

The Lovells of Titchmarsh:
An English Baronial Family, 1297-148?

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Abstract:

This thesis examines the experiences of the Lovell family from the time of their elevation to the parliamentary peerage under Edward I to their demise after the deposition of Richard III. Because the family remained of baronial rank until Francis Lovell was made a viscount in 1483, the thesis gives special attention to the economic, social and political status of the baronial class within the aristocracy as a whole. After a detailed chronological account of the family's history the analysis moves to three central thematic chapters which address the Lovells' experience of and attitudes towards landholding and the localities, war and central government, and awareness of dynasty. The thesis concludes with an evaluation of whether the baronage can legitimately be treated as an order, estate or status group in both late medieval and modern concepts of social structure.

This thesis is dedicated to my parents,
Irmgard and Helmut Simon,
who enabled me to do this

and to

Michael Gaunt, Kirsty Hartsiotis and Alex Service
who helped me stay sane.

List of Contents:

Abstract.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
List of Contents.....	iv
List of Illustrations.....	viii
Acknowledgments.....	ix
Abbreviations.....	x
1. The Baronage in the later Middle Ages.....	1
1.1. Introduction.....	1
1.2. Land and Status.....	3
1.3. Peerage and Baronage.....	6
1.4. Affinities.....	10
1.5. Mobility.....	12
1.6. Service.....	16
1.7. Nobility and Gentry.....	18
1.8. The Baronage: A Research Agenda.....	23
1.9. Sources and Methods.....	27
2. The History of the Lovell Family.....	31
2.1. The Ancestors of the Lovells in Normandy.....	32
2.2. The Early Lovells In England.....	38
<u>2.2.1. William Lovell II and John Lovell I (c. 1177-1252).....</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>2.2.2. The Profits of Law; Philip Lovell (d. 1259).....</u>	<u>39</u>
<u>2.2.3. Royal Service; John Lovell II (1252-1287).....</u>	<u>40</u>
2.3. The First Lords Lovell.....	43
<u>2.3.1. Into the Peerage: John Lovell III (1287-1310).....</u>	<u>43</u>
<u>2.3.2. Perils of War: John Lovell IV (1310-1314).....</u>	<u>45</u>
<u>2.3.3. Interlude I: The Lovells of Titchwell.....</u>	<u>47</u>
<u>2.3.4. Out of the Peerage: John Lovell V and VI (1314-1361).....</u>	<u>49</u>
2.4. Rising Fortunes.....	53
<u>2.4.1. Lord Lovell and Lord Holland: John Lovell VII (1361-1408).....</u>	<u>53</u>
<u>2.4.2. Early Death: John Lovell VIII (1408-1414).....</u>	<u>60</u>
<u>2.4.3. Interlude II: Robert Lovell (c. 1379-1434).....</u>	<u>61</u>
<u>2.4.4. The Quiet Life of William Lovell III (1414-1455).....</u>	<u>63</u>

2.4.5. <u>The Brief Life of John Lovell IX (1455-1465)</u>	67
2.5. The Titled Lovell: Francis, Viscount Lovell (1465-1487?)	69
2.6. The End of the Lovell Family; William and Henry Lovell, Lords Morley	78
2.7. Post Scriptum: The Lovell Descendants; Morley, Staplelton and Norreys	80
3. Estates, Family and Locality	83
3.1. The Estates of the Lovells of Titchmarsh	86
3.1.1. <u>The Acquisition and Alienation of the Lovell Estates</u>	86
3.1.1.1. <i>Acquisition</i>	86
3.1.1.2. <i>Alienation</i>	93
3.1.1.3. <i>Conclusion</i>	95
3.1.2. <u>Geographical Distribution</u>	96
3.1.3. <u>Income from Land</u>	99
3.2. Dynastic Strategies	103
3.2.1. <u>The Marriages of the Lords Lovell</u>	104
3.2.2. <u>Provisions for Wives and Widows</u>	109
3.2.3. <u>Provision for Younger Sons and Daughters</u>	112
3.3. Localities	119
3.3.1. <u>Local Administration</u>	120
3.3.2. <u>The 'Circle' of the Lovell Family</u>	125
3.3.3. <u>The Lovells and the Localities</u>	134
3.4. Conclusion	136
4. High Politics	138
4.1. Service to the Crown	142
4.1.1. <u>Military Service</u>	142
4.1.2. <u>Political Service</u>	148
4.1.2.1. <i>Parliaments and Councils</i>	149
4.1.2.1.1. <i>Summonses to Parliament</i>	149
4.1.2.1.2. <i>Attendance at Parliament</i>	155
4.1.2.1.3. <i>Councils</i>	157
4.1.2.2. <i>Offices</i>	161
4.1.2. <u>Baronial Service</u>	167

4.2. Patronage	168
<u>4.2.1 Rewards for Service</u>	168
<u>4.2.2. Viscounty</u>	171
4.3. Crisis and Survival	176
<u>4.3.1. Baronial Opposition to the Crown</u>	176
<u>4.3.2. Dynastic Changes</u>	182
4.4. Conclusion	188
5. Representations of Power	190
5.1. The Lovell Residences	192
5.2. Piety and Remembrance	206
5.3. Heraldry	215
<u>5.3.1. Introduction</u>	215
<u>5.3.2. Heraldry as Decoration</u>	220
<u>5.3.3. The Lovell Lectionary (British Library, Harley 7026)</u>	223
<u>5.3.4. The Heraldic Decorations of the Lovell Tomb, Minster Lovell</u>	226
5.4. The Lovell-Morley Dispute	233
<u>5.4.1. The Court of Chivalry</u>	234
5.4.1.1. <i>The Origins of the Court of Chivalry</i>	234
5.4.1.2. <i>The Scrope-Grosvenor Controversy and the Grey-Hastings Trial</i> ..	236
5.4.1.3. <i>The Use of the Depositions of the Armorial Cases</i>	237
<u>5.4.2. The Lovell-Morley Dispute</u>	239
5.4.2.1. <i>The Rolls</i>	239
5.4.2.2. <i>The Case of Lovell versus Morley</i>	240
5.4.2.3. <i>Who had the right to the arms?</i>	243
<u>5.4.3. Interpreting the Evidence</u>	246
5.4.3.1. <i>'The traditional way': Heraldry, Military Experience and Affinities</i>	246
5.4.3.2. <i>The Use of Memory</i>	249
<u>5.4.4. The Reasons Behind the Lovell-Morley Dispute</u>	254
5.5. Conclusion	260
6. Conclusion	262

7. Appendices:	274
Appendix 1: Biographies	274
Appendix 2: Genealogies	278
1) The Lovells in Normandy.....	278
2) The Beaumont Family.....	279
3) The Beaumont Ancestors.....	280
4) The Basset-Lovell Connection.....	281
5) The Lovell-de la Zouche Marriages.....	282
6) The Burnell Family.....	283
7) The Lovells of Titchwell (according to Edward Hull).....	284
8) The Holland Family.....	285
9) The Bryan Family.....	286
10) The Lovell Descendants.....	287
Appendix 3: Maps	288
1) The Lovell Estates in 1297.....	288
2) The Burnell Inheritance.....	289
3) The Holland Inheritance.....	291
4) The Deincourt Inheritance.....	294
5) The Lovell Estates in Berkshire.....	296
Appendix 4: Finances	297
1) Oxford, Magdalen College, 36/9(Estate Papers) and Misc. 315.....	297
2) Income from Land, John Lovell VII and Maud Holland.....	298
3) Income from Land, William Lovell III and Alice Deincourt.....	300
4) Land held by Maud Holland in jointure.....	302
5) Land held by Alice Deincourt in jointure.....	303
6) Land held by Joan Beaumont at the time of her death.....	304
Bibliography:	305

List of Illustrations

Figure 1: Titchmarsh Castle.....	196
Figure 2: Old Wardour Castle.....	198
Figure 3: Grounds of Wardour Castle.....	199
Figure 4: Minster Lovell Hall.....	202
Figure 5: Patterned Path Leading to Minster Lovell Hall.....	205
Figure 6: Knight on the Lovell Tomb, St. Kenelm's Church, Minster Lovell.....	212
Figure 7: John Lovell VII from the Lovell Lectionary.....	224
Figure 8: Heraldic Decoration of Lovell Tomb.....	229-30

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Abbreviations:

<i>BIHR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research.</i>
<i>CChR</i>	<i>Calendar of Charter Rolls.</i>
<i>CCR</i>	<i>Calendar of Close Rolls.</i>
<i>CIM</i>	<i>Calendar of Inquisition Miscellaneous.</i>
<i>CIPM</i>	<i>Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem.</i>
<i>CLR</i>	<i>Calendar of Liberate Rolls.</i>
<i>Complete Peerage</i>	G.E. Cockayne, <i>The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom</i> , new ed., rev. V. Gibbs <i>et al.</i> (London, 1910-59).
<i>CPR</i>	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls.</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i> , L. Stephen and S. Lee (ed.), 63 vols. (London 1885-1900).
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English History Review.</i>
<i>Parl. Writs</i>	<i>Parliamentary Writs and Writs of Military Summons, together with Records and Muniments relating to the suit and service due and performed to the King's High Court</i> , Francis Palgrave (ed.), 2 vols., (1827).
<i>PRO</i>	Public Record Office.
<i>Rot. Parl.</i>	<i>Rotuli Parliamentum</i> , 6 vols. (London 1783).
<i>RS</i>	Rolls Series.
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society.</i>
<i>VCH</i>	<i>Victoria County History.</i>

1. The Baronage in the Later Middle Ages

1.1. Introduction

Political history, the study of the governing body of people and the institutions through which they governed the country, has been and probably will continue to be a central part of the study of the past. The study of the 'body politic' has gone through countless transformations. There exist a great variety of approaches to this topic, changing not only with time but also with the individual interests of each historian. Some historians concentrate their research on institutions, others on specific regions, or individuals. The aristocracy has naturally been central to studies of medieval government. The prominent role many aristocrats played in the running of the country has ensured that these individuals as well as the aristocracy as a whole were closely researched by historians. For a long time this was seen by many historians only in relationship to the king – who himself was judged to a large extent by his skill in handling his noble subjects. A good king managed to centralise power and keep the aristocracy under control, whereas a bad king let his authority be usurped by his powerful subjects. As K.B. McFarlane pronounced 'An excessive addiction to constitutional issues has ... made nearly all current interpretation of our early history too royalist.'¹

McFarlane's work shifted the focus of attention to the aristocracy in its own right, as a fundamental and necessary part of government. The aristocracy was not only the vital link between the king and the government and the localities, it was also an integral part of the administration and the dispensation of justice and was indispensable for the organisation of an army in times of war. The traditional negative view of a strong and active aristocracy can also be explained by the general conviction of historians, particularly in the nineteenth century but still found today, that the centralization of power is good, while devolution is bad. In the middle ages it was necessary that many decisions were taken in the localities. It was not only inadvisable but impossible to refer constantly back to the central government. Medieval government was of necessity highly personalized and in an age when communication was slow and further hampered by partial literacy and a sparse population, in a time when the government had no standing army or police force, this system of government worked, though with many deficiencies. There were men – and women – who abused their positions of power, but exploitation of power is not restricted

¹ K.B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England. The Ford Lectures for 1953 and Related Studies* (Oxford, 1973), p. 2.

to the late medieval aristocracy.

When talking about the ruling 'class' in the context of late medieval England, a brief definition of some of the terms is necessary as no general definition exists. Some of these terms are used to describe different parts of the aristocracy. In medieval England (and general English usage) the term 'aristocracy' is not used to describe a system of government but the group of people ruling the country. The original meaning of the word 'aristocracy', the rule of the best, though describing a completely different phenomenon, is certainly connected with the modern use of the word. The English 'aristocracy' were the 'best' men who ruled the country. The notion that these men had a particular capability to rule or, to be precise, to participate in government, remained valid throughout the middle ages, at least in theory. A significant difference existed between the theoretical justification of rule by the aristocracy supported by their inherent 'nobility', and the reality that their importance was based on their wealth, particularly landed wealth.² The term aristocracy is used throughout this thesis to encompass the entire landowning class, those families who did not have to work for a living and received their income from their land. By the later middle ages the aristocracy consisted of two distinct groups, the peerage and the gentry.³ In this thesis the term nobility is used synonymously with peerage, describing the men and their families who received individual summonses to parliament. The baronage were those peers who held no additional title, the untitled nobility.⁴ At the top of this hierarchy were the magnates, a term generally used to describe the titled peers. One part of the ruling class of medieval England which has to remain outside the scope of this thesis are the spiritual lords. Though the spiritual lords were in positions of great influence and power, and were great landowners in their own right, the basis for their positions was a completely different one than those of the temporal lords.⁵

² Nigel Saul, 'Chaucer and Gentility', in Barbara A. Hanawalt (ed.), *Chaucer's England. Literature in Historical Context* (Minneapolis, 1992), pp. 50-52.

³ see below, p. 4.

⁴ Bush excludes from the peerage all those who received an individual summons but had no title excepting those who held a barony by patent; 'membership of the upper house was not confined to peers', M.L. Bush, *The English Aristocracy* (Manchester, 1984), p. 19. In 1327 according to his evaluation there were only seven peers, and 'before 1337 the earldom was the only peerage title in existence', *ibid.*, pp. 37, 91.

⁵ The clergy, so Rigby states in his analysis of the English society, was 'a group apart with its own hierarchy', S.H. Rigby, *English Society in the Later Middle Ages Class, Status and Gender* (Basingstoke, 1995), p. 212.

1.2. Land and Status

Land was the fundamental basis of power throughout the entire middle ages – and far beyond that era.⁶ The medieval aristocracy was the group of people who controlled the land, its produce and the people living on it. Land therefore provided the aristocracy not only with their income, it also gave them control over the people, people they could muster in the event of war. Only towards the end of the middle ages did wealth founded on trade and finance become an alternative basis of power. The growing importance of towns, with their power based upon finance, industry, and trade, as was the case with the Italian city states or the union of merchant towns in the Hanseatic League, is regarded as one of the important differences between the middle ages and the renaissance.⁷

As a consequence of the Norman Conquest, the English king was the ultimate landowner, the only person who really owned the land.⁸ This gave the king more influence on the distribution of land than his contemporaries in France, or especially Germany. However, the king had no absolute control over the land and could not deprive his vassals of their estates at will. Though the land was in theory only held for life, it had become hereditary within a few generations of the Norman Conquest.⁹ However, the English king had *more* possibilities than his German and French counterparts. As the ultimate feudal lord, the king had on occasion the right to become directly involved in the controlling of the land of his vassals. These ‘feudal incidents’ gave the king, or any other feudal lord, some influence.¹⁰ However, throughout the middle ages the vassals tried to devise mechanisms to avoid these feudal incidents. Particularly with the development of the enfeoffment to use, the aristocracy of the later middle ages was able dramatically to curtail these incidents, causing what has been defined as a ‘decline of feudalism’.¹¹

The aristocracy did not remain unchanged throughout the later middle ages. In the

⁶ ‘Land was the creation and the reflection of a family’s political, social and economic standing’, C. Carpenter, ‘The Beauchamp Affinity. A Study of Bastard Feudalism at Work’, *EHR* 95 (1980), p. 521.

⁷ Jean-Claude Hocquet, ‘City-State and Market Economy’, in Richard Bonney (ed.), *Economic Systems and State Finance* (Oxford, 1995), 82-84.

⁸ In other European countries, for example in the German Empire, a difference existed between the land held as a fief from the king and the land personally belonging to the vassal. This was the land he could not be deprived of. For a fundamental analysis of the different systems of feudalism see, Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, 2 vols. (London, 1962).

⁹ Judith A. Green, *The Aristocracy of Norman England* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 196.

¹⁰ The most common feudal incident was the death of the tenant. Whoever was the heir of the land had to be accepted as such by the feudal lord. In ordinary circumstances the new tenant had to pay a relief and swear fealty; if the heir was a minor the wardship and marriage would pass to the lord who would usually profit from either the lands himself, or by selling or granting it to a second party; J.M.W. Bean, *The Decline of English Feudalism, 1215-1540* (Manchester, 1968), pp. 8-11.

¹¹ *ibid.*, pp. 302-3.

fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the aristocracy became highly stratified. The development began at the end of the thirteenth century and was completed by the middle of the fifteenth century.¹² The main division within the aristocracy was created by parliament; the two groups were defined by their representation within this national assembly. The peerage were the richer landowners who received individual summonses to parliament, while the gentry were gentle landowners, the less well-endowed part of the aristocracy, who were represented in parliament by the knights of the shire elected from their midst. By the end of the fifteenth century, the nobility itself was subdivided into five ranks: dukes, earls, marquesses, viscounts and barons. Similarly, the gentry had separated into three ranks: knights, esquires and gentlemen. This stratification would continue unchanged into the seventeenth century and the introduction of the life barony.¹³ Before the emergence of the parliamentary peerage at the end of the thirteenth century the English aristocracy is usually seen as a largely homogeneous group. Only the handful of earls differed in rank from the other noblemen. This group seemed to be doomed to extinction, as from the reign of Henry II, new creations failed to replace the earldoms which either fell into abeyance or which were united with other earldoms.¹⁴ Some earldoms were actively suppressed by Henry III and Edward I.¹⁵ Another, less conspicuous group existed within the aristocracy, the baronage. These men held some of their lands by 'barony'. Unlike the later barons, whose rank was defined by their representation in parliament, the baronage of the thirteenth century was defined by a particular form of landholding. Though the terms 'baron' and 'barony' were introduced by the Normans, some continuities with pre-Conquest institutions can be seen. The 'barons' were the Norman equivalent of the Anglo-Saxon thegns, and often held the same estates.¹⁶ Tenants of baronies were entitled to special rights, especially dealing directly with the king on certain matters. Barons were also made distinct by the fact that they led their men under their own banner in war.¹⁷ That the barons were regarded as a distinct group of landholders is also discernable in the inheritance laws which ordered that barons

¹² D.A.L. Morgan, 'The Individual Style of the English Gentlemen', in Michael Jones (ed.), *Gentry and Lesser Nobility in Late Medieval Europe* (New York, 1986), p. 16.

¹³ Bush, p. 37.

¹⁴ In 1154 22 earls existed – a result of the numerous new titles created by Stephen and Matilda – but in 1327 this number had been reduced to a mere seven. A few years earlier, Thomas of Lancaster held no fewer than five earldoms, Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Salisbury and Lancaster, J.R. Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster. 1307-1322. A Study in the Reign of Edward II* (Oxford, 1970), p. 9.

¹⁵ For example the Earldom of Chester in 1237, or the Earldom of Derby, McFarlane, *Nobility*, pp. 250, 254-56.

¹⁶ Green, p. 198.

¹⁷ J. E. Powell and K. Wallis, *The House of Lords in the Middle Ages* (London, 1968), p. 223-26.

had to pay a considerably larger relief for entering their inheritance than knights. According to the second chapter of Magna Carta, the relief for entering a barony was set at £100, the same amount as the relief for an earldom. The relief was later reduced to 100 marks, probably first with the re-issue of Magna Carta in Simon Montfort's parliament of 1265, and again in 1297.¹⁸ The sum to be paid was still considerably larger than a knight's relief of 100s.¹⁹ This specific use of 'baron' and 'barony' only developed around 1300; however, as David Crouch demonstrates, the term 'baron' was never absolutely restricted to holders of a 'barony'. 'The title "baron" had a general application to obviously great men'.²⁰ The rank of baron was a prestigious one for which a man was prepared to pay a higher relief than to become a mere knight.²¹

The estimation that the thirteenth-century aristocracy was a largely homogeneous group with the exception of the earls (and to a lesser extent the barons) has recently been challenged. John Gillingham has argued that many ideas that have hitherto been seen as particular to the later middle ages were in fact already in existence in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Chivalry and the differentiation of the aristocracy into a pre-parliamentary 'nobility' and a 'gentry' were known.²² Peter Coss, however, argues that the English gentry only developed from the mid-thirteenth century onwards.²³ Much of this controversy seems to be based on different definitions of what exactly the gentry was.²⁴ It seems to be safe to argue that it was from the late twelfth century onward that the differences of wealth within the aristocracy became more pronounced and also that with the difference of wealth an increasing awareness of status developed. The aristocracy started to be more conscious of their position within the ruling class and felt a desire to show this position to their contemporaries with the adoption of specific titles and outward symbols.

The parliamentary baronage discussed in this thesis was not identical to the men who held land by barony. As the names of those who received individual summonses were only enrolled on the dorse of the Close Rolls from 1295 onward, the origins of this group are difficult to examine. In Magna Carta it was determined that the greater barons, as well

¹⁸ Susan Reynolds, 'Magna Carta 1297 and the Legal Use of Literacy', *Historical Research* 62 (1989), pp. 236-37.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 224.

²⁰ D. Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain. 1000-1300* (London, 1992), pp. 109-11.

²¹ *ibid.*, pp. 110-13.

²² J. Gillingham, 'Thegns and Knights in Eleventh-Century England. Who was then the Gentleman?', *TRHS* sixth ser. 5 (1995), pp 129-154.

²³ Peter Coss, 'The Formation of the English Gentry', *Past and Present* 147 (1995), p. 51.

²⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 47-50.

as the prelates and earls, were to be summoned individually to advise the king.²⁵ The use of the term ‘greater barons’ is highly unusual and it is unclear which men were to be included in this group.²⁶ As the enrollment of the lists of summonses only started eight decades later, the early history of the parliamentary peerage remains vague. Additionally, these early lists were not complete as many men who were already at court – generally office holders – were not in need of being summoned.²⁷ The lists were also compiled with a degree of carelessness, as, for example, summonses were occasionally sent out to men who were already dead.²⁸ It is clear that the lists were closely related to the summons for military service.²⁹ Here, the older distinction between barons and knights was not decisive. Although some overlaps exist between the earlier baronage and the parliamentary baronage, the question of whether or not an aristocrat held by barony did not determine whether a man would be summoned to parliament. Similarly, the financial qualification set out in the *Modus Tenendi Parliamentum* was not the criterion used in reality.³⁰ In the end, it was the king or his clerks who decided who was to receive a summons and be included in the list.

1.3. Peerage and Baronage

The point at which the division of the aristocracy into nobility and gentry was complete is still a matter for debate. The formation of a group of families with the hereditary right to an individual summons to parliament signified that ‘the English parliamentary peerage was a class apart.’³¹ Chris Given-Wilson considers that this process was concluded by the late fourteenth century.³² Joel Rosenthal judges that ‘the watershed between the casual issuing of summons and the creation of a semi-continuous and hereditary peerage lies about 1350.’³³ Powell and Wallis in their study of the House of Lords in the middle ages set the closure of the peerage earlier than either Given-Wilson or Rosenthal, to the

²⁵ *ibid.*, p. 23.

²⁶ Powell and Wallis, pp. 127-28.

²⁷ As late as 1376 not all people who were attending parliament are found in the list of summonses, Powell and Wallis, p. 374.

²⁸ For example, John Lovell IV was summoned to parliament on 9 September 1314, after he had been killed in the battle of Bannockburn in June, *Parl. Writs*, vol. ii, div. i, p. 138.

²⁹ Powell and Wallis, pp. 228-29.

³⁰ see below, p. 24.

³¹ C. Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages. The Fourteenth-Century Political Community* (London, 1987), p. 65.

³² *ibid.*

³³ J. Rosenthal, *Nobles and the Noble Life, 1296-1500* (London, 1976), p. 25.

first quarter of the fourteenth century.³⁴ These differences reflect the different ways in which the criteria defining a closed peerage are applied. The parliamentary peerage was certainly still developing during the fourteenth century. At the end of the century, a difference was made between those peers who were from families who had inherited the right to an individual summons and those who had earned this right through their own service to the Crown. While the hereditary peers were called 'barons', the 'new' peers were styled 'bannerets'.³⁵ This distinction became superfluous in the fifteenth century as fewer new men were summoned and, when they were, they automatically became hereditary peers themselves. This difference in terminology does indicate that by the end of the fourteenth century the notion of a hereditary right to summonses had become generally accepted. However, the use of the title 'banneret' is, as with most medieval titles, very inconsistent. It was also used as a military rank and several incidents are reported in which men were invested as bannerets.³⁶ At least on one occasion a summons to parliament was issued after it was established that a man was styled banneret. Thomas Camoys had first been elected knight of the shire but was later summoned as a lord by Richard II. It was stated that he could not be a knight of the shire, as he like his father was a banneret. In this case, 'banneret' was used as a hereditary title, rather than to signify that Thomas Camoys was newly raised into the peerage. However, not all men who were styled bannerets were summoned to parliament and thus included in the nobility.³⁷

But while the peerage was not yet a completely formed 'class' at the end of the fourteenth century, this development was already well under way by the 1320s. Though it had not become a closed group, there was a growing sense that the men sitting in the House of Lords had a special status. The lists of summonses became less erratic, though this is also a sign that these lists were compiled with greater care. The fact that more attention was paid to their compilation, however, shows that the lists determining who was to be summoned had become more important. The growing importance of parliament and the House of Lords within it is also shown by the fact that the legal treatise *Modus Tenendi Parliamentum* was probably composed around this time.³⁸ The parliamentary peerage never became an absolutely closed group. New recruitments became less frequent during the fifteenth century but they never ceased completely. The number of 'new men'

³⁴ Powell and Wallis, p. 303.

³⁵ Powell and Wallis, p. 382.

³⁶ For example Sir John Chandos in 1367, Crouch, *Image of Aristocracy*, p. 117.

³⁷ Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, pp. 61-62.

³⁸ *Parliamentary Texts of the Later Middle Ages*, Nicholas Pronay and John Taylor (eds.) (Oxford, 1980), pp. 15-18.

summoned did not however replace all baronies which became extinct, causing the peerage to shrink and, as many of the estates and titles went to other noble families, the survivors became richer.

Edward I did not have the creation of a separate tier of aristocracy in mind when he sent personal summons to certain nobles. However, in a society where inheritance held such importance, it was almost inevitable that a personal summons was gradually translated into a hereditary right. A clear sign of this development is that men started to be summoned after marrying the heiress of a noble or through inheritance from their mother.³⁹ Membership of the parliamentary peerage had become a rank, like earldoms.⁴⁰ However, the transfer of a baronial title, like that of an earl, depended largely on the king. The usual path for a family to be included among the nobility and receive an individual summons to parliament remained service to the Crown.⁴¹ The composition of this group of noblemen became more and more fixed and the common experience of parliament gave the nobility a common identity. 'Regular attendance in parliament also gave the group a certain political coherence ... This frequent and direct access to the monarch also set them apart from most of the gentry'.⁴²

The development of the parliamentary peerage as a separate class was also accompanied by the development of certain rights. The right of 'trial by peers' was established by the end of the fourteenth century and was later also extended to peeresses.⁴³ This development shows that the 'peerage' did not consist merely of the men summoned to parliament but that their wives were part of the nobility in every sense. The right to be tried by the peers was an integral part of the peerage; denying it could be used

³⁹ Ebles le Strange had married Alice de Lacy, widow of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster. He was summoned for the first time in 1327. He was also granted £20 from the county of Lincoln, the inheritance of his wife, but was not summoned as earl; Powell and Wallis, p. 311. Edward Montague, the younger brother of the Earl of Salisbury, married one of the daughters and heiresses of Thomas of Brotherton, Earl of Norfolk, *ibid.*, pp. 355-56. The first peer to be summoned in right of his mother was Nicholas Burnell, but as nearly 40 years had passed between the death of his uncle and his own summons, the reason for his summons could also be his own importance, Rosenthal, *Nobles*, p. 26. See also Chapter 4, p. 152.

⁴⁰ Ralph de Monthermer was styled Earl of Gloucester and Hertford after marrying the widow of the last Earl, Joan, daughter of Edward I, Geoffrey Ellis, *Earldoms in Fee. A Study in Peerage Law and History* (London, 1963), p. 134. The fact that his wife was the King's daughter was certainly an important factor in this unusual transfer of the title, but it also shows that it was possible.

⁴¹ So for example Oliver Ingham, who was a supporter of Roger Mortimer, was first summoned in 1328, Powell and Wallis, p. 313. During the French Wars many of the nobles who distinguished themselves in the king's service were later summoned to parliament, as for example, Thomas Bradestone or Reginald Cobham of Stersborough, *ibid.*, 355.

⁴² Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, p. 65.

⁴³ Powell and Wallis, pp. 471-2.

to deny a person his status as a peer.⁴⁴ Yet, apart from the right to trial by fellow peers, the English nobility was peculiar in its lack of privileges. Much has been written about the ‘underprivileged’ nature of the English aristocracy and particularly the nobility. The English nobility lost many rights, for example judicial rights to try felonies, earlier than their continental counterparts.⁴⁵ Unlike the French nobility, they were not exempt from taxation; nor did they enjoy other specific rights.⁴⁶ However, the French nobility obtained the right to fiscal exemption only in the fifteenth century.⁴⁷ The differences between the French and the English nobility in fact developed in parallel with the emergence of the English nobility.

The distinction between nobility and gentry became more clearly defined during the two centuries following the first surviving records of individual summonses to parliament. An ‘economic gulf’ had appeared between the peerage and the gentry by the time of the income tax of 1436.⁴⁸ As mentioned above, this development was partly caused by the frequent intermarriages between noble families and the subsequent merging of many houses, following the extinction of the male line of one of the families. The difference in wealth between the nobility and the gentry also determined the different opportunities available to both groups. Greater resources gave the nobility the chance to involve themselves in national politics to a greater extent than the gentry.⁴⁹ Deeper involvement in government and their position in the House of Lords brought the nobility into close contact with the king. This involvement in court politics created an important difference in the attitudes of the different ranks of the aristocracy: ‘Here the division between peerage and non-peerage was of more consequence than it was in local lordship, for peers stood in a special constitutional relationship with the Crown, with personal obligation to the body politic.’⁵⁰

⁴⁴ This was the case with John Beauchamp of Holt, who having been created a baron by Richard II in 1387 – the first barony by patent – was denied trial by peers in the Merciless Parliament the following year, Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, p. 63.

⁴⁵ Bush, pp. 28-30.

⁴⁶ Bush, pp. 35-6.

⁴⁷ J.B. Henneman, ‘Privilege and Fiscal Politics in Late Medieval France’, *French Historical Studies* 8 (1983), pp. 1-17.

⁴⁸ Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, p. 58.

⁴⁹ ‘Their lands and responsibilities made them more aware of the country as a whole.’ C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity. A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992), p. 616.

⁵⁰ G. L. Harriss, ‘The Dimensions of Politics’, in R.H. Britnell and A.J. Pollard (eds.), *The McFarlane Legacy. Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society* (Stroud, 1995), p. 7.

1.4. Affinities

The nobility and gentry can also be seen as two parts of the affinities that were a characteristic phenomenon of late medieval England. Affinities were an integral part of late medieval society: the lords used this method of employment both in their military campaigns and to fill administrative positions. In the later middle ages recruitment of an army or any armed following was no longer based on the tenurial relationship between lord and tenant, whereby a man served the lord from whom he held his lands. Military service for land was replaced by monetary rents, and armies were recruited through written contracts and men were paid for their service. While most of the men were retained for a specific time, some were retained for life. Additionally, many noblemen retained men to administer their estates, as well as men holding local offices and lawyers. The division between those who did the retaining and those who were retained is usually seen as reflecting the division between nobility and gentry.

In fact, the late middle ages has been described as 'the age of bastard feudalism'.⁵¹ The term 'bastard feudalism' was coined in the late nineteenth century with clearly negative connotations. Since the 1940s the term has lost much of its pejorative character. Lewis in his research on indentured retinues came to the conclusion that the indentured retinues were not as unstable as historians had believed, but were 'a steadying influence in a society where old institutional loyalties were breaking down and new ones had not yet fully developed to take their place.'⁵² This change of view owes much to the work of K.B. McFarlane, who reversed the judgment that bastard feudalism was the explanation for the Wars of the Roses and laid the blame for their outbreak on the incompetence of the kings.⁵³ In recent research 'bastard feudalism' has been seen as a natural consequence of the development of society in the middle ages.⁵⁴ Additionally, the growth of lay literacy resulted in a widening interest in written documentation.⁵⁵ Recording the relationship between lord and man, the duties and rights of both parties, was only sensible if both

⁵¹ 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), p. 1.

⁵² N.B. Lewis, 'The Organisation of Indentured Retinues in Fourteenth Century England', *TRHS* fourth ser. 27 (1945), p. 39.

⁵³ K.B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century. Collected Essays* (London, 1981), p. 41-42.

⁵⁴ Bastard Feudalism, according Christine Carpenter, 'was the natural heir to feudalism in its function as a cohesive force between nobility and gentry, not an illegitimate offspring.' Carpenter, 'Beauchamp Affinity', p. 531.

⁵⁵ The growth of lay literacy, at least to the degree of 'pragmatic literacy' was a result of the growing administration, M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record* (2nd ed. Oxford, 1993), pp. 246-47.

sides were able to use the written document. The replacement of tenurial service became increasingly necessary as the connections between lords and their leasees had become ever more complicated: 'It seems that very few men of substance held their land from one lord only.'⁵⁶ Indeed, this 'simple pattern' was only in existence for a short period after the Norman conquest.⁵⁷ Far from being indicative of an unstable and corrupt society, affinity can be seen as the most important mechanism of late medieval government. Affinities linked the centre of the medieval state, the king, and his nobles, to those who usually exercised the power in the localities, the gentry. J.R. Lander concludes that ties of affinity created by indentures and service were usually stronger than the ties within families.⁵⁸

Though retaining is often seen as the setting down of the personal links between the nobility and the gentry that were the very essence of medieval government,⁵⁹ some historians still come to very negative assessments of the effects of bastard feudalism.⁶⁰ It has been argued that the increase of bastard feudalism was a reaction to the development of administration. The closer link between the Crown and the lower aristocracy, mainly through offices held by the gentry for which they had to report to the centre of government directly, threatened to cut out the barons and magnates from their all-important position as middlemen.⁶¹ But while this new, direct link between the central government and the lower echelons of the landowning class was a danger to the position of the higher aristocracy, it also provided a means to subvert the system. By retaining the men who held offices the higher nobility forced themselves back into the 'chain of command'. Using the indentures, the nobility was 'spinning a bastard feudal web over the system' of local government. This enabled the nobility to retain their power in the

⁵⁶ C.D. Ross, 'The Yorkshire Baronage. 1399-1435' (unpubl. D.Phil. thesis, Oxford, 1950), p. 350. Lord Ros, for example, held land of eighteen different overlords, S. Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity. 1361-1399* (Oxford, 1990), p. 26.

⁵⁷ R. Horrox, 'Service', in R. Horrox (ed.), *Fifteenth Century Attitudes* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 73.

⁵⁸ J.R. Lander, 'Family, 'Friends' and Politics in Fifteenth Century England', in R.A. Griffiths and J. Sherborne (eds.), *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages. A Tribute to Charles Ross* (New York, 1986), p. 37.

⁵⁹ 'Inevitably private relationships became an integral part of the public system, because without the existence of the vertical and horizontal links between minor and major landowners no government of any sort would have been possible.', Christine Carpenter, 'Law, Justice and Landowners in Late Medieval England', *Law and History Review* 1 (1983), p. 214.

⁶⁰ 'For convenience these lodgings [of the retainers] needed to be separate from those of the owner, his family and immediate household, to ensure privacy and also protection against possible treachery and mutiny in his stronghold. For mercenaries, secured by money and not by traditional devotion to the family, were liable to be bought over by a rival with more pay and to turn against their master.' Margaret Wood, *The English Medieval House* (London, 1965), p. 169.

⁶¹ P. Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', *Past and Present* 125 (1989), pp. 41-43.

localities which they were in danger of losing to the gentry who had improved their position by becoming more closely involved with the central government.⁶² This is perhaps a classic example of the assessment that centralization of government is always a positive development.

1.5. Mobility

A hierarchy of wealth and influence existed within the aristocracy and was regarded as part of the natural plan of the world. 'Hierarchy was seen as a reflection of the divine order which created and sustained the universe.'⁶³ The hierarchy within the aristocracy was reflected in terms of titles. However, this was clearly not a two-tiered system but a many-layered one, and the nobility as well as the gentry were subdivided into several ranks. These ranks were strictly regulated and new titles were given their place within this established order.⁶⁴ Within each rank further hierarchies existed, each the subject of discussion and arguments.⁶⁵ The seating in parliament of newly advanced nobles was often described at their creation⁶⁶ and the issue of precedence between nobles was often quarrelled over, for example between John Mowbray, Earl of Norfolk and Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick.⁶⁷ The sum of money granted to a newly created noble was also structured hierarchically. As the £20 for the third penny usually bestowed on an earl had long been defined,⁶⁸ other sums accorded to different ranks were designated in relation to this figure.⁶⁹ The grant of this endowment was at the king's pleasure, as Richard of Conisborough discovered when he was created Earl of Cambridge in 1414 without being granted the customary third penny.⁷⁰

⁶² D.A. Carpenter, 'Debate. Bastard Feudalism Revised', *Past and Present* 131 (1991), p. 189.

⁶³ Horrox, 'Service', p. 61.

⁶⁴ When John Beaumont was created the first English viscount, his place in parliament between the earls and the sons of earls was also set down, Rosenthal, *Nobles*, p. 33-4.

⁶⁵ G. Dodd, 'Crown, Magnates and Gentry: The English Parliament, 1369-1421 (unpubl. DPhil. thesis, York 1998), p. 70.

⁶⁶ When Richard Beauchamp was created a duke in April 1445 his place in parliament was clearly described as between the Duke of Norfolk and the Duke of Buckingham, Powell and Wallis, p. 474.

⁶⁷ R.E. Archer, 'Parliamentary Restoration: John Mowbray and the Dukedom of Norfolk in 1425', in R.E. Archer and S. Walker (eds.), *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England. Essays Presented to Gerald Harriss* (London, 1995), p. 106-112.

⁶⁸ This development had started in the twelfth century, Powell and Wallis, p. 60.

⁶⁹ Viscount Beaumont was granted 20 marks with his new title. When Henry V's younger brothers John and Humphrey were created dukes of Bedford and of Gloucester, they were granted, additionally to the sum they received as earls, £40, Powell and Wallis, pp. 469, 443.

⁷⁰ T.B. Pugh, 'The Southampton Plot of 1415', in R.A. Griffiths and J. Sherborne (eds.), *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages. A Tribute to Charles Ross* (New York, 1986), p. 74-5.

The fourteenth as well as the fifteenth century was especially rich in the introduction of new ranks. The fourteenth century saw the introduction of the prince (1301),⁷¹ the duke (1337) and the marquis (1385).⁷² The creation of Edward I's eldest son as Prince of Wales was not only a symbol of the conquest of Wales; it also conveyed a special rank to the king's heir for the first time.⁷³ Similarly, the first English duke was also the king's eldest son: Edward of Woodstock was created Duke of Cornwall.⁷⁴ The elevation of Robert de Vere to the rank of marquess was not only unusual because the title had not been used in England before, but also because Robert was only distantly related to the royal family. The unpopularity of this promotion (and the subsequent elevation of Robert de Vere to Duke of Ireland) reflected not only the disapproval of Richard II's favouritism, but also the great awareness of the importance of rank within the aristocracy.⁷⁵ The fifteenth century saw the development of the division of the gentry into gentlemen, esquires and knights, the adoption of the originally French title of 'viscount'⁷⁶ and the increasing separation of the royal family from the rest of the nobility until it had become a distinct estate of its own.⁷⁷ However, as C. Carpenter has shown for the lowest ranks of the aristocracy, the introduction of a new title does not necessarily indicate the development of a new group of aristocrats or fundamental changes within the structure of society, but instead might only reflect contemporary keenness to be seen as part of a recognized and not impenetrable class.⁷⁸

Social mobility is a necessity in every society. The prospect of promotion to a higher rank is an incentive for people to serve their social superiors. The later middle ages can be described as an 'age of ambition', where men aimed at the acquisition of power and influence.⁷⁹ As land was the foundation of power it provided both the means of acquiring noble status and was the principal reward for this status. To purchase land was a difficult

⁷¹ Crouch, *Image of Aristocracy*, p. 95.

⁷² Powell and Wallis, pp. 327 and 397-98.

⁷³ Crouch, *Image of Aristocracy*, pp. 94-95.

⁷⁴ Powell and Wallis speculate that the decision to create a dukedom in England might be linked to Edward III's decision to drop his own ducal title, Duke of Aquitaine, when he claimed the French Crown, Powell and Wallis, p. 327.

⁷⁵ Powell and Wallis, pp. 397-98.

⁷⁶ Powell and Wallis, pp. 468-9.

⁷⁷ R.A. Griffiths, 'The Crown and the Royal Family in Later Medieval England', in R.A. Griffiths and J. Sherborne (eds.), *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages. A Tribute to Charles Ross* (New York, 1986), pp. 16-18.

⁷⁸ Carpenter, *Locality*, pp. 76, 138-147.

⁷⁹ 'The late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in England formed an age of ambition, of upward class movements.' F.R.H. Du Boulay, *An Age of Ambition. English Society in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1970), pp. 66-67.

business, as the land market was extremely tense throughout most of this period.⁸⁰ Additionally, purchases of land were often complicated with expensive litigations resulting from heirs claiming their rights to property.⁸¹ C. Carpenter sees the acquisition of land by purchase as typical behaviour of the men who had recently joined the aristocracy, whilst established families tended to rely on marriage and inheritance.⁸² However, well established families did occasionally buy land, a particularly spectacular purchase being William Scrope's acquisition of the Isle of Man from the Earl of Salisbury for 10, 000 marks.⁸³ Newly acquired land was used to endow younger sons or enlarge and consolidate the estates, especially those around the *caput honoris*.⁸⁴

The most common way in which land was acquired was by marriage and inheritance.⁸⁵ Inheritance was the most important means by which one's land could be increased, but it was also the most unpredictable. The method of acquisition of land determined the shape the estate would have; it was easier to purchase land situated near to the other family estates than to find an heiress whose lands were in similarly close proximity. Purchase gave estates a rounded character, while estates created mainly by inheritance were usually widespread.⁸⁶ Families did their best to influence the safe transition of land within the family, but often chance or legal restrictions would hinder this.⁸⁷ Only in the fourteenth century were legal means for the direction of land first introduced. This enabled the smooth passage of land from father to son, thereby preventing the land falling into the hands of the feudal lord should the heir be a minor. The enfeoffment to use, which allowed a landholder to secure the transition of land to his – or her – heir, also enabled him to endow his younger sons or daughters.⁸⁸ While feudal

⁸⁰ At the end of the fifteenth century the situation, at least in Warwickshire, relaxed, Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 133.

⁸¹ see Chapter 3, p. 90-92.

⁸² as for example the Catesbys, Carpenter, *Locality*, pp. 119-20.

⁸³ C. Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity, 1360-1413* (New Haven and London, 1986), p. 168.

⁸⁴ Both the Berkeleys and the Greys of Ruthin purchased land around the centre of their 'country', Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, p. 162

⁸⁵ 'Now we assume that wealth will be earned; the late Middle Ages, on the other hand, assumed that it would be inherited.' D. Starkey, 'The Age of the Household: Politics, Society and the Arts. c. 1350. c. 1550', in S. Medcalf (ed.), *The Later Middle Ages* (London, 1981), p. 232.

⁸⁶ see Chapter 3, pp. 86-93.

⁸⁷ The most important of these was of course that until the sixteenth century, land could not be directed after one's death, making it necessary for all arrangements had to be concluded during the lifetime of the landowner, McFarlane, *Nobility*, pp. 62-63.

⁸⁸ John Grey of Wilton for example bestowed more of his land to his younger son Roger than on his eldest Henry, R.I. Jack, 'The Greys of Ruthin. 1325-1490. A Study in the Lesser Baronage' (unpubl. PhD thesis, London, 1961), pp. 172-73.

incidents were curtailed, these arrangements also complicated the course of inheritance, as often the land was handed out of the family only in tail male, and marriage to an apparent heiress could turn out to be not as lucrative as it had seemed.⁸⁹ As over half of the peers married heiresses, most of the noble families tended to increase their lands and therefore their status.⁹⁰ The continuous advancement of any noble family depended also on its ability to produce an heir.⁹¹

Yet not all families succeeded in rising continuously; the baronial family of Darcy, for example, was declining throughout the fifteenth century, so that the extinction of the line seems to have been only the final step.⁹² Marriages could also damage the family's financial position, though usually only temporarily. The necessity of settling part of the lord's lands in jointure on his wife, as well as the longevity of many dowagers, deprived some heirs of large parts of their inheritance.⁹³ Additionally, wardships, though seldom greatly damaging the estate, usually caused a reversal of fortune for these periods.⁹⁴ Forfeitures as the result of political miscalculation seldom deprived the family of their lands for good. Even when the forfeited estates were granted in perpetuity to another family it was often possible to regain it, when the descendants of the condemned man could secure the support of the king.⁹⁵

⁸⁹ see Chapter 3, p. 91.

⁹⁰ Rosenthal, *Nobility*, p. 58.

⁹¹ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 61.

⁹² 'For some years before they became extinct, these moribund families had ceased to be of importance either in national or in local affairs', Ross, 'Yorkshire Baronage', p. 251.

⁹³ The Cliffords were especially plagued with dowagers, in four generations they had four dowagers, and for some time three were holding their jointure at the same time; Eufemia Neville, widow of Robert, Lord Clifford outlived her husband by 48 years, Ross, pp. 235-249. The problems caused by long-lived dowagers is examined in Rowena Archer, 'Rich Old Ladies. The Problem of Late Medieval Dowagers', in A.J. Pollard (ed.), *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History* (Gloucester, 1984), 15-33.

⁹⁴ The disappearance of the Scropes of Bolton from national politics for good was partly caused by the minority of Richard Scrope and the problems caused by the wardship, B. Vale, 'The Scropes of Bolton and Masham, c. 1300-c. 1450: A Study of a Northern Noble Family with a Calendar of the Scrope of Bolton Cartulary', 2 vols. (unpubl. DPhil. thesis, York 1987), vol. i, pp. 211-23.

⁹⁵ John Scrope of Masham, younger brother and heir of Henry Scrope executed for his participation in the Southampton Plot, regained the forfeited estates, Vale, vol. i, pp. 226-229. John Holland, son of the Duke of Exeter who had lost his lands and honours in 1399 and brother of Richard Holland killed in the rebellion of January 1400, was eventually granted his father's title after the honour had been first transferred to Thomas Beaufort, Powell and Wallis, pp. 428, 430, 447-48, 472. However, if a ruling monarch, or another powerful member of the royal family, was interested in keeping the land out of the hand of the owner, this was possible as well. Robert Ferrers, Earl of Derby, lost his lands permanently to Edmund of Lancaster, probably with the help of his elder brother Edward who as king continued to reject the claims of Robert Ferrers and his son, M. Prestwich, *Edward I* (London, 1988), p. 61.

1.6. Service

Medieval society was tied together through a network of service and patronage. Service was the most important way to advance in society.⁹⁶ It could be given in a variety of ways, as a soldier in war, as an administrator in peace, or as a lawyer representing a lord's interests at the courts. Through service, men came into contact with their social superiors.⁹⁷ The man serving a richer and more powerful lord received much more than just payment from his employer, he received his 'good lordship'. This meant support on a much wider level: a lord could help to arrange a favourable marriage, lend his support in litigation and help to further his servant's advance.⁹⁸ Much of what today is regarded as corrupt was in these times seen as correct. It has been argued that the legal system was a comparatively new intruder into a society based largely on personal connections.⁹⁹ The shortest way to advance was the royal court, as the king controlled the most extensive patronage.¹⁰⁰ One reason for the exceptionally large share of patronage at the Crown's disposal was the centralization of the administration of later medieval England.¹⁰¹ Service to the Crown attracted even high-ranking nobility.¹⁰² It was possible to advance to some extent without the help of a lord, but as medieval society was built on the links created by service, it was impossible to escape completely. Every aristocrat had to serve at least his feudal lord or the king. Service was the quicker and safer way to advancement. The greater the lord was that a man served, the greater were the possibilities of advancement. Service, however, was not entirely without dangers: the fortunes of the men were linked both in good and in bad with that of their lord.¹⁰³

The law was another widely used path to social advancement. Often lawyers were in

⁹⁶ 'Service to one's social betters had always been one of the principal paths to advancement for the nobility', Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, p. 17.

⁹⁷ Horrox, 'Service', p. 63

⁹⁸ Horrox, 'Service', pp. 61-78, *passim*.

⁹⁹ Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 282.

¹⁰⁰ Though generally advancement was not great, there were some notable exceptions such as the Brounfleets; Henry Brounfleet began his career as a clerk of the buttery in the 1380s – in 1449 his son was summoned to parliament as Lord Brounfleet and Vescy. Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 57-8. Another exceptional family were the de la Poles of Hull who advanced through service to the Crown, in their case in the form of money-lending and trade, from rather humble origins to earl within two generations, R. Horrox, 'The de la Poles of Hull', *East Yorkshire Local History Society* 38 (1983), p. 7.

¹⁰¹ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 199.

¹⁰² 'Even the great nobility, ..., submitted to the pull of royal service', Horrox, 'Service', p. 67.

¹⁰³ The most prominent 'victims' were of course the courtiers who were often the target for any criticism against a king and sometimes suffered the ultimate fate, for example the more than forty individuals who were executed, exiled or dismissed by the Merciless Parliament in 1388, Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 187.

the service of the nobility or the Crown. From the latter half of the fourteenth century many of the offices of state were occupied by lawyers.¹⁰⁴ They were regarded as socially inferior by the aristocracy; nevertheless, the sheer amount of money some successful lawyers and judges acquired enabled their families to advance into the nobility. The two Scrope families of Bolton and Masham were descended from two brothers who were lawyers and judges and who laid the financial and territorial foundation on which the sons of each brother were able to build a place in the ranks of the nobility.¹⁰⁵ Usually the newly advanced families gained much of their social standing through military service.¹⁰⁶ Service in war remained an important way to gain access to the parliamentary peerage. Though a great lord could also provide a rising family with sufficient patronage to advance in society, the royal court and the greater patronage of the king was more attractive and most rising men entered royal service when possible.¹⁰⁷

But service was not an end in itself. The relationship between lord and man was understood to be reciprocal, offering benefits to both parties.¹⁰⁸ By using whatever influence and local knowledge his men could bring to his service, a lord acknowledged the standing of the men he employed and recognized their greater influence in a particular field. Apart from obvious material gains, both sides also profited in a less tangible way. The lord could show his own worth through the men in his retinue; the larger it was and the more important the people it included, the greater his own worship.¹⁰⁹ The retainer also gained importance by being in the service of his lord. He was able to wield power at his lord's command which he would not have been able to exercise on his own. The connection to the lord alone did much to improve a man's position. Material gains and promotion, through a marriage arranged by one's lord or the granting of a office or support given for the purchase of land, were probably never out of the mind of the retained men; but service itself brought them closer to those higher up the social hierarchy. Affinities created interlacing networks of relationships between lords and retainers as well as between retainers.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ see Chapter 4, pp. 161-67.

