordis wet neuere what comouns greues
 Til here rentis bigynne to ses.¹¹⁴

In other words, the Commons or commonality¹¹⁵ were the defenders of the common weal; the Lords were interested only in their rents. The poet's faith in the parliamentary system and his belief in the accountability of the king was further indicated by the comments on the parliament of February 1404. Here, it was stated that,

I wolde such a statutue were,
 And there-upon set a payne,
 What soget [subject] wolde make his souereyn swere
 that he tolde in counseil layne.
 Oft glosere maketh lordis fayne,

¹¹³ *Twenty-Six Political and other Poems*, ed. J. Kail, Early English Texts Society, original series, cxxiv (London, 1904), pp.1-120.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.12, stanza 13.

¹¹⁵ The meaning of the word 'comouns' is ambiguous, since it could be referring to either the Commons in parliament or the commonalty. However, the importance of the passage lies in the rejection of the Lords as arbiters of the common good.

Passe the boundes of here play.¹¹⁶

As with the other post-Langland poems, it was faith in institutionalised politics which formed the sub-text of these poems. The Commons in parliament may not have lived up to the ideals and expectations of contemporaries but the evidence, both from the Digby manuscript and from the other poems discussed in this section, suggests that by the first decade of the fifteenth century they had at least won recognition of the established place they held in the polity and the value of their function therein.

iv/ ATTITUDES TO PARLIAMENT: THE OPPOSITION TO RICHARD II, 1386-88

Richard II's preoccupation with the life and deposition of Edward II is well known and widely written about.¹¹⁷ In the words of Chris Given-Wilson, '...from [Richard's] point of view, there was one great stain on the history of the English Crown, namely the deposition of his great-grandfather; and it was a stain which he was determined to remove'.¹¹⁸ This he attempted to do by a series of measures which closely identified himself with his royal predecessor. As early as 1378, for example, he had the capitals of the Norman piers standing at either end of Edward's tomb painted brown with a motif of white hearts, which was Richard's personal badge;¹¹⁹ in 1383, the abbot of Gloucester was exempted for life from attending parliament, in return for celebrating Edward's anniversary every year;¹²⁰ and the year 1385 marked the beginning of a long campaign by Richard to get Edward canonized by the pope - in this year as well as in 1387, 1390, 1395, 1396 and 1397 delegations were sent to Rome to press for this special dispensation.¹²¹

Far less attention, however, has been given to a parallel cult which ran alongside that of Richard II's predecessor and which drew for its inspiration another political figure contemporaneous with Edward II; namely, Thomas of Lancaster.¹²² Whilst it is true that

¹¹⁶ *Twenty-Six Political Poems*, p.21, stanza 28.

¹¹⁷ See J.M. Theilmann, 'Political Canonization and Political Symbolism in Medieval England', *J.B.S.*, xxix (1990), 241-66, pp.253-61; A.R. Echerd, 'Canonization and Politics in Late Medieval England: The Cult of Thomas of Lancaster', Ph.D thesis (Univ. of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1993); C. Given-Wilson, 'Richard II, Edward II, and the Lancastrian Inheritance', *E.H.R.*, cix (1994), 553-571, pp.568-9; Saul, *Richard II*, p.323.

¹¹⁸ Given-Wilson, 'Richard II, Edward II', p.567.

¹¹⁹ J. Harvey, 'The Wilton Diptych: A Re-examination', *Archaeologia*, 98 (1961), 1-28, pp.5-6

¹²⁰ *C.P.R.*, 1381-5, p.273.

¹²¹ Echerd, 'Canonization and Politics', pp.235-6.

¹²² The exceptions are Theilmann, 'Political Canonization', pp.248-53; S. Walker, 'Political Saints in Later Medieval England', in Britnell and Pollard, eds., *The McFarlane Legacy*, pp.77-106, esp. pp.83, 92.

the initial burst of popular enthusiasm for this cult had subsided by the mid-fourteenth century, the continuing interest of a number of aristocratic families ensured it that it was still held with considerable regard in certain notable quarters. Significantly, these included some of the noblemen who led the opposition to Richard II between 1386 and 1388. Richard, earl of Arundel, Thomas, earl of Warwick and Henry, earl of Derby each had strong family reasons to promote the memory of Thomas of Lancaster and there is evidence that each actively sought to associate himself with the cult during the reign of Richard II.¹²³

On the surface, the existence of *two* parallel cults of 'political sainthood' at the end of the fourteenth century may not seem particularly important; but when we consider what they symbolised and what political principles each was being used to promote, it is apparent that they may have had far more significance than historians have acknowledged.¹²⁴ On the one hand, Richard II's attempt to have Edward II canonized stemmed from a basic desire to assert the inviolability of royal authority.¹²⁵ Richard promoted the cult of Edward II as a way of emphasising that it was a subject's duty to give his unremitting support and obedience to the king.¹²⁶ On the other hand, and in direct contrast, the cult of Thomas of Lancaster legitimised action taken *against* royal authority. As leader of the baronial opposition to Edward II, Thomas of Lancaster had been inextricably linked with the Ordinances of 1311 which had articulated the view that there was a basic and fundamental division between the crown as an institution and the crown as personified by the king himself.¹²⁷ Underlying the Ordinances was the assertion that if the king failed to adhere to the basic principles of medieval kingship, the

¹²³ Arundel's mother was niece to Thomas of Lancaster, whilst his first wife, Elizabeth, was granddaughter of Humphrey Bohun, earl of Hereford and Essex, who had been killed whilst fighting for Lancaster in 1322. Arundel is also recorded as possessing the *Luttrell Psalter* which depicted the scene of Thomas of Lancaster's execution in 1322; Echerd, 'Canonization and Politics', pp.192-4. Warwick was grandson of Guy Beauchamp who one chronicler held responsible for the Ordinances of 1311; *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, ed. N. Denholm-Young (London, 1957), pp.62-4. There is also evidence that the Beauchamp family were responsible for venerating Lancaster by installing a stained glass window in Bulkington Church, Warwickshire, in his memory; Echerd, 'Canonization and Politics', p.216. Finally, Bolingbroke, as heir to the duchy of Lancaster was in a natural position to associate himself with the cult. James Sherbourne has suggested that during the initial stages of Richard II's deposition Bolingbroke had initially cast himself in the tradition of Thomas of Lancaster by intending to set himself up as Steward of England; J. Sherbourne, 'Perjury and the Lancastrian Revolution of 1399', *Welsh History Review*, xiv (1988), 217-41, esp. pp.222-3. Note that as king, Henry IV chose to give St. George's Chapel at Windsor a set of vestments which contained an orphrey embroidered with scenes from the life of Thomas of Lancaster; M.F. Bond, ed., *The Inventories of St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle* (Windsor, 1947), p.44. A shrine dedicated to the memory of earl Thomas was maintained at Pontefract by both the Lancaster and Bohun families at the end of the fourteenth centuries.

¹²⁴ Note, however, the brief allusion to the two cults and their effect on politics by Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.103-4.

¹²⁵ Given-Wilson, 'Richard II, Edward II', pp.567-71.

¹²⁶ For Richard's notions of kingship, see S. Walker, 'Richard II's Views on Kingship', in R.E. Archer and S. Walker, eds., *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England. Essay Presented to Gerald Harriss* (London, 1995), ch. 4; N. Saul, 'Richard II and the Vocabulary of Kingship', *E.H.R.*, cx (1995), 854-877.

¹²⁷ J.C Davies, *The Baronial Opposition to Edward II: Its Character and Policy*, 2nd edn. (London, 1967), pp.357-93; J.R. Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster 1307-1322* (Oxford, 1970), pp.106-20; McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, pp.12-22.

political community, led by the barons, had a right and obligation to intervene for the sake of the common good.¹²⁸ Thus, Lancaster's posthumous reputation rested for the most part on the widespread perception that he had died for the sake of the commonalty. This is shown in what is perhaps one of the most important surviving liturgical records relating to Lancaster's cult, 'The Office of St. Thomas of Lancaster'.¹²⁹ In it, he was likened to Thomas Becket; but whereas Becket's '...head was broken on account of the peace of the Church', Lancaster's was said to have been '...cut off for the cause of the peace of England' - or, as it was put elsewhere, 'Alas! he is beheaded for the aid of the commons'.¹³⁰

If the ideas and principles associated with Thomas of Lancaster *were* in circulation amongst the magnate 'opposition' to Richard II, this introduces an important new dimension in which to view the events between 1386 and 1388. For one thing, it would make far more sense out of the otherwise puzzling references which cropped up in the late 1380s to the fate of Edward II. These included the famous interview at Eltham in 1386 in which the duke of Gloucester and Bishop Arundel were said to have threatened Richard II with the fate of his great-grandfather, referring to an '...ancient law, which not long since, lamentably, had to be invoked'.¹³¹ There was another reference in the following year by the king himself who, in one of the questions put to his royal judges, asked,

How is he to be punished who moved in [the] parliament [of 1386] that the statute should be sent for by which King Edward [the second]...had formerly been adjudged in parliament, by a consideration of which statute, the new statute [relating to the 1386 continual council]...was initiated in parliament?¹³²

There are also indications that documentation relating to the deposition of Edward II was produced in the Merciless Parliament of 1388 and may well have formed textual support behind the threat of the Lords Appellant to depose Richard II in December 1387.¹³³ Finally, it may have been a measure of the increased attention contemporaries were giving to the historical parallels between the resistance to Richard II and Edward II that Walsingham

¹²⁸ The idea that the promotion of the 'common good' was recognised as forming a central part of late medieval political ideology has been discussed at length by John Watts in the context of Henry VI's reign; *Henry VI*, pp.16-38, 51-80.

¹²⁹ *The Political Songs of England, from the Reign of John to that of Edward II*, ed. T. Wright, Camden Society, old ser., vi (1840), pp.268-72. See also Theilmann, 'Political Canonization', p.250, note 28.

¹³⁰ *Political Songs of England*, pp.268, 270.

¹³¹ *Knighton's Chronicle*, pp.360-61.

¹³² For the text of the questions see *SR*. ii. 102-4; *RP*. iii. 233, 257-8; *Select Documents of English Constitutional History*, ed. S.B. Chrimes and A.L. Brown (London, 1961), pp.137-9. D. Clementi has shown that this was a reference to legislation, now lost, which was produced as a result of the Ordinances of 1311; 'Richard II's ninth question to the judges', *E.H.R.*, lxxxvi (1971), 96-113.

¹³³ In the parliament of 1397, it was stated that records were produced in 1388 relating to the deposition of Edward II; *RP*. iii. 376.7.

mistakenly believed that Thomas of Lancaster had been officially canonized by the pope in 1390.¹³⁴

However, the real significance of the cult of Thomas of Lancaster, with its emphasis on the importance of the 'common weal', lies in the *ideological* perspective it gives to the magnate opposition of the late 1380s and, in particular, to the bearing it may have had on the rôle of parliament in this opposition. Whereas in Edward II's reign responsibility for articulating the interests and grievances of the commonalty still lay almost exclusively with the magnates, by Richard II's reign this function had transferred, in large part, to the institution of parliament.¹³⁵ In this latter period it is evident that the political outlook and attitudes of the 'baronial' opposition had undergone a corresponding degree of modification, taking account of the fact that parliament was now the principal forum in which the interests of the kingdom should be represented and expressed. This can be seen, at least initially, by the way that Gloucester and Arundel are supposed to have defended parliament in their meeting with the king at Eltham; not only did they remind Richard that it was the king's duty to call parliament every year '...to which both rich and poor can resort', but they added that if the king was absent from parliament, as Richard II was at this point, there was an ancient statute which allowed it to dissolve itself without the king's assent.¹³⁶ Interestingly, it has been suggested that these remarks derived from a knowledge of the content of the *Modus tenendi parliamentum*.¹³⁷ If true, this has enormous significance, for the *Modus* was a political tract which placed great value on the rôle and importance of parliament in the polity.¹³⁸ Indeed, it may not have been a co-incidence, given its connection to Thomas of Lancaster, that the *Modus* appears to have undergone a marked revival at the end of the fourteenth century.¹³⁹

The central importance of parliament, however, lay in the setting up of the so-

¹³⁴ *Historia Anglicana*, ii. p.195. See also Walker, 'Political Saints', p.83, note 37.

¹³⁵ For the traditional rôle of the Lords see Prestwich, 'Parliament and the Community of the Realm', pp.5-6; Morris, 'Magnates and Community of the Realm'; 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), ch.3, p.5.

¹³⁶ *Knighton's Chronicle*, pp.356-7.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.356-7, notes 1 and 2.

¹³⁸ *Parliamentary Texts of the Later Middle Ages*, ed. N. Pronay and J. Taylor (Oxford, 1980), pp.13-63; Taylor, *English Historical Literature*, pp.212-16.

¹³⁹ See Sherbourne, 'Perjury and Lancastrian Revolution', p.222, note 17 and J. Taylor, 'The Manuscripts of the *Modus Tenendi Parliamentum*', *E.H.R.*, lxxxiii (1968), 673-88. The idea that there was a 'revival' of interest in the *Modus* during Richard II's reign is based on the fact that its earliest copies date to this period - and in good numbers. There is an alternative theory advocated by G.O. Sayles that the *Modus* was in fact a product of Richard II's reign which, if the case, would add even greater significance to the discussion in this section; see G.O. Sayles, 'Modus Tenendi Parliamentum: Irish or English', in J. Lydon, ed., *England and Ireland in the Later Middle Ages* (Dublin, 1981), pp.122-152. For the connection of Lancaster to the *Modus*, see Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, pp.289-92; W.A. Morris, 'The Date of the "Modus Tenendi Parliamentum"', *E.H.R.*, xlix (1934), 407-22.

called 'commission of government' in 1386. Once again the parallels between this commission and the conciliar administration set up under Edward II are striking.¹⁴⁰ Indeed, it is quite possible that the commission was directly modelled on the precedent set by the Lords Ordainers since copies of the Ordinances still appear to have been widely available during Richard II's reign.¹⁴¹ Thus, just as in the 1310s governance was effectively taken out of the hands of Edward II and placed in the care of a group of barons who discharged their responsibilities in the name of the community of the realm, so too in 1386 the king's government was detached from the person of the king and relocated in a continual council headed by Gloucester and Arundel.¹⁴²

In 1386, however, the involvement of parliament was of paramount importance because the continual council was invested with its authority and legitimacy through the enactment of a parliamentary statute.¹⁴³ The immediate purpose behind this move was to prevent the king from overriding the action of parliament once it had ended - as had happened in 1340 and 1376¹⁴⁴ - but the significance ran far deeper than this. The crucial implication of the statutory authority enjoyed by the commission of government was that the enactment and implementation of legislation was *not*, in fact, the sole preserve of the king but, under special circumstances, could be undertaken by the community of the realm acting independently. Under the terms of the settlement of 1386 Richard II was not only expected to comply with, but also to be subject to, a new statutory law which was almost certainly made against his will. In other words, the principle that was being asserted in this assembly was that an act of parliament, which had the assent of the commonalty, was stronger and carried more weight than the wishes of a king who was divinely appointed. Although this did not herald a new constitutionalism based on the permanent precedence of parliament over the king,¹⁴⁵ nevertheless, it did demonstrate that there was a capacity within the political community to remove the king's executive power and set up in its place an alternative system of authority

¹⁴⁰ For the parallels see Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.71,103-4; Given-Wilson, 'Richard II, Edward II', p.569.

¹⁴¹ J.G. Edwards, 'Some Common Petitions in Richard II's First Parliament', *B.I.H.R.*, xxvi (1953), 200-213. Note Edwards' comment, 'Inasmuch as exemplars of the Ordinances had been officially circulated to every shire when they were promulgated, copies of the text would presumably not be hard to come by...', p.201.

¹⁴² See McKisack, *The Fourteenth Century*, pp.445-9; Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.105-7; W.M. Ormrod, 'Government By Commission: The Continual Council of 1386 and English Royal Administration', *Peritia*, x (1996), pp.303-21; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.161-75

¹⁴³ *SR*. ii. 40-43.

¹⁴⁴ See G.L. Harriss, 'The Commons' Petition of 1340', *E.H.R.*, lxxxviii (1963), 625-54 and *idem*, *King, Parliament and Public Finance*, pp.261-3; Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III*, p.48. For 1376, see Holmes, *The Good Parliament*, p.159.

¹⁴⁵ See Ormrod, 'Government by Commission', pp.309-11.

based on the superiority of parliament.¹⁴⁶ As the principal focus of the community of the realm, parliament was being used as a way of justifying, as well as legitimising, government through conciliar administration.

So far we have been talking specifically about the nobility, but the agenda that was implemented in 1386 also depended to a considerable extent on the support given to the nobles by the parliamentary Commons. In fact, J.J.N. Palmer has shown that many of the issues brought to a head in the Wonderful Parliament - particularly the concern over crown expenditure - had first arisen as a result of vigorous criticism by the Commons in the preceding assembly of 1385.¹⁴⁷ This explains why the Commons gave their full backing to the commission of government and, indeed, why they petitioned to have its lifetime extended beyond the single year which had initially been set.¹⁴⁸ Clearly, in 1386 the political community was acting in concert against the king's authority and in this context it is not at all implausible that some of the principles which have been discussed in terms of the nobility had also percolated downwards to include members of the Commons. Arguably, the idea that the true end of politics should be the promotion of the common good or common weal was not an exclusive political ideology but prevailed throughout the political community and especially amongst those who attended parliament as MPs and were used to dealing with issues of common concern. Challenging the authority of the crown could never have been an action taken lightly, particularly by the gentry class, but a general conviction in the preeminence of this principle would certainly have made the process easier. It was this which enabled the Commons to back measures against the king in 1386 and, ironically enough, it was perhaps this belief which explains why the Commons so rapidly withdrew their consent in 1388; by this time their enthusiasm for government reform had given way to widespread disillusionment and the conviction that the best interests of the kingdom would now be served by a monarch whose power and authority was restored.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Note Roskell's remarks on 1386: 'In this bitter and ferocious struggle for political control, the attempt was being made - and temporarily it was successful in an anti-royal sense - to determine an important question. This was not, indeed, whether king or parliament should be supreme...but rather which of two views of parliament should prevail, the king's conception or parliament's own conception of itself. In the royal view, parliament should be an instrument of government. In parliament's view, it should be an organ of control'; *The Commons and their Speakers in the English Parliament* (Manchester, 1984), p.131. See also the discussion by B. Wilkinson, 'The Deposition of Richard II and the Accession of Henry IV', E.H.R., liv (1939), 215-39, repr. in Fryde and Miller, eds., *Historical Studies*, i, pp.329-53, esp. pp.335-6.

¹⁴⁷ Palmer, 'The Parliament of 1385', pp.476-90.

¹⁴⁸ *RP*, iii. 221.20; Saul, *Richard II*, p.162.

¹⁴⁹ Tout, 'Parliament and Public Opinion', p.314; A. Tuck, 'The Cambridge Parliament, 1388', E.H.R., lxxxiv (1969), 225-43, pp.226-7; Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace', pp.132-5; Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility*, pp.134-7; Saul, *Richard II*, pp.199-200.

The partnership between the Commons and nobility in 1386 had a lasting impact on Richard II. In chapter 2, this was shown in the way that the king's attitude to parliament from 1389 onwards was characterised by a desire to assert his *regimen parliamenti*¹⁵⁰ so that the institution would never again provide the framework with which his political authority could be challenged. However, it can also be seen in the fact that the grudge Richard felt towards those who participated in the events between 1386 and 1388, centred specifically on the setting up of the commission of government; the very first act of the so-called 'Revenge Parliament' of September 1397, for example, was to annul the proceedings of the Wonderful Parliament of 1386 and, in particular, the '...commission encontre la regalie nostre seigneur le roy'.¹⁵¹ This, it should be stressed, was in preference to the blood-letting that had occurred as a result of the Merciless Parliament of 1388. In 1397, Richard also chose to revoke the pardons he had granted at the end of the Appellant rule but he did so by mentioning only those who had been involved in the commission of government, not the incidents of 1388.¹⁵² Finally, it is noticeable that the supposed confession of Thomas, duke of Gloucester, made no mention at all of his actions in the Merciless Parliament, but, again, concentrated on his involvement in the commission of government (in addition to his complicity in Richard's brief deposition in 1387).¹⁵³ Richard's concentration on the events of 1386 provides a very clear indication of the remarkable significance that the parliament of this year had for the late medieval constitution. This should be seen not only in terms of the more immediate threat which the proceedings of this assembly posed for the king, but also in terms of the broader questions the assembly raised about the potential for conciliar government through parliamentary consent.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has considered the interaction of people and ideas in the context of parliament. Two basic themes have emerged from the foregoing discussion. In the first place, it has been shown how attitudes towards parliament - as recorded in written evidence - could vary considerably according to the background of the author, the audience of his work

¹⁵⁰ This was the phrase used in question 6 of the points Richard II put to his judges in 1387; S.B. Chrimes, 'Richard II's Questions to the Judges, 1387', *L.Q.R.*, lxxii (1956), 365-90.

¹⁵¹ *RP*. iii. 350.a.

¹⁵² *RP*. iii. 350.12.

¹⁵³ *RP*. iii. 378-9. See also *Chronicles of the Revolution*, pp.78-83.

and possibly the views and interests of his patron. It has been shown, for example, that chroniclers tended to focus on the aristocratic, religious and to some extent, the 'local', aspects of parliament, at the expense of detailed accounts of the Commons, whilst contemporary poets preferred to concentrate on the Lower House and its responsibilities in the polity, at the expense of discussion about the Lords. Secondly, a consideration of the period between 1386 and 1388 has revealed how attitudes and ideas about parliament could shape the nature of the institution itself. Thus, it has been argued that the opposition to Richard II was, at least in part, inspired by a broad political ideology which emphasised that the promotion of the 'common weal' could find as much expression through parliament as it could by upholding the personal authority and power of the king. As such, it has been demonstrated that parliamentary proceedings could be shaped equally by high-minded political principles as they could by personal ambition and self-interest. This was a perspective on politics which was shared by both the Lords and the Commons in the late medieval parliament.

CONCLUSION

In a work which has consciously attempted to cover an extremely diffuse and multi-faceted subject it is not possible or practical to summarise all the elements that have been included in the foregoing discussion. Nevertheless, this thesis has been underpinned by two general assertions which, now that we have considered the late medieval parliament in depth, can be addressed more directly. The first was essentially a point about methodology. At the beginning of the thesis it was suggested that new historiographical methods and approaches have to be developed if we are to take the history of the late medieval parliament forward. In three principle areas this thesis has illustrated the possibilities arising from a new approach to the subject. In the first place, it has been demonstrated that a broad and inclusive investigation of parliament is not only feasible but serves an extremely valuable function by putting into perspective the different elements which shaped or comprised the institution. Clearly, the late medieval parliament was not just about the Commons, taxation or common petitions but concerned a whole plethora of other issues that affected political life at the centre as well as political life in the localities. Secondly, this thesis has shown the advantages to be gained from a thorough and detailed analysis of the contemporary records pertaining to the medieval parliament; the parliament rolls in particular have never before undergone a large-scale and systematic analysis and there is clearly much else to learn by exploiting them and other records more fully. Finally, this thesis has highlighted the benefits of approaching these sources from several different methodological standpoints; in addition to a more traditional reading of the official records, the foregoing discussion has drawn on prosopographical evidence, quantitative analysis and has also attempted a qualitative investigation of the 'unofficial' records of the late medieval parliament.

The second and more fundamental assertion underpinning this thesis was that there is an urgent need to re-establish the place of parliament in the medieval polity. This supposition derives from the relative neglect of the institution in the historiography of the past two or three decades, as well as from the calls of more recent historians for a 'new constitutional history' which excludes parliament and concentrates instead on the processes of law and the ideology of kingship and noble authority.¹ Whilst this study has not advocated a return of parliament to the very heart of the fourteenth- or fifteenth-century constitution -

¹ For references see Introduction, pp.15-18.

where whig tradition would place it - it has, nevertheless, sought to defend the basic point that institutional history is as relevant to the political experience of late medieval society as is the study of legal procedures or the political attitudes of the ruling élite. This study has sought to challenge directly the current trend to dismiss parliament as if, having had its heyday at the hands of 'constitutional' historians earlier this century and in the last, it is no longer considered appropriate or relevant to today's approach to medieval politics. In short, underlying the whole discussion has been the premise that parliament must be assimilated into future research if we are to have a fully rounded picture of politics in late medieval England.

Exactly what this place in politics was can be shown by addressing and refuting some of the more common assertions that have been made by way of justifying parliament's exclusion from mainstream medieval political history. One of the most common assertions to be made, and one which is designed perhaps to distance the medieval institution from its modern successor, is that the late medieval parliament was not strictly part of government - that it had no executive power and could wield no real authority in itself. This is a view that suffers from an overemphasis on the rôle of the Commons in the assembly, for without a doubt, the link between *them* and executive authority was tenuous indeed. This thesis, however, has sought to emphasise that the medieval parliament was not, in fact, a 'people's parliament' but was a royal institution serving first and foremost the interests and agenda of the king. If medieval government was about the exercise of royal authority there can be no question that parliament performed some vital functions on the behalf of the king in this respect. Taxation and legislation are the two most important and most obvious examples. It has been shown how both were firmly within the grip of the crown and how both, ultimately, catered to its needs. Thus, if the king called parliament in order to raise money, invariably he received it, and if he wished to enact legislation unilaterally, or if he wished to reject proposals by the Commons for legislation, there was nothing to stop him; this was the *king's* parliament. In addition, it should also be pointed out that petitioning in parliament facilitated the governance of the realm. It is worth remembering that petitioning had originally been conceived as a way for the crown to keep tabs on its authority in the localities; this thesis has highlighted how petitioning continued to provide an invaluable point of contact between the king and his subjects, in which the former could act on information provided by the latter if and when needed. In short, it is essential that parliament should be seen for what it was - not as some detached institution running alongside and in parallel to the crown but as an aspect or manifestation of the crown itself; it was, in essence, another department of royal government, albeit an irregular one, which not only served

government needs but was also, of course, attended by top-ranking government officials and bureaucrats in the Lords.

It has also been asserted, particularly in the 'new constitutional history', that the promotion of the 'common weal' was primarily the responsibility of the nobility and that parliament played only a peripheral rôle in representing the realm to the king. There is certainly much to be said for expanding the concept of representation in the medieval polity but in doing so we should be careful not to turn conventional wisdom on its head and ignore the fact that common petitions - which were articulated in the name of the community of the realm - continued to be presented in parliament in large numbers throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Nor should we overlook the firmly established contemporary view that, at least in the context of parliament, the Lords were not able to speak for the realm, but could represent only their own interests to the king; it was, after all, the Commons rather than the Lords who came to parliament invested with *plena potestas* to act on the behalf of the whole commonalty. The concept of representative government was undoubtedly central to medieval kingship and the nobility, some of whom had constant access to the person of the king, unquestionably performed a vital rôle in providing this advice and direction. But this does not, however, preclude the possibility that parliament also fulfilled an equally important function providing the crown with direct access to broad public opinion and grievances - information which was not necessarily available to the nobility.

Linked very closely with the concept of representation is the widely recognised principle that English kings were expected to rule with the consent of their subjects. Again, in the 'new constitutional history', the rôle of parliament in providing this consent is reduced to a bare minimum; since it is the nobility who are depicted as monopolising counsel, naturally it is only they who are considered to have co-operated with the king in the exercise of royal authority. One possible reason explaining this exclusion of parliament is the long-established notion that the assembly was an occasion for the king and nobility to *confront* the broader constituency of the realm; that parliamentary proceedings were dominated by conflict and acrimony, which left little room for broad-based political consensus. Most historians have spoken in these terms in the context of the hard bargaining that is said to have occurred between the crown and Commons over the supply of taxation and the redress of grievances; parliament is depicted as an occasion where terms were agreed to, conditions imposed and concessions made only begrudgingly and with reluctance. The confrontational aspect of parliament has also been reinforced by an overemphasis in historiography on so-called 'crisis

parliaments' which invariably stresses the tense and acrimonious atmosphere of the institution.

This thesis, whilst not denying that difficult negotiations between the crown and Commons occurred, or indeed, that at times there was serious disagreement and criticism, nevertheless has sought to re-establish the broad context in which parliament met; namely, that this was an occasion in which the political *community*, made up of the king, the Lords and the gentry and urban élites, came together to discuss issues which affected the realm as a whole. Such a gathering should not be characterised as a clash between the crown and the Commons, but as a remarkable manifestation of co-operation between them. Though the Commons could never be said to have limited the authority of the king, nevertheless, parliament did provide the framework in which the king's government was accessible, *and could be influenced by*, the involvement of the Lower House. To this extent parliament was every bit as central to the king's ruling with the consent of his subjects as were the nobility. It was, after all, in parliament that two of the most important facets of royal authority - the ability to raise taxation and the ability to make new laws - were transacted, and this was achieved not with the consent of the nobility but with the consent, and in reference to, the wishes of a much broader political community.

The idea that consensus, rather than conflict, represented the defining characteristic of the late medieval parliament has been shown the most effectively by a reassessment of the most notorious period of parliamentary conflict: the first years of Henry IV's reign. This first Lancastrian king looked to parliament for both political and financial support and on both counts he was not disappointed; parliament at this point was characterised by a broad consensus amongst the political community which focussed on the importance of keeping the king secure on the throne. Had Henry IV not enjoyed this approval or consent it is extremely unlikely that he would have received the generous taxation necessary to buttress the regime and if this had happened the regime itself would, in all probability, have collapsed - clearly, he was relying on more than just the consensus of his nobility for political survival. Henry IV's position as a usurper king, together with the depletion of his nobility, obviously produced special circumstances which thrust the Commons into an unusually prominent rôle in the polity, but the basic point stands for the period covered by this thesis as a whole; parliament was not an occasion for confrontation between the Upper and Lower Houses, but was a gathering of the political community whose collaboration with each other ensured that the king's authority was even more effectively upheld and implemented. This underlying convergence of interests gains an extra dimension if we take into account the findings of the

prosopographical survey in Appendix 1. This highlights the remarkable extent of integration - either through office-holding, connections with a magnate or membership of the royal affinity - in the political community that met at parliament.

This notion of the existence of a 'political community' extending beyond the limited ranks of the nobility brings us to yet another aspect of the 'new constitutional history' which emphasises that the true locus of politics in the late Middle Ages lay not at the centre but in the localities where the nobility and crown interacted with each other and the gentry. Recent calls for the detailed investigation of law and the use that was made of it by local landowners threatens to restrict our understanding of the political activity of contemporaries - and particularly the activity of the gentry - to a purely parochial context. However, the political experience of the knights of the shire, as highlighted by the prosopographical survey, indicates that these were men of affairs whose contacts with the crown and the nobility, as well as their administrative experience in the localities and at the centre, must inevitably have meant that their political perspective was *not* limited simply to the locality from which they came. Though it has been shown that not all common petitions necessarily concerned matters of common interest, nevertheless, there are sufficient examples to demonstrate the capability of the gentry to formulate common agendas and pursue common issues which pertained to the realm as a whole. Their concerns over the expenditure of the crown, for example, or the quality of counsel the king was receiving, or the state of the kingdom's defence, showed a sophisticated understanding that they did not just belong to local communities but were also members of a nation or a kingdom. It was this which explains why the crown was highly successful in gaining grants of taxation between 1369 and 1421. This was not indicative of the intrinsic political weakness of the Commons. Nor, indeed, was it indicative of their political naivety. Instead, it reflected, for the most part, their conviction that such financial exactions were necessary for the common good and well-being of the community of the realm. Likewise, when they criticised the crown for its handling of finances, this did not derive from an objection to the principle of parliamentary taxation, but from the belief that the subsidies they had granted in good faith were not actually being spent for the common interest. In short, throughout late-medieval England there were members of the gentry, as well as town dwellers, whose attendance of parliament was testimony to the fact that politics, and attitudes to politics, were *not* organised simply around litigation over land disputes or local power struggles, but also included an important national and *institutional* dimension.

Indeed, it was not simply those who attended parliament whose political outlook

extended to a broader context. We should remember that some of those common petitions which were not drafted by the Commons were the result of local communities who had deliberately framed their own petitions so that they appeared to pertain to a wider, common interest. It may well be that this was purely a device to increase the chances of a local grievance being resolved, but this is besides the point; these common petitions highlighted the fact that there was an awareness in the localities of the importance of the national dimension to the resolution of their own particular local problems. They also, incidentally, highlighted the value of parliament in focussing the self-identity of local people themselves and demonstrate that at least in one context, there really were 'county communities' in late medieval England.

One of the most exciting discoveries to arise out of the research for this thesis was the fact that *private* petitioning also remained very much a part of the business of parliament right through the period under investigation (and, indeed, beyond). Clearly, this is an area which deserves further detailed exploration but, on the basis of what has been shown already, it is quite clear that many individuals relied on parliament as a forum for the redress of private concerns when the legal structure in the localities and local lordship had failed them. The continued prevalence of private petitions underlines the point that parliament was not some distant institution operating at arm's length at the centre but had a relevance for, and was accessible to, a far greater proportion of the population - from the freeholders upwards - than has, arguably, been acknowledged in the past. This, of course, was in addition to the fact that the imposition of taxation and the implementation of legislation could have a significant impact on the broader population of the kingdom as a whole. In short, placing undue emphasis on the localities obscures the fact that, by any standards, late medieval England was a remarkably centralized state. Parliament, as a major conduit between the centre and the locality, played a critical rôle in this process of centralization. It was through parliament that the interests, concerns and hopes of local people could focus at the centre; it was also through parliament that the centre could directly influence and affect life in the locality.

The late medieval parliament was a constantly changing institution and, unlike its modern successor, its power and influence in the polity was in a permanent state of flux. We have seen that in the reigns of Richard II and Henry IV, as well as in the last years of Edward III, parliament was very much central to the 'high politics' of the period. Indeed, at one stage, under the commission of government in 1386, the influence of the assembly in the polity was even asserted above the will and personal authority of the king. Under Henry V, however, the institution faded from the limelight as the attention of the king and political community turned

to military exploits on the continent. It may well be, therefore, that in challenging certain aspects of the 'new constitutional history' - which is primarily located in the fifteenth century - we are, in fact, dealing with changing circumstances in different periods.

Assuming this to be the case, two final points can be made. Firstly, what was true of the mid to late fifteenth century, in terms of the prominence of parliament in the polity, was not necessarily true of the earlier part of the century or, indeed, of the fourteenth century as a whole. Our approach to institutional history should therefore be sensitive to the possibility that whilst, in one period, parliament may not have been particularly visible in 'high politics', in another, it may have been absolutely central. Secondly, and more fundamentally, even allowing for the fact that the importance of parliament in national affairs could diminish, the points that have been made in this conclusion stand no matter what period in the late Middle Ages we are dealing with. Thus, the basic functions that parliament fulfilled - as an expedient of royal authority, as a forum for representative and consensual government, and as a focus for the collective or individual interests and aspirations of the 'community of the realm' - remained intact whatever the state of affairs. In this sense, the late medieval parliament has an important and perfectly legitimate part to play in our considerations of the nature of the English polity throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

APPENDIX 1: PROSOPOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF KNIGHTS OF THE SHIRE, 1377 - 1421

METHODOLOGY

This appendix uses a prosopographical methodology in order to provide a breakdown of the political experience of knights of the shire who attended parliament between 1377 and 1421. In its broadest form, prosopography has been defined as ‘...the investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives’.¹ This can be further elaborated in two ways. Firstly, uncovering the details of an individual’s life is not an end in itself for prosopography but is the means to a greater end; namely uncovering the nature of the group or institution to which that individual was associated. Secondly, since it is the nature of the ‘group’, rather than the individual, which is the focus of interest in prosopography, only certain aspects of that individual’s life or career are deemed relevant for investigation and inclusion. The primary focus of this appendix is on the political activity of the knights of the shire and, to this end, the three main areas of an individual’s career which have been scrutinised are: membership of the royal affinity; extent of office-holding; and connections with important people.

The principal source for this appendix is the History of Parliament Trust volumes which cover the period from 1386 to 1421.² Inasmuch as they provide exhaustive biographical accounts of MPs’ careers and lives across a thirty-five year period, these volumes are a remarkable achievement and offer a substantial contribution to the material now available for the history of the late medieval parliament. Nevertheless, although some attempt was made in volume one to analyse this raw biographical information, there is still considerable scope for further synthesis and this, in essence, is the task that the following appendix undertakes. Regrettably, the History of Parliament volumes did not start at the beginning of Richard II’s reign and in an attempt to ‘complete’ the three reigns which are included in the appendix, I have undertaken my own selective biographical research on the knights of the shire between 1377

¹ L. Stone, *The Past and Present Revisited* (London, 1987), p.45. For other discussion of prosopographical methodology, see also J.E. Neale, ‘The Biographical Approach to History’, in *idem, Essays in Elizabethan History* (London, 1958), pp.225-38; G. Beech, ‘Prosopography’, in J. Powell, ed., *Medieval Studies, An Introduction: Second Edition* (Syracuse, 1992), pp.185-212.

² J.S. Roskell, L. Clark, and C. Rawcliffe, eds., *The House of Commons, 1386-1421*, History of Parliament Trust, 4 vols. (Stroud, 1993).

and 1385. For the most part this has been achieved either by exploiting the considerable number of unpublished theses that have investigated the representation of selected counties during Richard II's reign³ or, where these are not forthcoming, I have used various official printed material such as the Chancery Rolls and the Lists and Indexes Series. I have also referred to the records of the king's wardrobe and household (P.R.O. class mark E 101) to identify knights of the shire who were king's esquires between 1377 and 1385.

The appendix is intended to provide the reader with a quick and easy guide to the political composition of each parliament from 1377 to 1421. It is a conscious attempt to provide a survey of the membership of parliament, not on an individual or constituency basis, but in terms of the meeting of *all* the knights of the shire at any one parliament in this period. For the most part, if it is used in conjunction with the key, the appendix is self-explanatory, but there are three additional points that can be made from the outset by way of clarifying my methodology. Firstly, with the exception of the columns indicating whether a knight of the shire had been a sheriff, JP or escheator, together with one or two other exceptions specified in the key, the information given for each parliament represents the situation at that particular point in time. In other words, the appendix recognizes that careers developed and changed over the years and it therefore includes information only where there is reasonable certainty that it applied at the time of the parliament in question. If there is an element of doubt, an entry may be prefixed by a question mark. If the indications are that an aspect of a knight of the shire's career no longer applied, then it is omitted altogether. It should also be noted that the status of people sometimes changed; where this happens, especially in the context of the promotion of the nobility to higher titles, the appendix again records the correct title at the time of the parliament. Secondly, since space is a factor, and since my concern is specifically with the most notable political experience of the knights of the shire, rather than their total administrative experience, I have excluded from the appendix the appointments to the various *ad hoc* commissions in the localities as well as to commissions of array and appointments as tax-collectors. And thirdly, the column headed 'important connections' refers, in the main, to a knight's association with members of the nobility, including spiritual peers. It should be stressed that a 'connection' does not, in this context, imply membership of a magnate's affinity; the intention here is to demonstrate whether a knight of the shire was in any way associated, or had formal contacts, with a lord and, as such, the term 'connection' implies that a far broader and

³ These are listed under 'Unpublished Theses' in the Bibliography.

more inclusive set of criteria have been used. Furthermore, since there were some individuals who, without being members of the nobility, still carried a significant amount of political weight - either in the localities or at the centre - this column also includes men who did not possess a title.

Key to abbreviations and symbols

Note: this key provides a list of the less obvious abbreviations and symbols used in the following appendix - shortened first names and other easily identified abbreviations have not been included.

| | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| ~ | = | belted knight |
| PP | = | returned to the previous parliament (ie. re-elected) |
| N | = | parliamentary novice (ie. returned for the first time to parliament) |
| Roy. Affin. | = | member of the Royal affinity |
| Knt. Body | = | Knight of the Body |
| Knt. Chm. | = | Knight of the Chamber |
| Knt. Bach | = | Knight Bachelor |
| K's Knt | = | King's Knight at time of return to parliament |
| K's Esq. | = | King's Esquire |
| K's serg | = | King's sergeant-at-arms |
| annuity | = | in receipt of an annuity during parliament |
| Yeo of HH | = | Yeoman of the Household |
| SH | = | sheriff |
| ES | = | escheator (on first day of parliament) |
| PX | = | appointed as a sheriff/escheator in the past, <i>before</i> becoming a knight of the shire |
| P✓ | = | appointed as a sheriff/escheator in the past, having <i>first</i> been a knight of the shire |
| F | = | sheriff/escheator in the future |
| JP | = | justice of the peace (on first day of parliament) |
| £ | = | JP in the future |
| \$ | = | JP in the past, and possibly in the future |
| Name | = | (in bold) Speaker in parliament |
| <u>Name</u> | = | (underlined) Ex-Speaker |
| (Name) | = | (bracketed) signifies a former connection which has relevance to the current parliament. In most case this concerns dead noblemen such as the Lords Appellant in Henry IV's reign. Special cases however are (Bolingbroke) and (P of W) which indicates an association with Henry IV and Henry V, respectively, before they became king. |
| ? | = | information is probable, but not certain |
| e. | = | earl |
| d. | = | duke |

| | | |
|--------------|---|--|
| P of W | = | Prince of Wales |
| d of L | = | duchy of Lancaster |
| Archbp. | = | Archbishop |
| Bp. | = | Bishop |
| HH | = | household |
| M | = | Master |
| Const. | = | Constable of a royal (unless stated otherwise) castle |
| Stwd. | = | Steward of royal (unless stated otherwise) lands/lordship |
| Keeper | = | Keeper of a royal (unless otherwise stated) castle |
| Captain | = | Captain of a royal (unless otherwise stated) castle |
| Rec/Receiver | = | Receiver of a royal (unless otherwise stated) lordship/lands |
| Chamb. | = | Chamberlain |
| Council | = | Member of king's council |
| Ch. | = | Chief |
| Dep. | = | Deputy |
| Adm.' | = | Admiral |
| S | = | South |
| W | = | West |
| Jnt. | = | Joint |
| Ambassador | = | MP had been as Ambassador in the past |
| Lt. | = | Lieutenant |

Supplementary Key for the parliaments of Feb. 1388, Sept. 1388 and Sept. 1397.