¹⁰⁵ Vale, vol. i, p. 37.

¹⁰⁶ Not only the de la Poles, whose position was improved by Michael de la Pole's service in France, Horrox, 'de la Poles', p. 29; but also the two sons of the Scrope brothers, Henry Scrope of Masham and Richard Scrope of Bolton, Vale, vol. i, pp. 76-78.

¹⁰⁷ Again, Michael de la Pole, who was first in the service of John of Gaunt and who then transferred to Richard II's court, is a prominent example, A. Steel, *Richard II* (Cambridge, 1941), p. 95.

¹⁰⁸ Horrox, 'Service', pp. 66-71.

¹⁰⁹ Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, p. 93.

¹¹⁰ Marriages between the families within an affinity were not uncommon, Carpenter, *Locality*, pp. 311-13.

1.7. Nobility and Gentry

Though many differences in the legal and financial position of the nobility and gentry can be identified, it is important to question how far this separation had any influence on the actual lives and experiences of both groups. The nobility and gentry had much in common. They both held sufficient land to gain political power from it. The holding of land and the managing of estates united them in their common lifestyle and gave them many common interests. Though the larger landholders usually had neither the time nor the inclination to concern themselves with the details of farming, they had as much interest in maintaining the profitability of their estates as smaller landholders. The entire aristocracy participated in the common religious and cultural practices of Christianity and chivalry. According to their personal preferences and financial means, the gentry as much as the nobility engaged in acts of piety and generosity, founding chantries and bestowing lands and money on religious houses. The gentry was emulating the nobility by engaging in literary patronage, thus showing their interest in literature glorifying chivalric values.¹¹¹ The proliferation of conduct books also indicates that the gentry were trying to model their behaviour on that of the nobility.¹¹² The use of coats-of-arms became another outward sign of the aristocracy and spread through the gentry down to the rank of mere gentleman.¹¹³ Although, from the thirteenth century onwards, some members of the 'lower' sphere of the gentry refused to take on knightly status, they continued to be part of the fighting elite.¹¹⁴ The most prestigious chivalric institution, the Order of the Garter, was (at least at its foundation) open to nobility and gentry alike.¹¹⁵ The habit of nominating men who were prominent in war or at court regardless of their rank continued

¹¹¹ P. Coss, 'Aspects of Cultural Diffusion in Medieval England: The Early Romances, Local Society and Robin Hood', *Past and Present* 108 (1985), pp. 44-52.

¹¹² 'the manuals of etiquette produced at this time must surely be seen as further evidence of this [increase of social mobility], being guide books to polite society for the *nouveaux riches*', Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 49.

¹¹³ Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 90.

¹¹⁴ There has been a long and interesting discussion about the causes for this development, rising prices for military equipment or changes of attitude are both cited as influencing the shrinking of the number of families who were willing or able to take up knighthood. For a discussion, see for example, David A. Carpenter, 'Was there a crisis of the Knightly Class in the Thirteenth Century? The Oxfordshire Evidence', *EHR* 95 (1980), 721-752; Peter Coss, *The Knight in Medieval England, 1000-1400* (Stroud, 1993), pp. 60-62.

¹¹⁵ Among the founding members were – next to the Prince of Wales, the earl of Derby, and other high ranking noblemen – several knights, for example Sir Thomas Holland (later Earl of Kent), and Sir Miles Stapleton, *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, App. B, pp. 534-547.

throughout the middle ages and beyond.¹¹⁶

It is therefore impossible to draw a sharp social distinction between the gentry and nobility.¹¹⁷ There was also no sharp differentiation between the lowest ranks of the gentry and the most prosperous of the yeomen. The growing obsession with rank and hierarchy in the fifteenth century, often cited as proof of the growing stratification of the aristocracy,¹¹⁸ can also be seen as indicating the exact opposite: that the society was not as rigidly divided as many contemporaries thought proper.¹¹⁹ Social mobility did indeed become more restricted during the course of the later middle ages but it did not cease altogether. The preconceptions of how society should function changed: the growing stratification was as much a stratification of the mind as one of society. At the lower end of the aristocracy it proved to be impossible to restrict access to the gentry. 'New men' who had acquired land could not be stopped from taking on the trappings of gentility: for example self-styled gentlemen could not be excluded from the right to use a coat-of-arms.¹²⁰ One of the best known examples of these 'new men' is William Paston, whose father was a 'husbandman' and who acquired gentry status and manors by following 'the shortest route – service'.¹²¹ Though the Pastons were exceptional in many ways, they were not the only family who crossed the line between yeomanry and gentry.¹²² The barrier between the gentry and the peerage was never completely closed either. Fewer 'new men' were summoned to parliament in the fifteenth century, but recruitment never completely ceased.¹²³ Service to the Crown, especially in times of crisis, often helped to lift men into the ranks of the nobility.¹²⁴

¹¹⁶ It is therefore not surprising to find several members of Richard III's 'Middleham Connection' among those nominated during his reign, as for example, Sir Richard Ratcliffe, Sir John Conyers and Sir John Savage, *ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Bush, pp. 2-3.

¹¹⁸ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 122.

¹¹⁹ 'Indeed the very urgency with which some theorists argue for behaviour as a function of birth rather than upbringing is surely evidence of awareness that they were living in a world where social barriers were not immutable', Horrox, 'Service', p. 62.

¹²⁰ Nigel Saul, *Knights and Esquires. The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 27-28.

¹²¹ C. Richmond, *The Paston Family in the Fifteenth Century. The First Phase* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 2.

¹²² Carpenter, *Locality*, pp. 96-152.

¹²³ see also above, p. 7.

¹²⁴ Among the 'new men' summoned were a number of men who had supported the duke of Suffolk in 1448: for example, Richard Woodville and John Stourton. Other crises brought other creations, in 1455, Thomas Stanley, knight of the shire for Lancashire, was raised to Lord Stanley. Sir Walter Blount was created Lord Mountjoy in 1465, as a measure to strengthen Edward IV's position in the House of Lords. Powell and Wallis, pp. 484, 500, 515.

Another factor which kept the nobility relatively 'open' was the fact that the laws of inheritance relating to baronial titles were never strictly regulated. Only in the case of 'normal' inheritance, that is of a son inheriting the estates (or most of the estates) of his father, did the descent of the right to an individual summons become automatic. In all other cases when a man acquired the estates of a baron by marrying an heiress or inheriting it from his mother, the decision as to whether he was to be summoned to the House of Lords was in the king's hand.¹²⁵ Often a new creation was spuriously 'disguised' as a resurrection of ancient claims.¹²⁶ The fact that such precedents were sought, and if necessary invented, was a clear indication that the parliamentary peerage was by then a definable and prestigious body, and that an ancient claim to membership was regarded as more dignified than a new creation. As we have seen above, the difference between membership by ancient right and by recent elevation was expressed by the different titles of baron and banneret. However, the term 'banneret' was also still used as a military rank and ceased to be used completely during the first half of the fifteenth century.¹²⁷

A complete separation of the peerage and gentry was further rendered impossible by the fact that the dividing line ran within individual families. The 'barony' with the right to an individual summons was inherited by the eldest son; younger sons were therefore excluded from the peerage.¹²⁸ Even the younger sons of the titled nobility were theoretically reduced to the status of knights. It was not unusual for a peer sitting in the House of Lords to find a brother or cousin as knight of the shire in the Commons.¹²⁹ Intermarriage between gentry and nobility was also very common.¹³⁰ It can be assumed that long-standing relationships between families, tied together through marriages,

¹²⁵ William Beauchamp, husband of the heiress of the barony of St. Amand was summoned, Powell and Wallis, p. 486, whereas Sir John Ratcliffe, who was married to the daughter and heir of Lord FitzWalter, was never summoned to Parliament, 'No doubt considerations of current politics affected the decision in each case', *ibid.*, p. 481.

¹²⁶ William Bourghier was summoned as Lord FitzWarin in 1449; the last time a FitzWarin was summoned had been in 1336, *ibid.* p. 486. The resurrection of the barony of Lisle for John Talbot, the fourth son of the Earl of Shrewsbury, was made on behalf of his mother Margaret Beauchamp. However, 'the assertions on which the grant was made were flagrantly untrue', *ibid.*, p. 474-5.

¹²⁷ see above, p. 7.

¹²⁸ For example, Thomas Ferrers, esquire, was the younger son of Lord Ferrers, Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 66. Bush sees this phenomenon as typical and particular to the English aristocracy, Bush, p. 210-11.

¹²⁹ Sir Otto Grandison, knight of the shire for Kent, had two brothers among the peers, W.M. Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III. Crown and Political Society in England. 1327-1377* (New Haven and London, 1990), p. 166.

¹³⁰ Bush, p. 40-1; Maud, daughter of Lord FitzHugh, for example married William Eure, MP for Yorkshire in 1422, Ross, 'Yorkshire Baronage', p. 226; Philip, fourth lord Darcy married Elizabeth Grey, daughter of Sir Thomas Grey of Heton, *ibid.*, p. 255.

landholding or geographical proximity, did not change fundamentally if the head of one family was summoned to parliament and thus elevated into the peerage. Clearly, it is difficult to come to general conclusions about the importance that family ties had for the cohesion of the aristocracy as a whole. In this context the much discussed question of how extensive was the family network to which an individual felt bound, is of considerable importance. It has been argued, on the basis of research into individual families, that the nuclear family was of greater importance than the extended one.¹³¹ However, ties with the larger family and a sense of family tradition often played a decisive role in family politics. Although attitudes towards national politics were seldom dictated by kinship,¹³² the fate of different branches of one family often influenced each other.¹³³ Extensive knowledge of one's own and one's neighbours' wider family networks was very important with regard to the acquisition of estates. As the right to inherit could be claimed by distant relatives, incomplete knowledge of the possible heirs of an estate often led to long and costly litigations.¹³⁴ Though more often than not the larger family created problems in matters of inheritance,¹³⁵ some cohesion between

¹³¹ 'It is rare to find relatives beyond daughters and younger sons provided for.' Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 211. 'Historical demographers ... show that the late medieval English family was a nuclear one: in other words, it consisted (as Smith wrote) of a husband and wife, and their dependent offspring.' Starkey, p. 230.

¹³² It has been argued that the involvement of Henry, Lord Scrope of Masham in the Southampton plot of 1415 was a consequence of his marriage to the stepmother of the main conspirator, Richard, Earl of Cambridge. The marriage of the earl's infant daughter to the son of Thomas Grey of Heton is generally regarded as the reason for his involvement, Vale, vol. i, pp. 208-10. 'family co-operated politically only in a minority of instances.' J.R. Lander, 'Family, Friends', p. 37. Yet, Lord Scrope of Masham was not involved in the rebellion of his relative, Richard Scrope, Archbishop of York in 1405. Richard, Lord Scrope of Bolton did not suffer any negative effects from the demise of his son William Scrope of Bolton, Earl of Wiltshire, who as one of the most fervent adherents of Richard II was executed in 1399, Vale, vol. i, p. 85-86.

¹³³ The disengagement with the court and the economic decline of the main line under Sir Richard Abberbury *le filz* also proved disastrous to his younger brother Thomas Abberbury and the related Abberburys of Cotesford in Oxfordshire, S. Walker, 'Sir Richard Abberbury (c. 1330-1399) and his Kinsmen: the Rise and Fall of a Gentry Family', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 34 (1990), pp. 134-136.

¹³⁴ Sir John Fastolf especially in his older age had several litigations concerning land he had purchased on weak titles, P.S. Lewis, 'Sir John Fastolf's Lawsuit over Titchwell, 1448-55', *Historical Journal* 1 (1958), pp. 1-2.

¹³⁵ A very prominent example is the case of the two families of Ralph Neville, first earl of Westmorland, whose descendants were a considerable group in the House of Lords. They bitterly quarreled amongst themselves, especially his grandson from his first marriage, the second Earl of Westmorland, and his son from his second marriage, the Earl of Salisbury, who had inherited most of his fathers estates. 'If this great family connection had worked together it would have been the overwhelming, irresistible force in English politics.' Lander, 'Family, Friends', p. 32.

different branches of families is discernible several generations after the original split.¹³⁶ There was often 'considerable ambivalence of attitude towards the institution of the family',¹³⁷ but as the division between the gentry and nobility ran within the nuclear family, at least in some cases a strong bond can be assumed. Additionally, tenurial relationships encouraged the maintenance of contact within families, as the head of the senior branch was often overlord of the land which the junior branch held.

The importance of the division created by the different roles of the gentry and nobility in parliament should not be exaggerated. The character of parliament changed fundamentally during the later middle ages and the lower house, the representatives of the shires and boroughs, gained influence and merged into a political unity.¹³⁸ However, the knights of the shire, who made up the larger part of the 'commons', were men with whom the 'lords' had much in common. They were their neighbours and often members of their affinities.¹³⁹ They came from a similar background both culturally and personally, and as landowners shared the same, or largely the same, interests. Except in extraordinary circumstances it was more constructive for the commons and Lords to work together than against each other. Indeed government was only possible when the different parts of the aristocracy worked together. Of course, there were some points of discord between the nobles and the knights of the shire, but these usually arose from personal differences rather than from fundamental differences of ideology.¹⁴⁰

The main difference between the nobility and the gentry was an economic one. It was the greater income from land, and also the greater dignity that larger estates conveyed to their owner, which set the nobility apart from the gentry. Their greater financial resources enabled the peers to wield greater influence than the knights and esquires, and

¹³⁶ Again, a good example of this concerns the two Scrope families, who, partly as a result of geographical proximity, sometimes worked together and followed the same politics; for example Thomas, Lord Scrope of Masham and John, Lord Scrope of Bolton joined in the ill-fated attack on Bootham Bar in York in 1487 to raise the city in support of Lambert Simnel, Vale, vol. i, p. 235.

¹³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 136.

¹³⁸ 'the parliament rolls make it clear that the two representative groups had now definitely emerged as a single political entity: the commons.' Ormrod, p. 166.

¹³⁹ This phenomenon has so far been mainly discussed in relation to attempts at 'packing' the commons. Often it is difficult to establish whether a retainer was returned as knight of the shire because he was under the patronage of the magnate of the region or whether he was retained as an influential person in his own right, 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. 127-153, with references to other research.

¹⁴⁰ One incident where the nobility and the commons were thought to have been following different policies was the poll tax of 1380. The decision for taxation in the form of a poll tax is thought to have been made by the commons as this form of taxation would not hit them as hard as the other forms of taxes proposed by the lords: Powell and Wallis, p. 387-88. However, this theory has been rebuffed, R.B. Dobson, *The Peasants' Revolt of 1381* (2nd ed. London, 1983), pp. 21-22.

occasionally to dominate them. It is however as well to remember that both gentry and nobility were part of the ruling class, the aristocracy.

1.8. The Baronage: A Research Agenda

It is evident that the division of the aristocracy into two distinct groups, nobility and gentry, is not as clear cut as it is sometimes suggested. Furthermore, considerable differences in wealth and power existed between the magnates and some of the untitled nobles. The baronage, the untitled peers, are a part of the English aristocracy which has received little attention from historians to date. So far little detailed research has been conducted about these men as a group¹⁴¹ and only a few individual families have been researched in detail.¹⁴² The barons are often seen as a quite insignificant group: many historians seem to think it sufficient merely to mention their numbers rather than to list their names.¹⁴³ This is notable neglect considering that the other ranks of the aristocracy have been researched extensively. The main reason is the relative obscurity of many barons, which has made them a less attractive target for research. If any consideration is given to them as a group within the peerage, it usually leads to the conclusion that many of them had more in common with the gentry than with the magnates.¹⁴⁴

There was a larger number of untitled barons than titled peers. Theoretically they held the majority within the House of Lords. It seems that at least on certain occasions voting began with the least important peer.¹⁴⁵ If one assumes that the barons had any political ambitions fundamentally different from those of the titled nobility, this voting system could have provided an opportunity for the barons to press for their own policies. If the barons had more in common with the gentry, they would have had the opportunity to support the knights of the shire. However, as has been argued above, only in a few instances did conflicts of interests emerge between the House of Lords and the House of Commons.¹⁴⁶ Similarly there is no indication of conflicts between the baronage and the

¹⁴¹ One exception is C.D. Ross' dissertation about 'The Yorkshire Baronage' that deals both with the titled as well as the untitled noble families, see n. 57.

¹⁴² So for example the Greys of Ruthin, see n. 88, and the Scropes of Masham and Bolton (who apart from the short period when the earldom of Wiltshire was bestowed upon Richard Scrope of Bolton, classify as a baronial family), see n. 132.

¹⁴³ For example, T.B. Pugh lists the peers assigned to the court to try the conspirators of 1415 as 'two dukes (Clarence and Gloucester) eight earls (Arundel, Dorset, Huntington, March, the Earl Marshal, Oxford, Salisbury and Suffolk) and nine barons', Pugh, 'Southampton Plot', p. 63.

¹⁴⁴ Ross, 'Yorkshire Baronage', p. 395.

¹⁴⁵ Powell and Wallis, pp. 490, 503, 512.

¹⁴⁶ see above, p. 22.

titled peers. Moreover, it has been claimed that in fact the position of the barons within the House of Lords was of little significance compared to that of the titled peers, that the influence of barons and bannerets on the decision taking in the House of Lords was negligible, and that this was the main reasons why so many of the untitled peers thought it unnecessary to attend parliament.¹⁴⁷ Even though the individual baron was less wealthy than the titled peer, the baronage as a group potentially had considerable influence on the politics taking place in parliament.¹⁴⁸ All indications point to the conclusion that the barons, though less wealthy and influential than the magnates, were an integral and influential part of the nobility.¹⁴⁹

As discussed above, the aristocracy had always been stratified. The twelfth and thirteenth-century baronage, however, was not equal to the barons who were summoned to parliament from the end of the thirteenth century.¹⁵⁰ The men who received individual summonses to parliament were not selected because of a special type of landholding, nor was the right to a parliamentary summons ever really tied in with a certain level of income. According to the *Modus Tenendi Parliamentum*, all earls and barons holding land of £400 or 400 marks annual income should receive an individual summons.¹⁵¹ This definition of the parliamentary barons was not, in reality, the decisive criterion.¹⁵² The right to an individual summons remained an honour bestowed on an individual by the will of the king: like other titles it had become hereditary by the fifteenth century, but it was not tied to levels of income. The *nouveaux riches* were not summoned even when their incomes were large enough to support baronial rank. As the tax return of 1436 show, the income of the baronage was usually smaller than that of the titled nobility and larger than that of the gentry; nevertheless there were certain barons who had a larger income than some earls and some knights whose income was larger than that of certain barons.¹⁵³

¹⁴⁷ Dodd, pp. 69-70.

¹⁴⁸ A similar argument which has been raised in connection with the influence of nobility and gentry, has been refuted by C. Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses. Politics and Constitution in England, c. 1437-1509* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 57-58.

¹⁴⁹ see Chapter 4, pp. 152-63.

¹⁵⁰ see above, pp. 4-3.

¹⁵¹ *Parliamentary Texts*, p. 68.

¹⁵² Powell and Wallis, p. 284-86.

¹⁵³ For example John, Lord Talbot of Furnivalle was assessed of a total annual income of £1205, while John, earl of Somerset, had only £1000; Lord Latimer had income of £175, while Sir John Tirell of Essex had £396, Grey, pp. 615-18, 633. The use of the income tax to calculate the income of the aristocracy has been criticised by Ross and Pugh. Their research has shown that the income of many nobles was larger than Grey assumed and several of the rich knights were subsequently included into the peerage, T.B. Pugh and C.D. Ross, 'The English Baronage and the Income Tax of 1436', *BIHR* 26 (1953), pp. 16-26. However, the promotions did not include all the knights who would qualify.

The practice of bastard feudalism has generally been discussed only in connection with the relationship between the nobility and gentry. For example, C. Carpenter states: 'it was the essential tie between the greater and the lesser aristocracy – the nobility and the gentry.'¹⁵⁴ However, it was not only the gentry who were retained by the nobility: often lesser noblemen were also retained by their superiors. Similarly, richer knights retained men from the lesser gentry.¹⁵⁵ As the difference in status between lord and retainer was significant, only the more important peers could retain lesser peers. By retaining lesser noblemen as well as the local gentry, magnates not only increased their influence on the political community but affirmed their own superior position. The vertical network, carrying the decisions from the centre into the localities, did not simply consist of two separate groups, the nobility and gentry, but was much more complex: as the titled peers could influence the lesser peers, so the richer, untitled peers could overawe the lesser gentry. Aymer de Valence had several barons in his retinue: for example several members of the de la Zouche family.¹⁵⁶ Thomas of Lancaster could afford to have fellow earls in his pay: they included John Warenne, Earl of Surrey, Robert Umfraville, Earl of Angus, and David Strathbogie, Earl of Athol, as well as several barons such as the Lords FitzWarin, Latimer, Holland and Segrave.¹⁵⁷ This practice did not cease as the division between the nobility and gentry hardened. John of Gaunt was 'the most powerful magnate in England..., his retinue could be a source of attraction to other lords.'¹⁵⁸ He had several barons within his retinue.¹⁵⁹ Richard, Duke of York, retained James Butler, Earl of Ormond;¹⁶⁰ Richard, Duke of Gloucester, had an indentured contract with the Earl of Northumberland¹⁶¹ and with the Scropes of Masham, the latter an extraordinary arrangement not only because it included the entire Scrope family and household, but also

¹⁵⁴ Carpenter, 'Beauchamp Affinity', p. 514. Given-Wilson discusses the retaining policy of Richard II and Henry IV as between the Crown and the greater gentry, yet several of the retainers he mentioned were in fact barons, as for example, Henry Lord FitzHugh and John Lord Beaumont, Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, pp. 212-13, 229.

¹⁵⁵ Thomas Sandford of Ascom, esquire, for example, retained William Bradley of Snipe, yeoman. J.M.W. Bean, *From Lord to Patron. Lordship in Late Medieval England* (Manchester, 1989), pp. 111-12.

¹⁵⁶ J.R.S. Philipps, *Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke. 1307-1324. Baronial Politics in the Reign of Edward II* (Oxford, 1972), p. 297.

¹⁵⁷ Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, p. 56.

¹⁵⁸ Bean, *Lord to Patron*, p. 75.

¹⁵⁹ For example, Richard Lord Scrope of Bolton, Thomas Lord Ros and, though only for the last two years of John of Gaunt's life, his son-in-law Ralph Neville, who was created Earl of Westmorland a year later, Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, Appendix i, pp. 262-284.

¹⁶⁰ 'Private Indentures for Life Service in Peace and War 1278-1476', M. Jones and S. Walker (eds.), *Camden Miscellany xxxii*, Camden Society fifth ser. 3 (1994), p. 129.

¹⁶¹ *ibid.* p. 154; see also M. Hicks, 'Dynastic Change and Northern Society, The Fourth Earl of Northumberland, 1470-89', in M. Hicks, *Richard III and his Rivals* (London, 1991), pp. 369-71.

because it did not include any payment at all.¹⁶² Like any knight or esquire, a baron profited from his connections with a more powerful lord, who could offer him security and patronage.¹⁶³ Bastard feudalism was not a simple two-tier system, of the nobility retaining the gentry; it was a very flexible means of creating hierarchical structures within a region. Some of the poorer barons were actually in the pay of the richer peers, but generally the difference in rank was not as pronounced as that. While it seems certain that the barons were deferring to the magnates, and often followed their lead, they did not slavishly follow them and could and did take up different political agendas. The relationship of the barons to the gentry was presumably similarly varied. Rich barons employed gentry in their household or retinue. However, between some barons and their gentry neighbours the difference in social and financial status was hardly visible. The links between gentry and baronage are hard to explore, due to the lack of surviving records. As part of the nobility, the barons were linking the centre of government with the localities. In the political and social hierarchy, the baronage looked up to the king and the magnates and down to the gentry for political and personal alliances.

A central question to be pursued in this thesis is whether the baronage can be seen as a distinct group within the nobility. The fact that they received individual summonses to parliament set them apart from the gentry. However, was this differentiation discernable outside parliament? Did the common experience of parliamentary work indeed create 'a certain political coherence'?¹⁶⁴ Considering the sometimes extremely poor attendance at parliament by the lords,¹⁶⁵ and particularly by the untitled peers,¹⁶⁶ it is important to question whether the occasional meetings between the barons and the magnates gave them any real sense of unity. If during the middle ages the English nobility had unusually few rights that set them apart from the gentry, the barons had no unifying legal status whatsoever. The fact that younger sons, and especially the younger sons of the baronage, sank back into the ranks of the gentry prevented a clear distinction between certain families from developing. Yet, it might be argued that there were other phenomena in terms of lifestyle, involvement in local and national politics, marital arrangements, and economic organisation that marked out the baronage as a distinct group within the

¹⁶² L.C. Attreed, 'An Indenture between Richard Duke of Gloucester and the Scrope Family of Masham and Upsall', *Speculum* 58 (1983), pp. 1018-25.

¹⁶³ The indenture between the Scopes and the Duke of Gloucester was certainly initiated to secure the duke's protection for the under-age Lord Scrope, Vale, vol. i, p. 234.

¹⁶⁴ see above, n. 42.

¹⁶⁵ The problem has been addressed by J.S. Roskell who judged 'that the lords' attendance was frequently spasmodic, and at times embarrassingly scanty', J.S. Roskell, 'The Problem of Attendance of the Lords in Medieval Parliaments', *BIHR* 29 (1956), 153-204.

¹⁶⁶ see above, p. 23.

nobility.

The barons, like the gentry or indeed most people in this 'age of ambition', aspired to rise within society. The longer a baronial family existed, the higher the chance they would succeed and receive a title. In the end, the fate of a baronial family could be twofold. Either they failed to produce a male heir and the lands passed to one or several heiresses, or they were on the winning side of this demographic phenomenon, producing sons who might be able to arrange a marriage with an heiresses. They were either ruined by political miscalculation or they prospered in the service of a great lord or the king. A few families were able to acquire a title within a generation of entering the peerage, for example the Scropes of Bolton;¹⁶⁷ a few managed in even shorter time, as for example Michael de la Pole.¹⁶⁸ Rapid progress, like that of the Scropes of Bolton or the de la Poles, was only possible with exceptionally strong support from the king. Often these quickly-acquired dignities did not last long, as in both the above-mentioned cases. It took a baronial family usually several generations, luck and a certain amount of ruthlessness to rise into the narrow class of magnates. The Greys of Ruthin, a cadet line of the Greys of Wilton (themselves a cadet line of the Greys of Codnor), were lucky in avoiding many pitfalls of their class: no wardships hampered their progress, no political miscalculation ruined their prospects, and within a century and a half they had become a considerable power.¹⁶⁹ Yet the promotion to the rank of earl in 1465 was mainly due to their close connection to the family of Edward IV's queen, Elizabeth Woodville.¹⁷⁰ Other families, such as the de la Zouches of Harringworth, slowly gathered wealth, land and influence, with the help of advantageous marriages, solidified their control over their countries and never acquired a title.¹⁷¹ The baronage was by no means merely a transitional stage between gentry and titled nobility, but the tendency for surviving families to rise, and the barons' ambition to acquire a title often turned this rank into a temporary phase.

The baronage, as a group, as individuals and as families, has received very little scholarly attention.¹⁷² My aim is to provide a case study of a single baronial family

¹⁶⁷ Richard Scrope of Bolton was first summoned in 1371, his son William was created Earl of Wiltshire in 1397, Vale, vol. i, pp. 68 and 127.

¹⁶⁸ Michael de la Pole received his first individual summons in 1366 and was created earls of Suffolk in 1385, Powell and Wallis, pp. 365 and 395.

¹⁶⁹ 'Fortune, abetted by foresight, ability and, on occasion, straightforward villainy, advanced their prosperity and dignity during the two centuries following 1323 [their first summons]', Jack, 'Yorkshire Baronage', p. 8.

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 170.

¹⁷¹ Rosenthal, *Nobles*, pp. 59-62.

¹⁷² see above, p. 23.

throughout its existence. This thesis shall try to determine whether this particular baronial family behaved differently from the titled nobility. As so little research has previously been undertaken or published, a case study seems to be the best method to explore the baronage. The family examined here is the Lovells of Titchmarsh. Descendants of a Norman family, the family rose to some local standing in the thirteenth century and were part of the peerage from 1297 to their eventual extinction in the male line in 1489. With the exception of the two years in which Francis Lovell, head of the main line, rose to the rank of viscount, the main line were and remained simple barons. The cadet branches of the family, for example the Lovells of Titchwell, sank back into the ranks of the gentry. Another younger son, William Lovell, however, acquired his own baronial title and became Lord Morley; though he was only summoned for a short time during the readaption of Henry VI, his descendants were able to reclaim their noble status.¹⁷³ Comparison with other baronial families, the Greys of Ruthin and the de la Zouches of Harringworth for example, will not only determine whether or not the Lovells were a typical baronial family but also how much their behaviour was decided by their status and how much by their own interests and ambition. In many ways the Lovells were indeed a typical baronial family: they slowly gained importance and wealth, accumulating titles through several marriages to baronial heiresses, founded several short-lived cadet branches, suffered temporary forfeiture of their estates as a result of political miscalculation, and experienced their share of long-lived dowagers and lengthy wardships. Even the fact that the family became extinct in the male line, not due to the violence of the later middle ages but rather to their failure to produce male heirs, is typical for aristocratic families. A study of this family will hopefully add to the understanding of a neglected group within the aristocracy.

1.9. Sources and Methods

The research on medieval individuals or families is in most cases severely limited by a lack of original sources. Private papers have usually failed to survive, though a few exceptions, such as the Duchy of Lancaster documents, are preserved with the central government records in the Public Record Office. Some material has also been preserved in private archives.¹⁷⁴ However, only in a few cases, such as with the Pastons, can the

¹⁷³ see Chapter 2, pp. 78-79.

¹⁷⁴ For example the lay cartulary of the Scrope of Bolton among the archives of the Cholmondeley family, Vale, vol. i, p. 4.

surviving papers give some impression of a family's personal life.¹⁷⁵ The lack of private papers can be compensated by using central government material, which by the later middle ages survives in quite significant amounts, to enable us to examine at least the public side of the aristocracy.

The surviving private papers of the Lovells are now kept in Magdalen College, Oxford.¹⁷⁶ Apart from these there are several other sources upon which to draw, including chronicles and private papers of other families. References to the Lovells can also be found in the Paston Letters,¹⁷⁷ which mention the family several times. The Stonor Letters also contain several references to the Lovells.¹⁷⁸ Additionally, a few letters by the Lovells themselves have survived in these collections.¹⁷⁹ A very important source are the two rolls relating to the Lovell-Morley dispute at the court of chivalry in 1385/86.¹⁸⁰ This dispute is of considerable interest, since the depositions give an unusual insight into the history of both families.¹⁸¹ Some indication of the personalities of the Lovells can be glimpsed from their surviving manuscripts.¹⁸² Two wills, those of John

¹⁷⁵ *The Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, 2 vols., N. Davis (ed.) (Oxford, 1971); other examples are the Stonor Letters, *Kingsford's Stonor Letters and Papers. 1290-1483*, Christine Carpenter (ed.) (Cambridge, 1996), and the Cely Letters, *The Cely Papers, 1472-1488*, A. Hanham (ed.) (London, 1975).

¹⁷⁶ The main part concern the lawsuit of Sir John Fastolf over Titchwell, a manor belonging to a cadet branch of the Lovells of Titchmarsh, see Chapter 2, pp. 47-49. Other records include two account rolls of the Lovell estates, and some papers concerning the proposed foundation of two fellowships at Magdalen College by Alice Deincourt, Lady Lovell, see Chapter 3, p. 94.

¹⁷⁷ Concerning the marriage of Francis Lovell to Anne FitzHugh, Davis, *Paston Letters*, vol. ii, p. 375; his presumed whereabouts after the Battle of Bosworth, *ibid.*, pp. 447, 449; and his mysterious disappearance after the Battle of Stoke 1487, *ibid.* pp. 255-56.

¹⁷⁸ *Kingsford's Stonor Letters*, pp. 109-10, 298.

¹⁷⁹ John Lovell IX to his father-in-law, Lord Beaumont, is preserved among the Paston letters. This letter is not included in the edition by N. Davis, see *The Paston Letters. 1422-1509 A.D.*, J. Gairdner (ed.) (London, 1895), vol. i, no. 329. A couple of letters by Francis Lovell can be found among the Stonor Letters, *Kingsford's Stonor Letters*, pp. 406 and 418-19.

¹⁸⁰ Both are kept in the Public Record Office. The depositions for John Lord Lovell are recorded on a very damaged roll, PRO30/26/69; the depositions in favour of Robert Lord Morley are on a more complete roll, C47/6/1. For a discussion see, A. Ayton, 'Knights, Esquires and Military Service: The Evidence of the Armorial Case before the Court of Chivalry', in A. Ayton and J.L. Price (eds.), *The Medieval Military Revolution. State, Society and Military Change in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (London and New York, 1995), 81-104.

¹⁸¹ see Chapter 5, p. 247.

¹⁸² A manuscript of Gualterius de Castellione's *Alexandreis* preserved in Exeter College, Oxford, seems to have belonged to one of the John Lovells, Andrew G Watson (ed.), *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts, c. 1435-1600, in Oxford Libraries* (Oxford, 1984), vol. i, p. 795. A picture of John, fifth Lord Lovell, can be found in a manuscript by John Siferwas. The manuscript is a lectionary commissioned by Lord Lovell for Salisbury Cathedral, R. Marks and N. Morgan, *The Golden Age of English Manuscript Painting. 1200-1500* (London, 1981), pp. 23, 25-26; see Chapter 5, pp. 223-26.

Lovell VII and William III, are preserved as well.¹⁸³ Though the material available for a detailed study of the Lovell family is limited, it is nevertheless possible to work out a relatively complete picture of the politics, social position and, to a certain extent, the personal interest of the family.

There are many dangers in limiting research to one baronial family, especially in terms of overgeneralizing their experiences as the experiences of the entire baronial class. To avoid this pitfall the history of the Lovell family will be contrasted with other baronial families, such as the closely-connected de la Zouches of Haringworth. The results of my research will be compared to research that has been conducted into the titled nobility. One main focus of this thesis will be the relationship between the titled nobility and the barons, the extent to which they were living 'in the same world', and the degree to which their political involvement, personal connections and representation are similar. Research that has already been conducted into the gentry, especially in recent years, will also be very useful in determining differences between the barons and this group of lower social standing.

The main focus of my research is centred on three topics. First, I examine the estates of the Lovell family and their marital arrangements, their personal networks on the local level, and their role in shaping local politics. Secondly, I investigate the involvement of the Lovell family in 'national' politics and the positive and negative effects this had on the fortunes of the family. Thirdly, I explore the means by which the Lovells constructed themselves as a baronial family, as expressed by the monuments they left behind. This section will also consider the Lovell-Morley dispute. Before embarking on detailed discussion of these different aspects a chronological chapter will set out the history of the Lovell family to give an overall view and enable us to see the family as a whole.

In her study of the political society of Warwickshire, Carpenter declares that 'Although it is clearly undesirable to generalise about a group before we know something of the people of whom it consisted, it is equally unsatisfactory to leave the analysis at the level of isolated case studies.'¹⁸⁴ My approach to the phenomenon of the 'baronage' is to turn Carpenter's statement upside down: it is undesirable to leave the analysis at the level of isolated case studies; however, it is equally unsatisfactory, in fact impossible, to generalise about a group before we know something of the people of whom it consisted.

¹⁸³ British Library, Add. Ms. 39,992N (an excerpt is printed in N.H. Nicolas (ed.), *Testamenta Vetusta*, 2 vols. in one (London, 1826), p. 173); *Lincoln Diocesan Documents. 1450-1544*, Andrew Clark (ed.), Early English Text Society orig. ser. 149 (London, 1914), pp. 70-87.

¹⁸⁴ Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 6.

2. The History of the Lovell Family

The aim of this chapter is to set out a chronological narrative of the history of the Lovells of Titchmarsh, recounting the fate of this family, gathering together the facts of their lives and pointing out a few matters of interest not addressed in detail in the analytical chapters. The purpose is to create a framework against which the discussions in the following chapters can be viewed. It aims at giving the reader a sense of continuity of the family's history, a picture of the entire development, relating the changing fortunes of the individual members, and showing the slow rise of the Lovells of Titchmarsh from relative obscurity to great importance. Some of the facts gathered here have of course already been collected and retold in the *Complete Peerage*;¹ however, the work of reference contains only very brief biographies of each Lord Lovell. This chapter aims to include as much information about each Lord Lovell as possible. Additionally, it will include some information about the wives of the Lords Lovell and brief histories of the cadet branches of the family. To enable the reader to find the relevant parts for reference, this chapter is not only divided into sections, but each section – if appropriate – is subdivided into separate paragraphs dealing with different aspect of the Lovells' lives: their military careers, their involvement in national and local politics and the implications of their marriages. This chapter may seem to be a mere conglomeration of data; it is, however, of fundamental importance to the ensuing analysis. It allows the thesis to stand on its own; the reader does not have to refer to other biographical sources. It is also imperative to see the history of the Lovell family as a whole before discussing the different facets of their lives. It is difficult enough to discuss two hundred years of the history of a family, and not confuse the individual lords, a problem added to by the family's marked fondness for the name John. Without the help of a simple chapter setting out the outline of the family's history, the danger of losing oneself in the details without seeing the picture of the family as a whole is particularly great. For ease of reference the Lords Lovell are numbered. Equally the Ladies Lovell are referred to by their maiden names, not only to keep them apart more easily, but also to keep their own backgrounds in mind.²

¹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, pp. 215-25.

² For the importance of family connections see Chapter 3, pp. 104-9.

2.1. The Ancestors of the Lovells in Normandy

The main focus of this thesis is the period when the Lovells were part of the parliamentary peerage. However, a preliminary look back to the ancestors of the Lovells in Normandy and the earlier Lovells before they received their first individual summons in 1297 is necessary to determine why the family was elevated into the peerage at this time. Naturally, the information available about the Lovells is only patchy in the first period of their history. Few governmental records were made in the eleventh to thirteenth centuries and fewer survived. The ancestors of the Lovells in Normandy held positions of importance within the duchy and their notoriety allows us to reconstruct their history. The first Lovells resident in England however were of relative obscurity due to their comparatively small wealth; thus only a few facts about their lives are known.

The family of the Lovells of Titchmarsh can be traced back to the tenth century. The first member of the family mentioned in the *Complete Peerage* is Robert, who lived around 1060 and possessed seignorial rights near Ivry in Normandy.³ Robert is said to have married Aubrée, the daughter of Hugh, Bishop of Bayeux, whose mother Aubrée, wife of Ralph of Ivry, built the castle of Ivry. However, the exact nature of the relationship between the Ivry family and the Lovells is unknown. Judging from the long dispute over the castle of Ivry between Ascelin Goel, grandson of Robert, and the neighbouring aristocracy it seems likely that some connection existed.⁴ The abbey of Ivry, with which the Lovells retained a connection for several centuries, was founded by Roger of Ivry, Butler of William the Conqueror.⁵ Whether there was any familial relationship between Roger of Ivry and the Lovells is uncertain.

Only a few details are known about the fate of the next generation of this family. Robert's son Robert of Ivry married Hildeburge, daughter of Hervé de Gallardon. Robert, like his father-in-law, was castellan of Ivry.⁶ Later in life he became a monk at the abbey of Bec. Orderic Vitalis mentions Robert and his wife in his *Ecclesiastical History of Normandy and England*, describing them as good and pious, a stark contrast to the savage nature of their son Ascelin.⁷ Most of the information about the life of Robert

³ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 208.

⁴ see Appendix 2, Figure 1: The Lovells in Normandy.

⁵ For their relationship with Ivry and its cells in Elcombe, Docking and Minster Lovell see below, Chapter 5, pp. 206-7.

⁶ *Gesta Normannorum Ducum of William of Jumiéges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigny*, Elisabeth M.C. van Houts (ed. and trans.)(Oxford, 1995), vol. ii, p. 229, n. 4.

⁷ *Orderic Vitalis, Ecclesiastical History of Normandy and England*, M. Chibnall (ed. and trans.)(Oxford, 1972), vol. iii, p. 208-9.

of Ivry is provided by the grants to several religious houses in Normandy.⁸ The date of his death is unknown. His widow led a pious life and spend many years undertaking pilgrimages between different religious houses, before settling down in St Martin de Pontoise. She acquired the reputation of a saintly women, as the existence of a brief Life indicates, presumably written shortly after her death on 3 June 1115.⁹

Robert's son and heir was Ascelin Goel. He is the first member of his family whose exploits we can trace in some detail. Orderic Vitalis describes him as a ruthless character.¹⁰ It was this ruthlessness that brought him to the attention of his contemporaries and secured him a place in their chronicles. It also made him the 'founder of the family fortunes'.¹¹ He took part in William the Conqueror's invasion of the Vexin in 1087. He had private grievances with Hugh Estevel and Ralph Mauvoisin, whose lands he devastated; thus his motive for joining the campaign was probably only partly his allegiance to William I.¹² In 1091 Ascelin captured William de Bréteil and forced him to relinquish the castle of Ivry and give Ascelin his illegitimate daughter, Isabel, as his wife.¹³ Ascelin and William de Bréteil both claimed hereditary rights on the castle of Ivry.¹⁴ Having lost the castle, William de Bréteil appealed to the King of France and the Duke of Normandy, and after a prolonged siege of Ascelin's castle of Bréval he was forced to surrender Ivry. Yet the quarrel over the possession of the castle was far from over. After William de Bréteil's death in 1103 Ascelin supported William's nephew and legitimate heir, Renaud, against his brother-in-law, Eustace de Bréteil, William's illegitimate son.¹⁵ With the support of most of his barons, Eustace was able to hold on to the possessions of his father, but after his participation in rebellion of 1118-19 he was deprived of most of his lands by the king.¹⁶ Most of the inheritance went to Amice Gael,

⁸ for example Bec, Saint-Père at Chartres, Coulombs and Saint-Evroul *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 209.

⁹ 'Vie de la B. Hildeburge de Gallardon, châtelaine d'Ivry, religieuse à St Martin', in *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Saint-Martin-de-Pontoise*, J. Depoin (ed.) (Pontoise, 1895-1909), pp. 50-54.

¹⁰ 'Goellus autem probus et callidus et predo malignus æccelsiarumque uiolator erat, nobiles et animosos parentes habebat', *Orderic Vitalis* (Oxford, 1978), vol. vi, p. 290.

¹¹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 210, n. c).

¹² *Orderic Vitalis* (Oxford, 1973), vol. iv, pp. 78-9, n. 3.

¹³ *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, vol. ii, p. 229, *Orderic Vitalis*, vol. iv, pp. 202-3.

¹⁴ Ascelin claimed it through his grandmother Aubrée. William de Bréteil's claim to the castle seems to have rested on his grandmother Emma, a daughter of Count Ralph de Bayeux, *Orderic Vitalis*, vol. iv, p. 199, n. 4.

¹⁵ Depoin, p. 473; according to Crouch the rival claimant of Eustace was called William Gael, the brother of Amice Gael and son of Emma, the sister of William de Bréteil, D. Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins. The Roots and Branches of Power in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, 1986), p. 108.

¹⁶ *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, vol. ii, pp. 230-31. Eustace was married to Isabel, an illegitimate daughter of Henry I, see Appendix 1, p. 274.

William de Bréteil's niece, who married Robert Beaumont, Earl of Leicester.¹⁷ Ascelin Goel had seven sons, but only three are known by name: Robert Goel, Ascelin's immediate successor, William Lovell and Roger the Stammerer.¹⁸

Robert Goel, who is treated as Ascelin's successor in the *Complete Peerage*,¹⁹ may have been an illegitimate son.²⁰ He joined the revolt against Henry I in the spring of 1119.²¹ Shortly afterwards, according to Orderic Vitalis as the first rebel, he made his peace with the King. For this timely change of allegiance he was rewarded with the castellanship of Ivry.²² Henry I was not completely convinced of Robert Goel's change of heart and took his brothers as hostages.²³ Little else is known about Robert Goel.²⁴ He probably died in or before 1123.²⁵

Robert Goel's brother William was the first to carry the surname Lovell, *Lupellus*, 'the little wolf'. The general tendency to assume a family surname started in the late eleventh century. At this time most families derived their name from their main residence, as for example the Montforts and Beaumonts.²⁶ This was, however, not the only possibility: others families used patronyms, like FitzAlan, or the names of the offices they held, as for example Stewart.²⁷ The name Lovell was derived from the heraldic animal; the wolf. The popularity of the wolf can be seen from the appearance of several families with the surname of Lovel at this and later times with no connection to the Lovells of Titchmarsh.²⁸ It is a moot question whether the 'dog' in the coat-of-arms of the Lovells of Titchmarsh was added as illustration of their name or whether the name derived from

¹⁷ This rather complicated matter is explored in detail by Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, pp. 13, 108-109.

¹⁸ 'Ex coniuge sua septem filios genuit, quorum nequitia nimis excruit, et multus fletus ex oculis viduarum et pauperum suis exciuit, *Orderic Vitalis*, vol iv, p. 202. For Roger the Stammerer see Appendix 1, pp. 274-75.

¹⁹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, pp. 210-11.

²⁰ While Orderic Vitalis does not differentiate between Robert Goel and William Lovell concerning their parental status, vol. iv, pp. 208-9, the *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* mention only William and Roger as sons of Ascelin, vol. iii, 15, pp. 228-9; see also Depoin, p. 474.

²¹ C. Warren Hollister, 'War and Diplomacy in the Anglo-Norman World', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 6 (1983), p. 74.

²² *Orderic Vitalis*, vol. vi, pp. 218-9.

²³ *Orderic Vitalis*, vol. vi, pp. 228-231. One of the hostages taken was Ralph the Red, whom Orderic calls Robert's brother-in-law. It seems that Robert was married to one of Ralph's sisters.

²⁴ He served Henry I against Aumary, Count of Evreux, *Orderic Vitalis*, vol. vi, p. 230.

²⁵ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 211.

²⁶ C. Warren Hollister, 'The Aristocracy', in E. King (ed.), *The Anarchy of King Stephen's Reign* (Oxford, 1994), p. 37.

²⁷ C. A. Newman, *The Anglo-Norman Nobility in the Reign of Henry I. The Second Generation* (Philadelphia, 1988), pp. 38-39.

²⁸ As for example the Lovels of Barton Bendish, or Castle Cary, as well as numerous non-noble families.

the use of a wolf-like figure. Parallel with the introduction of surnames runs the adoption of *Leitnamen*. These were names that were used in a family for generations and usually given to the heir. The Lovell's first *Leitnamen* were William and Robert. Only in the thirteenth century does the name which came to dominate the family, John, appear.

Like his brother Robert, William Lovell I profited from joining a revolt against Henry I. In 1123 a rebellion broke out under the leadership of Aumari de Montfort, Count of Evreux. Once more the aim was to install William Clito, son of Robert Curthose, as Duke of Normandy and possibly heir to Henry I.²⁹ Waleran Beaumont, Count of Meulan, joined the rebellion and presumably to strengthen the allegiance between the rebels married his three sisters to important noblemen of the country who participated in the uprising: Hugh de Montfort, Lord of Montfort-sur-Risle, Hugh fitz Gervase, Lord of Chateauneuf, and William Lovell, Lord of Ivry.³⁰ William Lovell I took part in the final battle of this rebellion at Bourgt roude and like his brother-in-law Waleran Beaumont, Hugh de Montfort, and a number of other high ranking rebels, was taken prisoner after the battle. However, William I managed to bribe his captor to release him.³¹ He was lucky to escape as the other prisoners were severely punished by Henry I. Some were blinded, others imprisoned. Hugh de Montfort of Montfort-sur-Risle was still a prisoner ten years later.³² Shortly after the battle William Lovell I made his peace with Henry I.³³

It is astonishing to see how the first generations of this family founded their fortune to a great extent on their participation in rebellions against their feudal lord. Ascelin Goel's war with William de Br tuil, who was very probably his lord, in the end helped to secure the castellanship of Ivry. The marriage to de Br tuil's illegitimate daughter improved the social standing of Ascelin. Robert Goel received Ivry probably in 1119, thanks to his timely change of allegiance. For William Lovell it was the marriage to Matilda Beaumont that made the participation in the rebellion worthwhile. Through this marriage the Lovells became related to one of the most noble and influential families of Normandy, and to

²⁹ The revolt was a consequence of the death of William Atheling, only legitimate son of Henry I, who shortly before his death on the White Ship, had been installed as Duke of Normandy. His death opened the succession to the English throne and the duchy of Normandy new, K. Leyser, 'The Anglo-Norman Succession, 1120-1125', *Anglo-Norman Studies* 13 (1990), p. 225; M. Chibnall, 'Normandy', in E. King (ed.), *The Anarchy of King Stephen's Reign* (Oxford, 1994), p. 94.

³⁰ *Orderic Vitalis*, vol vi, pp. 232-33, G.H. White, 'The Career of Waleran, Count of Meulan and Earl of Worcester, 1104-1166, *TRHS* fourth ser. 17 (1934), p. 24.

³¹ 'Guillelmus uero Lupellus a quodam rustico captus arma sua illi pro redemtione sui dedit, et ab eo tonsus instar amrigeri manu palum gestans ad Sequanam confugit, et incognitus ad transitum fluminis pro nauulo caligas suas nauclero impertiuit, nudisque pedibus proprios lares reuisit, gaudens quod de mano hostili utcumque prolapsus euaserit', *Orderic Vitalis*, vol. vi, p. 352.

³² Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, p. 23; White, p. 27.

³³ *Orderic Vitalis*, vol. vi, p. 358.

many other noble families.³⁴ Matilda Beaumont belonged to a family who could trace their ancestors back to Charlemagne, Hugh Capet and Henry I, King of East Frankia.³⁵ During this time the Lovells managed to gain from swift changes between rebellion and loyalty to their feudal lord. They displayed a very cynical approach to loyalty, treating it as a principle they only adhered to when it suited them. Obviously, there were a number of aristocrats in this period who realised that great profits could be made by adopting this risky strategy of adhering to or ignoring their feudal ties as the political situation demanded.

The connections with the Beaumonts continued to influence the fortunes of the family. It was probably due to Henry I's decision to strengthen the Beaumont 'party'³⁶ that William Lovell I received considerable lands in England. The first lands he was granted, which would remain in the hands of the family for centuries to come, were the royal demesne lands of Southmere and Docking in Norfolk; he was granted a rent of 100s. known as Lovel Soke and was assessed for Danegeld in several counties.³⁷ It seems that he was the first Lovell to spend some of his life in England. William Lovell I remained a supporter of Waleran Beaumont. In 1139 he appears in a charter of his brother-in-law.³⁸ William was also closely connected with the dukes of Normandy; a writ by Geoffrey Plantagenet is addressed to him.³⁹ Like Waleran Beaumont, William was employed as a justice by the Duke of Normandy. Together with Guy de Sablé, William was in charge of the bailiwicks of Verneuil and Nonancourt.⁴⁰ Just after Henry Plantagenet succeeded his father as Duke of Normandy, William Lovell is one of the many supporters of Waleran Beaumont who witnesses a charter of the new duke – significantly it is the only one Waleran and his entourage attested.⁴¹ However, the link to the Beaumonts was not wholly profitable. In 1153 William Lovell I's lands were devastated by Simon de Montfort, Count of Evreux.⁴² This attack has to be seen in the context of the retaliation of Robert and Simon de Montfort against Waleran Beaumont. Waleran was married to their sister, and so far had refused to hand over Montfort to his brother-in-law Robert and had

³⁴ see Appendix 2, Figure 2: The Beaumont Family.

³⁵ see Appendix 2, Figure 3: The Beaumont Ancestors.

³⁶ Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, p. 24-26.

³⁷ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 211.

³⁸ Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, p. 36.

³⁹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 211.

⁴⁰ *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum, 1066-1154*, H.A. Cronne and R.H.C. Davis (eds.), vol. iii (Oxford, 1968), pp. xxxviii-xxix, 106.

⁴¹ *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, vol. iii, pp. 268-69; Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, p. 69.

⁴² *Gesta Normannorum Ducum*, p. 175.

deprived Simon of Gournay.⁴³ As there are no further sources available regarding William Lovell I, we can only assume that he followed the example of his brother-in-law Waleran Beaumont and supported Stephen of Blois first before switching his allegiance to Empress Maud. William Lovell I died between 1166 and 1170.⁴⁴

⁴³ Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, pp. 74-5.

⁴⁴ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, p. 212.

2.2. The first Lovells in England

2.2.1. William Lovell II and John Lovell I (c. 1170-1252)

William Lovell I divided his lands between two of his sons.⁴⁵ The Norman lands were inherited by Waleran d'Ivry,⁴⁶ the elder son of William Lovell I, while the English lands, centered around Docketing (Norfolk), were given to his younger son William Lovell II. The origins of the practice of dividing the land between sons along the lines of 'patrimony' and 'acquisition', and how far this practice was actually adhered to is still under discussion.⁴⁷ Many Norman nobles did follow this principle,⁴⁸ others however did not.⁴⁹ It should also be kept in mind that a division of the heritage into a Norman and English part of the lands was sensible as the Channel 'was a physical barrier' that complicated administration.⁵⁰ Whether William Lovell II received all the lands his family held in England is unknown. Neither the date of this division nor that of the death of William Lovell I is known precisely.⁵¹

The most striking characteristic of William Lovell II is his obscurity. Compared to the status held by his ancestors in Normandy he was of little significance. Few details are known about his life. Next to the land held by William Lovell I, William II also held land in Elcombe (Wiltshire). He joined the third crusade in 1190. From his mother, Matilda Beaumont, he inherited the one manor which would later become the main residence of the family, Minster (Lovell) (Oxfordshire). The family of his wife Isabel is unknown. Along with many other noblemen William Lovell II refused to serve in France in 1201. He probably died about 1212.⁵²

His son and heir, the first John Lovell, was a minor at his father's death. As he held

⁴⁵ William I had at least one other son, Goel, who was a clerk, Depoin, p. 474-75.

⁴⁶ From the choice of the name Waleran for his eldest son, though by no means a unusual one at that time, the importance of the connection to Waleran Beaumont can be deducted. Hugh de Montfort also called his son Waleran after his brother-in-law, Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, p. 15. For Waleran d'Ivry see Appendix 1, p. 274.

⁴⁷ The origins of this practice have been researched by George Garnett, "Ducal" Succession in Early Normandy', in G. Garnett and J. Hudson (eds.), *Law and Government in Medieval England and Normandy. Essays in Honour of Sir James Holt* (Cambridge, 1994), 80-110. The influence of the precedence was studied by E.Z. Tabuteau, 'The Role of Law in the Succession to Normandy and England, 1087', *Haskins Society Journal* 3 (1992), pp. 141-69.

⁴⁸ A similar pattern was followed by the Montforts of Montfort-sur-Risle in 1088, the Montgomerys in 1094 and other families, Tabuteau, pp. 157-60.

⁴⁹ For example the division of lands between Waleran and Robert Beaumont does not follow this principle, Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, pp. 8-9.

⁵⁰ Newman, p. 21.

⁵¹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 212.

⁵² *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, pp. 213-4.

land from the king in chief, his wardship went to King John, who granted it to Alan Basset, one of his most loyal supporters.⁵³ John Lovell I married, probably before 1216, Alan Basset's daughter Katherine.⁵⁴ Unlike his father-in-law, who remained loyal to the King, John I probably joined the opposition against King John as his lands were forfeited in 1216.⁵⁵ In 1223 John Lovell I refused to accompany the king on the campaign against Llewelyn ap Iorwerth⁵⁶ and his lands were forfeited again.⁵⁷ It is uncertain when his lands were restored to him but it seems that on both occasions only a short time had elapsed. A year after John I had refused to join the campaign against Llewelyn, he took part in the siege of Bedford castle.⁵⁸ Nothing more is known about his life. John Lovell I died before 23 December 1252.⁵⁹ His wife, Katherine Basset, seems to have lived to an extremely old age.⁶⁰

2.2.2. The Profits of Law: Philip Lovell (d. 1259)

Philip Lovell, according to the *Dictionary of National Biography* a younger son of John Lovell I,⁶¹ was the only member of this family who sought advancement through a career in the law. Before he became a clerk, he had married the widow of Alexander de Arsic, with whom he had two sons.⁶² After her death he entered the service of Roger de Quency, Earl of Winchester. It was probably in his capacity as steward of the Earl, who was also Constable of Scotland, that Philip met and won the friendship of Alexander II of Scotland.⁶³ This connection to the Scottish King may have given Philip the chance to enter royal service. He was first appointed justiciary of the Jews but was later dismissed for taking bribes in 1251.⁶⁴ Only a year later, in 1252, he became treasurer of England,

⁵³ *DNB*, vol. i, p. 1296.

⁵⁴ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 214. According to the *DNB* she is called Aliva, see 'Philip Lovell' in *DNB*, vol. xii, pp. 164-65, see Appendix 2, Figure 4: The Basset-Lovell Connection.

⁵⁵ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 214.

⁵⁶ D.A. Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III* (London, 1990), p. 311.

⁵⁷ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 213.

⁵⁸ Carpenter, *Minority of Henry III*, pp. 360-66.

⁵⁹ *CIPM*, vol. i, Henry III, no. 269.

⁶⁰ She is mentioned in an *Inquisition post mortem* in 1259, *ibid*, no. 670; and seems to have been still alive in 1266, *CPR*, 1258-66, p. 638.

⁶¹ *DNB*, vol. xii, p. 164.

⁶² *DNB*, vol. xii, p. 165.

⁶³ 'et ipsius [Alexander III] patrem et matrem habuit quandoque amicissimus', Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, Henry R. Luard (ed.), RS 57 (London, 1880), vol. v, p. 270.

⁶⁴ Matthew Paris, vol. v, pp. 261-2.

despite his earlier misbehaviour.⁶⁵ In this capacity he assured the payment of the king's debts to Simon de Montfort in 1257.⁶⁶ He received several grants from the King during this time.⁶⁷ During this time Philip Lovell also became keeper of the lands of Hugh de Marshall⁶⁸ and was granted the manor of Dunton (Warwickshire).⁶⁹ In 1258 he was accused of having despoiled the royal forest of Whittlewood.⁷⁰ Even though he was imprisoned, he was only removed from office on the demands of the barons in November 1258.⁷¹ He died in 1259 in his church of Hamestable. Matthew Paris writes that he died 'præ dolore, ut dicitur, et mentis amaritudine, eo quo regi, cui tantum seriverat, non reconcilibratur'.⁷²

Philip Lovell was a controversial figure. Matthew Paris has some sympathies for him, calling him a 'virum prudentem, facundum et generosum'.⁷³ However, his position within the government and the way he fulfilled his post provoked the hostility of his contemporaries, a stance which is repeated in modern depictions of his career.⁷⁴ Philip Lovell's extraordinary prominence in the affairs of his time is a good example of the opportunities a career in the law could give a man of rather humble origins. Philip Lovell's position at the royal court certainly influenced the career of his nephew, John Lovell II. These close contacts created opportunities of advancement for John II. How great Philip Lovell's influence was, however, cannot be gauged.

2.2.3 Royal Service: John Lovell II (1252-1287)

John Lovell I's heir, John Lovell II, was about 30 at his father's death.⁷⁵ He was in closer contact with the court than any of his ancestors. This was probably due not only to the high office of his uncle Philip Lovell but also to their connections to the Basset

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, p. 320; *CPR*, 1247-1258, p. 149.

⁶⁶ *CPR*, 1247-1258, p. 590; see also J.R. Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 136.

⁶⁷ *CPR*, 1247-1258, pp. 60, 80, 263, 406.

⁶⁸ *VCH*, Staffordshire, vol. iv, p. 116.

⁶⁹ *VCH*, Warwickshire, vol. iv, p. 64.

⁷⁰ Matthew Paris, vol. v, pp. 714-15. He had been granted free pasture in Saucy and Whittlewood in 1255, *CPR*, 1247-1258, p. 406.

⁷¹ *CPR*, 1258-1266, p. 1; Matthew Paris, vol. v, p. 719; Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, p. 171.

⁷² Matthew Paris, vol. v, p. 731.

⁷³ Matthew Paris, vol. v, p. 270.

⁷⁴ The article in the *DNB* depicts him in a rather unfavourable light, *DNB*, vol. xii, pp. 164-65. This judgment is echoed by Maddicott who describes him as 'a man with a bad reputation for corrupt and oppressive behaviour', Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, p. 171.

⁷⁵ *CIPM*, vol. i, no. 269.

family. In 1255 John II was in the service of the Lord Edward.⁷⁶ He took part in the unsuccessful campaign against Prince Llewelyn in 1257.⁷⁷ During the Barons' War, John Lovell II was one of the few who remained faithful to King Henry III. The reason for his royalist inclination can probably be found in his close relationship with several important royalists.⁷⁸ Fulk Basset, Bishop of London, and brother of John Lovell II's mother, was a steadfast supporter of the King from about 1257, after having been an outspoken critic. Philip Basset, Katherine Basset's youngest brother, who had earlier taken part in the rebellion of Richard Marshall, was on the side of the reformists in the early stages of the reform movement, but by 1259 he had, together with many of the less extreme faction, re-joined the King.⁷⁹ John Lovell II also had some connection with the rebelling barons.⁸⁰ John Lovell was given the mandate to keep the counties of Cambridge and Huntingdon in 1261.⁸¹ Blaauw writes that John II was sent to Rome in 1262 to secure a new absolution from the oath of Oxford for Henry III.⁸² However, this seems to be a confusion with Roger Lovell, who was proctor at the papal court.⁸³ John Lovell II received several royal grants.⁸⁴ His mother Katherine Basset also received a grant.⁸⁵ After Henry's return from France in 1263 John II was given the custody of Northampton Castle.⁸⁶ He was taken prisoner at the battle of Lewes,⁸⁷ as was his maternal uncle Philip Basset. To secure his release he let his lands in Norfolk.⁸⁸ It is worth speculating that

⁷⁶ *CPR*, 1247-1258, p. 402.

⁷⁷ *Foedera*, Rymer, i, 1, p. 361.

⁷⁸ see Appendix 2. Figure 4: The Basset-Lovell Connection

⁷⁹ The deduction that the relationship between the Lovells and the extended family of Katherine Basset was and remained close is supported by several documented incidents; John Lovell II and his brother Thomas appear as witnesses in a charter of Roger Bigod, which was confirmed in 1302, *CChR*, 1300-1326, p. 31, 34. Roger Bigod also gave the manor of Wilton to John Lovell, *CCR*, 1307-1313, p. 111. Philip Basset relinquished the marriage of a ward to his aunt Katherine Lovell, *CIPM*, vol. i, no. 670. John Lovell III and his brothers were going on the king's service with Hugh le Despenser, son of Alina Basset, several times, *CPR*, 1292-1301, pp. 73, 76.

⁸⁰ The manor of Minster Lovell was held of Simon de Montfort, *CIPM*, vol. i, no. 269. Hugh le Despenser, first husband of John Lovell II's cousin Alina Basset, was a prominent supporter of Simon de Montfort and died at the battle of Evesham, Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, p. 342.

⁸¹ *CPR*, 1258-1266, p. 163-64.

⁸² W.H. Blaauw, *The Barons' War including the Battle of Lewes and Evesham* (London, 1844), pp. 81-2.

⁸³ F.M. Powicke, *King Henry and the Lord Edward. The Community and the Realm of the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford, 1947), vol. ii, 423, n. 3. The document cited by Blaauw only refers to Roger Lovell, *Foedera*, Rymer, vol. i, 1, p. 414. For Roger Lovell see also Appendix 1, p. 277.

⁸⁴ *CPR*, 1258-1266, pp. 165, 190, 300.

⁸⁵ *CPR*, 1258-1266, p. 432.

⁸⁶ *CPR*, 1258-1266, p. 316.

⁸⁷ For a detailed description of the battle see D.A. Carpenter, *The Battles of Lewes and Evesham, 1264/65* (Keele, 1987).

⁸⁸ These were the manors of Southmere, Docking and Titchwell, *CPR*, 1258-1266, p. 410.

these events may have brought him to the attention of the King and his son. After the rebellion was overcome he was appointed to a commission to deal with the lands of the rebels in Northamptonshire.⁸⁹

The centre of the Lovells' land by then seems to have moved to Titchmarsh, presumably because the letting of their other manors forced the family to move to this manor. The manor, which was their main residence at the time of their rise into the nobility, was part of the inheritance of John Lovell II's wife Maud de Sydenham. She was the heiress of William de Sydenham, who had died before 1233.⁹⁰ However, no detailed information exists about this family. The manor was held from the de la Zouches of Ashby de la Zouche. John Lovell II continued to be in the service of the Crown. He helped raise money for the crusade of Lord Edward.⁹¹ He received protection for going on the crusade in 1270.⁹² In 1276-77 his son, John III replaced him in the campaign against Wales and in 1282 two *servientes* fulfilled the same task.⁹³ John Lovell II continued to receive grants from the king.⁹⁴ He was excused from attending the eyre in several counties.⁹⁵ John Lovell II died in 1287.⁹⁶

⁸⁹ *CPR*, 1258-1266, p. 490-91, *CIM*, vol. i, no. 6-7. He was also granted the land of the rebel John le Sauvage, but he had to relinquish it in 1266, *CPR*, 1258-1266, p. 537.

⁹⁰ *VCH*, Northamptonshire, vol. iii, p. 144.

⁹¹ License to let his manors of Southmere, Docking and Titchwell to raise money for going on the crusade, *CPR*, 1266-1272, p. 425.

⁹² *CPR*, 1258-1270, pp. 440, 479.

⁹³ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 215. *Parl. Writs*, vol. i, pp. 195, 202, 226.

⁹⁴ *CCR*, 1272-1279, p. 539; *CCR*, 1279-1288, pp. 173, 213, 389, *CCR*, 1288-1296, p. 163.

⁹⁵ Wiltshire, *CCR*, 1279-86, p. 111, Oxfordshire, *ibid.*, p. 344, Northamptonshire, *ibid.*, 364, Buckinghamshire, *ibid.*, 405, Norfolk, *ibid.*, p. 406.

⁹⁶ *CIPM*, vol. ii, no. 622.

2.3. The First Lords Lovell

2.3.1. Into the Peerage: John Lovell III (1287-1310)

Like his father, John Lovell III spent most of his life in service to the king. Already during his father's lifetime he had gone on campaign with Edward I. In 1287 he also took part in the King's Welsh campaign with the Earl of Gloucester, Gilbert de Clare.⁹⁷ On this campaign he was accompanied by his elder, illegitimate brother, John Lovell of Snotescombe. The good relationship that apparently existed between them was later disturbed. John Lovell of Snotescombe filed an assize of *mort d'ancestor* against John Lovell III.⁹⁸ The outcome of the assize seems to be unknown. The less law-abiding side of John III is revealed when in 1290 he, together with Gilbert de Clare and a number of others, was accused of attacking Humphrey de Bohun's land at Brecon.⁹⁹ John Lovell III served Edward I in France.¹⁰⁰ As a household member of Hugh Bigod, Earl of Norfolk, John III protested against the tax raised by Edward I.¹⁰¹ In 1297, John III accompanied his King on the unhappy campaign in Flanders and was sent back to England with William de Gainsborough to request funds necessary for Edward I's return to England.¹⁰² Edward I would not have entrusted this difficult mission to anyone who did not have his trust. It can also be assumed that the messenger would have to have a certain amount of authority among his fellow magnates.

In 1297 John Lovell was summoned to parliament as John Lovell of Titchmarsh (Northamptonshire). The receiving of an individual summons was probably not a real turning point in the career of John Lovell or his family. It is not even certain whether this was indeed the first time John Lovell III took his seat in what would eventually become the House of Lords. As the enrollments of individual summons were not yet continuous and were often done with little accuracy it is possible that John Lovell III had been receiving individual summonses before 1297. Like many other aristocrats of this time, John Lovell used the opportunity of the Wars of Independence to advance in status by service to the king: the summonses to parliament were at this time closely connected to the

⁹⁷ CPR, 1281-92, pp. 271-72, 295-96.

⁹⁸ CPR, 1292-1301, pp. 44-45. For John Lovell of Snotescombe see Appendix 1, p. 275.

⁹⁹ CCR, 1288-1296, p. 126.

¹⁰⁰ CPR, 1292-1301, pp. 73-76. He was going beyond seas in the king's service with Hugh le Despenser, the son of Alina Basset and Hugh le Despenser.

¹⁰¹ see Chapter 4, pp. 176-82.

¹⁰² Prestwich, *Edward I*, p. 394; see also Chapter 4, pp. 177-78.

summonses to military service.¹⁰³

John Lovell III continued to serve Edward I on his campaigns in Scotland. In 1300 he mustered in Carlisle.¹⁰⁴ He was also present in Dunfermline.¹⁰⁵ However, his participation seems not always to have been voluntarily: John III served for a considerable period in lieu of a large fine he had incurred hunting in the royal forest.¹⁰⁶ His second wife Joan was with him during the later stages of this campaign.¹⁰⁷ In 1304 John Lovell participated in 'the show-piece siege of Stirling castle'¹⁰⁸ and was the noble who received the keys of the castle from the Sir William Oliphant.¹⁰⁹ He was lieutenant of the Earl Marshal of England in 1306.¹¹⁰ John Lovell III's career was indeed to a large extent based on his prominence in the Scottish Wars.¹¹¹

John Lovell III was a military man and his activities in the political sphere were mainly restricted to his later years. He was one of the noblemen who witnessed a letter to the Pope in 1301.¹¹² He was summoned to Edward II's coronation in February 1307.¹¹³ He witnessed a letter to the Pope in 1309 as he had done in 1301.¹¹⁴ His stance in the first severe crisis of Edward II's reign is unclear. He was summoned to a council in March 1309. In March 1310 he was one of the magnates declaring that the appointment of ordainers should not be taken as a precedent nor prejudice the King or his heirs.¹¹⁵ He died later that year, before 1 October when the *writ diem clausit extremum* is dated.¹¹⁶ Like his father John Lovell II, John Lovell III's advancement in the social hierarchy was firmly based on military service to the Crown. Though John III's relationship to the king

¹⁰³ M. Prestwich, 'Magnate Summonses in England in the Later Years of Edward I', *Parliaments, Estates and Representation* 5 (1985), pp. 100-1; for a detailed discussion of John Lovell III's elevation into the parliamentary peerage see Chapter 4, pp. 149-55.

¹⁰⁴ *Documents and Records illustrating the History of Scotland and the Transactions between the Crowns of Scotland and England*, Francis Palgrave (ed.), vol. i (London, 1837), pp. 213, 217.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*, p. 263.

¹⁰⁶ *CPR*, 1301-1307, pp. 145-46, 166.

¹⁰⁷ *CCR*, 1302-1307, p. 24; a plea between John Lovell and his wife and Robert de Bytering was held until their return from Scotland.

¹⁰⁸ *Documents and Records*, p. 268; Prestwich, *The Three Edwards. War and State in England 1272-1377* (London, 1980), p. 49.

¹⁰⁹ *Foedera*, vol. i, p. 966.

¹¹⁰ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, pp. 216-17.

¹¹¹ For a more detailed discussion of John Lovell III's military career and its implication on the family history see Chapter 4, pp. 144-45.

¹¹² *Parl. Writs*, vol. i, pp. 42-43.

¹¹³ *Parl. Writs*, vol. ii, div. i, p. 17.

¹¹⁴ *CCR*, 1307-1313, p. 253.

¹¹⁵ *CCR*, 1307-1313, p. 253; *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, Henry T. Riley (ed.), vol. ii, *Liber Custumarum*, RS 12 (London, 1860), pp. 200-202; see also Chapter 4, pp. 178-79.

¹¹⁶ *CIPM*, vol. v, no. 263; *CFR*, 1307-1319, pp. 73-76.

was not always amiable, his continuous service, particularly his continuing service at war, in Scotland and earlier in Flanders, caused John Lovell III's advancement into the peerage.

His rise was also furthered by his two advantageous marriages, which brought some lands and reputation to his family. He married first, Isabel du Bois, sister and eventually heiress of William du Bois. Isabel died about 1280.¹¹⁷ Their only daughter Maud inherited her uncle's land after his death in 1313.¹¹⁸ By that time, Maud had already married William de la Zouche with whom she had at least ten children. This was the first of the three intermarriages between the Lovells of Titchmarsh and the de la Zouches of Harringworth.¹¹⁹ John Lovell III next married Joan de Ros, daughter of Robert de Ros. She was the mother of John Lovell IV and William Lovell. Although Joan de Ros survived her husband by thirty-eight years there is no evidence to indicate a second marriage. As dower the manors of Elcombe and Bluntesdon (Wiltshire) were assigned to her. Joan de Ros died on 13 October 1348.¹²⁰ The date might indicate that she died of the plague but as she was already advanced in age, it is also possible that she died of natural causes.

2.3.2. The Perils of War: John Lovell IV (1310-1314)

John Lovell IV, son of John Lovell III and Joan de Ros, served the king on several campaigns. Already in 1298 he was on campaign with his father.¹²¹ John Lovell IV was a retainer of the Earl of Pembroke between 1308 and 1310.¹²² During this period, in 1309, John IV received protection for going overseas in the company of Aymer de Valence.¹²³ John IV continued to be in the Earl's entourage. The Earl of Pembroke's retinue included several members of the de la Zouche family, William de Ros, brother of Joan de Ros,¹²⁴ and John IV's younger brother William Lovell.¹²⁵ William Lovell was most certainly a younger son of John Lovell III. In 1304, the pardon for John Lovell III,

¹¹⁷ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 217.

¹¹⁸ *Complete Peerage*, vol. xii, p. 940.

¹¹⁹ see Appendix 2, Figure 5: The Lovell-de la Zouche Marriages

¹²⁰ *CIPM*, vol. ix, no. 128.

¹²¹ *CPR*, 1292-1301, p. 371.

¹²² *CPR*, 1307-1313, p. 101; Phillips, p. 300.

¹²³ *CPR*, 1308-1313, p. 101. The indenture does not specify which John Lovell is meant and it is possible that it might be John Lovell III. However, as John IV was serving in Aymer de Valence's retinue together with his brother William, it seems likely that the indenture refers to John IV.

¹²⁴ *Complete Peerage*, vol. xi, pp. 96-97.

¹²⁵ Phillips, pp. 300-3.

his wife and his son John IV also includes his other son William.¹²⁶ There is no evidence to illustrate John Lovell IV's involvement in the stormy politics of his days. He seems to have stayed in the shadow of his lord, Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke. John IV accompanied the Earl of Pembroke on the Scottish campaign in 1314 and was one of the Earl's retainers killed in the battle of Bannockburn in 1314.¹²⁷ William Lovell, John IV's brother, Aymer de la Zouche of Ashby de la Zouche and others were taken prisoner by the Scots.¹²⁸

John Lovell IV married Maud Burnell, sister of Edward, first Lord Burnell, and niece of Robert Burnell, chief justice of Edward I and Bishop of Bath and Wells.¹²⁹ She was to become the heiress of her brother in 1315. The marriage was particularly advantageous for a rising family like the Lovells. The Burnells were of great political significance and had especially close connection with the court. Robert Burnell had left his considerable estates to his nephew Edward Burnell.¹³⁰ However, the early death of John Lovell IV caused the Burnell inheritance to pass to another family. Maud Burnell received her dower after February 1315, when she was suing for it.¹³¹ She married John Haudlo before December 1315 without licence. As a consequence her lands were declared forfeit and taken into the King's hands.¹³² After the payment of a fine of £100 the lands were restored to Maud and her second husband.¹³³ A great part of her lands went to the offspring of her second family.¹³⁴ Maud Burnell died before 17 May 1341.¹³⁵ John Haudlo died on 5 August 1346.¹³⁶

Nicholas Haudlo assumed his mother's surname and was summoned to parliament as Lord Burnell from 1350.¹³⁷ Some of the Burnell lands however went to John Lovell V:

¹²⁶ *CPR*, 1301-1307, p. 230; for more information about William Lovell see Appendix 1, p. 275-76.

¹²⁷ Matthew of Westminster, *Flores Historiarum*, vol. iii (London, 1890), p. 159. Among the other retainers of Aymer de Valence killed at the battle were John Comyn, John de Ryvere and William de Vescy.

¹²⁸ Phillips, p. 75.

¹²⁹ see Chapter 3, pp. 104-9.

¹³⁰ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, p. 434.

¹³¹ *CCR*, 1313-1318, p. 208.

¹³² *CFR*, 1307-1319, p. 268.

¹³³ *CFR*, 1307-1319, p. 271.

¹³⁴ The *Inquisitions post mortem* of John Haudlo are dividing the lands between the three heirs; Edmund son of Richard Haudlo, deceased, the son of John Haudlo and his first wife Joan FitzNiel, Nicholas Burnell, his son from his second marriage with Maud Burnell, and John Lovell IV.

¹³⁵ *Complete Peerage*, vol. vi, p. 400.

¹³⁶ *Writ of diem clausit extremum* dated 8 August 1346. *CIPM*, vol. viii, no. 667; see also Appendix 1, p. 276.

¹³⁷ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, p. 435; for the implications of this summons see Chapter 4, p. 152.

the manor of Sparkford, together with the advowson of the church there, two parts of the manor and advowson of Chiriton, and the hamlet of Upton (all Somerset).¹³⁸ After the death of Alina, wife of Edward Burnell, son of Nicholas Burnell, further lands in Romsley (Shropshire) went to the Lovells.¹³⁹ The disputed inheritance also involved the Lovells in a case at the Court of Chivalry. The case of Lovell *versus* Morley about the right to bear the arms *argent, a lion rampant sable armed and crowned or*, broke out in 1385. The fact that the Lovells of Titchmarsh involved themselves in a costly law suit at the Court of Chivalry about the right to bear these arms shows clearly that they upheld their claim to the Burnell estates.¹⁴⁰ Further parts of the Burnell lands returned to the Lovells after the death of the Hugh Burnell, the last Lord Burnell, in 1420.¹⁴¹

2.3.3. Interlude I: The Lovells of Titchwell

During the long years of John Lovell V's minority a cadet branch of the family was involved in national politics. Thomas Lovell, the younger son of John Lovell II, was the only younger son who established a cadet branch of the family that lasted for more than one generation.¹⁴² In 1270 John Lovell II had endowed Thomas with the Manor of Titchwell (Northamptonshire).¹⁴³ In 1317 he entered an indenture for service in peace and war with Thomas of Lancaster.¹⁴⁴ At this time Thomas of Lancaster had just lost the dominant position he had held in the aftermath of the disastrous battle of Bannockburn which had left Edward II weakened.¹⁴⁵ In 1317 Edward II took many important noblemen, such as Aymer de Valence and Bartholomew Badlesmere, into his retinue as well as many lesser noblemen such as William de la Zouche.¹⁴⁶ The indentures of Thomas of Lancaster have to be seen as a reaction to the indentures of the King, as both sides were preparing for the armed conflict into which the situation rapidly deteriorated.¹⁴⁷ Yet, at this time a peaceful conclusion, or at least a temporary conclusion,

¹³⁸ *CFR*, 1337-1347, p. 477, see also Chapter 5, p. 249.

¹³⁹ *CIPM*, vol. xii, no. 60. In 1367, John Lovell VII is named as the heir-apparent of Edward Burnell, son of Hugh Burnell, for the manor of Romsley, *CCR*, 1364-1368, p. 338.

¹⁴⁰ see Chapter 5, pp. 253-59.

¹⁴¹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, p. 435, see also Chapter 3, pp. 90-91. and Appendix 2, Figure 6: The Burnell Family.

¹⁴² see Appendix 2, Figure 7: The Lovells of Titchwell

¹⁴³ Titchwell 198; Norfolk III, Macray, 2/3 Deeds, Magdalen College, Oxford.

¹⁴⁴ 'Private Indentures', 56-58. For a discussion of the retinue of Thomas of Lancaster see Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, pp. 40-66.

¹⁴⁵ Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, pp. 186-189.

¹⁴⁶ Prestwich, *Three Edwards*, p. 87.

¹⁴⁷ Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, pp. 210-11.

was found: the Treaty of Leake of June 1318.¹⁴⁸ What position Thomas Lovell took during the growing conflict between the King and his most powerful subject cannot be established. His name is not among those whom Edward II forbade to attend the assembly at Doncaster in 1321 called by Thomas of Lancaster.¹⁴⁹ The exact significance of the prohibition and the meeting in Doncaster, which perhaps did not even take place,¹⁵⁰ is unclear. Unlike many other retainers who deserted the Earl of Lancaster as the armed conflict with the King became inevitable,¹⁵¹ Thomas Lovell remained loyal to his lord and took part in the battle of Boroughbridge. Thomas Lovell escaped from the battle itself, but was apprehended as a traitor and his lands forfeited.¹⁵² However, he was pardoned soon afterwards, on 11 July 1322.¹⁵³ Thomas Lovell was charged a fine of £200.¹⁵⁴ Half of the fine was pardoned in 1324.¹⁵⁵ In 1325 the last part of his lands were returned to him.¹⁵⁶ It is possible that this was part of the move to a reconciliation with the party of Thomas of Lancaster, which Edward II tried to achieve at that time.¹⁵⁷

In 1327 Thomas Lovell and his sons were among the troops under William de la Zouche holding Caerphilly Castle against Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer.¹⁵⁸ Again his lands were forfeit, but were eventually returned to him. While Thomas Lovell, first holder of the manor of Titchwell, still played a relatively significant role during his life, neither of his sons nor any of their descendants achieved more than local importance. Thomas Lovell died before 11 August 1331, when the *writ of diem clausit extremum* is dated.¹⁵⁹

Ralph Lovell, Thomas's son, participated in the siege of Calais. His presence there, together with his first cousin once removed, John Lovell V, is noted several times during the Lovell-Morley dispute in 1385.¹⁶⁰ The Thomas Lovell who went to Scotland on the

¹⁴⁸ Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, pp. 213-28.

¹⁴⁹ *Foedera*, vol. iii, pp. 899-901.

¹⁵⁰ 'there is no evidence that the meeting ever took place', G.L. Haskins, 'The Doncaster Petition, 1321', *EHR* 53 (1938), 479.

¹⁵¹ Maddicott, pp. 310-11.

¹⁵² 'Private Indentures', p. 57, n. 44.

¹⁵³ *CPR*, 1321-1324, p. 175.

¹⁵⁴ *CFR*, 1319-1327, p. 157.

¹⁵⁵ *ibid.*, p. 323.

¹⁵⁶ *CPR*, 1325-1327, p. 193.

¹⁵⁷ G.O. Sayles, 'The Formal Judgements on the Traitors of 1322', *Speculum* 16 (1941), p. 63

¹⁵⁸ *CPR*, 1327-1330, pp. 13, 37-38. The pardon of outlawry also mentions Gilbert and Ralph Lovell, his sons.

¹⁵⁹ *CIPM*, vol. vi, no. 304.

¹⁶⁰ see Chapter 5, p. 256.

King's service in 1334 was presumably his brother.¹⁶¹ Ralph's grandson, William Lovell of Titchwell, was one of the few English casualties of the battle of Agincourt.¹⁶² After the extinction of the Lovells of Titchwell with the death of William's sister, Margery Lovell, the possession of the manor of Titchwell was disputed between Sir John Fastolf and the Lovells of Clevedon. John Fastolf had bought the manor from John Roys, the husband of Margery Lovell. The Lovells of Clevedon claimed to be the granddaughters of Thomas Lovell who, according to Edward Hull's deposition, was the younger brother of Margery Lovell's father's.¹⁶³ John Fastolf tried to find proof that this claim was wrong. The lawsuit and the investigation were conducted partly by William Worcester and produced a number of fascinating documents now held in Magdalen College, Oxford. P.S. Lewis, in his discussion of the lawsuit between John Fastolf and the Lovells of Clevedon, comes to the conclusion that the Lovells of Clevedon were in fact not directly related with the Lovells of Titchwell but another cadet branch of the Lovells of Titchmarsh, though in what exact relation they stood cannot be ascertained. Yet, this was not the decisive reason why the manor was awarded to John Fastolf. It was the death of Edward Hull in 1453 which removed the main opponent to John Fastolf's claim and the manor was granted to him soon afterwards.¹⁶⁴ Later Titchwell was part of the lands and possessions of John Fastolf that came to the Pastons after his death. After prolonged quarrels over the possession of the manor John Paston III handed Titchwell over to William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester, who presented it to the newly established Magdalen College in Oxford in 1483.

2.3.4. Out of the Peerage: John Lovell V and VI (1314-1361)

At the time of John Lovell IV's death in June 1314, his heir was his two-year-old daughter Joan.¹⁶⁵ John V was born posthumously probably in September 1314.¹⁶⁶ The Lovell lands were granted to Edward II's Italian financier, Antonio de Pessagno in August 1314.¹⁶⁷ On 2 October the wardship and marriage of John Lovell was given to Aymer de Valence for the sum of 1,200 marks.¹⁶⁸ After the death of Aymer de Valence

¹⁶¹ *CPR*, 1331-1334, p. 556.

¹⁶² Titchwell 158, Norfolk III, Macray, Magdalen College, Oxford.

¹⁶³ see Appendix 2, Figure 7: The Lovells of Titchwell

¹⁶⁴ Lewis, 'John Fastolf's Lawsuit', pp. 115-138.

¹⁶⁵ *CIPM*, vol. v, nos. 520, 545.

¹⁶⁶ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 218.

¹⁶⁷ *CFR*, 1307-1319, p. 206; Antonio de Pessagno was a Genoese banker who had lent Edward II over £111,000, Prestwich, *Three Edwards*, p. 106.

¹⁶⁸ *CFR*, 1307-1319, pp. 211-12.

the wardship of John Lovell was released as part of the payment of his debts to the Crown by his widow, Mary de St. Pol.¹⁶⁹ At least some of the lands were granted to Hugh le Despenser.¹⁷⁰ In 1326 the marriage of John Lovell V was granted to Joan Jermie, the sister-in-law of Thomas, Earl of Norfolk, the King's brother.¹⁷¹

There is no specific information available to us to assess how damaging the long minority was. It is obvious that the early death of John Lovell IV was a major crisis of the fortunes of the family. John Lovell V never achieved the position his grandfather held. He was never summoned to parliament.¹⁷² This 'falling out' of the peerage – which remarkably seems to have escaped the notice of the compilers of the *Complete Peerage* – in itself was not damaging to the fortunes of the family, but it reflected the reduced wealth and influence of the family. Though there is no evidence on which we can base an assessment as to whether the economic situation of the family deteriorated as well, some financial decline seems nearly inevitable considering the often changing guardians of the lands. Though the Lovells were not a rich family, the wardship and marriage of the heir were desirable commodities which were either sold to an interested nobleman or granted as a reward. It is interesting that Aymer de Valence, the former lord of John Lovell IV, was the first guardian of John V. Perhaps, as John IV had been killed serving in his retinue, the Earl felt some kind of responsibility for his retainer's son.

Unfortunately nothing is known about the childhood of John Lovell V. The family lands were also reduced as his grandmother and mother both held part of it as dower. John V received the manor of Titchmarsh in January 1333.¹⁷³ In May 1333 he received the remainder of the family land not held in dower and did homage to Edward III.¹⁷⁴ He continued to serve the King as his father and grandfather had done. In 1334 he went to Scotland in the King's service.¹⁷⁵ Two years later he received letters of protection for guarding the Islands of Jersey, Guernsey and Sark with Hugh Balle.¹⁷⁶ In 1339 he was to hold an assize with other nobles.¹⁷⁷ In 1342 he was appointed on the commission to collect wool in Norfolk.¹⁷⁸ In 1344 John Lovell V was attacked by William de Belgrave,

¹⁶⁹ *CPR*, 1323-1327, p. 165.

¹⁷⁰ *CPR*, 1323-1327, p. 347.

¹⁷¹ *CPR*, 1323-1327, p. 267.

¹⁷² see Chapter 4, p. 151.

¹⁷³ *CFR*, 1327-1337, pp. 343-44. On 17 August 1332 he was called 'a minor in the king's wardship', *CCR*, 1330-1333, p. 488.

¹⁷⁴ *CCR*, 1333-1337, p. 47.

¹⁷⁵ *CPR*, 1330-1334, p. 556.

¹⁷⁶ *CPR*, 1334-1338, p. 324.

¹⁷⁷ *CPR*, 1338-1340, p. 303.

¹⁷⁸ *CFR*, 1337-1347, pp. 283, 286.

his son John Belgrave and others. John V was imprisoned by the assailants, his goods carried away and his servants assaulted.¹⁷⁹ In the same year he was overseas with Henry of Lancaster. He returned to England and was appointed to several commissions in 1344 and 1345.¹⁸⁰ In 1346 he acknowledged a debt of £18 6s. to the Prince of Wales.¹⁸¹ He was also active on the 1346-47 campaign and fought at Crécy. At the siege of Calais he witnessed the argument between Nicholas Burnell and Robert Morley about the right to bear the coat-of-arms *argent, a lion rampant sable crowned and armed or*.¹⁸²

John Lovell V married Isabel, who was probably the sister of William de la Zouche, and so the daughter of his cousin.¹⁸³ John V died on 3 November 1347,¹⁸⁴ perhaps the victim of an attack. In 1349 Constantine Mortimer, John de Norwich, William de Kerdiston and others were appointed as keepers of the peace in Norfolk, especially to deal with 'many evildoers indicted before them of the death of John Lovel' who were in the goal in Norwich.¹⁸⁵ The fact that this commission was only appointed two years after John Lovell V's death does not exclude the possibility that the men were the murderers of John V. However, there were several other men of this name living at this time: for example a John Lovel of Somerton was granted an annuity by Edward III in 1347.¹⁸⁶ Another John Lovell was imprisoned by the Abbot of Westminster in 1357.¹⁸⁷ A definite answer to the question of whether the John Lovel mentioned in the peace commission of 1349 is John Lovell V cannot be reached. It is possible that he was killed, as he had already been assaulted three years earlier. It is, however, also possible that he succumbed to an illness. Dower was assigned on 22 January 1348 to John V's widow Isabel.¹⁸⁸ She outlived her husband for only two years, dying on 2 July 1349.¹⁸⁹ Her lands were granted to Isabel, the king's daughter.¹⁹⁰

John Lovell V left behind two sons, who were both minors at the time of his death; both would eventually inherit the Lovell lands and both were called John. To give two children

¹⁷⁹ *CPR*, 1343-1346, pp. 407-08.

¹⁸⁰ *CPR*, 1343-1345, pp. 405, 590.

¹⁸¹ *CCR*, 1346-1349, p. 36.

¹⁸² see Chapter 5, p. 247.

¹⁸³ see Appendix 2, Figure 5: The Lovell-de la Zouche Marriages.

¹⁸⁴ *CIPM*, vol ix, no. 44.

¹⁸⁵ *CPR*, 1348-1350, p. 457.

¹⁸⁶ *CPR*, 1345-1348, p. 537.

¹⁸⁷ *Register of Edward the Black Prince, 1351-1365*, p. 204.

¹⁸⁸ *CCR*, 1347-1349, p. 353; *CIPM*, vol. ix, no. 393.

¹⁸⁹ *CIPM*, vol. ix, nos. 464, 664.

¹⁹⁰ *CPR*, 1348-1350, pp. 343, 358, 479.

the same name was not uncommon, as the well known example within the Paston family of the brothers John Paston II and John Paston III shows. Two of Elizabeth Stonor's brothers were also called John.¹⁹¹ Perhaps this was to ensure that one of the children would carry on the name with which the family was associated.

John Lovell VI was about six years of age at his father's death.¹⁹² His wardship was given to John de Beauchamp,¹⁹³ and later to Richard Talbot.¹⁹⁴ Richard Talbot sold the wardship to John de Pulteneye, except for Elcombe and Blunsdon Gay (Wiltshire). John de Pulteneye died and left the wardship to William Clinton, Earl of Huntingdon.¹⁹⁵ The Lovell lands were reported as being devastated by the plague in 1350, when the farm for it was reduced by a quarter from 160 marks to 120 marks *per annum*.¹⁹⁶ John Lovell VI died unmarried on 12 July 1361, still a minor.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹¹ *Kingsford's Stonor Letters*, p. 281.

¹⁹² *CIPM*, vol. ix, no. 44.

¹⁹³ *CFR*, 1347-1356, p. 63.

¹⁹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 73.

¹⁹⁵ *CPR*, 1350-1354, p. 431.

¹⁹⁶ *CFR*, 1347-1356, p. 244.

¹⁹⁷ *CIPM*, vol. ix, no. 358.

2.4. Rising Fortunes

2.4.1. Lord Lovell and Lord Holland: John Lovell VII (1361-1408)

John Lovell VI's heir was his younger brother John Lovell VII. In the inquisition taken in Oxford, 31 May 1362, his age is given as 21.¹⁹⁸ He was declared of age in April 1363.¹⁹⁹ In 1366 he was commissioner of array in Middlesex²⁰⁰ and in 1367 in Northamptonshire.²⁰¹ He served in Brittany in 1367.²⁰² In 1368 he was abroad in the company of Lionel, Duke of Clarence.²⁰³ Even though John VII had come of age in 1363 he was first summoned in 1375 for the parliament sitting in spring 1376.²⁰⁴ Neither his father John V, nor obviously his brother John VI, were ever summoned to parliament; in fact more than sixty years had passed since the last Lovell was summoned to parliament in 1314. The reason why the summonses was renewed in favour of John Lovell VII will be discussed in Chapter 4.²⁰⁵

One of the reasons for John VII's improved status is undoubtedly his marriage to Maud Holland, the heiress of the Holland barony. Her grandfather's younger brother was Thomas Holland, who became Earl of Kent through his marriage to Joan of Kent, the daughter and heiress of Edmund of Woodstock, Earl of Kent. After Thomas Holland's death Joan of Kent married Edward, Prince of Wales.²⁰⁶ Through his fortunate marriage to Maud Holland, John Lovell not only gained considerable lands, but also created a close, albeit indirect, relationship to the royal family. Robert Holland, Maud Holland's grandfather, died on 16 March 1373.²⁰⁷ Some of the estates were held in tail male, and Thomas Holland, the elder son of Thomas Holland and Joan of Kent, was the next male heir. The order to deliver the Holland estates was given on 3 May 1373.²⁰⁸ John Lovell VII had himself and his wife enfeoffed with a part of their estates, the lands, manors and

¹⁹⁸ *ibid.* Not unusually, most inquisitions profess ignorance as to the age of the heir; the inquisition of Ralph Lovell also states John Lovell, son and heir of John Lovell, who has the reversion of Titchwell manor to be 21 years, *ibid.*, no. 357. Contrary to this, the inquisition taken in Cheshire states that John VI was only 17, *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 219.

¹⁹⁹ *CCR*, 1360-1364, p. 468.

²⁰⁰ *CPR*, 1364-67, p. 365.

²⁰¹ *ibid.*, p. 431.

²⁰² Protection for one year for John Lovell, *Foedera*, vol. iii, p. 731.

²⁰³ *Foedera*, vol. iii, p. 844.

²⁰⁴ *A Perfect Copy of all summons of the nobility to the Great Councils and Parliaments*, Sir William Dugdale (ed.), p. 287.

²⁰⁵ Chapter 4, pp. 151-54.

²⁰⁶ see Appendix 2, Figure 8: The Holland Family.

²⁰⁷ *CIPM*, vol. xiii, no. 263.

²⁰⁸ In the *inquisition post mortem* he is wrongly called John Holland, son of Robert Lovell, *CFR*, 1368-1377, p. 211.

advowson of Upton, the manors of Wardour, Knook, Knighton, Axford, Stitchcombe, and Elcombe (Wiltshire), the manor and advowson of Sutton Walrand (Dorset), the woods, rents, services in Ufton Robert, Ufton Nervet, Sulhamstead Banaster, Sulhamstead Abbots, Englefield and Padworth (all Berkshire), the manors of Minster Lovell (Oxfordshire) and Titchmarsh (Northamptonshire).²⁰⁹

The financial and political implications of this marriage will be discussed in detail later in this thesis,²¹⁰ but the huge increase of political power observable during the lifetime of John Lovell VII as the result of this marriage should be emphasised. It is an indication of this significance that John Lovell used his wife's name as well as his own, being the first baron to show the accumulation of baronies by using both the titles, Lord Lovell and Holland.²¹¹ Curiously, the marriage was not the first contact between the Hollands and the Lovells. Robert Holland, first Lord Holland, was an adherent of Thomas of Lancaster (as was Thomas Lovell of Titchwell),²¹² and was also pardoned for his participation in the execution of Piers Gaveston. Like Thomas Lovell he fought at Boroughbridge, but was captured afterwards. He was only restored to his lands after the overthrow of Edward II.²¹³ Unfortunately the exact date of the marriage between John VII and Maud Holland is not known, but presumably it took place between 1371, when John VII enfeoffed Robert Holland with a number of estates, and 1373, when livery of the inheritance was granted.²¹⁴

The marriage did not change the life of John Lovell immediately; but he gradually became drawn deeper into national politics and became connected to some high ranking men. In 1374 he was in the retinue of Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, and with the Duke of Brittany.²¹⁵ In 1379 he served under Edmund Mortimer in Ireland.²¹⁶ The Earl of March demised the Earl's lordship in Newbury (Berkshire) to John Lovell for life, free of rent.²¹⁷ It seems safe to assume that John VII and Edmund Mortimer were on friendly terms as the Earl also bestowed 'a cup with the cover of blue stone' to John Lovell in his will.²¹⁸ John Lovell was one of those to swear fealty to Richard II at his coronation in

²⁰⁹ see Chapter 3, pp. 110-11.

²¹⁰ see Chapter 3, pp. 106-7, and Chapter 4, p. 154.

²¹¹ Powell and Wallis, p. 437.

²¹² see above, p. 47.

²¹³ *Complete Peerage*, vol. vi, pp. 528-531.

²¹⁴ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 219.

²¹⁵ *Foedera*, vol. iii, p. 1011.

²¹⁶ *CPR*, 1377-1381, p. 409.

²¹⁷ *CIPM*, vol. xv, no. 542.

²¹⁸ *Testamenta Vetusta*, p. 112.

1377.²¹⁹ Later that year he was appointed master of the king's hounds.²²⁰ In 1378 he served with Henry Percy at the siege of Berwick.²²¹ He was in Ireland in the King's service in 1380.²²² After the end of the Peasants' Revolt in 1381 he was on a commission to issue proclamation against the rebels in Oxfordshire²²³ and to arrest certain rebels in Berkshire.²²⁴ He was also chosen for the commission dealing with the murders of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon Sudbury, Robert de Hales, Prior of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem, John Cavendish and others.²²⁵ In 1381 he became keeper of the Castle of Devizes and the forests of Melkesham, Chippenham and Pensham and the manor of Roude.²²⁶ He was in the commission to implement the decisions of parliament in 1381.²²⁷

During the 1380s John VII became even more involved with the workings of both central and local government. In 1382 he was appointed to a commission with Robert Tressilian, Richard Abberbury and others, to arrest those who congregated unlawfully in Oxfordshire and Berkshire.²²⁸ He shared many appointments with Robert Tressilian and Richard Abberbury and was on many commissions with both men.²²⁹ He accompanied the King to Scotland in 1385, and was in command of a contingent of one hundred men-at-arms and two hundred archers together with William, Lord Botreaux and Richard, Lord Seymour.²³⁰ During this campaign a dispute arose between John Lovell and Thomas, Lord Morley, about the right to bear the arms *argent, a lion rampant sable crowned and armed or*. The evidence of the subsequent case at the Court of Chivalry has been discussed by A. Ayton and will be a major theme in Chapter 5 of this thesis.²³¹ During the same campaign in Scotland in 1385 the dispute between Richard, Lord Scrope of Bolton and Sir Robert Grosvenor started over the right to bear the arms *azure, a bend*

²¹⁹ *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, vol. ii, p. 479.