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| W | = | assigned to administer in the localities the oath of loyalty in support of the Appellants, 20 March, 1388 (Sept. 1388 parliament only) |
| X | = | pardoned in 1397-8 for specific adherence to the Appellants |
| Y | = | commissioners to seize and survey the estates declared forfeit, 3 rd October 1397 (Sept. 1397 parliament only) |
| Z | = | named on parliamentary committee appointed 31 January 1398 (Sept. 1397 parliament only) |

Supplementary Key for the parliaments between 1401 and 1406

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A | = | knighted at Henry IV's coronation |
| B | = | appointed on the 'partisan' commission of May 1402, to stop treasonous rumours and make proclamation of the king's intention to govern well |
| C | = | active participation in suppressing rebellion |
| D | = | attendance of one or both of the Great Council Meetings of 1401 and 1403 |

PARLIAMENT of OCTOBER 1377

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------|----|---|-----------|----|----|----|--|---|
| BEDS. | Thomas Hoo~ | | | | PX | | | | Michael de la Pole~ |
| | Thomas Pever | * | | | F | £ | F | | Nigel Loring~ - d of L annuitant |
| BERKS. | John Foxle~ | | | | | JP | | | |
| | John Kentwood~ | | | annuity | | JP | | Steward, d of L from 1378 | (Black Prince) then R II |
| BUCKS. | John Aylesbury~ | | | | PX | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| | Thomas Sackville I~ | * | | | F | JP | | | |
| CAMBS. | Henry English | | | | F | \$ | F | | |
| | Roger Harleston | | | | PX | | | | |
| CORNW. | Richard Cergeaux~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | Nicholas Wangford | | | | F | | | | |
| CUMB. | Robert Moubray~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | |
| | Richard Sandes | * | | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | Alfed Sunny~ | | | | PX | JP | | Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Robert Twyford~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | John, earl of Pembroke |
| DEVON | Thomas de la Pomeray | * | | | F | | | | |
| | Martin Ferers | * | | | | JP | | | |
| DORSET | Edmund Fitzherbert~ | * | | | PX | \$ | | | William, earl of Salisbury/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | Edward Cerne~ | * | | | | | | | |
| ESSEX | Robert Marney~ | | | | | | £ | | Edward de la Pole |
| | John Bampton | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| GLOUCS. | John Thorp~ | | | K's Knt | F | £ | | Constable/Keeper of Forest/Controller of Customs | |
| | William Whitenton | * | | | | | | | |
| HERES. | Peter de la Mare~ | * | | | pX | £ | | | Edmund, of March |
| | Edmund Brugge~ | * | | | pX | \$ | PX | | |
| HERTS. | Nicholas Fitzsymond | * | | | | | | | Edmund, earl of March |
| | John Quenyld | * | | | | £ | | | Richard Burley~/William Lee~ |
| HUNTS. | William Moigne~ | | | | F | JP | | | |
| | John Waweton | | | | | \$ | | | Henry English/William Moigne~ |
| KENT | John Freningham | * | | | F | £ | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | James Peckham | | | | F | £ | | | |
| LANCS. | John Boteler~ | * | | | P✓ | £ | | Constable/Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Nicholas Haryngton | | | | F | £ | | ?Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | James Belers~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | William Flamville~ | * | | | F | £ | ES | | Anne, countess Pembroke |
| LINCS. | John Dymmok~ | | | | | JP | P✓ | | |
| | John Auncel | * | | | | JP | | | Alexander Neville, Archbishop of York |
| MIDDX. | John Saunford | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | Thomas Farndon | | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | Hamon Felton | * | | | | | | | |
| | John Mantel | * | | | P✓ | | | | |
| N'ANTS. | Thomas Preston~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | Richard Wydevill | | | | P✓ | | PX | | |
| N'UMB. | William de la Vale | | | | | | P✓ | | (Black Prince) |
| | William Heselryg | | | | | JP | | | |
| NOTTS | Simon Leek~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Thomas, Lord Furnival |
| | John Annesley~ | * | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| OX'SHIRE | Reginald Malyns~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | |
| | Robert Symeon | | | | | | | | |
| RUTLAND | Thomas Burton | | | | F | £ | | | William, Lord Latimer/?Michael de la Pole~ |
| | Lawrence Hauberck | * | | | | JP | | | Thomas Despenser |
| SALOP | John Ludlow~ | | | | F | | | | |
| | Robert Kendale~ | | | | | £ | | | |
| SOMERSET | Maurice With~ | * | | | | | | | |
| | Walter Bluet~ | | | | | | | | |
| S'HANTS | Maurice Bruyn~ | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | Ralph Norton~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | |
| STAFFS. | Nicholas Stafford~ | * | | | PX | JP | | attorney for earl of Stafford | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | Thomas Thomehorn~ | * | | | F | | | | |
| SUFFOLK | Richard Waldegrave | | | K's Knt | | £ | | | Princess Joan, king's mother/Guy, Lord Brian |
| | John Sutton | *? | | | | JP | | | Richard Waldegrave~/Michael de la Pole~ |
| SURREY | Nicholas Carew I | | | K's Esq | | JP | | (Keeper Privy Seal 1371-7) | Guy, Lord Brian |
| | John Kingsford | * | | | | £ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Walter Fitzwalter |
| SUSSEX | William Percy~ | * | | | F | JP | | | John of Gaunt/Ric. earl of Arundel/Rob. Lord Poynings |
| | Nicholas Wilcombe | * | | | PX | JP | | | Richard, earl of A/William Percy~ |
| WARWS. | Henry Arderne~ | * | | | | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | William Breton~ | | | | P✓ | | | | ?Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | James Pickering~ | | | | F | JP | F | | William Windsor~ |
| | Hugh Salkeld | * | | | | £ | F | | |
| WILTS. | Phillip Fitz Waryn | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | Nicholas Bonham | | | | | £ | | | |
| WORCS | Richard Fyton~ | | | | PX | \$ | | | |
| | John Beauchamp | * | | K's esq | | JP | | Keeper/Constable | |
| YORKS. | Robert Roos~ | * | | | | \$ | | | |
| | Robert Neville~ | * | | | F | £ | | | John of Gaunt/Michael de la Pole~ |

PARLIAMENT of 1378

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|---|---------|---|-------------------------------|---------|----------|----|---|--|
| BEDS. | Edward Butler~ Laurence Pabenhams~ | * | * | | | | | | Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich/Hugh Despenser~ Aylesbury (Black Prince) then R II |
| BERKS. | John Kentwood~ Thomas Langford | * | | K's knt | | JP £ | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | |
| BUCKS. | William Molyns Thomas Sackville I~ | * | * | | | | | | Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| CAMBS. | Roger Harleston John Sibile | * | * | | F PX | JP £ | F | | |
| CORNW. | John Kentwood~ John Beville | * | * | K's knt | | JP F | | | |
| CUMB. | Peter Tilliol~ Clement Skelton~ | * | * | | F | £ | F | Chief Forester | |
| DERBS. | Oliver Barton Ralph Stahum | * | * | | | \$ | | Constable/Stwd., d of L from 1379 | John of Gaunt |
| DEVON | John Beaumont~ William Bonville~ | * | * | | F | \$ | | | |
| DORSET | Ivo fitzwaryn~ Alan Cheny | * | * | | | £ | | | John, Lord Arundel |
| ESSEX | Thomas Symond~ Alexander Goldingham~ | * | * | | | £ | | | John of Gaunt ?Thomas, earl of Buckingham (Black Prince) |
| GLOUCS. | Peter Veel Edmund Bradeston~ | * | * | | PX | \$ | | ?Constable | |
| HERES. | Walter Deveros~ John Eylesford~ | * | * | K's Knt K's esq K's Knt | PX | JP JP | | | Edmund, earl of March/ <u>Peter de la Mare~</u> |
| HERTS. | Robert Turk~ John Quenyld | * | * | | F | \$ | | | Richard Burley~/ William Lee~ |
| HUNTS. | Robert Stokes~ Robert Lovetot | * | * | | | £ | | | William Moigne~/Nicholas Styvecle~ John of Gaunt |
| KENT | Thomas Fogg~ John Brokhill~ | * | * | | | | | Captain (1376-7) | |
| LANCS. | John Boteler~ Ralph Ipre~ | * | * | | P✓ | £ | | Constable/Steward, d of L Steward & Keeper, d of L | John of Gaunt John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | Edmund Appleby Thomas Erdington~ | * | * | | | JP | | | |
| LINCS. | William Bussy~ John Auncell | * | * | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | Alexander Neville, Archbishop of York |
| MIDDX. | Thomas Pynnore Thomas Brakenburgh | * | * | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | William Kerdeston Robert Salle | * | * | | PX | £ | | | William, earl of Suffolk William, Lord Latimer - John of Gaunt |
| N'ANTS. | Thomas Latymer~ John Seyton~ | * | * | K's esq | | £ | | Captain | John Cheyne John of Gaunt |
| N'UMB.? | John Fenwick Nicholas Raymes | * | * | | PX | £ | F | Keeper | |
| NOTTS | John Annesley~ William Neville~ | * | * | | | | | | John of Gaunt John of Gaunt |
| OX'SHIRE | John Herle Robert Symeon | * | * | | | £ | | | |
| RUTLAND | Walter Scarle Nicholas Morewood | * | * | | F | JP \$ | F | | John Asplion - chancery official |
| SALOP | Hugh Cheyne~ Edward Acton | * | * | K's esq | | £ | | Keeper | Edmund, earl of March Hugh, Lord Burnell |
| SOMERSET | Maurice With <u>Thomas Hungerford~</u> | * | * | | PX | JP £ | PX | Constable/Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| S'HANTS | Maurice Bruyn~ Phillip Popham~ | * | * | | | £ | | | |
| STAFFS. | Robert Swynerton~ John Hinkley | * | * | | | | | | John, Lord Holland/Hugh, earl of Stafford Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| SUFFOLK | Richard Waldegrave~ William Wingfield~ | * | * | K's Knt | | £ | | Steward of HH for earl of Stafford Keeper | Princess Joan, king's mother/Guy, Lord Brian (Black Prince)Michael de la Pole~ |
| SURREY | John Legge John Hathersham I | * | * | K's serg. | | £ | | | |
| SUSSEX | Edmund Fitzherbert~ John Cobham | *(Dors) | * | | PX | \$ | | | John, Lord Cobham William, earl of Salisbury/Richard, earl, earl of Arunde William Courtenay, Bishop of London/Ed. earl of Devon |
| WARWS. | Robert Stafford~ Thomas Birmingham~ | * | * | K's knt | | £ | | | |
| WESTM. | James Pickering~ John Louthre | * | * | | F | £ | F | | Thomas, earl of Warwick William Windsor~ |
| WILTS. | John Dauntsey~ Ralph Cheyne~ | * | * | | PX | £ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| WORCS. | Walter Cokesey~ John Russell~ | * | * | | | JP | | | Beauchamp connection |
| YORKS. | Ralph Hastings John Hothom | * | * | | PX | JP | | | |

PARLIAMENT of 1379

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------|----|---|-----------|----|----|----|-----------------------------------|---|
| BEDS. | William Mordaunt | * | | | | | | | |
| | Ralph Fitz Richard | * | | | F | £ | | | Braybrooke/Reynold, Lord Grey |
| BERKS. | Thomas de la Mare | * | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | Gilbert Shotesbrook | * | | | | £ | | | |
| BUCKS. | John Aylesbury~ | | | | PX | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| | Thomas Sackville~ | * | | | F | JP | | | |
| CAMBS. | John Brunne | * | | | | | | | |
| | John Sibile | * | | | | £ | F | | |
| CORNW. | Nicholas Wangford | | | | P✓ | | | | |
| | Thomas Peverel | * | | | F | JP | | | |
| CUMB. | John Derwentwater~ | | | | P✓ | £ | ES | | Roger, Lord Clifford/William, Lord Greystoke |
| | Thomas Whitrigg | * | | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | Alfred Sulny~ | | | | PX | \$ | | Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | John Curson | | | | | £ | F | | John of Gaunt |
| DEVON | John Beaumont | * | | | | \$ | | | |
| | William Bonville~ | * | | | F | \$ | | | |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ | | | | | JP | | | |
| | Roger Maningford | * | | | P✓ | JP | F | | |
| ESSEX | Robert Marney | | | | | £ | | | Edward de la Pole |
| | Robert Swynbourn | | | | F | £ | | | Walter Lord Fitzwalter/Ric Waldegrave~/John Doreward |
| GLOUCS. | Edmund Bradeston~ | * | | K's Knt | | | | | |
| | John Giffard | | | | | | | | |
| HERES. | Robert Whitney~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | |
| | Walter Deveros~ | * | | K's esq | PX | JP | | | |
| HERTS. | Walter Lee~ | | | Knt body | F | \$ | | | John of Gaunt |
| | John Westwycombe | | | | | \$ | | | Bohun family/?Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| HUNTS. | John Waweton | | | | | \$ | | | Henry English/William Moigne~ |
| | William Risceby | * | | | | | | | |
| KENT | Robert Passhale | | | | | | | | |
| | Ralph St. Leger | | | | F | | | | de Vere family |
| LANCS. | Nicholas Haryngton | | | | P✓ | £ | | Master Forester, d of L from 1380 | John of Gaunt |
| | Robert Urswyk~ | * | | | | £ | F | Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | Thomas Walsh~ | | | | | £ | | | John of Gaunt |
| | Roger Perwych~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | |
| LINCS. | Ralph Rocheford | * | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| | John Auncell | * | | | | JP | | | Alexander Neville, Archbishop of York |
| MIDDX. | John Peckbridge~ | | | | | | | | |
| | William Swanland | | | | | \$ | | | |
| NORFOLK | Edmund Thorp~ | | | | PX | | | | William, earl of Suffolk/Roger, Lord Scales |
| | Thomas Gissing~ | | | annuity | | £ | | | (Black Prince)/Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich |
| N'ANTS. | Thomas Preston~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | William Brantingham~ | * | | | | | | Avener of royal HH | Thomas Brantingham, Bishop of Exeter -treasurer |
| N'UMB. | John Heron | * | | | PX | | | | |
| | Alan Heton | * | | | | | | | |
| NOTTS | John Annesley~ | | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| | John Bekingham | | | | | | PX | | |
| OX'SHIRE | John Herle | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | Robert Symeon | * | | | | | | | |
| RUTLAND | John Hellwell | * | | | | | | | |
| | Lawrence Hauberck | | | | | JP | | | Thomas Despenser/?Richard, earl of Arundel |
| SALOP | Brian Cornwall | | | | P✓ | | | | |
| | Hugh Cheyne~ | * | | K's esq | | £ | | Keeper | Edm.und, earl of March |
| SOMERSET | John Burghersh~ | * | | | F | | | | |
| | John Radyngton | * | | | | | | | |
| S'HANTS | Maurice Bruyn | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | Ralph Norton~ | | | | PX | £ | | | |
| STAFFS. | Nicholas Stafford~ | | | | PX | JP | | attorney for earl of Stafford | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | John Knightley | | | | | £ | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| SUFFOLK | John Tuddenham | * | | | F | £ | | | Roger, Lord Scales/William, Earl of Suffolk |
| | Andrew Cavendish | | | | F | £ | | | William, Lord Latimer/Richard Lyons |
| SURREY | John Olyver | * | | | | JP | F | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | John Uvedale | * | | | | £ | | | Ric. e of Arundel/Will. Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| SUSSEX | William Percy~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Robert, Lord Poynings |
| | Edward Dallingridge~ | * | | | | £ | | | John of Gaunt/Ric. earl of Arundel/Ed. Lord Despenser |
| WARWS. | Thomas Birmingham~ | * | | | F | £ | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | John Wyard | * | | | | | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | John Louthe | * | | | | | | | |
| | James Pickering~ | * | | | F | JP | F | | William Windsor~ |
| WILTS. | Thomas Hungerford~ | * | | | PX | JP | PX | Constable/Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | John Dauntsey~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| WORCS. | John Russell~ | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | William Wasteneys~ | * | | | | £ | | | |
| YORKS. | John Bigod | * | | | PX | £ | PX | | |
| | John Constable~ | * | | | F | JP | | | |

PARLIAMENT of JANUARY 1380

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|-----------------------|---------|---|-----------|----|----|----|--|---|
| BEDS. | Thomas Pever | | | | P✓ | £ | F | | Nigel Loring~ d of L annuitant |
| | William Terrington | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| BERKS. | John James | * | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | Richard Brouns | * | | | F | £ | | | Wm Wykeham Bp. Win./Ric. Adderbury II~/Hu Segrave |
| BUCKS. | John Birmingham~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| | Robert Luton~ | * | | | | £ | | | |
| CAMBS. | Roger Harleston | | | | PX | | | | |
| | John Sibile | * | | | | £ | F | | |
| CORNW. | William Talbot | * | | | F | £ | F | | |
| | John Beville | | | | F | JP | | | |
| CUMB. | Robert Moubray~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | |
| | William Curwen~ | * | | | F | | | ?Constable | |
| DERBS. | Thomas Marchington~ | * | | | | | | | ?John of Gaunt |
| | Ralph Brayelesford~ | * | | | | £ | F | | John of Gaunt |
| DEVON | John Beaumont | * | | | | \$ | | | |
| | John Daumarle | * | | | PX | £ | | | |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ | * | | | | | JP | | |
| | John Frompton | * | | | | | | | |
| ESSEX | John Gildesburgh~ | * | | | | | \$ | | Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| | Richard Lyons | * | | | PX | | | | |
| GLOUCS. | Maurice Wythe | *(Soms) | | | | | | | |
| | John Thorp~ | | | K's Knt | F | JP | | Constable/Keeper of Forest/Controller of Customs | |
| HERES. | Peter de la Mare~ | | | | PX | | | | Edmund, earl of March |
| | Robert Whitney~ | * | | | P✓ | £ | | | |
| HERTS. | Walter Lee~ | * | | Knt body | F | \$ | | | John of Gaunt |
| | John Henxstworth | | | | PX | \$ | | | (Black Prince) |
| HUNTS. | John Waweton | * | | | | \$ | | | Henry English/William Moigne~ |
| | Robert Waryn | | | | | \$ | | | John Styvecle/William Moigne~/Thomas Dengaine~ |
| KENT | William Septvaus~ | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| | Nicholas atte Crouche | * | | | PX | | | | |
| LANCS. | John Boteler~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | Constable/Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Thomas Southworth~ | * | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | John Fauconer~ | * | | | | | | | |
| | John Burdet~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | ?Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| LINCS. | William Bussy~ | | | | P✓ | | P✓ | | |
| | John Boys | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| MIDDX. | Nicholas Exton | | | | F | £ | | | |
| | John Shoreditch I | | | | | JP | | | |
| NORFOLK | Stephen Hales~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | £ | | | (Black Prince) |
| | Roger Welsham~ | | | | | £ | | Deputy Constable | Edmund, earl of Cambridge |
| N'ANTS. | Simon Warde | * | | | P✓ | JP | PX | | |
| | John Tyndale | * | | | F | JP | PX | Forester of bailiwick | William, Lord Zouche/William Thorpe~ |
| N'UMB. | William de la Vale | | | | | | P✓ | | |
| | Walter Swynhowe | * | | | | £ | | | |
| NOTTS | Sampson Strelley~ | | | | PX | £ | | | |
| | Robert Morton I | | | K's esq | P✓ | | | Receiver, d of L | John of Gaunt/Alexander Neville, Archbishop of York |
| OX'SHIRE | Reginald Malyns | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | Edmund Stonore | * | | | PX | \$ | | | |
| RUTLAND | Thomas Burton | | | | P✓ | JP | | | William, Lord Latimer/Michael de la Pole~ |
| | Walter Scarle | | | | F | JP | F | | John Asplion - chancery official |
| SALOP | Richard Peshale~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | |
| | Thomas Newport | * | | | F | JP | | | |
| SOMERSET | John Meriet | * | | | | | | | |
| | John Thomere | * | | | | £ | | | |
| S'HANTS | Bernard Brocas~ | | | K's Knt | F | £ | | Keeper/M. King's hounds/Ambassador | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| | Maurice Bruyn | * | | | | £ | | | |
| STAFFS. | Nicholas Stafford~ | * | | | PX | JP | | attorney for earl of Stafford | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | Thomas Aston~ | * | | | F | £ | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| SUFFOLK | John Shardelowe~ | | | | | JP | | | Roger, Lord Scales/William, earl of Suffolk |
| | John Ulveston~ | | | | F | JP | P✓ | | Will. earl of Suffolk/Will. Wingfield~/Ric. Waldegrave- |
| SURREY | John Uvedale | * | | | | £ | | | Ric. e.of Arundel/Will. Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| | John Cobham | *(Sus) | | K's knt | | £ | | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| SUSSEX | Edward Dallingridge~ | * | | | | £ | | | John of Gaunt/Ric. earl of Arundel/Ed. Lord Despenser |
| | William Percy~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Robert, Lord Poynings |
| WARWS. | Henry Arderne~ | | | | | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | John Rous | * | | K's Serg | | £ | PX | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | William Threlkeld~ | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | John Louthe | * | | | | | | | |
| WILTS. | Thomas Hungerford~ | *(Soms) | | | PX | JP | PX | Constable/Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Laurence St. Martin~ | * | | | F | | | | |
| WORCS. | John Wood~ | | | ?K's esq | F | JP | PX | Constable | John Beachamp~ |
| | John Beauchamp | | | K's esq | | JP | | Keeper/Constable | |
| YORKS. | Ralph Hastings~ | | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | Robert Roos~ | | | | | \$ | | | |

PARLIAMENT of NOVEMBER 1380

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|---------------------------|-----------|---|-----------|----|----|-----|---|--|
| BEDS. | William Terrington | * | | ?annuity | F | £ | | ?royal servitor | |
| | Ralph Walton | * | | | | | | | Thomas, earl of Buckingham/Braybrooke family |
| BERKS. | Thomas Langeford | | | | | £ | | | |
| | Gilbert Shotesbrook | | | | | JP | | | |
| BUCKS. | John Aylesbury~ | | | | PX | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| | Thomas Sakeville~ | | | | F | JP | | | |
| CAMBS. | John Sibile | * | | | | JP | F | | |
| | - | | | | | | | | |
| CORNW. | Warren Archdeacon | * | | | | F | | | |
| | John Kentwood~ | | | K's knt | | JP | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | (Black Prince) then R II |
| CUMB. | Peter Tilliol~ | | | | F | JP | F | Chief Forester/Keeper of West March of Scotland | |
| | William Huton | * | | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | Oliver Barton | | | | | JP | | Constable/Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | William Sallowe | * | | | PX | £ | F | | |
| DEVON | William Bonville~ | ? | | | F | JP | | | |
| | John Daumarle | * | | | PX | JP | | | |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | Roger Maningford | | | | P✓ | JP | F | | |
| ESSEX | Robert Marney | | | | | JP | | | Edward de la Pole/Thomas Swinburne~ |
| | John Gildesburgh~ | * | | | | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Berkeley | * | | | | F | | | ?John of Gaunt |
| | William Heyberer | * | | | | JP | | Surveyor of Works, Glouc. Castle | |
| HERES. | <u>Peter de la Mare~</u> | * | | | PX | £ | | | Edmund, earl of March |
| | John Eylesford~ | | | K's Knt | | JP | | | Edmund, earl of March/ <u>Peter de la Mare~</u> |
| HERTS. | Walter Lee~ | * | | Knt body | F | \$ | | | John of Gaunt |
| | John Quenyld | | | | | \$ | | | Richard Burley~/William Lee~ |
| HUNTS. | Robert Stokes~ | | | | | | | | |
| | William Risceby | | | | | | | | |
| KENT | Thomas Fogg~ | | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| | William Guildford | | | | F | £ | | | |
| LANCS. | John Boteler~ | * | | | P✓ | £ | | Constable/Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Thomas Southworth~ | * | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | Thomas Walsh~ | | | | | £ | P✓ | | John of Gaunt |
| | Laurence Hauberk~ | | | | | \$ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Thomas Despenser |
| LINCS. | William Spain | * | | | | JP | | Feodary & Purveyor, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | - | | | | | | | | |
| MIDDX. | Adam Francis~ | * | | | | F | £ | | |
| | Baldwin Radington | * | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | Edmund Thorp~ | | | | | PX | | | William, earl of Suffolk/Rogers, Lord Scales |
| | Thomas Gissing~ | | | annuity | | £ | | | (Black Prince)/Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich |
| N'ANTS. | Thomas Preston~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | Warren Lucien | * | | | | F | | | ?John Trussell/Giles Malory |
| N'UMB. | Adam Dassels | * | | | | F | | | |
| | Ralph Euer~ | * | | | | F | £ | Ambassador | Henry, earl of Northumberland/?John of Gaunt |
| NOTTS | John Gateford | | | ?K's serg | F | JP | | | Furnivall family |
| | Robert Basely | * | | | | | | | John Neville, Lord of Raby |
| OX'SHIRE | John Herle | | | | | | £ | | |
| | John Harrowden | * | | | | F | ? F | | |
| RUTLAND | John Wittlebury | | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | William Morewood | * | | | | F | £ | | ?John of Gaunt |
| SALOP | Peter Careswell | * | | | PX | \$ | | | |
| | Thomas Young I | * | | | | | £ | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Marshal | | | | | | | | |
| | Roger Dore | * | | | | | | | |
| S'HANTS | Bernard Brocas~ | * | | K's Knt | F | JP | | Keeper/M. King's Hounds/Ambassador | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| | John Hay | * | | | | | £ | | |
| STAFFS. | Adam Peshale | | | | | F | £ | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | William Walsale | | | | P✓ | £ | ES | | 'royal placemen' |
| SUFFOLK | Edmund Hederset~ | * | | | | | | | William, earl of Suffolk/assoc. With de la Pole family |
| | Thomas Bergham | * | | | | | | | |
| SURREY | William Weston I | * | | Esq body | F | £ | F | | John Legge - Sergeant at arms |
| | John Redinghersh | * | | | | | | | |
| SUSSEX | Edward Dallingridge~ | * | | | | | JP | | John of Gaunt/Ric. earl of Arundel/Ed. Lord Despenser |
| | William Waleys | * | | | | F | | | John of Gaunt/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| WARWS. | John Birmingham | *(Bucks.) | | | | P✓ | \$ | | |
| | Robert Stafford~ | | | | | | \$ | | |
| WESTM. | Walter Strickland~ | * | | | | | £ | F | William Windsor~ |
| | Thomas Warthcop | | | | | F | | | |
| WILTS. | <u>Thomas Hungerford~</u> | * | | | PX | JP | PX | Constable/Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Nicholas Bonham | | | | | JP | | | |
| WORCS. | John Wood~ | * | | ?K's esq | F | JP | PX | Constable | |
| | John Beauchamp | * | | K's esq | | JP | | Keeper/Constable | |
| YORKS. | John Constable | | | | | F | JP | | |
| | Robert Neville~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | John of Gaunt/Michael de la Pole~ |

PARLIAMENT of 1381

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|---|----|---|---------------------|----|----------|----|--|--|
| BEDS. | John Trailly~ Edward Butler~ | | | K's Knt | | | | | Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich/Hugh Despenser~ |
| BERKS. | Thomas de la Mare John Cifrewast | | * | | PX | JP | | | |
| BUCKS. | John Aylesbury~ John Cheyne~ | * | | K's knt | PX | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| CAMBS. | William Papworth~ Simon Burgh | | * | K's Esq. | PX | JP | F | | Thomas Sackville I~ Thomas, Lord Morley |
| CORNW. | Richard Cergeaux~ John Kentwood~ | | * | K's knt | PX | JP | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury Richard, earl of Arundel (Black Prince), then R II/John of Gaunt/ de Bohun |
| CUMB. | Gilbert Culwen John Denton | | | | PX | \$ | PX | | |
| DERBS. | Robert Twyford~ Thomas Marchington~ | | | | PX | \$ | PX | | John, earl of Pembroke ?John of Gaunt |
| DEVON | William Bonville~ James Chudleigh~ | * | * | | F | JP | | | |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ John Mautravers | * | * | | PX | \$ | F | Steward for earl of Buckingham | Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| ESSEX | John Sutton Thomas Maundeville | | * | | | JP | | | Richard Waldegrave~/Michael de la Pole~ John of Gaunt/Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| GLOUCS. | John Thorp~ Peter Veel | | | K's Knt | PX | JP | | Constable/Keeper of Forest/Controller of Customs ?Constable | (Black Prince) |
| HERES. | Walter Deveros~ Ralph Lingeyn~ | | * | K's esq | PX | JP | | | |
| HERTS. | Walter Lee~ Thomas Morwell | * | * | Knt body K's esq | F | \$ JP | | | John of Gaunt duchess of Brittany - king's sister |
| HUNTS. | William Moigne~ John Waweton | | | | PX | JP | | | Henry English/William Moigne~ John of Gaunt |
| KENT | Thomas Fogg~ John Freningham | * | | | | \$ JP | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| LANCS. | William Atherton~ Robert Urswyk~ | | * | | PX | \$ | | | John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | William Flamville~ Thomas Walsh~ | | * | | PX | JP | PX | Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| LINCS. | John Toutheby~ Robert Leek~ | | * | | | \$ | | | Alexander Neville, Archbishop of York |
| MIDDX. | John Shoreditch I Thomas Charleton I | | * | | | JP | | | |
| NORFOLK | Stephen Hales~ Thomas Gerberge | | * | K's Knt | PX | JP | | | (Black Prince) Edmund, earl of Cambridge |
| N'ANTS. | Edgar St. John~ Nicholas Lilling~ | | * | | F | \$ | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| N'UMB. | Adam Dassels Ralph Euer~ | * | * | | F | \$ | | Ambassador | Henry, earl of Northumberland/? John of Gaunt |
| NOTTS | Simon Leek~ Thomas Rempston I~ | | * | | PX | \$ | | | Thomas, Lord Furnivall John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| OX'SHIRE | John Herle Thomas Blount | | * | | | \$ | | | |
| RUTLAND | Thomas Burton~ John Wittlebury | | * | | PX | \$ | | | (William, Lord Latimer)/Michael de la Pole~ |
| SALOP | Brian Cornwall~ Robert Kendale~ | | | | PX | \$ | | | |
| SOMERSET | Peter Courtenay~ Maurice With | | * | | | \$ | | | |
| S'HANTS | Thomas Worting~ John Sandys~ | | * | annuity | | \$ | | | |
| STAFFS. | Adam Peshale~ John Basset~ | * | * | | PX | \$ | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| SUFFOLK | Richard Waldegrave~ William Wingfield~ | | | K's Knt | | \$ | | Keeper | Princess Joan, king's mother/Guy, Lord Brian (Black Prince)/Michael de la Pole~ |
| SURREY | Robert Loxley I John Hathersham I | | | | PX | JP | ES | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester John, Lord Cobham |
| SUSSEX | Edmund Fitzherbert~ Edward Dallingridge~ | | * | | PX | \$ | | Master Forester, d of L | William, earl of Salisbury/Richard, earl of Arundel Richard, earl of Arundel/Edward, Lord Despenser |
| WARWS. | John Birmingham John Peyto~ | | * | | PX | \$ | | | John of Gaunt |
| WESTM. | William Threlkeld~ Hugh Salkeld | | | | | \$ | | | |
| WILTS. | John Dauntsey~ John Roches~ | | * | K's Knt | PX | \$ | | Jnt. Warden of forest/Ambassador/Surveyor of forest Steward for earl of Warwick | Richard, earl of Arundel Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| WORCS. | Henry Arderne~ John Sapy | | | | | \$ | | | |
| YORKS. | Robert Neville~ John Bigod~ | * | | | PX | \$ | PX | | John of Gaunt/Michael de la Pole~ |

PARLIAMENT of MAY 1382

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------------|----|---|-----------|----|----|----|--|---|
| BEDS. | Thomas Pever | | | | P✓ | £ | P✓ | | Nicholas Loring~ - d of L annuitant |
| | William Terrington | | | ?annuity | F | £ | | ?royal servitor | |
| BERKS. | Thomas de la Mare | * | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | Roger Curson | | * | | | JP | | | |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Sackville I~ | | * | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | John Tiringham | | * | | | JP | | | |
| CAMBS. | William Papworth~ | * | | | PX | JP | F | | Aylesburys/Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin |
| | Simon Burgh | * | | K's esq. | | £ | | | Thomas, Lord Morely |
| CORNW. | Warren Archdeacon | | | | F | | | | William Courtenay, Archbishop of Canterbury |
| | Richard Cergeaux~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| CUMB. | Richard Salkeld | | * | | | | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | John Dalmore | | * | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | Thomas Marchington | * | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| | Phillip Okore~ | | * | | | £ | | | John of Gaunt/Hugh Calverly~/Reg. Lord Grey of Ruthin |
| DEVON | William Bonville~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | James Chudleigh~ | * | | | PX | JP | F | | |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | John Mautravers | * | | | | JP | | | |
| ESSEX | William Berland | | * | | | JP | | | |
| | Alexander Goldingham | | * | | | JP | | | Aubrey de Vere/de Bohun interest |
| GLOUCS. | John Thorp~ | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Constable/Keeper of Forest/Controller of Customs | ?John of Gaunt |
| | Peter Veel | * | | | PX | \$ | | ?Constable | (Black Prince) |
| HERES. | Walter Deveros | * | | K's esq | PX | JP | | | |
| | <u>Peter de la Mare~</u> | | | | PX | JP | | | Roger, earl of March |
| HERTS. | Robert Turk~ | | * | | F | JP | | | |
| | John Thornbury~ | | * | | F | £ | | | John of Gaunt |
| HUNTS. | William Moigne~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | Robert Beville | | * | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| KENT | Thomas Colepepir~ | | * | | F | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Cobham~ | | * | | P✓ | | | | John, Lord Cobham |
| LANCS. | Roger Pilkington | | * | | | \$ | | | John of Gaunt |
| | Robert Clifton | | * | | | | | | |
| LEICS. | William Flamville~ | * | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | |
| | Thomas Walsh~ | * | | | | JP | P✓ | | John of Gaunt |
| LINCS. | John Toutheby~ | * | | | | JP | | | Alexander Neville, Archbishop of York |
| | William Airmyn | | * | | | | | | |
| MIDDX. | John Saunford | | * | | | \$ | | | |
| | William Barnville | | * | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | Stephen Hales~ | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | (Black Prince) |
| | Thomas Gerberge~ | * | | | | JP | | | Edmund, earl of Cambridge |
| N'ANTS. | Nicholas Lilling~ | * | | | F | £ | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | Edgar St. John~ | * | | | | | | | |
| N'UMB. | David Holgrave | | * | K's esq | | | | | |
| | Robert Clifford | | * | | F | \$ | F | | brother, Richard Clifford is Master of King's chapel |
| NOTTS | Sampson Strelley~ | | * | | PX | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Rempston I~ | * | | | F | | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| OX'SHIRE | John Herle | | * | | | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Blount | | * | | | | | | |
| RUTLAND | John Daneys~ | | * | | | JP | | | |
| | William Morewood | | * | | PX | \$ | | | ?John of Gaunt |
| SALOP | Brian Cornwall~ | * | | | P✓ | £ | | | |
| | Robert Kendale~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| SOMERSET | Peter Courtenay~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | <u>Thomas Hungerford~</u> | | * | | PX | JP | PX | Constable/Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| S'HANTS | Thomas Worting~ | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | John Sandys~ | * | | annuity | F | £ | | | |
| STAFFS. | Thomas Thomehorn~ | | * | | P✓ | | | | |
| | Thomas Stafford~ | | * | | | \$ | | | |
| SUFFOLK | <u>Richard Waldegrave~</u> | * | | K's Knt | | £ | | Keeper | Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich |
| | William Wingfield~ | * | | | | JP | | | Princess Joan, king's mother/Guy, Lord Brian |
| SURREY | Robert Loxley I | * | | | PX | JP | ES | | Michael de la Pole~/John of Gaunt |
| | John Hathersham I | * | | | P✓ | £ | | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| SUSSEX | Edmund Fitzherbert~ | * | | | PX | \$ | | | John, Lord Cobham |
| | Edward Dallingridge~ | * | | | | JP | | Master Forester, d of L | William, earl of Salisbury/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| WARWS. | John Peyto~ | * | | | | \$ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Edward, Lord Despenser |
| | William Spemore | | * | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| WESTM. | John Preston | | * | | | \$ | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | John Crackenthorpe | | * | | | | F | | |
| WILTS. | John Dauntsey~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | John Roches~ | * | | K's Knt | F | £ | | Adm. S & W/Keeper/Jnt Warden of forests/Ambassador/Surveyor of forests | |
| WORCS. | Richard Fyton~ | * | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | John Sapy~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| YORKS. | William Percy | | * | | P✓ | | | | |
| | Robert Neville~ | * | | | P✓ | £ | | | John of Gaunt/Michael de la Pole~ |

PARLIAMENT of OCTOBER 1382

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------------|----|---|-----------|----|----|----|---|--|
| BEDS. | Thomas Pever | * | | | P/ | £ | P/ | | Nigel Loring~ - d of L annuitant |
| | William Terrington | * | | ?annuity | F | £ | | | |
| BERKS. | Robert Bullok | * | | | F | | | | |
| | Thomas Farringdon | * | | K's esq | F | | | | |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Sackville I~ | * | | | P/ | JP | | | |
| | John Broughton | * | | | P/ | | PX | | |
| CAMBS. | George Muschet~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | - | | | | | | | | |
| CORNW. | Warren Archdeacon~ | * | | | F | | | | |
| | Richard Cergeaux~ | * | | | P/ | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| CUMB. | Clement Skelton~ | | | | | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Bowet | * | | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | Thomas Wensley~ | * | | | | | £ | | John of Gaunt/ d of L affinity |
| | John Curson | | | | | | £ | F | John of Gaunt |
| DEVON | William Bonville~ | * | | | P/ | JP | | | |
| | Alexander Merle | * | | | | | | | |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | John Mautravers | * | | | | JP | | | |
| ESSEX | Robert Swynbourn | | | | F | £ | | | Walter Lord Fitzwalter/Ric Waldegrave~/John Doreward |
| | Robert Marney | | | | | \$ | | | Edward de la Pole/Thomas Swinburne~ |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Fitznichol~ | * | | | F | | | | |
| | Laurence Sebrooke~ | * | | | F | £ | | | John Beauchamp~ - Knt of the HH |
| HERES. | Walter Deveros | * | | K's esq | PX | JP | | | |
| | <u>Peter de la Mare~</u> | * | | | PX | JP | | | Roger, earl of March |
| HERTS. | Robert Turk~ | * | | | F | JP | | | |
| | John Thornbury~ | * | | | F | £ | | | John of Gaunt |
| HUNTS. | William Moigne~ | * | | | P/ | JP | | | |
| | William Lovetot | | | | | £ | | | William Moigne~ |
| KENT | John Colepepir | * | | | P/ | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Brockhill | * | | | F | £ | | Captain | |
| LANCS. | John Assheton~ | * | | | | £ | | | John of Gaunt |
| | Robert Urswyk~ | | | | | £ | F | Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | John Neville~ | * | | | | | | | Ralph, Lord Basset of Drayton |
| | Roger Perwych~ | | | | PX | \$ | | | John of Gaunt |
| LINCS. | Robert Leek | | | | | JP | | | |
| | William Spain | | | | | JP | | Feodary & Purveyor, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| MIDDX. | Adam Francis~ | | | | F | £ | | | |
| | John Wroth | | | | | JP | | | |
| NORFOLK | Stephen Hales~ | * | | K's Knt | P/ | JP | | | (Black Prince) |
| | Roger Welsham~ | | | | | JP | | ?Deputy Constable | Edmund, earl of Cambridge |
| N'ANTS. | John Wydville | * | | | PX | £ | PX | | |
| | John Tyndale | | | | F | JP | PX | Forester of bailiwick | William, Lord Zouche/William Thorpe~ |
| N'UMB. | Robert Clifford | * | | | F | \$ | F | | brother, Richard Clifford is Master of king's chapel |
| | Walter Heron | * | | | | | | | |
| NOTTS | Simon Leek~ | | | | P/ | \$ | | | Thomas, Lord Furnival |
| | John Burton~ | | | | | | | Verderer, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| OX'SHIRE | Gilbert Wace~ | | | | PX | JP | P/ | | (Black Prince)/Princess Joan, king's mother |
| | Roger Cheyne | * | | K's esq | | | | | |
| RUTLAND | John Daneys~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | William Flore | * | | | F | £ | | Controller of forest/Receiver | |
| SALOP | Peter Careswall~ | | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | Edward Acton | | | | F | £ | F | | Hugh, Lord Burnell |
| SOMERSET | Edgar Daubeneye | * | | | | | | | |
| | John de la Mare~ | | | | P/ | JP | | | |
| S'HANTS | Maurice Bruyn | | | | | JP | | | |
| | John Sandys~ | * | | annuity | F | £ | | | |
| STAFFS. | Richard Peshale~ | * | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | John Knightley | | | | | \$ | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| SUFFOLK | <u>Richard Waldegrave~</u> | * | | K's Knt | | £ | | Keeper | Princess Joan, king's mother/Guy, Lord Brian |
| | William Wingfield~ | * | | | | JP | | | Michael de la Pole~ |
| SURREY | Thomas Salman~ | * | | | | | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Thomas Arundel, Bp of Norwich |
| | Robert Loxley I | * | | | PX | JP | ES | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| SUSSEX | Edmund Fitzherbert~ | * | | | PX | \$ | | | William, earl of Salisbury/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | William Waleys | | | | F | | | | John of Gaunt/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| WARWS. | Robert Stafford~ | | | | | £ | | | |
| | John Eynesford~ | | | K's Knt | | JP | | | (Edmund, earl of March)/ <u>Peter de la Mare~</u> |
| WESTM. | <u>James Pickering~</u> | * | | | F | \$ | P/ | | William Windsor~ |
| | John Kirby~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| WILTS. | John Dauntsey~ | * | | | PX | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | John Roches~ | * | | K's Knt | F | £ | | Adm. S & W/Keeper./Jnt Warden of forest/Ambassador/Surveyor of forest | |
| WORCS. | John Sapy~ | * | | | P/ | JP | | | |
| | Alexander Besford | * | | | | £ | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | John Saville~ | * | | | P/ | \$ | PX | | John of Gaunt/(Black Prince) |
| | John St. Quintin~ | * | | | | £ | | Keeper | ?John of Gaunt |