²²⁰ *CPR*, 1377-1381, p. 71.

²²¹ *The Anonimale Chronicle. 1333-1381*, V.H. Galbraith (ed.) (Manchester, 1927), p. 126.

²²² Protection for going to Ireland, *CPR*, 1377-81, p. 409.

²²³ *CPR*, 1381-1385, p. 73.

²²⁴ *ibid.* p. 72.

²²⁵ *ibid.* p. 71.

²²⁶ *CPR*, 1381-85, p. 62.

²²⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 73, 84, 86.

²²⁸ *CPR*, 1381-1385, pp. 140-41.

²²⁹ as for example *CCR*, 1381-1385, p. 176, *CPR*, 1381-1385, pp. 202, 247, 252. For details see below.

²³⁰ 'An Account of the Army with which King Richard the second invaded Scotland in the ninth year of his Reign, A.D. 1385', N.H. Nicolas (ed.), *Archaeologia* 22 (1879), p. 17; Commission of array, *CCR*, 1381-1385, p. 555.

²³¹ see Ayton, pp. 81-104 and Chapter 5.4.

or. John Lovell was a commissioner in this widely discussed trial.²³² In 1386 he was on a commission of array in Wiltshire due to the impending French invasion.²³³

In 1388 John VII was one of the fifteen people²³⁴ expelled from court by the Lords Appellant.²³⁵ John Lovell, like many of the others abjured, seems to have returned to court soon, as in 1389 he was a member of the commission to sell the land of the people condemned by the Merciless Parliament.²³⁶ Indeed, far from being discouraged by his expulsion from court, John Lovell VII's involvement in all aspects of central government increased after the incident. He had participated, for example in the work of parliament before 1388, he had been appointed to confer with the commons in April 1384,²³⁷ but after this date John Lovell took a very active role in parliament. He was trier of petitions for Gascony and the other lands beyond the sea in both parliaments of 1390, in 1391 and in 1393;²³⁸ and for petitions for England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland in one of the parliaments of 1397, the parliament of 1402, both parliaments held in 1404, and the parliaments in 1406 and 1407.²³⁹ He was a trier of petitions in ten of the fifteen parliaments summoned between 1390 and 1407. He also was appointed as one of the noblemen to confer with the commons in 1402.²⁴⁰ John VII was present at the first parliament of Henry IV, where he, along with a large number of prelates and magnates and other barons, consented to the secret imprisonment of Richard II.²⁴¹ John VII served on many commissions during the next decade as for example a commission touching a complaint against the King's bailiff in the hundred of Stone.²⁴² He witnessed a letter by the King to the Pope protesting against the papal provisions to benefices.²⁴³

John Lovell VII held a prominent place in many events of his time. He was present

²³² Vale, vol. i, pp. 95-105.

²³³ CCR, 1385-1389, p. 60.

²³⁴ The other abjured were the bishops John Fordham and Thomas Rushok, John, Lord Beaumont, Thomas, Lord Camoys, Hugh, Lord Burnell, William, Lord Zouche, Sir Richard Abberbury, Sir Baldwin Bereford, Sir Thomas Clifford, Sir Aubrey de Vere, Sir John Worth, Margery, Lady Moleyns, Joan, Lady Mohun and Blanche, Lady Poynings.

²³⁵ Thomas of Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, Henry T. Riley (ed.), RS 28 (London, 1864), vol. iii, pp. 172-73; Capgrave, *Chronicle of England*, p. 249; *Knighton's Chronicle. 1337-1396*, G.H. Martin (ed. and trans.)(Oxford, 1995), p. 428; *Historia Vitae et Regni Ricardi Secundi*, G.B. Stow (ed.) (Philadelphia, 1977), p. 166; see Chapter 4, pp. 179-81.

²³⁶ CPR, 1388-1392, p. 107.

²³⁷ Rot. Parl., vol. iii, 167b.

²³⁸ Rot. Parl., vol. iii, 258a, 278a, 285a and 300b.

²³⁹ Rot. Parl., vol. iii, 348b, 486a, 523a, 545b, 567b, and 609a.

²⁴⁰ Rot. Parl., vol. iii, 486b.

²⁴¹ Rot. Parl., vol. iii, 426b-427a.

²⁴² CPR, 1391-1396, p. 432.

²⁴³ CCR, 1389-1392, p. 140-41.

with the Earl of Derby and others, not mentioned by name, when Thomas Talbot confessed to having planned to assassinate the Dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester in 1394.²⁴⁴ With Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of York, Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, Thomas Mowbray, Earl of Nottingham, Aubrey de Vere, Earl of Oxford, William Beauchamp, Rainald Grey of Ruthin, Thomas Percy and Hugh Burnell, John Lovell vouched for the good behaviour of Richard, Earl of Arundel in the same year.²⁴⁵ Also in 1394 he supervised the shipping of troops to Ireland.²⁴⁶ In the following year John Lovell VII was retained for 200 marks by the King.²⁴⁷ In 1398 he was one of the appointed attorneys of his relative Thomas Holland, when he went to Ireland.²⁴⁸ John Lovell VII accompanied Richard II on his badly timed expedition to Ireland in 1399.²⁴⁹

Despite his close connection with the court and his personal connection to Richard II and the Hollands, John VII, like most of his contemporaries, accepted Henry of Bolingbroke as King. In fact he was one of the first to join Henry at Chester. As mentioned above, John Lovell VII consented to the secret imprisonment of Richard II.²⁵⁰ His career continued undisturbed by the change of dynasty. In 1400 he was appointed castellan of Corfe Castle.²⁵¹ He was present when Thomas Holland, John Holland, John Montague, Thomas Despenser and Ralph Lumley were declared traitors.²⁵² About this time he was also one of the four noblemen who were considered as possible tutors of the Prince of Wales.²⁵³ John Lovell VII was made a member of the permanent council in 1403 and 1406²⁵⁴ and eventually became a Knight of the Garter in about 1405.²⁵⁵ In 1405 he went to Wales on the king's service despite his advanced age.²⁵⁶

In both reigns, John VII received grants of land and offices. He was granted the wardship of certain lands in Crofton on 5 April 1377 but lost them to Henry Esturmy as

²⁴⁴ *CPR*, 1391-1396, pp 488-89.

²⁴⁵ *CCR*, 1392-1396, p. 368.

²⁴⁶ His son Robert served in Ireland for several years after 1394, see below, p. 62; array of ships, *CPR*, 1392-1395, p. 488-89.

²⁴⁷ *CPR*, 1391-1396, p. 552

²⁴⁸ *CPR*, 1396-1399, p. 406.

²⁴⁹ Together with his son John Lovell, *CPR*, 1396-1399, p. 545.

²⁵⁰ see above, p. 56.

²⁵¹ *CPR*, 1399-1401, p. 182.

²⁵² *CPR*, 1401-1405, p. 122.

²⁵³ *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England*, N.H. Nicolas (ed.), vol. i., pp. 177-78.

²⁵⁴ see Chapter 4, pp. 158-59.

²⁵⁵ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, Appendix B.

²⁵⁶ *CCR*, 1402-1405, pp. 461-62.

he failed to appear at a hearing in the Chancery.²⁵⁷ In 1378 he received the commitment of 'certain lands in Crofton', formerly granted to Alice Perrers.²⁵⁸ In 1381 the keeping of the hundred of Catsash (Somerset) was granted to him for ten years.²⁵⁹ The keeping of the hundred of Stone was committed to him in 1386.²⁶⁰ In 1387 he was awarded the custody of Elizabeth Mautravers, the heiress of John Mautravers.²⁶¹ Also in 1387 he was granted the marriage of the heiresses of the Bryan barony, Philippa and Elizabeth.²⁶² Together with Alice Bryan, he had commitment of some manors in Somerset until the lawful age of Elizabeth and Philippa, formerly held by their uncle Philip Bryan.²⁶³ In 1392 John Lovell VII with John Devereux and John Golafre complained about having to answer for the farm of the lands of John de Hastings, Earl of Pembroke, whose wardship was granted to them without their knowledge.²⁶⁴ In 1402 he received the custody of Fremantle Park²⁶⁵ and Ludlow Castle.²⁶⁶ He was assigned with Thomas de Camoys, Thomas de Skelton and John Lisle to protect Southampton in 1403.²⁶⁷

John VII was also active in the administration of his estates. Unfortunately little detailed information has survived,²⁶⁸ but a few glimpses can be gleaned from the records of central government. In 1367 he leased one sixth of the barony of Wych Malbank (Cheshire), to John Delves for £50.²⁶⁹ In 1377 he granted £10 of the income of Titchmarsh to William de Scargill.²⁷⁰ He granted the manor and advowson of Cound (Shropshire) to Richard, Earl of Arundel.²⁷¹ He moved the *caput honoris* to Wardour, where he rebuilt the manor in the shape of a spectacular, hexagonal castle in 1393.²⁷² At

²⁵⁷ CCR, 1377-1381, pp. 272-73.

²⁵⁸ CFR, 1377-1383, p. 86.

²⁵⁹ CFR, 1377-1383, p. 280. The grant was renewed in 1391, CFR, 1383-1391, p. 353.

²⁶⁰ CFR, 1383-1391, p. 150.

²⁶¹ CCR, 1385-1389, p. 230; 8 May 1387. John Lovell was not allowed to marry Elizabeth to his own son, CPR, 1385-1388, p. 239; Elizabeth Mautravers married Sir Humphrey Stafford, their son married Robert Lovell's daughter Maud, J.S. Roskell, *The Commons in the Parliament of 1422. English Society and Parliamentary Representation under the Lancastrians* (Manchester, 1954), p. 216-17; see below, p. 63.

²⁶² CPR, 1385-1388, p. 276.

²⁶³ CFR, 1383-1391, p. 201.

²⁶⁴ CCR, 1389-1392, p. 516.

²⁶⁵ CPR, 1401-1405, p. 121.

²⁶⁶ *ibid*, p. 140.

²⁶⁷ CCR, 1402-1405, pp. 82-83.

²⁶⁸ see Chapter 3, pp. 99-102.

²⁶⁹ CPR, 1363-1367, p. 378.

²⁷⁰ CCR, 1377-1381, p. 371.

²⁷¹ CCR, 1374-1377, p. 538.

²⁷² In 1393 he received the licence to crannelate Wardour, CPR, 1392-1395, p. 261; Gervase Mathew, *The Court of Richard II* (London, 1968), p. 207; see Chapter 5, pp. 197-201.

times it seems that John Lovell was in financial difficulties, as he borrowed 500 marks from Thomas Langley in 1406, though he himself lent the same sum to Stephen Scrope.²⁷³ He with Richard Seymour and others were jointly seised of some lands in Clanville.²⁷⁴

Like other aristocrats of this time John Lovell VII did break the law on occasion. He gave quarter with warranty of the manors of Minster Lovell (Oxfordshire), Titchmarsh (Northamptonshire), Elcombe (Wiltshire), Sparkford (Somerset), in 1384 to Thomas, Bishop of Ely, Richard Abberbury, and others.²⁷⁵ As could be expected his position in power made it possible and likely for him to attack other nobleman and be attacked by them. In 1391 he was accused of unlawfully expelling Thomas Manston from his manor of Manston (Dorset), imprisoning the tenants, and other atrocities. Thomas Manston took the case to parliament where a commission was formed to deal with the case. John Lovell, not surprisingly, denied the charges. Two years later the commission was renewed.²⁷⁶ In the same year John VII sued William Wakeleyn, Henry Bretonell, Thomas and Robert Arden, William Foliot and Wiliam Mede for attempted murder. He claimed that they had assaulted him and caused damage of £1,000.²⁷⁷ Several mainprises exist in which John Lovell promises not to hurt or harm other nobles.²⁷⁸ During a lawsuit in 1401 John VII had money distributed to the sheriff, under-sheriff and jury.²⁷⁹ In 1403 John Lovell was indirectly involved in a burglary of the treasury of receipt. John Freeman, one of John Lovell's servants, stole a bundle of feet of fines concerning Northamptonshire between 1331 and 1336. The theft was connected to a dispute between John Lovell and William Doyle over the possession of the manor of Hinton in the Hedges (Northamptonshire). Surprisingly neither John Freeman nor his lord were punished for this crime.²⁸⁰ In 1407 a plea between John Lovell VII and William Doyle was enrolled concerning the manor and advowson of Hinton and adjacent lands.²⁸¹ In 1405 an assize of *novel disseisin* was produced by Henry Popham against John Lovell VII, his eldest son, John Lovell VIII, his younger son, Robert Lovell, and his wife Maud, about a freehold in Knighton and Upton, and tenements in Wardour (Wiltshire) and Sutton

²⁷³ CCR, 1405-1409, pp. 108, 110, 128.

²⁷⁴ CIPM, vol. xix, no. 559.

²⁷⁵ CCR, 1381-1385, p. 427.

²⁷⁶ CPR, 1391-1396, pp. 79, 238.

²⁷⁷ CPR, 1388-1391, pp. 520-21.

²⁷⁸ 1399, John Roche, CCR, 1399-1400, p. 93; 1400, John Russell, *ibid*, pp. 302-3.

²⁷⁹ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 117.

²⁸⁰ Edward Powell, 'Law and Justice', in R. Horrox (ed.), *Fifteenth Century Attitudes* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 39.

²⁸¹ CCR, 1405-1409, pp. 188-89.

Walrand (Dorset). The assize was turned down and Henry Popham was ordered by the king to sue by writ in common form.²⁸² The dispute was resolved in 1410, when Henry Popham made a quitclaim of Upton, Knook, Wardour and Knighton (Wiltshire) Sutton Walrand (Dorset) and the churches of Upton and Sutton Walrand as well as the advowson of Maiden Newton (Dorset).²⁸³

John Lovell VII died in his favourite residence Wardour on 10 September 1408.²⁸⁴ He was by far the most important member of his family to date and apart from his descendant Francis Lovell the most prominent overall. His life marked a high point in the career of the Lovell family. He was buried in the church of the Hospital of St. James and St. John near Brackley (Northamptonshire), following his wish expressed in his will. He left a vestment of black cloth adorned with stars of gold, and 'certain copes and other things' of the same material to the Hospital. He nominated his wife and son as executors of his will.²⁸⁵ His widow's dower was assigned shortly afterwards.²⁸⁶ Maud Holland gave the manors of Bagworth and Thornton (Leicestershire), the lands, rents reversions and services of Salthrop and Westlecott and the reversion of Chilton Foliat (all Wiltshire), to Thomas, Bishop of Durham.²⁸⁷ Using her estates Maud Holland intended to transform the hospital of St. James and St. John, Brackley into a house of friars and preachers. She received licence for this in 1420.²⁸⁸ Maud Holland died on 7 May 1423, apparently without having remarried.²⁸⁹ On 7 July 1423 the escheators were ordered to seise her grandson, William Lovell III of her lands.²⁹⁰

2.4.2. Early Death: John Lovell VIII (1408-1414)

John Lovell VIII followed the example set by his father and served the new dynasty. His career was cut short by his early death a few years later. He was given seisin of his lands in 1409.²⁹¹ Very few things are known about him and he never reached the prominence his father had. Even the identity of his wife is not known for certain. She was

²⁸² CCR, 1402-1405, pp. 412-13, 498.

²⁸³ CCR, 1409-1413, p. 75.

²⁸⁴ CIPM, vol. xix, nos. 404-417. The writ of *diem clausit extremum* is dated 11 September, CFR, 1405-1413, p. 121.

²⁸⁵ British Library, Add. Ms. 39,992 N; see Chapter 5, pp. 207-9.

²⁸⁶ Order to assign dower on 1 November 1408 in the counties of Norfolk, Somerset, Wiltshire and Northamptonshire, CCR, 1405-1409, p. 415. see Chapter 3, pp. 110-11.

²⁸⁷ CCR, 1419-1422, pp. 105, 107.

²⁸⁸ CCR, 1419-1422, pp. 125-26.

²⁸⁹ Writ of *diem clausit extremum*, CFR, 1422-1430, p. 3, dated 12 May 1323. C139/6 no. 51.

²⁹⁰ CFR, 1422-1430, p. 42.

²⁹¹ CCR, 1405-1409, pp. 430, 445; CFR, 1405-1413, p. 128.

presumably Eleanor, daughter of William de la Zouche of Haringworth.²⁹² It is interesting that John Lovell VII, himself being married to the heiress of a barony, was not able to secure an heiress for his firstborn son, though he had more success with his younger son Robert. The strengthening of the family ties to the de la Zouche family was apparently still a major concern for the Lovells. This was the third intermarriage between the families. In 1410 John Lovell VIII, together with John de Eton, Edmund Hastings and others, was enfeoffed with several manors by John Neville, Lord Latimer.²⁹³ He died on 19 October 1414.²⁹⁴ Eleanor de la Zouche's dower was assigned to her only in 1416.²⁹⁵ Nothing further is known about her.

2.4.3. Interlude II: Robert Lovell (c. 1379-1434)

John Lovell VII had three sons in addition to his eldest son and heir John VIII:²⁹⁶ Ralph Lovell who was a canon of Salisbury and rector of Stanton Harcourt; Thomas, about whom nothing is known, perhaps because he died young;²⁹⁷ and Robert Lovell. John Lovell VII settled some land on Robert,²⁹⁸ and arranged his marriage to Elizabeth Bryan, whose wardship and marriage he had received in 1387.²⁹⁹ Elizabeth's elder sister, Philippa, had been married to John Devereux. Both marriages took place before their grandfather, Guy Bryan, had died. The *inquisition post mortem* states that Guy Bryan had some time ago enfeoffed parts of his lands in Devon to Martin Ferrers, John Ferrers, William Tray and John Preston, who in turn enfeoffed Sir John Devereux, father of Philippa's husband, John Lovell, Peter Courtenay and others.³⁰⁰ William Bryan, the uncle of Philippa and Elizabeth, died on 22 September 1395.³⁰¹ They also inherited the

²⁹² *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 221.

²⁹³ *CCR*, 1409-1413, p. 110. They enfeoffed the lands to John Neville and his wife Maud, who kept them after her divorce and also after the forfeiture of her second husband, Richard, Earl of Cornwall, in 1415.

²⁹⁴ *CIPM*, vol. xx, nos. 196-203.

²⁹⁵ *CCR*, 1413-1419, p. 339.

²⁹⁶ According to a genealogy William Worcester uncovered during his researches for the lawsuit over the manor of Titchwell; Magdalen College, Oxford, Adds. 99

²⁹⁷ Lewis, 'John Fastolf's Lawsuit', p. 14.

²⁹⁸ Namely the manors of Sutton Waldron and Brockhampton and half of the advowson in Maiden Newton (all Dorset), *CIPM*, p. 415. In 1413, however, Robert made quitclaim of Sutton Waldron in favour of his mother and elder brother, *CCR*, 1413-1419, pp. 58, 62.

²⁹⁹ see Appendix 2, Genealogy 9. The Bryan Family

³⁰⁰ *CIPM*, vol. xvi, no. 959.

³⁰¹ *CIPM*, vol. xvi, nos. 988-990.

estates of another uncle, Philip Bryan.³⁰² After the death of her first husband Philippa married Henry le Scrope of Masham.³⁰³ The partition of the land was ordered on 14 June 1397.³⁰⁴ Philippa received livery of her lands on 13 February 1399.³⁰⁵ The lands of Christina Kentcombe,³⁰⁶ who held of the gift of Guy Bryan, Elizabeth's and Philippa's grandfather, were ordered to be partitioned 28 May 1400.³⁰⁷ On 13 February 1400 Elizabeth Bryan proved that she was of age.³⁰⁸ Robert Lovell and Elizabeth were seised of the manor of Donhead (Somerset), and half of the advowson of Pompknolle church (Dorset), the Isle of Lundy, the lordships of Dartmoor, Clifton and Hardense (Devon) on 17 March and 15 June 1400.³⁰⁹ Philippa Bryan died without issue on 16 November 1406.³¹⁰ Her heiress was her sister Elizabeth. Even though after Philippa's death Robert Lovell held the entire Bryan barony in the right of his wife, he never received an individual summons to parliament.

Robert Lovell had accompanied his father and brother to Ireland in 1394.³¹¹ He went to Ireland again in 1396 and 1397. In 1404 and again in 1406 Robert Lovell served in Wales together with the Prince of Wales. The close attachment to Henry of Monmouth was probably a result of Robert's connection to Henry Scrope, the husband of his wife's sister, who was a personal friend of the Prince of Wales.³¹² Robert remained in close contact with both Henry Scrope and the Prince of Wales. It was during this time that he incurred great debts on the Prince's behalf. He tried to regain the money after Henry of Monmouth had become King but was unable to do so.³¹³ Robert was not only forced to borrow money himself,³¹⁴ but he also had to alienate his castle of Wardour (Wiltshire),³¹⁵ presumably to his brother John Lovell VIII. Nevertheless, Robert was indentured for the first French campaign of Henry V and also took part in the campaign of

³⁰² J.S.Roskell, Linda S. Clark and Carole Rawcliffe (eds.), *The House of Commons, 1386-1421* (Stroud, 1993), vol. ii, p. 632.

³⁰³ Vale, vol. i., p. 122.

³⁰⁴ *CFR*, 1391-1399, p. 214.

³⁰⁵ Vale, vol. i., p. 122.

³⁰⁶ *CIPM*, vol. xviii, no. 215.

³⁰⁷ *CCR*, 1399-1402, pp. 302-3; *CFR*, 1399-1405, p. 60.

³⁰⁸ *CIPM*, vol. xviii, no. 314. In the inquisition of Christina Kentcombe from 18 February 1400 she is said to be aged 16 and be in the king's ward, *ibid*, no. 215.

³⁰⁹ *CCR*, 1399-1402, pp. 77, 86.

³¹⁰ *CIPM*, vol. xix, nos. 228-32.

³¹¹ *CPR*, 1391-1396, p. 482.

³¹² Roskell, Clark and Rawcliffe, vol. ii, p. 632.

³¹³ Roskell, Clark and Rawcliffe, vol. ii, pp. 632-33.

³¹⁴ 1408 recognisance of a debt of 1,000 marks to Henry le Scrope, *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 245, and a debt of 200 marks to John Storton and William Coventre, *ibid*, p. 269.

³¹⁵ Roskell, *Commons in Parliament*, p. 200.

Bedford, in 1420.³¹⁶ After Henry V's death he attempted again to recover large debts,³¹⁷ though still unsuccessfully. He received several pardons for not appearing in court in cases connected to the debts he owed. While he was struggling to sort out his financial difficulties, he sat as knight of the shire for Dorset twice, in 1421 and 1422.³¹⁸ However, he was not able to regain the debts. When Robert Lovell died in 1434, he was outlawed and his goods were confiscated.³¹⁹

His widow Elizabeth inherited after the death of her mother Alice in 1435, the lands she held in dower.³²⁰ Elizabeth Bryan died in 1437.³²¹ The only child of Robert Lovell and Elizabeth Bryan, Maud Lovell, married firstly Richard Stafford, by whom she had a daughter Avice. Richard Stafford's father, Humphrey Stafford, was Robert Lovell's fellow member for Dorset in 1421;³²² his mother was Elizabeth Mautravers, whose wardship had been granted to John Lovell VII. After the death of Maud's first husband she married John Arundel. Maud Lovell and John Arundel had one son, Humphrey, who died in infancy.³²³ Avice Stafford married James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire and Ormond, but died without issue on 3 July 1457.³²⁴ Maud Lovell in her will left her relics to her son Humphrey Arundel and one French book to her daughter Avice.³²⁵

2.4.4. The Quiet Life of William Lovell III (1414-1455)

John Lovell VIII's son, William Lovell III was still a minor at the death of his father.³²⁶ His wardship was granted to Henry, Lord FitzHugh of Ravensworth in 1416.³²⁷ After the death of his grandmother, Maud Holland, the lands she held in dower as well as the Holland barony came into his hands. William III married before 1422 Alice Deincourt. She and her sister Margaret, who was married to Ralph Cromwell, became on the death of their brother, William Deincourt, his heiresses. The Deincourt lands were partly

³¹⁶ Roskell, *Commons in Parliament*, pp. 200-1.

³¹⁷ More than £2330 were still indebted to him in 1427, when he petitioned for payment, SC 8 no. 60/6.

³¹⁸ Roskell, Clark and Rawcliffe, vol. ii, p. 632.

³¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 634.

³²⁰ *CFR*, 1430-1437, pp. 235-36.

³²¹ *Writ of diem clausit extremum* dated 8 July 1437, *CFR*, 1430-1437, p. 301 and another dated 29 October 1437, *CFR*, 1437-1445, p. 2; and a third writ, 1 May 1438, *ibid.*, p. 38.

³²² Roskell, Clark and Rawcliffe, vol. ii, p. 633.

³²³ *Complete Peerage*, vol. i, p. 248.

³²⁴ *Complete Peerage*, vol. x, p. 128.

³²⁵ *Testamenta Vetusta*, p. 233.

³²⁶ *CIPM*, vol. xx, nos. 196-203; where he is said to be 17 years and more.

³²⁷ *CPR*, 1416-1422, p. 9-10, where he is called John. *Ibid.*, p. 37 with his correct name.

situated in the North of England.³²⁸ Alice's part of her lands was assigned to her in 1424.³²⁹ Through her mother she was also co-heiress of the Grey of Rotherfield barony.³³⁰ In 1430 William Lovell enfeoffed his wife Alice and other nobles, including Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, with a large part of his lands.³³¹ Alice Deincourt's other grandmother Alice Neville,³³² widow of William Deincourt, died in 1433 and the lands she held in dower were partitioned between Alice Deincourt, Lady Lovell, and her sister Margaret.³³³ Her sister-in-law Elizabeth Beaumont died in 1448, when her lands were partitioned as well.³³⁴ After the death of her sister Margaret in 1454, Alice inherited her lands as well. In 1457, after the death of Margaret's husband, Ralph Cromwell, the remainder of the Grey of Rotherfield and Deincourt baronies he had held in jointure with his wife were granted to Alice and all fines were pardoned.³³⁵ The two baronies were reunited in the hands of Alice Deincourt. However, a few of the lands held by Ralph Cromwell were only recovered by Francis Lovell.³³⁶

William Lovell was not as deeply involved in national politics as were some of his predecessors, yet his social position made some participation unavoidable and necessary.³³⁷ He served under Henry V in France in 1420.³³⁸ In 1430 he served again in France.³³⁹ His return from France is recorded in the *Annals of St. Albans*,³⁴⁰ an indication that his position in France was of some importance. He was trier of petitions in Parliament in 1433,³⁴¹ and appears in many counties on the commissions of the peace.³⁴² It is uncertain whether William was involved in the actual business of these commissions. From 1433 onwards he was regularly appointed on commissions to collect

³²⁸ Among other lands, Alice Deincourt held a manor in Naburn and in Askam Bryan near York.

³²⁹ *CCR*, 1422-1424, pp. 118-19. Order to partition lands 8 February 1423, *CFR*, 1422-1430, p. 31.

³³⁰ After the death of her grandmother Elizabeth, widow of Robert Grey, her land were partitioned; *CFR*, 1422-1430, p. 68.

³³¹ *CCR*, 1429-1430, pp. 57-58; see Chapter 3, p. 111.

³³² Alice Neville was the eldest daughter of John Neville of Raby and his first wife Maud Percy, *Complete Peerage*, vol. iv, p. 123.

³³³ *CFR*, 1430-1437, pp. 104, 164.

³³⁴ *CFR*, 1445-1452, pp. 92-93.

³³⁵ *CPR*, 1452-1461, pp. 278, 433.

³³⁶ McFarlane, *England*, p. 250.

³³⁷ see Chapter 4, p. 157.

³³⁸ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 221.

³³⁹ In 1430 supplies were sent to him in France, *CCR*, 1429-1435, p. 71.

³⁴⁰ *Annales Monasterii S. Albani a Johanne Amundesham. Monacho. A.D. 1421-1440* T. Riley (ed.), RS 28, v (London, 1870, repr. Wiesbaden, 1965), vol. i, p. 62.

³⁴¹ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. iv, p. 420a.

³⁴² In Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Northamptonshire, Yorkshire North Riding, Leicestershire, Shropshire, Dorset, Staffordshire and Wiltshire.

taxes.³⁴³ He was appointed on a commission to receive an oath from certain people in Oxfordshire not to maintain peace breakers.³⁴⁴ In 1440 he was ordered to watch out for and suppress any unlawful assemblies.³⁴⁵ He was appointed constable of Wallingford Castle in 1450.³⁴⁶ He was appointed to the commission to raise troops against the rebellion of Jack Cade.³⁴⁷ He was also on a commission of oyer and terminer about a number of people who had murdered and robbed in the county of Oxford.³⁴⁸ In 1453 he was exempted from attending parliament on account of his health and in regard for the services he had done during the reign of Henry V.³⁴⁹

There is some patchy information about his estate management, though very often it is impossible to determine the politics behind the measures. After the death of Hugh Burnell in 1420, William Lovell inherited the Burnell estates.³⁵⁰ In 1423 William Lovell settled the manor of Ohecote (Northamptonshire) on Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester.³⁵¹ In 1429 William Lovell quitclaimed the manor of Sadelworthfirthes and Quyk (Yorkshire).³⁵² In 1437 he was granted the keeping of the alien priory of Cogges and Minster Lovell for the duration of ten years.³⁵³ Like his grandfather he was involved in legal suits. In 1433 he gave a mainprise not to harm William Penteney.³⁵⁴ In 1438 he recognized a debt of £1,000 to John Cottesmore, Henry Langeley, William Tresham and Thomas Byllyng.³⁵⁵ In 1439 he was allowed to enclose the woods pertaining to Minster Lovell in the royal forest of Wychwood.³⁵⁶ This measure was presumably connected with the rebuilding of Minster Lovell Hall.³⁵⁷ He seised the manors of Southmere and Docking to John Ratcliffe and Katharine his wife, who was one of Hugh Burnell's

³⁴³ 1433, *CFR*, 1430-1437, p. 187; 1434, *ibid.*, p. 193; 1436, *ibid.*, pp. 261, 269; 1437, pp. 352, 354; 1440, *CFR*, 1437-1445, pp. 141, 143-44; 1442, *ibid.*, pp. 215, 217; 1445, pp. 326-27; 1446, *CFR*, 1445-1452, pp. 33, 35; 1449, *ibid.*, pp. 122, 124; 1450, *ibid.*, p. 173, 1453, *CFR*, 1452-1461, pp. 44, 48.

³⁴⁴ *CPR*, 1430-1436, pp. 392-95.

³⁴⁵ *CCR*, 1435-1445, p. 387.

³⁴⁶ *CPR*, 1446-1452, p. 333.

³⁴⁷ Commission to deal with traitors in Kent, *CPR*, 1452-1461, p. 385.

³⁴⁸ *CPR*, 1446-1452, pp. 386-87.

³⁴⁹ *CPR*, 1452-1461, pp. 74-75.

³⁵⁰ see Chapter 3, pp. 90-91.

³⁵¹ *CCR*, 1422-1429, p. 123.

³⁵² *CCR*, 1429-1435, p. 28.

³⁵³ *CFR*, 1437-1445, p. 17, 39.

³⁵⁴ *CCR*, 1429-1435, p. 228.

³⁵⁵ *CCR*, 1435-1445, p. 173.

³⁵⁶ *CPR*, 1436-1441, p. 250.

³⁵⁷ see Chapter 5, pp. 201-5.

granddaughters.³⁵⁸ However, William Lovell had not obtained a royal licence, an offence for which he was pardoned in 1441.³⁵⁹ In the same year he was pardoned for having seised Nicholas Dixon, John Leventhorp and Thomas Radcly with the manor of Billingford.³⁶⁰ Both these instances would have been unknown to us, if by chance the government had not fined William Lovell for not getting the necessary licence first. In 1451 he was granted 20 acres in Mershwoodhall (Dorset).³⁶¹ His possession of an enclosure in Wychwood Forest was confirmed in 1452.³⁶² He bought some lands in Oxfordshire from Richard, Duke of York, the possession of which was disputed in 1477.³⁶³ In 1447 William Lovell with John Stafford, Archbishop of Canterbury, William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln, Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, William de la Pole, Ralph Cromwell, Ralph Sudeley, Drew Barentyn, Richard Quatermayns and his wife Sybil received a licence to found the guild of St. Christopher in Thame.³⁶⁴

William Lovell III died on 13 June 1455.³⁶⁵ In his will he endows his three younger sons with land and leaves some money for the marriage of his granddaughter.³⁶⁶ His wife's dower was assigned on 21 October 1455.³⁶⁷ In 1457 Alice Deincourt gave the manors of Wooburn Deincourt and East Claydon (Buckinghamshire) to Magdalen College, Oxford, for the foundation of two fellowships there.³⁶⁸ She was afterwards the governess of Prince Edward, son of Henry VI until 1460, when she was dismissed as the Prince was thought old enough to be given male tutors, and because Alice was ill.³⁶⁹ She apparently recovered and remarried in 1463, Ralph Boteler, Lord Sudeley.³⁷⁰ In the late 1460s Ralph Boteler suffered through his former Lancastrian affections.³⁷¹ Alice continued to hold significant parts of the Lovell estates as well as her own lands until her

³⁵⁸ see Chapter 3, pp. 90-91.

³⁵⁹ *CCR*, 1425-1445, p. 424.

³⁶⁰ *CCR*, 1435-1445, p. 414.

³⁶¹ *CFR*, 1445-1452, pp. 211-12.

³⁶² *CPR*, 1452-1461, p. 27.

³⁶³ *CCR*, 1476-1485, pp. 76, 84-85.

³⁶⁴ *CPR*, 1446-1452, pp. 180-81.

³⁶⁵ 14 June 1455 *writ of diem clausit extremum*, *CFR*, 1452-1461, p. 100; C139/158 no. 28.

³⁶⁶ see Chapter 3, pp. 113, 116.

³⁶⁷ In the counties of Northampton, Surrey, Stafford, Hertford, Oxford and Berkshire, Shropshire and the adjacent march of Wales, Warwick and Leicester, Buckinghamshire and Kent, *CCR*, 1454-1461, p. 93.

³⁶⁸ Brackley, 66a, M Northants II, 764, Magdalen College, Oxford.

³⁶⁹ *CCR*, 1454-1461, p. 567.

³⁷⁰ Licence to remarry, *CPR*, 1461-1467, p. 222 for a fine of £100.

³⁷¹ Colin Richmond, 'The Nobility and the Wars of the Roses, 1459-1461', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 21 (1977), pp. 80-81.

death on 10 February 1474.³⁷²

2.4.5. The Brief Life of John Lovell IX (1455-1465)

William Lovell III's heir, John Lovell IX was aged 22 at his father's death. Letters of denization for a 'John Lovell born in the duchy of Normandy' were enrolled in 1452.³⁷³ If John IX was older than was claimed in the *inquisition post mortem* of his father, it is possible that the letters of denization are referring to him, as his father was in Normandy until 1430.³⁷⁴ The order was issued on 21 October 1455 to give him seisin of his fathers lands in Northamptonshire, Staffordshire, Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire, Warwickshire and Leicestershire, Buckinghamshire, Shropshire and the adjacent march of Wales and Kent.³⁷⁵ The fact that a large part of his inheritance was in the hand of his mother, either as dower or through enfeoffment, must have resulted in a considerable decrease in wealth.

John Lovell IX married Joan Beaumont, daughter of John Beaumont, Viscount Beaumont. A letter from John Lovell IX to his father-in-law exists, in which he accepts the proposal to give the stewardship of Bagworth (Leicestershire) to Thomas Everyngham.³⁷⁶ Like his father-in-law, John Lovell IX was a royalist and supported Henry VI as long as possible.³⁷⁷ In 1459 he was trier of petitions in parliament.³⁷⁸ In the same year he was on a commission of array in Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Berkshire.³⁷⁹ He was also appointed master of Wychwood for his good services against the Yorkists.³⁸⁰ He was appointed to a commission of array in 1460.³⁸¹ In the same year he was also on a commission of oyer and terminer.³⁸² John Lovell IX was appointed on the commission to arrest Richard, Duke of York, and other leader of the rebels.³⁸³

³⁷² In most of the inquisitions she is still called 'Lady Lovell', C 140/147 no. 64; C140/52 no. 31; E149/228 no. 2; for the estates she held see Chapter 3, p. 111.

³⁷³ *CPR*, 1446-1452, p. 523.

³⁷⁴ see above, p. 64.

³⁷⁵ *CFR*, 1452-1461, p. 155.

³⁷⁶ *The Paston Letters. 1422-1509 A.D.*, J. Gairdner (ed.) (London, 1895), vol. i, p. 442.

³⁷⁷ see Chapter 4, p. 184.

³⁷⁸ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 223.

³⁷⁹ *CPR*, 1452-1461, p. 557.

³⁸⁰ *CPR*, 1452-1462, pp. 534-35.

³⁸¹ *CPR*, 1452-1461, p. 603.

³⁸² *ibid.*

³⁸³ In Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Hampshire and Wiltshire, and in Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Middlesex and Hertfordshire, *CPR*, 1452-1461, pp. 613-14

Together with other Lancastrians he tried to keep London for Henry VI but failed.³⁸⁴ John IX fought on Henry VI's side in the battle of Towton.³⁸⁵ After the victory of Edward IV John IX's lands were forfeited,³⁸⁶ but eventually he made his peace with the new regime and his lands were returned.³⁸⁷ He was involved in the quarrel over the possession of the manor of Ashby de la Zouche. Before 4 April 1461 he expelled James Butler, Earl of Wiltshire and Ormond, shortly before his estates were officially forfeited.³⁸⁸ The manor was part of the Beaumont lands³⁸⁹ and John IX's occupation presumably an attempt to claim the estates after the death of his father-in-law in the battle of Northampton in 1460.³⁹⁰ The financial position of John Lovell IX was strained: in 1462 he recognized a debt of 1,000 marks to Richard Quartermayns.³⁹¹ John IX was also forced to sell some manors in Shropshire.³⁹² The only time John IX was involved in the administration of the Yorkist regime was when he was appointed on a commission of oyer and terminer in 1464.³⁹³

John Lovel IX died young on 9 January 1465.³⁹⁴ His widow married, probably in the same year, Sir William Stanley.³⁹⁵ She died on 5 August 1466.³⁹⁶ Barbara Coulton claims that Joan, Lady Lovell had three children with Sir William Stanley – William, Joan, and Catherine – and died on 24 August 1469.³⁹⁷ This claim, which Coulton does not support with any kind of evidence, has to be discounted in the light of the *Inquisitions post mortem* dated to the seventh year of Edward IV's reign.

³⁸⁴ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 223.

³⁸⁵ Richmond, *Nobility*, p. 76.

³⁸⁶ *CPR*, 1461-1467, p. 35.

³⁸⁷ No official entry seems to have been made; the return must have happened between 8 August 1461, when receivers for the forfeited lands were appointed, *CPR*, 1461-1467, pp. 43-44, and 27 December 1461 when certain lands were ratified, *ibid.*, p. 87.

³⁸⁸ *CPR*, 1461-1468, pp. 549-50.

³⁸⁹ J.M. Williams, 'The Political Career of Francis Viscount Lovell (1456-?)', *The Ricardian* 8 (1990), p. 383.

³⁹⁰ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, p. 62.

³⁹¹ *CCR*, 1461-1468, p. 139.

³⁹² see Chapter 3, pp. 93-94.

³⁹³ *CPR*, 1461-1467, p. 346.

³⁹⁴ *Writ of diem clausit extremum* dates 14 January 1464, *CFR*, 1461-1471, p. 127. C140/13 no. 27.

³⁹⁵ *CPR*, 1461-1467, p. 474.

³⁹⁶ *Writ of diem clausit extremum* dated 14 September 1466, *CFR*, 1461-1471, p. 177. C140/19 no. 20; C140/40 no. 7.

³⁹⁷ B. Coulton, 'The Wives of Sir William Stanley: Joan Beaumont and Elizabeth Hopton', *The Ricardian* 9 (1992), p. 315.

2.5. The Titled Lovell: Francis, Viscount Lovell (1465-1487?)

John Lovell IX's son and heir, Francis Lovell, was about nine years old at his father's death. His wardship and marriage was granted to Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick.³⁹⁸ It is relatively certain that Francis Lovell actually moved to Middleham Castle, where he grew up and made the most important acquaintance of his life with one of the other wards of the Earl of Warwick: Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Richard Neville married Francis Lovell to his niece, Anna FitzHugh, daughter of his sister Alice Neville and Henry, Lord FitzHugh.³⁹⁹ At the time of the insurrection of his father-in-law in 1470,⁴⁰⁰ Francis, his wife Anna and his two sisters, Frideswide and Joan, were apparently living with Lord FitzHugh. They were included in the pardon the rebels received.⁴⁰¹ After Edward IV's return to England Francis's father-in-law Henry FitzHugh seems to have intended to send his wife, Alice Neville, their eldest son and Francis to Scotland, but nothing came of this.⁴⁰² As Francis was still a minor after Edward IV had re-established himself in power in 1471, Edward granted Francis's wardship, together with some of his lands, to his sister Elizabeth and her husband John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk.⁴⁰³ Francis Lovell probably lived with the de la Poles for the next few years.⁴⁰⁴ Portions of the Lovell estates were given to other aristocrats.⁴⁰⁵ The custody of Francis's grandmother's land was given as a payment for outstanding debts of 4000 marks to Gerard Canizen.⁴⁰⁶ In 1474 parts of her estates were granted to different aristocrats.⁴⁰⁷

Francis Lovell joined the Corpus Christi Guild at York, together with his wife.⁴⁰⁸ On 6 November 1477 he received his lands, lordships, manors and all other

³⁹⁸ *CPR*, 1467-1477, p. 51

³⁹⁹ *Paston Letters*, Davis, vol ii, p. 375.

⁴⁰⁰ For an account of the revolt see A.J. Pollard, 'Lord FitzHugh's Rising in 1470', *BIHR* 53 (1979), 175-75.

⁴⁰¹ *CPR*, 1467-1477, pp. 215-16.

⁴⁰² Williams, p. 386.

⁴⁰³ *CPR*, 1467-1477, pp. 261, 312.

⁴⁰⁴ Williams, p. 386.

⁴⁰⁵ Ralph Hastings was granted the keeping of Titchmarsh, *CPR*, 1467-77, p. 440, and Humphrey Blount that of Acton Burnell, *ibid.*, p. 257.

⁴⁰⁶ *CPR*, 1467-1477, p. 468. Francis is called her son and heir in this entry.

⁴⁰⁷ The hundred of Sutton (Northamptonshire) was granted to William Newenham, *CFR*, 1471-1485, p. 87; the manor of Wilkescote (Wiltshire) to Richard Draper, *ibid.*, p. 88, the manor of Chilton (Wiltshire) to Robert Wynnyng, *ibid.*, p. 88; the manor of Chylton (Wiltshire) to William Walters, *ibid.*, pp. 88-89.

⁴⁰⁸ *The Registrum of the Guild of Corpus Christi in the City of York*, R. H. Skaife (ed.), Surtees Society 57 (1872), p. 86.

appurtenances.⁴⁰⁹ He continued in the service of Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Due to this and his marriage the centre of activities for Francis Lovell shifted from the south of England to the north.⁴¹⁰ He was appointed to commissions in Yorkshire.⁴¹¹ In 1480 Francis accompanied the Duke of Gloucester on his campaign into Scotland, where Francis was dubbed knight by Richard.⁴¹² Still in Edward IV's reign, on 4 January 1483, he was created Viscount Lovell.⁴¹³ This elevation was certainly due to the influence of his friend Richard. The description of the ceremony wrongly supposes the king to be Richard III,⁴¹⁴ a mistake also made by some historians,⁴¹⁵ including modern researchers.⁴¹⁶ The elevation into the titled nobility reflects not only Francis's close link to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, but also the fact that his estates were large enough to support a title. Indeed, his family had been wealthy enough for some time: their landed income had surpassed that of the poorest earl.⁴¹⁷ In the next parliament, Edward IV's last, Francis was appointed trier of petitions for England.⁴¹⁸

During the short reign of Edward V, Francis Lovell rose into positions of power, no doubt due to his connection to Richard, who had now become Lord Protector. Francis was appointed Chief Butler as well as constable of Wallingford Castle.⁴¹⁹ After Richard assumed the throne, Francis rose rapidly in importance and influence. At the coronation of Richard III he bore the third sword of the state.⁴²⁰ His wife, mother-in-law, cousin and other members of the family participated in the grand spectacle as well.⁴²¹ He became Lord Chamberlain as successor of William Hastings, a position usually held by a close

⁴⁰⁹ *CPR*, 1477-1485, p. 62.

⁴¹⁰ 'The Lovell affinity ... had evidently been allowed to disintegrate, and by the end of the reign there is still no sign that Lovell had begun to pick up the pieces.' R. Horrox, *Richard III. A Study in Service* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 221; see also Chapter 3, pp.122-23, 130-31.

⁴¹¹ In 1480 he was appointed to a commission of array in the North Riding, *CPR*, 1476-1485, p. 213; in 1482 to a commission of oyer and terminer in the three Ridings of Yorkshire, *ibid.*, p. 343.

⁴¹² *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 224.

⁴¹³ see Chapter 4, pp. 173-75.

⁴¹⁴ British Library Add. MS. 6113, fol. 126d.

⁴¹⁵ Edward Hall, *The Union of the Two Noble and Illustrious Families of Lancaster and York* (Menston, 1971), Richard III, fol. i dorse.

⁴¹⁶ e.g. Rosenthal, *Nobles*, p. 33; Ronald Butt, *A History of Parliament. The Middle Ages* (London, 1989), p. 624.

⁴¹⁷ see Chapter 4, p. 172.

⁴¹⁸ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi, p. 196b.

⁴¹⁹ *British Library Manuscript. 433*, R. Horrox and P. Hammond (eds.)(Gloucester, 1983), vol. iii, pp. 3-4.

⁴²⁰ *The Coronation of Richard III. the Extant Documents*, Anne F. Sutton and P.W. Hammond (eds.)(Gloucester, 1983), p. 37.

⁴²¹ see Chapter 4, pp. 166.

friend of the monarch.⁴²² He was re-appointed Chief Butler on account of the death of Anthony Woodville, Lord Rivers.⁴²³ In 1483 Francis became a Knight of the Garter,⁴²⁴ and was re-appointed as constable of Wallingford Castle; additionally he received the honour of Wallingford St. Valery and four and a half Chiltern hundreds including fees and wages.⁴²⁵

Francis Lovell was heavily involved in the government of Richard III's reign. He was on the general commission of array for the resistance against Henry, Duke of Buckingham.⁴²⁶ His detachment from his family's former centre of power and the gentry there is demonstrated by his letter to Sir William Stonor, in which Francis Lovell asks him to array men against the Duke of Buckingham, on whose side William Stonor actually fought.⁴²⁷ Francis Lovell was member of the commission to arrest and imprison the rebellious Duke.⁴²⁸ He was also on the commission of oyer and terminer in 1484 dealing with counterfeit money in nine counties⁴²⁹ and the commission of muster of archers to be sent to Brittany.⁴³⁰ He also sat in eight further commissions of the peace after 1483.⁴³¹ This can be seen as a ploy by Richard III to fill the commissions with aristocrats loyal to him. However, Francis Lovell held land in all those counties, and his father as well as his grandfather had been sitting in many of those commissions.⁴³² He was a member of the commission to investigate the treasonous activities of William Collingbourne, most famous for his doggerel on Francis Lovell, Richard Ratcliffe and William Catesby.⁴³³

Francis Lovell's influence was mainly founded on his close connection with Richard. During the short reign of Richard III he received considerable grants of land, mainly centered around his Oxford estates.⁴³⁴ Yet he never managed to use these new estates for

⁴²² Horrox, *Richard III*, p. 249. Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 72-73.

⁴²³ 'Grant for life to the king's kinsman Francis Lovel, ..., of the office of chief butler of England, void by the death of Anthony, late earl Ryvers,' *CPR*, 1477-1485, p. 365, see also Horrox and Hammond, vol. i, pp. 78-80; see Chapter 4, pp. 163-65.

⁴²⁴ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, Appendix B.

⁴²⁵ *CPR*, 1477-1485, p. 365, see also Horrox and Hammond, vol. i, pp. 78-80.

⁴²⁶ *CPR*, 1476-1485, p. 370.

⁴²⁷ *Kingsford's Stonor Letters*, pp. 418-19.

⁴²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 371.

⁴²⁹ *CPR*, 1477-1485, p. 544.

⁴³⁰ *ibid.*, p. 547.

⁴³¹ Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Essex, Northamptonshire, Yorkshire East Riding and North Riding, and Wiltshire.

⁴³² Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Yorkshire North Riding, Wiltshire; see Chapter 3, pp. 130-31.

⁴³³ *CPR*, 1476-1485, p. 519.

⁴³⁴ see below, p. 73.

political influence and was remarkably badly connected with the local gentry, even in his patrimony.⁴³⁵ His role in the regime of Richard III is more difficult to fathom than might be assumed from the elevated position he held in government. Unlike many other nobles who achieved a position of power and influence close to the monarch, as for example the Despensers under Edward II or the close friends of Richard II (including Francis's great-great-grandfather John Lovel VII), Francis Lovell did not provoke hostility from opponents. The only indication of animosity is the often-quoted doggerel of William Collingbourne:

‘The catte, the ratte, and Louell our dogge,
Rulyth all Englande vnder the hogge
The whiche was ment, that Catisby, Ratclyffe and the lorde Louell, ruled
the land vnder the kyng, which bare the whyte bore for his
conysaunce.’⁴³⁶

The fact that Francis Lovell seems to have filled his positions in such an unobtrusive manner means that, despite his prominent position, there is hardly any reference to him in the chronicles. Neither Mancini's *Usurpation of Richard III* nor Thomas More's *History of Richard III* mentions Francis Lovell at all. He remains a 'shadowy presence' for the modern historian.⁴³⁷ Only after Richard III's death and the attempts to overthrow Henry VII does Francis become more prominent in the chronicles.⁴³⁸ In Shakespeare's famous play he has three lines.⁴³⁹

Though the main focus of his attention was with his friend Richard, Francis did not neglect his family's estates and responsibilities. He was involved in several suits over the possession of some Holland estates, the manors of Thorpe Waterfield, Aldwincle, Achurch and Chelveston (Northamptonshire) with Sir Richard Grey, the stepson of Edward IV.⁴⁴⁰ He was also involved in a dispute with the king's chamberlain William Hastings about the manors of Ashby de la Zouche, Thornton and Bagworth (Leicestershire), part of the Beaumont estates. He lost both these quarrels during the reign of Edward IV; however, the possession of the Holland estates were finally granted to him

⁴³⁵ Horrox, *Richard III*, p. 222.

⁴³⁶ R. Fabyan, *The New Chronicles of England and France in to Parts* (London, 1811), p. 672.

⁴³⁷ Williams, p. 382.

⁴³⁸ for example, Richard F Green, 'Historical Notes of a London Citizen', *EHR* 96 (1981), Polydore Vergil, *The Anglica Historia, 1485-1537*, Denys Hays (ed. and trans.), Camden Society third ser. 74 (1950), pp. 10-24.

⁴³⁹ III. 4 ; LOVELL [to Hastings] 'Come, come, dispatch! Tis bootless to exclaim.'

III. 5; coming in with Ratcliff and Hasting's head:

'Here is the head of that ignoble traitor,

The dangerous and unsuspected Hastings.'

⁴⁴⁰ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi, pp. 254b-55a.

by Richard III in 1483 and the wardship of the Beaumont lands during the minority of William Hasting's heir. He was also involved in a suit over pasture rights with the City of York.⁴⁴¹ Richard III recommended Francis as officer in Richard's mother's estates in Wiltshire.⁴⁴² Together with William Catesby he was given the constablenesship of the Castle of Rockingham.⁴⁴³ In 1484 he was granted the manors and lordships of Cookham and Bray (Berkshire), with annuities for the widows of two old acquaintances.⁴⁴⁴ His sister Frideswide, who was married to Sir Edward Norreys of Yattendon (Berkshire), received an annuity of 100 marks.⁴⁴⁵ The grant was presumably a result of the participation of William Norreys, Frideswide's father-in-law, in the rebellion of Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham. William Norreys had fled the country after the collapse of the uprising and his estates were forfeited. A considerable part was granted to Francis.⁴⁴⁶ Francis was also assigned the town and parish of Harrow.⁴⁴⁷ William Staveley granted him the manor and all other lands, tenements, services, and reversions in Broughton Lovell in 1484.⁴⁴⁸ The keeping of the manor of Langley during the minority of the Earl of Warwick was granted to Francis. He was made master forester of Wychwood, as his father and grandfather had been, and received the stewardship of Burford, Shipton, Spellesbury and the hundred of Cadlangtone with the keeping of the land of Burford with wages and fees.⁴⁴⁹ The list of lands, lordships and manors granted to Francis Lovell, which is also included in the British Library Manuscript edited by Horrox and Hammond is quite impressive: the manors of Yattendon, Hampstead, Aldworth, Buckholt, the land and tenement in Spenhamland, the manor or land and tenement in Frilsham, manor or lordship in Wyle, Fulscot, Midgham, Halecourt, Martelstone, Stokes in Compton, and land and tenement called Maydenhithe in Cookham (all Berkshire), the manor or lordship in Edes (Wiltshire) and more, altogether he was granted lands worth £400.⁴⁵⁰ Thomas Danvers and John Legh granted the manor and lands in Kirby Bellers to Francis Lovell in 1484.⁴⁵¹ Francis Lovell was in dispute with his cousin Henry Lovell, Lord Morley,

⁴⁴¹ Williams, p. 387.

⁴⁴² Horrox and Hammond, p. 3

⁴⁴³ J.S. Roskell, 'William Catesby, Counsellor to Richard III' *Bulletin of the John Ryland's Library* 42 (1959), p. 285.

⁴⁴⁴ *CPR*, 1476-1485, pp. 478, 487, 503. Margaret Harcourt received an annuity of £40 and Anne Stonor an annuity of £10, Horrox and Hammond, vol. i, p. 251.

⁴⁴⁵ *CPR*, 1476-1485, pp. 483, 508. Horrox and Hammond, vol. i, p. 252.

⁴⁴⁶ see Chapter 3, p. 89.

⁴⁴⁷ *CPR*, 1486-1485, p. 540.

⁴⁴⁸ *CCR*, 1476-1485, p. 281.

⁴⁴⁹ Horrox and Hammond, vol. i, p. 282.

⁴⁵⁰ Horrox and Hammond, vol. iii, pp. 148-49; see Chapter 4, pp. 170-71.

⁴⁵¹ *CCR*, 1476-1485, p. 358.

about the manor and lordship of Claydon, Buckinghamshire.⁴⁵²

On 20 February 1484 Francis Lovell and John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, Francis's former guardian, received licence to found a fraternity of twelve masters, secular persons of either sex, within the church of St. Helen, Abingdon (Berkshire).⁴⁵³ This was in fact a resurrection of an elder fraternity in that church. The function of the fraternity was to repair the street between Abingdon and Dorchester, Oxfordshire and to celebrate divine service for the health ('good estate') of Francis Lovell, his father and grandfather, and Richard III and his family.⁴⁵⁴ There is no information about the fate of the foundation.

It is difficult to judge Francis Lovell's personal position in a reign only lasting for two years and plagued with the ever present problem of succession, first Edward IV's and Richard's own, after the death of his son. It seems that Francis Lovell was a faithful friend of his lord. He fought in the battle of Bosworth, 22 August 1485, and escaped. After the change of dynasty Francis continued his opposition to Henry VII. Unlike most other nobles, including Richard III's nephew and heir apparent, John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, Francis Lovell never tried to come to terms with the new regime. In the first notifications of the result of the battle he was listed, together with John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk, Richard Ratcliffe, and John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, as being killed.⁴⁵⁵ It seems likely that Henry VII would have been willing to take Francis Lovell back into grace. The fact that Francis is mentioned in the 'Devize for the Coronation of Henry VII', however, is most likely a mistake.⁴⁵⁶ There is no evidence that Francis actively tried to come to terms with the new regime. His lands were forfeit and he was attainted in the Parliament in November 1485.⁴⁵⁷

Francis Lovell spent the next months in hiding. He was in sanctuary in Colchester.⁴⁵⁸ In the spring of 1486 he tried to kidnap Henry VII at York, while John Sante, Abbot of Abingdon, had the task of freeing the young Edward, Earl of Warwick, son of George,

⁴⁵² Horrox and Hammond, vol. ii, p. 53.

⁴⁵³ *CPR*, 1476-1485, p. 386.

⁴⁵⁴ *CPR*, 14877-85, p. 386; J. Rosenthal cites this as an occasion where unrelated great men were commemorated, though William Lovell was obviously Francis's grandfather, and Richard, Duke of York, the father-in-law of John de la Pole, Joel Rosenthal, *Patriarchy and Families of Privilege in Fifteenth Century England* (Philadelphia, 1991), p. 20.

⁴⁵⁵ S.B. Chrimes, *Henry VII* (London, 1972), p. 51.

⁴⁵⁶ The devize has him carrying the sceptre with the dove for the coronation of queen Elizabeth, 'a captur of gold with a dowe in the topp to be born by the Viscounte Louell'; 'Rutland Papers', W. Jerdan (ed.), *Camden Society orig. series* (1842), p. 12; see Chapter 4, p. 166.

⁴⁵⁷ *Rot.Parl.*, vol. vi, pp. 275b-76b; Enquiry into the lands forfeit, August 1486, *CPR*, 1485-1494, pp. 133-35.

⁴⁵⁸ *Letters and Papers of the Reign of Richard III and Henry VI*, J.G. Gairdner (ed.), RS 24 (London, 1861), vol. i, p. 234.

Duke of Clarence.⁴⁵⁹ Both attempts failed miserably. Francis Lovell seems to have fled to Furness Fells where other 'rebels' had hidden.⁴⁶⁰ He was then reported as being in Ely on 19 May 1486.⁴⁶¹ He fled to Burgundy perhaps with the help not only of his in-laws, the FitzHughs, but also that of the Pastons.⁴⁶² There he stayed with the dowager duchess Margaret, sister of Richard III and Edward IV.⁴⁶³ He took part in the attempt to establish Lambert Simnel as the Yorkist heir to the throne. He was in Ireland in the spring of 1487 and took part in the coronation of Lambert Simnel in Dublin.⁴⁶⁴ Together with John de la Pole, Francis Lovell was one of the most prominent persons taking an active part in the rebellion.⁴⁶⁵ He fought in the battle of Stoke on 16 June 1487 and disappeared afterwards. A rare insight into the personal life of his family is given by a letter which Francis Lovell's mother-in-law wrote to John Paston III when she cancelled a business meeting. 'Also my doghtyr Louell makith great sute and labour for my sone hir husbonde. Sir Edwarde Franke hath been in the north to inquire for hym. He is comyn agayne, and cane noight vnderstonde wher he is.'⁴⁶⁶ It seems that his family was as much in the dark about what happened to Francis Lovell as we are.

There are a number of theories about the fate of Francis Lovell after the battle of Stoke. It is certain that, unlike John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, he survived the battle itself. There is a legend that he survived and lived secretly in a cellar in Minster Lovell.⁴⁶⁷ This is highly unlikely. Not only was Minster Lovell given to none other than Jasper Tudor after the forfeiture of the Lovell lands in 1485, but Francis Lovell had also spent only a short time there, so he would probably have no faithful servant to hide him.⁴⁶⁸ There is another tradition in which Francis Lovell fled to Scotland, where he lived for several years. He might have died there in late 1491 or early 1492.⁴⁶⁹ Though this is a possibility

⁴⁵⁹ Williams, pp. 393-94.

⁴⁶⁰ S. O'Connor, 'Francis Lovell and the Rebels of Furness Fells', *The Ricardian* 7 (1987), p. 366.

⁴⁶¹ *Paston Letters*, Davis, vol. ii, p. 447-48.

⁴⁶² Williams, pp. 394-95.

⁴⁶³ O'Connor, p. 367.

⁴⁶⁴ Williams, p. 395.

⁴⁶⁵ 'Historical Notes of a London Citizen', p. 589.

⁴⁶⁶ *Paston Letters*, Davis, vol. ii, pp. 455-56.

⁴⁶⁷ Allegedly his body was discovered on 6 May 1728 in a vault under Minster Lovell Hall 'as having been sitting at a table, which was before him, with a book, paper, pen, etc., etc.; in another part of the room lay a cap; all much mouldred and decayed. Which the family and others judged to be this lord Lovel, whose exit hath hitherto been so uncertain.' F. Peck, *Memoirs of Oliver Cromwell*, p. 87, cited after A.J. Taylor, *Minster Lovell Hall. Oxfordshire* (English Heritage)(1985), p. 19.

⁴⁶⁸ For arguments for this story see D. Baldwin, 'What happened to Lord Lovell?', *The Ricardian* 7 (1985), 60-65.

⁴⁶⁹ For this possibility see O'Connor, pp. 368-69.

it would be surprising, especially given his unwavering support to any opposition against Henry VII, that he did not reappear in the course of one of the later rebellions.

The distribution of the lands of Francis Lovell is probably one the most detailed listings of the Lovell estates ever made. The attainder of Francis Lovell was passed in the first parliament of Henry VII, on 7 November 1485. Probably at that time he was also degraded from being Knight of the Garter.⁴⁷⁰ But already before this date part of the estates were handed out. On 4 November Robert Hals, 'gentilman' received the office of the bailiwick of Hals (Northamptonshire) and the keeping of the park there.⁴⁷¹ Thomas Lovel of Barton Bendish, the chancellor of Henry VII, was granted the lordship of Didlington (Oxfordshire).⁴⁷² The largest part of the lands went to Jasper Tudor, Henry VII's uncle; Minster Lovell, Rotherfield Grey and Banbury (Oxfordshire), Risingdon (Gloucestershire), Acton Burnell, Holgate, Uppington and other manors in Shropshire were part of the generous grants the new Duke of Bedford received from his nephew.⁴⁷³ John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, who had spent most of his live in exile, was also generously rewarded,⁴⁷⁴ partly with estates forfeited by Francis Lovell.⁴⁷⁵ Charles de Somerset, illegitimate son of Henry, Duke of Somerset, received part of the Lovell estates, including the manor and lordship of Titchmarsh, and other estates in Northamptonshire.⁴⁷⁶ Other recipients of grants were John Mortimer, knight of the king's body,⁴⁷⁷ John Dudley,⁴⁷⁸ John North,⁴⁷⁹ John Savage,⁴⁸⁰ Nicholas Luyston,⁴⁸¹ Edmund Bedyngfeld,⁴⁸² Thomas Wolton,⁴⁸³ John, Viscount Welles,⁴⁸⁴ William Stanley,⁴⁸⁵ Thomas Stanley,⁴⁸⁶ John Molton⁴⁸⁷ and John Risley.⁴⁸⁸ In 1489 Anna

⁴⁷⁰ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, Appendix B.

⁴⁷¹ *CPR*, 1485-1494, p. 24

⁴⁷² *ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

⁴⁷³ *CPR*, p. 64.

⁴⁷⁴ *Chrimes*, p. 54-55.

⁴⁷⁵ *CPR*, 1485-1494, p. 121.

⁴⁷⁶ *CPR*, 1485-1494, p. 100.

⁴⁷⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 90-91.

⁴⁷⁸ *ibid.*, p. 88.

⁴⁷⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 74-75.

⁴⁸⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 101-2.

⁴⁸¹ *ibid.*, p. 167.

⁴⁸² *ibid.*, p. 189.

⁴⁸³ *ibid.*, p. 62.

⁴⁸⁴ *ibid.*, p. 236.

⁴⁸⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 263-64.

⁴⁸⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 270-71.

⁴⁸⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 340-41.

⁴⁸⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 209-10.

Francis Lovell's wife/widow was granted an annuity of £20 per annum from Henry VII.⁴⁸⁹ She was still living in 1495; the date of her death is not known.⁴⁹⁰

⁴⁸⁹ *Letters and Papers*, vol. ii, p. 71.

⁴⁹⁰ Williams, p. 397.

2.6. The End of the Lovell Family; William and Henry Lovell, Lords Morley

William Lovell was the second son of William Lovell III, and like his two younger brothers was given some estates by his father.⁴⁹¹ William married Elizabeth St. Clare before 1445.⁴⁹² She was one of the co-heiresses of Thomas St. Clare. Her sister Eleanor was married to John Gage and her second sister Edith to Richard Harcourt.⁴⁹³ Elizabeth died leaving no children from her marriage and her lands reverted to her sisters. After her death and before 1465, William married Elizabeth Morley, heiress of the Morley barony.⁴⁹⁴ After the death of her grandmother Isabel, daughter of Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, William Lovell and his wife Eleanor were given seisin of her lands.⁴⁹⁵ William was knight of the shire for Oxfordshire 1459.⁴⁹⁶ Though it was not general practice by this time, his marriage to Elizabeth Morley could have given William Lovell the right to individual summons in the right of his wife. He was indeed summoned to the parliament scheduled to take place in York during the time in which Edward IV was in the hands of the Earl of Warwick.⁴⁹⁷ He was summoned as William Lovell, Lord Morley, during the readaption parliament of Henry VI in 1470.⁴⁹⁸ Perhaps due to his partisanship to the Lancastrian regime, William Lovell was not summoned again to any other parliaments during the second reign of Edward IV. He died in 1475, and his wife died very shortly afterwards.⁴⁹⁹

Their son Henry Lovell, Lord Morley, was still a minor when his parents died. His wardship was granted to John Say, knight, and John Sturgeon, esquire.⁵⁰⁰ But not all of the Morley estates were given to them; some parts were granted to other aristocrats.⁵⁰¹ Some of the Morley lands seem to have remained in the king's hands or returned to it as

⁴⁹¹ see Chapter 3, pp. 113.

⁴⁹² *CPR*, 1441-1446, p. 443.

⁴⁹³ *VCH*, Oxfordshire, vol. v, p. 285.

⁴⁹⁴ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ix, p. 219; this was the same family with whom the Lovells had fought about the right to the arms *argent, a lion rampant sable crowned and armed or*.

⁴⁹⁵ 27 May 1467, *CFR*, 1461-1471, p. 208.

⁴⁹⁶ Josiah C. Wedgewood and Ann D. Holt, *History of Parliament. Biographies of the Members of the Commons. 1436-1509* (London, 1936), pp. 556-57.

⁴⁹⁷ *CCR*, 1468-1476, pp. 115-16.

⁴⁹⁸ Dugdale, p. 467.

⁴⁹⁹ The *writs of diem clausit extremum* are dated 18 and 26 October 1476, *CFR*, 1471-1485, pp. 136, 121. The inquisitions for both are kept together. C140/59 no. 73.

⁵⁰⁰ *CPR*, 1467-1476, p. 603.

⁵⁰¹ e.g. James Ratcliffe was granted the manor of Swanton Morley, co Norfolk, in 1477, *CPR*, 1476-1485, p. 15, other examples, *ibid.*, pp. 3, 5, 16, 37, 48.

Richard III sent orders to the tenants in Wooburn Deincourt (Buckinghamshire), to pay all due sums to officers appointed by Henry Morley.⁵⁰² Some of the lands, the manor and lordship of Halingbury Morley (Essex), the manors of Walkerne (Hertfordshire), the manors of Hyngham, and Buston Buxstone, the hundred of Fairchoo (Norfolk), were demised to William Parker, the husband of Henry Morley's sister Alice.⁵⁰³ Henry Lovell married Elizabeth de la Pole, daughter of John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk (the former guardian of Henry's cousin Francis), and his wife Elizabeth, sister of Edward IV. It was a very prestigious marriage, indicating the importance of Henry Lovell. On 5 February 1489 he had licence to enter his inheritance without proof of age.⁵⁰⁴ Henry Lovell was killed shortly afterwards on 13 June 1489 during the battle of Dixmunde.⁵⁰⁵ His early death, without leaving any children, ended the male line of the Lovells of Titchmarsh. Though the last Lovell was killed in battle, infertility as much as violence caused the extinction of this family.⁵⁰⁶

As he died young, Henry Lovell, Lord Morley, was never summoned to parliament. Though his father had not been summoned after the return of Edward IV, it is likely that Henry would have been summoned had he lived longer. It is, of course, futile to question what would have happened if Henry had not died so young, but there is a considerable chance that he might have regained some of the estates forfeited by his uncle Francis. Together with the Morley's estates, and the Beaumont inheritance which was to come to the Lovells in 1508,⁵⁰⁷ his landed income would have been considerable. His link to the de la Poles however, would probably have been detrimental to a career at the Tudor court. Elizabeth de la Pole's dower was assigned on 18 November 1489.⁵⁰⁸ She did not marry again, presumably because of her family's possible claim to the Crown.

⁵⁰² Horrox and Hammond, vol. ii, pp. 28-29.

⁵⁰³ Horrox and Hammond, vol. ii, pp. 50-51.

⁵⁰⁴ *CPR*, 1485-1494, p. 268.

⁵⁰⁵ *Writ of diem clausit extremum* dated 27 June 1489, *CFR*, p. 88, 116, *CIPM*, vol. i (2nd series), nos. 499-509.

⁵⁰⁶ 'When William [III]'s grandson, Henry Lovel, Lord Morley, died childless in 1489 six Lovels had died in their bed since 1450 as against one (probably) violent death.' McFarlane, *England*, p. 258, n. 97.

⁵⁰⁷ see below, p. 81.

⁵⁰⁸ *CCR*, 1485-1500, p. 118, *Writ of dote assignanda*, *CIPM*, vol. i (2nd series), no. 199.

2.7. Post Script: The Lovell Descendants; Morley, Stapleton and Norreys⁵⁰⁹

The heiress of Henry Lovell, Lord Morley, was his sister Alice Lovell, who had married William Parker, a member of Richard III's 'Middleham Connection'.⁵¹⁰ It was unfortunate that part of the Morley estates and some parts of the original Lovell inheritance had been held by Henry Morley in tail male, with remainder to Francis Lovell. After Henry Morley's death those lands reverted to the Crown on account of the attainder in parliament and forfeiture of Francis.⁵¹¹ After the death of William Parker (sometime after 1504) and before 1506, Alice married Edward Howard, son of Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk. Alice died in 1518.⁵¹²

Henry Parker, her son from her first marriage, was her heir. Before his mother's death he had married Alice, daughter of Sir John St. John of Bletsoe. Henry was closely connected to the royal court and accompanied Henry VIII to the continent several times. He was summoned to Parliament after 1523.⁵¹³ His daughter Jane married George Boleyn, Lord Rochford, brother of Queen Anne Boleyn. Despite this connection he took part in the trial of Anne Boleyn in 1536, also against her brother, his son-in-law George. The accused included Henry Norreys, his first cousin once removed.⁵¹⁴ George Boleyn was executed on 17 May 1536. Henry Parker and his family remained heavily involved in the activities at the royal court. Henry carried Princess Elizabeth at the baptism of Prince Edward in 1537 and was one of the six lords to carry the canopy on the funeral of queen Jane Seymour. His daughter, Jane Parker, became a Lady of the Bedchamber of Henry VIII's fifth Queen Catherine Howard, and was executed on the same day as her unfortunate mistress, together with three other ladies, for having acted as procuresses of the queen.⁵¹⁵ Henry Parker was a supporter of the act of uniformity. He attended the funerals of Henry VIII and Edward V as well as the coronation of Queen Mary.⁵¹⁶ Henry Parker, Lord Morley, died in 1556. His son, another Henry, had predeceased him.⁵¹⁷

The third Henry Parker, Lord Morley, was a supporter of Catholicism, and – together

⁵⁰⁹ see Appendix 2, Figure 9: The Lovell Descendants.

⁵¹⁰ *CFR*, 1485-1509, pp. 125-27. *CIPM*, vol. i (2nd series), nos. 491, 499-509; see also *Complete Peerage*, vol. ix, pp. 220-21.

⁵¹¹ *CPR*, 1485-1494, pp. 298, 299, 304, 305, 307, 309-10.

⁵¹² *Complete Peerage*, vol. ix, p. 221.

⁵¹³ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ix, pp. 221-22.

⁵¹⁴ see below, p. 81.

⁵¹⁵ *Complete Peerage*, vol. x, p. 142.

⁵¹⁶ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ix, pp. 220-223.

⁵¹⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 224-25.

with his grandfather – had attended the coronation of Queen Mary, where he was created Knight of the Bath. He became involved in the machinations of the Duke of Norfolk and had to flee the country. He died in exile in Paris in 1577. For the next generations the family seems to have wavered between conforming with the Anglican Church and their Catholic faith. An interesting note to the history of the family is that it was William Parker, grandson of the third Henry Parker, who received an anonymous warning about the Gunpowder Plot. Even though he was regarded as a ‘recusant’ and was married to the sister of one of the conspirators, he passed the warning on.⁵¹⁸ The family became extinct in the male line in 1697 with the death of Thomas Parker, fifteenth Lord Morley, and sixth of the Parkers, Lords Morley.⁵¹⁹

Francis Lovell’s sisters, Frideswide and Joan, both had sons. Frideswide, and the heirs of Joan, unsuccessfully tried to recover some of the estates forfeited by Francis. In 1507 the family of their mother, Joan Beaumont, became extinct in the male line with the death of William, Viscount Beaumont. The inheritance was divided between Brian Stapleton, son of Joan Lovell and Brian Stapleton, and John Norreys, son of Frideswide Lovell and Edward Norreys. It was the descendant of Brian Stapleton, Miles Thomas Stapleton, who was summoned as Lord Beaumont in 1840.⁵²⁰

Frideswide Lovell’s younger son, Henry Norreys, became a gentleman of the King’s chamber and was one of the closest friends of Henry VIII. Henry Norreys later became an opponent of Cardinal Wolsey and a good friend of Anne Boleyn, whom he supported in her ambitions. For some time he profited from his allegiance, but when Anne Boleyn fell from grace, Henry suffered from his close connection with her, even though he was supposed to have been one of the promoters of Henry VIII’s third marriage to Jane Seymour. He was arrested and executed in 1536 as one of Anne Boleyn’s alleged lovers.⁵²¹

The execution and forfeiture did not damage the family’s fortune permanently. Henry VIII restored some of Henry Norreys’s estates to his son, Henry Norreys II. After Elizabeth I became Queen she showed herself generous to the son of a man whom ‘she believed to have sacrificed his life in the interests of her mother’.⁵²² She restored the remainder of the Norreys estates to him. His wife, Elizabeth Williams, was also highly regarded by Queen Elizabeth, as her father, John Williams, had shown great kindness to her during her imprisonment at the time of her sister’s reign. Henry Norreys II was

⁵¹⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 225-27.

⁵¹⁹ *ibid.*, p. 232.

⁵²⁰ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, pp. 63-65.

⁵²¹ *DNB*, vol. xiv, pp. 566-67.

⁵²² *DNB*, vol. xiv, p. 568.

summoned to parliament from 1572 onwards. Henry Norreys II and his wife Elizabeth had six sons, who distinguished themselves as soldiers during the reign of Elizabeth I.⁵²³ Most notable among them was John Norreys.⁵²⁴ A great monument of Henry Norreys II, including life-sized figures of Henry Norreys, his wife and their six sons, is in St. Andrew's Chapel in Westminster Abbey.⁵²⁵ The Norreys estates were inherited by Francis Norreys, the son of William Norreys, eldest son of Henry Norreys II. He was created Viscount Thame and Earl of Berkshire in 1621. Only two years later, following an argument with Lord Scrope, Francis Norreys was sent to prison for a short time and subsequently committed suicide in 1623.⁵²⁶ His daughter Elizabeth inherited his estates.⁵²⁷

⁵²³ *ibid.*, pp. 567-69.

⁵²⁴ *DNB*, vol. xiv, pp. 572-77.

⁵²⁵ Margaret Whinney, *Sculpture in Britain. 1530 to 1830* (Harmundsworth, 1964), pp. 17-18, plate 10.

⁵²⁶ *DNB*, vol. xiv, p. 565.

⁵²⁷ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ix, pp. 648-49.

3. Estates, Family and Locality

Every analysis of a ruling class or individual has to start with an examination of their basis of power. As has been discussed in the Introduction to this thesis, the basis for power throughout the middle ages was land.¹ It is generally accepted that the position of every aristocrat in England was dependent upon the amount of land he – or she – held.² The pattern of landholding differed significantly between the ranks of the aristocracy. Whereas the nobility's estates stretched over large parts, if not all, of the realm, the estates of the gentry were situated in one county with some parts stretching into adjacent counties. Though this is a helpful generalization of the landholding pattern of the English aristocracy, as is usually the case with generalizations, exceptions seem to be nearly as frequent as the rule. One issue hardly ever addressed in research is how the status of the baronage was reflected in the distribution of their land. Several questions have to be asked about the connection between rank and landholding. First, whether the barons' rank, between the gentry and the titled nobility, might also determine the pattern of their landholding. Secondly, whether their estates could, for example, be spread over a number of counties but still be concentrated in one region of the realm. The layout of their lands might resemble that of the richer gentry with whom they are seen to have much in common. Additionally, we have to ask whether there were significant differences between the estates of barons who had just risen into the parliamentary peerage and those whose family had held their title for several generations. As the older baronial families tended to have more lands, we have to examine how this increasing wealth changed the general shape of their estates.

The examination of the landholding patterns of the different ranks of the aristocracy is not simply interesting for its own sake. As the basis of power, the different structures of the estates determined the area in which the landholder could influence local politics and administration. It has been said that the longer the lands were held by one family the stronger was that family's hold over the men living in and around the estate.³ The continued control not only set up a tradition of service to a particular family; the lord often

¹ For full bibliographical references relating to this section, see Chapter 1.

² For example C. Carpenter, defines land as 'the creation and reflection of a family's political and economic standing.' Carpenter, 'Beauchamp Affinity', p. 521; 'As the family collects land it rises; or alternatively as the family rises, it collects land. The two processes are more than inseparable, they are identical.' J.L. Kirby, 'The Hungerford Family in the Later Middle Ages' (unpubl. MA thesis, London, 1939), pp. 4-5.

³ Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, pp. 162-63.

enjoyed special rights in this area, for example rights of free warren or of return of writs. Connections with neighbouring families became closer, and relations with tenants intensified over generations. This phenomenon would put the nobility in a better position to exercise their power as they were generally the families resident longer in the area. Precisely because the nobility tended to be more established, made up of an older landed elite, so too this group tended to hold on to its land for longer than many of the gentry – a group that always included a significant number of families that had only shortly before risen from the ranks of the yeomanry. Needless to say, the nobility's greater authority on the national level improved their position in the localities as well. However, the scattered nature of the nobility's estates made them more difficult to control. Moreover, the nobility is said to have been more interested in the broader aspects of the development of the realm as a whole, leaving direct influence in and the politics of the localities to the lesser landowners. If the nobility wanted to control local affairs, they used their status to influence the lower ranks of the aristocracy, thus dominating the localities indirectly. Their involvement in court politics, their frequent absences abroad to fight in the king's wars as well as the scattered nature of their estates made it more likely for them to lose contact with local politics. The gentry on the other hand were present and involved in the affairs of the region in which they lived.⁴ Again the question arises, whether the difference is indeed as clear-cut. The personal interests of the individual aristocrat must have also had an influence on his participation in the affairs of the localities as well as at the centre of power, although his role, what influence he could or was expected to exercise, was also determined by his status. By examining the positions the barons held in the localities, we can determine their attitude towards this area of government. We have to ask whether they tended to follow the titled nobility in seeking influence and power on the national level, and therefore restricted their involvement in the localities to dominating the gentry. Or were they in fact in the same position as the knights in the shires, under the control of the magnates?

Besides their land, family – and marriage in particular – were subjects of the greatest importance to the medieval aristocrat. This chapter will address some fundamental questions about baronial marriages. How did barons choose their wives? Did they marry women of the same background? What costs were they willing to accept for the hand of a prospective heiress? The origin of the wives' families will give some indication of how much the barons were restricted in their perception of the country. Did they, like the higher nobility, look across the entire kingdom for spouses or were their wives from the

⁴ Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, p. 83.

same part of the country as themselves?⁵ Similar questions have to be asked about the marriages of other members of baronial families. This will help to determine what importance was given to the marriages of younger sons and daughters of the family. Were there, for example, significant differences between their marriage arrangements and those of the heir?

The connections with the other families living around them will be examined as well. Who were the men and women with whom the baronial family associated? How did they interact with families of the same rank and what were their connections with those families of lower and higher ranks living around them? Is it possible to judge from the origins of these associates where the family was bound into the local politics and where they had no interest in influencing the localities? Did the families with whom they had links change in the course of time?

This chapter will begin with an examination of the lands the Lovells possessed, examining how and when they came into their possession. It will then discuss Lovells' connections with other aristocratic families, the marriage strategies they employed and general considerations about the importance of family, wives, sons and daughters. This will lead into an assessment of the family's involvement in local affairs and their connections with other aristocratic families. Throughout, the status of the Lovells as members of the baronial class will be compared with that of other families of similar rank.

⁵ 'marriages beyond the county boundaries tended, however, to be confined to the higher reaches of local society.' Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 99.

3.1. The Estates of the Lovells of Titchmarsh

To determine the nature and amount of power at the disposal of the Lovell family it is necessary to estimate the extent of the estates in the hands of the family, to establish where they were situated and also to determine how they came into the hands of the Lovells. It will also be necessary to discover how the nature of the landholding changed – if indeed it did change – between the time when John Lovell III received his first individual summons to parliament in 1297 and the extinction of the family with the death of Henry Lovell in 1489.

3.1.1 The Acquisition and Alienation of the Lovell Estates

3.1.1.1. Acquisition

The means of acquiring land in the later middle ages can be divided into three categories: by purchase, by grant, and by marriage or inheritance. It could be argued that different groups within the aristocracy employed different means of acquiring lands. Newer members of the aristocracy tended to acquire their landed interests through purchases. Courtiers, lawyers, soldiers or merchants tried to transfer their monetary profits into status, as did those families who had reached the lower ranks of the gentry. The older families were reluctant to use this method, as it was often complicated by litigation. Royal grants were the method employed by courtiers whose close contact with the king enabled them to secure a share of royal patronage. Marriage and inheritance was the way the older noble and gentle families used to enlarge their estates. However, it seems unlikely that such differentiation can be made that easily. Where in this system would a baronial family such as the Lovells stand? As the method of acquisition fundamentally influenced the structure of landholding, this is an important issue. Another aspect that will have to be addressed is whether and how the method of acquisition employed by the Lovells changed during the two hundred years discussed in this thesis.

When examining the landholding pattern of the Lovells, it becomes clear that even in 1297, at the time of their elevation into the peerage, the Lovell estates did not conform with the pattern regarded as typical for a family of their status, that is, of knightly rank. John Lovell III held five manors: Titchmarsh (Northamptonshire), Elcombe (Wiltshire), Minster Lovell (Oxfordshire), Docketing and Southmere (Norfolk).⁶ Although he could not ‘by any stretch of imagination be called [a] baron by tenure’,⁷ his estates were scattered

⁶ see Appendix 3, Map 1.

⁷ Sidney Painter, *Studies in the History of the English Feudal Barony* (Baltimore, 1943), p. 53.

over a considerable part of the Midlands and East Anglia. This widespread nature of the estates was probably highly inconvenient and must have made administration extremely difficult. Some of the Lovell manors had been granted to the family by the King (Docking and Southmere), while others (Minster Lovell and Titchmarsh) had been inherited. Other families of similar rank to the Lovells show a corresponding pattern of landholding at this time: Alan de la Zouche, first Lord of the Ashby de la Zouche family, held similarly dispersed estates; twelve manors and some lands in thirteen counties.⁸ Milicent de Cauntelo, mother of the first Lord de la Zouche of Haringworth, held eight manors, one hamlet, one borough, one hundred and some lands in nine counties.⁹ The shape of the Lovell estates, even at this early stage fairly widespread, was apparently typical for families of their rank.

The Lovells used all three methods to increase their landholding. They acquired land by purchase, through grants and by marriage. As purchase is often regarded as being the method used by families newly risen into the aristocracy, we might expect that the Lovells used this method particularly during the thirteenth and early fourteenth century. However, judging from the surviving records, the Lovells started to buy lands only some time after they had become part of the nobility, at the end of the fourteenth century. John Lovell VII is the first Lovell who is known to have purchased lands or the reversion thereof. The most important acquisition was a part of the former estates of Sir Laurence St. Martin: the manors of Knook, Wardour, and Knighton (Wiltshire) and Sutton Waldron (Dorset), which he bought from one of the co-heirs, Thomas Calston, between 1386 and 1393.¹⁰ In 1389, John Lovell VII purchased the reversion of Bridzor from the abbess and convent of Shaftesbury.¹¹ It can be assumed that at least a part of the new estates of John Lovell VII were purchased, although no records exist indicating how they were acquired. In the fifteenth century, William Lovell III also acquired estates from Richard, Duke of York. As with the acquisition of the St. Martin inheritance, this purchase led to a long legal dispute that was still occupying William III's grandson Francis Lovell in 1477.¹² Contrary to general opinion the Lovells of Titchmarsh started buying land at a late stage,

⁸ *CIPM*, vol. v, no. 458.

⁹ *CIPM*, vol. iii, no. 539.

¹⁰ The inheritance of Sir Laurence St. Martin was partitioned between Thomas Calston and Henry Popham. Henry Popham tried to regain the estates. Only after extended litigations, which lasted till 1410 did Popham drop his claim on the estates: *CCR*, 1402-1405, pp. 412-13, 461-62; *CCR*, 1409-1413, p. 75; Roskell, Clark and Rawcliffe, vol. iv, p. 114. Robert Lovell, younger son of John Lovell VII, made quitclaim of the manor in 1413: *CCR*, 1413-1419, pp. 58, 62. Sutton Waldron was then granted by Maud and her son John, to John and Walter Roggers: *CPR*, 1422-1429, p. 263.

¹¹ *CPR*, 1388-1391, p. 21.

¹² *CCR*, 1476-1485, pp. 76.

long after they had become barons. Only then did they have enough income to afford to buy more lands. It is interesting to note that it was John Lovell VII, who was a more prominent figure at the royal court than the rest of his family, who first bought significant estates to increase his family's lands.

Looking at other baronial families it becomes clear that land was indeed purchased by 'new' families, as for example the Catesbys¹³ or the Scropes.¹⁴ William de la Pole acquired some estates permanently that had been given to him as sureties for loans.¹⁵ However, established baronial families also spent large amounts of money on the purchase of land, as for example William Scrope who purchased the Isle of Man, probably the most spectacular of these transactions.¹⁶ The Berkeleys and the Greys of Ruthin also purchased land in the vicinity of their other estates.¹⁷ The acquisition of land by purchase had an advantage over other methods in that it was easier to influence the location of the additional estates: if possible lands situated close to other estates of the family were acquired. Purchase of lands was, however, often complicated by litigation. The laws of inheritance allowed comparatively distant relatives to lay claim to the estates of their family. It was advisable to inquire in detail about other possible claimants and if necessary buy them off. If the background of the acquisition was not investigated sufficiently, another claimant might be found to exist and lengthy litigation would follow. Sir John Fastolf, who invested his gains from the French wars, was embroiled in several law-suits over his newly gained lands.¹⁸ John Lovell VII and Francis Lovell had similar experiences.¹⁹ Although no exact statement about the number of purchases can be made, it is clear that the Lovells occasionally bought estates. Purchase was evidently not the main method employed to increase their estates, neither before nor after they achieved the rank of baron. However, it would be wrong to assume that certain groups within the aristocracy were *per definitionem* more likely to buy lands than others. If possible, most aristocrats, whether 'new' men or barons of old stock, would grasp at the opportunity to acquire lands.

The second method of increasing one's land was by means of a grant from the king or, on rare occasions, from another landholder. It was, however, highly unusual that one aristocrat granted another part of his land. It is therefore not surprising that the only two

¹³ Carpenter, *Locality*, pp. 119-20.

¹⁴ Vale, vol. I, p. 30.

¹⁵ Horrox, *de la Poles*, p. 26.

¹⁶ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 168.

¹⁷ Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, p. 162, Jack, 'Greys of Ruthin', pp. 180-82.

¹⁸ Lewis, 'John Fastolf's Lawsuit', 1-3.

¹⁹ see above. Whether inheriting land was less complicated by other claimants will be discussed below, p. 90.

grants made by private persons were made to the two most prominent Lovells: John Lovell VII was given the lordship of Newbury (Berkshire) for life by Edmund Mortimer,²⁰ and Francis Lovell and some of his associates received a gift of land from William Staveley.²¹ More frequent were grants from the king. However, the Lovells received only a small number of grants from the king, most of these were only for a restricted period.²² More usual than grants of land were grants of offices.²³ These grants also extended the area that the recipient could influence, albeit only temporarily and as a deputy for the king. It was the extraordinarily close connection between Francis Lovell and Richard III which resulted in the first substantial permanent grants to the family. These lands were situated in close proximity to Francis's other southern estates, and were a largely unsuccessful bid by the king to strengthen the position of Francis and thereby, ultimately, his own.²⁴ Most of the lands he was granted in Berkshire were the estates forfeited by Sir William Norreys, father-in-law of Francis's sister Frideswide.²⁵ It is reasonable to assume that if Richard III had survived the lands would eventually have been returned to the Norreyses; either to William Norreys when he had made his peace with the King, or after William's death, to his son Edward Norreys.²⁶

The Lovells were in fact not exceptional in receiving only very few grants of land from the king. A similar sparsity of grants have been discovered by the historians who researched the Scropes,²⁷ the Greys of Ruthin²⁸ and the Hungerfords.²⁹ Only very important magnates and those aristocrats who had direct access to the king were more regularly granted lands. One example is Ralph Cromwell, who received quite substantial

²⁰ *CIPM*, vol. xv, no. 542; He also granted the manor of Great Hambleton (Rutland) to John Lovell VII for life, *CIPM*, vol. xix, no. 404.

²¹ *CCR*, 1476-1485, p. 281.

²² For example the keeping of the lands of the alien priories of Cogges and Minster Lovell for ten years in 1431 to William Lovell III, *CFR*, 1437-1445, pp. 17, 39.

²³ For example the keeping of the Castle of Devizes and the custody of Chippenham Forest was granted to John Lovell VII in 1381, *CPR*, 1381-1385, p. 62; the custody of Wallingford Castle, and the office of steward in the honour with the usual fees were granted to William Lovell III for life in 1450, *CPR*, 1446-1452, p. 333.

²⁴ see below, p. 90.

²⁵ see Appendix 3, Map 5.

²⁶ Though of course purely speculative, it is tempting to assume that Francis Lovell would have offered little resistance to the reinstatement of his sister and her husband in their estates, even to his own disadvantage. He could be seen as holding the estates in "a kind of protective custody as an act of fraternal loyalty", just as the loyal Nevilles held the forfeited estates of their rebellious kin after the Barons' War in the later thirteenth century, Charles Young, *The Making of the Neville Family, 1166-1400* (Woodbridge, 1996), p. 89; see also, Chapter 2, p. 73.

²⁷ Vale, vol. i, pp. 126-27.

²⁸ Jack, 'Greys of Ruthin', p. 179.

²⁹ Kirby, 'Hungerford Family', p. 78.

grants of land, particularly during his tenure as treasurer. However, many of these grants were only temporary.³⁰ Sir John Stanley, despite his connection with Richard II, received little from the king and only after the accession of Henry IV was he awarded larger grants.³¹ Land was scarce and only occasionally found its way into the king's hands; only rarely were minor noblemen rewarded with a permanent land grant. These grants were generally rewards for specific services.³² The experience of the Lovells of Titchmarsh in that respect was therefore representative for the baronage. It is obvious that only the Lords who were closely connected with the court received substantial grants, particularly John VII and Francis Lovell.³³

Most estates found their way into the hands of the Lovell family by the third and most secure, though slowest, means of acquisition: inheritance. Three fortuitous marriages multiplied the estates of the Lovells.³⁴ The first was that of John Lovell IV to Maud Burnell who became her brother's heir in 1315.³⁵ The second inheritance by marriage was that of the barony of Holland in 1373. As several Holland manors were held in tail male, they reverted to the cousin of Maud Holland's father, Thomas Holland, elder son of her grandfather's younger brother Thomas.³⁶ The acquisition of the Holland estates more than doubled the number of manors the Lovells held.³⁷ The third inheritance by marriage was that of the Deincourt and Grey of Rotherfield estates.³⁸ Although, as we have seen, the Lovells used other methods to expand their estates, these three inheritances were the chief means by which they acquired their estates, and thus increased their status.

However, these inheritances were not without their complications. Nor were they as planned and straightforward as it may seem. Like purchased estates, inherited lands could involve the heir in lengthy litigation and quarrels. One example is that of the Burnell estates. After the death of Hugh Burnell, grandson of Maud Burnell, widow of John Lovell IV, and her second husband John Haudlo, his heirs general were his three

³⁰ R.L. Friedrichs, 'The Career and Influence of Ralph Lord Cromwell. 1393-1356', (unpubl. PhD thesis, Columbia, 1974), pp. 193-95.

³¹ Barry Coward, *The Stanleys. Lord Stanley and Earls of Derby. 1385-1672. The Origins, Wealth and Power of a Landowning Family*, Chetham Society 30, (Manchester, 1983), pp. 4-6.

³² see below, Chapter 4, pp. 169-71.

³³ see Chapter 2, pp. 57-58, 72-73.

³⁴ see below, p. 103.

³⁵ See Appendix 3, Map 2.

³⁶ These were the manors of Dalbery, Wirksworth, Foxlow and Hertington in Derbyshire, and the manors or lands of Haydock, Goldbourne, Brightmead, Harwood, Overderwent, Newton in Makerfeld and Langton in Lancashire.

³⁷ see Appendix 3, Map 3.

³⁸ see Appendix 3, Map 4.

granddaughters while his heir male was William Lovell III.³⁹ William Lovell retrieved most of the Burnell estates despite the claims of Hugh's granddaughters. Apparently Hugh Burnell did not know, or chose to ignore, the fact that the Burnell estates were entailed. The marriage arrangements for Hugh's granddaughters seem to have been made under the pretence that they would inherit his considerable estates, although, to use Roskell's words, 'in fact, Lord Burnell possessed not a single acre of which he was free to dispose.'⁴⁰ Sir Walter Hungerford secured the marriage of Margaret Burnell for the considerable sum of £1,000 for one of his younger sons, Edmund,⁴¹ and had the marriage contract affirmed by the king.⁴² The marriage was not a complete financial disaster; William Lovell III granted the manor of Rowland Ryght (Oxfordshire) to the couple.⁴³ It seems that an amicable settlement was reached between the two families. The Hungerfords and Lovells, who were neighbours in Oxfordshire and had been associates for some time,⁴⁴ continued to keep on friendly terms even after the quarrel about the Burnell inheritance.⁴⁵ In 1416, another of Hugh Burnell's granddaughters, Katherine, was engaged to John Talbot, Lord Furnival. The contract was later dissolved when the groom discovered that the considerable dowry of more than 30 manors, which Hugh Burnell had promised, would not in fact be forthcoming. Katherine eventually married Sir John Ratcliffe, who after twelve years of lawsuits managed to secure three manors as his wife's inheritance,⁴⁶ as well as the manors of Docking and Southmere (Norfolk).⁴⁷ Hugh Burnell's third granddaughter was married to Thomas Erdington, a retainer of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick.⁴⁸

Conflicts between different heirs over an inheritance were quite common. Ralph Cromwell, for example, was engaged in a prolonged lawsuit over the lands of his cousin

³⁹ see Appendix 2, Figure 6: The Burnell Family.

⁴⁰ Roskell, Clarke and Rawcliffe, vol. iv, p. 157.

⁴¹ Roskell, Clarke and Rawcliffe, vol. iii, p. 446.

⁴² CPR, 1416-1422, p. 49.

⁴³ CIPM, Henry VII, vol. i, no. 137.

⁴⁴ John Lovell VII appears as a witness in several charters in the Hungerford Cartulary, *The Hungerford Cartulary. A Calendar of the Earl of Radnor's Cartulary of the Hungerford Family*, J.L. Kirby (ed.), Wiltshire Records Society 49 (Trowbridge, 1994), pp. 33, 112, 183, 224. The Cartulary also includes a quitclaim witnessed by a John Lovell dated 1356. As the then Lord Lovell, John Lovell VI, was just 14 years of age, it seems likely that it is an unrelated man of the same name; *ibid.*, p. 49

⁴⁵ In 1431 William Lovell was one of the noblemen supporting Walter Hungerford's proposition regarding the salary of the Duke of Gloucester, Kirby, 'Hungerford', p. 42.

⁴⁶ Billingford, Thurning and East Ryston (Norfolk).

⁴⁷ Roskell, Clarke and Rawcliffe, vol. iv, p. 157; CPR, 1436-1441, pp. 544, 563; CCR, 1435-1441, pp. 414, 424; 1441-1447, pp. 10-11.

⁴⁸ Carpenter, 'Beauchamp Affinity', p. 516.

Margaret Graa.⁴⁹ Even the Grey-Hastings trial at the court of chivalry was caused by the question of which of the two families had a right to inherit the Earl of Pembroke's coat-of-arms and ultimately his lands.⁵⁰ Very often those lawsuits were between the heirs male and the heirs general of the deceased.⁵¹ Entails, originally created to ensure the easier passage of land, proved to have their own pitfalls.

As will be discussed below, with the possible exception of Maud Holland, none of the wives of the Lords Lovell were heiresses when the marriages were contracted. The inheritances were an unexpected windfall caused by the surprising death of the original heir of the family.⁵²

It was not only the nobility who increased their lands through marriage; the gentry used the same method. The Stanleys' first great increase of land was due to Sir John Stanley's marriage to Isobel Lathom, daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas Lathom.⁵³ Thomas Chaucer acquired his first landed interests with his marriage to Maud Burghersh, daughter and co-heiress of Sir John Burghersh.⁵⁴ Although obtaining land by marrying a rich heiress or outliving other branches of one's family was a relatively safe way to increase one's estate, it was not without its problems. Inheritance always included a high risk factor and was highly unpredictable. It came down to the question of who would outlive whom. Moreover, as heiresses were rare and highly sought after it was nearly impossible to find one whose estates were situated close to the lands already held by the family. Though the scarcity of land on the market created the same problem for purchases, it was still easier to create a compact estate by acquisition than through inheritance. Most families, baronial as well as those of higher and lower rank, would marry a potential heiress, even when their estates would become unwieldy and widespread as a result. Even families like the Hungerfords, whose early estates lay closely around their main residence of Farleigh Hungerford, and might have been more reluctant to create a scattered landholding pattern than families whose lands were

⁴⁹ Friedrichs, 'Ralph, Lord Cromwell', pp. 296-304.

⁵⁰ Maurice H. Keen, 'English Military Experience and the Court of Chivalry; the Case of Grey v. Hastings', in Philippe Contamine, Charles Giry-DeLoison, and Maurice H. Keen (eds.), *Guerre et Société en France, en Angleterre et en Bourgogne, XIV^e- XV^e Siècle* (Lille, 1992), pp. 125-128; see Chapter 5, pp. 236-37.

⁵¹ 'Thanks to the practice of entailing land, inheritances disputed between heirs male and heirs general were becoming commoner in the Lancastrian period.' McFarlane, *England*, p. 246. A classic example of lengthy litigations over inheritance is the series of law suits over the Berkeley inheritance, which was 'undoubtedly the longest family squabble in the whole course of English legal history', it lasted nearly 200 years. Lander, 'Family, Friends', p. 29.

⁵² see below, p. 106.

⁵³ Coward, pp. 3-4.