PARLIAMENT of FEBRUARY 1383

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------------|----|---|---------------|----|-----|----|---|--|
| BEDS. | William Terrington | * | | ?annuity | F | £ | | ?royal servitor | |
| | Robert Digswell | | * | | F | | | | Reynold, Lord Grey |
| BERKS. | Thomas de la Mare | | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | William Golafre | | * | | F | | | | Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| BUCKS. | Edmund de la Pole~ | | | | F | £ | | | Michael de la Pole~ |
| | Thomas Sackville I~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| CAMBS. | George Muschet~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | John Andrew | | * | | | | | | |
| CORNW. | Richard Cergeaux~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | Michael Archdeacon | | * | | | | | | |
| CUMB. | Clement Skelton~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | John Dalston | | * | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | Thomas Marchington~ | | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| | Ralph Braylesford~ | | | | JP | P✓ | | | John of Gaunt |
| DEVON | Phillip Courtnay~ | | * | K's Knt | JP | | | Lieutenant of Ireland | Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich |
| | Ivo Fitzwaryn~ | | | | | | | Keeper | ?Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | John Mautravers | * | | | | JP | | | |
| ESSEX | <u>John Gildesburgh~</u> | | | | | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| | William Berland | | | | | JP | | | Aubrey de Vere/de Bohun interest |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Fitznichol~ | * | | | P✓ | | | | |
| | Ralph Waleys | | * | | PX | JP | PX | | Thomas Berkley, Lord Berkley |
| HERES. | John Eynesford~ | | * | (Warw)K's Knt | | JP | | | Roger, earl of March/ <u>Peter de la Mare~</u> |
| | <u>Peter de la Mare~</u> | * | | | PX | JP | | | Roger, earl of March |
| HERTS. | Robert Louthe | | * | | | \$ | | Keeper | Princess Joan, k's mother/John of Gaunt |
| | John Westwycombe | | | | | JP | | | Bohun/?Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| HUNTS. | Robert Lovetot | * | | | | JP | | | William Moigne~/Nicholas Styvecle~ |
| | Robert Waryn | | | | | \$ | | | John Styvecle/William Moigne~/Thomas Dengaine~ |
| KENT | Thomas Fogg~ | | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| | James Peckham | | | | P✓ | JP | | | John, Lord Cobham |
| LANCS. | Richard Hoghton~ | | * | | F | £ | ES | | John of Gaunt |
| | Robert Clifton | | | | | | | | |
| LEICS. | Thomas Walsh~ | | | | | \$ | P✓ | | John of Gaunt |
| | John Fauconer~ | | | | | | | | |
| LINCS. | John Bozoun~ | * | | | PX | £ | F | | ?John of Gaunt |
| | Walter Tailboys~ | * | | | F | | | | |
| MIDDX. | John Durham | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | Godfrey atte Perry | | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | Stephen Hales~ | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | (Black Prince) |
| | Roger Welsham~ | * | | | | JP | | | Edmund, earl of Cambridge |
| N'ANTS. | John Wydville | * | | | PX | JP | ES | | |
| | John Tyndale | * | | | F | JP | PX | Forester of bailiwick | William, Lord Zouche/William Thorpe~ |
| N'UMB. | Thomas Ilderton | | * | | PX | JP | | ?Constable | John of Gaunt/Henry, earl of Northumberland |
| | William de la Vale~ | | | | | \$ | P? | | (Black Prince) |
| NOTTS | Sampson Strelley~ | | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | John Burton~ | * | | | | | | Keeper of Wardrobe & Verderer, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| OX'SHIRE | Gilbert Wace~ | * | | | PX | JP | P✓ | | (Black Prince)/Princess Joan, king's mother |
| | John Harrowden | | | | F | JP | F | | |
| RUTLAND | John Hellwell | | | | | | | | |
| | William Morewood | | | | PX | \$ | | | ?John of Gaunt |
| SALOP | Roger Corbet~ | | * | | | ?JP | | | |
| | Brian Cornwall~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Fichet~ | | * | | | £ | | | |
| | John Mautravers | | * | (Dors) | | JP | | | |
| S'HANTS | Maurice Bruyn | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | Henry Popham | | * | | F | £ | | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| STAFFS. | Adam Peshale~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | John Knightley~ | * | | | | JP | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| SUFFOLK | <u>Richard Waldegrave~</u> | * | | K's Knt | | JP | | Steward for Queen Anne | Queen Anne/Princess Joan, k's mother/Guy, Lord brian |
| | William Wingfield~ | * | | | | JP | | | Michael de la Pole~ |
| SURREY | Robert Loxley I | * | | | PX | JP | ES | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| | Nicholas Slyfield | | * | | PX | £ | | | |
| SUSSEX | William Percy~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Robert, Lord Poynings |
| | William Waleys~ | * | | | F | | | | John of Gaunt/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| WARWS. | Robert Stafford~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | William Barrewell | | * | | F | | F | | John of Gaunt/Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | Richard Roos | | | | | | | | |
| | John Dente | | * | | | JP | | | |
| WILTS. | John Roches~ | * | | K's Knt | F | JP | | Adm. S & W/Keeper/Ambassador/Surveyor of forest | |
| | Hugh Cheyne | | * | K's esq | PX | JP | | | |
| WORCS. | Ralph Stafford | | * | | | £ | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | Reginald Hambury | | * | | | | P✓ | | ?Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | James Pickering~ | | * | (West) esch | F | JP | ES | | William Windsor~ |
| | William Percy~ | | | | P✓ | | | | |

PARLIAMENT of OCTOBER 1383

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------|----|----|-----------|----|----|----|--|---|
| BEDS. | Laurence Pabenham | | | | | JP | | | |
| | Robert Digswell | * | | | F | | | | Reynold, Lord Grey |
| BERKS. | Richard Brouns | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Wm. Wykeham, Bp. Win/Ric. Adderbury II~Hu. Segrave |
| | Thomas Tenise | | * | | | | | | |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Sackville I~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | John Nernytz | | * | | | | | | |
| CAMBS. | Henry English | | | | P✓ | \$ | F | Steward for earls of March | Gerald Braybrooke~ Roger, earl of March/(Edm., earl of March)Hugh Segrave |
| | Roger Harleston | | | | PX | | | | |
| CORNW. | Ralph Carminowe~ | | * | | PX | JP | | | Thomas Brantingham, Bishop of Exeter |
| | William Lambourne | | | | | \$ | | | |
| CUMB. | Thomas Blenkinsop~ | | * | | | | | Keeper/Const./Const. for Lord Clifford | Roger, Lord Clifford |
| | Amand Monceaux | | | | P✓ | JP | F | Constable from 1384 | |
| DERBS. | John Curson | | | | | JP | F | | John of Gaunt |
| | Ralph Brayesford~ | * | | | | JP | P✓ | | John of Gaunt/d of L affinity |
| DEVON | John Prideaux~ | | * | | | | | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| | Robert Cornu | | * | | | | | | |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | John Mautravers | * | | | | JP | | | |
| ESSEX | Robert Marney | | | | | JP | | | Edward de la Pole/Thomas Swinbourne~ |
| | Alexander Goldingham | | | | | JP | | | |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Fitznichol~ | * | | | P✓ | | | | |
| | Ralph Waleys | * | | | PX | \$ | PX | | |
| HERES. | William Deveros | | *? | K's esq | PX | \$ | | | |
| | Andrew Herle | * | | | | ? | | | |
| HERTS. | Robert Louthe | * | | | | \$ | | Keeper | Princess Joan, king's mother/John of Gaunt Bohun family/?Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| | John Westwycombe | * | | | | JP | | | |
| HUNTS. | Robert Stokes~ | | | | | | | | |
| | Robert Lovetot | * | | | | \$ | | | William Moigne~/Nicholas Styvecle~ |
| KENT | Thomas Colepepir | | | | F | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Fogg~ | * | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| LANCS. | Walter Urswyk~ | | * | | | JP | | | John of Gaunt/(Black Prince) |
| | John Holcroft | | * | | | | | | |
| LEICS. | James Belers~ | | | | | JP | | | |
| | Robert Langham | * | | | | £ | | | John of Gaunt/William Bagot~ |
| LINCS. | John Multon | | | | | | | | |
| | John Bussy~ | * | | | F | JP | | | John of Gaunt |
| MIDDX. | John Saunford | | | | | \$ | | | |
| | Thomas Pinnore | | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | Stephen Hales~ | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | (Black Prince) |
| | John Harsyk | * | | | PX | \$ | | | |
| N'ANTS. | Roger Perwych~ | | | | PX | JP | | | John of Gaunt |
| | John Wydville | * | | | PX | JP | ES | | |
| N'UMB. | David Holgrave | | | K's esq | | | | | |
| | John Mitford | | | | F | JP | F | Steward for the Percies | Henry, earl of Northumberland |
| NOTTS | Robert Basely | | | | | | | | John Neville, Lord of Raby |
| | Thomas Annesley | * | | | | | | | John Annesley~ Knt of body//Thomas Rempston I~ (Black Prince)/Princess Joan, king's mother |
| OX'SHIRE | Gilbert Wace~ | * | | | PX | JP | P✓ | | |
| | John Harrowden | * | | | F | JP | F | | |
| RUTLAND | John Calveley~ | | * | | F | £ | | | |
| | John Wittlebury | | | | PX | JP | | | |
| SALOP | Roger Corbet~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Young I | | | | | £ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| SOMERSET | Edgar Daubeneye~ | | | | | | | | |
| | William Bonville~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| S'HANTS | Maurice Bruyn | * | | | | \$ | | | |
| | William Ringbourne | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| STAFFS. | Nicholas Stafford~ | | | | PX | JP | | Chief Steward for earl of Stafford | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | Richard Peshale~ | | | | PX | JP | | | |
| SUFFOLK | Richard Waldegrave~ | * | | K's Knt | | JP | | Steward for Queen Anne | Queen Anne/Princess Joan, k's mother/Guy, L ord Briar |
| | William Wingfield~ | * | | | | JP | | | Michael de la Pole~ |
| SURREY | Thomas Salman~ | | | | | | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | John Hathersham I | | | | P✓ | £ | | | John, Lord Cobham |
| SUSSEX | John Saintclere~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | John of Gaunt |
| | William Percy~ | * | | | P✓ | \$ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Robert, Lord Poynings |
| WARWS. | Humphrey Stafford I~ | | *? | | F | \$ | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | Robert Stafford~ | * | | | | \$ | | | |
| WESTM. | Richard Burgh | | * | | | | | | |
| | Robert Cliburn | | * | | | | | | |
| WILTS. | Thomas Hungerford~ | | | | PX | JP | PX | Constable/Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Nicholas Bonham | | | | | JP | | | |
| WORCS. | Nicholas Lilling~ | | | | F | £ | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | Henry Bruyn | | | | | JP | P✓ | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | Robert Neville~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | John of Gaunt/Michael de la Pole~ |
| | John Constable | | | | F | \$ | | | |

PARLIAMENT of APRIL 1384

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------|----|---|-------------|----|----|----|---|--|
| BEDS. | Thomas Pever | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | d of L affinity |
| | Ralph Fitz Richard | | | | F | JP | | | Reynold, Lord Grey/Nigel Loring~ - d of L annuitant |
| BERKS. | Richard Brouns | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Wm. Wykeham, Bp. Win./Ric. Adderbury II~/Hu. Segrave |
| | Thomas Catewy | | * | | | JP | | | |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Sackville I~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Edmund Brudenell~ |
| | Alan Ayot | | * | | | | | | |
| CAMBS. | John Colville~ | | | | | | | | |
| | William Gambourn | | * | K's esq | | | | | |
| CORNW. | Oto Bodrugan | | * | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | John Tregorrek | | * | | | JP | | | |
| CUMB. | John Corkeby | | * | | | | | | |
| | John Bronham | | * | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | Robert Francis~ | | * | | F | £ | | | |
| | William Adderley | | * | | | £ | | | John Dabrichecourt~ |
| DEVON | William Bonville | | * | (see Soms) | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| | James Chudleigh~ | | * | | PX | JP | F | | |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ | | * | | | JP | | | |
| | John Mautravers | | * | | | JP | | | |
| ESSEX | Ralph St. Leger | | | | F | | | | de Vere family |
| | John Fitzsymond~ | | * | | PX | | | | Aubrey de Vere/Joan, countess of Hereford |
| GLOUCS. | Edmund Bradeston~ | | | K's Knt | | JP | | | |
| | William Heyberer | | | | | JP | | Bailiff/Surveyor of Gloucester castle | |
| HERES. | Kinard Bere | | * | K's esq | F | JP | | | |
| | Richard Mawarden | | * | K's esq | F | | | | |
| HERTS. | Edward Benstede~ | | * | | PX | JP | | | |
| | Edmund Brook | | * | | | | | | Princess Joan, king's mother |
| HUNTS. | Robert Stokes~ | | * | | | | | | |
| | Robert Lovetot | | * | | | | \$ | | William Moigne~/Nicholas Styvecle~ |
| KENT | Robert Corby | | * | K's esq | F | | | | |
| | William Guildford | | | | F | \$ | | | |
| LANCS. | Roger Pilkington~ | | | | | \$ | | | John of Gaunt |
| | Thomas Gerard | | * | | F | £ | | | |
| LEICS. | Edmund Appelby | | | | | | | | |
| | William Flamville~ | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | |
| LINCS. | John Multon~ | | * | | | | | | |
| | John Bozoun~ | | | | PX | \$ | F | | ?John of Gaunt |
| MIDDX. | John Wroth I | | | | | JP | | | |
| | Nicholas Exton | | | | F | JP | | | |
| NORFOLK | Edmund Thorp~ | | | | PX | | | | Roger, Lord Scales |
| | Robert Cayley | | * | | | JP | | Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich |
| N'ANTS. | John Tyndale | | | | F | JP | ES | Forester of bailiwick | William, Lord Zouche/William Thorpe~ |
| | Roger Chamber | | * | | PX | £ | PX | | |
| N'UMB. | Thomas Moderby | | * | | | | | | |
| | Robert Estidwyn | | * | | | | | | |
| NOTTS | Bertram Bolingbroke | | * | | | | | PX | |
| | Thomas Annesley | | * | | | | | | John Annesley~ - Knt of body/Thomas Rempston I~ |
| OX'SHIRE | Gilbert Wace~ | | * | | PX | JP | P✓ | | (Black Prince)/Princess Joan, king's mother |
| | Edmund Giffard | | * | | | JP | PX | | |
| RUTLAND | Robert Harrington~ | | * | | F | | | | |
| | Nicholas Greenham | | * | | | | | | |
| SALOP | Peter Careswell~ | | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | Edward Acton | | | | P✓ | £ | F | | Hugh, Lord Burnell |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Hungerford~ | | * | (see Wilts) | PX | JP | PX | Constable/Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | William Bonville~ | | * | (see Dev) | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| S'HANTS | John Sandys~ | | | annuity | P✓ | £ | | | Thomas, earl of Kent |
| | William Sturmy~ | | * | | F | £ | | Warden of Forest | |
| STAFFS. | John Knightley | | | | | \$ | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | Thomas ASton~ | | | | F | £ | | Forester | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| SUFFOLK | John Wingfield~ | | * | | | JP | | | Michael de la Pole~/Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich |
| | John Ulveston~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | William Wingfield~/Richard Waldegrave~ |
| SURREY | Thomas Salman~ | | * | | | | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | John Cobham | | | K's knt | | £ | | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| SUSSEX | Edward Dallingridge~ | | | | | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Edward, Lord Despenser |
| | John St. Owen | | * | | | | | | Roger, earl of March |
| WARWS. | John Peyto~ | | | | | \$ | | | John of Gaunt |
| | William Spemore | | | | | | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | Robert Cliburn | | * | | | | | | |
| | John Manesergh | | * | | | | | | |
| WILTS. | Thomas Hungerford~ | | * | (see Som) | PX | JP | PX | Constable/Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | John Roches~ | | | K's Knt | F | JP | | Keeper/Dpt Marshal of England from 1385/Ambassador/Surveyor of forest | |
| WORCS. | John Herle~ | | * | | | JP | | | |
| | Ralph Stafford | | | | | £ | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| YORKS. | John Saville~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | PX | | John of Gaunt/ (Black Prince) |
| | John Bigod~ | | | | PX | JP | PX | | |

PARLIAMENT of NOVEMBER 1384

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|-------------------------|----|----------|-----------|----|----|----|---------------------------------------|---|
| BEDS. | Ralph Fitz Richard | * | | | F | JP | | | Reynold, Lord Grey/Nigel Loring - d of L annuitant |
| | Robert Digswell | | | | P✓ | | | | Reynold, Lord Grey |
| BERKS. | Richard Brouns | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Wm. Wykeham, Bp. Win./Ric. Adderbury II~/Hu. Segrave |
| | John Arches | * | | | £ | | F | | |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Sackville I~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Edmund Brudenell~ |
| | Thomas Colville | * | | | F | | PX | | Edmund de la Pole~ |
| CAMBS. | Thomas Hasildon I | * | | | | JP | | Attorney General & Stwd, d of L | John of Gaunt/Edmund, earl of Cambridge |
| | Henry English | | | | P✓ | \$ | F | Steward for earls of March | Rog. earl of March/(Edm. e. of March)/Rob earl of Oxfor |
| CORNW. | Ralph Carminowe~ | | | | PX | JP | | | Thomas Brantingham, Bishop of Exeter |
| | Thomas Fichet~ | * | | | | | | | |
| CUMB. | John Ireby~ | * | | | F | £ | | | Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| | Thomas Lamplugh~ | * | | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | Thomas Wensley~ | | | | | JP | | | John of Gaunt & d of L retinue |
| | William Dethek~ | * | | | £ | | | | William. Fitzherbert - assoc. Thos. earl of Buckingham |
| DEVON | James Chudleigh~ | * | | | PX | JP | F | | |
| | Robert Cornu~ | | | | | | | | |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | John Mautravers | * | | | | JP | | | |
| ESSEX | Robert Swynbourn | | | | F | £ | | | Walter, Lord Fitzwalter/Ric. Waldegrave~/John Doreward |
| | Robert Marney | | | | | JP | | | Edward, de la Pole/Thomas Swinbourne |
| GLOUCS. | Robert Whittington | * | | | F | £ | F | | John Browning associate of Edward, Lord Despenser |
| | William Heyberer | * | | | | JP | | Bailiff/Surveyor of Gloucester castle | |
| HERES. | John Eylesford~ | * | K's Knt | | | JP | | | Roger, earl of March/ <u>Peter de la Mare~</u> |
| | Richard Nash | * | | | | JP | | | Roger, earl of March |
| HERTS. | Robert Turk~ | | | | F | \$ | | | |
| | John Westwycombe | | | | | \$ | | | Bohun family/?Thomas, earl of Buckingham |
| HUNTS. | Robert Lovetot | * | | | | \$ | | | William Moigne~/Nicholas Styvecle~ |
| | John Herlyngton | | | | F | JP | F | | |
| KENT | Thomas Fogg~ | | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| | Thomas Cobham~ | | | | P✓ | | | | John, Lord Cobham |
| LANCS. | Robert Urswyk~ | | | | | JP | ES | Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | William Tunstall | * | | | | | | | |
| LEICS. | Thomas Walsh~ | | | | | \$ | P✓ | | John of Gaunt |
| | John Fauconer~ | | | | | | | | |
| LINCS. | John Bozoun~ | * | | | PX | JP | F | | ?John of Gaunt |
| | Robert Leek~ | | | | | JP | | | |
| MIDDX. | Thomas Charlton I | | | | | JP | | | |
| | John Durham | | | | | £ | | | |
| NORFOLK | Stephen Hales~ | | K's Knt | | P✓ | JP | | | (Black Prince) |
| | Robert Cayley | * | | | | JP | | Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich |
| N'ANTS. | John Tyndale | * | | | F | JP | ES | Forester of bailiwick | William, Lord Zouche/William Thorpe~ |
| | Roger Chamber | * | | | PX | £ | PX | | |
| N'UMB. | John Lylburn~ | * | | | | | | | Henry, earl of Northumberland |
| | Thomas Moderby | * | | | | | | | |
| NOTTS | John Annesley~ | | Knt body | | | | | | |
| | Richard Bevercotes | * | | | | | | | |
| OX'SHIRE | Gilbert Wace~ | * | | | PX | JP | P✓ | | (Black Prince)/Princess Joan, king's mother |
| | Roger Cheyne | | K's esq | | | | | | |
| RUTLAND | William Flore | | | | P✓ | £ | | Controller of forest/Receiver | |
| | William Morewood | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | ?John of Gaunt |
| SALOP | Robert Cuyne | * | | | | | | | |
| | Edward Acton | * | | | P✓ | £ | F | | Hugh, Lord Burnell |
| SOMERSET | William Bonville~ | * | (Devon) | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | Edgar Daubeneye | | | | | | | | |
| S'HANTS | Maurice Bruyn~ | | | | | \$ | | | |
| | Phillip Popham~ | * | | | P✓ | | | | |
| STAFFS. | Nicholas Stafford~ | | | | PX | JP | | Chief Steward for earl of Stafford | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | William Walsale | | | | P✓ | £ | ES | | 'royal placeman' |
| SUFFOLK | John Wingfield | * | | | | JP | | | Michael de la Pole~/Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich |
| | Richard Cousin~ | * | | | | | | | ?William, earl of Suffolk/?William, earl of Salisbury |
| SURREY | John Cobham | * | K's Knt | | | £ | | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| | Robert Notbourne | * | | | P✓ | | | | |
| SUSSEX | Edward Dallingridge~ | * | | | | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Edward, Lord Despenser |
| | William Percy~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Robert, Lord Poynings |
| WARWS. | John Birmingham~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| | Thomas Astley~ | | | | | \$ | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | Walter Strickland~ | | | | | £ | F | | William Windsor~ |
| | Robert Windsor | * | | | | | | | |
| WILTS. | Humphrey Stafford I~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | Robert Russel~ | * | | | | | PX | | |
| WORCS. | Walter Cokesey~ | | | | | JP | | | ?John of Gaunt |
| | John Herle~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| YORKS. | John Saville~ | * | | | P✓ | \$ | PX | | John of Gaunt |
| | <u>James Pickering~</u> | | | | F | JP | P✓ | | William Windsor~ |

PARLIAMENT of 1385

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|--------------------------|--------|---|-----------|----|-----|-------|---|--|
| BEDS. | Thomas Pever | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | Nigel Loring~ d of L annuitant |
| | Reynald Ragon | * | | | F | £ | F | | Lord Reynold, 2nd Lord Grey |
| BERKS. | Richard Brouns | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Wm Wykeham, Bp. Win/Ric. Adderbury II~/Hu. Segrave |
| | Laurence Drew | * | | | | \$ | | (King's Attorney 1381-2) | |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Sackville I~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | John Frome | * | | | F | £ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/William, earl of Salisbury |
| CAMBS. | John Colville~ | | | | | | | | |
| | William Gambourn | | | K's esq | | | | | |
| CORNW. | Richard Cergeaux~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | William Talbot | | | | P✓ | \$ | F | | |
| CUMB. | Peter Tilliol~ | | | | F | JP | F | Chief Forester/Keeper of West March of Scotland | |
| | Richard Beaulieu | * | | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | Robert Francis~ | | | | F | £ | | | |
| | William Adderley | | | | | £ | | | John Dabrichcourt~ |
| DEVON | John Stretch~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| | John Paulet | * | | | F | | | | |
| DORSET | John Mautravers | * | | | | | JP | | |
| | Stephen Derby~ | * | | | | | \$ | | |
| ESSEX | <u>John Gildesburgh~</u> | | | | | | JP | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester |
| | John Fitzsymond~ | | | | PX | | | | Aubrey de Vere/Joan, countess of Hereford |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Fitznichol~ | | | | P✓ | | | | ?Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | William Heyberer | * | | | | | JP | Bailiff/Surveyor of Gloucester castle | |
| HERES. | Leonard Hakluyt~ | * | | | F | £ | F | | Roger, earl of March |
| | Andrew Herle | | | | | | | | |
| HERTS. | Walter Lee~ | * | | Knt body | F | JP | | | John of Gaunt |
| | John Thornbury~ | | | | F | JP | | | John of Gaunt |
| HUNTS. | William Papworth~ | | | | PX | JP | F | | Thomas, Lord Morley |
| | Nicholas Styvecle~ | * | | | P✓ | \$ | PX | | |
| KENT | Thomas Brockhill | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | Nicholas Adam | * | | | | | | | |
| LANCS. | Robert Urswyk | * | | | | | \$ ES | Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Thomas Radcliffe | * | | | | | JP | Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | John Fauconer~ | * | | | | | | | |
| | John Calveley~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | |
| LINCS. | Philip Tilney~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | |
| | William Ayremin~ | | | | | | | | |
| MIDDX. | Adam Francis~ | | | | F | £ | | | |
| | John Peckbridge~ | | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | John White~ | * | | | | | \$ | Bailiff, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Robert Cayley | * | | | | | JP | Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Henry Despenser, Bishop of Norwich |
| N'ANTS. | Giles Mallory~ | * | | | F | | | | ?Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | Robert Holdenby | * | | | | | JP | F | |
| N'UMB. | William Heron~ | * | | | | | | | |
| | Nicholas Raymes | * | | | | | \$ | P✓ | |
| NOTTS | John Annesley~ | * | | Knt body | | | | | |
| | John Burton~ | | | | | | | Verderer, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| OX'SHIRE | Gilbert Wace~ | * | | | PX | JP | P✓ | | (Black Prince)/Princess Joan, king's mother |
| | William Wilcotes | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| RUTLAND | Hugh Calveley | * | | K's esq? | | | | | ?John of Gaunt |
| | John Knot | * | | | | | | | |
| SALOP | William Hugford~ | * | | | F | | F | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | Thomas Lee I | * | | K's esq? | F | \$ | | | |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Fichet~ | | | | | | JP | | |
| | Phillip Brian | * | | | | | | | |
| S'HANTS | John Uvedale | | | | | | \$ | | Richard, e of Arundel/Will. Wykeham, Bp of Winchester |
| | Henry Popham | | | | F | £ | | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| STAFFS. | Nicholas Stafford~ | * | | | PX | JP | | Chief Steward for earl of Stafford | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | John Hinkley | | | | | | \$ | Steward of HH for earl of Stafford | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| SUFFOLK | John Ulveston~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | William Wingfield~/Richard Waldegrave~ |
| | Robert Carbonel~ | * | | | F | \$ | | | Marg. countess of Norfolk/M. de la Pole, earl of Suffolk |
| SURREY | Thomas Salman~ | | | | | | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | Robert Loxley I | | | | PX | JP | PX | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| SUSSEX | Edward Dallingridge~ | * | | | | | JP | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Edward, Lord Despenser |
| | John Cobham | *(Sur) | | K's Knt | | | £ | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| WARWS. | Thomas Erdington~ | * | | | | | \$ | | |
| | Robert Stafford~ | | | | | | JP | | |
| WESTM. | Richard Roos | | | | | | | | |
| | John Crackenthorpe | | | | | | | F | |
| WILTS. | Robert Corbet~ | * | | | F | £ | | | ?Thomas, duke of Gloucester |
| | Hugh Cheyne~ | | | K's esq | PX | JP | | | |
| WORCS. | John Sapy~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| | Henry Bruyn | | | | | | JP | P✓ | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | John Bigod | | | | PX | JP | PX | | |
| | William Melton~ | * | | | PX | ?JP | PX | | William Windsor~/John of Gaunt |

PARLIAMENT of 1386

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------|----|----------|-----------|----|-----|----|--|--|
| BEDS. | Ralph Fitz Richard | | | | F | \$ | | | Gerald Braybrooke~ |
| | John Hervy | * | | | | JP | | possibly in HH of d of L | Reynold, Lord Grey/John of Gaunt |
| BERKS. | Gilbert Talbot | | * | K's Knt | | JP | | | John of Gaunt |
| | Richard Brouns | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Wm. Wykeham Bp. Win/Ric. Adderbury II~Hu. Segrave |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Sackville I~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | John Chetwode~ | | * | | | F | | | |
| CAMBS. | William Papworth~ | | *(Hunts) | | PX | JP | F | | |
| | Thomas Hasilden I | | | | | \$ | | Attorney General & Stwd., d of L | John of Gaunt/?Edmund, duke of York |
| CORNW. | Ralph Carminowe~ | | | | PX | JP | | | Thomas Brantingham, Bishop of Exeter |
| | John Beville | | * | | F | £ | | | |
| CUMB. | Amand Mounceux | | | | P✓ | \$ | F | Joint keeper up to 1385 | |
| | John Thirlwell | | * | | PX | | | Deputy keeper up to 1385 | Henry, earl of Northumberland |
| DERBS. | Thomas Wensley~ | | | | | JP | | | John of Gaunt |
| | William Dethek~ | | | | | ?JP | | | |
| DEVON | Phillip Courtenay~ | | | K's Knt | | \$ | | Lieutenant of Ireland | John of Gaunt/William Courtenay, Archbp. of Canterbur, |
| | John Stretch~ | * | | | PX | | | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ | | * | | | JP | | | |
| | John Frome | | *(Bucks) | | F | £ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/William, earl of Salisbury |
| ESSEX | Robert Marney | | | | | JP | | | Thomas Swinburne~/Joan, countess of Hereford |
| | Edmund Brokesbourne | | * | | | | | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Fitznichol~ | * | | | P✓ | | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | William Hervy | | * | | | \$ | | Alnager of England | John of Gaunt |
| HERES. | Kinard Bere | | | K's esq | F | JP | | | |
| | Thomas de la Barre~ | * | | K's Knt | PX | JP | F | | |
| HERTS. | Walter Lee~ | * | | Knt body | | JP | | | John of Gaunt |
| | Thomas Lee II | | * | Esq body | F | | | Constable/Keeper of royal park | |
| HUNTS. | William Moigne~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | Robert Lovetot | | | | | JP | | | William Moigne~/Nicholas Styvecle~ |
| KENT | William Bettenham | | * | | | | | | |
| | Geoffrey Chaucer | | * | K's esq | | JP | | Controller of Customs | 'links with courtiers' |
| LANCS. | Nicholas Haryngton | | | | P✓ | £ | | ?Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Robert Worsley | | * | | | £ | | | John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | William Flamville~ | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | |
| | Thomas Walsh~ | | | | | \$ | P✓ | | John of Gaunt |
| LINCS. | Walter Tailboys~ | | | | | F | | | Robert, Lord Willoughby |
| | John Bozoun~ | | | | PX | JP | F | | ?John of Gaunt |
| MIDDX. | Adam Francis~ | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| | William Swanland | | | | | JP | | | |
| NORFOLK | Thomas Gerberge | | | | | | | | Edmund, duke of York |
| | Stephen Hales~ | | | K's knt? | P✓ | JP | | | Thomas, Lord Morley |
| N'ANTS. | Roger Chamber | | | | PX | £ | PX | | |
| | John Tyndale | | | | F | JP | PX | | |
| N'UMB. | Bertram Monboucher~ | | | | | P✓ | | | ?Henry, earl of Northumberland/Richard, Lord Scrope |
| | Robert Clavering~ | * | | | | | | Chancellor & Chamberlain of Berwick | Henry, earl of Northumberland |
| NOTTS | John Annesley~ | * | | Knt body | | | | | |
| | John Leek~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | |
| OX'SHIRE | Richard Adderbury I~ | | | Knt. Chm. | | JP | | Chamberlain to Queen Anne | Queen Anne |
| | Gilbert Wace~ | * | | | PX | JP | P✓ | | Princess Joan, king's mother |
| RUTLAND | John Wittilbury | | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | Walter Scarle | | | | P✓ | JP | F | | |
| SALOP | Hamon Peshale~ | * | | | | | | | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | Edward Acton | | | | P✓ | £ | F | | |
| SOMERSET | William Bonville~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| | Thomas Brooke~ | * | | | F | £ | | | Phillip Courtenay~ |
| S'HANTS | Bernard Brocas~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | M. of K's hounds/Keeper/Chamberlain for Queen Anne from c.1387 | |
| | John Sandys~ | | | annuity | P✓ | JP | | Deputy Constable | Thomas, earl of Kent/William Wykeham, Bp. Winchester |
| STAFFS. | William Sharesull~ | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| | Aymer Lichfield | * | | | F | \$ | F | | |
| SUFFOLK | Richard Waldegrave~ | | | K's Knt | | JP | | Steward for Queen Anne | Q. Anne/Guy, Lord Brian/Thos Bp of Ely/Ric e of Arunde |
| | William Wingfield~ | | | | | JP | | | Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk |
| SURREY | James Berners~ | * | | Knt Chm. | | JP | | | 'Courtier' |
| | John Newdigate | * | | | | JP | | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| SUSSEX | Edmund Fitzherberd~ | | | | PX | \$ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | Edward Dallingridge~ | * | | | | JP | | | Ric. e. of Arundel/Thos. d. of Gloucester/Lord Despenser |
| WARWS. | John Peyto~ | | | | | | | | John of Gaunt/Thomas, earl of Nottingham |
| | George Castell | * | | | F | £ | PX | | |
| WESTM. | John Derwentwater~ | | | | P✓ | £ | P✓ | | Roger, Lord Clifford/William, Lord Greystoke |
| | Robert Cliburn | | | | | | | | |
| WILTS. | Thomas Hungerford~ | | | | PX | JP | PX | Ch. Stwd. S. Trent/Ch. Stwd, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Ralph Cheyne~ | | | | PX | £ | | | |
| WORCS. | Nicholas Lilling~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick/assoc. with Beauchamp affinity |
| | Henry Bruyn | * | | | | JP | P✓ | | Thomas, earl of Warwick/assoc. with Beauchamp affinity |
| YORKS. | John Godard~ | | * | | F | JP | F | | |
| | John St Quintin~ | | | | | JP | | Keeper | ?John of Gaunt |

PARLIAMENT of FEBRUARY 1388

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS | W | X |
|----------|--|----|---|-----------|----|----|----|---------------------------------------|---|---|-----|
| BEDS. | Gerard Braybrook II~ Robert Digswell | * | | | F | £ | | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester Reynold, Lord Grey of Ruthin | | W X |
| BERKS. | Edmund Sparsholt Laurence Drew | * | | | F | £ | | | | | |
| BUCKS. | Phillip de la Vache~ Robert Luton~ | * | | K's Knt | | | | Captain (appointment by Appellants) | William Beauchamp~/Roger, Lord Clifford | | |
| CAMBS. | John Dengaine~ John Chalers~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | ?Thomas Arundel, Bishop of Ely | | |
| CORNW. | Henry Ilcombe~ John Reskymer~ | * | | | | | F | | | | |
| CUMB. | John Derwentwater~ John Ireby~ | * | | | P/ | £ | P/ | | Roger, Lord Clifford/William, Lord Greystoke Thomas, duke of Gloucester | | W |
| DERBS. | Robert Francis~ William Adderley | | | | F | \$ | | | John Dabrichcourt~ | | |
| DEVON | Phillip Courtenay~ John Prideaux~ | * | | K's Knt | | | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | Edward, earl of Devon | | |
| DORSET | Robert Turbervill John Frome | * | | | | £ | | | | | |
| ESSEX | John Gildesburgh~ Thomas Coggeshale | * | | | F | £ | F | | John, Lord Arundel/William, earl of Salisbury Thomas, duke of Gloucester | | W X |
| GLOUCS. | John Berkeley I~ William Heyberer | * | | | F | £ | | Surveyer of Works, Gloucester castle | | | |
| HERES. | Leonard Hakluyt~ Richard Nash | | | | F | £ | F | | Roger, earl of March Roger, earl of March | | |
| HERTS. | Walter Lee~ Robert Turk~ | * | | Knt body | F | JP | | Constable (appointment by Appellants) | Walter, Lord Fitzwalter | | W |
| HUNTS. | Robert Waryn Richard Botiller | * | | | | \$ | | | John Styvecle/William Moigne~/Thomas Dengaine~ Nicolas Styvecle~ | | W |
| KENT | Thomas Fogg~ James Peckham | | | | P/ | JP | | | John of Gaunt John, Lord Cobham | | W |
| LANCS. | John Boteler~ Thomas Gerard | | | | P/ | JP | | Constable/Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt | | |
| LEICS. | William Flamville~ Thomas Walsh~ | * | | | P/ | JP | P/ | | John of Gaunt | | W |
| LINCS. | Philip Tilney~ Walter Tailboys~ | * | | | PX | £ | | Chief Steward, d of L from 1389 | | | |
| MIDDX. | Adam Francis~ William Swanland | * | | | F | JP | | | Robert, Lord Willoughby | | W |
| NORFOLK | John Strange~ John White~ | * | | | | £ | F | Bailiff, d of L | John of Gaunt/Richard, earl of Arundel/?Bolingbroke John of Gaunt/ Thomas Hungerford~ | | X X |
| N'ANTS. | Giles Mallory~ John Wydville | | | | F | | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick Thomas, earl of Warwick | | X |
| N'UMB. | Thomas Umfraville~ John Mitford | * | | | F | £ | | Captain from 1389)/Envoy in 1389 | | | |
| NOTTS | John Leek~ John Annesley~ | * | | | F | JP | P/ | Envoy in 1389 | Henry, earl of Northumberland/Edmund, duke of York | | |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Baratyn William Wilcotes | * | | Knt body | PX | JP | F | | John Golafre~ - Knt. Chmb Thomas, Lord Despenser | | |
| RUTLAND | Hugh Browe~ Oliver Mauleverer~ | * | | | | £ | | | Ric. earl of Arundel/?Thos, duke of Gloucester | | X |
| SALOP | Richard Ludlow~ William Hugford~ | * | | | | £ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel Richard, earl of Arundel | | |
| SOMERSET | William Bonville~ Thomas Brooke~ | * | | | F | \$ | | | | | |
| S'HANTS | Thomas Worthing~ Henry Popham | * | | | F | £ | | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester | | |
| STAFFS. | John Ipstones~ Roger Longridge | * | | | | £ | | | John of Gaunt (Hugh, earl of Stafford) | | |
| SUFFOLK | Richard Waldegrave~ William Burgate~ | * | | K's Knt | | | JP | Steward for Queen Anne until 1387 | Thomas Arundel, Bishop of Ely/Richard, earl of Arundel Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk | | |
| SURREY | John Hathersham I Hugh Quecche | * | | | P/ | £ | | | John, Lord Cobham Richard, earl of Arundel | | W X |
| SUSSEX | Edward Dallingridge~ William Waleys | * | | | | | JP | Deputy Captain/Ambassador | Thos d of Glouc/Ric e of Arundel/Lord Desp. | | W |
| WARWS. | William Bagot~ Guy Spyne | * | | | PX | £ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/John Seyntcler~ - d of L Bolingbroke/Thos e of Notts/Thos e of Warw | | X X |
| WESTM. | Thomas Blenkinsop~ Thomas Strikland I | * | | | | | F | Constable for Lord Clifford | Thomas, earl of Warwick Roger, Lord Clifford | | |
| WILTS. | John Dauntsey~ John Bettesthorne | * | | | PX | JP | | | ?Richard, earl of Arundel | | W |
| WORCS. | Nicholas Lilling~ Hugh Cheyne~ | * | | | P/ | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick Roger, earl of March | | X X |
| YORKS. | William Melton~ Robert Constable~ | * | | annuity | PX | \$ | PX | Keeper | John of Gaunt/William Windsor~ Thomas, duke of Gloucester/Bolingbroke | | |

PARLIAMENT of SEPTEMBER 1388

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS | X |
|----------|------------------------|----|-----------------|-----------|----|----|----|--|--|---|
| BEDS. | William Terrington | | | | F | JP | | | John Waltham - Keeper of Privy Seal | |
| | Ralph Walton | | | | | | | | Braybrookes/Thomas, duke of Gloucester | |
| BERKS. | William Golafre | | | | PX | | | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester | |
| | Laurence Drew | * | | | | JP | | | | X |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Sackville I~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | | |
| | Roger Dayrell | | | | | | | | | |
| CAMBS. | John Dengaine | * | | | PX | | | | | |
| | Robert Parys | | * | | PX | JP | PX | | | |
| CORNW. | William Lambourn | | | | | | \$ | | | |
| | John Reskymer~ | * | | | F | JP | | | | |
| CUMB. | Robert Muncaster~ | | * | | | | F | | | |
| | Amand Mounceux | | | | P✓ | \$ | ES | | | |
| DERBS. | Nicholas Montgomery I~ | * | | | F | £ | | | John of Gaunt/Roger Strange~ | |
| | Robert Francis~ | * | | | F | \$ | | | | X |
| DEVON | John Stretch~ | | | | PX | £ | | | Edward, earl of Devon | |
| | John Grenville~ | * | | | F | £ | | | Edward, earl of Devon | |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford I~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | | |
| | John Moigne~ | * | | | F | £ | F | | | |
| ESSEX | Alexander Walden~ | | * | | | | £ | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester/Walter, Lord Fitzwalter | |
| | John Fitzsymond~ | | | | PX | | | | Aubrey de Vere/Joan, countess of Hereford/Fitzwalter | |
| GLOUCS. | John Berkeley I~ | * | | | F | £ | | | | X |
| | Laurence Seybrooke~ | | | | F | £ | | | HH of Princess Joan | |
| HERES. | Malcolm de la Mare | * | | | F | | | | | |
| | William Seymour | * | | | | | | | John of Gaunt | |
| HERTS. | Walter Lee~ | * | | Knt body | F | JP | | Constable (appointed by Appellants) | Walter, Lord FitzWalter | |
| | Robert Turk~ | * | | | F | \$ | | | | X |
| HUNTS. | Robert Waryn | * | | | | | \$ | | John Styvecle/ William Moigne~/Thomas Dengaine~ | |
| | John Herlyngton | | | | F | JP | F | | | |
| KENT | James Peckham | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | John, Lord Cobham | |
| | William Bettenham | | | | | | | | | |
| LANCS. | John Assheton~ | | * | | | | \$ | | John of Gaunt | |
| | John Croft~ | | | | | | \$ | Steward, d of L until 1387 | John of Gaunt | |
| LEICS. | William Flamville~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | | |
| | Roger Perwych~ | | | | PX | JP | | | ?John of Gaunt | |
| LINCS. | John Bussy~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke/M. de la Pole, earl of Suffolk | |
| | Philip Tilney~ | * | | | PX | £ | | Chief Steward, d of L from 1389 | | |
| MIDDX. | William Barnville | | | | | | | | | |
| | Godfrey atte Perry | | | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | John Strange~ | * | | | | | £ | F | John of Gaunt/Richard, earl of Arundel/?Bolingbroke | |
| | John White~ | * | | | | | \$ | Bailiff, d of L | John of Gaunt | X |
| N'ANTS. | John Harrowden | | | | F | \$ | F | | 'connected with Appellants' | |
| | John Mulsho | * | | | F | JP | PX | Deputy to William Thorpe, Keeper | Thomas, earl of Stafford/William, Lord Zouche | |
| N'UMB. | John Mitford | * | | | F | JP | P✓ | Envoy | Henry, earl of Northumb./Edm. d. of York | X |
| | - | | | | | | | | | |
| NOTTS | John Annesley~ | * | | K's Knt | | | | | | |
| | Robert Cockfield~ | * | | | | | | | | |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas de la Poyle~ | * | | | PX | \$ | | | ?Thomas, duke of Gloucester | |
| | John Rede | * | | | | JP | | | | |
| RUTLAND | John Daneys~ | | | | | | \$ | | Hugh Despenser/?Bolingbroke | |
| | Walter Scarle | | | | P✓ | JP | ES | | | |
| SALOP | Hugh Cheyne~ | | *(Worcs)annuity | | | | £ | Keeper | Roger, earl of March | X |
| | Edward Acton | | | | P✓ | £ | F | | | |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Hungerford~ | | | | PX | JP | PX | Ch. Stwd. S of Trent/Ch. Stwd., d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke | |
| | John Burghersh~ | | | | P✓ | | | | | |
| S'HANTS | Thomas Worting~ | * | | | | | £ | | | |
| | Henry Popham | * | | | F | £ | | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester | |
| STAFFS. | Thomas Aston~ | | | | F | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Stafford/Thomas, earl of Warwick | |
| | John Delves | * | | | F | £ | F | | William Bagot~ & John Bagot~ | |
| SUFFOLK | Richard Waldegrave~ | * | | K's Knt | | JP | | Steward for Queen Anne until 1387 | Thos Arundel, Archbp. York/Ric, e. of Arundel | X |
| | William Burgate~ | * | | | | | | | Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk | |
| SURREY | John Thorp I | * | | K's esq | | | | | | |
| | Thomas Kynnersley | * | | | | | £ | | Richard, Lord Poynings | |
| SUSSEX | Nicholas Wilcombe | | | | PX | \$ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/William Percy~ | |
| | Robert de Ore | | | | | | | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester | |
| WARWS. | William Bagot~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | Thos. e. of Notts./Bolingbroke/Thos. e. of Warw | X |
| | Guy Spyne | * | | | | | F | | Thomas, earl of Warwick | |
| WESTM. | Robert Sandford I | * | | | | | £ | | | |
| | Hugh Salkeld I | * | | | | | £ | | | |
| WILTS. | Ralph Cheyne~ | | | | PX | £ | | | | |
| | Richard Horne | * | | | | | F | | William, earl of Salisbury | |
| WORCS. | Nicholas Lilling~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick | X |
| | Alexander Besford | | | | | JP | | Steward for Westminster Abbey | Thomas, earl of Warwick | |
| YORKS. | Robert Neville~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | John of Gaunt | |
| | James Pickering~ | | | | F | JP | P✓ | | William Windsor~ | |