⁵⁴ J.S. Roskell, *Parliament and Politics in Late Medieval England* (London, 1983), vol. iii, p. 155.

dispersed already, acquired a number of estates in other parts of the realm from their respective wives.⁵⁵

3.1.1.2. Alienation

It is a truism that if some families gained land, others lost part or all of their estates. Most noble families at some stage found themselves in a position when they had to sell or mortgage land. The connection between land and status meant that these families sold part of their status with their lands.⁵⁶ But it was not financial difficulties alone that could deprive families of their lands. Political miscalculation could sometimes lead to loss of land: in particular during the Wars of the Roses, many families had their lands forfeited temporarily or for ever.⁵⁷ Though land was of utmost importance to the medieval aristocrat, there were occasions in which he would voluntarily alienate some of his estates, either for religious purposes or to endow younger sons and daughters.⁵⁸

The Lovells, like many others, found themselves in situations in which the sale of land became necessary. John Lovell IX, who had temporarily lost his estates to the crown because he had backed Henry VI to the bitter end, was obviously in financial difficulties in the last years of his life when he acknowledged debts of 1, 000 marks to Richard Quartermayns.⁵⁹ In 1463, he sold the manor of Pitchford (Shropshire) to Thomas Stoke, a merchant from Shrewsbury.⁶⁰ In the same year he sold the manors of Rowton and Amaston (Shropshire) to another Shrewsbury merchant, William Luster.⁶¹ The lands sold by John Lovell IX were part of the Shropshire estates, lands for which neither he nor his family had ever shown real interest. Although the Lovells like other noble families were willing to split their estates in order to endow younger sons, only in cases of emergency were they willing to sell them. Indeed it is likely that the Lovells sold more of their land during their history than these three manors, transactions of which we know nothing as the records have been lost. However, it is obvious that the Lovells, like other noble families, were reluctant to part with their estates.

The Lovells experienced few catastrophes, and none were of permanent duration.

⁵⁵ Kirby, 'Hungerford', pp. 91, 143.

⁵⁶ 'loss of land was not only damaging in itself but could entail loss of status.' Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 94.

⁵⁷ The political fortunes and misfortunes of the Lovells, including the forfeitures, will be discussed in Chapter 4, pp. 179-81, 182-87.

⁵⁸ see below, p. 112.

⁵⁹ *CCR*, 1461-1468, p. 139.

⁶⁰ *VCH*, Shropshire, vol. iv, p. 79.

⁶¹ *VCH*, Shropshire, vol. viii, p. 201.

Ultimately Francis Lovell's unwillingness to come to terms with the new Tudor regime after Bosworth was a major cause of the demise of the family. But it was his disappearance after the battle of Stoke as well as the death of his only male relative, Henry Lovell, Lord Morley, two years later, that finally dispersed the Lovell estates, part of which were forfeited, part held in tail male and so reverted to the crown.⁶² Other families, as for example the Hungerfords, had the misfortune of having the heir of the family taken prisoner in France.⁶³ Additionally, two Hungerfords, Robert, third Lord Hungerford, and Sir Thomas Hungerford were both executed during the Wars of the Roses, their land forfeited to the crown. Sir Walter Hungerford took part in the unsuccessful rebellion of the Duke of Buckingham in 1483. His lands were forfeited, but after the accession of Henry VII his attainder was reversed as were those of his relatives.⁶⁴ Though the fortunes of the family were severely damaged by this string of unfortunate political decisions, it was not completely destroyed by them.

A different reason for parting with lands led Francis Lovell to sell the Hospital of St. James and St. John in Brackley (Northamptonshire) to William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester. The Hospital was dissolved on the grounds that it did not fulfil its duties any more.⁶⁵ The lands (together with the former Lovell manor of Titchwell) were used by Bishop Waynflete to endow his foundation of Magdalen College, Oxford. Francis Lovell's grandmother had also granted lands to the College earlier.⁶⁶ It is safe to assume that the transfer was conducted under the condition that Waynflete used the lands for the College. The lands sold by Francis Lovell were not only at the centre of his estates and in a county where the Lovells usually exercised their influence, more significantly his most famous ancestor, John Lovell VII, was buried in the church of the Hospital. It had been set aside for a religious purpose by Francis's great-grandmother, Maud Holland, widow of John Lovell VII. Although the hospital had not been functioning for some time when it was sold, it is surprising that Francis Lovell sold this particular property.⁶⁷

The example of Brackley Hospital also raises questions about the degree to which baronial families mobilised their property for the endowment of religion. It is difficult to draw any general conclusions about the importance of religious foundations for the nobility and their willingness to part with their land to support their foundations. Family

⁶² see Chapter 2, pp. 78-79.

⁶³ M. Hicks, 'Counting the Cost of War: The Moleyns Ransom and the Hungerford Land-Sales, 1453-87', in M. Hicks, *Richard III and his Rivals. Magnates and Their Motives in the Wars of the Roses* (London, 1991), pp. 185-208.

⁶⁴ *ibid.* pp. 59-63.

⁶⁵ *VCH*, Northamptonshire, vol. ii, 153.

⁶⁶ Oxford, Magdalen College, Brackley, 66a, M Northants, II, 764.

⁶⁷ see Chapter 5, pp. 207-10.

tradition had some influence on the amount of grants made by aristocrats⁶⁸ but most depended on the individual founder's personal wishes,⁶⁹ making any generalization hazardous at best.⁷⁰

3.1.1.3. Conclusion

We have seen that the main method the Lovells used to increase their estates throughout their history was marriage and inheritance. In this respect the Lovells acted like a typical aristocratic family. For, despite the problems mentioned above, inheritance was still the safest way to acquire land. It was the way used – if possible – by all the different ranks of the aristocracy, from gentlemen to high ranking dukes.⁷¹ The Lovells were lucky in the number of heiresses that they married. The negative side of this was that the lands the family accumulated were not concentrated in one part of the country but spread all over the realm. Other families, particularly the Scropes, managed to create an estate with a definite centre of interest, in their case, Yorkshire.⁷² This phenomenon was certainly the result of the Scropes' habit of marrying locally.⁷³ Like other families who rose to prominence in the fourteenth century, they accumulated a large part of their lands by purchase.⁷⁴ The de la Zouches, on the other hand, who rose into the peerage at the same time as the Lovells, similarly acquired their estates mainly by inheritance and marriage. Their lands, like those of the Lovells, were spread over a large part of the country.⁷⁵

The main difference between these families is that the Lovells and de la Zouches were raised into the nobility earlier than the Hungerfords and Scropes. While the latter received their first individual summons after the parliamentary peerage had solidified into a separate class around the middle of the fourteenth century, the Lovells as well as the de la Zouches were among the first to receive summonses. They rose from the knightly class,

⁶⁸ The Greys of Ruthin, for example, Jack, 'Greys of Ruthin', p. 107.

⁶⁹ 'Family tradition played little part in shaping the piety of the individual Hungerford or the distinctive form in which it was expressed.' M. Hicks, 'Chantries, Obits and Almshouses: The Hungerford Foundations, 1325-1478', in M. Hicks, *Richard III and his Rivals: Magnates and their Motives in the Wars of the Roses* (London, 1991), p. 98.

⁷⁰ see Chapter 5, pp. 206-14.

⁷¹ For example Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and his brother George, Duke of Clarence, married the co-heiresses of Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, John de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk married Alice Chaucer, the twice-widowed heiress of Sir Thomas Chaucer.

⁷² Vale, vol. i, p. 113.

⁷³ *ibid.*, pp. 120-21.

⁷⁴ The original Hungerford estates, except the inherited Peverell manors were within forty miles of Farleigh Castle, the main residence of the Hungerfords, Kirby, 'Hungerford', p. 91.

⁷⁵ William de la Zouche, second Lord la Zouche, held land in nineteen counties and a tenement in London at the time of his death in 1381, Rosenthal, *Nobles*, p. 59.

through military service to the crown, to their new rank, while the Scropes and Hungerfords were civil servants and lawyers before they joined the nobility. The main difference in landholding pattern seems to derive less from the position the family held than from the time their rise into the peerage occurred. The difference, however, became less significant the longer the family was part of the baronage. If the family did not become extinct it was inevitable that one of the wives would inherit land which was situated in a different part of the realm. Over time, the originally compact estates of a family like the Hungerfords, became as dispersed as the lands of the Lovells.

3.1.2. Geographical Distribution

The estates of the Lovells of Titchmarsh were spread over several counties. At the time they were elevated to the parliamentary peerage they already held land in four different counties.⁷⁶ As their estates grew during the next centuries they became even more widely scattered. At the time of their largest extent, the estates of the Lovells of Titchmarsh stretched over twenty-four counties and two cities.⁷⁷ By the late fourteenth century the Lovell estates were considerable (John Lovell VII was called 'lord Lovel the Rich')⁷⁸ and were still increasing in size. The fact that most lands were acquired through inheritance led to an erratic and fragmentary expansion of estates which did not conform to a coherent plan and which resulted in lands being spread throughout the realm.

For two hundred years the Lovells were on the winning side of the demographic development, producing male heirs while other families, including those of their wives, failed to do so.⁷⁹ Though the annual income the Lovells received from their estates had by 1436 surpassed the limit of 1,000 marks⁸⁰ (which was thought to be the prerequisite for elevation to an earldom)⁸¹ their rise into the titled nobility was delayed by nearly half a century. The extent to which this was caused by the half-hearted involvement of William Lovell III in the affairs of the realm will be discussed in the next chapter.⁸²

The centre of the Lovell estates was and continued to be in the Midlands, particularly in

⁷⁶ see Appendix 3, Map 1.

⁷⁷ Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Derbyshire, Dorset, Essex, Gloucestershire, Hampshire Lancashire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, London, Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland, Shropshire, Somerset, Staffordshire, Suffolk, Surrey, Warwickshire, Worcestershire and the three ridings of Yorkshire as well as the city of York.

⁷⁸ Lewis, 'Sir John Fastolf's Lawsuit', pp. 12-13.

⁷⁹ "As long as the family did not die out, a great inheritance tended to expand." George Holmes, *The Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1957), p. 8.

⁸⁰ H.L. Gray, 'Incomes from Land in England in 1436', *EHR* 49 (1934), p. 615.

⁸¹ Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility*, p. 4.

⁸² see Chapter 4, p. 157.

Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire and, further to the east, Northamptonshire. Though this remained true the inheritances expanded into other parts of the realm. The Burnell estates lay mostly in Shropshire. Shropshire, as well as Somerset and Dorset, where another large part of the Burnell estates was situated, was a part of the kingdom where the Lovells had not previously had interests.⁸³ The Holland lands were partly situated close to the Lovell estates in Northamptonshire; for example the manors of Achurch, Aldwinkle and Chelveston lay in close proximity to Titchmarsh. In other southern and Midland counties the situation was similar. However, other Holland estates, such as those located around their *caput honoris* at Upholland in Lancashire, were in regions of the country distant from the other Lovell lands.⁸⁴ The Deincourt estates were themselves spread over a large part of the country, from Derbyshire to Yorkshire, the latter being a county where the Lovells had previously held no lands.⁸⁵

Much has been made of the fact that 'every lord had his *caput honoris*',⁸⁶ a central manor that was his main residence and the centre of his administration. The questions of where the Lovells' *caput honoris* was, and indeed whether there was a single residence which served the purpose for all generations, needs to be considered here.⁸⁷ It is around this main residence, that the lord exerted his influence on local politics most directly.⁸⁸ It was also the site of his building activities and where he and his family were buried.⁸⁹ Due to all these indications, the *caput honoris* would, at least in theory, be easily discernible from other residences.

To gain an impression of which of the Lovell manors were the main residences, it is possible to look for certain characteristics which give some evidence of the prolonged presence of the family in the house. There are the special rights enjoyed by the family and licenses to crenelate a manor, an indication that the residence was either restored or even rebuilt. The location of parks and fishponds also give some evidence as to which of the manors were used on a regular basis.

The original regional centre of the Lovells was in Norfolk. It was also in this area that they were granted special rights.⁹⁰ Only after John Lovell II had let the manors of

⁸³ see Appendix 3, Map 2.

⁸⁴ see Appendix 3, Map 3.

⁸⁵ see Appendix 3, Map 4.

⁸⁶ Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, p. 104.

⁸⁷ The questions of the location of the Lovells' *caput honoris* will be addressed again later in the thesis.

⁸⁸ see below, p. 119.

⁸⁹ see below Chapter 5, pp. 207-13.

⁹⁰ Free warren was granted to John Lovell II in 1268 for Southmere and Docking, *CChR* 1257-1300, p. 93, as was a weekly market and yearly fair in Docking (Norfolk), *ibid.*

Docking, Southmere, Titchwell and Elcombe, was the main residence moved to Titchmarsh.⁹¹ Henceforth, it was in Northamptonshire that the Lovells sought and acquired special rights. In 1274, the right to free warren is recorded for the manor of Titchmarsh. However, after that date it is not mentioned any more.⁹² In 1304 a weekly market and an annual fair were granted for Titchmarsh.⁹³ From 1314 the right to free fishery in the River Nene was held with the manor.⁹⁴ In the latter part of the fourteenth century John Lovell VII's favourite residence was at Wardour (Wiltshire). He obtained a licence to crenelate it in 1393. His grandson, William Lovell III, preferred to reside at Minster Lovell, where he rebuilt the manor house.⁹⁵

The location of fishponds can also be seen as an indication of the prolonged residence of the Lovells at a manor. Freshwater fish were a status symbol which indicated the wealth of a family.⁹⁶ Though the fish could be transported to other residences it was of course more economic to have the fishpond located at a frequently visited manor. The fishery in Titchmarsh (Northamptonshire) has already been mentioned.⁹⁷ Minster Lovell had three fishponds.⁹⁸ There was also a fishpond in Elcombe (Wiltshire),⁹⁹ which though not a main residence, was one of the first estates the Lovells held in England. Other places of residence were probably chosen for their convenient location and the fact that their topography allowed the construction of fishponds. However, in some locations, the ponds had probably been planned by earlier owners.¹⁰⁰

Similarly, parks were usually connected with a major residence. John Lovell III had licence to enclose a park near Minster Lovell (Oxfordshire) in the forest of Wychwood in 1296.¹⁰¹ Nearly 150 years later William Lovell had a second licence for the enclosure.¹⁰² This provides one hint that Minster Lovell was one of the Lovells' residences from an

⁹¹ see Chapter 2, p. 42.

⁹² *VCH*, Northamptonshire, vol. iii, p. 146.

⁹³ *CChR*, 1300-1326, p. 49.

⁹⁴ *VCH*, Northampton, vol. iii, p. 146.

⁹⁵ see Chapter 5, pp. 192-205.

⁹⁶ C.C. Dyer, 'The Consumption of Fresh-water Fish in Medieval England', in Michael Aston (ed.), *Medieval Fish, Fisheries and Fishponds in England*, British Archaeological Reports, British Series 182 (1988), vol. i, pp. 27-38.

⁹⁷ *CIPM*, vol. ix, nos. 44 and 393.

⁹⁸ C.J. Bond and R.A. Chambers, 'Oxfordshire Fishponds', in Aston (ed.), *Medieval Fish*, vol. ii, p. 361; Other medieval fishponds were in Cogges and Shipton under Wychwood, *ibid.*, p. 358.

⁹⁹ *VCH*, Wiltshire, vol. xi, p. 246.

¹⁰⁰ There were fishponds in Bagworth and Thornton (Leicestershire), *CIPM*, vol. xiii, no. 263; a fishpond in Shepshead (Leicestershire), C139/6 no. 51; a fishery in Yoxhall (Staffordshire), *CIPM*, vol. xiii, no. 263.

¹⁰¹ *CCR*, 1296-1303, p. 87.

¹⁰² *CPR*, 1436-1441, p. 376.

early stage. Another park, 'Barley Park', was part of the manor of Ducklington (Oxfordshire).¹⁰³ There were further parks in Rotherfield Grey (Oxfordshire),¹⁰⁴ Yoxhall (Staffordshire)¹⁰⁵ and Castle Bromwich (Warwickshire).¹⁰⁶ In Elcombe (Wiltshire) a park existed but was later merged with pasture;¹⁰⁷ the park in Bagworth (Leicestershire) was probably also disemparked.¹⁰⁸

As a result of the way in which the Lovells acquired their estates, they were spread over a large part of England, though there were some areas, mainly in the Midlands, where they held a significant number of manors and lands. There were other counties, notably Shropshire and Lancashire, where they owned significant lands. These were regions where the families whose estates they inherited had had their centre of power, the Burnells in Shropshire, the Hollands in Lancashire. Similarly, some of the manors which show all the indications of being a major residence did not seem to have been of particular interest to the Lovells themselves, but presumably had been major residences of their previous owners and the rights had been acquired with the manors. The manors of Ducklington¹⁰⁹ and Yoxhall¹¹⁰ are typical examples for this. As far as it is possible to tell the manors in which the Lovells were particularly interested were mainly in three counties: Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, and Wiltshire. It is in those counties that we might expect the Lovells to have had influence in local politics.

3.1.3. Income from land

Unfortunately few detailed accounts of the administration of noble estates have survived; and the lower the status of the family, the fewer are the surviving records. The Lovells are no exception in this respect. Only two account rolls of their administration have survived. The accounts of two fiscal years, 1394-95 and 1400-01,¹¹¹ are kept at

¹⁰³ *CPR*, 1485-1494, p. 25-6.

¹⁰⁴ *Kingsford's Stonor Letters*, p. 406.

¹⁰⁵ *CIPM*, vol. xiv, no. 263.

¹⁰⁶ *CIPM*, vol. ii, no. 813.

¹⁰⁷ *VCH*, Wiltshire, vol. xi, p. 246.

¹⁰⁸ L.M. Cantor, 'The Medieval Parks of Leicestershire', *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological Society* 42 (1970-1), p. 18.

¹⁰⁹ Maud Holland had two views of frankpledge (Oxfordshire): C 139/6 no. 51; The Lovells also had the advowson of the church.

¹¹⁰ It had perhaps been a centre for Holland estates; the Lovell's also had the advowson of the church there, *CIPM*, vol. xiii, no. 263; Yoxhall is also one of the manors mentioned in the two account rolls, see below.

¹¹¹ Oxford, Magdalen College, 36/9(Estate Papers) and Oxford, Magdalen College, Misc. 315.

Magdalen College, Oxford.¹¹² The earlier roll refers to the manors of Yoxhall (Staffordshire), Bagworth (Leicestershire), Shepshead (Leicestershire), Hambleton (Rutland) and Titchmarsh (Northamptonshire). The later roll also refers to Hals, Brackley,¹¹³ Hinton-on-the-Hedges, King's Sutton, Maidford (all Northamptonshire), Broughton (Buckinghamshire) and Finmere (Oxfordshire). Both rolls are very short and only contain the rents and farms received from tenants on these manors. The account rolls seem to be the final accounts of a part of the Lovell estates. This implies that the estates were divided into receiverships. The first account roll records a total of £240 7s. in rents received from tenants. The second, longer, account roll not only gives the rents of individual tenants (and a sum for each receivership, which the earlier roll does not include) but also a list of expenses. The sum of income is substantially larger than in the earlier roll; £403 18s. 8d.. The expenses amount to £367 5s. 10d.. The largest item is money for the lord's coffers (£343).¹¹⁴ The *inquisitions post mortem* show a similar picture. The value of the land held by John Lovell VII at the time of his death was recorded as being £347 12s. 7d.. Additionally, his wife held lands of the value of £119 6s. 5d., a large amount of which were knights' fees and parts of knights' fees.¹¹⁵

For the income tax of 1436 William Lovell III was assessed at exactly £1, 000.¹¹⁶ This suspiciously round sum has to be regarded with some skepticism. As Pugh and Ross have pointed out, the returns for this income tax have to be considered with great care.¹¹⁷ As there were no dowagers alive at this time, William held all the Lovell estates. However, the assessment probably does not include his wife's share of the Deincourt and Grey of Rotherfield estates. Elizabeth Beaumont, widow of Alice's brother William Deincourt, held dower valued at £243 11s. 8d.¹¹⁸ If this was indeed a third of the total income of the Deincourt estates, Alice's own share would be the same amount, as she and her sister Margaret would share the remaining two thirds. The total income of the Deincourt and Grey of Rotherfield baronies would therefore be £730 15s. The income of the Lovell family at this time was presumably considerably higher than the amount mentioned in the income tax returns. William Lovell III's *inquisition post mortem* is

¹¹² The receiver of those manors was John Brockhampton, Master of the Hospital of St. James and St. John in Brackley. The Hospital was sold by Francis Lovell to William Waynflete, bishop of Winchester in 1484, who used the lands for his foundation of Magdalen College.

¹¹³ The fact that the manors of Brackley and Hals are listed separately is quite astonishing, as they are usually treated like a unity: Hals with Brackley.

¹¹⁴ see Appendix 4, Table 1 and 2.

¹¹⁵ see Appendix 4, Table 2.

¹¹⁶ Grey, p. 615.

¹¹⁷ Pugh and Ross, 1-26.

¹¹⁸ Pugh and Ross, p. 26.

unfortunately not very helpful, as he had enfeoffed a great part of his estates.¹¹⁹ By the time of his death his wife was the sole heiress of the Deincourt estates. Unfortunately, since no *inquisition post mortem* was made for Francis Lovell we cannot know how large his income was. Considering that he held not only the lands he inherited from his father and grandmother, but also the considerable estates Richard III had granted him, the assumption that his income was about £2,000 is probably a conservative guess.

Though the surviving records do not allow us to determine the exact income of the Lovells at any given time, it is clear that the wealth of the family increased greatly in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. According to the *inquisitions post mortem* John Lovell III held four knights' fees at the time of his death in 1308.¹²⁰ However, six years later Aymer de Valence paid £800 for the wardship and marriage of John Lovell V. As the family had not inherited any significant lands in this time, nor expected to inherit any (Maud Burnell's brother was still alive), the Earl of Pembroke could only expect a profit of about £420 in the twenty-one years the wardship of John Lovell V was to last. It may be argued that the high price Aymer de Valence paid for the wardship was due to the fact that he also acquired the marriage of his ward. However, it seems more likely that the *inquisitions post mortem* undervalued the income of John III. Additionally, some land might have been in the hand of John III's wife at the time of his death. It seems more likely that Aymer de Valence, among whose retainers John Lovell IV and his younger brother William had been, knew how much the Lovell estates were worth than that he foolishly paid an enormous sum he would never have the chance to retrieve. Judging the value of the Lovell estates from the premium the Earl of Pembroke paid it seems more likely that it was at least twice as high as the £20 given in John III's *inquisitions post mortem*.

However, even if John Lovell III's income was about £40, the increase to £1,000 represented by William Lovell III's tax assessment, is indeed spectacular. By this time the Lovells were among the richest of those families of baronial status, but they were not the only baronial family wealthier than the poorer titled peers. Ralph Cromwell, who held the other half of the Deincourt and Grey of Rotherfield baronies in right of his wife Margaret, was assessed for almost the same landed income as William Lovell, £1,007 *per annum*.¹²¹ The Hungerford estates were also worth about £1,000.¹²² The Lovells

¹¹⁹ The income from land in William Lovell III's *inquisition post mortem* is only £86 19s. 1d., his wife's £256 12s. 6d., see Appendix 4, Table 5. At the time of William Lovell's death some estates had been settled on William's heir John Lovell IX and his wife Joan, see below, p. 111.

¹²⁰ If each of the knight's fee is taken to have had the value of 100s., his income from land would have been exactly £20: *CIPM*, vol. ii, no. 622.

¹²¹ Grey, p. 615.

¹²² Kirby, 'Hungerford', p. 125.

belonged to the richest barons in the realm, but their wealth was not unusual.

The discussion of different aspects of landholding has shown that the Lovells were typical for one particular group of baronial families: namely, those families who were elevated to the peerage from the existing ranks of substantial landholders and survived and thrived through several generations. The pattern of their landholding did not differ fundamentally from the higher nobility, nor did the nature of their landholding significantly change over the centuries. From the earliest days the estates of the Lovells were spread over several counties. With the increase of the estates the number of counties in which they held lands grew but the basic pattern remained unchanged. Other baronial families, however, held lands which were more concentrated in one region. This was partly due to the different ways in which the families reached the nobility,¹²³ and partly due to the different strategies which they used to increase their estates. The longer a family was part of the nobility the more likely it was that they would inherit some lands far from the original family estates, which thereby lost their compact nature. In landholding as well as in income, most baronial families held a position which reflected their intermediate position between the higher nobility and the gentry.

¹²³ see Chapter 4, p. 150.

3.2. Dynastic Strategies

Family, and particularly marriage, was a central element in the life of medieval noblemen and women. Family was an important part of the society of the middle ages. How large the medieval family was, whether the men and women felt responsible only to the 'nuclear family' or whether their responsibility extended to collaterals as well, is a matter for debate.¹²⁴ This chapter will address several problems facing a baronial family in connection with the family: the strategies of marriages, provisions for wives and widows, as well as the provisions made for younger sons and daughters.

The first objective of marriage was to produce an heir to whom the family estates could be left. Apart from this most important incentive for marriage, other factors were taken into consideration. Marriages created new bonds between families and strengthened old ties between neighbours.¹²⁵ Furthermore, marriage to a landholder's daughter brought the possibility of reaping an inheritance. No matter how remote this chance seemed at the time the match was made, inheritance remained a possibility; and it is to be expected that families kept an eye on one another in order to ensure their own interests when the occasions arose. To secure an advantageous marriage, especially to an heiress, it was necessary to provide handsomely for the bride by settling parts of the groom's estates on the couple in jointure. This of course could have the negative effect of depriving an heir of large parts of his estates if his mother and/or grandmother proved to be long-lived.¹²⁶ However, holding land in jointure did help to prevent land from falling into the king's hands in the event of the minority of the heir. Every marriage had to be arranged by balancing the cost of the marriage against the prospect of increased wealth or connections. The crucial problem arising every generation was to find a suitable partner. As this decision was vital for the welfare of a family, the right to award marriages came to be exploited by the Crown. By the thirteenth century, the marriage as well as the wardship of any tenant who held any land in chief went automatically to the king. The king used both rights either to reward his allies or to raise money.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ see Chapter 1, pp. 20-21.

¹²⁵ As Pollard has shown for the Richmondshire gentry, see A.J. Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community of Gentry During the Wars of the Roses', in Charles Ross (ed.), *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1979), pp. 47-49.

¹²⁶ This phenomenon has been discussed frequently, most notably perhaps by Archer, 'Rich old ladies', 15-33.

¹²⁷ S.L. Waugh, *The Lordship of England: Royal Wardships and Marriages in English Society and Politics. 1217-1327* (Princeton, 1988), pp. 106-10.

3.2.1 The Marriages of the Lords Lovell

To evaluate the decisions made before a marriage it is important to know who arranged the match. In cases in which the groom was in wardship, the date of the marriage is decisive in establishing whether it was the guardian who arranged the marriage or the groom himself. Unfortunately, no records about the marriages of the Lovells, the time when they were arranged or actually took place, have survived. The age of the heir given in the *inquisitions post mortem*, a *terminus ante quem*, is often the only information we have.

Between the receipt of the first individual summons to parliament in 1297 and the extinction of the main line of the family after 1487, a total of nine men successively held the title. Five of them were minors when their fathers died, and their lands and marriages fell into the king's hands. As John Lovell VI died unmarried and still a minor in 1363, it is possible that four out of the remaining eight lords were married off by their guardians. The marriages of John V to Isabel de la Zouche, John VII to Maud Holland and William III to Alice Deincourt were perhaps arranged by their guardians. The only case in which we know for certain that the guardian was the matchmaker is the marriage between Francis Lovell and Anna FitzHugh. In the case of the remaining five marriages (John III's first marriage to Isabel du Bois and his second to Joan de Ros, John IV's marriage to Maud Burnell, John VIII's to Eleanor de la Zouche, and John IX's to Joan Beaumont) the respective roles played by fathers and/or grooms cannot be precisely determined. The question that immediately springs to mind is whether the matches arranged by a guardian were more or less advantageous than the ones made by family. Another aspect of the marriages which has to be addressed is whether the choice of marriage partner changed over this period.

Examining all the marriages of the Lords Lovell,¹²⁸ it becomes clear that there is actually no significant difference between the two 'groups' of Lovell wives. There is no significant difference between the matches that were probably arranged by a guardian and those arranged by a member of the family, either the father of the groom or the groom himself. Surprisingly, only one marriage was contracted between a ward and a relative of the guardian: Anna FitzHugh was the niece of Francis Lovell's guardian Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick.¹²⁹ He was apparently still hoping for a better match for his own two daughters, even though the marriages of Queen Elizabeth's sisters to eligible noblemen

¹²⁸ For details see Chapter 2.

¹²⁹ The letter to John Paston announcing the marriage of Francis to 'my Lady Fytzhugh ys doghtere' also reports that 'the Erle of Arundell ys son hath weddyd the Quyne ys sistere.' *Paston Letters*, Davis, vol. ii, p. 375.

and the King's refusal to allow his own brothers to marry the two girls had eliminated 'all likely candidates' on the marriage market.¹³⁰ Francis might have been the son of 'one of the wealthiest of peers below the rank of earl';¹³¹ he was even of similar age to the earl's daughters; but he was deemed not good enough to marry one of the 'Kingmaker's' offspring.

It is surprising that not more of the marriages followed the pattern usually accepted as being the norm for marriages arranged when an heir was in wardship: with the daughter of his guardian.¹³² The only marriage that did follow this pattern was between John Lovell I and Katherine Bassett, daughter of his guardian, which took place before 1216. It is a model case of a ward-guardian marriage relationship. The marriage of John Lovell I had been of the greatest importance to the history of the family. It was his link to the highly influential Bassets that introduced John Lovell I to the royal court. His son and grandson then used this opportunity to elevate their position through service to the king.¹³³ The marriage of Francis Lovell to Anna FitzHugh was equally influential for the history of the Lovells, though for a different reason. It was not the marriage itself, but Francis's connection with Richard, Duke of Gloucester, which had developed while they were both living in the household of the Earl of Warwick, that had the strongest impact on the fate of Francis himself and, as a consequence, on the future of his entire family.¹³⁴ This connection was certainly strengthened by Francis's marriage to Anna FitzHugh. The bond with her family in Ravensworth that was created, Francis's association with Richard, and the not insignificant estates that his family held in the North, were all decisive in Francis shifting his activities from his family's estates into Yorkshire.

The women who married into the Lovell family were the daughters of families of a strikingly similar background to that of their respective husbands. When the marriage between John Lovell III and Isabel du Bois was arranged, neither family were yet part of the parliamentary peerage. Sir John du Bois, Isabel's brother, was summoned several times to attend the king or partake in military operations, as was John Lovell III.¹³⁵ John Lovell III and the brother of his second wife, Robert de Ros, received their first

¹³⁰ This was probably one prominent reason why the Earl became estranged from Edward IV; Charles Ross, *Edward IV* (London, 1974), pp. 93-94.

¹³¹ *ibid.*, p. 438.

¹³² 'After the usual custom his guardian married him to his own daughter...', *Kingsford's Stonor Letters*, p. 46.

¹³³ see Chapter 2, p. 39. How much importance the Lovells themselves gave this connection can be judged by the fact that they adopted a coat-of-arms that was a derivation of the Basset arms, see below, Chapter 5, pp. 215-16.

¹³⁴ see Chapter 4, pp. 163-65, 173-75.

¹³⁵ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, p. 202.

individual summonses in the last years of the thirteenth century.¹³⁶ John Lovell IV's marriage to Maud Burnell created a link between two families who had just risen into the parliamentary peerage. Even in the case of Joan Beaumont, whose father John Beaumont had received the title of viscount in 1440,¹³⁷ the difference in status between the two families was not significant. William Lovell III was one of the richest barons of his time. The main difference between the two men was their position within the government of the realm.¹³⁸

The inheritance of the women married by the Lords Lovell was not the main reason for the arrangement of the marriages. However, the possibility of inheriting some estates was certainly considered in all cases. Women might become heiresses after the marriage had been arranged.¹³⁹ In five instances the possibility became reality. Joan de Ros became the heiress of her brother on his death in 1413; her land went to her only daughter Maud, by then married to William de la Zouche. The inheritances of Maud Burnell, Maud Holland and Alice Deincourt have already been mentioned above.¹⁴⁰ The Beaumont lands were split between Joan Beaumont's grandchildren, Brian Stapleton and John Norreys, after her brother's death, long after Joan's own death.¹⁴¹ All these women, with the possible exception of Maud Holland, were not expected to inherit their family's estates. It is uncertain whether Maud Holland was already the heiress of the Holland barony at the time of the marriage. She inherited the large estates in Northamptonshire and Lancashire after the death of her grandfather Robert Holland in 1373.¹⁴² It is by no means certain that this marriage was indeed arranged by a guardian but it seems unlikely that a marriage to a possible heiress of this rank could have been arranged solely by a young man of moderate rank. An influential guardian, however, could have enough authority to arrange for the marriage. It is even possible that the King himself, by not re-granting the wardship of John Lovell VII after his brother's death, arranged the marriage.

If land was not the main incentive for the marriage, what was? The answer has to be that with these marriages the Lovells became linked with other families of influence and lineage. The marriage of John Lovell VII to Maud Holland connected the Lovells with a family not only of great wealth but also with significant connections. The marriage of Maud's uncle Thomas to Joan of Kent, granddaughter of Edward I, elevated him to an

¹³⁶ *Complete Peerage*, vol. iv, p. 216; vol. ix, p. 97.

¹³⁷ see Chapter 4, pp. 172-73.

¹³⁸ see Chapter 4, pp. 171-72.

¹³⁹ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 153.

¹⁴⁰ see above, p. 90.

¹⁴¹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, p. 63-64, n. f.

¹⁴² *CFR*, 1368-1377, p. 211, *CIPM*, vol. x, no. 263.

earldom and increased his family's rank considerably. Joan's subsequent marriage to the Prince of Wales in 1361 created a close connection with the royal family. The connections created by this marriage helped to boost the career of John Lovell VII immensely.¹⁴³ Joan Beaumont's father, John Beaumont, was one of the most influential men in the reign of Henry VI. This marriage gave the Lovells a link with the group of nobles around Beaumont, Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, and Queen Margaret and balanced their connection with Ralph Cromwell, brother-in-law of Alice Deincourt, and Richard, Duke of York. But it was not only relationships to families more influential than themselves that could be important. The Lovells also restrengthened their long-lasting link with the de la Zouches of Haringworth with two marriages. It seems that the establishing and reinforcing of these links to other families strengthened their position within the aristocracy.

To draw a conclusion from the examination of the marriages of the Lords Lovell, it is noticeable that there were no significant differences between marriages which were probably arranged by a guardian and those devised by the father or groom himself. The brides were all daughters of barons; they came from the same class as their grooms. The main motivation for the marriages of the Lords Lovell was the improvement of family connections to other baronial families. Though the expansion of land was pivotal for the advancement of the family, close links with the other baronial families were equally essential to the Lovells' fortune. The fact that so many of their wives became heiresses was luck. For a baronial family it was probably difficult to obtain the hand of an heiress: John Lovell VII was the exception here. The women the Lords Lovell married were the sisters of great landholders or daughters who were not expected to inherit. Though they were not heiresses at the time of the marriage, there was always the possibility that they might inherit the family estates. In fact, all but the two de la Zouche women, Anna FitzHugh and John Lovell III's second wife, Isabel de Ros, eventually inherited their family's lands. The accumulation of four additional baronies in the hands of the Lords Lovell was unusual only in the number of lucky marriages they made. By the fifteenth century many families had added one¹⁴⁴ or perhaps two other baronial titles¹⁴⁵ to their names, but four was highly exceptional. That the subsidiary titles were explicitly acknowledged and valued can be seen from the plate depicting Francis Lovell's coat-of-

¹⁴³ see Chapter 4, pp. 151-54.

¹⁴⁴ William Beaumont, brother of Joan Beaumont, was Viscount Beaumont and Lord Bardolf, *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, p. 62-63.

¹⁴⁵ For example William de la Zouche (*d.* 1500) was Lord la Zouche, St. Maur and Lovel (of Castle Cary), *Complete Peerage*, vol. xii, II, p. 946.

arms in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, which is inscribed: 'Franceis viscont Lovell & Holand Burnell Deyncort & Grey'.¹⁴⁶

The Lovells were of course not the only family to marry several heiresses. Indeed, 'over half the peers married, as one of their wives, an heiress.'¹⁴⁷ While some baronial families, for example the Hungerfords, were extremely lucky in arranging marriages that brought lands into the family,¹⁴⁸ others were less fortunate, for example the Greys of Ruthin. Though fortunate on other levels, only one marriage to an heiress brought land permanently into the family.¹⁴⁹ The connections baronial families built with their marriages were most important to their fortunes. One good example is the marriage of Anthony Grey to Queen Elizabeth's sister, Joan Woodville. This created a link between the Greys of Ruthins and the royal family, and it was this connection which was probably the reason why Anthony's father Edmund was created Earl of Kent in 1465.¹⁵⁰ The Bourgchier marriages were not only significant for bringing large inheritances and titles for all the sons of William Bourgchier into the family. The connections built by the marriages were at least as relevant to the rise of the family.¹⁵¹ William Bourgchier's marriage to Anna, dowager Countess of Stafford, brought her large dower into the possession of the Bourgchiers, but it also created close links to the high nobility.¹⁵² William Bourgchier's children were half-brothers of Humphrey Stafford, Duke of Buckingham. They were also through this marriage related to the royal family, as Anna was the daughter of Thomas, Duke of Gloucester. Her eldest son from this, her third, marriage, Humphrey Bourgchier, married Isabel, daughter of Richard, Earl of Cambridge.¹⁵³

Unfortunately most studies of baronial families do not examine whether the wives were already heiresses at the time the marriage was arranged. This would enable us to judge more precisely how the two objectives of marriages, the establishment and reinforcement of connections or the accumulation of estates, were weighted. Without this

¹⁴⁶ A photograph of the garter stall plate can be found in Powell and Wallis, plate XIII, see also pp. 524-25, see Chapter 5, pp. 218-20.

¹⁴⁷ Rosenthal, *Nobles*, p. 58.

¹⁴⁸ The Hungerfords were unusually lucky to marry five heiresses in five generations, M. Hicks, 'Piety and Lineage in the Wars of the Roses: The Hungerford Experience', in M. Hicks, *Richard III and his Rivals: Magnates and Their Motives in the Wars of the Roses* (London, 1991), p. 165.

¹⁴⁹ Lord Roger de Grey married Elizabeth, heiress of John, Lord Hastings, *Complete Peerage*, vol. vi, p. 153.

¹⁵⁰ Jack, p. 170.

¹⁵¹ His third son, William, became Lord FitzWarin, his third son John, Lord Berners, L.S. Woodger, 'Henry Bourgchier, Earl of Essex, and his Family' (unpubl. DPhil., Oxford, 1974), pp. 51-52.

¹⁵² *ibid.*, p. 42.

¹⁵³ *ibid.*, p. 50.

knowledge, judging only from the fact that these women became heiresses in the end, the consideration of increasing their lands is given too much importance. All too often, as with most of the Lovell marriages, inheritance only became an issue long after the marriage. One example is the marriage of William de la Zouche to Maud Lovell. Maud was the daughter of the first Lord Lovell and inherited the estates of her mother's family, years after she had married William de la Zouche.¹⁵⁴ Another instance within the Lovell family was that of Alice Lovell, daughter of William Lovell, Lord Morley. After the death of her brother Henry in 1489, she became the heiress of the Morley barony, being then already married to William Parker, a knight of obscure background.¹⁵⁵ In both cases it is evident that the marriages were primarily meant to build ties between families and the inheritance was not a decisive factor in the arrangement. Though inheritance was an extremely important consideration taken into account by the medieval aristocrats when arranging their marriages, concentration on the result of the marriages might have overstressed the importance of land.

On the whole, the experience of the Lovells was typical for a family of their rank. The wives they married became heiresses more often than was the case in most other families of their class. The main incentive for most of these marriages was not land, it was the connections made to other families. All the wives were from families who were of the same class as the Lovells themselves. The main aim of the marriages seems to have been to establish or strengthen the connection to other baronial families.

3.2.2. Provision for Wives and Widows

As mentioned above, the hand of a well connected wife came at a price: land, often a large part of the family estates, had to be given to the couple in jointure. These lands could be taken into a second marriage by the wife, should she outlive her husband. These widows, the rich old ladies, are not generally well regarded by historians. The women are often criticized for outliving their husbands, as if they did it only to spite their sons, preventing them from entering their well deserved inheritance.¹⁵⁶ However, this negative view of

¹⁵⁴ see Chapter 2, p. 53-54.

¹⁵⁵ see Chapter 2, p. 80.

¹⁵⁶ These heiresses 'had a nasty habit of surviving their husbands, sometimes for decades, to keep the heir out of the promised land.' C. Carpenter, 'The Fifteenth Century English Gentry and their Estates' in: Michael Jones (ed.), *Gentry and Lesser Nobility in Late Medieval Europe* (Gloucester, 1986), p. 41. Speaking about Katherine Neville, long-lived dowager, Lander even describes her as a 'family nuisance, holding in jointure an unduly large proportion of the Mowbray family estates with which she had already enriched two successive husbands.' J.R. Lander, *Government and Community: England 1450-1509* (London, 1980), p. 239; R. Archer also stresses the negative effects of long-lived dowagers though in less vitriolic terms: 'these features made dower one of the commonest and in some cases most destructive of

dowagers and the consequences their longevity had on the family's fortunes needs to be reconsidered. It seems implausible that a practice like this would have been continued for such a long period if its effects were wholly negative. Some perceived benefit had to come out of keeping the dowagers in possession of parts of the family's estate.

The Lovells had their share of long-lived dowagers. Joan de Ros survived her husband by 38 years. She died on 13 October 1348, outliving both her son and her grandson. Maud Holland died fifteen years after her husband and ten years after her son; Alice Deincourt lived for 18 years after William Lovell's death and also outlived her son. Maud Burnell outlived her husband for a considerable time. Both Maud Burnell and Alice Deincourt remarried. Maud Burnell's second marriage not only removed the estates she held in dower from the hands of John Lovell V but, as already mentioned, re-directed most of the Burnell estates to Nicholas, her eldest son from her second marriage.¹⁵⁷

John Lovell V, John VIII and John IX, the sons of those long-lived dowagers Maud Burnell, Maud Holland and Alice Deincourt, were indeed less influential men than their respective fathers. However, the reason for this is not the fact that part of their estates were still in the hands of their mothers but that all three only outlived their fathers by a few years. The dowagers were perhaps an additional factor in the lesser importance of these men. The main problem was, however, not the unfortunate longevity of the widows but the catastrophic early deaths of their sons. The widows, by holding on to parts of the estates, not only prevented them from falling into the king's hand, but also provided an important connection with their own important relations.

Like other families, the Lovells bestowed lands on their wives. In addition dower was assigned to them. Joan de Ros, second wife of John Lovell III, is the first wife about whose provisions some information is available. She held as dower the manors of Elcombe and Blunsdon Gay (Wiltshire).¹⁵⁸ John Lovell V and Isabel de la Zouche held the manor of Minster Lovell in jointure.¹⁵⁹ Her dower was assigned in 1349.¹⁶⁰ To reflect the elevated rank of John Lovell VII's bride Maud Holland, a considerable part of

baronial incidents', Archer, 'Rich, old ladies', p. 16. However, in the same article Archer points out that 'no record survives of contemporary opinion on the existence of dowagers and their effect on succession, *ibid*, p. 26.

¹⁵⁷ see Chapter 2.

¹⁵⁸ *CIPM*, vol. ix, no. 128; *CCR*, 1346-1349, p. 573.

¹⁵⁹ *CCR*, 1346-1349, p. 355.

¹⁶⁰ *CCR*, 1349-1354, pp. 13-14; The dower consisted of parts of knights' fees in Titchmarsh and the advowson of the church there, the third part of the manors of Upton Noble and Sparkford, and the third part of two parts of the manor of Chiriton, all in Somerset, *ibid*, *CIPM*, vol. ix, no. 464.

the Lovell lands was settled upon the couple in jointure:¹⁶¹ among the lands (some of which were placed in jointure later in their marriage) was John VII's favourite residence of Wardour Castle (Wiltshire). The jointure also included the manors of Elcombe (Wiltshire)¹⁶² and Minster Lovell (Oxfordshire).¹⁶³ In addition to the estates held in jointure, dower was assigned to Maud in 1408.¹⁶⁴ Alice Deincourt held considerable estates in jointure as well.¹⁶⁵ After the marriage of John Lovell IX and Joan Beaumont, William Lovell III settled the manors of Askham Bryan, Dringham and Baynton (Yorkshire) on the couple.¹⁶⁶ Quite a substantial part of the lands were settled on Joan.¹⁶⁷ Unfortunately owing to the fact that Francis Lovell's estates were forfeited and no proper *inquisition post mortem* was ever initiated for either him or his wife, no details about a land settlement are known.¹⁶⁸ We know that Francis made arrangements to have the manors of Titchmarsh, Hals with Brackley, Thorp Waterfield and Duston (all Northamptonshire) settled on his wife Anna.¹⁶⁹ However, Henry VII granted Titchmarsh and Duston to Charles, the illegitimate son of the Duke of Somerset, in 1486.¹⁷⁰ Perhaps the annuity granted to Anna by Henry VII in 1495 was in compensation for this loss.¹⁷¹ It is surprising that the dower arrangements for the Lovell wives always included central manors of the family's estates. The only exception to the rule are the three Yorkshire manors settled on John IX and Joan Beaumont by his parents. The Scropes usually endowed their wives with manors far from the centre of their estates.¹⁷² The difference may be caused by the fact that most of the Scrope's estates were more compact than the lands of the Lovells, so that the distant manors were particularly unattractive for the family. Distinct approaches of different families to their dowagers could also be

¹⁶¹ In 1371 John Lovell VII enfeoffed the manors of Minster Lovell (Oxfordshire), Titchmarsh (Northamptonshire), Sparkford, Upton Lovell (both Somerset) and Elcombe (Wiltshire), *CCR*, 1369-1371, p. 309; thirteen years later he arranged a settlement of the same manors, apart from Upton Lovell which is not mentioned, *CCR*, 1381-1385, p. 427. All manors were later settled on Maud and him in jointure.

¹⁶² see Appendix 4, table 4.

¹⁶³ *CIPM*, vol. xx, nos. 200, 202 (John VIII).

¹⁶⁴ *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 415.

¹⁶⁵ see Appendix 4, table 5.

¹⁶⁶ C139/158 no. 28.

¹⁶⁷ see Appendix 4, table 6.

¹⁶⁸ One could expect had larger parts of the estates been settled on Anna FitzHugh. She would have tried to secure her share of Francis Lovell's lands after his forfeiture, as Maud Clifford did successfully after the forfeiture and execution of her second husband, Richard, Earl of Cambridge in 1415, *CCR*, 1413-1419, p. 252.

¹⁶⁹ E40/4790, see also *CCR*, 1476-1485, p. 413.

¹⁷⁰ *CPR*, 1485-1494, p. 100.

¹⁷¹ *CPR*, 1485-1494, p. 304.

¹⁷² Vale, vol. i, p. 132.

responsible.

One aspect of families with long-lived dowagers which has perhaps been unduly stressed in the past is that the family, or the head of the family, lost influence by not being in control of parts of his estates.¹⁷³ As we have seen, the relative obscurity of some members of the senior line of the Lovell family was largely a consequence of their own early deaths, and should not be ascribed to their supposed poverty as a result of some of their estates having passed out of their control. John Lovell V's position, for example, was also hampered through his long minority. John VII, who eventually became a very influential man, inherited all the Lovells estates, but as a result of his long minority it took him over a decade to gain a position of consequence in the country. The existence of a long-lived dowager could be irritating and impeding for the ambitions of their sons. However, the fact that generation after generation settled large parts of their estates on their wives does seem to indicate that there was some positive element connected with these arrangements. It has been mentioned before that lands held in jointure did not fall to the king if the heir was a minor. Additionally, the land settlement also shows how important were the links to other families created by these women. The jointures not only tell the modern historian of the significance of the connections made, but also indicates the significance they held at the time.

3.2.3 Provision for Younger Sons and Daughters

It was not only the marriages of the family heir that were of great importance. The marriages of younger sons as well as those of daughters were arranged with great care as well. They too could bring connections and prestige to the family. Younger sons and daughters had to be well provided for so as not to damage the reputation of the family. Nevertheless, younger sons were not as important as the heirs to the family; they left fewer traces in the records of the national government, particularly if they did not inherit any land. The fate of daughters is even more difficult to track. Only if, by accident, they were mentioned in other documentation or inherited land, can their existence be discovered. Additionally, there were several families bearing the surname Lovell and it is often impossible to decide whether a certain Lovell was indeed one of the Lovells of Titchmarsh.¹⁷⁴ Examining the provisions made for younger sons and daughters by the head of the family also sheds light on the status of the family itself, on the amount of land

¹⁷³ Joel T. Rosenthal, *Patriarchy and Families of Privilege in Fifteenth-Century England* (Philadelphia, 1991), p. 198.

¹⁷⁴ The lawsuit over the manor of Titchwell shows that already in the fifteenth century it was impossible to establish how different Lovell families were related, see Chapter 2, pp. 47-49.

they could and were willing to spare to provide their younger sons, and the effort they extended to find suitable partners for both sons and daughters.

One example of the provision for younger sons may be given here: William Lovell III's endowment of his four sons, John IX, William, Henry and Robert. William III and his wife Alice bestowed lands on all of them. As the editor of his will pointed out, William Lovell's estates were large enough for him to be able to share his lands between his children without depriving the eldest of too much of his inheritance.¹⁷⁵ William, the second son, received the largest number of manors and lands.¹⁷⁶ The remainder was to his younger brothers first and then to John IX and his heirs male.¹⁷⁷ Robert, third son of William Lovell III, was to receive four manors.¹⁷⁸ Henry, the youngest, received four and a half manors.¹⁷⁹ As William III held some of the estates to be settled on his younger sons in jointure with his wife, Alice Deincourt, the land passed to them only after their mother's death.¹⁸⁰ Three of the manors settled on William Lovell, Lord Morley,¹⁸¹ were still in Alice's hands at the time of her death and went to his son Henry Lovell, Lord Morley. As Robert had died in 1461,¹⁸² only Henry Lovell is mentioned. None of the manors settled on him were in the hands of his mother. Two further manors were settled on him.¹⁸³ One has to remember that despite these provisions the bulk of the estates went to William III's heir, John Lovell IX, and his son Francis. The behaviour of William III towards his younger sons is reflected by other provisions for younger sons we know of. Indeed, apart from Ralph Lovell, a younger son of John VII, who was a cleric, all younger sons we know of received some estates as an endowment. This is a clear sign that the younger sons were regarded as important members of the family.