PARLIAMENT of JANUARY 1390

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------------|-----------------|---|-----------|----|----|----|------------------------------------|---|
| BEDS. | Baldwin Pigot | * | | | F | \$ | | | |
| | William Terrington | * | | | F | \$ | | | John Waltham - Keeper of Privy Seal |
| BERKS. | John Kentwood~ | | | | | \$ | | Justiciar of South Wales | |
| | Richard Brouns | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Wm. Wykeham, Bp. Win./Ric. Adderbury II~/Hu. Segrave |
| BUCKS. | John Aylesbury~ | | | | PX | JP | | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester |
| | Robert Luton~ | | | | | JP | | | |
| CAMBS. | Henry English | | | | P✓ | \$ | F | Steward for earls of March | Roger, earl of march/Robert, earl of Oxford |
| | Simon Burgh | | | K's esq | | £ | | Custodian of Marck castle | William Courteney, Archbishop of Canterbury |
| CORNW. | Richard Cergeaux~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | ?Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | William Lambourne | * | | | | \$ | | | |
| CUMB. | William Threlkeld~ | | | | | £ | | | |
| | Amand Mounceux | * | | | P✓ | JP | ES | | |
| DERBS. | Thomas Wensley~ | | | | | JP | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | Nicholas Montgomery I~ | * | | | F | £ | | | John of Gaunt/John Curson |
| DEVON | Phillip Courtney~ | | | K's Knt | | \$ | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | |
| | James Chudleigh~ | | | | PX | JP | F | | |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford I~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | John Frome | | | | F | £ | | Ambassador | William, earl of Salisbury |
| ESSEX | Robert Swynbourn | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | Walter, Lord Fitzwalter/?Thomas, Duke of Gloucester |
| | Robert Marney | | | | | \$ | | | Edward, earl of Rutland/Joan, countess of Hereford |
| GLOUCS. | John Cheyne I~ | * | | Knt. Chm | | JP | | Ambassador | |
| | Laurence Seybrooke~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | HH of Princess Joan |
| HERES. | Kynard Bere | | | K's esq. | | P✓ | JP | | |
| | Thomas Oldcastle | * | | | PX | £ | PX | | Roger, earl of March/?Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| HERTS. | Walter Lee~ | * | | Knt body | P✓ | \$ | | Constable | Walter, Lord FitzWalter |
| | John Thornbury~ | | | Knt body | F | JP | | | ?John of Gaunt |
| HUNTS. | Henry Green~ | * | | | | \$ | | | John of Gaunt/William, Lord Beauchamp |
| | William Moigne~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| KENT | Arnald Savage I~ | * | | Knt Chm | PX | \$ | | | |
| | John Cobham | | | | | £ | | | |
| LANCS. | Ralph Ipre~ | | | | | £ | | Keeper of Park, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | John Assheton~ | * | | | | \$ | | | John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | Thomas Walsh~ | | | | | \$ | P✓ | | John of Gaunt |
| | John Burdet~ | | | | PX | \$ | | | |
| LINCS. | John Bussy~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | Philip Tilney~ | * | | | PX | £ | | Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| MIDDX. | John Shoreditch I | | | | | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Coningsby | * | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | John White~ | * | | | | \$ | | Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | William Rees | * | | | F | £ | F | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Thomas, earl of Nottingham. |
| N'ANTS. | Roger Chamber | | | | PX | JP | PX | | |
| | John Mulsho | * | | | F | \$ | PX | Deputy to William Thorpe, Keeper | Thomas, earl of Stafford./William, Lord Zouche |
| N'UMB. | Thomas Umfraville~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | Captain from 1389 | |
| | John Mitford | * | | | F | JP | P✓ | Envoy | Henry, earl of Northumberland/Edmund, duke of York |
| NOTTS | John Leek~ | | | | PX | £ | | | Thomas Rempston I~ |
| | John Gateford | | | K's serg | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Baratyn | | | | | JP | ES | | John Golafre~ - Knt. of the Chamber |
| | William Wilcotes | | | | F | £ | | | John Golafre~ - Knt of Chamber/Thos, Lord Despenser |
| RUTLAND | Hugh Calveley | | | | | £ | | | John of Gaunt |
| | Oliver Mauleverer~ | | | | | £ | | | |
| SALOP | Richard Ludlow~ | | | | | \$ | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | Thomas Lee I | | | | F | \$ | | | |
| SOMERSET | <u>Thomas Hungerford~</u> | * | | | PX | \$ | | Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | Thomas Beaupyne | | | | | | | Deputy Butler, Bristol | |
| S'HANTS | John Sandys~ | | | annuity | P✓ | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Kent |
| | John Bettesthorne | | | | PX | \$ | | | |
| STAFFS. | Nicholas Stafford~ | | | | PX | JP | | Chief Steward for earl of Stafford | Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | John Delves~ | * | | | F | £ | F | | William Bagot~ & John Bagot~ |
| SUFFOLK | <u>Richard Waldegrave~</u> | * | | K's Knt | | JP | | Steward to Queen Anne until 1387 | Thomas Arundel, Archbp. of York/Rich. earl of Arunde |
| | William Wingfield~ | | | | | JP | | | Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk |
| SURREY | John Hathersham I | | | | P✓ | JP | | | John, Lord Cobham |
| | John Thorp I | * | | K's esq | | | | | |
| SUSSEX | William Percy~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | Thomas Jardyn | * | | | PX | | PX | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| WARWS. | William Bagot~ | * | | K's esq. | PX | \$ | | Keeper from November | Thos. e. of Nottingham./Bolingbroke/Thos. e. of Warwick |
| | Guy Spyne | * | | | | | F | | Thomas, earl of Warwick/William Bagot~ |
| WESTM. | John Crackenthorpe | | | | | | F | Constable | Thomas, Lord Clifford |
| | Hugh Salkeld I | * | | | | £ | | | |
| WILTS. | <u>Thomas Hungerford~</u> | * | | | PX | JP | PX | Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | William Sturmy~ | | | | F | £ | | Warden of Forest | |
| WORCS. | Nicholas Lilling~ | * | | | P✓ | \$ | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | Hugh Cheyne~ | *(Salop)annuity | | | | £ | | Keeper | Roger, earl of March |
| YORKS. | Robert Neville~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | John of Gaunt |
| | John Saville~ | | | | P✓ | JP | PX | | John of Gaunt |

PARLIAMENT of NOVEMBER 1390

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY. AFFIN. | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|---|----|---------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------|--|---|--|
| BEDS. | Gerard Braybrooke I~ Thomas Zouche | * | | | | JP | | | Thos. d of Glos./John, Lord Cobham/Reynold, Lord Grey Henry Green~ |
| BERKS. | Thomas Childrey John Arches | * | | | | \$ F JP F | | | Gilbert Talbot~ ?tenant of d of L |
| BUCKS. | Edward Durdant Roger Dayrell | * | | ?annuity | | | | | |
| CAMBS. | John Colville~ Simon Burgh | * | | K's esq | £ | | | Custodian of Marck castle Joint Deputy Haverner (Cornwall and Devon) | William Courteney, Archbishop of Canterbury |
| CORNW. | John Reskymer~ Michael Archdeacon | * | | | P✓ \$ | | | | |
| CUMB. | William Stapleton Thomas Sands | * | | | F £ F JP | | | | |
| DERBS. | William Adderley Thomas Foljambe | * | | | \$ JP | | | | John Dabrichcourt~ John of Gaunt/Walter Blount~ |
| DEVON | James Chudleigh~ John Prescott | * | | | PX JP F JP | | | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby~ Theobald Wykeham | * | | | \$ F | | | | |
| ESSEX | Alexander Walden~ Thomas Bataill | * | | | JP PX | PX | | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester/(Walter Lord Fitzwalter) ?Thomas, duke of Gloucester |
| GLOUCS. | Gilbert Denys~ Thomas Berkeley I | * | | | F P✓ | | | | John of Gaunt |
| HERES. | Roger Wigmore Richard Nash | * | | K's esq | \$ JP | | | Const./Justice, Chmb. & Rec. S. Wales | Roger, earl of March Roger, earl of March/Thomas, earl of Stafford |
| HERTS. | Walter Lee~ John Ruggewyn | * | | Knt body | P✓ \$ PX JP F | | | Constable | (Walter, Lord FitzWalter) Richard Pantry - K's esq. |
| HUNTS. | William Moigne~ Robert Waryn | * | | | P✓ JP \$ | | | | John Styvecle~/Wiiliam Moigne~/Thomas Dengaine~ |
| KENT | Arnald Savage I~ Thomas Cobham~ | * | | Knt. Chm | PX \$ P✓ | | | | |
| LANCS. | Robert Urswyk~ John Croft~ | * | | | \$ \$ | ES | Master Forester, d of L | | John of Gaunt John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | Robert Langham Thomas Walsh~ | * | | | \$ JP P✓ | | | | John of Gaunt |
| LINCS. | John Bussy~ John Rochford | * | | | P✓ JP F JP | | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke Bolingbroke/Simon Felbrigge~ |
| MIDDX. | Adam Francis~ John Shoreditch I | * | | | F JP JP | | | | |
| NORFOLK | Robert Berney~ Hugh Fastolf | * | | | F JP F PX JP | | | | John of Gaunt/Richard, earl of Arundel Margaret, countess of Norfolk/Simon Burley~ |
| N'ANTS. | John Wydville John Mulso | * | | | PX JP PX F JP PX | | Deputy to William Thorpe, Keeper | | Thomas, earl of Stafford/William, Lord Zouche |
| N'UMB. | John Felton~ John Mitford | * | | | PX JP F JP P✓ | | Envoy Envoy | | Henry, earl of Northumberland Henry, earl of Northumberland/?Edmund, duke of York |
| NOTTS | John Burton~ Hugh Cressy | * | | | F £ PX \$ | | | | ?John of Gaunt Thomas Rempston I~ |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas de la Poyle~ Thomas Baratyn | * | | | PX \$ JP P✓ | | | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester John Golafre~ - Knt of the Chamber |
| RUTLAND | Hugh Browe~ John Calveley~ | * | | | JP P✓ \$ | | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/?Thomas, duke of Gloucester John of Gaunt |
| SALOP | Richard Ludlow~ Thomas Whitton | * | | ?K's esq | \$ F | | | | Richard, earl of Arundel Richard, earl of Arundel |
| SOMERSET | John Berkeley I~ <u>Thomas Hungerford~</u> | * | | | P✓ £ PX JP PX | | Ch. Stwd. S of Trent/Ch. Stwd, d of L | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| S'HANTS | William Sturmy~ Henry Popham | * | (Wilts) | | F £ P✓ £ | | Warden of Forest | | |
| STAFFS. | Nicholas Stafford~ John Delves~ | * | | | PX JP P✓ £ F | | Chief Steward for earl of Stafford | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester (cousin to Hugh, earl of Stafford) |
| SUFFOLK | William Wingfield~ William Burgate~ | * | | | JP | | | | William Bagot~ & John Bagot~ Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk |
| SURREY | William Weston I John Bentley | * | | ?K' esq | P✓ \$ P✓ | | | Up to 1389 Chamb. & K's Rec. in Chester & Clk of Exchequer | |
| SUSSEX | William Percy~ William Waleys | * | | | P✓ JP P✓ | | | | Richard, earl of Arundel Richard, earl of Arundel/John Seyntcler~ - d of L |
| WARWS. | William Bagot~ Guy Spyne | * | | K's esq | PX JP F | | Keeper from November 1390 | | Thos e. of Nottingham/Bolingbroke/Thos e. of Warwick Thomas, earl of Warwick/William Bagot~ |
| WESTM. | Christopher Moresby~ Hugh Salkeld I | * | | | PX ?JP £ | | | | |
| WILTS. | John Roches~ John Wroth | * | | K' Knt | P✓ \$ \$ | | Deputy Marshal of England./Keeper/Surveyor of forest | | |
| WORCS. | Nicholas Lilling~ Hugh Cheyne~ | * | | | P✓ \$ £ | | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick Roger, earl of March |
| YORKS. | William Elys~ <u>James Pickering~</u> | * | | Knt body K' Knt | P✓ \$ P✓ | | | | |

PARLIAMENT of 1391

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|---|----|----------|-----------|----|---------|----|---|--|
| BEDS. | William Terrington Ralph Walton | | | K's ser | P✓ | \$ | | | John Waltham/Thomas Haxey Braybrookes/?Thomas duke of Gloucester |
| BERKS. | Laurence Drew John Eastbury | | * | | | JP £ | | | Gilbert Talbot~ |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Aylesbury~ John Broughton | | * | | F | £ | PX | | Ralph, Lord Lumley |
| CAMBS. | Robert Denny~ Simon Burgh | | * | | P✓ | | | | Thomas Gerberge~ steward duke of Y William Courteney, Archbishop of Canterbury |
| CORNW. | John Colshull I John Treverbyn | | * | K's esq | F | JP | | Custodian of Marck castle Steward, duchy of Cornwall from 1392 | |
| CUMB. | Peter Tilliol~ Robert Lowther | | * | K's esq | P✓ | JP | P✓ | King's Bailiff, Winchelsea | |
| DERBS. | Phillip Okore~ Thomas Foljambe | | * | | F | \$ | F | | Ralph, Lord Neville John of Gaunt |
| DEVON | James Chudleigh~ William Sturmy~ | | * | | JP | | | Steward, d of L from 1392 | John of Gaunt/Walter Blount~ |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford I~ John Hamley~ | | * | | PX | ?JP | F | | |
| ESSEX | William Coggeshall~ Walter Lee~ | | * | | F | £ | | Warden of Forest | |
| GLOUCS. | Maurice Berkeley~ Robert Whittington | | * | | P✓ | JP | F | | Thomas, earl of Stafford Roger, earl of March |
| HERES. | Robert Whitney~ Roger Wigmore | | * | | P✓ | \$ | | connected to royal HH Const./Justice, Cham. & Rec. S Wales | Queen Anne (daughter is lady in waiting) Roger, earl of March |
| HERTS. | John Thornbury~ John Norbury | | * | K's esq | F | JP | | | ?John of Gaunt Bolingbroke/John of Gaunt |
| HUNTS. | William Moigne~ Robert Lovetot | | * | Knt. body | P✓ | JP | | Deputy Captain of Brest | 'Appellant supporter' Nicholas Styvecle~ |
| KENT | Arnald Savage I~ Nicholas Potyn | | * | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| LANCS. | Robert Urswyk~ Robert Worsley | | * | Knt. Chm | PX | \$ | | | John Devereux~ - steward of K's HH John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke John of Gaunt/John Stanley~ |
| LEICS. | William Flamville~ Thomas Walsh~ | | * | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Steward, d of L, 1392-3 | John of Gaunt |
| LINCS. | John Bussy~ Gerard Sothill | | * | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke Phillip, Lord Darcy |
| MIDDX. | Thomas Bray II William Norton I | | | | | | | | connection with Westminster Abbey |
| NORFOLK | John White~ Robert Berney~ | | * | | F | JP | F | Bailiff, d of L | John of Gaunt/Margaret, countess of Norfolk John of Gaunt/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| N'ANTS. | Nicholas Lilling Roger Chamber | | *(Worcs) | | P✓ | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| N'UMB. | Gerard Heron~ John Mitford | | * | | PX | \$ | PX | | |
| NOTTS | Robert Cockfield~ Thomas Hercy~ | | * | annuity | F | JP | P✓ | Envoy/Const., Stwd. & Sheriff of the Bishop of Durham's liberty Envoy /Steward for Percies | Henry, earl of Northumberland/Edmund, duke of York |
| OX'SHIRE | William Wilcotes John Rede | | * | K's esq | F | £ | | | John of Gaunt/Hugh Hercy~ John Golafre~/Thomas, Lord Despenser |
| RUTLAND | John Bussy~ Hugh Greenham~ | | *(Lincs) | | P✓ | JP | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| SALOP | Roger Corbet~ Hugh Cheyne~ | | * | | | JP | | | |
| SOMERSET | John Rodney~ Thomas Brooke~ | | *(Worcs) | annuity | JP | | | Keeper | Roger, earl of March John of Gaunt |
| S'HANTS | John Sandys~ Robert Cholmley | | * | annuity | P✓ | JP | | Lieutenant to earl of Notts./Constable | Thomas, earl of Kent/Thomas, earl of Nottingham William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| STAFFS. | John Bagot~ William Walsale | | * | K's esq | PX | JP | | Constable | William Bagot~/John of Gaunt/Reginold, Lord Grey 'royal placeman' |
| SUFFOLK | Roger Drury~ William Bardwell~ | | * | | F | £ | P✓ | | e. of Arundel/d. of Glouc/Magaret, countess of Norfolk Margaret, countess of Norfolk |
| SURREY | Thomas Brewes~ Ralph Cuddington | | * | | F | | | | Richard earl of Arundel/Thomas, earl of Kent |
| SUSSEX | William Percy~ Robert Tauk | | * | | P✓ | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Robert, Lord Poynings Richard, earl of Arundel |
| WARWS. | William Bagot~ Guy Spyne | | * | K's esq | PX | \$ | | Keeper | Thomas, earl of Nottingham/Bolingbroke Thomas, earl of Warwick/William Bagot~ |
| WESTM. | William Curwen~ William Thornburgh | | * | | F | | | | |
| WILTS. | Bernard Brocas~ Robert Dingley I | | * | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Keeper/M. K's Hounds/Chamb/Ambass | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester/Queen Anne Thomas, earl of Kent |
| WORCS. | Alexander Besford Henry Bruyn | | * | K's esq | PX | | | Steward for Westminster Abbey | Thomas, earl of Warwick Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | Robert Neville~ John Godard~ | | * | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | John of Gaunt/(Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk) |

PARLIAMENT of 1393

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------|------------|---|-----------|----|-----|-----|--|--|
| BEDS. | John Worship | * | | Esq body | F | £ | | Yeoman of Royal cup-house | |
| | William Terrington | * | | K's ser | P✓ | \$ | | | Thomas Haxey/John Waltham |
| BERKS. | John Kentwood~ | | | | | | JP | Justiciar of S. Wales up to 1390 | |
| | Edmund Sparsholt | | | | F | £ | | | |
| BUCKS. | Edmund Missenden~ | * | | | | | | | Uncle is Bernard Brocas~ - chamberlain to Queen Anne |
| | Alan Ayot | | | | | | | | |
| CAMBS. | John Colville~ | | | | | | | | |
| | Robert Denny~ | * | | | | | | | Thomas Gerberge~ - steward for Edmund, duke of York |
| CORNW. | John Trevarthian | * | | K's esq | F | JP | | | |
| | John Treverbyn | * | | K's esq | | \$ | | King's bailiff, Winchelsea | |
| CUMB. | Geoffrey Tilliol | * | | | | | | | |
| | William Lowther I | * | | | F | | F | | Neville family |
| DERBS. | John Dabrichcourt~ | * | | | | £ | | Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Nicholas Goushill~ | * | | | | | | | Thomas, earl of Nottingham |
| DEVON | Phillip Courtenay~ | | | K's Knt | | ?\$ | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | |
| | James Chudleigh~ | * | | | PX | JP | P✓ | | |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford I~ | * | | | | P✓ | JP | | William, earl of Stafford |
| | John Moigne~ | | | | | P✓ | JP | PX | |
| ESSEX | Walter Lee~ | * | | Knt body | P✓ | \$ | | Constable/Keeper | John of Gaunt |
| | Thomas Swinbourne~ | * | | | F | £ | | Warden of Guines castle | Thomas Percy~ |
| GLOUCS. | John Cheyne I~ | | | Knt Chmb | | \$ | | Ambass/Lieutenant of Constable of England in the Court of Chivalry | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | Thomas Fitznichol~ | | | | P✓ | | | | |
| HERES. | John Chandos~ | * | | | PX | \$ | | | |
| | Thomas Oldcastle | | | | PX | £ | PX | | Roger, earl of March/?Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| HERTS. | Robert Turk~ | | | | F | \$ | | | ?Thomas, duke of Gloucester |
| | John Ruggewyn | | | | PX | JP | F | | Richard Pantry - K's esq |
| HUNTS. | John Peckbridge~ | | | | | | | | |
| | Robert Stokes~ | | | | | | | | Nicholas Styvecle~ |
| KENT | William Burcester~ | * | | | PX | JP | | | Thomas, Lord Despenser |
| | Nicholas Potyn | * | | | F | | | | John Devereux~ - steward of K's HH |
| LANCS. | Robert Urswyk~ | * | | | | \$ | P✓ | M. Forester & Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | Ralph Ipre~ | | | | | £ | | Keeper & Receiver, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | Hugh Shirley~ | * | | | | £ | | | Chamber knt. of John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | Robert Harrington~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| LINCS. | John Bussy~ | *(Rut) | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Keeper of King's Manor & Castle | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | Robert Cumberworth | * | | | | £ | | | |
| MIDDX. | William Tamworth | * | | K's esq | | | | | |
| | Thomas Maidstone | * | | Yeo HH | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | Ralph Shelton~ | * | | | | \$ | | | Thomas Erpingham~/John Strange~/John Wynter |
| | John Curson~ | * | | | | \$ | | | Bp. Peverel/Edmund, Bishop of Stafford/Morleys |
| N'ANTS. | Giles Mallory~ | | | | | F | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick/?John, earl of Huntingdon |
| | John Tyndale | | | | P✓ | ?JP | PX | Forester of bailiwick | William, 3rd Lord Zouche |
| N'UMB. | Gerard Heron~ | * | | annuity | | £ | | Envoy/Const. Steward & Sheriff of the | Bishop of Durham's liberty |
| | John Mitford | * | | annuity | F | JP | P✓ | Envoy /Steward for Percies | Henry, earl of Northumberland/Edmund, duke of York |
| NOTTS | Thomas Rempston I~ | | | | F | | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | John Gateford | | | | P✓ | JP | | sergeant-at-arms | |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Paynell~ | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Baratyn | | | | | JP | P✓ | | John Golafre~ - Knt. of the Chamber |
| RUTLAND | Walter Scarle | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | |
| | John Elme~ | * | | | | | | | |
| SALOP | William Hugford~ | | | | P✓ | | ES | | Oliver Mauleverer~ |
| | John Darras | * | | | F | | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Brooke~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | William Bonville~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| S'HANTS | Bernard Brocas~ | *(Wilts) | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Keeper/M. K's Hounds/Chmb/Ambass | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester/Queen Anne |
| | John Sandys~ | * | | annuity | P✓ | JP | | Constable | Thomas, earl of Kent/Thomas, earl of Nottingham |
| STAFFS. | Thomas Aston~ | | | | F | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | William Walsale | * | | | P✓ | £ | P✓ | Constable | 'royal placeman' |
| SUFFOLK | William Elmham~ | * | | K's Knt | | \$ | | Envoy | |
| | William Argentine~ | * | | | F | | | | Thomas Erpingham~ |
| SURREY | Thomas Brewes~ | * | | | | | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Thomas, earl of Kent |
| | William Weston I | | | ?K's esq | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | |
| SUSSEX | William Percy~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Robert, Lord Poynings |
| | John Broke | * | | | | JP | PX | Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Edward Dallingridge~ |
| WARWS. | William Bagot~ | * | | K's esq | PX | \$ | | Keeper | Thomas, earl of Nottingham./Bolingbroke |
| | John Catesby | | | | | JP | | Attorney for earl of Warwick | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | John Crackenthorpe | | | | | | F | Constable for Lord Clifford | Thomas, Lord Clifford |
| | Hugh Salkeld I | * | | | | | ?JP | | |
| WILTS. | Thomas Hungerford~ | | | | PX | JP | PX | Ch. Stwd. S of Trent/Ch. Stwd., d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | William Sturmy~ | *(Devon) | | K's Knt | F | £ | | Warden of Savernake Forest | |
| WORCS. | Nicholas Lilling~ | *(N'ants.) | | | P✓ | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | William Spemore | | | | | | | Chief Steward for earl of Warwick | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | Ralph Euer~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | Ambassador | Henry, earl of Northumberland |
| | Robert Neville~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | John of Gaunt/Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk |

PARLIAMENT of 1394

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|-----------------------|---------|---|-----------|----|-----|----|---|---|
| BEDS. | John Worship | * | | Esq. body | F | £ | | Yeoman of royal cup-house | |
| | Reginald Ragon | | | | F | \$ | F | | Reynold, 2nd Lord Grey |
| BERKS. | Richard Adderbury II~ | * | | | | | | Ambassador | John of Gaunt (Adderbury Knt of the duke's Chamber) |
| | William Langford~ | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Sackville I~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Dayrell | | | | | | | | |
| CAMBS. | Baldwin St. George~ | * | | | F | | | | ?John of Gaunt |
| | Richard Hasilden | * | | | F | | | Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| CORNW. | John Colshull I | | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | |
| | John Treverbyn | * | | K's esq | | \$ | | King's bailiff, Winchelsea | |
| CUMB. | Clement Skelton~ | | | | | \$ | | | |
| | Robert Lowther | | | | F | JP | F | | Ralph, Lord Neville |
| DERBS. | Thomas Wensley~ | | | | | JP | | Steward & Constable, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | John de la Pole~ | | | | | JP | | Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| DEVON | John Grenville~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| | James Chudleigh~ | * | | | PX | ?JP | P✓ | | |
| DORSET | Stephen Derby | | | | | \$ | | | |
| | John Perle I | | | | | £ | F | | |
| ESSEX | Walter Lee~ | * | | Knt body | P✓ | \$ | | Constable/Keeper | John of Gaunt |
| | Thomas Bataill | | | | PX | | PX | | ?Thomas, duke of Gloucester |
| GLOUCS. | John Cheyne I~ | * | | Knt Chm | | \$ | | Ambass./Lieutenant in Court Chivalry | Thomas, duke of Gloucester |
| | Henry River~ | * | | | PX | JP | | | |
| HERES. | Leonard Hakluyt~ | | | | F | JP | F | | Roger, earl of March |
| | Thomas Clanvowe | * | | K's esq | F | £ | | | |
| HERTS. | John Ruggewyn | | | | PX | JP | F | | Richard Pantry - K's esq. |
| | Richard Pantry | * | | Esq body | | | | | Thomas Lee II/Walter Lee~ |
| HUNTS. | John Herlington | | | | F | JP | P✓ | | |
| | John Waweton | | | | | \$ | | | William Moigne~ |
| KENT | William Pecche~ | * | | | | | | | |
| | John Cobham | | | K's esq | | £ | | | |
| LANCS. | Robert Urswyk~ | * | | | | JP | P✓ | Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | Thomas Gerard | | | | F | £ | | | |
| LEICS. | Thomas Walsh~ | | | | | ?JP | P✓ | Steward & Constable, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Robert Harrington~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| LINCS. | John Bussy~ | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Keeper manor & castle/Ch Stwd, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | John Rochford | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Bolingbroke/Simon Felbrigge~ |
| MIDDX. | John Shorditch II | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | James Ormesby | * | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | John White~ | | | | | \$ | | Bailiff, d of L | John of Gaunt/Margaret, countess of Norfolk |
| | William Rees | | | | F | £ | F | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Thomas, earl of Nottingham |
| N'ANTS. | Henry Green~ | | | | | \$ | | | John of Gaunt/William, Lord Beauchamp |
| | Giles Mallory~ | * | | | F | | | ?Chief Steward for earl of Warwick | Thomas, earl of Warwick/?John Holland, earl of Hunts. |
| N'UMB. | Gerard Heron~ | * | | annuity | | £ | | Envoy/Const., Steward & Sheriff of Bishop of Durham's liberty | |
| | John Mitford | * | | annuity | F | JP | P✓ | Envoy /Steward for Percies | Henry, earl of Northumberland Edmund, duke of York |
| NOTTS | William Neville | | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| | Nicholas Strelley | * | | | | £ | | | |
| OX'SHIRE | William Wilcotes | | | K's esq | P✓ | ?JP | | Chief Steward for Queen Anne | Queen Anne/John Golafre~/Thomas, Lord Despenser |
| | John Adderbury | * | | | | JP | | | |
| RUTLAND | John Daneys~ | | | | | \$ | | | |
| | John Elme~ | * | | | | | | | Oliver Mauleverer~ |
| SALOP | Adam Peshale | | | K's Knt | P✓ | £ | | Keeper of Forest | William, earl of Stafford |
| | William Hugford~ | * | | | P✓ | | ES | | ?Richard, earl of Arundel |
| SOMERSET | Humphrey Stafford I~ | *(Dors) | | | P✓ | JP | | | William, earl of Stafford |
| | John Berkeley I~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | |
| S'HANTS | Henry Popham | | | | P✓ | £ | | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| | John Hampton | * | | | | | | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| STAFFS. | John Ipstones~ | | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| | William Walsale | * | | | P✓ | £ | P✓ | Constable/Marshal of Hall from 1395 | |
| SUFFOLK | William Elmham~ | * | | K's Knt | | \$ | | Envoy | |
| | Robert Bukton | * | | Q's esq | | | | Constable | Thomas Percy~ (brother of earl of Northumberland) |
| SURREY | Nicholas Carew II | | | | PX | ?JP | F | | |
| | William Weston I | | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | |
| SUSSEX | William Percy~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel/Robert, Lord Poynings |
| | Thomas Sackville II~ | * | | | F | | | | Edward Dallingridge~ |
| WARWS. | William Bagot~ | * | | K's esq | PX | \$ | | Keeper | Thomas, earl of Nottingham./Bolingbroke |
| | Thomas Burdet~ | * | | | F | | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | William Curwen~ | | | | F | | | | |
| | William Thornburgh | | | | | | ES | | |
| WILTS. | John Roches~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | \$ | | Dep. Marshal of Eng/Keeper/Ambassador/Surveyor of forest | |
| | John Gawen | * | | | PX | £ | PX | | John Waltham, Bishop of Salisbury |
| WORCS. | William Spemore | * | | | | | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | Richard Thurgim | * | | | | JP | PX | | Richard, Lord Scrope |
| YORKS. | Robert Neville~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | John of Gaunt/Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk |
| | John Routh~ | * | | K's Knt | | £ | F | | |

PARLIAMENT of 1395

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------|----------|---|-----------|----|-----|----|---------------------------------------|---|
| BEDS. | Philip Walwyn | * | | Esq body | PX | | | keeper of royal manor | Bolingbroke |
| | Giles Daubenev | * | | | | | | | |
| BERKS. | William Wood I | * | | | PX | \$ | PX | | Richard Adderbury~ |
| | William Brouns | * | | | | JP | PX | Steward | Princess of Wales |
| BUCKS. | John Chetwode~ | | | | F | | | | Henry Green~ |
| | Edward Durdant | | | K's esq. | | | | | |
| CAMBS. | Edmund de la Pole~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | brother was Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk |
| | Thomas Hasildon II | * | | | F | | | Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| CORNW. | Henry Ilcombe~ | | | | | | F | | |
| | John Chenduyt | * | | | | | | official of duchy of Cornwall estates | |
| CUMB. | William Stapleton | | | | F | £ | F | | |
| | Thomas Sands | | | | | JP | | | |
| DERBS. | John Cockayne~ | * | | | F | £ | F | | Bolingbroke |
| | Peter Melbourne | * | | | | \$ | | Constable & Keeper of Park, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| DEVON | Phillip Courtenay~ | | | annuity | | \$ | | | Edward, earl of Devon/Richard II |
| | Hugh Courtenay~ | * | | | F | £ | | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford I~ | *(Som) | | | P✓ | JP | | | William, earl of Stafford |
| | Theobald Wykeham | | | | P✓ | | | | |
| ESSEX | Thomas Coggeshall | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester |
| | John Doreward | * | | | F | JP | | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Fitznichol~ | | | | P✓ | | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | Gilbert Denys~ | | | | P✓ | | | | John of Gaunt |
| HERES. | John Chandos~ | | | | PX | \$ | | | |
| | Thomas Walwyn I | * | | K's esq. | | | | | |
| HERTS | Thomas Morwell | | | annuity | | JP | | | |
| | John Ruggewyn | * | | | PX | JP | F | | Richard Pantry - esq. of Body |
| HUNTS. | John Waweton | * | | | | \$ | | | |
| | John Herlington | * | | | F | JP | P✓ | | |
| KENT | Nicholaus Haute~ | * | | | F | | | | Lord Cobham/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | Thomas Brockhill | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| LANCS. | Robert Urswyk~ | * | | | | \$ | P✓ | Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | Thomas Radcliffe | | | | | ?JP | | Constable/Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| LEICS. | Thomas Walsh~ | * | | | | \$ | P✓ | Constable/Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Appellant |
| | Nicholas Colman | * | | | | | | | |
| LINCS. | John Bussy | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Keeper manor & castle/Ch.Stwd, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | Robert Cumberworth | | | | | £ | | | |
| MIDDX. | John Shorditch II | | | | | £ | | | |
| | Thomas Coningsby | | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | John White~ | * | | | | \$ | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke/Margaret, countess of Norfolk |
| | Robert Berney~ | | | | F | JP | F | | John of Gaunt/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| N'ANTS. | Roger Chamber | | | | PX | \$ | PX | | |
| | Robert Chiselden | * | | | F | | F | ?Receiver General, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| N'UMB. | William Swinburne~ | * | | | | | | | John of Gaunt/Henry, earl of Northumberland |
| | Sampson Hardyng | | | | | JP | ES | | |
| NOTTS | Thomas Rempston I~ | | | | P✓ | | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | Nicholas Burdon | * | | esq. body | | | | Royal auditor | |
| OX'SHIRE | William Wilcotes | * | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | | (Chief Steward for Queen Anne) | (Queen Anne)/Thomas, Lord Despenser |
| | William Bruley | * | | | | | PX | | |
| RUTLAND | John Wittlebury | | | | PX | JP | | | 'supporter of Appellants' |
| | Walter Scarle | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Verderer | 'supporter of Appellants' |
| SALOP | Thomas Young I | | | | | JP | | | Richard, earl of Arundel |
| | John Longford | * | | | | | | | |
| SOMERSET | William Bonville~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| | Thomas Brooke~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| S'HANTS | Bernard Brocas~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | Keeper/Ambassador | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| | Robert Cholmley | | | K's esq | PX | \$ | | Constable | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| STAFFS. | William Shreshull~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | Aymer Lichfield | | | | P✓ | \$ | ES | | William Bagot~ |
| SUFFOLK | William Argentine~ | | | | P✓ | | | | |
| | William Burgate~ | | | | | | | | Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk |
| SURREY | Nicholas Carew II | * | | | PX | JP | F | | |
| | Robert Loxley II | * | | | | | | | ?John of Gaunt |
| SUSSEX | Thomas Sackville II~ | * | | | F | | | | Edward Dallingridge~ |
| | Hugh Quecche | | | | | | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick/Richard, earl of Arundel |
| WARWS. | William Bagot~ | * | | K's esq | PX | \$ | | Keeper./Stwd./Lt to earl Marshal | Thomas, earl of Warwick/John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | William Spernore | *(Worcs) | | | | | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | Walter Strickland | | | | | JP | P✓ | | |
| | William Crackenthorp | | | | | | F | | |
| WILTS. | John Lilborne~ | * | | | | \$ | | | |
| | John Gawen | * | | | PX | JP | PX | | John Waltham, Bishop of Salisbury/Henry Green~ |
| WORCS. | Alexander Besford | | | | | \$ | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| | Robert Russell I | * | | | F | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | John St Quintin~ | | | | | \$ | | | |
| | Peter Bukton~ | * | | | F | £ | F | Constable & Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke/Hen. earl of Northumberland |

PARLIAMENT of JANUARY 1397

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------|---------|---|-----------|----|-----|----|---------------------------------------|--|
| BEDS. | John Worship | | | Esq body | F | £ | | Usher of Royal Chamber | |
| | William Terrington | | | K's Serv | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| BERKS. | Richard Adderbury~ | | | | | | | Ambassador | John of Gaunt (Adderbury is Knt of the duke's Chamber) |
| | Robert James | * | | | F | £ | F | | Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk/Thomas Chaucer |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Shelley | * | | K's esq | | | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall 1398-9 | Steward to John, earl of Huntingdon |
| | John Barton I | * | | | | JP | | attorney for earl of Huntingdon | John, earl of Huntingdon |
| CAMBS. | Thomas Skelton~ | * | | | | JP | | Chief Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Thomas Hasilden II | * | | | F | | | Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| CORNW. | John Arundell | * | | | F | JP | | | |
| | John Colshull I | | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | |
| CUMB. | John Ireby~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Thomas, duke of Gloucester |
| | Clemence Skelton~ | | | | | JP | | | |
| DERBS. | William Dethick~ | | | | | | \$ | | |
| | Roger Bradbourne | * | | | F | | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| DEVON | William Bonville~ | *(Soms) | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| | John Grenville~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford I~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Edmund, earl of Stafford. |
| | John Moigne~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | |
| ESSEX | William Coggeshall~ | | | | PX | £ | | | John, Lord Cobham |
| | John Doreward | * | | | F | JP | | | Rich. e. of Arundel/Thos d of Glous/John, Lord Cobham |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Butler~ | * | | | | JP | | | John, earl of Salisbury |
| | John Berkeley I~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | |
| HERES. | Thomas Clanvowe~ | | | K's Knt | F | ?JP | | HH of Queen Isabella | Queen Isabella |
| | Thomas Walwyn II | * | | | PX | | PX | Receiver General to earl of March | Roger, earl of March |
| HERTS. | Edward Benstede~ | | | | PX | \$ | | | 'out of sympathy with court' |
| | John Ruggewyn | | | | PX | JP | F | | Richard Pantry - K's esq. |
| HUNTS. | John Styvecle | * | | | | JP | | | William Bagot~/Henry Green~ |
| | Thomas Waweton | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| KENT | Thomas Brockhill | * | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| | Nicholas Potyn | | | | P✓ | | | | |
| LANCS. | Robert Urswyk~ | * | | | | \$ | P✓ | Master Forester, d of L | John Devereux~ Steward of K's HH |
| | Richard Molyneux | * | | | F | | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| LEICS. | Thomas Walsh~ | * | | | | \$ | P✓ | | John of Gaunt/Robert Urswyk~/strong supporter of R II' |
| | Edmund Bugge | * | | | | | | | John of Gaunt |
| LINCS. | John Bussy~ | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Keeper manor & castle/Ch Stwd, d of L | esq. of Bolingbroke/John of Gaunt |
| | John Copledyke~ | * | | | PX | £ | F | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| MIDDX. | Thomas Maidstone | | | Yeo HH | | | | | |
| | Thomas Goodlake | * | | Esq body | | | | Keeper of K's park & warrens | |
| NORFOLK | John Curson~ | | | | | \$ | | | Peverel, Bishop of—/Edmund, Bishop of Stafford/Morleys |
| | William Rees | | | | F | £ | F | | Thomas, duke of Norfolk |
| N'ANTS. | Henry Green~ | | | (K's Knt) | | \$ | | Council member/Ambassador 1398 | William, Lord Beauchamp/Lord Zouche |
| | John Cope | * | | | F | | F | | Bolingbroke |
| N'UMB. | Thomas Gray~ | * | | annuity | | JP | | Constable/Envoy | Ralph, earl of Westmorland/Thomas, duke of Norfolk |
| | John Mitford | * | | annuity | F | JP | P✓ | Envoy/Steward Percies/Constable | Henry, earl of Northumberland./John le Scrope~ |
| NOTTS | Thomas Rempston I~ | | | | P✓ | | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke |
| | Hugh Cressy | | | | F | £ | | | Thomas Rempston I~ |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Baratyn | | | | | JP | P✓ | | John Golafre~ - Knt of the Chamber |
| | John Adderbury | | | | | JP | | | |
| RUTLAND | Robert Pleasington~ | * | | | | | | | |
| | Roger Flore | * | | | F | £ | F | Verderer | Edward, earl of Rutland |
| SALOP | Fulk Sprengnose | * | | | | | | | |
| | William Lee I | * | | | | £ | F | | |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Brooke~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Arthur~ | * | | | F | | | | ?Thomas, Lord Despenser |
| S'HANTS | John Popham~ | * | | | F | £ | | Bailiff, d of L | John of Gaunt |
| | Robert Cholmley | | | K's esq | PX | \$ | | Constable | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester |
| STAFFS. | John Bagot~ | | | | F | £ | F | | William Bagot~/John of Gaunt |
| | Robert Francis~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| SUFFOLK | William Elmham~ | | | K's Knt | | \$ | | Envoy | Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk |
| | Robert Bukton | | | Q's esq | | | | Constable | Thomas Percy/Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk |
| SURREY | Nicholas Carew II | * | | | PX | JP | F | | |
| | William Weston I | | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | |
| SUSSEX | William Percy~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | ?Richard earl of Arundel |
| | John Ashburnham | * | | | PX | | | | |
| WARWS. | William Bagot~ | * | | K's Knt | PX | \$ | | Steward | Thomas, duke of Norfolk |
| | Thomas Clinton | * | | | | | F | | Thomas, duke of Norfolk |
| WESTM. | John Lancaster I~ | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| | Hugh Salkeld I | | | | | \$ | | | Ralph, Lord Greystoke |
| WILTS. | John Roches~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | \$ | | Keeper/Surveyor of forest/Ambassador | |
| | Robert Corbet~ | | | | F | £ | | | |
| WORCS. | William Spemore | *(Warw) | | | | \$ | | | Eleanor de Bohun, duchess of Gloucester |
| | Richard Ruyhale | * | | | | \$ | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | Ralph Euer~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | Ambassador | John Russell~/Thomas, Lord Despenser |
| | Peter Buckton~ | | | | F | £ | ES | Steward of HH of Bolingbroke | Henry, earl of Northumberland/Thomas, earl of Warwick |

PARLIAMENT of SEPTEMBER 1397

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS | X | Y | Z |
|----------|----------------------|---------|---|-----------|----|-----|----|---|--|---|---|---|
| BEDS. | Baldwin Pigot | | | | F | \$ | | | ?Thomas, duke of Norfolk | | | |
| | John Worship | * | | Esq body | F | £ | | Usher of Royal Chamber | | | | |
| BERKS. | John Englefield | | * | | | | | | John of Gaunt/William Wykham, Bishop of Winchester | | | |
| | John Hartington | | * | | | | | | | | | |
| BUCKS. | Thomas Aylesbury~ | | | | F | £ | | | Ralph Lumley | | | |
| | Thomas Shelley | * | | K's esq | | | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall 1398-9 | John Holand, duke of Exeter | | | |
| CAMBS. | Thomas Hasilden II | * | | | F | | | Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke | | | Y |
| | John Tyndale | | | | P✓ | \$ | PX | Forester of bailiwick | 'sympathetic' to Richard II | | | |
| CORNW. | John Arundell | * | | | F | JP | | | | | | |
| | John Trevarthian | | | K's esq | F | \$ | | | | | | |
| CUMB. | Peter Tilliol | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | John Holand, duke of Exeter (1398) | | | Y |
| | William Osmundlaw | * | | | F | £ | F | | ?Ralph, earl of Westmorland | | | |
| DERBS. | John Dabrichcourt~ | | | | | | | Master Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt (Steward HH in Feb 1399) | | | |
| | William Meynell~ | * | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEVON | Hugh Courtenay~ | | | | F | £ | | | Edw, earl of Devon/Edw, duke of Aumale | | | Y |
| | William Bonville~ | * | | | P✓ | \$ | | | | | | |
| DORSET | John Bathe | * | | | PX | £ | | | Thomas Holand, earl of Kent/John of Gaunt | | | |
| | William Martin | * | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESSEX | John Howard~ | * | | annuity | F | JP | | | | | | Y |
| | Robert Tey | * | | K's esq | F | JP | | Constable | Joan de Bohun, countess of Hereford | | | Z |
| GLOUCS. | Hugh Mortimer | * | | | | | | | Thomas, Lord Despenser | | X | |
| | John Browning | * | | | F | | F | | Thomas, Lord Despenser | | | |
| HERES. | Thomas Clanvowe~ | * | | K' Knt | F | JP | | | connected with HH of Queen Isabella | | | |
| | John Skydemore | * | | K's esq | | | | Constable/Steward, d of L | John Holand, duke of Exeter/John of Gaunt | | | Y |
| HERTS. | Edward Benstede~ | * | | | PX | \$ | | | 'out of sympathy with the court' | | X | |
| | John Ruggewyn | * | | | PX | JP | F | | Richard Pantry - K's esq. | | | |
| HUNTS. | Thomas Waweton | * | | | F | £ | | | | | | |
| | John Knyvet | * | | | PX | JP | PX | | | | | |
| KENT | William Pecche~ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | John Cobham | | | K's esq | | £ | | | | | | |
| LANCS. | John Boteler~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | Constable/Steward, d of L | John of Gaunt | | | |
| | Ralph Radcliffe~ | * | | annuity | PX | | | | John of Gaunt | | | |
| LEICS. | John Calveley~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | \$ | | | Thos. d. of Norfolk/Ric. earl of Arundel | | | X |
| | Henry Neville~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | | | | |
| LINCS. | John Bussy~ | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Keeper manor & castle/Ch Stwd, d of L | John of Gaunt | | | X |
| | John Rochford | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Bolingbroke/Simon Felbrigue | | | Z |
| MIDDX. | Adam Francis~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | John Montague, earl of Salisbury | | | |
| | John Wroth~ | * | | | | JP | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | Nicholas Dagworth~ | * | | Knt Chm | | | | Ambassador | | | | |
| | Edmund Thorpe~ | * | | annuity | | | | | Henry Percy - vice Chamberlain of HH | | | |
| N'ANTS. | John Mulsho | | | | P✓ | JP | PX | 'one of R's most trusted' | Edward, duke of Aumale | | | |
| | Hugh Northburgh | * | | | | | | | Edward, duke of Aumale | | | |
| N'UMB. | Gerald Heron~ | | | annuity | | ?JP | | Envoy/Const Sher & esch of Bishop of Durham's liberty | | | | Y |
| | Robert Lisle~ | * | | | F | £ | F | | | | | |
| NOTTS | Thomas Rempston I~ | * | | | P✓ | | | | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke | | | |
| | Robert Morton | * | | annuity | F | | F | married lady-in-waiting to Queen Anne | | | | Y |
| OX'SHIRE | William Wilcotes | | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | | (Chief Steward for Queen Anne) | (Queen Anne)/J. Golafre~/Thos, Lord Desp. | | | Y |
| | John Golafre | * | | K's esq | F | JP | F | | Edward, duke of Aumale | | | Z |
| RUTLAND | Oliver Mauleverer | | | | | JP | | | William Lord Zouche/Henry Green | | | |
| | Thomas Oudeby~ | * | | | PX | JP | F | | Edward, duke of Aumale/William, Lord Zouche | | | |
| SALOP | Fulk Pembridge~ | * | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Richard Chelmswick | *? | | K's esq | | JP | | Const/Keeper/Steward, duchy of Cornwall | | | | X |
| SOMERSET | Ivo Fitzwaryn~ | | | ?Knt Chm | | \$ | | Keeper | | | | Z |
| | Thomas Brooke~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | Bolingbroke | | | Y |
| S'HANTS | Robert Cholmley | * | | K's esq | PX | \$ | | Constable | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester | | | |
| | Robert More II | * | | | PX | | | Verderer | Robert Cholmley - King's esquire | | | |
| STAFFS. | Rustin Villeneuve | * | | | | | | | Edward, duke of Eumale | | | |
| | John Bagot~ | * | | | F | £ | F | | John of Gaunt/William Bagot~ | | | |
| SUFFOLK | William Bardwell~ | | | | | £ | | | Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk | | | |
| | Robert Bukton | * | | 'Q's esq | | | | Constable | Thos Percy~/M. de la Pole, earl of Suffolk | | | X |
| SURREY | Nicholas Carew II | * | | | PX | JP | F | | | | | Y |
| | Thomas Wintershall | * | | | | | | Keeper of the door, Queen's HH | Queen Isabella/Thomas, earl of Kent | | | |
| SUSSEX | Thomas Sackville II~ | | | | | F | | | Edward Dallingridge~ | | | X |
| | John Ashburnham | * | | | PX | | | | | | | |
| WARWS. | William Bagot~ | * | | K's Knt | PX | JP | | Constable/Steward | Thomas, duke of Norfolk | | | X |
| | Thomas Crewe | * | | | F | £ | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick | | | X |
| WESTM. | William Curven~ | | | | | F | | | | | | |
| | William Crakenthorp | | | | | | F | | | | | |
| WILTS. | Henry Green~ | *(Norf) | | K's Knt | | JP | | Council/Ambassador | Will. Lord Beauchamp/Will. Lord Zouche | X | | Z |
| | Thomas Blount~ | * | | Knt Chm | | | | | | | | |
| WORCS. | John Russell~ | | | K's Knt | | JP | | Council/Master of King's horse | | | | Y |
| | Richard Ruyhale | * | | | | JP | | | John Russell~/Thomas, Lord Despenser | | | Z |
| YORKS. | James Pickering~ | | | K' Knt | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | | | | |
| | David Roucliff~ | * | | | | £ | | Const. & Stwd. & M. Forester, d of L | John of Gaunt/Bolingbroke | | | |

PARLIAMENT of 1399

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|------------------------|--------|---|------------------|----|-----|----|--|---|
| BEDS. | Roger Beauchamp~ | * | | | F | | | | Gerald Braybrooke~ |
| | Gerard Braybrook II~ | | | | F | £ | | Keeper of forest/Const. c of Hereford | Joan, countess of Hereford/(Thomas, duke of Gloucester) |
| BERKS. | Edmund Sparsholt | | | | P✓ | £ | | (1401 described as K's serv) | |
| | Robert James | | | | F | £ | F | | Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk/Thomas Chaucer |
| BUCKS. | Edmund Hampden | * | | ?K's esq | PX | JP | F | | Gerald Braybrook~ |
| | Roger Dayrell | | | | | | | | |
| CAMBS. | Payn Tiptoft~ | *? | | Knt Chm annuity? | F | JP | | | (Richard, earl of Arundel) |
| | Richard Hasilden | | | | F | | | | (Bolingbroke) |
| CORNW. | William Lambourne~ | | | | | | \$ | Lt. to Thomas Remspton~, Adm of West, by 1402 | |
| | John Colshull I | | | | P✓ | JP | | Buyer for the royal HH | |
| CUMB. | William Leigh~ | * | | | PX | £ | | ?Constable for earl of Northumberland | Henry, earl of Northumberland |
| | Roland Vaux | * | | | | | | | (?John of Gaunt) |
| DERBS. | Walter Blount~ | * | | annuity | | | \$ | Constable, d of L/Ambassador | (John of Gaunt) |
| | John Curson | | | annuity | | JP | P✓ | Council/Steward, d of L/Keeper | (Bolingbroke) |
| DEVON | Phillip Courtnay~ | | | annuity | | | \$ | | (?John of Gaunt) |
| | John Stretch | * | | | | | | Steward, d of L | |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford I~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | ?Edmund, earl of Stafford |
| | John Frome | | | | F | JP | | Ambassador/Council in 1401 | Thomas earl of Gloucester |
| ESSEX | Thomas Coggeshale | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Council | (Thomas, duke of Gloucester) |
| | John Doreward | | | grant | P✓ | JP | | | (Richard, earl of Arundel/Thomas, duke of Gloucester) |
| GLOUCS. | John Cheyne I~ | | | K's Knt | | | \$ | Ambassador | (Thomas, duke of Gloucester)/John Russell~ |
| | Thomas Fitznichol~ | | | | P✓ | | | | (Richard earl of A) |
| HERES. | Kinard Bere~ | | | ?K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | (Roger, earl of March) |
| | Thomas Walwyn II | | | | PX | | ES | Receiver General for earl of March | Edmund, earl of March/William, Lord Abergavenny |
| HERTS. | Edward Benstede~ | * | | | PX | | \$ | | |
| | John Ludwick | * | | K's esq | | JP | | | possible attachment to d of L |
| HUNTS. | John Herlyngton | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | 'loyal serv. to H IV' | |
| | Robert Beville | | | | | | | | (John of Gaunt) |
| KENT | John Freningham | | | ?K's esq | P✓ | JP | | Council | John, Lord Cobham |
| | Thomas Brockhill | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| LANCS. | Robert Urswyk~ | | | annuity | | | \$ | P✓ Master Forester, d of L | (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke) |
| | Henry Hoghton~ | * | | | | | £ | Bailiff, d of L | (Bolingbroke) |
| LEICS. | Thomas Maureward~ | * | | | | | F | £ | (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke) |
| | Thomas Mandeville | * | | | | | | | (John of Gaunt) |
| LINCS. | Thomas Hawley~ | * | | | | | F | £ | Richard Brugge/Henry Retford |
| | John Rochford~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | Steward, d of L | (Bolingbroke) |
| MIDDX. | John Durham | | | Esq body | | ?JP | | | |
| | Thomas Maidstone | | | annuity | | | | Yeoman of the Household | |
| NORFOLK | Robert Berney~ | | | annuity | F | JP | F | Steward, d of L | (John of Gaunt)/(Richard, earl of Arundel) |
| | John Gurney | * | | | F | \$ | F | | (Richard, earl of Arundel)/Thos. Erpingham~/J. Strange~ |
| N'ANTS. | John Cope | | | K's esq | F | | ES | Clerk of Marshalsea of royal HH | (Bolingbroke) |
| | Robert Chiselden | | | | F | | P✓ | ?Receiver General, d of L | (?John of Gaunt)/John Trussell~ |
| N'UMB. | Thomas Gray~ | | | annuity | | JP | | Constable/Envoy | Ralph, earl of Westmorland |
| | Sampson Hardyng | | | | | JP | PX | | |
| NOTTS | John Gateford | | | annuity | P✓ | JP | | Deputy Steward of forest from 1400 | |
| | William Leek | * | | esq body | | | F | | Thomas Rempston I~ |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Baratyn | | | | | JP | P✓ | | |
| | John Wilcotes | * | | | F | £ | F | | |
| RUTLAND | Roger Flore | | | | F | JP | F | Keeper for earl of Rutland/Verderer | Edward, earl of Rutland |
| | John Durant | * | | | | £ | | | |
| SALOP | Thomas Young I | | | | | JP | | | (Richard earl of Arundel)/Thomas earl of Arundel |
| | John Burley I | * | | | F | JP | | | (Richard earl of Arundel)/Thomas earl of Arundel |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Brooke~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | William Bonville~ | *(Dev) | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| S'HANTS | Thomas Skelton~ | | | | | JP | | Chief Steward, d of L | (John of Gaunt)/William Gascoigne |
| | Nicholas Dabrichcourt~ | * | | annuity | PX | | | | (John of Gaunt) |
| STAFFS. | Robert Francis~ | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | Edmund, earl of Stafford |
| | Thomas Aston~ | | | | F | JP | | | Edmund, earl of Stafford/Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| SUFFOLK | William Argentine~ | | | | P✓ | | | | Thomas Erpingham~ |
| | John Hevenyngham~ | * | | | F | £ | | | (Thomas duke of Gloucester)/Thomas Erpingham~ |
| SURREY | John Hathersham II | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | Ralph Cuddington | | | | F | | | Commissioned into goods of R II | assoc. with d of L/Will. Wykeham, Bishop of Winchest |
| SUSSEX | John Pelham | * | | K's esq | | | £ | Const., d of L/Royal Sword Bearer at Coronation | (Bolingbroke) |
| | John Preston | * | | | | JP | | Steward, d of L | (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke)/(Richard earl of Arundel) |
| WARWS. | William Lucy~ | * | | annuity | F | \$ | | Constable/Steward, d of L | (John of Gaunt)/(Richard earl of Arundel) |
| | Alfred Trussell~ | * | | | F | £ | F | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | Thomas Musgrave~ | * | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | John Crackenthorpe~ | | | | | | F | Constable for Lord Clifford | Thomas, Lord Clifford |
| WILTS. | William Sturmy~ | | | | F | JP | | Warden of forest/Ambassador/1401 Council/Steward of HH Princess Blanche 1401-2 | |
| | John Roches~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | Keeper/Ambassador/Surveyor of forest | |
| WORCS. | John Blount II | * | | | | JP | PX | | assoc. with Lancaster family |
| | William Spemore | | | | | | | | Thomas, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | Ralph Euer~ | | | annuity | P✓ | JP | | Ambassador | (Boling)/Hen. e. of Northumberland/Thos. .e. of Warwick |
| | Robert Neville~ | | | annuity | P✓ | JP | | Constable, d of L | (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke)/(?Michale e. of Suffolk) |

PARLIAMENT of 1401

| COUNTY | M P | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS | A | B | C | D |
|----------|---|----|---|-----------|----|-----|----|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| BEDS. | Baldwin Pigot Giles Daubenev | | | | F | \$ | | | ?Thomas, duke of Norfolk | | | | |
| BERKS. | John Golafre Thomas Gloucester | * | | K's esq. | P✓ | \$ | F | Marshal of King's hall | Edward, earl of Rutland/Thomas Chaucer (Bolingbroke) | | | | |
| BUCKS. | John Barton I Thomas Durant | * | | | | \$ | | | John, earl of Huntingdon | | | | |
| CAMBS. | Baldwin St. George~ Thomas Hasilden II | | | K's esq | F | | | Escorted K's daughter Steward, d of L | (John of Gaunt) (John of Gaunt)/Bolingbroke | | B | C | |
| CORNW. | John Trevarthian William Bodrugan I | * | | K's esq | P✓ | \$ | | | | | | | D |
| CUMB. | Robert Lowther William Stapleton | | | | F | \$ | F | Verderer | Ralph, earl of Westmorland | | | | D |
| DERBS. | Thomas Gresley~ Peter de la Pole | * | | annuity | F | £ | | | (Bolingbroke) | | | | |
| DEVON | Phillip Courtney~ John Wadham~ | * | | annuity | | \$ | | lawyer for d of L | Lord Grey of Condor (John of Gaunt) | | B | | D |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford I~ John Frome | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | Edmund, earl of Stafford (Thomas earl of Gloucester) | | B | | D |
| ESSEX | William Coggeshall~ Robert Tey | * | | | PX | JP | | Council/Ambassador | (John, earl of Huntingdon)/ <u>John Doreward</u> | | | | C D |
| GLOUCS. | John Browning Thomas Fitznichol~ | * | | | P✓ | \$ | F | Constable | (Thomas, earl of Gloucester) (Richard, earl of Arundel)/(Bolingbroke) | | | | |
| HERES. | Walter Devereux~ John Greyndore~ | * | | K's esq | F | \$ | | | (John of Gaunt)?P of W | | B | C | |
| HERTS. | Thomas de la Barre~ Robert Newport | * | | K's Knt | PX | JP | P✓ | Constable | | | | | C D |
| HUNTS. | Robert Scott Thomas Waweton | * | | Esq body | F | \$ | F | | (Aubrey, earl of Oxford)/countess of Hereford/Mortimer Styuecle/Waweton/John Tiptoft~ ?John Tiptoft~ | | | | B |
| KENT | Arnold Savage I~ Robert Clifford | | | | PX | JP | | Steward HH & councillor of P of W | P of W | | | | |
| LANCS. | Robert Urswyk~ Nicholas Atherton~ | * | | annuity | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | Master Forester, d of L | brother is Keeper of Privy Seal (John of Gaunt) | | | | D |
| LEICS. | Thomas Derby John Neville~ | * | | Kn.body | | | | Bailiff, d of L | (John of Gaunt) | | | | D |
| LINCS. | Henry Retford~ John Copledyke~ | * | | Kn.body | PX | JP | | Ambassador | (Richard, earl of Arundel) | | | | C D |
| MIDDX. | William Loveney John Wroth~ | * | | annuity | PX | ?JP | F | | | | | | B C D |
| NORFOLK | John Payne II John Wynter | * | | | F | £ | | Keeper of Great Wardrobe | (Bolingbroke)/Henry, Bishop of Norwich | | | | C |
| N'ANTS. | Giles Mallory~ John Warwick I | * | | | | £ | | Chief Butler/Constable | (Bolingbroke) | | B | | |
| N'UMB. | Gerald Heron~ John Mitford | * | | k's esq | | JP | PX | Steward, d of Cornwall 1399-1400 | Prince of Wales/Thomas Erpingham~ ?Richard, earl of Warwick | | | | |
| NOTTS | John Burton II~ John Kniveton | * | | Esq body | PX | | F | Forester | | | | | B C D |
| OX'SHIRE | John Wilcotes Thomas Chaucer | * | | annuity | F | JP | F | Envoy | Henry, Earl of Northumberland/Lord Scrope | | B | C | D |
| RUTLAND | John Durant William Oudeby | * | | | F | £ | F | Envoy/Constable for Lord Scrope | (Bolingbroke)/ (Thomas, duke of Gloucester) | | | | |
| SALOP | John Burley I Hugh Cheyne~ | * | | annuity | PX | £ | F | Constable | Thos, Lord Despenser/Hen, Bishop of Lincoln (John of Gaunt)P of W | | B | | D |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Beachamp~ William Stourton | * | | | | £ | F | Chief Butler/Constable, d of L | (John of Gaunt)P of W | | | | C |
| S'HANTS | John Lisle~ Robert Cholmley | * | | | | JP | | Keeper of P of W's court from July | P of W | | | | B C D |
| STAFFS. | John Bagot~ Robert Francis~ | * | | annuity | F | JP | F | | Edmd. earl of Stafford/Thos., earl of Arundel (Roger, earl of March) | | B | C | D |
| SUFFOLK | Roger Drury Robert Bukton | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Stwd. of Principality of Wales/Keeper | Thomas Hungerford~ (Bolingbroke)/assoc. with d of L as tenant | | A | | D |
| SURREY | William Weston I John Wintershall | * | | K's Kn | F | JP | | Constable | (John of Gaunt)/Thomas Langley | | | | B D |
| SUSSEX | John Pelham Henry Hussey~ | * | | K's esq | PX | \$ | | Constable | Edmund, earl of Stafford (assoc. with Appellants) | | | | D |
| WARWS. | Thomas Burdet~ Alfred Trussell~ | * | | annuity | F | £ | F | Constable | Thomas, e of Worcester/Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk | | | | D |
| WESTM. | William Thornburgh Hugh Salkeld II | * | | | F | £ | F | | (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke) | | B | | |
| WILTS. | William Sturmy Walter Hungerford~ | * | | | F | JP | | Constable, d of L | Thomas, earl of Arundel Richard, earl of Warwick | | | | D |
| WORCS. | John Beauchamp~ Ralph Stafford | * | | | F | £ | F | | (Bolingbroke)/ (Thomas, duke of Gloucester) | | | | |
| YORKS. | John le Scrope~ Gerald Usflete | * | | | F | JP | | Ambass./Council/Warden of forest Constable | Steward of HH of Princess Blanche (Bolingbroke) | | A | | D |
| | | * | | | | \$ | | | Richard, earl of Warwick (kinship) Edmund, earl of Stafford | | | | C |
| | | * | | annuity | PX | \$ | | | (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke) | | | | D |

PARLIAMENT of 1402

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS | A | B | C | D |
|----------|-------------------------|----|---|-----------|----|----|----|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| BEDS. | John Worship | | | | P✓ | JP | | | | | | | |
| | Reynold Ragon | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | | | | | |
| BERKS. | John Arches | | | | | JP | P✓ | Bailiff for Bishop of Winchester | Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin | | | | |
| | Robert James~ | | | | F | £ | P✓ | | William, Bishop of Winchester/tenant of d of L | | | | |
| BUCKS. | Richard Arches~ | * | | | | £ | | | Michael de la Pole, e. of Suffolk/Thos Chaucer/Thos. Percy | | | | |
| | Edmund Hampden | | | ?K's esq | PX | JP | F | | assoc. with Lancastrian supporters | | | | D |
| CAMBS. | Thomas Prior | * | | | | | | | assoc. with d of L supporters | | | | |
| | John Hobildod | * | | K's esq | F | £ | | | | | | C | |
| CORNW. | William Talbot ~ | * | | | F | £ | F | | | | B | | D |
| | John Whalesborough | * | | | | £ | | | connected with Botreaux family | | | | |
| CUMB. | William Leigh~ | | | annuity | P✓ | £ | | Constable for earl of Northumberland | Henry, earl of Northumberland | | | | |
| | John Skelton | * | | K's esq | F | £ | F | | Heney, earl of Northumberland | | | | |
| DERBS. | John Cockayne~ | | | K's Bach | F | JP | F | ?Chief Steward, d of L | (Bolingbroke) | | B | | D |
| | Roger Leche | * | | Esq body | PX | JP | | | | | | C | D |
| DEVON | William Bonville~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | | | | | |
| | John Grenville~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Edward, earl of Devon | | B | | C |
| DORSET | William Cheyne~ | * | | K's esq | F | £ | | Envoy | (Thomas, duke of Gloucester) | | | | |
| | John Bathe | | | | PX | JP | | | (John of Gaunt)/(Thos. Holland, earl of Kent) | | B | | |
| ESSEX | Gerald Braybrook II~ | | | | F | JP | | Keeper of forest/Const c of Hereford | Joan, countess of Hereford | | B | | |
| | William Coggeshall~ | * | | | PX | JP | | | (John, earl of Huntingdon)/ <u>John Doreward</u> | | | C | D |
| GLOUCS. | Maurice Russell~ | * | | | PX | JP | | | | | B | | |
| | Thomas Fitznichol~ | * | | | | P✓ | | | (Richard, earl of Arundel)/(Bolingbroke) | | | | C |
| HERES. | Thomas de la Barre~ | * | | K's Knt | PX | JP | P✓ | | | | B | | |
| | Phillip Holgot | * | | | | JP | PX | | (Roger, earl of March) | | | | |
| HERTS. | Edward Benstede~ | | | K's Knt | PX | JP | | | | | | | D |
| | Robert Corbet~ | | | K's Knt | F | JP | | Constable | Eleanor de Bohun/Thomas Erpingham~ | | B | | |
| HUNTS. | Thomas Waweton | * | | | F | £ | | | ?John Tiptoft~ | | | | |
| | Robert Scott | * | | Esq body | F | JP | F | | Styuecle/Waweton/John Tiptoft~ | | | | |
| KENT | <u>Arnold Savage I~</u> | * | | K's Knt | PX | JP | | Steward of HH /Council | P of W | | | | |
| | Thomas Brockhill | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | | | | | |
| LANCS. | Richard Hoghton~ | | | | P✓ | JP | PX | Chief Steward & Parker, d of L | (John of Gaunt) | | | A | |
| | Nicholas Haryngton~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | (John of Gaunt) | | | | |
| LEICS. | Henry Neville~ | | | K's Knt | PX | £ | | | | | | B | C |
| | John Berkeley~ | * | | Knt Bach | PX | £ | | | 'family attach to d of L' | | | | C |
| LINCS. | Henry Retford~ | * | | Knt body | PX | JP | | Ambassador | | | | B | C |
| | Gerald Sothill~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | son is esq. royal body/Henry Retford~/Darcy | A | | | C |
| MIDDX. | Thomas Coningsby | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | James Northampton | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | Ralph Shelton~ | | | | | | \$ | | Thomas Erpingham~/John Strange~/John Wynter | | | | D |
| | Robert Berney~ | | | annuity | | JP | F | Deputy Constable | (John of Gaunt)/(Richard, earl of Arundel) | | | | |
| N'ANTS. | Giles Mallory~ | * | | | | F | | | Richard, earl of Warwick | | | | |
| | John Cope | | | K's esq | P✓ | | P✓ | Clerk of Marshalsea of royal HH | (Bolingbroke) | | | | C |
| N'UMB. | Gerard Heron~ | * | | annuity | | JP | | Envoy | Lord Say - Steward of HH | | B | | D |
| | John Mitford | * | | annuity | F | JP | ES | Envoy/Constable for Lord Scrope | Henry, earl of Northumberland/Lord Scrope | | | | D |
| NOTTS | Richard Stanhope~ | * | | Knt body | F | £ | | | (Bolingbroke) | | | | C |
| | John Clifton~ | * | | Knt body | | F | | | (Bolingbroke)/Thomas Rempston~ I | | | | C |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Chaucer | * | | | PX | £ | F | Chief Butler HH/Constable, d of L | (John of Gaunt)/P of W | | | | C |
| | Thomas Wykeham | * | | | F | £ | | Keeper for Bishop of Winchester | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester | | | | |
| RUTLAND | Thomas Oudeby~ | | | | PX | JP | F | | d of L affinity | | B | | D |
| | Roger Flore | | | | F | JP | F | Keeper for duke of York | Edward, duke of York | | | | |
| SALOP | John Cornwall~ | * | | k's knt | PX | £ | | | (John of Gaunt)/(Roger, earl of March) | | | | |
| | Adam Peshale~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | | | B | | D |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Brooke~ | | | k's knt | P✓ | JP | | | | | B | | D |
| | William Stourton | * | | | | JP | | Stwd of Principality of Wales/Keeper | <u>Thomas Hungerford~</u> | | | | D |
| S'HANTS | John Popham~ | | | | F | £ | | Bailiff, d of L | (John of Gaunt) | | | | D |
| | Edward Cowdray | * | | | F | | | Bailiff for Bishop of Winchester | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester | | | | |
| STAFFS. | William Walsale | * | | annuity | P✓ | £ | ES | Constable/Keeper | | | | | |
| | John Swynerton | * | | annuity | PX | | ES | Steward of Forest | (Thomas earl of Warwick) | | | | |
| SUFFOLK | Ralph Ramsey | * | | K's esq | F | £ | | | (Bolingbroke) | | | | |
| | Gilbert Debenham | * | | | PX | \$ | | | Thomas Erpingham~/ (Thomas, duke of Norfolk) | | | | |
| SURREY | John Waterton | * | | K's esq | PX | | | Rec. of duchy of Cornwall/?Ambass | P of W/(Bolingbroke) | | | | |
| | Ralph Cuddington | | | | P✓ | | | | William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester | | | | |
| SUSSEX | John Dalingridge~ | * | | K's Knt | PX | \$ | | | (Bolingbroke)/Lord Say - Steward HH | | | | |
| | Henry Hussy~ | * | | | | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Arundel | | | | D |
| WARWS. | William Bagot~ | | | | PX | \$ | | | (Bolingbroke) | | | | |
| | Alfred Trussell~ | * | | | F | £ | F | | (Thomas) & prob. Richard, earl of Warwick | | | | C |
| WESTM. | William Threlkeld~ | | | | | JP | | | | | B | | |
| | William Crackenthorp~ | | | | | | F | | | | | | D |
| WILTS. | John Berkeley I~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | | | | | |
| | Thomas Calston | * | | | F | £ | F | | (Bolingbroke) | | | | |
| WORCS. | Thomas Throckmorton | * | | | | JP | ES | | (Thomas) and Richard, earl of Warwick | | | | |
| | John Brace | * | | | PX | | PX | | William Lord Beachamp of Abergavenny | | | | |
| YORKS. | Robert Rokley~ | * | | annuity | | \$ | | | (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke) | | | | |
| | Thomas Colville~ | * | | | | | | Master Forester | Ralph, earl of Westmorland | | | | |

PARLIAMENT of JANUARY 1404

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS | A | B | C | D |
|----------|----------------------|----|---|-----------|----|----|----|--|--|---|---|---|-----|
| BEDS. | Reynold Ragon | * | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin | | | | |
| | William Terrington | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | | | | | |
| BERKS. | William Langford~ | | | | F | JP | | | | | | | D |
| | Edmund Sparsholt | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Henry, Bishop of Lincoln/Thomas Chaucer (John, earl of Huntingdon) | | | | |
| BUCKS. | John Barton I | | | | \$ | | | | | | | | |
| | Edmund Brudenell | * | | | | JP | F | ?Stwd of royal manor | | | | | |
| CAMBS. | Payn Tiptoft~ | | | Knt chm | P✓ | \$ | | | John Tiptoft~ | | B | C | D |
| | John Brunne | * | | | | JP | | | | | | | D |
| CORNW. | John Arundell~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall/Captain official of duchy of Cornwall estates | P of W | A | | | D |
| | John Chenduyt | | | annuity | | | | | | | | | |
| CUMB. | Robert Lowther | | | | F | \$ | P✓ | Verderer | Ralph, earl of Westmorland | | | | |
| | William Lowther I | | | | P✓ | | P✓ | | Ralph, earl of Westmorland | | B | C | |
| DERBS. | Nicholas Longford~ | * | | | F | | | | Assoc. with d of L affinity (Bolingbroke) | | | | |
| | John Curson | | | annuity | | JP | P✓ | Council/Steward, d of L/Keeper | (John of Gaunt) | | | | |
| DEVON | Thomas Pomeroy~ | * | | K's Esq | PX | £ | | | | | | | |
| | Edmund Pyne | * | | | F | | | | | | | | |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford I~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | | | B | | D |
| | John Frome | | | | P✓ | JP | | Council/Ambassador | (Thomas Despenser, earl of Gloucester) | | B | | |
| ESSEX | William Bourghier~ | * | | annuity | | £ | | Knt of P of W's Chamber/Ambassador | P of W/(Thomas, duke of Gloucester) | | | | C |
| | John Doreward | | | annuity | P✓ | JP | | Council | (Bolingbroke)/Thomas Erpingham~ | | B | | |
| GLOUCS. | Maurice Russell | * | | | PX | JP | | Envoy | | | B | | |
| | Robert Whittington | | | K's Esq | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | | | B | | D |
| HERES. | John Oldcastle~ | | | | F | £ | | Captain | | | | | C |
| | Thomas Walwyn II | | | | PX | | PX | ?Receiver General for earl of March | Edmund, e of Hereford/William Beauchamp | | B | | |
| HERTS. | John Poultney~ | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Robert Corbet~ | * | | K's Knt | F | JP | | Constable | Eleanor de Bohun/Thomas Erpingham~ | | B | | D |
| HUNTS. | Robert Scott | * | | Esq body | F | JP | F | Parker of confiscated lands 1405 | Styuecle/Waweton/John Tiptoft~ | | | | |
| | John Tiptoft~ | * | | K's Knt | | £ | | Steward, d of L | | | | | |
| KENT | Arnold Savage I~ | * | | K's Knt | PX | JP | | Council | P of W | | | | |
| | Reynold Braybrooke | * | | | | JP | | | Thomas Langley | | | | D |
| LANCS. | Robert Laurence | * | | annuity | F | £ | F | | (John of Gaunt) | | B | | |
| | Ralph Radcliffe~ | * | | annuity | PX | | | Receiver, d of L | | | | | |
| LEICS. | William Brokesby | * | | Esq body | F | £ | | Marshal of King's hall | | | | | D |
| | Edmund Bugge | * | | K's esq | | | | Master Forester, d of L | (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke) | | A | | |
| LINCS. | Richard Hansard~ | * | | | F | £ | F | | | | | | |
| | John Copledyke~ | * | | K's knt | PX | JP | F | | | | | | C D |
| MIDDX. | William Wroth | * | | K's Esq | | JP | | | | | | | |
| | John Wroth~ | * | | | PX | JP | | | | | | | D |
| NORFOLK | John Reymes | * | | K's Esq | | | | Constable | (John of Gaunt)/Thomas Erpingham~ | | B | | |
| | John Wynter | * | | K's Esq | | JP | PX | Receiver General for P of W | P of W/Thomas Erpingham~ | | | | |
| N'ANTS. | John Trussell~ | * | | | | | | | (Thomas, earl of Warwick)/Beauchamp affinity | | | | D |
| | Ralph Parles | * | | | PX | JP | F | | | | B | | D |
| N'UMB. | John Widdrington~ | * | | Esq body | F | £ | F | | | | B | | |
| | Sampson Hardyng | * | | | | JP | PX | Steward | | | | | |
| NOTTS | John Leek | * | | Esq body | | £ | | | | | | | |
| | Richard Stanhope~ | * | | Knt body | F | £ | | | (Bolingbroke) | | | | C |
| OX'SHIRE | Peter Bessels~ | * | | | F | JP | F | | | | | | D |
| | William Mackney | * | | K's Esq | | | | | Richard, earl of Warwick | | | | |
| RUTLAND | Thomas Thorpe | * | | | F | | | | | | | | |
| | John Pensax | * | | | PX | JP | | | | | | | |
| SALOP | John Burley I | * | | | F | JP | | Jnt. Controller muster of royal armies | Thomas, earl of Arundel | | B | C | D |
| | George Hawkstone | * | | | F | £ | F | | | | | | |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Brooke | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | | | | | B C |
| | William Stourton | * | | | | JP | | Stwd of Principality of Wales/Keeper | Thomas Hungerford~ | | | | D |
| S'HANTS | John Lisle~ | * | | K's Knt | F | JP | | Governor of Guernsey from 1405 | assoc. with d of L as tenant | | A | B | C D |
| STAFFS. | Ralph Stafford | * | | | | | | | (Edmund, earl of Stafford) | | | | |
| | William Walsale | * | | annuity | P✓ | £ | P✓ | Constable/keeper | assoc. with Beauchamp affinity. | | | | |
| SUFFOLK | John Strange~ | * | | K's Knt | | JP | ES | Chief Usher of King's Hall | (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke)/(Arundel) | | B | | D |
| | John Ingoldisthorpe~ | * | | | PX | £ | F | | Thomas, duke of Norfolk | | | | D |
| SURREY | William Brantingham~ | * | | | | | | Avener of HH | | | | | |
| | John Wintershall | * | | | F | £ | F | | | | | | |
| SUSSEX | John Pelham | * | | knt chm | | JP | | Const. & ChiefStwd, d of L/Council | (Bolingbroke) | | A | | |
| | Robert Lewknor | * | | | | | | | (Richard, earl of Arundel) | | | | |
| WARWS. | Robert Hugford | * | | | | | £ | | Richard, earl of Warwick | | | | |
| | Roger Smart | * | | K's Esq | | | | Keeper of Forest, d of L | (Bolingbroke) | | | | C |
| WESTM. | Roland Thornburgh | * | | | | | £ | F | | | | | |
| | Richard Duckett | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WILTS. | Richard Mawarden | * | | annuity | P✓ | | | Keeper | | | | | |
| | Peter Stantor | * | | annuity | | | £ | | | | | | |
| WORCS. | John Blount II | * | | | | JP | PX | | John Russell~ - member of HH | | | | B C |
| | John Washbourne | * | | | | JP | PX | | Richard, earl of Warwick | | | | |
| YORKS. | John Routh~ | * | | K's Knt | | £ | P✓ | | | | | | |
| | Richard Tempest | * | | K's knt | | JP | | | Henry, earl of Northumberland | | | | D |

PARLIAMENT of OCTOBER 1404

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS | A | B | C | D |
|----------|-----------------------|----------|---|-----------|----|----|----|---|--|------------------------------|---|---|-----|
| BEDS. | Thomas Durant | | | | | | | £ | ?Hugh Waterton~ | | | | |
| | William Wenlok | * | | | | | | | William Beauchamp, Lord Abergavenny | | | | |
| BERKS. | John Golafre | | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | F | | Thomas Chaucer/P of W | | | | |
| | John Arches | | | | | | P✓ | | (William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester)tenant of d of L | | | | |
| BUCKS. | Roger Cheyne | * | | | | | | | John Cheyne I~ - prominent Lollard | | | | |
| | Robert James | | | | P✓ | £ | P✓ | | Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk/Pole/Thomas Chaucer | | | | |
| CAMBS. | Baldwin St. George~ | | | | | | | F | 1402 escorted king Henry's daughter | | | B | C D |
| | William Standon | * | | annuity | | | | | | | | | |
| CORNW. | John Arundell~ | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | P of W | | | | D |
| | Ralph Botreaux~ | * | | | | | | £ | Ambassador | 'personal contact with king' | | | |
| CUMB. | John More I~ | | | | | | | F | | | | | |
| | William Bewley | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | John Cockayne~ | | | K's Bach | F | JP | F | | (Bolingbroke) | | | B | |
| | Roger Bradbourne | | | | F | | | | (Bolingbroke) | | | | D |
| DEVON | William Sturmy~ | | | K's Knt | F | \$ | | Ambassador/Warden of forest | | | | | |
| | Walter Reynell | * | | | | | | PX | | | | | |
| DORSET | John Devereux~ | * | | | | | | | ?Edward, duke of York | | | | |
| | John Frampton | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ESSEX | William Coggeshall~ | | | | PX | JP | | | (John, earl of Huntingdon)/ <u>John Doreward</u> | | | C | D |
| | Robert Litton~ | * | | annuity | | JP | | | (Bolingbroke)/John Blaket | | | | C |
| GLOUCS. | Richard Mawarden | *(Wilts) | | | P✓ | | | Constable, 1400-Mar. 1404 | | | | | |
| | James Clifford | * | | K's Esq | | | | Keeper | | | | | |
| HERES. | John Greyndore~ | | | K's Knt | F | JP | | Constable | HH of P of Wales | | | B | C |
| | Thomas Walwyn II | * | | | PX | | PX | ?Receiver Gen, for earl of Hereford | Edm. E. of Hereford/Will, Lord Abergavenny | | | B | |
| HERTS. | John Poultney~ | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | William Parker II | * | | | | | | | John Norbury (1st Treasurer Exch) | | | | |
| HUNTS. | John Tiptoft~ | * | | K's Knt | | £ | | Steward, d of L | | | | | C |
| | Robert Scott | * | | Esq Body | F | JP | F | Parker of confiscated lands in 1405 | Styuecle/Waweton/John Tiptoft~ | | | | |
| KENT | Thomas Clinton~ | | | | | | | F | | | | | |
| | Henry Horne | * | | | | F | | | | | | | |
| LANCS. | James Haryngton~ | * | | annuity | | £ | | Constable & M. Forester & Steward, d of L/Ambassador | | | | | C |
| | Ralph Staveley~ | * | | Esq body | F | JP | | Stwd & Bailiff & M. Forester, d of L | (Bolingbroke) | | | | C |
| LEICS. | John Berkeley~ | | | Knt Bach | PX | JP | | | 'family attach to d of L' | | | | C |
| | Robert Veer | * | | | | PX | | | | | | | |
| LINCS. | <u>Henry Retford~</u> | | | Knt body | PX | JP | | Ambassador | | | | | C D |
| | Thomas Hawley~ | | | K's Knt | F | JP | | | Richard Brugge/ <u>Henry Retford~</u> | | | | C |
| MIDDX. | Roger Strange~ | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | William Powe | * | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | John Gurney | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | Thomas Erpingham~/J. Strange~/John Wynter | | | B | |
| | Edmund Oldhall | * | | | PX | \$ | F | Receiver/Receiver, d of L | | | | | |
| N'ANTS. | Ralph Green | * | | | F | £ | F | | | | | | C |
| | John Cope | | | K's esq | P✓ | | F | Clerk Marshalsea royal HH/charged with earl of North 1403 | | | | | C |
| N'UMB. | Robert Lisle~ | | | | F | JP | F | | | | | | |
| | William Carnaby~ | * | | | | | F | Constable, in 1403 | (John of Gaunt)/Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York | | | | |
| NOTTS | Richard Stanhope~ | * | | Knt body | F | JP | | | (Bolingbroke) | | | | C |
| | Simon Leek | * | | | F | £ | F | | (Thomas, duke of G)/father = Sir John? | | | | |
| OX'SHIRE | John Drayton~ | * | | | | | | \$ | | | | | |
| | John Wilcotes | | | | P✓ | JP | ES | | Hen. Beaufort Bp. of Winchester/Thos.d. of Norfolk | | | | D |
| RUTLAND | Thomas Oudeby~ | | | | PX | JP | F | | Roger Flore | | | | |
| | Roger Flore | | | | F | JP | F | Keeper for earl of Rutland | Edward, duke of York | | | | |
| SALOP | John Burley I | * | | | F | JP | | Jnt. Controller muster of royal armies | Thomas e of Arundel/(Edmund, e. of Stafford | | B | | D |
| | John Darras | | | | P✓ | | | Steward of forest | (Richard earl of Arundel) | | | | |
| SOMERSET | Hugh Luttrell~ | * | | | | | | £ | Keeper/Lt. to Capt Calais/ex-Ambass/Mayor Bordeaux (John of Gaunt) | | | | |
| | Leonard Hakeluyt~ | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | Edmund, earl of March | | | B | C |
| S'HANTS | Henry Popham~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | (William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester) | | | | D |
| | John Popham~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | Constable/Bailiff, d of L | (John of Gaunt) | | | | D |
| STAFFS. | Robert Francis~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Constable | Thomas? earl of Stafford | | | | D |
| | John Bagot~ | | | annuity | F | £ | F | | Thomas Langley | | | B | |
| SUFFOLK | Andrew Butler~ | * | | K's Knt | F | £ | F | | Thomas Erpingham~ | | | | |
| | John Strange~ | * | | K's Knt | | JP | ES | Chief Usher of the King's Hall | (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke) | | B | | D |
| SURREY | William Brantingham~ | * | | | | | | Avener of HH | | | | | |
| | William Croyser | * | | | | | | | (John of Gaunt)/(William, Bishop of Winchester) | | | | |
| SUSSEX | John Dallingridge~ | | | K's Knt | PX | JP | | Constable from 1405 | (Bolingbroke)/Lord Say - Steward HH | | | | |
| | John Pelham~ | * | | Knt chm | | JP | | Constable & Ch. Stwd, d of L/Council | (Bolingbroke)/(John of Gaunt) | | | B | |
| WARWS. | Thomas Raleigh | * | | | | | | | William, Lord Willoughby | | | | |
| | Thomas Crewe | | | | F | £ | | | (Thomas earl of Warwick) | | | | |
| WESTM. | Robert Leybourne~ | * | | | | | | | (John of Gaunt) | | | | |
| | Thomas Strickland II | * | | K's esq | F | £ | F | Keeper | (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke) | | | | C |
| WILTS. | Walter Hungerford~ | | | K's Knt | F | JP | | Constable between 1401-3 | (Bolingbroke) | | | | D |
| | William Worfton | * | | | PX | JP | | Deputy Warden for duke of York | Edward, duke of York | | | | |
| WORCS. | John Beauchamp~ | | | | | JP | F | | Richard earl of Warwick | | | | |
| | Henry Bruyn | | | | | JP | P✓ | | (Thomas earl of Warwick) | | | | |
| YORKS. | Peter Bukton~ | | | annuity | F | JP | P✓ | Stwd & Const. & M. Forester, d of L | (Bolingbroke) | | | | C D |
| | William Dronfield~ | * | | K's esq | PX | JP | | ?Bailiff, d of L | (Bolingbroke) | | | | |