How much influence William Lovell III had on the marriages of his younger son, William, is unknown. William was married to Elizabeth St. Clare by 1445.¹⁸⁴ She was

¹⁷⁵ 'He had ... an exceptional number of manors to dispose of', *Lincoln Diocesan Documents*, p. 72.

¹⁷⁶ The manors of Bridzor, Upton Lovell, Hurdecote, East Wanborough (all Wiltshire), Barley, East Wickham, Rotherhide, Widford (Gloucestershire), and property in Bampton and Little Minster (Oxfordshire). The notes in the edition of the will incorrectly state that Little Minster is Minster Lovell, *ibid.*, p. 81, n. 7.

¹⁷⁷ *ibid.*, p. 82-83.

¹⁷⁸ Of Stone, Polebrook and Hinton-on-the-Hedges (Northamptonshire), North Crawley (Buckinghamshire); *ibid.*, p. 84-5.

¹⁷⁹ Willington, Pitchford (Shropshire), Brome, Bidford (Warwickshire) and half the manor of Wolverhampton (Staffordshire), the some estates in Chester, *ibid.*, p. 85.

¹⁸⁰ C140/47 no. 64.

¹⁸¹ Knook, Bridzor and Upton Lovell.

¹⁸² *CFR*, 1461-1471, p. 2.

¹⁸³ Shopton (Buckinghamshire) and Standlake (Oxfordshire).

¹⁸⁴ *CPR*, 1441-1446, p. 443.

one of the co-heiresses of Thomas St. Clare. Elizabeth died leaving no children from her marriage and the lands reverted to her sisters. After her death¹⁸⁵ and before 1465, William married Elizabeth Morley, heiress of the Morley barony. Her wardship had been granted to William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, in 1442.¹⁸⁶ The marriage between this rich heiress and William Lovell's younger son was perhaps influenced by previous relations between the Lovells and the de la Poles, who also had strong connections to Oxfordshire. Neither of William Lovell III's younger sons, Robert and Henry, seem to have married. Both died without children.¹⁸⁷

Many younger sons apparently never married: of William Lovell's four sons only the elder two, John Lovell IX and William, are known to have married. In the cases when younger sons married, their marriages were arranged with as much care as those of the Lords Lovell. One striking fact is that all the known marriages of younger sons were marriages to heiresses.¹⁸⁸ It may be that only these marriages were important enough to be recorded. The likelihood of records being made in sufficient number to survive is of course greater when land was passed from one family to another. However, neither of the younger sons left any children, so it is probable that they did not marry. In fact, Rhoda Friedrichs postulated in a recent article that younger sons were particularly discouraged from marrying by their fathers and elder siblings. As the family had to provide for their cadets only if they married – bachelors remained living with the family – it was not in the interest of the main line that they did. Only in the eventuality that a younger son found an heiress and therefore provided for himself was a marriage encouraged.¹⁸⁹ However, in the case of the Lovell family, a consequent policy of keeping younger sons unmarried and unprovided for cannot be discerned. All three younger sons, William who was married as well as his (apparently) unmarried brothers, received land from their parents. Certainly, it was not only in the interest of the main line of the family, but also of the cadets themselves, to marry well. It might be that their parents and elder siblings discouraged a profitless match, but also that they themselves were reluctant to marry a landless woman. This seems more likely than a rigid strategy to prevent the establishment of cadet branches.

The younger sons who usually spring to mind are those who for one reason or another

¹⁸⁵ Elizabeth was still alive in 1457 when William Lovell and Elizabeth, Richard Harcourt and Eleanor and John Gage and Edith received a pardon for debts, *CFR*, 1452-1461, p. 350.

¹⁸⁶ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ix, p. 219.

¹⁸⁷ J. Bridges, *History and Antiquities of the County of Northamptonshire* (1791), vol. i, p. 175.

¹⁸⁸ William Lovell's marriages to Elizabeth St. Clare and Elizabeth Morley, and Robert Lovell's, younger son of John Lovell VII, to Elizabeth Bryan.

¹⁸⁹ Rhoda L. Friedrichs, 'Marriage Strategies and Younger Sons in Fifteenth-Century England', *Medieval Prosopography* 14 (1993), 53-69.

became prominent in their own right, either by entering the church and rising within its hierarchy, by acquiring their own place in the nobility, or by entering politics as members of the gentry. Thomas Bourghier, younger brother of Henry Bourghier, became Archbishop of Canterbury and a cardinal; Alexander Neville, younger son of Ralph Neville (*d.* 1367), rose to be Archbishop of York. The only Lovell who entered a career in church did not rise particularly high within its ranks. Ralph Lovell, younger son of John VII, was canon of Salisbury and rector of Stanton Harcourt.¹⁹⁰ Whether by lack of ambitions, early death or insufficient connections his career did not take him very far. While discussing the career opportunities of the younger sons of the Hungerfords, Kirby states that they 'were not one of the great families, ..., whose cadets easily became bishops.'¹⁹¹ This seems to be true for Ralph Lovell as well.

The strategy to increase one's status by marriage was employed by one of the younger sons, William Lovell, who became Lord Morley. Marriage to the heiress of a barony did not always automatically lift the groom into the nobility. Robert Lovell, despite holding the entire Bryan barony, was twice elected knight of the shire for Dorset instead of sitting as Lord Bryan in the House of Lords.¹⁹² William Lovell, younger son of William III, served as knight of the shire for Oxfordshire in 1459, before his marriage to Elizabeth Morley elevated him to the rank of a lord (though he was only summoned during the readeption of Henry VI).¹⁹³ An active career in the House of Commons was taken by quite a number of younger sons of barons, as for example, Edmund Hungerford¹⁹⁴ or John Berkeley, younger son of Thomas, Lord Berkeley.¹⁹⁵ Even younger sons of titled noblemen, such as Philip Courtenay, younger son of Hugh Courtenay, Earl of Devon, were elected knight of the shire.¹⁹⁶ Many younger sons attempted to improve their status either as courtiers or as professional soldiers.

Unfortunately, knowledge about the daughters of baronial families is even more scarce and more difficult to find than information about younger sons.¹⁹⁷ As might be expected, daughters who inherited land, or were heirs apparent at a critical stage, are those about whom we know most. An example of this special treatment is Joan Lovell, daughter of

¹⁹⁰ Lewis, 'John Fastolf's Lawsuit', p. 14.

¹⁹¹ Kirby, 'Hungerfords', p. 163.

¹⁹² Roskell, Clarke and Rawcliffe, vol. iii, p. 632, see Chapter 2, pp. 61-63.

¹⁹³ Josiah C. Wedgwood and Ann Driolt, *History of Parliament. Biographies of the Members of the Commons House. 1439-1509* (London, 1936), pp. 556-57, see also Chapter 2, p. 78.

¹⁹⁴ Kirby, 'Hungerford', p. 51-52.

¹⁹⁵ Roskell, Clarke and Rawcliffe, vol. ii, pp. 197-203.

¹⁹⁶ *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 670-73.

¹⁹⁷ In the records of the time as well as in modern secondary literature women are usually only mentioned under their husband's names.

John Lovell IV and Maud Burnell. She is mentioned as her father's heir in his *inquisition post mortem* in 1314. However, it was her brother John V, born posthumously, who became the heir of the Lovell estates whose wardship and marriage were given to Anthony Pesagno. Joan subsequently disappears from the records. She might have died in infancy or married a neighbouring landholder, bearing him several children, still leaving no traces in the official records. Elizabeth, a daughter of John V, is known to us, as the manor of Axford (Wiltshire) was settled on her with a remainder to her brother John VII.¹⁹⁸ The two daughters of John Lovell IX, Frideswide and Joan, were included in the pardon for Henry FitzHugh and their brother Francis after Lord FitzHugh's rebellion in 1470.¹⁹⁹ The pardon was necessary since they were Francis's heiresses at this time.

With the growing importance of the Lovells as a family, information about the daughters increases, though not necessarily for this reason. John Lovell VII's daughters are known to us mainly because of the quarrel about the manor of Titchwell after the extinction of the Lovells of Titchwell. William Worcester's pedigree of the descendants of John Lovell VII mentions Philippa, wife of John Dinham, and two other daughters who were both in religious orders; one daughter, Maud, became abbess of Romsey Abbey,²⁰⁰ while another joined the minoresses in London.²⁰¹

The fact that William Lovell III had a daughter as well as four sons is only known to us because he left £200 in his will for the marriage of his granddaughter, Anne Ogard, 'if she be married worshipfully and to such as is or shal be a lorde of name'.²⁰² Anne Ogard was probably the daughter of Sir Andrew Ogard, a Danish knight.²⁰³ He was a member of the council of the Duchy of York from the 1440s onwards.²⁰⁴ It seems that Andrew Ogard was married to an unnamed daughter of William Lovell III, who predeceased him. Andrew Ogard was later married to Alice, daughter of John Clifton.²⁰⁵ If William Lovell III's daughter was indeed married to Andrew Ogard, she must have died several years before 1454, when her husband died.²⁰⁶ This would mean that Anne Ogard was an orphan by the time William Lovell III made his will and was perhaps in special need of support in the search for a husband. The most interesting aspect of the settlement is the

¹⁹⁸ *VCH*, Wiltshire, vol. xii, p. 49.

¹⁹⁹ *CPR*, 1467-1477, pp. 215-16.

²⁰⁰ She died in 1462, *CPR*, 1461-1467, p. 182.

²⁰¹ Oxford, Magdalen College, Adds. 99.

²⁰² *Lincoln Diocesan Documents*, p. 74.

²⁰³ Roskell, *Parliament and Politics*, vol. ii, p. 187.

²⁰⁴ P.A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York, 1411-1460* (Oxford, 1988), p. 17.

²⁰⁵ Roskell, *Parliament and Politics*, p. 191.

²⁰⁶ *CFR*, 1452-1461, p. 99.

condition of William Lovell, that his granddaughter was only to receive the £200 if she was married 'worshipfully' to somebody who is or will be a lord. Though it is doubtful that William Lovell had the modern definition of a parliamentary 'lord' in mind when he set this prerequisite, he was clearly showing some awareness of rank. The husband of Anne Ogard was to be 'worshipful' and wealthy enough to be called a lord. Presumably he had the higher ranks of the gentry in mind as well as the baronage. William III's concern about the status of Anne Ogard's husband shows that her position in society would reflect back on the status of the Lovells even though she was related through the female line.

Most Lovell daughters married into the knightly class: this is the case with Philippa, daughter of John Lovell VII, William Lovell's unnamed daughter and the two daughters of John Lovell IX, Joan and Frideswide. Only Maud, mentioned above, married another baron, William de la Zouche.²⁰⁷ As examined above, this lack of 'class-consciousness' only applies when the modern dichotomy of peerage and gentry is applied. The medieval barons probably saw themselves as part of a more complex hierarchy, in which the higher ranks of the gentry and the lesser titled nobles were of the same 'class' as the barons. The fate of the daughters of noble families is rarely examined in research, not only because it poses some difficulties to the historian, but also because most research focuses on the patrilineal family (which also reflects the priorities set in the middle ages). A tendency to try to marry one's daughters to men of similar rank is discernible, as for example the fathers of the wives of the Lovells managed to do. However, it was not always possible to find men of the same rank. Isabel Scrope, daughter of the first Lord Scrope of Masham, married Sir Robert Plumpton.²⁰⁸ The daughters of Henry FitzHugh (who was also guardian of William Lovell III) married men of knightly rank, even though their father was a very influential courtier.²⁰⁹ The marriages of daughters were an important opportunity for the family to create new links with other families, or strengthen old ties. The matches were arranged with care. Though there did not seem to be a sharp distinction between the gentry and the nobility, there was a sense that the husband's rank mattered.

The study of the provisions and strategies employed by the Lovells of Titchmarsh regarding their family, especially their marriages, shows clearly how important marriage and in particular the marriage of the head of the family were to them. The wives created important links to other families; indeed, these relationships were usually the reason why

²⁰⁷ William de la Zouche was, strictly speaking, not a baron at the time of their marriage before 1296 as we was first summoned to parliament in 1308, *Complete Peerage*, vol. xii, II, pp. 939-40.

²⁰⁸ Vale, vol. i, p. 240.

²⁰⁹ Ross, 'Yorkshire Baronage', p. 226.

a marriage was contracted. Any inheritance that resulted from marriage was usually the consequence of dynastic accident rather than careful planning. The connections thus established were important enough for the women who symbolized them to be endowed with large parts of the family estates. It is therefore necessary to take a more balanced view of the problem of dowagers. Jointures represented a tangible measure of the importance attached by the family to the new and sometimes prestigious connections produced by a wife and perpetuated by a dower. Younger sons and daughters were also important figures in establishing connections to other families. Though only very few details are known about younger sons or daughters, it becomes obvious that in the case of the Lovells they were regarded as an important part of the family. Other nobles, as for example, Henry Bourghier, did not settle any land on younger sons.²¹⁰ No rigid rules existed dictating which members of the family had to be cared for; generally it was only the members of the immediate family who were endowed with land. Occasionally even more distant relatives were provided for. In these cases, the recipient was in particular need, as for example Anne Ogard, as both her parents had died, which explains why her grandfather, William Lovell III, bestowed money on her. Similarly, a distant relative of Francis Lovell, Anne Neville, cousin of his wife Anna FitzHugh, received an annuity of £10 from his estates. Like Anne Ogard, Anne Neville was in special need, as her husband William Stonor had joined the rebellion against Richard III.²¹¹ Though some regulations were created by convention, in the end family was defined by the individual's wishes.²¹² In the cases in which arrangements for more distant relatives were made, they were caused by unusual circumstances.

²¹⁰ Woodger, p. 197.

²¹¹ Horrox and Hammond, vol. i, p. 251.

²¹² 'In the horizontal family network, choice did play some role: one could, in part, pick and choose one's effective relatives.' Rosenthal, *Patriarchy and Family*, p. 103.

3.3 Localities

The nobility, as the governing class of medieval England, participated both in central and local government. Their involvement in national administration and politics, service to the king in war and peace, their involvement with the royal court and participation in parliaments will be discussed in the next chapter. The nobility were also interested in the localities, the area surrounding their estates, where they could influence the implementation of the decisions taken at the centre of power. Looking at the experience of a baronial family we have to ask how much they could indirectly influence local politics and how much they directly participated in it. The area in which they were able to wield power will be examined as well as the question of whether the kind of influence they had depended on the distance from the family's main estates. It is possible, for example that their direct involvement was restricted to a certain area, perhaps around one central residence, the *caput honoris*, while they could only indirectly influence wider areas where they had fewer manors. As medieval government was to a great extent determined by personal relationships, the connections between the Lovells and other families of the region will be examined to see whether, for example, these were determined by their status and whether their associates originated from the same area in which the Lovells were politically active.

This aspect of baronial life – their influence and involvement in the localities – is very complex. Comparing the activities of the Lovells of Titchmarsh and that of other families of the same rank is extremely difficult. Most of our sources allow only a partial understanding of their actual involvement. The appointments to commissions of the peace for example do not inform us whether or not a baron actually attended the quarter session.²¹³ Sparsity of previous research on baronial families, the diversity of the actions of the men involved and the complexity of the personal links all combine to make statements about the role of the baronage in the localities difficult. In exploring the activities of the Lovells in the local administration and examining the circle of associates around the family, this section will investigate a new aspect of the organisation of the locality, the place of the baronage. Without attempting to reach a definite answer regarding the character of baronial involvement in the locality, this analysis and a comparison of the Lovells with other families will help towards understanding of the position of barons in relation to the titled nobility and the gentry.

²¹³ see below, p. 120.

3.3.1. Local Administration

To ascertain the interest of the Lovell family in the politics of the localities and their influence on local affairs, it is necessary first to examine the most substantial evidence surviving from the central government: the appointments to commissions. These commissions were important as one of the main links between the central government and the localities. The commissioners implemented policies decided upon by the central government: they were asked to array troops, hear and determine legal cases, collect taxes or raise loans. One kind of commission, the commissions of the peace, has particularly attracted the interest of historians. The appointment to the commissions of the peace is taken as an important indicator of the men's position in the county of the nomination. Though it is by no means certain that the appointees participated actively in all or any of the commissions to which they were appointed, there is evidence that nominated noblemen were influential in the area of the commission. The commissions were one of the main methods through which government decisions were executed in the localities. Therefore it was not only advisable but necessary to appoint nobles who could be expected to have influence and interests in the region and might enforce the decision taken by the commission.²¹⁴ There are only a few records of the proceedings of the quarter sessions of the commissions of the peace or attendance figures in existence.²¹⁵ However, while it cannot be assumed that appointment to a commission should simply be equated with actual participation in the commission,²¹⁶ significant variations are likely to signify a change of influence at the centre of power or increase of influence in the localities.²¹⁷ If the nominations to the commissions of the peace are considered together with the appointments to all other commissions, it is possible to locate the centres of interest of individual lords and to get some impression of the area in which they were able to exercise their authority.

Next to the work of the commissions, the participation of the Lovells in the

²¹⁴ Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, p. 165.

²¹⁵ The only Lovell mentioned in the JUST 1 was the justice John Lovell of Snotescombe in the late thirteenth century. As peers were not entitled to the payment which justices of the peace received from 1388 and 1390 onwards, the receipts cannot be used to determine the frequency with which this group attended the quarter sessions, J.R. Lander, *English Justices of the Peace, 1461-1509* (Gloucester, 1989), p. 58-59.

²¹⁶ As has been done, for example, by Young in his discussion of the involvement of the Nevilles in thirteenth century administration, Young, pp. 103-110, and Theresa May, 'The Cobham Family in the Administration of England, 1200-1400', *Archaeologia Cantiana* 84 (1967), 1-31.

²¹⁷ A. Musson writes very correctly: 'Significant changes in the personnel of commissions were often more likely to have been prompted by political motives and circumstances than being performance-related', Anthony J. Musson, *Public Order and Law Enforcement. The Local Administration of Criminal Justice. 1294-1350* (Woodbridge, 1996), p. 50.

administration of the county will be of interest as well. The question of whether they attended the county courts personally or whether they sent their stewards is particularly significant. With this information it would be possible to evaluate the influence they could wield regarding the elections of officials, particularly the knights of the shire. This investigation will have some considerable overlaps with the next part of the chapter, the 'circle of the Lovells', the men and families with whom the Lovells were associated or who were their retainers.

As so often, there is little information about the first Lords Lovell; the first detailed records available relate to John VII.²¹⁸ After his first appointment to a commission of array in Northamptonshire,²¹⁹ John Lovell VII was almost continuously appointed to commissions to keep the peace in Oxfordshire. After 1385 he was omitted from the commissions in Berkshire, to which he had been appointed in the early 1380s.²²⁰ In 1386 he was included in the commissions for Wiltshire.²²¹ After remaining absent from all commissions of the peace in the late 1380s²²² he was appointed sporadically to the commissions of the peace in Wiltshire.²²³ From 1396 onward he was appointed regularly to the commissions of the peace in Wiltshire²²⁴ and Oxfordshire.²²⁵ Most of his appointments to other commissions were in Oxfordshire,²²⁶ with some in Berkshire as well.²²⁷ Although he was occasionally appointed to commissions in other parts of southern England,²²⁸ he remained most active in Wiltshire, where he was appointed to

²¹⁸ Neither John Lovell III nor his son seem to have been nominated to commissions, only few appointments of John V are recorded, *CPR*, 1340-1343, p. 86; *CFR*, 1337-1347, pp. 283, 286; *CPR*, 1343-1345, p. 590.

²¹⁹ *CPR*, 1364-1367, p. 431.

²²⁰ 1382, *CPR*, 1381-1385, p. 247; 1383, *ibid.*, p. 347, 1384, *ibid.*, p. 350; 1385, *CPR*, 1385-1388, p. 80.

²²¹ 1386, *CPR*, 1385-1388, p. 82.

²²² His absence from the commissions is significantly longer than the short phase of circa one and a half years, in which Richard II removed the nobility from the commissions of the peace, R.L. Storey, 'Liveries and Commissions of the Peace', in F.R.H. Du Boulay and Caroline M. Barron (eds.), *The Reign of Richard II. Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (London, 1971), pp. 138-149.

²²³ 1391, *CPR*, 1388-1391, p. 516, 1394, *CPR*, 1391-1396, p. 587.

²²⁴ 1396, *CPR*, 1396-1399, p. 96; 1397 *ibid.*, p. 230; 1398, *ibid.*, p. 372;

²²⁵ 1396, *CPR*, 1396-1399, p. 96; 1397, *ibid.*, p. 236; 1398, *ibid.* p. 372; 1399, *ibid.*, p. 437.

²²⁶ *CPR*, 1381-1385, pp. 71, 73, 84, 140, 195, 202, 247, 252, 347, 498; 1385-1388, p. 168; 1388-1391, p. 439; 1396-99, pp. 236, 372, 437.

²²⁷ *CPR*, 1381-1385, pp. 72, 86, 141, 247, 347, 350; 1385-1388, p. 80.

²²⁸ Commission of oyer and terminer, Southampton, *CPR*, 1399-1402, p. 286, 289; in London and Middlesex, p. 267-68.

several commissions of array²²⁹ and other commissions.²³⁰ The changes in the pattern of appointments are interesting. The first appointment indicates that the family's original interests were in Northamptonshire and that John Lovell's own centre of interest was in the three counties of Wiltshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

An examination of the appointments to commissions of his descendants – with the exception of Francis Lovell – shows very similar results. The centre for the Lords Lovell was Oxfordshire.²³¹ Next to Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Northamptonshire figure largely in the appointments; occasionally nominations to commissions in Wiltshire complete the picture.²³² The Lovells were constantly appointed to the commissions of the peace in these four counties (none is recorded for John Lovell VIII).²³³ William Lovell III was appointed to five additional commissions.²³⁴ Apart from William Lovell's appointment to commissions of the peace in some more distant counties like Shropshire, where he had inherited land, and the North Riding of Yorkshire, where some of his wife's estates were situated, the appointments to these commissions strengthen the impression that the centre of the family's involvement in political affairs was in the southern Midlands: in Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Northamptonshire.

A different picture emerges when examining the records of the commissions to which Francis Lovell was nominated. Before 1483 he was only appointed to a few commissions in Yorkshire.²³⁵ Though his grandfather had been appointed to the commission of the peace in the North Riding of this county, this only reflected the fact that he was an

²²⁹ *CCR*, 1381-1385, p. 555, *CCR*, 1385-1389, p. 60, *CCR*, 1399-1392, p. 54, *CPR*, 1399-1401, p. 210, *CPR*, 1401-1405, p. 115.

²³⁰ Commission to enquire about the Priory of Ambresbury, *CPR*, 1399-1401, p. 269; commission to enquire about certain lands of the hospital of St. Thomas, *CPR*, 1401-1405, p. 200.

²³¹ Only one appointment to a commission exists for John Lovell VIII, to the commission of the peace in Oxfordshire, *CPR*, 1413-1416, p. 422; William Lovell was regularly nominated to the commissions to raise money in the form of loans or to collect the subsidies granted by parliament in this county, for example in 1428, *CPR*, 1422-1429, p. 481; in 1436, *CPR*, 1429-1436, p. 529; in 1439, *CPR*, 1436-1441, p. 250, in 1440, *ibid*, p. 504, and more. John Lovell IX, out of favour after the takeover by the Yorkists was only appointed to one single commission, in Oxfordshire: commission of oyer and terminer, *CPR*, 1461-1467, p. 346.

²³² For example William III was appointed to a commission enquiring about treasons and insurrections in Oxfordshire and Berkshire in 1428, *CPR*, 1422-1429, p. 495; on a commission *de kidellis* for Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire in 1438, *CPR*, 1436-1441, p. 148; and again in 1452, *CPR*, 1446-1452, p. 578; John Lovell IX was nominated to array troops and arrest the duke of York in Northamptonshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire, *CPR*, 1452-1461, p. 603.

²³³ In Berkshire William III and John IX were appointed on the same commission of the peace on 13 December 1453 and 15 April 1454, *CPR*, 1452-1461.

²³⁴ Dorset, Leicestershire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and the North Riding of Yorkshire. From 1432 onwards, however, he was no longer appointed to the commission for Staffordshire. The reason for this is unclear, as he still held land in the county after 1432.

²³⁵ *CPR*, 1377-1385, pp. 213, 343.

important landowner there. There is no indication that William III or any other Lovells had had any previous active interests in that part of the country. After the usurpation of Richard III, the pattern of Francis's appointments repeated those of his father and grandfather. He served on commissions in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire.²³⁶ The fact that after Richard III's accession, Francis Lovell, though dropped from the commission of the peace in Bedfordshire, was appointed 'to seven other commissions to which he had never been appointed previously'²³⁷ has been seen as an indication of the huge increase in influence Francis enjoyed as Chamberlain of the new King. However, not only did Francis hold considerable estates in most of these counties (Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Wiltshire and the North Riding of Yorkshire), but his grandfather William III had served on the commissions of the peace there. Only the East Riding of Yorkshire and Essex were really 'new' appointments, and even here, Francis Lovell did in fact hold some estates.²³⁸ Furthermore, the dropping of Francis from the commission in Bedfordshire²³⁹ was less extraordinary than his appointment in the first place as he did not hold any land in Bedfordshire. He was only appointed to the commission on 14 June 1483, officially still in the reign of Edward V, though *de facto* power was in the hands of the Duke of Gloucester. He was re-appointed on 26 June 1483 and then dropped from the list.²⁴⁰ The two appointments to the commissions of the peace may have been caused by the exceptional circumstances of this period. Francis Lovell probably did not attend many, if any, of the quarter sessions of the commissions of the peace at this time as he was occupied with the offices he held at the centre of the realm, as Lord Chamberlain and Chief Butler of England.²⁴¹ The changing pattern of appointments shows that Francis Lovell's principal interests were neither in the North nor in his family's traditional territories, but at the side of Richard, Duke of Gloucester and King of England.

In a comparison of the activities of the Lovells with that of other barons, two major developments emerge clearly: first, the number of commissions of the peace to which barons were appointed generally increased during the course of the fifteenth century and, secondly, the Lovells were appointed to a higher number of commissions than most other barons. William de la Zouche, brother-in-law of John Lovell VIII, sat only on the

²³⁶ Commission to deal with rebels in 1483, *CPR*, 1477-1485, p. 371; commission of array in spring 1484, *ibid.*, pp. 399-400, in October 1484, *ibid.*, pp. 489, 490-92.

²³⁷ Lander, *Justices of the Peace*, p. 134.

²³⁸ Lander sees in the large number of commissions to which Francis was appointed a ploy of Richard III to fill the commissions with men faithful to him, Lander, *Justices of the Peace*, p. 138.

²³⁹ Lander calls his omission "odd", Lander, *Justices of the Peace*, p. 134.

²⁴⁰ *CPR*, 1477-1485, p. 553.

²⁴¹ see Chapter 4, p. 159.

commissions of the peace in Northamptonshire in the first years of Henry IV's reign. His son was additionally appointed to the commission in Rutland. At this time, William Lovell III was nominated to six commissions.²⁴² John de la Zouche, a contemporary of Francis Lovell, was appointed to eight commissions (as opposed to Francis's ten). Richard FitzHugh, Francis's brother-in-law sat on four commissions of the peace.²⁴³ This result is intriguing, as the de la Zouches' estates were widely scattered, as were the Lovells'. The fact that the de la Zouches were, however, not appointed to as many commissions as the Lovells may indicate that their estates were not substantial enough. It may also show that the Lovells had a more active interest in local politics. However, this conclusion is undermined by the fact that Francis Lovell was appointed to an exceptional number of commissions even though he was too tied up at the court to be actively involved in local politics. The number of counties to which a baron was appointed was determined mainly by the shape of their estates. However, the connection they had to the central government also had some influence, as Francis Lovell's example shows, though it was not possible to appoint a baron to the commission of the peace in a county where he held no estates.

The appointments to the commissions of the peace and other local commissions confirm the conclusions of the earlier assessments that the main interests of the Lovells were in the southern Midlands: Northamptonshire, Berkshire and most prominently Oxfordshire. John Lovell VII's additional involvement in Wiltshire reflects the fact that he seems to have moved the main residence of the family to Wardour Castle, which he rebuilt.²⁴⁴ The Lovells were a distinctly Midland family: their significant estates in Shropshire or Lancashire did not lead them to become involved in the local administration of these counties. It was Francis Lovell who, after being removed from his family's original lands, became involved in the North. His upbringing in the North, and presumably the tumultuous events during Richard III's reign, all meant that Francis's contact with the former associates of his family in the South was blatantly inadequate.²⁴⁵ Apart from Francis, the Lovells were Midlanders. However, judging from these appointments it becomes clear that the Lovells were not restricted to one county in their activities. This also indicates that they were a mobile family and probably did not have one single manor, one *caput honoris*, from which they ruled their estates. Minster Lovell

²⁴² Another contemporary, William FitzHugh, was appointed to commissions of the peace only in the North Riding of Yorkshire.

²⁴³ In addition to his family's traditional North and East Ridings of Yorkshire in the counties of Somerset and Dorset.

²⁴⁴ see Chapter 5, pp. 191-201.

²⁴⁵ Horrox, *Richard III*, p. 221.

was certainly one of the favourite residences, and John VII seemed to be particularly fond of Wardour Castle, but neither was their only place of residence.

3.3.2. The 'Circle' of the Lovell Family

Medieval government relied heavily upon personal connection between the different levels of administration. The vertical connections, from the king through the higher nobility down to the parish gentry, were the lines of communication between the centre of power and the localities.²⁴⁶ Next to the ties between the different ranks of the aristocracy, horizontal bonds between men of the same rank were equally important for the government to function effectively. Both vertical as well as horizontal ties with other members of the aristocracy determined the life of the medieval baron.

It is, however, very difficult to determine clearly which families were connected on a more than occasional basis. As no private documents of the Lovells have survived, the analysis of those men and women who were the associates of the Lovells has to be based on the occasions on which the personal links were recorded in the form of a legal arrangement and found their way into the archives of central government. In fact, the shortage of evidence can be very misleading. Often, and especially with families of gentry status, the relationship between different knights sharing the same surname cannot be determined. The crossings of paths over time may have been accidental and unconnected. As has been pointed out, if one searches closely enough, everybody is somehow connected with everybody else.²⁴⁷ In a society as small as the late medieval aristocracy it was natural that the same families met each other again and again. Keeping those difficulties in mind, it is nevertheless possible to gain some idea of the specific connections the Lovells established with other families.

In an examination of the associates of the Lovells it will be important to determine with which families or individuals the Lovells were connected in the localities, and whether their links to other baronial families were closer or more frequent than to families of different rank. Their links to the higher nobility as well as their relationship to the knightly families living in the same area will have to be examined.

The most prominent feature of the relationship between the different levels of the aristocracy was retaining. There is little direct evidence either that the Lovells were retained by members of the higher nobility or that they in turn retained members of the gentry. This is not surprising as only a very small proportion of contracts have survived.

²⁴⁶ 'It was the nobility, throughout the middle ages and beyond, who provided the essential link between centre and locality', Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 288.

²⁴⁷ Kirby, 'Hungerford', p. 172.

Only the first Lords Lovell are known to have been in the pay of richer men. John Lovell III was probably a member of the household of Hugh Bigod; John IV and his brother William were retained by Aymer de Valence.²⁴⁸ An indenture of one other member of the Lovell family exists: in 1317 Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, retained Thomas Lovell of Titchwell for life. This is the only indenture for which the actual document has come down to us.²⁴⁹ No later indenture or even indication of the existence of one survives. Though there is no actual proof that the Lovells themselves had a paid retinue, some indication exists that they did. Henry Popham in his legal battle about the St. Laurence inheritance accused John Gawen and Thomas Bonham, both Wiltshire landowners, of being in the pay of John Lovell VII.²⁵⁰ Considering their relatively high status, we can assume that the Lovells retained a number of men, perhaps including the two mentioned by Henry Popham. However, the lack of private documents and the fact that the retainers of the family were of little importance allows us to come to no exact conclusion about the number or status of the Lovells' retainers.

Most retainers of the baronage, as C. Ross established in his research, were usually of such obscure origins that it is impossible to identify them.²⁵¹ The evidence on which to base the examination is sparse even for some of the titled nobles. Of the retinue of Henry Bourghier, Earl of Essex, only ten men are known, only two of whom were esquires; all others were below that rank and five were menial servants.²⁵² The Lovells of Titchmarsh, as substantial barons, were in the obscure middle-ranking position between the men like the Nevilles, Percies or royal dukes like John of Gaunt, who retained large numbers of important men, and those men of knightly rank who were retained themselves. But whether or not a formal contract of retainer existed between the Lovells and their men, the Lovells also occasionally broke the law to protect their servants. The cases of over-protectiveness for their men were of less spectacular nature than those of the great dukes,²⁵³ but the Lovells were guilty of maintenance as well. John Lovell VII managed to produce a pardon for his servant John Freeman who had stolen legal records from the treasury of receipt concerning a lawsuit between John Lovell and William Doyle.²⁵⁴ On another occasion he is known to have distributed money to strengthen his

²⁴⁸ see above, Chapter 2, pp. 43, 45-46.

²⁴⁹ Jones and Walker, pp. 56-58.

²⁵⁰ see above, p. 87. He assisted John VII and his wife Maud in several land transactions. Roskell, Clarke and Rawcliffe, vol. ii, p. 281.

²⁵¹ Ross, 'Yorkshire Baronage', p. 338.

²⁵² Woodger, pp. 265-66.

²⁵³ The case of Ankarette Twynho and George, Duke of Clarence, with all its far reaching consequences springs to mind.

²⁵⁴ see Chapter 2, p. 59.

side in a dispute over land.²⁵⁵ The share of the barons in the system of bastard feudalism is not as striking as that of the greater peers, but they did participate in it as well.

It was not only retaining that defined the relationship between members of the aristocracy. These men had to co-operate on various occasions to allow the transfer and administration of their estates. The enfeoffment to use was an important tool for the landholder which enabled him to influence the transfer of his land. Enfeoffments were used to endow younger sons with lands, guarantee the smooth passage of the patrimony to the heir or settle parts of the estates in jointure on the landholder and his wife. The owner of the land had to be able to rely on the feoffees.²⁵⁶ Generally, the feoffees can be divided into three categories: friends, relatives, and lawyers. Unfortunately, only two enfeoffments of Lovell estates were enrolled. In both cases the enfeoffments were probably settlements in connection with a marriage. Another enfeoffment has survived in its original format.²⁵⁷ The choice of attorneys was taken with similar care to that of feoffees. Attorneys were appointed when a lord was absent from the country for considerable time either on pilgrimage or more often on the king's service. However, not all lords leaving the country appointed attorneys or had these appointment enrolled. In the case of the Lovells, only John Lovell VII's appointments were enrolled: he nominated attorneys each time he served in Ireland.²⁵⁸

The most important feoffee for the settlement of land in jointure between John VII and Maud Holland was her grandfather Robert Holland.²⁵⁹ Most of the others can be linked with the Lovells on other occasions. William Werfton as well as Hildebrand Barr were again feoffees in the second settlement enrolled thirteen years later. A William Worston was appointed attorney for John Lovell, and they sat together on several commissions in Wiltshire.²⁶⁰ It is tempting to assume that William Worston and William Werfton were indeed the same person. Hildebrand Barr was also appointed as one of John Lovell VII's attorneys in 1380, and gave mainprise for John Lovell in the grant of the wardship and marriage of the Bryan girls.²⁶¹ He was also one of the deponents in the Lovell-Morley dispute.²⁶² In the second enfeoffment Thomas Arundel, then bishop of Ely, was the most

²⁵⁵ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 117.

²⁵⁶ Carpenter, 'Beauchamp Affinity', p. 521.

²⁵⁷ Arrangements were made in the connection of the marriages of John Lovell VII to Maud Holland and William Lovell III to Alice Deincourt, additionally an arrangement to bestow land on his wife Anna was made by Francis Lovell, E40/4790.

²⁵⁸ *CPR*, 1377-1381, p. 458, *CPR*, 1391-1396, p. 486, *CPR*, 1396-99, pp. 541, 552 and 558.

²⁵⁹ *CCR*, 1369-1371, p. 309.

²⁶⁰ *CPR*, 1381-1385, pp. 356, 489; *CPR*, 1385-1388, pp. 82-83.

²⁶¹ *CPR*, 1385-1388, p. 276.

²⁶² PRO30/26/69, no. 27.

significant feoffee. Richard Abberbury,²⁶³ Thomas Themese, and Richard Holt were enfeoffed. John Dauteseye and Richard Chamberlain were listed as witnesses in both enfeoffments.²⁶⁴ Thomas Themese also served as John Lovell's attorney in 1380 and on commissions in Berkshire.²⁶⁵ Richard Holt was appointed as an attorney as well. Thomas Hungerford, another attorney in 1380, was the father of Walter Hungerford whose connection with the Lovells has already been discussed above.²⁶⁶ Walter Hungerford's son, Robert, married the daughter of one of the witnesses of the second enfeoffment, William, Lord Botreaux.²⁶⁷ This list could be extended almost indefinitely. Another important source for information about the associates of the Lovells is the Lovell-Morley dispute. The men who were questioned in this case had to have close links to the Lovell family to be able to provide information for the court case.²⁶⁸

Though not all the attorneys, feoffees and witnesses can be identified,²⁶⁹ it is obvious that most of them came from the southern counties where the Lovells were involved in local politics. Some of the men appointed, as for example Richard Abberbury, Warin de Lisle, Robert Tressilian and Hugh de Segrave, were also prominent courtiers. However, they were not only connected to John VII through their prominence at the centre of power but also sat on local commissions with him. The men he appointed as attorneys during his last stay in Ireland in 1399 include significantly fewer people who were active at the centre of power. The exceptions were the appointments of the courtiers Henry Green and John Busshy.²⁷⁰ Henry Green, however, had shared John Lovell's involvement in local politics in Wiltshire.²⁷¹ It is obvious that from the men he met at the royal court John Lovell VII choose those who had interests in the same counties as himself. It was advisable to employ people as feoffees or attorneys who were able to fulfil their obligations, and local men were in a far better position to do that than men with no connection in the county. Influence at the centre of power was an additional asset but in itself was not enough.

²⁶³ see Chapter 4, pp. 179-81.

²⁶⁴ *CCR*, 1381-1385, p. 427.

²⁶⁵ *CPR*, 1381-1385, pp. 141, 247, 347, *CPR*, 1385-88, p. 80.

²⁶⁶ see above, p. 91.

²⁶⁷ Kirby, 'Hungerford', p. 145.

²⁶⁸ see Chapter 5, p. 249.

²⁶⁹ For example, I have found no connection between Hugh Hopewas or Robert de Londres and John Lovell VII.

²⁷⁰ *CPR*, 1396-1399, pp. 541, 552, 558. The remaining attorneys were William Oudeby, Thomas Stanley, Thomas Frisby and John Sottesbury, Simon Herpissfeld, Robert Aleyn, Thomas Claceton, Simon Gaunstede, Laurence Allerthorpe, Thomas de Tyselegh, Mathew Kynyan and Giles Mallory.

²⁷¹ He was appointed to the commission of the peace with John Lovell in 1397, *CPR*, 1396-1399, p. 230.

It seems to have been general practice to employ men with interests in the same region as feoffees. For example, Henry Green employed William Lovell III and other men with strong interests in Northamptonshire in an enfeoffment.²⁷² However, most people who enfeoffed John Lovell VII – Guy Bryan,²⁷³ John Worth,²⁷⁴ Thomas Mowbray,²⁷⁵ John Neville, Lord Latimer,²⁷⁶ and Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of York²⁷⁷ – were closely connected with the royal court and had little or no connection with his local interests. In other cases, the connection between the landholder and the enfeoffed Lovell are obscure; for example there is no obvious reason why Edmund de Hemgrave choose to enfeoff John Lovell VII with Reginald Eccles and William March of Soterlee in 1379.²⁷⁸ It is likely that these were men of minor rank who were probably based in the same area as John Lovell VII. The choice of feoffees seems also to have depended on the personal preferences of the landholder. The fact that a number of well connected, and indeed important, men choose John VII as a feoffee, reflects his own position of importance at this time.²⁷⁹

The enfeoffment arranged for the provision of Alice Deincourt includes an impressive list of thirteen feoffees and twenty-one witnesses. Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, John Juyn and Richard Hastings were the most important men on the list. Alice Deincourt herself was one of the feoffees. Another feoffee, William Bedell, was in possession of the manor of Hurdecote (Wiltshire) for life, the reversion of which is part of the settlement. Most of the men, like the associates of John VII, had links with the counties in which William III was active: John Juyn was a judge and a neighbour of the Hungerfords.²⁸⁰ Thomas Woodville, another feoffee, was also serving on a commission with William Lovell.²⁸¹ The ‘circle’ around William Lovell III seems to fall into two categories. The first group comprised the men who had links with the central government and the court: Ralph Cromwell (husband of William’s sister-in-law), William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester, Richard, Duke of York, and some of the Duke’s retainers, such as

²⁷² *CPR*, 1446-1452, p. 124. The other feoffees were Robert Ros, John Stourton, Richard Woodville and John Wooley; John Stourton is presumably a relative of the William Stourton who held lands of John Lovell VIII, *CIPM*, vol. xx, no. 104.

²⁷³ The castle and township of Laugharn in Wales with the remainder of Guy Brian’s granddaughters Philippa and Elizabeth, *CPR*, 1385-1388, p. 500.

²⁷⁴ see Chapter 4, p. 180.

²⁷⁵ *CIPM*, vol. xviii, no. 269.

²⁷⁶ *CPR*, 1405-1408, pp. 147, 212, 337, 340.

²⁷⁷ *CCR*, 1392-1395, pp. 399-402.

²⁷⁸ *CPR*, 1377-1381, p. 346.

²⁷⁹ see below, Chapter 4, pp. 159-61, 169-70.

²⁸⁰ Kirby, ‘Hungerford’, p. 176.

²⁸¹ *CPR*, 1436-1441, p. 250.

Richard Quartermayns²⁸² and Henry Green.²⁸³ The second group was made up of more obscure figures from the localities, such as William Tresham,²⁸⁴ Thomas Wake (husband of Agnes Lovell of Clevedon) and William Aldwinkle.²⁸⁵ The differences between both groups of men are more apparent than real. All of these men, even Richard, Duke of York, and William Waynflete, had interests in counties in which parts of the Lovell estates were situated.

The associates of William Lovell III differed in status from those of his grandfather. The impression that most of them were of lesser importance is reinforced by the nature of the surviving records. Some of them were of high rank, but it seems more likely that they were chosen for their local connections than for any influence they had in court. Or rather, William Lovell did not have enough influence at court to employ these men because of any connections he had established there. In his will William III arranged for a number of servants to receive a sum of money.²⁸⁶ The *inquisition post mortem* of Alice Deincourt mentions a number of people receiving annuities from her estates.²⁸⁷ Some can be identified, such as Richard Fowler and Thomas Wood, who acted as feoffees in the settlement of land on William and Henry Lovell.²⁸⁸ The servants mentioned in William Lovell's will and most of Alice Deincourt's annuitants belonged to a group of people who, though always a part of the world of the Lovells are not encountered elsewhere in the records left by other Lovells. The analysis of the feoffees and attorneys has shown that all the associates of the Lovells, John VII's as well as William III's, had vested interests in the same counties as the Lovells themselves.

Francis Lovell's associates present a different picture. In his settlement for his wife, most of the men he enfeoffed had no connection with the counties in which the manors concerned were situated. Thomas, Lord Scrope of Upsall, Richard Ratcliff, George FitzHugh, Thomas Metcalf, Geoffrey and Edward Frank were 'northerners' and were all

²⁸² Johnson, p. 236; see below.

²⁸³ R.A. Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI. The Exercise of Royal Authority. 1422-1461* (London, 1981), p. 728.

²⁸⁴ He was on commissions of the peace with William Lovell in Northamptonshire, e.g. *CPR*, 1422-1429, p. 567; *CPR*, 1429-1436, p. 626.

²⁸⁵ He is probably related to the William Aldwinkle appointed as one of John VII's attorneys during his absence in Ireland in 1399. A William Aldwinkle is also one of the men to give mainprise for William Lovell III, *CCR*, 1429-1435, p. 228.

²⁸⁶ *Lincoln Diocesan Documents*, pp. 78-80.

²⁸⁷ Richard Hererent 6 marks, 6s. 8d.; John Bussel 4 marks; William Stafford, 66s. 8d.; Richard Stompton, £18 2s. 3d.; Isabelle Groby 40s.; Thomas Montgomery, £12; Thomas Suthwyk, £23; Richard Fowler 10 marks; John Haper, 4 marks; C140/47 no 64.

²⁸⁸ Thomas Wood received £13 from the manor of Cogges (Oxfordshire), and Richard Fowler 10 marks from the manor of Shobton (Buckinghamshire).

closely connected with Richard III.²⁸⁹ Even William Catesby, though himself based in Warwickshire, was probably chosen for his link with Richard rather than for his previous connections with the Lovells. It is obvious that Francis Lovell had lost touch with the families around the southern estates. It seems that Francis tried to stay in contact with some of them; he appears to have been on friendly terms with the Stonors.²⁹⁰ Additionally, in 1481 William Stonor married Anne Neville, daughter of John Neville, Marquis of Montague. She was the cousin of Anna FitzHugh, wife of Francis Lovell. Francis, himself busy in the North, asked Sir William Stonor not only to look after his deer in Rotherfield Grey,²⁹¹ but to raise troops against the rebellious Duke of Buckingham.²⁹² Here his trust in his 'cousin Stonor' proved to be misplaced, as William Stonor joined the Duke's abortive rebellion and fled abroad. Sir William Norreys, father-in-law of Frideswide, Francis's sister, also joined the Duke of Buckingham's rebellion.²⁹³ The disconnection with his family's centre is made clear by the choice of the people he associated with and his misplaced trust in William Stonor.

Another field in which the associations of a nobleman became apparent were the elections to parliament. Here, we are told, the nobility forced their retainers to be elected.²⁹⁴ However, the gentry was not always easily overawed by the nobility.²⁹⁵ According to the returns of the elections of the knights of the shire, the Lovells were never present at the county courts where the elections took place, nor did they send official proxies. Though it was still possible that the Lovells influenced the elections, this lack of any participation – at least as far as we can tell – in the actual elections shows that these were not of great priority to the Lovells. Turning to the men who were elected as knights of the shire or appointed sheriffs in the counties with which the Lovells had strong connection, it becomes obvious that a considerable number were linked with the Lovell family. Both Sir Richard Abberbury, one of John Lovell VII's feoffees, and his son Richard Abberbury the younger were knights of the shire, Richard the elder in Oxfordshire (1386), Richard the younger in Berkshire (1394; 1397, Sept.) Though their family was originally from Adderbury (Oxfordshire) the two most prominent members of

²⁸⁹ Edward Frank was the man who was sent by Alice Neville to search for Francis Lovell after his disappearance following the Battle of Stoke, see above, Chapter 2, p. 75.

²⁹⁰ Presents were exchanged between Francis Lovell and Elizabeth, the second wife of William Stonor in 1477-78, *Kingsford's Stonor Letters*, pp. 297-98.

²⁹¹ *ibid.*, p. 406.

²⁹² *ibid.*, p. 418-19.

²⁹³ *VCH*, Berkshire, vol. iv, p. 127.

²⁹⁴ J.R. Maddicott, 'The County Community and the Making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth-Century England', *TRHS* fifth ser. 27 (1977), pp. 31-32.

²⁹⁵ Clark, 127-154.

the family were also great landowners in Berkshire. Richard Abberbury the elder was also chamberlain to Queen Anne.²⁹⁶ The link with Richard Abberbury shows again how the connections of John Lovell VII at the royal court replicate his connections in the localities. Sir John Golafre, a Berkshire and Oxfordshire landowner and one of the witnesses in the land settlement of William Lovell III in 1430,²⁹⁷ sat as knight of the shire for Berkshire²⁹⁸ and Oxfordshire²⁹⁹ and also served several times as sheriff for Oxfordshire and Berkshire.³⁰⁰ John Gawen (or Gawayn), a lawyer by profession and one of the attorneys for John Lovell while he was in the king's service in Ireland in 1399, was elected knight of the shire for Wiltshire³⁰¹ where he also served as sheriff.³⁰² Richard Quartermayns, one of William Lovell III's associates,³⁰³ served as sheriff for Oxfordshire in 1436 and 1454.³⁰⁴ John Wilcotes, a witness of William Lovell III's enfeoffment, was knight of the shire for Oxfordshire.³⁰⁵ In six of the ten parliaments in which Wilcotes represented Oxfordshire, John Golafre was knight of the shire for Berkshire.³⁰⁶ He also served as sheriff in this county.³⁰⁷ This list could be extended without difficulty.

Without putting undue stress on this evidence, it becomes clear how closely the Lovells were associated with the local representatives in parliament and the sheriffs of the counties they were most interested in: Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire. In this respect their links with Northamptonshire were less developed. It is impossible to say whether the men were elected as associates of the Lovells or the Lovells sought their help because they were important men in the shire. Indeed, both explanations could be equally

²⁹⁶ Walker, 'Sir Richard Abberbury', p. 120.

²⁹⁷ *CCR*, 1429-1435, pp. 57-58. In 1425 John Golafre was a witness in a land settlement of John Blaket and his wife Elizabeth, together with William Lovell and William Lisle. *CCR*, 1422-1429, p. 259; Ralph Botiler, Lord Sudeley, who was to be Alice Deincourt's second husband, was the supervisor of John Golafre's will, Roskell, Clarke and Rawcliffe, vol. iii, p. 202.