PARLIAMENT of 1406

| COUNTY | M P | PP N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS | A B C D |
|----------|------------------------------|--------|-----------|----|----|----------|--|---|---------|
| BEDS. | Thomas Durant | * | | | | \$ | | | |
| | Hugh Hasilden | * | | | | \$ F | | | |
| BERKS. | Thomas Childrey | | | | | JP P✓ | | (William Wykeham, Bishop of Hereford) | |
| | Laurence Drew | | | | | JP | | | |
| BUCKS. | Edmund Brudenell | | | | | JP F | ?Steward of royal manor | | |
| | John Giffard | * | | | | F £ P✓ | | | |
| CAMBS. | Baldwin StGeorge~ | * | | | | F | | | B |
| | William Asenhill | * | K's esq | | | F JP F | Usher of King's Chamber | (Bolingbroke) | |
| CORNW. | John Arundell~ | * | K's Knt | | | P✓ JP | Capt./Steward, duchy of Cornwall | P of W | D |
| | Nicholas Broomford | * | | | | F | | John, earl of Holland | |
| CUMB. | Robert Lowther | | | | | F JP F | Verderer | | |
| | John Skelton | | annuity | | | P✓ £ F | | | |
| DERBS. | Roger Bradshaw | * | | | | | Master Forester, d. of L | | D |
| | Roger Leche | | Esq Body | | | P✓ JP | Steward, d of L/Ambass/Controller of HH until 1405 | P of W | C D |
| DEVON | Hugh Luttrell~ | *(Som) | | | | £ | Keeper/Ambassador | (John of Gaunt) | |
| | Thomas Pomeroy~ | | K's esq | | | P✓ £ | | (John of Gaunt) | |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford I~ | | K's Knt | | | P✓ JP | | | B D |
| | Ivo Fitzwaryn~ | | | | | JP | Keeper | (Bolingbroke) | D |
| ESSEX | Helming Leget | * | K's esq. | | | P✓ JP ES | Usher of King's Chamber/Constable | (Bolingbroke) | C |
| | Richard Baynard | * | | | | £ P✓ | | Will.Lord Fitzwalter/Joan, countess of Hereford | |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Fitznichol~ | | | | | P✓ | | (Bolingbroke)/(Richard, earl of Arundel | |
| | Robert Whittington | | K's esq | | | P✓ JP P✓ | | | B D |
| HERES. | John ap Harry | * | K's esq | | | P✓ P✓ | Deputy Steward, d of L | closely connected d of L/(Bolingbroke) | C |
| | Thomas Holgot | * | | | | F JP F | | Edmund, earl of March | |
| HERTS. | John Poultney~ | * | | | | | | | |
| | John Goldington I | * | | | | | | | |
| HUNTS. | John Botiller | * | | | | JP F | | Hen. Beaufort, Bp. of Winchester/John Tiptoft~ | |
| | John Tiptoft~ | * | K's Kn | | | JP | Treasurer of HH/Chief Butler/Steward, d of L | | C |
| KENT | Richard Clitheroe I | * | K's esq | | | P✓ £ | Deputy Treasurer Calais/Adm S & W | (John of Gaunt) | |
| | Robert Clifford | | | | | P✓ \$ P✓ | | | |
| LANCS. | Robert Laurence | | annuity | | | F £ ES | | (John of Gaunt) | B |
| | William Boteler~ | * | K's knt | | | \$ | | | A B C |
| LEICS. | John Neville~ | | | | | P✓ | Joint Captain, 1404-5 | | C D |
| | Henry Neville~ | | K's Knt | | | JP | Joint Captain, 1404-5 | | C D |
| LINCS. | John Skipworth | * | | | | JP | | Uncle to W. Lord Willoughby | |
| | John Copledyke~ | | K's knt | | | P✓ JP F | | | B C D |
| MIDDX. | Henry Somer | * | ?annuity | | | £ | Keeper of Privy Seal in Tower/(Baron of Excheq. from 1407) | | |
| | John Wroth~ (did not attend) | | | | | JP | | | |
| NORFOLK | Edmund Noon~ | * | K's knt | | | \$ | Steward for Thomas of Lancaster, 1401-03 | | |
| | John Reymes | | K's esq | | | | Constable | (John of Gaunt)/Thomas Erpingham~ | B |
| N'ANTS. | John Cope | * | K's esq | | | P✓ | Clerk of Marshalsea of HH | (?Bolingbroke) | |
| | John Warwick I | | Esq body | | | P✓ | Forester & Ranger | | |
| N'UMB. | John Clavinger~ | * | | | | P✓ | Ch. Stwd. & Bailiff for Abp. York | Nevilles/Archbishop of York | |
| | Robert Lisle~ | * | | | | F JP F | | | |
| NOTTS | Thomas Chaworth | * | Knt body | | | P✓ JP | | ?P of W | |
| | Richard Stanhope~ | * | Knt body | | | P✓ JP | | (Bolingbroke) | C |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Chaucer | * | | | | P✓ JP F | Chief Butler HH/Const./Const d of L | (John of Gaunt)/P of W/Hen.Beaufort, Bp of Winchester | |
| | John Wilcotes | * | | | | P✓ JP P✓ | | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester | D |
| RUTLAND | John Pensax | | | | | P✓ JP | | | |
| | Robert Scarle | * | | | | £ | | | |
| SALOP | David Holbache | * | | | | £ F | | Thomas, earl of Arundel | |
| | Thomas Whitton | | | | | P✓ | | | |
| SOMERSET | Walter Rodney~ | * | | | | F JP | | | |
| | Leonard Hakluyt~ | * | | | | P✓ JP P✓ | | Edmund, earl of March | C |
| S'HANTS | John Berkeley I~ | | | | | P✓ \$ | | | |
| | Thomas Skelton~ | | | | | JP | Chief Steward, d of L up to 1405 | (John of Gaunt) | |
| STAFFS. | Humphrey Stafford II~ | * | | | | £ | | P of W | C |
| | Thomas Aston~ | | | | | F \$ | Treasurer of Royal HH up to 1405 | | |
| SUFFOLK | John Strange~ | * | K's Knt | | | JP P✓ | Controller of King's HH | (John of Gaunt)/(e. of Arundel)/Bol/Erpingham B | |
| | William Bardwell~ | | knt chm | | | JP | | John & Richard de la Pole~ | |
| SURREY | John Wintershall | | | | | P✓ £ F | | | |
| | John Gravesend | * | | | | £ ES | | | |
| SUSSEX | John Dallingridge~ | * | K's Knt | | | P✓ JP | Constable | (Bolingbroke)/Lord Say - Steward of HH | |
| | John Pelham | * | | | | JP | Council/Const & Chief Stwd, d of L | (Bolingbroke) | B |
| WARWS. | Thomas Burdet~ | | | | | F | | Richard, earl of Warwick | C |
| | Thomas Lucy | * | K's Esq | | | F | | (John of Gaunt)?Richard, earl of Warwick | |
| WESTM. | John Beetham~ | * | | | | | | | |
| | John Lancaster I | | | | | F JP | | | |
| WILTS. | Thomas Bonham | * | | | | P✓ JP P✓ | Steward, d of L/Steward Bp. Salisbury | | B |
| | Thomas Calston | | | | | F \$ F | | (Bolingbroke) | |
| WORCS. | Ralph Arderne | * | | | | P✓ | | Richard, earl of Warwick | C |
| | Thomas Hodyngton | * | | | | P✓ | | Richard, earl of Warwick | D |
| YORKS. | Richard Redmayne~ | * | K's Knt | | | P✓ JP P✓ | | (John of Gaunt) | B D |
| | Thomas Rokeby | * | K's Knt | | | P✓ | | Ralph, earl of Westmorland | |

PARLIAMENT of 1407

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|---|----|---|-----------|----|----|----|--|--|
| BEDS. | John Worship William Bosom | | | Esq. body | | P✓ | \$ | | |
| BERKS. | John Golafre Edmund Sparsholt | | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | F | | P of W/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> ?Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| BUCKS. | Richard Wyot | * | | | F | JP | | Steward for Bishop of Winchester | Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> (John Holand, earl of Huntingdon) |
| CAMBS. | John Howard~ John Rochford~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | ?Constantine, Lord Clifton |
| CORNW. | John Chenduyt Richard Trevanion | | * | ?annuity | | | | Steward, d of L/Constable for Bp. Ely official of duchy of Cornwall estates | (Bolingbroke)/John Fordham, Bishop of Ely |
| CUMB. | William Stapleton William More II | | * | | F | JP | P✓ | | |
| DERBS. | Robert Strelley~ Thomas Okeover | | * | | | | | | |
| DEVON | Hugh Luttrell~ Robert Cary | * | * | | | | £ | Keeper/Ambassador | |
| DORSET | Humphrey StaffordI~ Ivo Fitzwaryn~ | * | * | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | Phillip Courtney~ (Bolingbroke) |
| ESSEX | William Marny~ Helming Leget | * | * | | PX | JP | | Keeper | Prince Thomas of Lancaster (Bolingbroke)/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Fitznichol~ Thomas Mille | * | * | K's esq | PX | \$ | PX | Usher of King's Chamber/Constable | |
| HERES. | John ap Harry Thomas Holgot | * | * | | | JP | F | | |
| HERTS. | Thomas de la Barre~ William Parker II | | * | ?K's Knt | PX | JP | P✓ | Deputy Steward, d of L | (Bolingbroke)/John Oldcastle~ 'Mortimer affinity |
| HUNTS. | Roger Hunt John Burton I | * | * | | | | £ | | John Norbury (1st Treasurer of Exchequer) John, earl of Norfolk/ <u>John Tiptoft</u> ~ ?John, earl of Somerset |
| KENT | Richard Clitheroe I John Darell | * | * | K's esq | PX | £ | | Keeper/Dep. Treasurer Calais/Control 'naval commander' | |
| LANCS. | Henry Houghton~ Ralph Staveley~ | * | * | | F | £ | F | Under Treasurer Excheq/Deputy Butler | Ralph earl of Westmorland/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> (Bolingbroke) |
| LEICS. | John Blaket Robert Sherard | * | * | Esq body | F | \$ | | Bailiff & Keeper & Stwd & M. Forester, d of L | (Bolingbroke) |
| LINCS. | John Skipworth John Meres | * | * | K's esq | PX | £ | | Stwd & Bailiff & M. Forester, d of L | |
| MIDDX. | John Lovenev Henry Somer | * | * | ?annuity | | | | Bailiff, d of L | Uncle to William, Lord Willoughby |
| NORFOLK | Edmund Thorpe~ John Wynter | | * | annuity | F | JP | | Keeper of Gt. Wardrobe/Treasurer to K's daughter Princess Phillipa Baron of Excheq/Keeper Privy Wardrobe in Tower | Geoffrey Chaucer |
| N'ANTS. | John Tyndale Thomas Wake | | * | | | JP | PX | | |
| N'UMB. | Edmund Hastings~(see Yorks) | * | * | Esq body | F | £ | | Receiver General for P of W | P of W/Thomas Erpingham~ |
| NOTTS | Robert Harbottle John Zouche~ Hugh Hussy~ | * | * | annuity | F | £ | F | Constable, d of L/Deputy at Newcastle | tenant of d of L (Bolingbroke)/Ralph, e of Westmor/Will.Lord Latimer <u>John Tiptoft</u> ~ brother William 4th Lord Zouche/William Chawort (John of Gaunt)/(Bolingbroke) |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Chaucer John Wilcotes | * | * | | PX | JP | ES | Chief Butler/Constable, d of L | P of W/Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| RUTLAND | Robert Browe William Sheffield | * | * | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | |
| SALOP | John Cornwall~ David Holbache | * | * | K's Knt | PX | \$ | | Constable | (John of Gaunt) Thomas, earl of Arundel |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Brooke~ Richard Cheddar | * | * | | | JP | F | | |
| S'HANTS | John Popham~ William Fauconer | * | * | | P✓ | \$ | | Constable/Bailiff, d of L | (John of Gaunt) |
| STAFFS. | John Bagot~ William Newport~ | * | * | annuity | F | \$ | ES | Bailiff for Bishop of Winchester Deputy Captain from 1408 | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| SUFFOLK | Roger Drury~ John Lancaster II | * | * | K Knt | PX | | | | (John of Gaunt)/P of W |
| SURREY | Ralph Cuddington Robert Bussebrigge | * | * | | F | £ | F | | John, earl of Norfolk poss. Arundel connexion Richard, Bishop of Salisbury |
| SUSSEX | John Dallingridge~ John Pelham~ | * | * | K's Knt | PX | JP | | Constable | (Bolingbroke)/Lord Say, Steward III |
| WARWS. | Alfred Trussell~ Henry Sutton | * | * | | P✓ | JP | F | Constable & Chief Steward, d of L | (Bolingbroke) |
| WESTM. | Alan Pennington~ Thomas Warcop I | * | * | | | | | | 'Beauchamp interest' 'Beauchamp interest' |
| WILTS. | Walter Hungerford~ William Stourton | * | * | ?K Knt | P✓ | \$ | | Chamberlain in Household of Princess Phillipa c.1406 Stwd. of Principality of Wales/Keeper | Walter Hungerford~ |
| WORCS. | William Beauchamp~ Richard Ruyhale | * | * | annuity | PX | \$ | | Constable | |
| YORKS. | Edmund Hastings~(see North) Alexander Lound~ | * | * | annuity | F | £ | F | | (Bolingbroke)/Ralph e of Westmor/Will.Lord Latimer |

PARLIAMENT of 1411

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFEN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|------------------------|--------|---|--------------|----|----|----|--|---|
| BEDS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| BERKS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| BUCKS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| CAMBS. | Walter de la Pole~ | * | | | F | £ | | Constable of Ireland | Thomas, duke of Clarence |
| | John Hobildod | | | K's esq | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| CORNW. | John Arundell~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | P of W |
| | John Urban | * | | | | \$ | | Lt. Admirals West & North/Ambassador | |
| CUMB. | - | | | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | Nicholas Montgomery I~ | | | | PX | JP | | | |
| | Robert Francis~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | Constable | Hugh, earl of Stafford/William Bouchier~ |
| DEVON | Robert Cary | * | | | | JP | F | | Phillip Courtney~ |
| | Edmund Pyne | | | | P✓ | | | | |
| DORSET | - | | | | | | | | |
| ESSEX | William Coggeshall~ | | | | PX | \$ | | | <u>John Doreward</u> |
| | John Tyrell | * | | | F | £ | | | <u>John Doreward</u> /Thomas Erpingham~ |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Mille | | | | | JP | F | | |
| | Robert Whittington | | | ?K's esq | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | |
| HERES. | - | | | | | | | | |
| HERTS. | Thomas de la Barre~ | | | ?K's Knt | PX | JP | P✓ | | |
| | Robert Newport | | | | | JP | | | (?Mortimer) |
| HUNTS. | Nicholas Styvecle | * | | | | £ | ES | | |
| | Robert Scott | | | Esq Body | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | Styuecle/Waweton/ <u>John Tiptoft</u> ~ |
| KENT | Reynold Pympe | * | | | PX | £ | ES | | |
| | William Nutbeam | * | | | F | JP | PX | | |
| LANCS. | John Assheton II~ | * | | K's Knt | | £ | | | |
| | John Booth I | * | | annuity | | £ | | Receiver, d of L | |
| LEICS. | John Berkeley~ | | | Knt bach | PX | JP | | | 'family attachment to d of L' |
| | Thomas Maureward~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| LINCS. | Thomas Willoughby~ | * | | | PX | \$ | | | brother is 5th Lord Willoughby |
| | John Pouger | * | | | | | | | |
| MIDDX. | Adam Francis~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| | Roger Strange~ | | | ?Knt body | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | John Wynter | * | | | | JP | PX | Receiver General P of W/Steward, d of L | P of W/Thomas Erpingham~ |
| | Edmund Oldhall | | | | PX | JP | F | Receiver, d of L | Alexander, Bishop of Norwich |
| N'ANTS. | John St. John~ | * | | Knt body | | | | Deputy Chamberlain & Justiciar S. Wales | P of W |
| | William Huddleston | * | | | | | | | |
| N'UMB. | - | | | | | | | | |
| NOTTS | William Rigmaiden | * | | Esq body | PX | JP | PX | | |
| | Thomas Staunton | * | | | | | | | ?P of W |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Chaucer | * | | | PX | JP | P✓ | Chief Butler HH/Const. Bp. of Winchester | P of W/Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| RUTLAND | - | | | | | | | | |
| SALOP | Adam Peshale~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | |
| | John Burley | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Arundel |
| SOMERSET | - | | | | | | | | |
| S'HANTS | John Uvedale | * | | | PX | £ | F | | |
| | William Fauconer | | | | | JP | | Bailiff for the Bishop of Winchester | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| STAFFS. | John Bagot~ | | | annuity | F | \$ | PX | Ambassador | |
| | William Newport~ | | | K's Knt | PX | | | | P of W |
| SUFFOLK | John Spencer | * | | K's esq | F | | | Controller of P of W's HH | P of W |
| | John Lancaster II | * | | | F | £ | F | | John, earl of Norfolk |
| SURREY | - | | | | | | | | |
| SUSSEX | - | | | | | | | | |
| WARWS. | Thomas Lucy | | | | P✓ | | | | ?Richard, earl of Warwick. |
| | Thomas Erdington | * | | | F | £ | | | ?Richard, earl of Warwick. |
| WESTM. | Robert Leybourne~ | | | | | | | | |
| | Christopher Moresby | * | | | F | £ | | | ?Ralph, earl of Westmorland |
| WILTS. | Walter Hungerford~ | *(Som) | | ?K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | P of W |
| | Henry Thorpe | | | | F | JP | | | |
| WORCS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| YORKS. | John Etton~ | * | | | PX | £ | | Steward of a forest | |
| | Robert Plumpton~ | * | | annuity | | | | | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |

PARLIAMENT of 1413

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|---|----|---|----------------------|----|----|----|---|--|
| BEDS. | Thomas Waweton William Bosom | | | | F | \$ | | | <u>John Tiptoft</u> ~ |
| BERKS. | John Golafre Robert de la Mare | * | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Controller & Surveyor | Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| BUCKS. | John Cheyne John Giffard | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| CAMBS. | William Porter II John Burgoyne | * | | K's esq | | JP | | Yeoman ranger & by appt. Q Joan 1408-d/Envoy for Q 1413 | Queen Joan |
| CORNW. | John Wybury John Trelawny II | * | | | | JP | P✓ | Parker | |
| CUMB. | Peter Tilliol~ William Bewley | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | |
| DERBS. | Roger Leche~ Thomas Chaworth~ | | | Esq body Knt body | P✓ | JP | | Steward of HH/Ambassador/Const./Chief Steward, d of L/Constable (P of W) | Henry Beaufort, Bishop Winchester |
| DEVON | Thomas Pomeroy~ Robert Cary | | | K's esq | P✓ | £ | | | |
| DORSET | Thomas Brooke William Stourton | * | | | F | £ | ES | Keeper | Richard Courtney - Receiver King's Chamber John Oldcastle~ Walter Hungerford~ |
| ESSEX | John Doreward John Tyrell | * | | | P✓ | \$ | | | <u>John Doreward</u> / Thomas Erpingham~ |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Fitznichol~ John Paucefoot~ | * | | | P✓ | £ | | | |
| HERES. | Thomas Holgot Thomas Hay | * | | | F | JP | P✓ | | (P of W)Edmund, earl of March |
| HERTS. | John Hotoft John Leventhorpe | * | | K's esq Esq body | F | £ | F | Contr. HH of P of W 1411-3/Clerk of the court of Common Pleas Receiver General, d of L/Constable | |
| HUNTS. | Roger Hunt Thomas Beville | * | | | | \$ | | | John, earl of Norfolk/William Hungerford Roger Hunt/Nicholas Styvecle |
| KENT | John Darell John Butler I | * | | | P✓ | JP | ES | | Ralph, earl of Westmorland./ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| LANCS. | John Assheton II~ John Stanley | * | | K's Knt K's Esq | | \$ | | | |
| LEICS. | James Bellers William Belgrave | * | | | F | JP | ES | Receiver, d of L | |
| LINCS. | Richard Hansard~ John Bell | * | | | F | JP | F | | son in Household of Henry IV or Henry V |
| MIDDX. | William Loveney Richard Wyot | | | ?annuity | P✓ | JP | | Steward for Bishop of Winchester | Hen. Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chauce</u> |
| NORFOLK | John Wynter Edmund Oldhall | * | | | | JP | P✓ | Receiver General P of W/Steward, d of L Receiver, d of L | (P of W)Thomas Erpingham~ Alexander, Bishop of Norwich |
| N'ANTS. | Nicholas Merbury Thomas Wake | * | | K's esq ?Esq bod | | JP | | | ?d of L connection |
| N'UMB. | John Bertram William Mitford | * | | | P✓ | £ | P✓ | Steward & Bailiff for Archbishop of York | Henry Bowet, Archbishop of York (P of W)William Chaworth/William, Lord Zouche |
| NOTTS | John Zouche~ Thomas Rempston II~ | * | | annuity | F | | | | |
| OX'SHIRE | <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> John Wilcotes | * | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Chief Butler HH/Constable, d of L Receiver General, duchy of Cornwall | (P of W)Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| RUTLAND | John Pensax John Burgh III | * | | | P✓ | \$ | | | Roger Flore Thomas, earl of Arundel in 1414 |
| SALOP | Robert Corbet Richard Lacon | * | | | F | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Arundel Thomas, earl of Arundel |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Brooke~ Richard Cheddar | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | | John Oldcastle~ |
| S'HANTS | John Uvedale John Arnold II | * | | | P✓ | JP | F | Bailiff & Rec. Gen. for Bp of Winchester | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| STAFFS. | Thomas Gresley~ Hugh Erdeswyk | * | | ?annuity | F | £ | | | Humphrey Stafford I & II~ |
| SUFFOLK | John Spencer John Lancaster II | * | | K's esq | F | | | Cofferer of HH | |
| SURREY | John Burgh II William Yerde | * | | | F | £ | F | Under Treasurer for earl of Arundel Harbinger of HH | John, earl of Norfolk Thos, e. of Arundel/Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Wincheste |
| SUSSEX | Richard Wayville Richard Wakehurst | * | | ?Esq bod | P✓ | | P✓ | Dep. to earl of Arundel, Constable | John, earl of Huntingdon, duke of Exeter Thomas, earl of Arundel |
| WARWS. | John Mallory William Birmingham | * | | | | JP | | | Thomas, earl of Arundel ?Richard, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | Robert Crakenthorpe John Hutton | * | | | F | £ | F | | Richard, earl of Warwick John, Lord Clifford |
| WILTS. | <u>William Sturmy</u> ~ Walter Hungerford~ | * | | K Knt ?K Knt | F | JP | | Warden of forest/Chief Steward for Queen Anne/Ambassador Chief Steward, d of L | |
| WORCS. | William Beauchamp~ John Phelip | * | | annuity Knt Chm | P✓ | \$ | | Constable Ambassador | ?Humphrey, duke of Gloucester Thomas Erpingham~ |
| YORKS. | Edmund Hastings~ Alexander Lound~ | * | | ?annuity K's Knt | P✓ | £ | P✓ | | ?Ralph, earl of Westmorland/William, Lord Latimer |

PARLIAMENT of APRIL 1414

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|----------------------------|----|---------|-----------|----|----|----|--|---|
| BEDS. | Thomas Waweton | * | | | F | \$ | | | <u>John Tiptoft</u> ~ |
| | John Goldington II | * | | | | JP | | | |
| BERKS. | John Golafre | * | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Controller & Surveyor | Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| | Edmund Sparsholt | | | | P✓ | JP | | | ?Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| BUCKS. | John Barton I | | | | | JP | F | | |
| | Richard Wyot | | *(Midd) | | P✓ | JP | | Steward for Henry, Bishop of Winchester | Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| CAMBS. | Baldwin St. George~ | | | | P✓ | | | | |
| | Nicholas Morys | * | | | | JP | | | |
| CORNW. | John Arundell~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | (P of W) |
| | John Colshull | * | | | | | | | retained by Richard Courtney, Bishop Norwich |
| CUMB. | Robert Lowther~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | ES | Verderer | |
| | William Leigh~ | | | annuity | P✓ | JP | | | |
| DERBS. | Phillip Leche~ | * | | ?Esq Body | | JP | | Ambassador/Const./Chief Steward, d of L/Constable | (P of W) |
| | Nicholas Montgomery II~ | * | | ?annuity | F | £ | | Const. & Steward & Master Forester, d of L | |
| DEVON | Robert Cary | * | | | | JP | ES | | Richard Courtney - Receiver of King's Chamber |
| | John St. Auban | * | | | | | | | |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford II~ | * | | ?annuity | | JP | | | (P of W)John Phelip~/Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | William Filoll | * | | | | JP | | | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| ESSEX | William Coggeshall~ | | | | PX | \$ | | | <u>John Doreward</u> |
| | <u>John Doreward</u> | * | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| GLOUCS. | Robert Whittington | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Forester | |
| | John Greville | * | | | PX | \$ | ES | | |
| HERES. | John Skydemore~ | | | K's esq | | JP | | Steward/Constable | (P of W) |
| | John Russell III | * | | | F | JP | PX | lawyer for d of L | Edward, duke of York |
| HERTS. | John Hotoft | * | | Esq body | F | JP | F | Controller of P of W's HH 1411-3/Clerk of the court of Common Pleas | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| | William Flete | * | | | | £ | F | | John, earl of Norfolk/William Hungerford |
| HUNTS. | Roger Hunt | * | | | | \$ | | | Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin/ <u>John Tiptoft</u> ~ |
| | John Botiller | | | | | JP | ES | | |
| KENT | Thomas Clinton~ | | | | | | P✓ | | |
| | John Darell | * | | | P✓ | JP | ES | | Ralph, earl of Westmorland/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| LANCS. | Ralph Radcliffe | * | | | | JP | | Receiver, d of L | |
| | Nicholas Blundell | * | | | | | | | |
| LEICS. | John Blaket | | | K's esq | PX | JP | | | |
| | Thomas Ashby | * | | | | £ | | | Edmund, Lord Ferrers/William, 4th Lord Zouche |
| LINCS. | John Skipworth | | | | | \$ | | | Uncle of William, Lord Willoughby |
| | Thomas Cumberworth | * | | | F | JP | | | |
| MIDDX. | Simon Camp | * | | Esq body | | | | Treas. & Rec. Gen. Queen Joan/Deputy to Edward duke of York, const. of Tower of London | |
| | Walter Green | * | | | | £ | | | |
| NORFOLK | Robert Berney~ | | | annuity | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | retained by Humphrey, duke of Gloucester |
| | John Wynter | * | | | | JP | PX | Steward, d of L | (P of W)Thomas Erpingham~ |
| N'ANTS. | Thomas Wydville | * | | | PX | JP | F | | Edward, duke of York./William, 4th Lord Zouche |
| | Nicholas Merbury | * | | K's esq | | JP | | Master of royal Ordinance/(from 1415, Usher of King's Chamber.) | |
| N'UMB. | John Middleton~ | * | | | | £ | F | | |
| | Robert Lisle~ | * | | | P✓ | JP | ES | | |
| NOTTS | Robert Plumpton~ | | | annuity | | | | | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| | Henry Sutton | | | | | | | | Beauchamp interest/Hugh Hussey |
| OX'SHIRE | William Lisle~ | * | | K's Knt | PX | | F | Lieutenant to Richard earl of Warwick, Capt. of Calais | |
| | John Wilcotes | * | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Receiver General, duchy of Cornwall | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| RUTLAND | Roger Flore | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Keeper for duke of York | Edward, duke of York |
| | Robert Browe | | | | F | JP | | | Edward, duke of York/Elizabeth, Lady Grey |
| SALOP | David Holbache | | | | | JP | ES | | Thomas, earl of Arundel |
| | John Wele | * | | | | JP | | Capt. & Steward for earl of Arundel | Thomas, earl of Arundel |
| SOMERSET | <u>John Tiptoft</u> ~ | | | K's Knt | | JP | | Steward, d of L/Keeper | |
| | Hugh Luttrell~ | | | | | JP | | Constable/Ambassador | (Steward of the Household Queen Joan by 1410) |
| S'HANTS | Walter Sandys~ | * | | | PX | £ | | | |
| | William Brocas | * | | | F | £ | | Master of the King's Bloodhounds | |
| STAFFS. | John Meverell | * | | | | | | | Edmund, Lord Ferrers |
| | William Walsale | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | Keeper | possible Beauchamp connection |
| SUFFOLK | William Phelip~ | * | | | | £ | | Constable | Thomas Erpingham~ |
| | Robert Corbet~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | \$ | | Constable | |
| SURREY | John Bonet | * | | | | | | | |
| | John Clipsham | * | | ?K's esq | PX | JP | PX | Parkert/Constable for Bishop of Winchester | Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| SUSSEX | William Bramshott | * | | | | PX | | | John Pelham~/?connection with Bohuns |
| | Thomas St. Cler | * | | | | | | | Thomas, earl of Arundel |
| WARWS. | Robert Castell | * | | annuity | PX | | F | Clerk & Keeper for P of W/in HH by 1415 | (P of W) |
| | Thomas Staffell | * | | | | | | | Richard, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | Robert Mauchell | * | | | | | | | |
| | Richard Wharton | * | | | | | | | |
| WILTS. | William Moleyns~ | * | | | | | £ | | <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| | <u>Walter Hungerford</u> ~ | * | | ?K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Chief Steward, d of L | |
| WORCS. | William Beauchamp~ | * | | annuity | PX | \$ | | Constable | Humphrey, duke of Gloucester |
| | John Beauchamp~ | * | | | | JP | P✓ | | Richard, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | Alexander Lound~ | * | | K's Knt | | £ | P✓ | Constable from 1415 | |

PARLIAMENT of NOVEMBER 1414

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|------------------------|-----------|---|-----------|----|----|----|---|--|
| BEDS. | John Enderby | * | | | | | £ | | Reginold, Lord Grey of Ruthin |
| | Roger Hunt | *(Hunts.) | | | | | \$ | | John, earl of Norfolk/William Hungerford |
| BERKS. | Laurence Drew | | | | | | JP | | |
| | John Shotesbrooke | * | | | | | £ | | brother = king's retainer |
| BUCKS. | John Barton I | | | | | | JP | Steward, St. Albans Abbey | William Bourgchier/Richard, Lord Grey of Condor |
| | John Wyot | * | | | P✓ | JP | | Steward for Bishop of Winchester | Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| CAMBS. | Walter de la Pole~ | | | | | | F | JP | Thomas, duke of Clarence |
| | Thomas Lopham | * | | | | | £ | Chief Steward for countess of Stafford | Anne, countess of Stafford |
| CORNW. | William Talbot~ | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | |
| | John Colshull | * | | | | | | | retained by Richard Courtney, Bishop of Norwich |
| CUMB. | Christopher Curwen | * | | | | | F | | |
| | John Eaglesfield | * | | | | | F | | |
| DERBS. | Roger Leche~ | | | ?esq body | P✓ | JP | | Treasurer of the Household/Ambassador/Chief Steward, d of L/Constable | |
| | Thomas Gresley~ | | | ?annuity | F | £ | | | |
| DEVON | Richard Hankford | * | | | | | | | son of Henry V's Chief Justice |
| | John Arundell II | * | | | | P✓ | | | ?Thos Chaucer/ Father = Steward duchy of Cornwall |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford II~ | * | | ?annuity | | JP | | | (P of W)/John Phelip/Hugh, earl of Stafford |
| | John Chideok | * | | | | | | | |
| ESSEX | William Swinbourne | * | | ?K's esq | | | | Captain | Joan, countess of Hereford/?Thomas, duke of Clarence |
| | Richard Baynard | | | | | JP | P✓ | | Thomas, Lord Morely |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Fitznicol~ | | | | | P✓ | | | |
| | John Browning | | | | | P✓ | P✓ | | 1415 retained by Edward, duke of York |
| HERES. | John Skydemore~ | * | | K's esq | | JP | | Steward/Constable | (P of W) |
| | Thomas Holgot | | | ?annuity | F | JP | ES | Justice Itinerant South Wales | (P of W)/Edmund, earl of March |
| HERTS. | John Hotoft | * | | Esq body | F | JP | F | Controller of P of W HH 1411-13/Clerk of the court of Common Pleas | (P of W) |
| | William Flete | * | | | | | £ | F | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| HUNTS. | Thomas Waweton | *(Beds) | | | | | F | \$ | <u>John Tiptoft~</u> |
| | Nicholas Styvecle | | | | | | £ | P✓ | |
| KENT | Arnold Savage~ | * | | | | | | | Thomas Erpingham~/Edmund Thorpe~ |
| | Robert Clifford | | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | |
| LANCS. | John Stanley | | | K's esq | | | \$ | | Steward & Master Forester, d of L |
| | Robert Laurence | | | K's esq | F | £ | | P✓ | |
| LEICS. | John Bellers | * | | | | | | | |
| | Richard Hotoft | * | | | | | £ | F | |
| LINCS. | Thomas Willoughby~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | | Alderman Guild, Boston |
| | Richard Hansard~ | | | | F | JP | F | | brother is 5th Lord Willoughby |
| MIDDX. | Thomas Charlton | * | | | | | £ | | |
| | John Walden | * | | | | P✓ | JP | | |
| NORFOLK | John Inglesthorp~ | | | | | | P✓ | £ | ES |
| | John Wodehouse | | | annuity | | | £ | | Constable/Chancellor, d of L |
| N'ANTS. | John Trussell~ | * | | | | | | | (P of W) |
| | John Mortimer | * | | | | | | F | ?John Oldcastle~ |
| N'UMB. | John Widdrington~ | | | ? | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | ?Reginold, Lord Grey |
| | Sampson Hardyng | | | | | JP | P✓ | | Steward |
| NOTTS | Hugh Hussy~ | * | | | | | | | Thomas Chaworth/Simon Leek |
| | Ralph Mackerell | * | | | | P✓ | £ | F | John Cressy~ |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Chaucer | | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Chief Butler HH/Constable, d of L/Envoy |
| | John Wilcotes | * | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | Receiver General, duchy of Cornwall |
| RUTLAND | Roger Flore | * | | | P✓ | JP | ES | | Keeper for duke of York |
| | John Newbold | * | | | | | | | Edward, duke of York |
| SALOP | David Holbache | * | | | | | JP | ES | Roger Flore - d of L connection |
| | Richard Lacon | * | | | | F | £ | | Thomas, earl of Arundel |
| SOMERSET | Hugh Luttrell | * | | | | | JP | | Constable/Ambassador |
| | Robert Hill | * | | | | P✓ | JP | F | (Steward of the HH of Queen Joan by 1410) |
| S'HANTS | Lewis John | * | | | | | F | £ | Master Worker of Mint Tower of London |
| | Thomas Wallop | * | | | | | | | <u>Thomas Chaucer/</u> Richard, earl of Oxford |
| STAFFS. | William Newport~ | * | | K's Knt | | P✓ | | | Constable |
| | John Meverel | * | | | | | | | (P of W) |
| SUFFOLK | William Phelip~ | * | | | | | £ | | Constable |
| | Robert Corbet~ | * | | K's Knt | P✓ | \$ | | | Constable |
| SURREY | John Burgh II | | | | F | JP | F | | Under Treasurer for earl of Arundel |
| | John Wintershall | | | | P✓ | JP | ES | | Deputy Constable |
| SUSSEX | Richard Wayville | * | | | | | | | Dep. to earl of Arundel, Constable Dover |
| | John Babelake | * | | | | | | | Thomas, earl of Arundel |
| WARWS. | John Harewell | * | | | F | JP | ES | | Thomas, earl of Arundel |
| | John Knightley | * | | | | | | ES | Richard, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | Thomas Warcop II | * | | | | | \$ | | |
| | William Thornburgh | | | | | | | P✓ | |
| WILTS. | <u>William Sturmy~</u> | | | K's Knt | F | JP | | | Warden of forest/Ambassador/Chief Steward estates Queen Anne |
| | Thomas Bonham | * | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | Verderer |
| WORCS. | John Throckmorton | * | | | | | JP | F | |
| | John Wood I | * | | | | | | F | |
| YORKS. | Richard Redmayne~ | | | annuity | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | Ambassador |
| | John Etton~ | | | | P✓ | £ | | | Steward of a forest |

PARLIAMENT of 1415

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|-------------------|----|---|-----------|----|----|----|---|--|
| BEDS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| BERKS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| BUCKS. | John Cheyne | | | | F | £ | | | |
| | Richard Wyot | * | | | P✓ | JP | | Steward for Bishop of Winchester | Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| CAMBS. | John Hore I | | * | | F | | F | | |
| | Nicholas Huish | | * | | | £ | PX | | |
| CORNW. | - | | | | | | | | |
| CUMB. | - | | | | | | | | |
| DERBS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| DEVON | - | | | | | | | | |
| DORSET | - | | | | | | | | |
| ESSEX | - | | | | | | | | |
| GLOUCS. | Thomas Fitznicol~ | * | | | P✓ | | | | |
| | Robert Poyntz | | * | | PX | £ | PX | Steward for countess of Stafford | Anne, dowager countess of Stafford |
| HERES. | - | | | | | | | | |
| HERTS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| HUNTS. | Nicholas Styvecle | * | | | | £ | PX | | |
| | Thomas Beville | | | | F | JP | | | Roger Hunt/Nicholas Styvecle~ |
| KENT | - | | | | | | | | |
| LANCS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| LEICS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| LINCS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| MIDDX. | Simon Camp | | | Esq body | | | | Treasurer & Receiver General to Queen Joan of Navarre | |
| | Thomas Coningsby | | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | - | | | | | | | | |
| N'ANTS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| N'UMB. | - | | | | | | | | |
| NOTTS | - | | | | | | | | |
| OX'SHIRE | - | | | | | | | | |
| RUTLAND | Roger Flore | * | | | P✓ | JP | ES | Keeper for duke of York | Edward, duke of York |
| | John Burgh III | | | | | £ | F | | Roger Flore/?Thomas, earl of Arundel |
| SALOP | Hugh Burgh | | * | | | £ | | Treasurer of Ireland | John, Lord Furnivall |
| | George Hawkstone | | | | F | £ | P✓ | | |
| SOMERSET | Hugh Luttrell | | * | | | JP | | Constable/Ambassador | (Steward HH Q. Joan by 1410) |
| | Robert Hill | | * | | PX | JP | F | | |
| S'HANTS | William Brocas | | | | F | £ | | Master of the King's Bloodhounds | |
| | John Harris | | * | | | | | Deputy Warden of a forest | |
| STAFFS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| SUFFOLK | - | | | | | | | | |
| SURREY | John Burgh II | | | | F | JP | F | Under Treasurer for earl of Arundel | Thos, e. of Arundel/Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Wincheste |
| | William Weston I | | | | P✓ | JP | | | |
| SUSSEX | Richard Styvecle | * | | K's esq | | £ | PX | | |
| | William Weston II | * | | | F | | P✓ | | |
| WARWS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| WESTM. | Robert Warcop | * | | | | | \$ | F | |
| | Thomas Warcop III | * | | | | | JP | | |
| WILTS. | Thomas Bonham | * | | | PX | JP | PX | Verderer | |
| | William Alexander | * | | | | | \$ | | |
| WORCS. | Humphrey Stafford | * | | | | | | | <u>Walter Hungerford~</u> |
| | John Brace | | | | PX | JP | PX | | Humphrey Stafford~ |
| YORKS. | Richard Redmayne~ | * | | annuity | PX | JP | PX | Ambassador | William, Lord Beauchamp |
| | John Etton~ | * | | | PX | £ | | Joint Keeper/Steward of a forest | John, duke of Bedford |

PARLIAMENT of MARCH 1416

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|-------------------------|----|---|-----------|----|----|----|---|--|
| BEDS. | William Bosom | | | | | JP | PX | | |
| | Roger Hunt | | | | | \$ | | Deputy Steward, d of L | John, earl of Norfolk/William Hungerford |
| BERKS. | Peter Bessels~ | | | | P/ | \$ | P/ | | |
| | John Golafre | | | K's esq | P/ | JP | P/ | Controlloer & Surveyor | <u>T. Chaucer</u> /Henry, Bp. Winchester/?T. e of Salisbur |
| BUCKS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| CAMBS. | John Hobildod | | | K's esq | P/ | \$ | | | |
| | Thomas Wykes | | | | | | | | |
| CORNW. | John Arundell~ | | | K's Knt | P/ | JP | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | |
| | William Bodrugan II | | * | | | | | | |
| CUMB. | John Lancaster I~ | | | | | F | JP | | |
| | William Stapleton | | | | | P/ | JP | P/ | |
| DERBS. | Nicholas Montgomery II~ | | | F | | £ | | Constable & Steward & Master forester, d of L | Ralph & Edmund de la Pole (courtiers) |
| | John de la Pole | | * | | | F | £ | | son of Hen. V's Chief Justice |
| DEVON | Richard Hankford | | | | | | | | Richard Courtney, Receiver of King's Chamber |
| | Robert Cary | | | | | JP | P/ | | |
| DORSET | - | | | | | | | | |
| ESSEX | Robert Darcy | | | (*) | | F | JP | PX | Steward for countess of Hereford |
| | John Tyrell | | | | | P/ | £ | | Steward for Lord Bourghier |
| GLOUCS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| HERES. | Thomas de la Barre~ | | | ?K's Knt | PX | \$ | P/ | | |
| | Robert Whitney II~ | | * | | | PX | | | |
| HERTS. | John Hotoft | | | Esq body | F | JP | F | Clerk of the court of Common Pleas | |
| | John Leventhorpe | | | | | | \$ | F | Receiver General, d of L/Constable |
| HUNTS. | Nicholas Styvecle | | * | | | JP | PX | | |
| | Henry Waryn | | * | | | | | | |
| KENT | William Cheyne | | | | | PX | JP | | |
| | John Wilcotes | | | K's esq | P/ | JP | | Receiver General, duchy of Cornwall | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| LANCS. | John Assheton II~ | | | K's Knt | | \$ | | Captain/Seneschal of Bayeux c.1417 | |
| | John Morley | | * | annuity | | | | | |
| LEICS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| LINCS. | Robert Hilton~ | | * | Knt body | PX | JP | | | |
| | William Tirwhit | | * | | | | | | |
| MIDDX. | - | | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | Edmund Oldhall | | | | | PX | JP | P/ | Receiver, d of L |
| | John Wodehouse | | | annuity | | | JP | | Chamberlain of Excheq/Chancellor & Steward & Constable, d of L |
| N'ANTS. | John St. John~ | | | Knt body | | | | | Mayor, Bordeaux/Steward/Ambassador |
| | William Huddleston | | | | | | | | John, earl of Norfolk |
| N'UMB. | Robert Ogle~ | | * | | | F | \$ | | Steward, sher,esch etc. for Bishop Durham/Envoy |
| | William Mitford | | | | | | JP | PX | Stwd & Bailiff of Archbishop of York |
| NOTTS | William Compton | | * | | | | | | Henry Bowet, Archbishop of York |
| | Thomas Rempston II~ | | | | | | £ | | Robert, Lord Willoughby |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Stonor | | * | | | | £ | | <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> (guardian) |
| | Thomas Wykeham | | | | | P/ | \$ | | Keeper for William Wykeham, Bp. of Winchester (d.1414) |
| RUTLAND | Roger Flore | | * | | | P/ | JP | P/ | Steward, d of L |
| | Geoffrey Paynell | | * | ?annuity | | | £ | | Receiver & Treasurer for the Queen |
| SALOP | Hugh Burgh | | * | | | | JP | | Treasurer of Ireland |
| | Edward Sprenghouse | | * | K's esq | PX | JP | | | Constable |
| SOMERSET | Robert Hill | | * | | | PX | JP | ES | |
| | Richard Boyton | | * | ?K's esq | | PX | | | ?John, earl of Somerset |
| S'HANTS | Bernard Brocas | | * | | | | | | |
| | John Uvedale | | | | | PX | JP | P/ | |
| STAFFS. | Humphrey Haughton | | * | | | F | | | Roger Flore, Steward d of L |
| | Roger Bradshaw | | | | | | | | |
| SUFFOLK | - | | | | | | | | |
| SURREY | John Burgh II | | * | | | F | JP | F | Under treasurer for earl of Arundel |
| | William Yerde | | | ?Esq bod | PX | | | PX | Harbinger of HH |
| SUSSEX | Richard Styvecle | | * | K's esq | | | JP | PX | |
| | Roger Fiennes~ | | * | | | F | £ | | |
| WARWS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| WESTM. | Roland Thornburgh | | | | | | JP | P/ | |
| | Robert Crakenthorpe | | | | | | | PX | John, Lord Clifford |
| WILTS. | Walter Beauchamp~ | | * | K's Knt | PX | JP | | | Keeper of a forest |
| | Robert Andrew II | | * | | | F | JP | PX | Steward, d of L |
| WORCS. | William Beauchamp~ | | * | annuity | PX | \$ | | | Constable |
| | William Russell | | * | | | | | | |
| YORKS. | Brian Stapleton~ | | * | | | | | | |
| | Robert Plumpton~ | | * | annuity | | | | | Steward & Constable, d of L |

(PARLIAMENT of OCTOBER 1416)

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|-------------------|--|---|--|--|----|----|----|-----------------|--------------------------|
| CAMBS. | William Allington | | | | | P/ | \$ | P/ | Council in 1417 | Thomas, duke of Clarence |
| | William Asenhill~ | | | | | F | JP | P/ | | |
| HUNTS. | Nicholas Styvecle | | * | | | | JP | PX | | |
| | John Hore I | | | | | F | | F | | |

PARLIAMENT of 1419

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|---|----|---|-----------|----|----|----|---|---|
| BEDS. | Thomas Waweton~ John Enderby | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | <u>John Tiptoft~</u> Reynold, Lord Grey of Ruthin |
| BERKS. | Thomas Beckingham John Shotesbrooke | * | ? | | \$ | PX | | Bailiff for Bishop of Winchester | Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| BUCKS. | John Barton II Richard Wyot | * | | | JP | P✓ | | Steward, St Albans Abbey Steward for Bishop of Winchester | Richard, earl of Warwick/Richard, Lord Grey Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| CAMBS. | John Burgoyne William Goodred | * | | | \$ | PX | | | |
| CORNW. | John Arundell II Thomas Arundell~ | * | | | PX | | | | <u>?Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| CUMB. | William Leigh~ Richard Restwold I | * | | annuity | P✓ | JP | | | <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| DERBS. | John Cockayne~ Hugh Erdeswyk | | | | F | JP | P✓ | | Thomas Erpingham~/John Pelham~ Thomas Gresely/Humphrey Stafford I & II~ |
| DEVON | Robert Cary Edward Pomeroy | * | | | F | | P✓ | | Richard Courtney, ?Rec K's Chamber Hugh Courtney, heir to earl of Devon |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford II~ Ralph Bush | * | | ?annuity | | | \$ | | John Phelip~/Thomas, Lord Berkley Thomas Beauchamp~/John Stourton |
| ESSEX | John Tyrell Robert Darcy | * | | | P✓ | £ | | ?Steward for countess of Stafford Steward for countess of Hereford | Humphrey, duke of Gloucester/ <u>John Tiptoft~</u> Joan, dowager countess of Hereford |
| GLOUCS. | John Greville William Tracy | * | | | PX | JP | ES | | John, duke of Bedford/Thomas, Lord Berkeley |
| HERES. | John Merbury John Russell III | * | | K's esq | PX | JP | PX | Chamberlain & Rec. S. Wales/Steward Brecon (D of L?) lawyer for d of L | |
| HERTS. | John Hotoft John Fray | * | | Esq body | F | JP | F | Clerk of the court of Common Pleas | |
| HUNTS. | Roger Hunt Robert Scott | * | | ?Esq | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | Anne, dowager countess of Stafford John, earl of Norfolk/Will. Hungerford~/ <u>John Tiptoft~</u> Styuecle/Waweton/Tiptoft |
| KENT | William Haute Edward Guildford | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| LANCS. | Nicolas Boteler John Laurence | * | | | | | | | |
| LEICS. | Thomas Ashby William Mallory | * | | | | | £ | | Edmund, Lord Ferrers/William, 4 th Lord Zouche (d of L) |
| LINCS. | - | | | | | | | | |
| MIDDX. | Thomas Frowyk Thomas Coningsby | * | | | | JP | | | |
| NORFOLK | John Lancaster II Oliver Groos | * | | annuity | P✓ | JP | ES | | John, earl of Norfolk |
| N'ANTS. | Thomas Strange John Bosenho | * | | | F | | ES | ?Captain | associated with Beauchamp affintiy |
| N'UMB. | Robert Ogle~ William Mitford | * | | | P✓ | \$ | | Const./ex-Envoy/Steward for Bp Durham Steward & Bailiff ArchBp. York's liberty | Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham Henry Bowet, Archbishop of York |
| NOTTS | John Zouche~ Ralph Hussy | * | | annuity | F | | | | William Chaworth~/William, 4th Lord Zouche |
| OX'SHIRE | John Wilcotes Thomas Stonor | * | | K's esq | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Council/Rec. General duchy of C | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| RUTLAND | Roger Flore Robert Browe | * | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | Chief Steward, d of L | Elizabeth, Lady Grey |
| SALOP | Robert Corbet William Burley | * | | | F | \$ | | | John, Lord Furnival/Hugh, Lord Burnell |
| SOMERSET | Robert Hill John Stourton I | * | | | PX | JP | P✓ | | |
| S'HANTS | John Uvedale Thomas Wallop | * | | | PX | JP | P✓ | | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| STAFFS. | Richard Vernon~ Thomas Gresley~ | * | | ?annuity | PX | JP | | Forester | |
| SUFFOLK | William Hanningfield William Rookwood | * | | | P✓ | £ | | | |
| SURREY | William Weston I William Yerde | * | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | ?Thomas, Lord Morley |
| SUSSEX | Richard Bannebury Richard Bitterley | * | | Esq body | PX | | PX | Harbinger of HH | ?John, earl of Huntingdon Robert, 4th Lord Poynings |
| WARWS. | Thomas Burdet~ John Mallory | * | | ?K's esq | | | | Keeper of a manor | Joan of Navarre ?Richard, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | Roland Thornburgh Robert Crackenthorpe | * | | | P✓ | £ | F | | Richard, earl of Warwick./Beauchamp affinity |
| WILTS. | John Westbury Robert Ashley | * | | | | JP | | F Verderer of forests | John, Lord Clifford <u>Walter Hungerford~</u> |
| WORCS. | Thomas Morant John Brace | * | | | | JP | | | Richard, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | Robert Hilton~ Halnath Mauleverer~ | * | | Knt body | PX | JP | PX | | William, Lord Beauchamp of Abergavenny |

PARLIAMENT of 1420

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|-----------------------|---------------|---|-----------|----|----|----|---|---|
| BEDS. | Roger Hunt | *(Hunts.) | | | | JP | | | John, earl of Norfolk/Will. Hungerford~/John Tiptoft~ |
| | Robert Scott | *(Hunts.)?Esq | | | PX | \$ | P✓ | | Styuecle/Waweton/John Tiptoft~ |
| BERKS. | William Danvers | * | | | | | F | | |
| | Thomas Rothwell | | | | | JP | F | | Thomas Chaucer |
| BUCKS. | John Hampden | * | | | | £ | | | |
| | William Whaplode | * | | | | £ | ES | Feodary, d of L | Hen. Beaufort, Bp of Winchester/ Thomas Chaucer |
| CAMBS. | Nicolas Caldecote | * | | | | £ | F | | John Tiptoft~ |
| | Thomas Camp | * | | | | | | | |
| CORNW. | William Bodrugan~ | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| | John Tretherf | * | | | | | F | | |
| CUMB. | Peter Tilliol~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | |
| | Thomas More II | * | | | | £ | | | |
| DERBS. | Thomas Blount II | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| | Henry Booth | * | | | | | PX | | |
| DEVON | Robert Chalons~ | * | | annuity | PX | | | | John Holand, earl of Huntingdon |
| | Thomas Archdeakon | * | | | | | | | |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford II~ | * | | ?annuity | | \$ | | | John Phelip~/Thomas, Lord Berkeley |
| | William Carent | * | | | F | £ | ES | | William Stourton |
| ESSEX | William Coggeshale~ | | | | PX | \$ | | | John Doreward |
| | Lewis John | | | | P✓ | £ | | Master Worker Mints Tower of London | Thomas Chaucer |
| GLOUCS. | Robert Greyndore | | | | | | | | ret. Edmund, earl of March |
| | Guy Whittington | * | | | F | £ | ES | | |
| HERES. | John Russell III | * | | | P✓ | JP | ES | Counsel for d of L | |
| | John Brugge | * | | | PX | JP | | ?Steward | John, Lord Furnival |
| HERTS. | John Barley | * | | | F | £ | F | | Anne, dowager countess of Stafford |
| | John Fray | * | | | | JP | | | |
| HUNTS. | Nicholas Styuecle~ | | | | | \$ | PX | | |
| | Thomas Waweton~ | *(Beds) | | | P✓ | \$ | | | John Tiptoft~ |
| KENT | William Rickhill | * | | | | | | | |
| | Thomas Town | * | | | | | | | ?Humphrey, duke of Gloucester. |
| LANCS. | Richard Shirburne | * | | | | | | | |
| | John Booth I | | | annuity | | \$ | | | |
| LEICS. | Ralph Shirley~ | * | | | F | JP | | Master Forester, d of L | |
| | James Bellers | | | | P✓ | JP | PX | | |
| LINCS. | Thomas Cumberworth~ | | | Knt body | P✓ | JP | | (kept Charles, duke of Orleans captive) | |
| | Robert Hakebeche~ | * | | | PX | JP | | | William, Lord Harrington |
| MIDDX. | John Boys~ | * | | | F | JP | | | |
| | Walter Green II | | | | | £ | | | |
| NORFOLK | John Radcliffe | * | | annuity | | | | Ex-Envoy/Constable Bordeaux/Captain | |
| | Edmund Wynter | * | | | PX | £ | PX | | Thomas, duke of Clarence/John, earl of Norfolk. |
| N'ANTS. | John Beaufo~ | * | | | | | | | |
| | Richard Knightley | * | | | | £ | F | Teller of receipt Exchequer | ?Richard, earl of Warwick |
| N'UMB. | Robert Ogle~ | * | | | P✓ | \$ | | Const./Ex-Envoy/Steward for Bp Durham | Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham |
| | Nicholas Turpin | * | | | | | | | |
| NOTTS | Thomas Chaworth~ | | | ?Knt b | PX | JP | | | |
| | Ralph Mackerell | | | | PX | £ | P✓ | | |
| OX'SHIRE | John Danvers | * | | | | | | | |
| | Richard Greville | * | | | | | | | |
| RUTLAND | Thomas Burton~ | * | | | PX | JP | | Keeper/Launder in K's forest | |
| | Henry Pleasington~ | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| SALOP | William Burley | * | | | F | \$ | | | John, Lord Furnival/Hugh, Lord Burnell |
| | John Wynnesbury | * | | | | £ | | | |
| SOMERSET | Thomas Stawell~ | * | | | | | | | |
| | John Stourton I | * | | | F | JP | PX | | |
| S'HANTS | Stephen Popham~ | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| | John Kirkby | * | | | | | | | |
| STAFFS. | William Lee II | * | | | | JP | PX | | |
| | John Mynors | *(B) | | | | | | Feodary, d of L | |
| SUFFOLK | Richard Steryacre | * | | | | JP | | | John Mowbray, earl of Norfolk |
| | Thomas Hethe | * | | | | | PX | | |
| SURREY | Robert Skerne | * | | | | JP | | | |
| | William Ottworth | * | | | | £ | F | | |
| SUSSEX | William Ryman | * | | | | | | Apposer, Upper Exchequer | John, Lord Arundel |
| | Ralph Rademyld~ | * | | | | | | | Robert, 4th Lord Poynings |
| WARWS. | John Cockayne~ | *(Derbs) | | | F | JP | P✓ | | Thomas Erpingham~/John Pelham~ |
| | William Peyto | * | | | F | | | | |
| WESTM. | William Beauchamp | * | | | | | | | |
| | Thomas Green II | * | | | | | | | |
| WILTS. | John Persons | * | | | | | PX | | John, Lord Mautravers |
| | John Rous III | * | | | | | | | Walter Hungerford~ |
| WORCS. | John Throckmorton | * | | | | JP | P✓ | | Richard, earl of Warwick |
| | John Weston | * | | | | JP | | Recorder in Coventry | Richard, earl of Warwick |
| YORKS. | Richard Redmayne~ | * | | annuity | PX | JP | PX | Ambassador | John, duke of Bedford |
| | John Langton~ | * | | | F | | | | |

PARLIAMENT of MAY 1421

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFEN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|-----------------------|---------|---|-----------|----|----|----|--|--|
| BEDS. | Robert Mordaunt | * | | | | | | | Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin |
| | John Goldington | | | | | \$ | | | |
| BERKS. | John Golafre | | | K's esq | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | Controller & Surveyor | <u>Thos. Chaucer</u> / Hen Beau./Thomas, earl of Salisbury |
| | William Fynderne | * | | | | £ | PX | | |
| BUCKS. | George Longville | * | | | F | £ | F | | |
| | Robert James | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | <u>Thomas Chaucer</u> |
| CAMBS. | Walter de la Pole~ | | | | P✓ | JP | | Envoy | Thomas, duke of Clarence |
| | William Freville | * | | | | | | | |
| CORNW. | John Arundell~ | | | K's Knt | P✓ | JP | | Steward, duchy of Cornwall | ?Edward, earl of Devon |
| | John Trelawny II~ | | | K's Knt | | | | | |
| CUMB. | John Lamplugh | | | | | | | | |
| | Richard Restwold II | * | | | | £ | | | |
| DERBS. | John Cockayne | *(Wars) | | | F | JP | P✓ | | Thomas Erpingham~/John Pelham~ |
| | Thomas Gresley | | | ?annuity | P✓ | JP | | Steward, d of L/Master Forester | |
| DEVON | Hugh Courtenay~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | | | Edward, earl of Devon |
| | Robert Cary | | | | | JP | P✓ | | ?Richard Courtney,- Rec. of K's Chamber |
| DORSET | Humphrey Stafford II~ | * | | ?annuity | | \$ | | | Thomas, Lord Berkeley |
| | Robert Lovell | * | | ?K's esq | | £ | | Lieutenant to duke of Gloucester | Humphrey, duke of Gloucester |
| ESSEX | John Tyrell | | | | P✓ | £ | | ?Steward to Anne countess of Stafford. | Humphrey, duke of Gloucester |
| | Robert Darcy | | | | P✓ | JP | ES | Steward for countess of Hereford | Joan, countess of Hereford |
| GLOUCS. | John Greville | | | | PX | JP | PX | Rec. General estates of duke of Bedford | John, duke of Bedford/Thomas, Lord Berkeley |
| | Guy Whittington | * | | | F | £ | PX | | |
| HERES. | John Merbury | | | K's esq | PX | JP | PX | Chmb. & Rec. S Wales 1400-21/Steward Kidwelly (D of L?) | |
| | John Russell III | * | | | P✓ | JP | PX | Counsel for d of L | |
| HERTS. | Robert Louthe | * | | | | | | | |
| | William Rokesburgh | * | | | | £ | F | | |
| HUNTS. | Nicolas Styvecle | * | | | | \$ | PX | | |
| | Roger Hunt | *(Beds) | | | | | JP | Steward for earl of Norfolk | John, earl of Norfolk/William Hungerford |
| KENT | - | | | | | | | | |
| | - | | | | | | | | |
| LANCS. | Thomas Radcliffe I | * | | annuity | | £ | | | |
| | Thomas Urswyk | * | | | | \$ | | Receiver & Master Forester, d of L | |
| LEICS. | Richard Hotoft | | | | | \$ | F | | |
| | John Burgh III | | | | | \$ | F | | <u>Roger Flore</u> |
| LINCS. | Richard Hansard~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | |
| | Godfrey Hilton~ | * | | | | £ | | | 1419, retinue of Thomas Beaufort, duke of Exeter |
| MIDDX. | Thomas Charlton~ | | | | | JP | | | 1420, retinue of John, duke of Beds. |
| | Henry Somer | | | | | JP | | Chancellor of Excheq./Warden of Exchange/Keeper Geoffrey Chaucer | |
| NORFOLK | John Wodehouse | | | annuity | | JP | | Chancellor for Queen/Chamberlain of Excheq/Chanc, Steward & Const. d of L | |
| | John Lancaster II | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | | John Mowbray, earl of Norfolk |
| N'ANTS. | John St. John~ | | | Knt. body | | | | Mayor of Bordeaux/Ambassador/Steward | John Mowbray, earl of Norfolk |
| | Thomas Strange | | | | F | | PX | ?Captain | associated with Beauchamp affinity |
| N'UMB. | John Manners | * | | | | PX | | | |
| | Sampson Hardyng | | | | | JP | PX | Steward Morpeth, Northumberland. | |
| NOTTS | Thomas Chaworth~ | * | | ?Knt Bod | PX | JP | | | |
| | William Meryng | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| OX'SHIRE | Thomas Chaucer | | | | PX | JP | P✓ | Chief Butler HH/Const. d of L/Envoy for Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester | |
| | John Wilcotes | | | K's esq | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | Rec. Gen. d. of Cornwall/Council | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| RUTLAND | John Pensax | | | | PX | \$ | | | |
| | William Sheffield | | | | | | | | |
| SALOP | Hugh Burgh | | | | | JP | | (1414-20 Treasurer of Ireland) | John Talbot, Lord Furnival |
| | William Burley | * | | | F | \$ | | | John Talbot, Lord Furnival |
| SOMERSET | William Bonville II~ | * | | | F | £ | | | Thomas, duke of Clarence |
| | Thomas Brooke~ | | | | F | £ | | | (John Oldcastle~) |
| S'HANTS | John Uvedale | | | | PX | JP | P✓ | | Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester |
| | Robert Dingley II | * | | | | F | | | |
| STAFFS. | John Bagot~ | | | annuity | P✓ | JP | P✓ | Ambassador. | |
| | Richard Lane | * | | | | JP | PX | Guardian Temporalities Bp. Coventry & Lichfield | |
| SUFFOLK | Andrew Butler~ | | | ?K's Knt | P✓ | £ | P✓ | | |
| | William Rookwood | | | | | \$ | PX | | ?Thomas, Lord Morley |
| SURREY | John Clipsham | | | ?K's esq | PX | JP | PX | Parker/Steward/Const. for Bp. Winchester | Hen. Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chauce</u> |
| | John Bonet | | | | | | | | |
| SUSSEX | William Ryman | * | | | | | | Apposer, Upper Exchequer | John Arundel, Lord Mautravers |
| | John Halle II | | | | | £ | PX | | Archbp. Chichele / <u>Thos Chaucer</u> / Beaufort/Pelham |
| WARWS. | John Mallory | | | | P✓ | £ | F | | Richard, earl of Warw/Beauchamp affinity |
| | William Holt II | * | | K's esq | | | | | Richard, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | Robert Warcop | * | | | | \$ | ES | | |
| | Robert Preston | * | | | | | | | |
| WILTS. | Robert Long | * | | | | £ | | | <u>Walter Hungerford~</u> |
| | Richard Milborne | * | | | | | F | | <u>Walter Hungerford~</u> |
| WORCS. | William Wollashull | | | | | JP | PX | | Richard, earl of Warwick. |
| | John Wood I | | | | | JP | P✓ | | Richard, earl of Warwick/John Phelip~ |
| YORKS. | Edmund Hastings~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | ?Nevilles |
| | William Gascoigne | * | | | | | | Steward & Constable, d of L from 1422 | |

PARLIAMENT of DECEMBER 1421

| COUNTY | MP | PP | N | ROY AFFIN | SH | JP | ES | OTHER OFFICE HOLDING | IMPORTANT CONNECTIONS |
|----------|--------------------------|----------|---|-----------|----|----|----|---|---|
| BEDS. | Thomas Manningham | * | | | | £ | PX | | |
| | Henry Cockayne | * | | | | | | | Reginald, 2nd Lord Grey |
| BERKS. | William Danvers | | | | | | F | | |
| | William Perkins | * | | | | £ | F | | |
| BUCKS. | John Cheyne~ | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| | Richard Wyot | | | | P✓ | JP | | Steward for Bishop of Winchester | Hen. Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chauce</u> |
| CAMBS. | John Burgoyne | | | | | \$ | PX | | |
| | William Fulburn | * | | | | JP | | Bailiff of liberty for Bishop of Ely | John Fordham, Bishop of Ely |
| CORNW. | John Trelawny~ | | | K's Knt | | | | | |
| | John Arundell II | | | | | PX | | | <u>?Thomas Chaucer</u> /F = Steward duke of Corn |
| CUMB. | Peter Tilliol~ | | | | P✓ | \$ | P✓ | | |
| | Nicholas Radcliffe~ | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| DERBS. | Nicholas Goushill | * | | | | JP | P✓ | | |
| | Thomas Okeover | | | | | | | | |
| DEVON | John Coppleston | * | | | | £ | PX | Steward for Bp. ?Laceys estates | Courtney, Bishop of Exeter |
| | Henry Fortescue | * | | | F | £ | | | Hugh Courtney, earl of Stafford |
| DORSET | John Horsey~ | * | | | PX | JP | | 'K's servitor' | |
| | John Roger | (*) | | | | | | | |
| ESSEX | William Coggeshall~ | | | | | PX | \$ | | <u>John Doreward</u> / Walter Fitzwalter |
| | Richard Baynard | | | | | | \$ | PX | Thomas, Lord Morely |
| GLOUCS.. | John Blaket~ | | | K's esq | | PX | \$ | | |
| | John Pauncefoot~ | | | | | F | £ | | ?Edmund, earl of March |
| HERES. | John Merbury | * | | K's esq | | PX | JP | PX | Chmb. & Rec. S. Wales 1400-21/Steward Kidwelly (D of L?) |
| | John Russell III | * | | | | P✓ | JP | PX | Counsel for d of L |
| HERTS. | Phillip Thornbury~ | | | | | | £ | | Connection with d of L |
| | John Kirkby II | * | | | | £ | F | Marshal of the Excheq./Dep. Steward, d of L | John, earl of Nottingham |
| HUNTS. | Robert Stonham | * | | | F | £ | | | |
| | Henry Heth | * | | | | JP | PX | | |
| KENT | Thomas Ellis | * | | | | | £ | | |
| | Roger Honyton | * | | | | | £ | | Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury |
| LANCS. | John Byron~ | * | | annuity | | F | | | |
| | Richard Shirburne | | | | | | | | |
| LEICS. | William Trussel~ | * | | | | PX | | | ?Humphrey, duke of Gloucester |
| | Laurence Berkeley~ | * | | | | F | | | ?Edmund, earl of March |
| LINCS. | Thomas Cumberworth | | | Knt body | | P✓ | JP | | |
| | Richard Welby | * | | | | | £ | | |
| MIDDX. | Richard Maidstone | * | | | | | | | |
| | Edmund Bibbesworth | * | | | | | | | |
| NORFOLK | John Lancaster II | * | | | | P✓ | JP | P✓ | John, earl of Norfolk |
| | Edmund Wynter | | | | | PX | £ | PX | Thomas, duke of Clarence/John, earl of Norfolk |
| N'ANTS. | John Knyvet~ | * | | | | | F | | |
| | Simon Kynnesman | * | | | | | | | |
| N'UMB. | Robert Ogle~ | | | | | P✓ | \$ | Const/Envoy/Stwd etc for Bp. Durham | Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham |
| | William Mitford | | | | | | JP | PX | Henry Bowet, Archbishop of York |
| NOTTS | Richard Stanhope | | | | | P✓ | JP | Verderer | |
| | Henry Pierrepont~ | | | | | | \$ | | ?Richard, Lord Grey of Condor |
| OX'SHIRE | John Danvers | | | | | | | | |
| | Peter Fettiplace | * | | | | | £ | | |
| RUTLAND | John Culpepper | * | | | | F | £ | | |
| | Thomas Greenham | * | | | | | £ | | Nicholas Bobwith, Bishop of Bath & Wells |
| SALOP | Richard Lacon~ | | | | | P✓ | £ | | |
| | John Stapleton II | * | | | | | | | |
| SOMERSET | Richard Cheddar | | | | | | | | |
| | John Stourton I | | | | | F | JP | PX | |
| S'HANTS | William Brocas | | | | | P✓ | £ | Master of the King's Bloodhounds | |
| | Richard Wallop | * | | | | | JP | | |
| STAFFS. | Hugh Erdeswyk | | | | | F | JP | | |
| | Richard Lane | * | | | | | JP | PX | Guardian of Temporalities for Bp. Lichfield & Coventry |
| SUFFOLK | William Rookwood | | | | | | \$ | PX | ?Thomas, Lord Morley |
| | James Andrew | * | | | | | £ | | |
| SURREY | John Clipsham | * | | ?K's esq | | PX | JP | PX | Hen. Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester/ <u>Thomas Chauce</u> |
| | William Ottworth | | | | | | £ | F | |
| SUSSEX | Ralph Rademylde | | | | | | | | Robert, 4th Lord Poynings |
| | Richard Bitterley | | | ?K's esq | | | | Keeper of King's Langley | ?Joan of Navarre |
| WARWS. | John Cockayne~ | *(Derbs) | | | | F | JP | P✓ | Thomas Erpingham~/John Pelham~ |
| | John Chetwynd | * | | K's esq | | | £ | F | ?Richard, earl of Warwick |
| WESTM. | John Lancaster I~ | | | | | P✓ | \$ | | |
| | William Blenkinsop | * | | | | | | | |
| WILTS. | John Stourton II | * | | | | F | £ | | |
| | Robert Long | * | | | | | £ | | <u>Walter Hungerford~</u> |
| WORCS. | Walter Corbet | * | | | | | £ | | |
| | John Brace | | | | | PX | JP | PX | William, Lord Beauchamp |
| YORKS. | <u>Richard Redmayne~</u> | | | annuity | | PX | JP | PX | John, duke of Bedford |
| | John Etton~ | | | | | PX | JP | Steward of a forest | |

APPENDIX 2: THE RESIDENCES OF KNIGHTS OF THE SHIRE IN SELECTED COUNTIES

Note: 'Position' indicates where in a county the knight of the shire's manor lay. 'N' indicates that it was in the north, 'C' indicates that it was in the centre, 'W' in the west and so on. A separate key is provided for Sussex. The sources used to locate manors are J. Speed, *The Counties of Britain: A Tudor Atlas by John Speed* (London, 1988) and *Domesday Book*, J. Morris, gen. ed. (Chichester, 1985).

DEVON

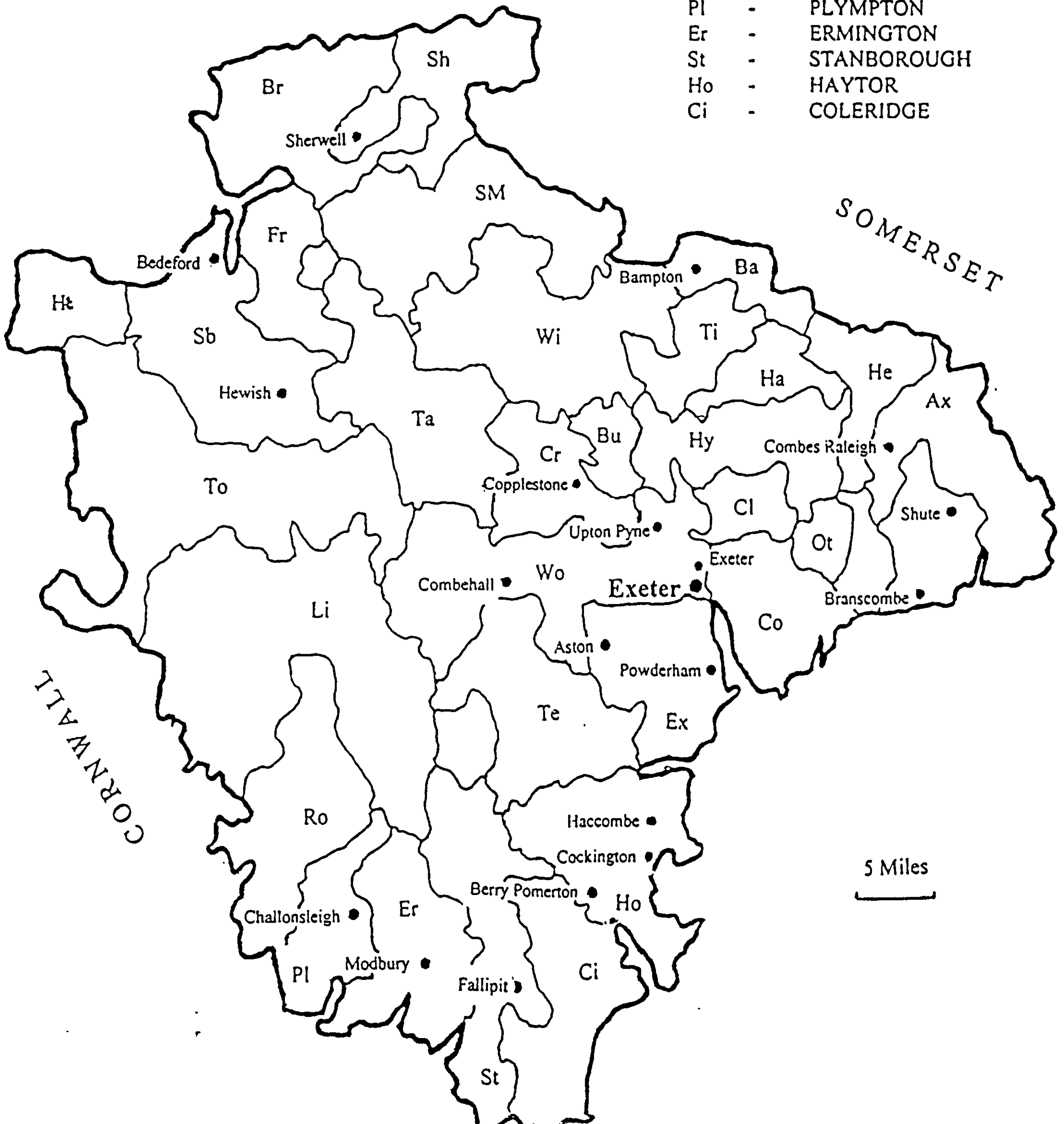
| <u>Parlt.</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Manor</u> | <u>Hundred</u> | <u>Position</u> |
|---------------|------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1386 | Sir Philip Courtney | Powderham | Exminster | SE |
| | Sir John Stretch | Unknown | - | - |
| 1388 | Sir Philip Courtney | Powderham | Exminster | SE |
| | Sir John Prideaux | Modbury | Ermington | SW |
| 1388 | Sir John Stretch | Unknown | - | - |
| | Sir John Grenville | Bedeford | Shebbeare | NW |
| 1390 | Sir Philip Courtney | Powderham | Exminster | SE |
| | Sir James Chudleigh | Aston | Exminster | SE |
| | | Sherwell | Shirwell | NW |
| 1390 | Sir James Chudleigh | Aston | Exminster | SE |
| | | Sherwell | Shirwell | NW |
| | John Prescott | Exeter | Wonford | SE |
| 1391 | Sir James Chudleigh | Aston | Exminster | SE |
| | | sherwell | Shirwell | NW |
| | Sir William Sturmy | (Wilts. and Hants.) | - | - |
| 1393 | Sir Philip Courtney | Powderham | Exminster | SE |
| | Sir James Chudleigh | Aston | Exminster | SE |
| | | Sherwell | Shirwell | NW |
| 1394 | Sir John Grenville | Bedeford | Shebbeare | NW |
| | Sir James Chudleigh | Aston | Exminster | ES |
| | | Sherwell | Shirwell | NW |
| 1395 | Sir Philip Courtney | Powderham | Exminster | SE |
| | Sir Hugh Courtney | Hacombe | Haytour | SE |
| | | Bampton | Tiverton | NE |
| 1397 | Sir William Bonville I | Shute | Culliton | E |
| | Sir John Grenville | Bedeford | Shebbeare | NW |
| 1397 | Sir Hugh Courtney | Hacombe | Haytour | SE |
| | | Bampton | Tiverton | NE |
| | Sir William Bonville I | Shute | Colyton | E |

| | | | | |
|-----------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 1399 | Sir Philip Courtney Sir John Stretch | Powderham Unknown | Exminster - | SE - |
| 1401 | Sir Philip Courtney Sir John Wadham | Powderham Branscombe | Exminster Colyton | SE SE |
| 1402 | Sir William Bonville I Sir John Grenville | Shute Bedeford | Colyton Shebbeare | E NW |
| 1404 | Sir Thomas Pomeray Edmund Pyne | Combes Raleigh Upton Pyne | Axminster Wonford | E SE |
| 1404 | Sir William Sturmy Walter Reynell | (Wilts. and Hants.) Unknown | - - | - - |
| 1406 | Sir Hugh Luttrell Sir Thomas Pomeray | (non resident) Combes Raleigh | - Axminster | - E |
| 1407 | Sir Hugh Luttrell Robert Cary | (non resident) Cockington | - Haytour | - SE |
| 1410 | Sir Thomas Pomeray Robert Cary | Combes Raleigh Cockington | Axminster Haytour | E SE |
| 1411 | Edmund Pyne Robert Cary | Upton Pyne Cockington | Wonford Haytour | SE SE |
| May 1413 | Sir Thomas Pomeray Robert Cary | Combes Raleigh Cockington | Axminster Haytour | E SE |
| Apr. 1414 | John St. Aubyn Robert Cary | Combes Raleigh Cockington | Axminster Haytour | E SE |
| Nov. 1414 | Richard Hankford John Arundell II | Hewish Bideford | Shebbeare Shebbeare | SE NW |
| Mar. 1416 | Richard Hankford Robert Cary | Hewish Cockington | Shebbeare Haytour | SE SE |
| 1417 | John Cole IV Robert Cary | Nethway Cockington | Unknown Haytour | - SE |
| 1419 | Edward Pomeray Robert Cary | Berry Pomerton Cockington | Haytour Haytour | SE SE |
| 1420 | Sir Robert Chalons Thomas Archdeacon | Challonsleigh Combehall | Plympton Wonford | SW SE |
| 1421 | Sir Hugh Courtney Robert Cary | Hacombe Bampton Cockington | Haytour Tiverton Haytour | SE NE SE |
| 1421 | John Coplestone Henry Fortescue | Coplestone Fallipit | Crediton Stanborough | C SE |

Map 1 - Devon: Hundreds and MPs' Residences

Hundred Key

| | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------|----|---|-------------|
| Br | - | BRAUNTON | Ta | - | TAWTON |
| Sh | - | SHIRWELL | Cr | - | CREDITON |
| Ht | - | HARTLAND | Bu | - | BUDLEIGH |
| Sb | - | SHEBBEAR | Hy | - | HAYRIDGE |
| Fr | - | FREMINGTON | He | - | HEMYOCK |
| SM | - | SOUTH MOLTON | Ax | - | AXMINSTER |
| Wi | - | WITHERIDGE | Li | - | LIFTON |
| Ba | - | BAMPTON | Wo | - | WONFORD |
| Ti | - | TIVERTON | Cl | - | CLISTON |
| Ha | - | HALBERTON | Ot | - | OTTERY |
| To | - | TORRINGTON | Co | - | COLYTON |
| | | | Te | - | TEIGNBRIDGE |
| | | | Ex | - | EXMINSTER |
| | | | Ro | - | ROBOROUGH |
| | | | Pl | - | PLYMPTON |
| | | | Er | - | ERMINGTON |
| | | | St | - | STANBOROUGH |
| | | | Ho | - | HAYTOR |
| | | | Ci | - | COLERIDGE |



HEREFORDSHIRE

| <u>Parlt.</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Manor</u> | <u>Hundred</u> | <u>Position</u> |
|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 1386 | Kynard de la Bere | Kinnersley | Streetford | W |
| | Sir Thomas de la Bare | Holmer | Grimsworth | C |
| | | Rotherwas | Webtree | C |
| 1388 | Leonard Hakluyt | Stoke Edith | Radlowe | E |
| | Richard Nash | Hereford | Grimsworth | C |
| 1388 | Malcolm de la Mare | Yatton | Wigmore | NW |
| | | Little Hereford | Wolsey | N |
| | William Seymour | Brobury | Grimsworth | C |
| 1390 | Sir Kynard de la Bere | Kinnersley | Streetford | W |
| | Thomas Oldcastle | Eyton | Wolsey | N |
| 1390 | Roger Wigmore | Lucton | Wolsey | N |
| | Richard Nash | Hereford | Grimsworth | C |
| 1391 | Sir Robert Whitney I | Whitney-on-Wye | Streetford | W |
| | | Pencombe | Broxashe | NE |
| | Roger Wigmore | Lucton | Wolsey | N |
| 1393 | Sir John Chandos | Peterchurch | Webtree | SW |
| | Thomas Oldcastle | Eyton | Wolsey | N |
| 1394 | (Sir) Leonard Hakluyt | Stoke Edith | Radlowe | E |
| | Thomas Clanvowe | Yazor | Grimsworth | C |
| 1395 | Sir John Chandos | Peterchurch | Webtree | SW |
| | Thomas Walwyn I | Stoke Edith | Radlowe | E |
| 1397 | Sir Thomas Clanvowe | Yazor | Grimsworth | C |
| | Thomas Walwyn II | Hellions | Unknown | E |
| 1397 | Sir Thomas Clanvowe | Yazor | Grimsworth | C |
| | John Skydemore | Kentchurch | Webtree | S |
| 1399 | Sir Kynard de la Bere | Kinnersley | Streetford | W |
| | Thomas Walwyn II | Hellions | Unknown | E |
| 1401 | Sir Walter Devereux | Weobley | Streetford | W |
| | Sir John Greyndore | (Gloucs.) | - | - |
| 1402 | Sir Thomas de la Bare | Holmer | Grimsworth | C |
| | | Rotherwas | Webtree | C |
| | Philip Holgot | Hereford | Grimsworth | C |
| 1404 | Sir John Oldcastle | Peterchurch | Webtree | SW |
| | Thomas Walwyn II | Hellions | Unknown | E |

| | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---|--------------------|
| 1404 | Sir John Greyndore Thomas Walwyn II | (Gloucs.) Hellions | - Unknown | - E |
| 1406 | John ap Harry Thomas Holgot | Vowchurch Hereford | Webtree Grimsworth | SW C |
| 1407 | John ap Harry Thomas Holgot | Vowchurch Hereford | Webtree Grimsworth | SW C |
| May 1413 | Thomas de la Hay Thomas Holgot | Arkstone Urishlay Hereford | Webtree Webtree Grimsworth | SW SW C |
| Apl 1414 | (Sir) John Skydemore Thomas Holgot | Kentchurch Hereford | Webtree Grimsworth | SW C |
| Mar 1416 | Sir Thomas de la Barre Sir Robert Whitney II | Holmer Rotherwas Whitney-on-Wye Pencombe | Grimsworth Webtree Streetford Broxashe | C C W NE |
| 1417 | John Russell III Thomas Holgot | Aymestry Lyngen Hereford | Wigmore Wigmore Grimsworth | NW NW C |
| 1419 | John Russell III John Brugge | Aymestry Lyngen Staunton-on-Wye | Wigmore Wigmore Grimsworth | NW NW C |
| May 1421 | John Russell III John Herbury | Aymestry Lyngen Lyonshall Weobly | Wigmore Wigmore Streetford Streetford | NW NW W W |
| Dec. 1421 | John Russell III John Merbury | Aymestry Lyngen Lyonshall Weobly | Wigmore Wigmore Streetford Streetford | NW NW W W |

* * *

Map 2: Herefordshire: Hundreds and MPs' Residences

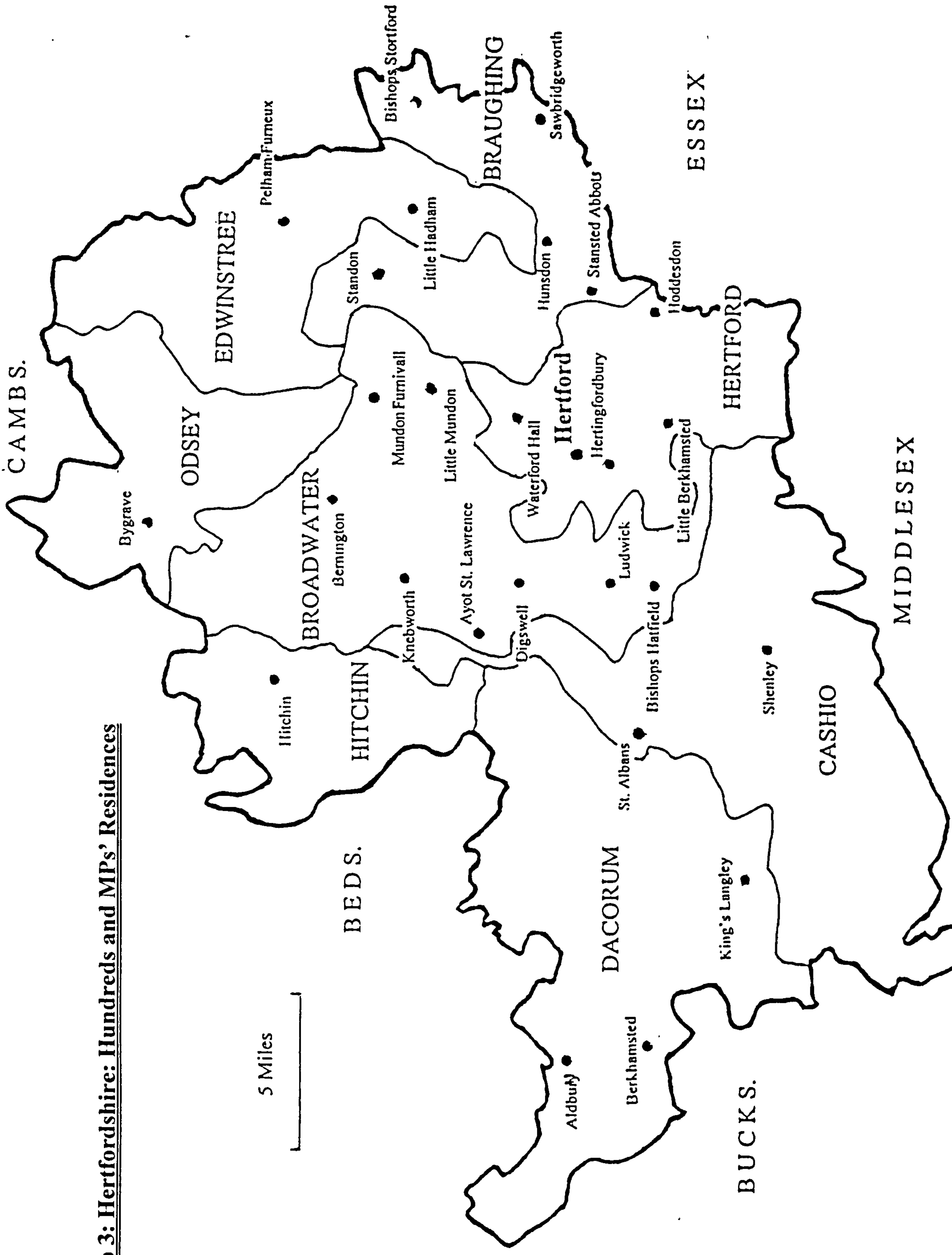


HERTFORDSHIRE

| <u>Parlt.</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Manor</u> | <u>Hundred</u> | <u>Position</u> |
|---------------|---|---|---|--------------------|
| 1386 | Sir Walter Lee Thomas Lee | Aldbury Waterford Hall | Dacorum Hertford | SW E |
| 1388 | Sir Walter Lee Sir Robert Turk | Aldbury Hitchin | Dacorum Hitchin | SW NW |
| 1388 | Sir Walter Lee Sir Robert Turk | Aldbury Hitchin | Dacorum Hitchin | SW NW |
| 1390 | Sir Walter Lee Sir John Thornbury | Aldbury Little Mundon Bygrave | Dacorum Broadwater Odsey | SW N N |
| 1390 | Sir Walter Lee John Ruggewyn | Aldbury Standon | Dacorum Braughing | SW NE |
| 1391 | John Norbury Sir John Thornbury | Little Berkhamsted Hoddesdon Little Mundon Bygrave | Hertford Hertford Broadwater Odsey | SE SE N N |
| 1393 | Sir Robert Turk John Ruggewyn | Hitchin Standon | Hitchin Braughing | NW NE |
| 1394 | Richard de la Pantry John Ruggewyn | St. Albans Standon | Cashio Braughing | S NE |
| 1395 | Sir Thomas Morewell John Ruggewyn | Little Hadham Bishops Stortford Standon | Edwinstree Braughing Braughing | NE NE NE |
| 1397 | Sir Edward Benstede John Ruggewyn | Bernington Standon | Broadwater Braughing | N NE |
| 1397 | Sir Edward Benstede John Ruggewyn | Bernington Standon | Broadwater Braughing | N NE |
| 1399 | Sir Edward Benestede John Ludwick | Bernington Digswell Ludwick | Broadwater Broadwater Broadwater | N N N |
| 1401 | Sir Thomas de la Barre Robert Newport | Ayot St. Lawrence Pelham Furneux | Broadwater Edwinstree | N NE |
| 1402 | Sir Edward Benestede Sir Robert Corbet | Bernington Berkhamsted | Broadwater Dacorum | N SW |
| 1404 | Sir John Poultney Sir Robert Corbet | Shenley Berkhamsted | Cashio Dacorum | S SW |

| | | | | |
|------|---|--|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| 1404 | Sir John Poultney William Parker II | Shenley King's Langley | Cashio Dacorum | S SW |
| 1406 | Sir John Poultney John Goldington I | Shenley Hunsdon | Cashio Braughing | S E |
| 1407 | William Parker II Sir Thomas de la Barre | King's Langley Ayot St. Lawrence | Dacorum Broadwater | SW N |
| 1411 | Sir Thomas de la Barre Robert Newport | Ayot St. Lawrence Pelham Furneux | Broadwater Edwinstree | N NE |
| 1413 | John Hotoft John Leventhorp | Knebworth Sawbridgeworth | Broadwater Braughing | N E |
| 1414 | John Hotoft William Flete | Knebworth Rickmansworth | Broadwater Cashio | N S |
| 1414 | John Hotoft William Flete | Knebworth Rickmansworth | Broadwater Cashio | N S |
| 1416 | John Hotoft John Leventhorpe | Knebworth Sawbridgeworth | Broadwater Braughing | N E |
| 1417 | Sir Philip Thornbury John Hotoft | Little Mundon Bygrave Knebworth | Broadwater Odsey Broadwater | N N N |
| 1419 | John Fray John Hotoft | Mundon Furnivall Knebworth | Broadwater Broadwater | N N |
| 1420 | John Fray John Barley | Mundon Furnivall Aldbury | Broadwater Dacorum | N SW |
| 1421 | Robert Louthe William Rokesburgh | Hertingfordbury Stansted Abbots | Hertford Braughing | C E |
| 1421 | Sir Philip Thornbury John Kirkby II | Little Mundon Bygrave Bishops Hatfield | Broadwater Odsey Broadwater | N N N |

* * *



Map 3: Hertfordshire: Hundreds and MPs' Residences

NORFOLK

Note: Where 'Norwich' is indicated in the position column, this indicates that a shire knight resided in the general proximity of Norwich, not necessarily in the town itself.

| <u>Parlt.</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Manor</u> | <u>Hundred</u> | <u>Position</u> |
|---------------|--|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1386 | Sir Thomas Gerberge Sir Stephen Hales | Marlingford Testerton Gallowe | Forehoe Brothercross | Norwich NW |
| 1388 | Sir John Strange Sir John White | Hunstanton Shotesham | Smethdon Henstead | NW Norwich |
| 1388 | Sir John Strange Sir John White | Hunstanton Shotesham | Smethdon Henstead | NW Norwich |
| 1390 | William Rees Sir John White | Tharston Shotesham | Depwade Henstead | Norwich Norwich |
| 1390 | Sir Robert Berney Hugh Fastolf | Gt. Witchingham Caister | Eynesford Flegg (East) | Norwich E |
| 1391 | Sir Robert Berney Sir John White | Gt. Witchingham Shotesham | Eynesford Henstead | Norwich Norwich |
| 1393 | Sir Ralph Shelton Sir John Curson | Gt. Snoring Shelton Billingford | Gallow Depwade Eynesford | NW Norwich Norwich |
| 1394 | William Rees Sir John White | Tharston Shotesham | Depwade Henstead | Norwich Norwich |
| 1395 | Sir Robert Berney Sir John White | Gt. Witchingham Shotesham | Eynesford Henstead | Norwich Norwich |
| 1397 | William Rees Sir John Curson | Tharston Billingford | Depwade Eynesford | Norwich Norwich |
| 1397 | Sir Nicholas Dagworth Sir Edmund Thorpe | Blickling Ashwellthorpe | South Erpingham Depwade | Norwich Norwich |
| 1399 | Sir Robert Berney John Gurney | Gt. Wichingham Harpley Barsham (Suffolk) | Eynesford Freebridge - | Norwich NW - |
| 1401 | John Payn II John Wynter | Wymondham Barningham Wynter | Forehoe North Erpingham | Norwich N |
| 1402 | Sir Ralph Shelton Sir Robert Berney | Gt. Snoring Shelton Gt. Wichingham | Gallow Depwade Eynesford | NW Norwich Norwich |

| | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---|-------------------------|
| 1404 | John Reymes John Wynter | Overstrand Barrungham Wynter | North Erpingham North Erpingham | N N |
| 1404 | John Gurney Edmund Oldhall | Harpley Barsham (Suffolk) East Dereham Little Fransham | Freebridge - Mitford Launditch | NW - Norwich W |
| 1406 | Sir Edmund Noon John Reymes | Tilney Shelhanger Overstrand | Freebridge Dis North Erpingham | W SE N |
| 1407 | Sir Edmund Thorpe John Wynter | Ashwellthorpe Barningham Wynter | Depwade North Erpingham | Norwich N |
| 1410 | John Wodehouse John Wynter | Roydon Barningham Wynter | Dis North Erpingham | SE N |
| 1411 | Edmund Oldhall John Wynter | East derham Little Fransham Barningham Wynter | Mitford Launditch North Erpingham | Norwich W N |
| May 1413 | Edmund oldhall John Wynter | East Derham Little Fransham Barningham Wynter | Mitford Launditch North Erpingham | Norwich W N |
| Apr. 1414 | Sir Robert Berney John Wynter | Gt. Witchingham Barningham Wynter | Eynesford North Erpingham | Norwich N |
| Nov. 1414 | Sir John Ingoldisthorpe John Wodehouse | Ingoldisthorpe Roydon | Smethdon Dis | N.E. SE |
| Mar. 1416 | Edmund Oldhall John Wodehouse | East Dereham Little Fransham Roydon | Mitford Launditch Dis | Norwich W SE |
| 1417 | Edmund Oldhall John Wodehouse | East Dereham Little Fransham Roydon | Mitford Launditch Dis | Norwich W SE |
| 1419 | John Lancaster II Oliver Groos | Bressingham Sloley | Dis Tunstead | SE Norwich |
| 1420 | Sir John Radcliffe Edmund Wynter | Attleborough Barnyngham Wynter | Shropham North Erpingham | SE N |
| 1421 | John Lancaster II John Wodehouse | Bressingham Roydon | Dis Dis | SE SE |
| 1421 | John Lancaster II Edmund Wynter | Bressingham Barnyngham Wynter | Dis - | SE - |

Map 4 - Norfolk: Hundreds and MPs' Residences

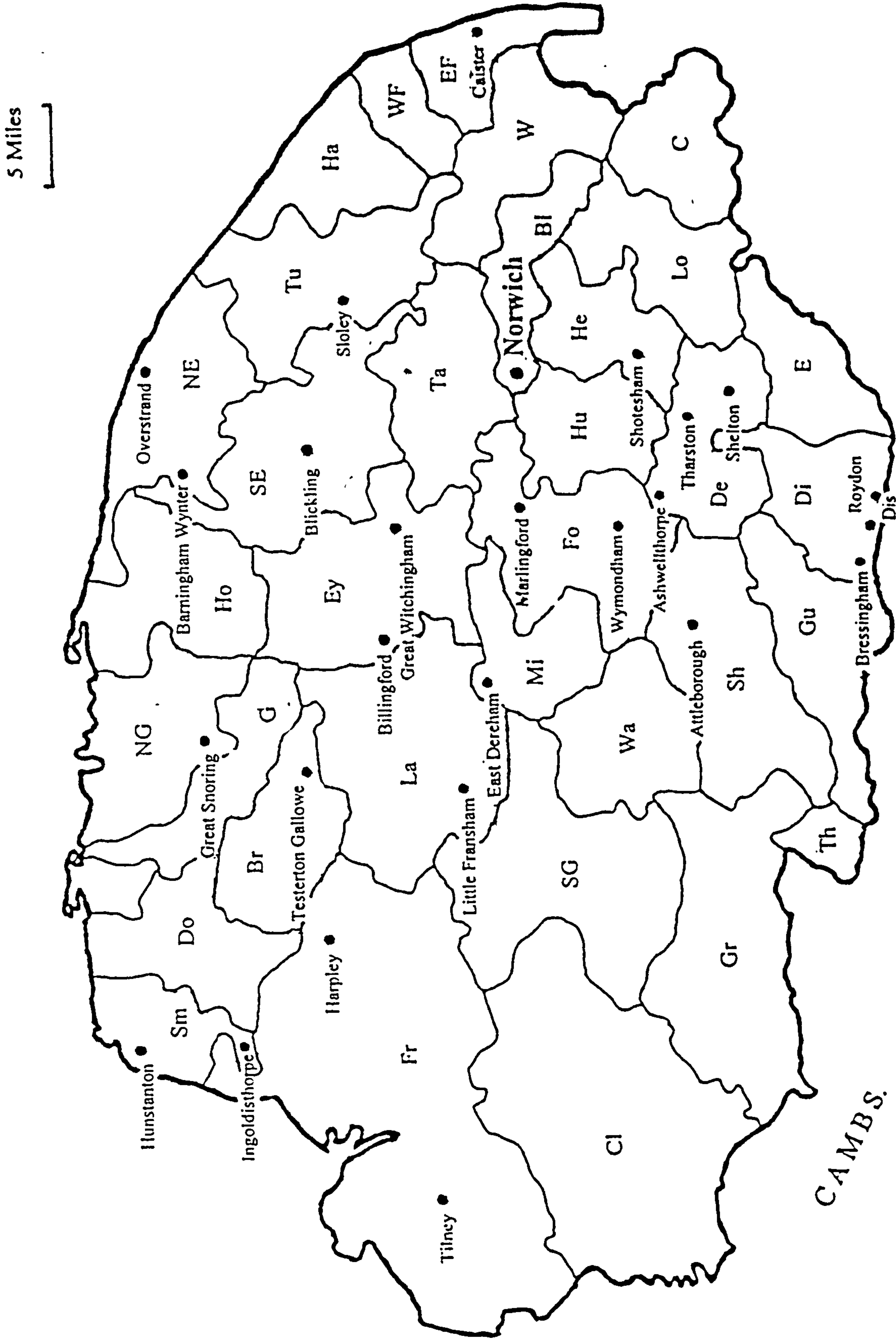
Hundred Key

WEST NORFOLK

- Br - BROTHERCROSS
- Cl - CLACKCLOSE
- Do - DOCKING
- Fr - FREEBRIDGE
- G - GALLOW
- NG - GREENHOE (NORTH)
- SG - GREENHOE (SOUTH)
- Gr - GRIMSHOE
- Gu - GUILTCROSS
- La - LAUNDITCH
- Sm - SMETHDON
- Wa - WAYLAND

EAST NORFOLK

- Bl - BLOFIELD
- C - CLAVERING
- De - DEPWADE
- Di - DISS
- E - EARSHAM
- NE - NORTH ERPINGHAM
- SE - SOUTH ERPINGHAM
- Ey - EYNSFORD
- EF - FLEGG (EAST)
- WF - FLEGG (WEST)
- Fo - FOREHOE
- Ha - HAPPING
- He - HENSTEAD
- Ho - HOLT
- Hu - HUMBLEYARD
- Lo - LODDON
- Mi - MITFORD
- Sh - SHROPHAM
- Ta - TAVERHAM
- Th - THETFORD
- Tu - TUNSTEAD
- W - WALSHAM



SUFFOLK

CAMBS.

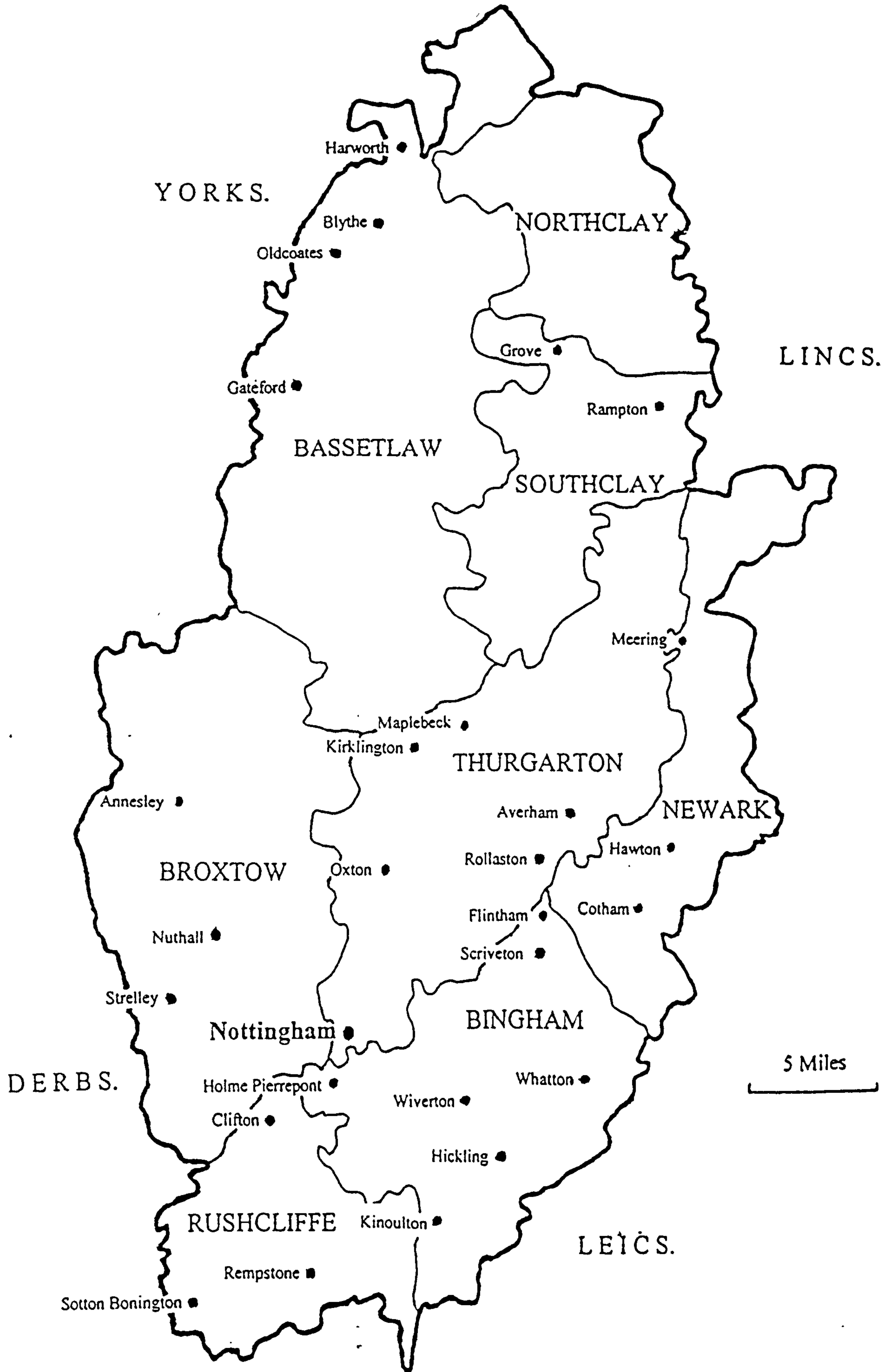
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

| <u>Parlt.</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Manor</u> | <u>Wapentake</u> | <u>Position</u> |
|---------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1386 | Sir John Annesley Sir John Leek | Annesley Cotham | Broxtow Newark | W E |
| 1388 | Sir John Annesley Sir John Leek | Annesley Cotham | Broxtow Newark | W E |
| 1388 | Sir John Annesley Sir Robert Cockfield | Annesley Nuthall | Broxtow Broxtow | W W |
| 1390 | John Gateford Sir John Leek | Gateford Cotham | Bassetlaw Newark | NW E |
| 1390 | Sir John Burton I Hugh Cressy | (not known) Oldcoates | - Bassetlaw | - NW |
| 1391 | Sir Thomas Hercy Sir Robert Cockfield | Grove Nuthall | Southclay Broxtow | NE W |
| 1393 | Sir Thomas Rempston I John Gateford | Rempstone Gateford | Rushcliffe Bassetlaw | S NW |
| 1394 | Sir William Neville Nicholas Strelley | Rollaston Strelley | Thurgarton Broxtow | C W |
| 1395 | Sir Thomas Rempston I Nicholas Burden | Rempstone Maplebeck | Rushcliffe Thurgarton | S C |
| 1397 | Sir Thomas Rempston I Hugh Cressey | Rempstone Oldcoates | Rushcliffe Bassetlaw | S NW |
| 1397 | Sir Thomas Rempston I Robert Morton | Rempstone Harworth | Rushcliffe Bassetlaw | S NW |
| 1399 | William Leek John Gateford | Scriveton Gateford | Bingham Bassetlaw | SE NW |
| 1401 | Sir John Burton II John Kniveton | (not known) Whatton | - Bingham | - SE |
| 1402 | Sir John Clifton Sir Richard Stanhope | Clifton Rampton | Rushcliffe Southclay | S NE |
| 1404 | John Leek Sir Richard Stanhope | Hickling Rampton | Bingham Southclay | SE NE |
| 1404 | Simon Leek Sir Richard Stanhope | Cotham Rampton | Newark Southclay | E NE |
| 1406 | Sir Thomas Chaworth Sir Richard Stanhope | Wiverton Rampton | Bingham Southclay | SE NE |

| | | | | |
|-----------|--|------------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| 1407 | Sir John Zouche Sir Thomas Rempston II | Kirklington Rempston | Thurgarton Rushcliffe | C S |
| 1411 | William Rigmaiden Thomas Staunton | Blythe Sotton Bonington | Bassetlaw Rushcliffe | N S |
| 1413 | Sir John Zouche Sir Thomas Rempston II | Kirklington Rempston | Thurgarton Rushcliffe | C S |
| 1413 | Sir Robert Plumpton Henry Sutton | Kinoulton Averham | Bingham Thurgarton | SE E |
| 1414 | Ralph Mackerell Sir Hugh Hussey | Clifton Flintham | Rushcliffe Bingham | S SE |
| Mar. 1416 | William Compton Sir Thomas Rempston II | Hawton Rempston | Newark Rushcliffe | E S |
| 1417 | Sir Thomas Chaworth Sir Henry Pierrepont | Wiverton Holme Pierrepont | Bingham Bingham | SE SE |
| 1419 | Sir John Zouche Ralph Hussey | Kirklington Oxton | Thurgarton Thurgarton | C C |
| 1420 | Sir Thomas Chaworth Ralph Mackerell | Wiverton Clifton | Bingham Rushcliffe | SE S |
| May 1421 | Sir Thomas Chaworth Sir William Meryng | Wiverton Meering | Bingham Newark | SE E |
| Dec. 1421 | Sir Henry Pierrepont Sir Richard Stanhope | Holme Pierrepont Rompton | Bingham Southclay | SE NE |

* * *

Map 5 - Nottinghamshire: Wapentakes and MPs' Residences



OXFORDSHIRE

| <u>Parl</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Manor</u> | <u>Hundred</u> | <u>Position</u> |
|-------------|---|--|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1386 | Sir Richard Adderbury Sir Gilbert Wace | Steeple Aston Ewelme | Wotton Ewelme | N S |
| 1388 | William Wilcotes Thomas Baratyn | North Leigh Chalgrove | Wotton Ewelme | N S |
| 1388 | Sir Thomas de la Poyle John Rede | Hampton Poyle Checkendon | Ploughley Langtree | N S |
| 1390 | William Wilcotes Thomas Baratyn | North Leigh Chalgrove | Wotton Ewelme | N S |
| 1390 | Sir Thomas de la Poyle Thomas Baratyn | Hampton Poyle Chalgrove | Ploughley Ewelme | N S |
| 1391 | William Wilcotes John Rede | North Leigh Checkendon | Wotton Langtree | N S |
| 1393 | Sir William Paynell Thomas Baratyn | Bucott (Berks) Chalgrove | - Ewelme | - S |
| 1394 | William Wilcotes John Adderbury | North Leigh Adderbury | Wotton Bloxham | N N |
| 1395 | William Wilcotes William Bruley | North Leigh Waterstock | Wotton Bullington | N C |
| 1397 | John Adderbury Thomas Baratyn | Adderbury Chalgrove | Bloxham Ewelme | N S |
| 1397 | William Wilcotes John Golafre | North Leigh Fyfield (Berks.) | Wotton - | N - |
| 1399 | John Wilcotes Thomas Baratyn | Great Tew Chalgrove | Wotton Ewelme | N S |
| 1401 | John Wilcotes Thomas Chaucer | Greta Tew Ewelme | Wotton Ewelme | N S |
| 1402 | Thomas Chaucer Thomas Wykeham | Ewelme Broughton Castle | Ewelme Bloxham | S N |
| 1404 | Sir Peter Bessels William Mackney | Bessels Leigh (Berks.) Mackney (Berks.) | - - | - - |
| 1406 | Thomas Chaucer John Wilcotes | Ewelme Great Tew | Ewelme Wotton | S N |

| | | | | |
|------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| 1407 | Thomas Chaucer John Wilcotes | Ewelme Great Tew | Ewelme Wotton | S N |
| 1410 | Thomas Chaucer William Wilcotes | Ewelme North Leigh | Ewelme Wotton | S N |
| 1411 | Thomas Chaucer - | Ewelme - | Ewelme - | S - |
| 1413 | Thomas Chaucer John Wilcotes | Ewelme Great Tew | Ewelme Wotton | S N |
| 1414 | Sir William Lisle John Wilcotes | Waterperry Great Tew | Bullington Wotton | N N |
| 1416 | Thomas Stonor Sir Thomas Wykeham | Stonor Broughton Castle | Pirton Bloxham | S N |
| 1417 | Sir William Lisle John Wilcotes | Waterperry Great Tew | Bullington Wotton | N N |
| 1419 | Thomas Stonor John Wilcotes | Stonor Great Tew | Pirton Wotton | S N |
| 1420 | John Danvers Richard Greville | Calthorpe Prescote Deddington | Banbury Banbury Wotton | N N N |
| 1421 | Thomas Chaucer John Wilcotes | Ewelme Great Tew | Ewelme Wotton | S N |
| 1421 | John Danvers Peter Fettiplace | Calthorpe Prescote Stokenchurch | Banbury Banbury Lewknor | N N S |

* * *

Map 6 - Oxfordshire: Hundreds and MPs' Residences



RUTLAND

| <u>Parlt.</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Manor</u> | <u>Hundred</u> | <u>Position</u> |
|---------------|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1386 | John Wittlebury Walter Scarle | Whissendine Uppingham | Alstoe Martinsley | N S |
| 1388 | Sir Hugh Browe Sir Oliver Mauleverer | Teigh Woodhead Empingham | Alstoe East East | N E E |
| 1388 | Sir John Daneys Walter Scarle | Tickencote Uppingham | East Martinsley | E S |
| 1390 | Hugh Calverley Sir Oliver Mauleverer | Cottesmere Empingham | Alstoe East | N E |
| 1390 | Sir Hugh Browe Sir John Calveley | Teigh Woodhead Teigh | Alstoe East Alstoe | N E N |
| 1391 | Sir John Bussy Sir Hugh Greenham | Cotsmore Ketton | Alstoe East | N E |
| 1393 | (Sir) Walter Scarle Sir John Elme | Uppingham Keyworth (Notts.) | Martinsley - | S - |
| 1394 | Sir John Daneys Sir John Elme | Tickencote Keyworth (Notts.) | East - | E - |
| 1395 | John Wittlebury (Sir) Walter Scarle | Whissendine Uppingham | Alstoe Martinsley | N S |
| 1397 | Sir Robert Pleasington Roger Flore | Burley Oakham | Alstoe Oakhamsoke | N W |
| 1397 | Sir Oliver Mauleverer Sir Thomas Oudeby | Empingham Stokedry | East Wrangdike | E S |
| 1399 | John Durant Roger Flore | Alsthorpe Oakham | Alstoe Oakhamsoke | N W |
| 1401 | John Durant William Oudeby | Alsthorpe Bisbrooke | Alstoe Wrangdike | N S |
| 1402 | Sir Thomas Oudeby Roger Flore | Stokedry Oakham | Wrangdike Oakhamsoke | S W |
| 1404 | Thomas Thorpe John Pensax | Pilton Oakham | Wrangdike Oakhamsoke | S W |
| 1404 | Sir Thomas Oudeby Roger Flore | Stokedry Oakham | Wrangdike Oakhamsoke | S W |

| | | | | |
|-----------|--|---|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1406 | John Pensax Robert Scarle | Oakham (Not Known) | Oakhamsoke - | W - |
| 1407 | Robert Browe William Sheffield | Teigh Woodhead Seaton | Alstoe East Wrangdike | N E S |
| May 1413 | John Pensax John Burgh III | Oakham Manton Moorcote | Oakhamsoke Martinsley Wrangdike | W C S |
| Apr. 1414 | Roger Flore Robert Browe | Oakham Teigh Woodhead | Oakhamsoke Alstoe East | W N E |
| Nov. 1414 | Roger Flore John Newbold | Oakham Whissendine | Oakhamsoke Alstoe | W N |
| 1415 | Roger Flore John Burgh III | Oakham Manton Moorcote | Oakhamsoke Martinsley Wrangdike | W C S |
| 1416 | Roger Flore - | Oakham - | Oakhamsoke - | W - |
| 1417 | Roger Flore - | Oakham - | Oakhamsoke - | W - |
| 1419 | Roger Flore Roger Browe | Oakham Teigh Woodhead | Oakhamsoke Alstoe East | W N E |
| 1420 | Sir Thomas Burton Sir Henry Pleasington | Tolethorpe Hall Little Casterton Burley | East East Alstoe | E E N |
| May 1421 | John Pensax William Sheffield | Oakham Seaton | Oakhamsoke Wrangdike | W S |
| Dec. 1421 | John Colpepper Thomas Greenham | Exton Ketton | Alstoe East | N E |

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Map7 - Rutland: Hundreds and MPs' Residences



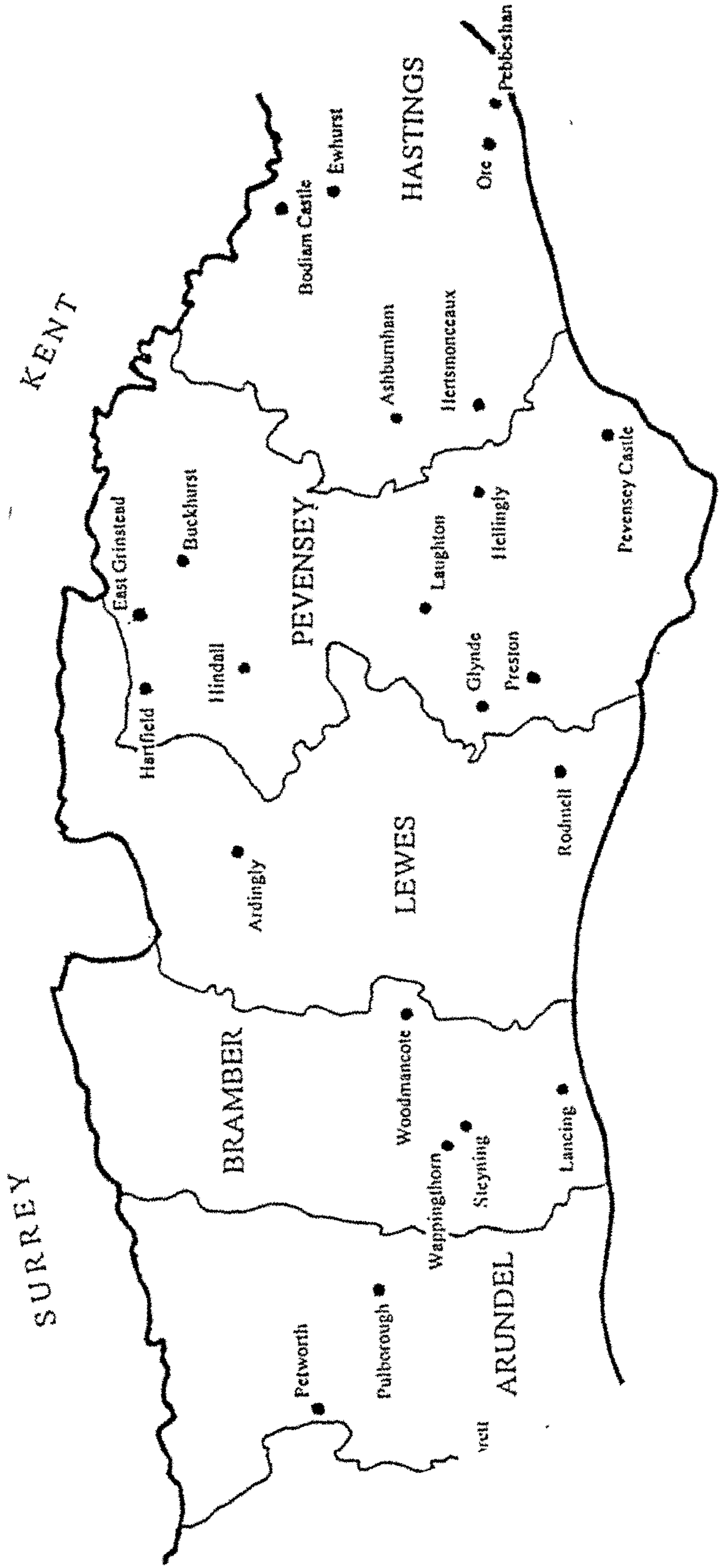
SUSSEXKey for 'position' column

| | |
|----------------|--------------|
| 1 - Chichester | 4 - Lewes |
| 2 - Arundel | 5 - Pevensey |
| 3 - Bramber | 6 - Hastings |

| <u>Parlt.</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Manor</u> | <u>Rape</u> | <u>Position</u> |
|---------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1386 | Sir Edmund Fitzherbert | Ewhurst | Hastings | 6 |
| | Sir Edward Dallingridge | Bodiam Castle | Hastings | 6 |
| 1388 | Sir William Waleys | Glynde | Pevensey | 5 |
| | Sir Edward Dallingridge | Bodiam Castle | Hastings | 6 |
| 1388 | Nicholas Wilcombe | Wappingthorn | Bramber | 3 |
| | Robert Ore | Ore | Hastings | 6 |
| 1390 | Sir William Percy | Woodmancote | Bramber | 3 |
| | Thomas Jardyn | South Mundham | Chichester | 1 |
| | | Bowley | Chichester | 1 |
| 1390 | Sir William Percy | Woodmancote | Bramber | 3 |
| | Sir William Waleys | Glynde | Pevensey | 5 |
| 1391 | Sir William Percy | Woodmancote | Bramber | 3 |
| | Robert Tauk | Westhamprett | Chichester | 1 |
| 1393 | Sir William Percy | Woodmancote | Bramber | 3 |
| | John Broke | East Grinstead | Pevensey | 5 |
| | | Hartfield | Pevensey | 5 |
| 1394 | Sir William Percy | Woodmancote | Bramber | 3 |
| | Sir Thomas Sackville II | Buckhurst | Pevensey | 5 |
| 1395 | Hugh Quecche | Steyning | Bramber | 3 |
| | Sir Thomas Sackville II | Buckhurst | Pevensey | 5 |
| 1397 | Sir William Percy | Woodmancote | Bramber | 3 |
| | John Ashburnham | Ashburnham | Hastings | 6 |
| 1397 | Sir Thomas Sackville II | Buckhurst | Pevensey | 5 |
| | John Ashburnham | Ashburnham | Hastings | 6 |
| 1399 | John Pelham | Laughton | Pevensey | 5 |
| | | Pevensey Castle | Pevensey | 5 |
| | John Preston | Preston | Pevensey | 5 |
| 1401 | (Sir) John Pelham | Laughton | Pevensey | 5 |
| | | Pevensey Castle | Pevensey | 5 |
| | Sir Henry Hussy | Harting | Chichester | 1 |

| | | | | |
|-----------|--|--|------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1402 | Sir John Dallingridge Sir Henry Hussy | Bodiam Castle Harting | Hastings Chichester | 6 1 |
| 1404 | (Sir) John Pelham Robert Lewknor | Laughton Pevensey Castle Pulborough | Pevensey Pevensey Arundel | 5 5 2 |
| 1404 | Sir John Dallingridge (Sir) John Pelham | Bodiam Castle Laughton Pevensey Castle | Hastings Pevensey Pevensey | 6 5 5 |
| 1406 | Sir John Dallingridge (Sir) John Pelham | Bodiam Castle Laughton Pevensey Castle | Hastings Pevensey Pevensey | 6 5 5 |
| 1407 | Sir John Dallingridge (Sir) John Pelham | Bodiam Castle Laughton Pevensey Castle | Hastings Pevensey Pevensey | 6 5 5 |
| May 1413 | Richard Wayville Richard Wakehurst | Rodmell Ardingly | Lewes Lewes | 4 4 |
| Apr. 1414 | William Bramshott Thomas St. Cler | Lordington East Grinstead | Chichester Pevensey | 1 5 |
| Nov. 1414 | Richard Wayville John Babelake | Rodmell Petworth | Lewes Arundel | 4 2 |
| 1415 | Richard Styvecle William Weston II | Merston Hindall | Chichester Pevensey | 1 5 |
| Mar. 1416 | Richard Styvecle Sir Roger Fiennes | Merston Hertsmonceaux | Chichester Hastings | 1 6 |
| 1417 | John Halle II Richard Styvecle | Pebbesham Hellingly Merston | Hastings Pevensey Chichester | 6 5 1 |
| 1419 | Richard Bannebury Richard Bitterley | Woodmancote Harting | Bramber Chichester | 3 1 |
| 1420 | William Ryman Ralph Rademyld | Appledram Lancing | Chichester Bramber | 1 3 |
| 1421 | William Ryman John Halle II | Appledram Pebbesham Hellingly | Chichester Hastings Pevensey | 1 6 5 |
| 1421 | Ralph Rademyld Richard Bitterley | Lancing Harting | Bramber Chichester | 3 1 |

Map 8 - Sussex: Rapes and MPs' Residences



WARWICKSHIRE

| <u>Parlt.</u> | <u>Name</u> | <u>Manor</u> | <u>Hundred</u> | <u>Position</u> |
|---------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1386 | George Castell Sir John Peyton | Withybrook Chesterton | Knightlow Kineton | E S |
| 1388 | Sir William Bagot Guy Spyne | Bagginton Coughton | Knightlow Barlichway | E W |
| 1388 | Sir William Bagot Guy Spyne | Bagginton Coughton | Knightlow Barlichway | E W |
| 1390 | Sir William Bagot Guy Spyne | Bagginton Coughton | Knightlow Barlichway | E W |
| 1390 | Sir William Bagot Guy Spyne | Bagginton Coughton | Knightlow Barlichway | E W |
| 1391 | Sir William Bagot Guy Spyne | Bagginton Coughton | Knightlow Barlichway | E W |
| 1393 | Sir William Bagot John Catesby | Bagginton Ladbroke | Knightlow Knightlow | E E |
| 1394 | Sir William Bagot Sir Thomas Burdet | Bagginton Arrow | Knightlow Barlichway | E W |
| 1395 | Sir William Bagot William Spernore | Bagginton Spernall | Knightlow Barlichway | E W |
| 1397 | Sir William Bagot Sir Thomas Clinton | Bagginton Amington | Knightlow Hemlingford | E N |
| 1397 | Sir William Bagot Thomas Crewe | Bagginton Wixford | Knightlow Barlichway | E W |
| 1399 | Sir William Lucy Sir Alfred Trussel | Charlecote Nuthurst | Kineton Barlichway | S W |
| 1401 | Sir Thomas Burdet Sir Alfred Trussel | Arrow Nuthurst | Barlichway Barlichway | W W |
| 1402 | Sir William Bagot Sir Alfred Trussel | Bagginton Nuthurst | Knightlow Barlichway | E W |
| 1404 | Robert Hugford Roger Smart | Emscote Kenilworth | Unknown Knightlow | - E |
| 1404 | Thomas Crewe Thomas Raleigh | Wixford Farnborough | Barlichway Kineton | W S |

| | | | | |
|-----------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------|
| 1406 | Sir Thomas Burdet Sir Thomas Lucy | Arrow Charlecote | Barlichway Kineton | W S |
| 1407 | Sir Alfred Trussel Henry Sutton | Nuthurst Ditchfield | Barlichway Kineton | W S |
| 1410 | William Mountfield I - | Coleshill - | Hemlingford - | N - |
| 1411 | Sir Thomas Lucy Thomas Erdington | Charlecote Erdington | Kineton Hemlingford | S N |
| May 1413 | William Birmingham John Mallory | Birmingham Newbold Revel | Hemlingford Knightlow | N E |
| Apr. 1414 | Robert Castell Thomas Stafford | Alspath Baggington | Hemlingford Knightlow | N E |
| Nov. 1414 | John Harewell John Knightley | Wootton Wawen Chesterton | Barlichway Kineton | W S |
| 1419 | Sir Thomas Burdet John Mallory | Arrow Newbold Revel | Barlichway Knightlow | W E |
| 1420 | Sir John Cockayne William Peyto | Pooley Chesterton | Hemlingford Kineton | N S |
| May 1421 | William Holt II John Mallory | Aston Newbold Revel | Hemlingford Knightlow | N E |
| Dec. 1421 | Sir John Cockayne John Chetwynd | Pooley Alspath | Hemlingford Hemlingford | N N |

* * *

Map 9 - Warwickshire: Hundreds and MPs' Residences



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