²⁹⁸ 1401, 1404 (Oct.), 1407, 1410, 1413 (May), 1414 (Apr.), 1416 (Feb.), 1421 (Feb.) Roskell, *House of Commons*, vol. i, pp. 261-62.

²⁹⁹ 1397 (Sept.), *ibid.*, p. 559.

³⁰⁰ 1397, 1404, 1414, 1424, *Lists of Sheriffs of for England and Wales*, PRO Lists and Indexes 9 (repr, with amendments, 1963), p. 108

³⁰¹ 1394, 1395, Roskell, Clarke and Rawcliffe, vol. iii, p. 682.

³⁰² *Lists of Sheriffs*, p. 153.

³⁰³ He stood surety for William's guarantee not to harm or hurt William Penteney: *CCR*, 1429-1435, p. 228. He received an annuity of 10 marks from Alice Deincourt: C140/47 no. 64. As mentioned above, John Lovell IX owed Richard Quartermayns £1,000.

³⁰⁴ *List of Sheriffs*, p. 108.

³⁰⁵ 1399, 1401, 1404 (Oct.), 1407, 1413 (May), 1414 (Apr.), 1414 (Nov.), 1417, 1419, 1421 (May), Roskell, *House of Commons*, vol. i, p. 559.

³⁰⁶ 1399, 1404 (Oct.), 1407, 1413 (May), 1414 (Apr.) and 1421 (May).

³⁰⁷ 1401, 1407, 1415, 1419, 1422, *Lists of Sheriffs*, p. 108.

true. The implications, however, remain the same: the Lovells were firmly embedded in the local society of these three counties. As before, the picture presented in Francis Lovell's time differs markedly from that of his ancestors. In 1484, one of his associates became sheriff of Oxfordshire. He was, however, a man with no previous connections to this county but a northerner, Edward Frank of Knighton in Richmondshire.³⁰⁸ Again the implications are clear: Francis Lovell had lost the connection with his family's 'circle'.

There are few instances in which the connection between the Lovells and another family lasted longer than the lives of the individual men involved. Usually the link did not outlast the second generation. The connections between the Lovells and the de la Zouches of Harringworth, lasting over two hundred years, are all the more interesting. As mentioned above, the Lovells of Titchmarsh held Minster Lovell from Alan de la Zouche of Ashby de la Zouche.³⁰⁹ William de la Zouche, the younger brother of Alan, was the founder of the cadet branch of this family, the de la Zouches of Harringworth. It was with this branch of the family that the Lovells were closely connected. The link was strengthened and re-strengthened by three marriages between the families. William de la Zouche, husband of Maud Lovell, half-sister of John IV, was a retainer of Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, as were John IV and several other members of the de la Zouche family (of the Harringworth as well as the Ashby de la Zouche branches).³¹⁰ By this time John IV held a small amount of land of William de la Zouche, if only 22 acres.³¹¹ Eon de la Zouche's daughter Isabel de la Zouche was probably the wife of John V. His grandson, another William de la Zouche, was, like John VII, a prominent member of the royal court in the 1380s and was also forced by the Lords Appellant to leave the court in 1388.³¹² Many of the knights and lawyers with whom John VII was associated were also closely connected to the de la Zouches.³¹³ William de la Zouche employed John Lovell VII as a feoffee twice.³¹⁴ William de la Zouche's daughter Eleanor married John VII's son John VIII. John de la Zouche, a contemporary of Francis Lovell, took part in the coronation of Richard III and fought at the battle of Bosworth, where he was taken prisoner.³¹⁵ Unlike Francis, he made his peace with Henry VII. John de la Zouche

³⁰⁸ *Lists of Sheriffs*, p. 108; Horrox, *Richard III*, p. 221.

³⁰⁹ see Chapter 2, p. 42.

³¹⁰ Philipps, p. 298.

³¹¹ The 22 acres arable were held in Docking (Norfolk) which the lands devolved to Maud Lovell, now wife of William de la Zouche, were situated, *CIPM*, vol. v, no. 520.

³¹² *Historia Vitae et Regni Ricardi Secundi*, p. 166.

³¹³ For example John Golafre, William Wilcotes, a relative of John Wilcotes, and even, as mentioned above, Henry Green.

³¹⁴ In 1396, *CCR*, 1395-99, pp. 66, 120; 1397, *ibid.*, p. 126.

³¹⁵ *Complete Peerage*, vol. xii, II, pp. 946-47.

married a distant relative of the Lovells, Joan Dinham, whose grandmother was Philippa Lovell, daughter of John VII.³¹⁶ Even Francis Lovell's counterparts from William Collingbourne's famous doggerel, William Catesby and Richard Ratcliff, shared his connection with the de la Zouches; they each married a daughter of William de la Zouche.³¹⁷

This is far from being a complete picture of the relationships and associations of the Lovells. Many more connections between the Lovells and other families could be explored, while some links will remain obscure to the modern researcher. However, even the examination of a part of their circle gives a good impression of the complexity of the bonds that tied the different members of the aristocracy together. Often not only one but several connections appear between different men, and it is impossible to decide which connection was the strongest or most decisive. With the prominent exception of Francis, the Lovells' associates came from the counties in which the Lovells had interests. Though it might be argued that as neighbours they were conveniently near and could easily be called upon to witness a charter or act as feoffees, with closer examination it becomes clear that even when the links between the men seems to have been forged at the royal court, the truly important connection was that of a shared interest in the localities. Some changes are noticeable in the associates of the different Lords Lovell. A significant number of the men connected with John Lovell VII also had strong links with the royal court. The associates of William Lovell III were mostly men of lesser rank than himself. Francis Lovell's associates were not at all related to the basis of his family's power, but belonged to the circle in which he himself acted, the orbit of Richard III. The associates of these men were drawn from the area of their activities, be it the localities, the localities and the court, or the association of another magnate.

3.3.3. The Lovells and the Localities

It is extremely difficult to decide how much influence the Lovells had in the localities as there is not enough evidence available on which to base a detailed account. It has become clear that the Lovells were involved in the political affairs of a number of counties where a large part of their estates were situated. Landholding was, however, not the only decisive factor. The Lovells did not take part in the administration in all the counties in which they held land: for example, no Lovell was active in Shropshire or Lancashire. The families

³¹⁶ see Appendix 2, Figure 5.

³¹⁷ Roskell, 'William Catesby', p. 148.

with which they were in contact were partly of the same rank as themselves, partly of higher or lower rank. As there is so little evidence, it is difficult to fathom how much actual influence the Lovells could exercise over the men who might have been part of their 'circle'. It seems unlikely that they could overawe the gentry on a larger scale. In co-operation with other lords or even some part of the more important gentry they could probably influence local affairs, but not on their own. It is probably here that the difference between the magnates and the barons is more prominent than in other spheres of the political world of the later middle ages, particularly the court where personal connections with the monarch were of the utmost importance. The higher nobility could influence more important figures among the gentry and also a greater number of them, and were able to influence the localities. Only a man of the highest standing was in a position to 'bend the royal administration in the shires to suit his interests.'³¹⁸ This was definitely beyond the Lovells' capability.

³¹⁸ Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, p. 106.

3.4. Conclusion

This analysis of the Lovell family has shown them to be a typical baronial family. From the time of their inclusion in the ranks of the parliamentary peerage, the Lovells assembled land and therewith rose in importance. In the fifteenth century they were a very, though not exceptionally, rich and powerful family. Like the Lovells, several other baronial families bordered on the lower ranks of the titled magnates in terms of their wealth. Unlike many other barons, who had a definite centre to their estates, the Lovells had a larger area in which they exercised their power. This put them on a similar level to the higher ranks of the nobility. The de la Poles, for example, also had more than one area of interest, one in East Anglia and one in the Thames valley. The shape of the estate of a baronial family depended to some extent on personal choices, particularly on the marriage strategies employed and the amount of money they were willing – and able – to invest in land purchases. However, there also seems to have been some divergence between those families who became barons at the end of the thirteenth century and those who received their first individual summons later. The importance of land made all ranks of the aristocracy take every opportunity to increase their estates, and in the long run this of course meant that their estates would be spread out over some part of the kingdom.

Marriage was a central issue to a medieval baron, having a profound influence on the fate of the family. Barons seem to have conducted their search for the right wife with great care. There was a tendency, though by no means a rigorous rule, to marry within a group of families of the same rank. Though the wives of the Lords Lovell were of exactly the same rank as their husbands, other baronial families and the other members of the Lovell family looked for marriage partners in a wider circle of families including the lesser titled peerage and the higher gentry. As inheritances were more often than not accidental, they were not the main aim of the marriage in the first place. The connections created by the marriages were the immediate gain. The upkeep of these links was one of the reasons why land was settled on the wives, even though this practice reduced the potential influence of their sons, by reducing their estates. Younger sons and daughters of the Lovell family were an integral part of the family. The sons particularly were provided for and endowed with lands. A clear distinction was drawn between the heirs of the family and their younger brothers. Despite giving parts of the estates to the younger sons, and financial help to daughters and granddaughters, it was the future Lord who received the bulk of the estates.

The analysis has also made clear that there were significant differences between the baronage and the magnates. It is particularly in the area of influence in the localities that the difference between the minor nobles and the magnates becomes obvious. The latter

could and did use their power to influence affairs more easily than did the barons, though it has been shown that even magnates could not always overawe the local gentry.³¹⁹ It seems that the barons were as much a part of the late medieval political society as were the greater nobles, but fewer records have survived to show the role they took. It is the issue of a baron's participation in local affairs that is difficult to fathom. The baronage was, though less influential than the titled peers, an important factor in local politics. They had too large a power base themselves to be dominated by the magnates. However, most of the time the aristocracy, gentry and nobility, would work together rather than against each other.

In examining the Lovells' strategies and experiences in relation to landholding, dynasty and the localities, this chapter has suggested that their attitudes and experiences were, on the whole, precisely what might be expected of a family that stood in that social group between the high nobility and the gentry. But individual circumstances, above all the personal attributes, attitudes and actions of the head of the family, were a constant conditioning factor in the life of any aristocratic family. The baronage was stratified within itself, with some barons of lesser standing resembling the gentry more in financial and political position, while others definitely stood high above men of knightly rank. The Lovells from John VII onwards belonged to the latter group. This heterogeneity, itself to some degree a product of dynastic accident and personal circumstance, suggests that we must approach with caution any attempts to set up any particular model of experience as 'typical' of the late medieval aristocracy.

³¹⁹ Clark, pp. 147-48.

4. High Politics

After discussing the different aspects of the life of a baronial family in the localities, we now have to turn to their participation in the affairs of the kingdom as a whole. 'High politics' can be defined as the involvement of the aristocracy in the government of the realm: at the royal court,¹ in parliament and councils; their participation in foreign and internal wars, and their exercising of national administration. The position he held at the royal court, in parliaments and councils and during wars was an integral part of a nobleman's life and reflected on his position in the localities. Though some events discussed in this chapter, for example grants of land, have already been addressed in the previous chapter, they will now be examined from a different angle. By looking at the lives of the Lovells within the context of their involvement in 'high politics' we can see different facets of their roles in the society of their time.

A clear separation between local government and national government cannot be drawn, as both were closely interlinked. The decisions taken at the centre were implemented in the localities, wars affected the localities, as did the taxes granted by parliament. Moreover, much of national and local government was conducted by the same people. The nobility in particular is seen as the essential link between centre and localities. Often the higher nobility, 'the group of twenty or so men with the rank of earl and above',² is seen as dominating national politics and it was to them that the barons and gentry looked for guidance. The last chapter has shown that the barons did have connections to the higher nobility but were not controlled by them. Similarly in national politics the baronage were not dependent on their richer peers. It will become clear in the discussion that though the barons did not act in an organised way as a single unit, individually they could exert great influence on the events at the centre of power.

The relationship between the king (as head of state and as the most powerful nobleman) and his subjects (the individual aristocrats, nobility as well as gentry) was based on a system that, when it worked, was beneficial to both sides. The king, ultimately the owner of all lands,³ granted the lands to his subjects and received service from them in return. Additionally the king dispensed patronage to them.⁴ All members of the late medieval aristocracy of more than mere local standing were in contact with the

¹ The royal court was 'the political hub of the realm', Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 1.

² A. Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility* (London, 1973), p. 1.

³ see Chapter 1, p. 3.

⁴ see also Chapter 1, p. 16.

royal court at least once in their lives. Every man or woman holding land in chief had to swear fealty in person to the king when he or she inherited their estates (or after coming of age in the case of inheriting the estates as a minor). The king granted the land to the major vassals who in turn granted it to smaller landholders. By the fourteenth century, however, the relationship between the greater lords and the lesser lords was often defined by another bond, that of retaining. The retained man was to give his lord his allegiance, fight for him in war and help him rule his land in times of peace; in return he received a fee. Similarly, from the reign of Edward I onwards, the king had, at least in times of war, to rely on contracts to raise an army. It has been argued that the king became the 'good lord of all good lords',⁵ the ultimate 'bastard feudal' lord. Like other lords he bent the law in favour of his men⁶ and displayed all the negative aspects of retaining⁷ so often criticised by contemporaries and historians alike. One important aspect of the retaining system is usually missing in the link between the king and his men, that of money. Only if the king had to raise an army for war (or, in the case of the household knights, the personal retinue of the king) was a fee involved. Instead of a monetary reward, the aristocracy expected patronage in return for their service. Christine Carpenter has argued recently that patronage was not 'the essential lubricant of government'.⁸ The nobility, not dependent on royal patronage for financial reasons, were dependent on the king to secure their lands, as he stood between them and anarchy.⁹ It is certainly true that if the relationship between the king and the aristocracy was functioning, they were indeed natural allies; but if it did not, the 'wrong' dispensation of patronage was always an important factor in the breakdown of the connection.

If the link between the king and his subjects worked, the latter provided service in war and in peace and in return they received patronage (whether or not this was an all-important issue). However, sometimes the good relationship broke down. As the king was the essential centre of medieval government, not only as a dispenser of patronage, it was particularly catastrophic if the consent between him and his most powerful subjects disintegrated. The king created new nobles, received their homage when they inherited their lands and was the centre of power. The importance of the monarchy is clear, as no rebellion ever attacked the monarchy as an institution. However, if the king was weak,

⁵ Powell, 'Law and Order', p. 37; Hicks, 'Bastard Feudalism', in M. Hicks, *Richard III and his Rivals. Magnates and their Motives in the Wars of the Roses* (London, 1991), p. 10.

⁶ 'This is a classic example of the manipulation of the law through bastard feudalism – the only noteworthy feature being that the lord involved in exerting pressure on the sheriff happened to be the king.' Powell, 'Law and Order', p. 39.

⁷ One example is of course Richard II's distribution of his badge and livery.

⁸ Carpenter, *Wars of the Roses*, p. 43.

⁹ *ibid.*, p. 39.

incompetent, or mad the nobility was faced with the difficult question of what to do to remedy the situation. Any attempt to overrule the king could be interpreted as treason.¹⁰ Yet, despite the dangers involved in opposing or (in the most extreme case) even trying to replace the king, the nobility felt the need to fight their king repeatedly during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The special position of the monarch also induced people to fight for his rights, defending the ruling monarch against those who wanted to compromise his rank. To fight for the ruling king was also the less dangerous option; every new king had to accept the former supporters of his opponent if he did not want to undermine his own position.

The increasing involvement of the aristocracy in the government of the realm, as well as the precedents created by earlier revolts, naturally changed the attitude the aristocracy held towards rebellion. At the end of the fifteenth century their administrative role had become so important, that 'the Tudor nobility were willy-nilly committed politicians'.¹¹ That the portion of the nobility actively involved in the dynastic struggles changed repeatedly and also within a short period has been demonstrated by C. Richmond. While four-fifths of the nobility were involved in the armed struggles of the Wars of the Roses between 1459 and 1461, four-fifths of them choose to stay at home in 1485.¹² But other influences apart from loyalty (real or feigned) to the king induced the members of the nobility to participate in the revolts of the time. These concerned their involvement in government itself and patronage. Connections of blood and marriage are usually seen as a decisive element in a nobleman's decision on which side, and if at all, he should participate in the dynastic struggles. Relationships not only induced people to fight with each other but also against each other. Two sides of a family claiming the same inheritance often took their quarrels onto the larger scene of national conflict.¹³ Affinities (the retinues of the great magnates) were once even regarded as the reason for the civil wars of the later middle ages. Though this view is largely disregarded today, membership of an affinity is still seen as being decisive in the decision as to whether or not to participate and on which side.¹⁴

All these aspects will have to be taken into consideration when examining the

¹⁰ As R. Horrox points out, 'opposition was also ideologically frightening. The king was the embodiment of order; ... His removal – or even his control – therefore represented a fundamental assault on order.' R. Horrox, 'Introduction', in R. Horrox (ed.), *Fifteenth Century Attitudes*, p. 5.

¹¹ Richmond, 'Nobility', p. 78-9.

¹² Richmond, 'Nobility', pp. 78-84.

¹³ One example is the quarrel between the Nevilles and Percies about the Cromwell inheritance which was 'inextricably bound up with the Wars of the Roses'; A. Pollard, 'Percies, Nevilles and the Wars of the Roses', *History Today* 43 (1983), 42-58.

¹⁴ see Chapter 1, pp. 10-11.

involvement of the Lovells in high politics: both the service the Lovells performed for the Crown and the rewards they received in return. Their activities – or indeed lack thereof – if the connection between the king and his subjects broke down will be discussed as well. It has become clear in the previous chapter that it was impossible for the baronage completely to disengage themselves from the government of the localities. The Lovells' landed wealth increased steadily, and with it grew the area in which they took part in local government. Though involvement in local government was to a large extent determined by the lords' wealth, they could on some occasions make the decision themselves as to whether or not to participate. A baron's involvement in 'high politics', however, was much more likely to be determined by the individual's wish to become involved. By looking at the experiences of the Lovells at the centre of power, we can determine how much their position there was determined by their wealth, their own ambitions and their connection with other aristocrats.

One problem frustrating both the careers of the Lovells and the research of the modern historian is the fact that so many Lords Lovell died young. Of all the Lords Lovell, only John III, John VII and William III survived long enough to see their fortieth birthday. Their early deaths not only cut their own careers short but left underage heirs whose sometimes long minority was usually a setback to the family's fortunes.

4.1. Service to the Crown

4.1.1. Military Service

Military service was the original occupation of the aristocracy, the basis on which they justified their right to rule. Indeed, even in today's imagination the natural occupation of the medieval aristocrat is war.¹⁵ It was control of the land, and therefore of the people living on the land – people who could be recruited to fight – on which the aristocracy based their power.¹⁶ Though by the later middle ages the feudal host had been replaced by the new method of recruiting an army through contracts, land was still the basis of power. The change between the two systems did not happen abruptly. It was a slow development beginning in the thirteenth century and being completed by the mid-fourteenth century. The king, as well, is seen to derive his authority from military strength.¹⁷ The aristocracy still made up a substantial part of the royal army. Though medieval society was not a society in which the individual's position was solely defined by birth, movement within the ranks was difficult. Serving in the king's wars was one way of rising in the hierarchy. Participation in military campaigns was an important part of the nobleman's life. It reasserted his authority and provided a means to advance in society.

Unfortunately, little *specific* information can be gathered about the role the Lords Lovell had in the wars during the two hundred years discussed in this thesis. Many details, for example the exact posts they held in many of the campaigns in which they participated, cannot be established from the surviving sources. Often it is not even clear whether they actually went on a campaign, as the only source of information we have are the letters of protection granted by the king. Some information seems to have survived purely accidentally, like the report in the Annals of St. Albans that William Lovell III returned to England from France in 1431 though his actual position there is not mentioned.¹⁸ Despite these handicaps, close examination of the existing material does allow some new insights into the lives of the Lovells.

The Lovells were part of the military elite for as long as we can trace their history. Their Norman ancestors, like Ascelin Goel and Waleran d'Ivry, were military leaders.

¹⁵ It has been argued that one reason for the civil wars of the later middle ages was that the nobility always engaged in armed conflict. If the king diverted those energies in foreign wars, internal peace could be held, otherwise the aristocracy would become restless and start a civil war, see for example Harris, p. 9.

¹⁶ see Chapter 1, p. 3; also Carpenter, *Wars of the Roses*, p. 35.

¹⁷ The king's power 'lies in the twin duties assigned to him as the defender of the realm, to preserve peace internally and to protect the realm against external enemies'; Carpenter, *Wars of the Roses*, p. 27.

¹⁸ *Annales Monasterii S Albani*, vol. i, p. 62.

Throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Lovells were involved in the wars waged by the English kings; indeed, there is little else we know about these men beyond which campaigns they participated in and which they did not join. It was primarily through his military service that John Lovell II managed to make a lasting impression on Henry III and on Edward I. John Lovell II served in the household of Prince Edward and remained loyal to the king throughout the Barons' War. He accompanied Edward I on his crusade, and together with his sons took part in the Welsh wars.¹⁹

Though all the Lords Lovell at some point in their careers joined in the royal wars, it was John Lovell III who took probably the most prominent role in the military campaigns of this time. John Lovell III replaced his father John Lovell II in the campaign against Llewelyn in 1276-77. He and his illegitimate half-brother, John Lovell of Snotescombe, took part in the Welsh campaign in 1287.²⁰ He was summoned to serve in Gascony in 1294.²¹ In 1296 he was marshal of the army in Scotland.²² It is possible that the later reference to John Lovell as marshal of Edward I refers to this campaign though it is also possible that John Lovell was marshal of the army on later campaigns.²³ 1297 was a particularly busy year: he was summoned to attend parliament,²⁴ and to accompany the King to Flanders,²⁵ he was to attend a military council in September,²⁶ and was to be in Newcastle in December to serve in Scotland.²⁷ Next to these he was one of the barons ordered to collect the recognizances and inquire about disturbers of the peace.²⁸ As he presumably left most of the work of the latter two duties to deputies or servants, and he did not accompany Edward I to Flanders at this particular point, it is not necessary to believe that 'it would seem, indeed, impossible for him to have executed all the commands he received'.²⁹ In 1298 he was sent to England by Edward I to find money the king needed to extricate himself out of his precarious position in Flanders.³⁰ John III

¹⁹ see Chapter 2, pp. 38-42.

²⁰ For notes, see Chapter 2, pp. 43-45.

²¹ *Parl. Writs*, vol. i, p. 260.

²² *Calendar of Documents related to Scotland preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office*, Joseph Bain (ed.) (Edinburgh, 1884), vol. ii, A.D. 1272-1307, pp. 190-92.

²³ 'Johannis Lovel de Tichemersh defuncti tunc Marescalli dictis patris nostri', *Parl. Writs*, vol. ii, div. ii, p. 448.

²⁴ see below p. 149.

²⁵ *Parl. Writs*, vol. i, p. 282.

²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 56.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 303.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 393.

²⁹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 216, n. e.

³⁰ see below, p. 147.

served repeatedly on Edward I's Scottish campaigns.³¹ However, it seems that he did not always perform the military service himself. In 1300 he sent other men to perform the service due.³² Sir William Oliphant surrendered the keys to Stirling Castle to John Lovell in 1304.³³ The latter incident happened while John Lovell was serving in Scotland in lieu of paying a fine for illegally hunting in the royal forest. It is questionable whether military service was in fact punishment, as it was probably easier for John III to perform the military service than to find the 2000 marks for the fine he was originally charged.³⁴ In 1306 he served as lieutenant of the Earl Marshal, Hugh Bigod.³⁵

Though unfortunately few details are known about the career of John Lovell III, for example what rank he held in the different campaigns, there is more evidence for his career than for most of his descendants. Though some of the evidence is circumstantial, it clearly indicates that John Lovell was an important personality in Edward I's army. This prominent position was the cause of John Lovell III's receiving an individual summons to parliament.³⁶

Like the first Lord Lovell, the later Lords participated in the campaigns of their kings. They can be found taking part in the campaigns in all of the royal wars; in Flanders, Wales, Scotland, France and Ireland. As has been mentioned above, the positions that the Lovells held on these campaigns are only known to us in a few instances. Even the position John Lovell III held when he received the keys to Stirling Castle is not known. The Lovells were more often found serving 'in the company of' another nobleman than actively leading a contingent themselves. John Lovell IV was a retainer of Aymer de Valence and accompanied him in this capacity to Bannockburn in 1314, John V was in France in the company of Henry of Lancaster and the Earl of Warwick in the 1340s. John Lovell IX fought against the Yorkists with his father-in-law, John Beaumont, in 1460. Francis was of course involved in the campaigns of Richard III.³⁷

There are, however, a few occasions on which the Lords Lovell held more conspicuous posts. These were held by the men who in previous campaigns had served under other noblemen. John Lovell VII's career may be given as an example. In the thirteen-sixties he spent a considerable time in France, serving, amongst others Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, and John de Montfort, Duke of Brittany. In 1378 he

³¹ He was summoned in 1299, 1300, 1301, 1303, and 1306, *Parl. Writs*, vol. i, pp. 318 and 324, 327, 347, 336 and 377.

³² *Documents and Records*, vol. i, pp. 213, 217.

³³ *Foedera*, vol. i, p. 966.

³⁴ see Chapter 2, pp. 43-45.

³⁵ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 217.

³⁶ see below, p. 149.

³⁷ For a detailed description of the different campaigns and notes see Chapter 2.

participated in the siege of Berwick with Henry Percy; in 1379 he was in Ireland again with Edmund Mortimer. However, in 1385 he commanded a small contingent during Richard II's Scottish campaign together with Lords Seymour and Botreaux. For Richard II's Irish campaigns of 1395 he was in charge of arraying the ships for the transfer of the troops. In 1403 John Lovell was in charge of guarding Southampton. William Lovell III might have held a small post in France in 1430, as supplies were sent to him.³⁸ Regarding those facts, it seems that a clear 'career-pattern' becomes visible. All the Lords Lovell, apart from John VI, who died as an infant, and possibly John VIII whose brief life coincided with a particularly peaceful era of English history,³⁹ did participate in the king's wars. However, only those who reached a more advanced age (which were, after all, only John Lovells III, VII, and William III) and were interested in taking a prominent role in the wars were commanding officers in the army. An exception to this is the career of John Lovell V. In 1336 together with Hugh Balle he was guarding the Channel Islands when he was just twenty-two.⁴⁰ Why his career deviates from the more common pattern of his family cannot be determined, as we do not know why he became guardian of the Channel Islands or what his position was in the army of Henry of Lancaster, in which he served later.

Without the support of a permanent military command structure, the arraying of troops was also handled by individual aristocrats. Rebellious noblemen also had to be dealt with by commission. As with other positions of command, few Lovells were ever appointed to general commissions of array. Both John VII as well as William III were repeatedly appointed to commissions of array for single counties. The last two Lords Lovell had to deal with commissions of this kind. In 1460 John Lovell IX was appointed to three commissions dealing with the rebellion against Henry VI. One was a general commission of oyer and terminer in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Hampshire and Wiltshire,⁴¹ the other two commissions to arrest all adherents of Richard, Duke of York, in nine counties.⁴² In 1483 Francis Lovell was nominated to a general commission of array against the Duke of Buckingham.⁴³ This can be explained by their increased landed wealth that gave them more influence in a wider part of the realm than their ancestors had been able to wield. However, since both John IX and Francis were already deeply involved in the conflict the

³⁸ see Chapter 2, pp. 53-56, 64 for annotations.

³⁹ The only military campaign he was involved in was when he accompanied his father and Richard II to Ireland in 1399.

⁴⁰ *CPR*, 1334-1338, p. 324.

⁴¹ *CPR*, 1452-1461, p. 613.

⁴² Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Hampshire, Wiltshire, Surrey, Sussex, Kent, Middlesex and Hertfordshire, *CPR*, 1452-1461, pp. 613-14.

⁴³ *CPR*, 1476-1485, pp. 370.

commissions were trying to curb, their involvement with them was inevitable.

It is obvious that none of the Lords Lovell were pursuing the career of a 'professional' soldier. They took part in the king's wars because this was part of their lives as barons, as were the commissions of array to which the Lovells were repeatedly appointed.⁴⁴ Once they had become part of the developing peerage, the Lovells, unlike some other baronial families, as for example the Montagues,⁴⁵ did not use the chance of service in war to rise in rank or acquire wealth. To serve the king successfully in a campaign could improve a man's status a certain degree, but without further involvement at the centre of power the extent of the rise was strictly limited. Sir John Fastolf became a rich man due to his participation in the French wars;⁴⁶ however, he remained a knight and did not rise into the nobility.

Taking part in the military campaigns of the king also had its dangers: death or capture. In 1314 John Lovell IV was killed in the Battle of Bannockburn while serving in the retinue of Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke.⁴⁷ His early death caused his lands and the wardship of his posthumously born son to be passed around among several guardians, a pawn of the quarreling factions in Edward II's tumultuous reign. The long wardship had a prolonged negative effect on the fate of the family.⁴⁸ Henry Lovell, Lord Morley, nephew of Francis Lovell, was killed in the battle of Dixmunde in 1489. With him the male line of the Lovells became extinct. There were other, smaller, problems that could be caused by the absence of the head of the family. While John Lovell III was in Scotland, accompanied by his wife, his manor in Elcombe (Norfolk) was devastated by Walter de Pavely, Richard de Avene and others, causing 1,000 marks' damage.⁴⁹ The law-suit that followed these events was protracted and the outcome is unknown. This example shows that even when no major crisis developed through the engagement in war, prolonged absence from the estates could encourage others to take advantage of it and could have negative effects on the family's lands.

Closely related to military service were diplomatic missions as very often the same men who served in prominent positions in war were sent on these missions. Not surprisingly, there are only a few occasions in which the Lovells, usually not holding an independent command, were sent on a mission. In 1298 John Lovell III (together with William of

⁴⁴ see also Chapter 3.

⁴⁵ McFarlane, *Nobility*, 160-62.

⁴⁶ McFarlane, *England*, pp. 178-80.

⁴⁷ His brother William, also a member of Aymer de Valence's retinue, was captured, see Chapter 2, p. 46.

⁴⁸ see below, p. 151.

⁴⁹ *CPR*, 1301-1307, pp. 348-49, 405.

Gainsborough) was sent to England by Edward I to obtain urgently needed money.⁵⁰ Though this mission was certainly both of great importance and required some delicacy of the envoys it can hardly be described as a typical diplomatic mission. The mission shows that John III's position in Edward I's army was one of trust and weight, which is particularly interesting as only shortly before John III had been among the nobles who had protested against the King's policies.⁵¹ It is possible that John Lovell III was later sent on a mission to France. The Chancery Rolls contain a record of the diplomatic exchange between the king of France and Edward I in 1303 and among the men mentioned are 'Sir Geoffrey de Geynvill, Sir John Lovell and Thomas de Logor, envoys of the king of England'.⁵² However, the John Lovell mentioned earlier in the document as having been on a diplomatic mission to France is called 'Master John Lovell'.⁵³ The man thus referred to was probably not any of the Lords Lovell but John Lovell III's half-brother, John Lovell of Snotescombe.⁵⁴

John III's mission to England in 1298 can only loosely be described as a diplomatic mission, and the second occasion it seems more likely that John Lovell of Snotescombe was actually the man in question. The Lovells were not qualified for – or interested in – diplomacy. The only other Lord Lovell who went abroad on a diplomatic mission was John Lovell III's son John IV. He accompanied the Earl of Pembroke to France in 1309, where the Earl asked Pope Clement V to reverse Piers Gaveston's excommunication, a task that he successfully completed.⁵⁵ John IV was participating in this mission as a retainer of Aymer de Valence, not as a diplomat.

Many diplomatic missions were undertaken by soldiers and administrators. Others, like the mission that led John IV to Avignon, required an envoy of greater status than the Lovells themselves had at this time. It was of great importance for the success of the mission that the envoys were either of high status or held an important position in the administration or army. As none of the Lords Lovell held either position, they did not partake in diplomatic activities. Journeys abroad, even for diplomatic reasons, could involve dangers. William Lovell, younger brother of John Lovell IV, accompanied the Earl of Pembroke to the papal court at Avignon in 1316 and was captured together with Aymer de Valence and had to stay behind as a hostage.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Prestwich, *Edward I*, p. 394.

⁵¹ see below, p. 177.

⁵² *CCR*, 1302-1307, p. 105.

⁵³ see also *Calendar of Documents related to Scotland*, vol. ii, pp. 252-55.

⁵⁴ The 'Expenses of John Lovell in going to Montreuil', also refer to him as 'magistro', PRO E101/308/25.

⁵⁵ Phillips, p. 29; see Chapter 2, pp. 45-46.

⁵⁶ see Appendix 1, p. 275.

The Lord Lovells' involvement in military and political service usually ran in parallel.⁵⁷ Some Lords, like John Lovell VII, were active in the political as well as the military sphere, while others, his grandson William III for example, refrained from participating in either of these fields more than was essential for maintaining his position as a baron. War, either to defend or conquer, was a *raison d'être* of the aristocracy; it was therefore unavoidable for all the Lords Lovell to perform some military service. However, except for the early generations the Lovells were not overly involved. Though perhaps missing out on the chance of promotion through this policy, the Lovells avoided most of the dangers of war. Some baronial families, notably the Hungerfords, were unlucky and repeatedly experienced the negative sides of both war and civil war.⁵⁸ The fortunes of the Lovell family were influenced both positively as well as negatively by war: John Lovell III was elevated into the peerage based on his military service; his son, John IV, died prematurely at the battle of Bannockburn, causing his son, John V, to drop out of the peerage. War was also the end of the Lovell family: the last Lovell, Henry Lovell, Lord Morley was killed aged eighteen. War, with all its opportunities and dangers, was an integral part of the aristocracy's life and remained so for the entire middle ages.

4.1.2. Political Service

It was in the course of the late thirteenth and particularly the fourteenth centuries that parliament emerged as a separate political arena where the aristocracy could exert some influence on the government of the realm. Parliaments were not only a much more public sphere than the councils that advised the king and helped him rule, but they also allowed a larger percentage of the aristocracy to participate in the government of the country. The aristocracy also started to take a greater part in the administrative side of government. They took over many of the offices that had previously been the domain of clerics. This development provided new ways to rise in rank and importance for the lower ranks of the aristocracy. But not only the lower ranks of the aristocracy, but also the nobility were taking over offices that had been held by bishops. This change was not radical and absolute, but it gave the aristocracy new influence in government. In particular those men who had studied the law had the opportunity to take a prominent role in parliament and administration. Though the aristocracy had always been closely involved in the development of politics, their active role in administration increased during the late middle

⁵⁷ For the Lovells' political activities, see below.

⁵⁸ M. Hicks, 'Piety of Margaret Lady Hungerford', in M. Hicks, *Richard III and his Rivals. Magnates and their Motives in the Wars of the Roses* (London, 1991), p. 101, see also Chapter 3, p. 94.

ages. It became an alternative way to advance, though it did not replace military service. The general development of greater involvement in government not only gave the gentry more possibilities, but also allowed the nobility to extend their influence.

4.1.2.1. *Parliaments and Councils*

4.1.2.1.1. Summonses to Parliament

The first list of summonses was enrolled for the parliament of 1295.⁵⁹ As John Lovell III received protection to go abroad 'in the king's service' with Hugh Despenser in 1294 it is possible that he was not included in the list as he was abroad.⁶⁰ It is also possible that the summons was not recorded. The enrollment of the summonses was only 'reasonably complete' after 1295.⁶¹ According to the *Complete Peerage*, John Lovell III was first summoned to the parliament beginning on 8 March 1299.⁶² Dugdale, however, records a summons for John Lovell III to the parliament held in Salisbury in February 1297.⁶³ He also records a summons for the following parliament.⁶⁴ The debated point is whether or not the meeting convening in Salisbury can be termed a parliament, as only the nobility was summoned. The meeting was called a parliament in the official records.⁶⁵ Powell and Wallis also discuss it as a parliament.⁶⁶ It seems therefore reasonable to accept that the assembly in Salisbury in 1297 was a parliament and to regard this event as the formal date for the Lovells' elevation into the peerage.

It is not important to determine exactly to which parliament John Lovell III received his first summons. We know that he was elevated into the peerage in the last years of the thirteenth century. This was the 'era of "military" summons',⁶⁷ when military service was the determining factor for receiving a summons to parliament. During the reign of Edward I, as Powell and Wallis have pointed out, the list of summonses to parliament closely resembled the summonses to military service. John Lovell III was actively involved in Edward I's military campaigns.⁶⁸ Significantly, John III had been marshal of

⁵⁹ see Chapter 1, pp. 5-6.

⁶⁰ *CPR*, 1292-1301, p. 73.

⁶¹ Prestwich, 'Magnate Summonses', p. 97.

⁶² *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 116

⁶³ Dugdale, pp. 18-19; see also *Parl. Writs*, vol. i, p. 52.

⁶⁴ Dugdale, pp. 19-20.

⁶⁵ *Handbook of British Chronology*, E.B. Fryde, D.E. Greenway, S. Porter and I. Roy, (3rd ed. London, 1986) p. 550.

⁶⁶ Powell and Wallis, p. 234.

⁶⁷ Prestwich, 'Magnate Summonses', pp. 100-01.

⁶⁸ see above, p. 143.

the King's army in Scotland in the year before his first summons to parliament was enrolled. It was John III's participation in the wars, in Wales, Flanders and Scotland, that secured him and his descendants their place in the House of Lords. While holding by barony was not the determining factor, many of the men summoned to parliament were indeed part of the thirteenth-century baronage. Most of the thirteenth-century barons belonged to the richer aristocracy and were therefore more likely to be summoned for military service. The Lovells' landed income was well below that of a baron.⁶⁹ While the magnates, the earls and richer barons, were so important for the running of the government and leading of war 'that Edward was almost bound to summon them to parliament',⁷⁰ men like John Lovell III or his son-in-law William de la Zouche had to be actively involved in military service to receive an individual summons.

Other barons who received their first summonses to parliament at around the same time as John Lovell, for example William de la Zouche of Haringworth,⁷¹ William Morley⁷² and William Ros,⁷³ were all frequent participants in the military campaigns of the time. Several of the men thus summoned to parliament were not even tenants-in-chief, as for example Brian FitzAlan.⁷⁴ At this time, however, the men summoned to parliament were not yet seen as a separate group; the lists of summonses enrolled at this time do not include all the men who were present in parliament. This indicates that men already present at court were not specifically summoned but attended parliament nevertheless. The letter to the Pope composed by the nobility in the parliament of 1301 is sealed by no fewer than thirty barons who, at least according to the records in the Close Rolls, did not receive individual summonses.⁷⁵ It is possible that not all of the barons whose seals are attached to the letter were actually present at the parliament,⁷⁶ but it shows that they were regarded as barons even though they received no individual summons to this parliament.

The summonses in this period might well have been 'illogical and unsystematic', a tendency enhanced by the incomplete recording of them,⁷⁷ but these men, lesser barons and knights, who were summoned and continued to be summoned to parliament, had earned their seat in this national assembly through their military service. Later in the

⁶⁹ see Chapter 3, pp. 99-102.

⁷⁰ Prestwich, 'Magnate Summonses', p. 101.

⁷¹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. xii, II, p. 939.

⁷² He was summoned to a military council at Rochester in 1297 and received his first summons in 1299, *Complete Peerage*, vol. ix, p. 211.

⁷³ William Ros was one of the barons summoned in 1295, Powell and Wallis, p. 225.

⁷⁴ Powell and Wallis, p. 226.

⁷⁵ Prestwich, 'Magnate Summonses', p. 97.

⁷⁶ Powell and Wallis, p. 244.

⁷⁷ *ibid.*

fourteenth century, many families rose through administrative service. However, as they were attempting to join a not only land-holding but also war-leading elite, it was a natural consequence of their rise in status that they were increasingly involved in war. Indeed, military service still had a significant influence on the status of an aspiring family. Both the Scrope families' elevations into the parliamentary peerage 'occurred during or immediately after distinguished military careers.'⁷⁸ Though administration became an increasingly important path to power, military service was still the best way to rise into the parliamentary peerage.

John Lovell IV, son and heir of John Lovell III, was summoned to several parliaments.⁷⁹ This might indicate that the Lovells' right to an individual summons was already at this early stage hereditary. However, John Lovell V, posthumous son of John IV, was *never* summoned to parliament or any of the Great Councils held after he had come of age.⁸⁰ Though John V spent a significant portion of his adult years fighting in France, it seems that the complete absence of any parliamentary summonses cannot simply be explained through his frequent absences. On the contrary, his active military service would make it more likely for him to be summoned. Though at this time it had already become general practice that the sons of those men who received individual summonses would be summoned as well, a hereditary right to individual summonses had not yet developed.⁸¹ There is little information about the life of John Lovell V, who died when he was still a young man, but it seems that his dropping out of the parliamentary peerage had little or no influence on his career.

John Lovell V's son John Lovell VII received his first summons only in 1375 to the parliament in spring 1376.⁸² This is surprising, as he had come of age in 1363. John VII, like his father, had spent a considerable part of the intervening years abroad.⁸³ However, the delay of twelve years between John VII's coming of age and his first summons to parliament is highly unusual. In fact, more than sixty years had passed between the death of John Lovell IV and the last individual summons he received and the first summons of his grandson in 1376. Neither John V nor (obviously) John Lovell VII's elder brother,

⁷⁸ Vale, vol. i, p. 76.

⁷⁹ The last summons sent to John Lovell V was to the parliament beginning on 20 January 1315. It seems that his name was copied to the new list of summonses even though he had died six months earlier. The entry was later canceled, *Parl. Writs*, vol. ii, div. i, p. 138.

⁸⁰ Neither Dugdale nor the *Complete Peerage* mention any summonses for John Lovell V.

⁸¹ see Chapter 1, pp. 6-7.

⁸² Summons dated 28 December 1375 for the parliament in April 1376, *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 219; Dugdale, p. 287.

⁸³ see above, p. 144.

John VI who had died under age, was ever summoned.⁸⁴ This continuing absence of the Lovells from the lists of summonses indicates clearly that this was not just an accidental omission, but that the family had indeed lost their right to an individual summons. John Lovell VII was therefore not summoned as soon as he had come of age, but had first to 'earn' the right, through military service and through his marriage to Maud Holland.⁸⁵

It has been argued that Nicholas Burnell, who was first summoned to parliament in 1451, was not in fact summoned because of his inheriting the Burnell barony through his mother – which is the explanation generally given⁸⁶ – but because of his own importance.⁸⁷ In both cases, John Lovell VII's as well as Nicholas Burnell's, it seems that the right of the family to receive a summons to parliament had to be reinforced by the individual's own actions. Both cases support the view that in the first half of the fourteenth century the right to receive an individual summons was not yet regulated, and depended heavily on the individual's own performance. The fact that one's ancestors had been summoned certainly strengthened one's claim to an individual summons but particularly after minorities the right had to be reasserted. Another interesting, though later, case of a considerable period of time passing between the inheritance of a barony and a first summons is that of the Lovell Lords Morley and their descendants. William Lovell, younger brother of John IX, married Eleanor Morley, heiress of Robert Morley, but was only summoned to parliament during the readeption of Henry VI. Neither his son, Henry Lovell, who died shortly after coming of age, nor either of the two husbands of his daughter Alice, was summoned to parliament. Alice's son, Henry Parker, was summoned again from 1523 onwards. However, even before he received his first summons to parliament he was styled 'Lord Morley'. Though it is obvious that Henry Parker had to re-establish his position in the baronage, the fact that he was not summoned as 'Lord Parker' but as 'Lord Morley' indicates that a continuity was seen from the original Lords Morley. The lack of individual summons does not seem to have infringed on his position, which is made particularly clear by the earlier address of him as 'lord', a title that even at the beginning of the sixteenth century was not yet reserved for those men sitting in the House of Lords.⁸⁸

John VII received his first summons to one of the most famous parliaments of

⁸⁴ There is a record for the receipt of wages for the justices of labourors mentioning a John Lovell, *Rot. Parl.*, vol. ii, 455b, however, as this John Lovell was appointed for a commission in Middlesex, a county in which the Lovells had no interest, and as John Lovell VI was at this time a minor in the king's wardship, we have to assume it is a different family.

⁸⁵ For the implications of this marriage see also Chapter 3, pp. 107-8.

⁸⁶ For example Powell and Wallis, pp. 357-58.

⁸⁷ Rosenthal, *Nobility*, p. 26.

⁸⁸ see Chapter 2, pp. 80-81.

medieval history, the Good Parliament. This parliament, summoned for spring 1376, was the first to be held after more than two years. Moreover, the financial situation of the realm was desperate and the situation of the war in France had rapidly deteriorated over the preceding few years.⁸⁹ It had been known in advance that the session would be turbulent. Though it is tempting to see in John VII's summons to parliament an attempt to strengthen the King's party, there is no evidence for this. There is no evidence that Edward III tried to 'pack the Lords' with new peers friendly to his cause. According to Powell and Wallis no 'new men' were summoned: only two men received their first summons and both were sons of peers.⁹⁰ However, John Lovell's first summons seems to have escaped their notice. Another factor speaking against the theory that John was summoned to strengthen the King's position is that the men John Lovell was in contact with prior to the parliament were those who opposed the group of courtiers around the aging King. In the years before John VII had served in France with Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March, and John Montfort, Duke of Brittany.⁹¹ The disappointing termination of this campaign was a major cause of the Earl of March's attacks on the courtiers during the Good Parliament.⁹² Given his previous connections to the men now opposing the King's friends, it seems unlikely that John Lovell VII was summoned to strengthen the King's side in parliament.

During the course of the parliament John Lovell VII supported the courtiers' faction. He was one of the twenty-six men, besides bishops and earls, to stand bail for William Latimer, Lord Chamberlain, who was impeached by the commons during the parliament.⁹³ Given the unpopularity of William Latimer, John Lovell VII's decision to provide bail was surprising, particularly considering John's previous associations. As William Latimer, like the others impeached, was pardoned before the year was out,⁹⁴ John Lovell's decision to give Latimer his support was fortunate. It seems that already at this time John VII was displaying not only his insight into the machinations at court but also his ability to keep on good terms with different sides of a conflict.⁹⁵ If we do not see John VII's apparent change of allegiance as the price he had to pay for receiving his summons to parliament – associations after all did not force men automatically to support the same politics – it seems that it was only by chance that the first parliament John VII

⁸⁹ see G. Holmes, *The Good Parliament* (Oxford, 1975), pp. 98-99.

⁹⁰ Powell and Wallis, p. 372.

⁹¹ John Montfort was married to Joan Holland, cousin of John Lovell VII's wife Maud Holland's father, Holmes, *Good Parliament*, p. 24; see Appendix 2, Figure 8: The Holland Family.

⁹² Holmes, *Good Parliament*, pp. 149-53.

⁹³ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. ii, 326b, for a discussion of the list of barons, see Powell and Wallis, p. 374.

⁹⁴ Ormrod, pp. 36-37.

⁹⁵ see below, pp. 179 and 183.

attended was one with such wide repercussions. It seems more likely that John VII had 'earned' the right to a summons by serving in the king's wars. Additionally, and perhaps decisively, the Good Parliament was the first parliament to be summoned after John Lovell's wife Maud had inherited her grandfather's Holland estates.⁹⁶

An interesting aspect of John's first summons is that he is styled 'banneret' in an entry in the *Rotuli Parliamentum*.⁹⁷ According to Powell and Wallis, at this time, 'bannerets' were of lower rank than 'barons' and were seated under the latter in parliament.⁹⁸ It is during this period that the term 'banneret' was used for men newly summoned to parliament, to differentiate them from those who had inherited the right.⁹⁹ If this is the case, it would strengthen the argument that John VII was not summoned because of his family's right to sit in the House of Lords, but because of his own importance. It was also about this time that John VII began to style himself 'Lord Lovell and Lord Holland' and to use both his family's arms and those his wife's family.¹⁰⁰ This does not necessarily mean that he claimed any hereditary right to be summoned to parliament but indicates his wish to be identified with both noble houses.

The later Lords Lovell were all summoned to parliament soon after coming of age.¹⁰¹ This shows that the right to receive individual summonses had become hereditary. The peerage had become a much more defined group. None of the later Lovells dropped out of the peerage because of a lengthy minority. It was not only the fact that the hereditary principle had been established, but also the growing position of the Lovells within the baronage, and their greater wealth, which ensured that they remained a part of the peerage. By the fifteenth century the Lovells belonged to the families who the King had to consult – if they wanted to be consulted. However, considering the entire period discussed here, from John Lovell III's first summons to Francis Lovell's disappearance, it becomes obvious that the Lovells were not quite as secure in their position as parliamentary barons as it might be assumed. After being elevated into the peerage at the

⁹⁶ see Chapter 2, pp. 53-54.

⁹⁷ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. iii, 167b.

⁹⁸ Powell and Wallis, p. 390.

⁹⁹ see Chapter 1, p. 7.

¹⁰⁰ see Chapter 5, pp. 218-19.

¹⁰¹ John Lovell VIII was first summoned to the next parliament after his father's death, beginning in January 1410; the writ is dated 26 Oct. 1409. *Handbook of British Chronology*, p. 567. William Lovell III came of age in summer 1423 and received summons to the parliament, commencing in April 1425, he received no summons for the parliament held from October 1423 to February 1424, *ibid.*, p. 568; John Lovell IX was first summoned to the parliament of 1459 which, though four years after his father's death, was the first parliament to be called since then, *ibid.*, p. 570; Francis Lovell was granted licence to enter his lands in November 1477. He received no individual summons for the parliament in 1478 but to the next parliament in 1483, *ibid.*, p. 571; for the dates of the first summonses see, *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, pp. 221-24.

end of the thirteenth century, the right to an individual summons was not simply inherited. After three minorities, John Lovell VII had to re-create their position through military and political service and a fortuitous marriage.

4.1.2.1.2. Attendance at Parliament

The regularity with which the nobility attended parliament – or did not attend – has been the topic of some discussion.¹⁰² As the evidence of attendance is not reliable, lack of proof that one particular lord had attended parliament does not automatically mean he did not appear at all. However, if a lord was actively involved in the working of parliament the likelihood of records surviving is far greater. It is this active participation in parliamentary business of the Lovells that is of special interest, particularly how this involvement can be compared to the other activities of the Lovells. The attendance of the Lords as a whole was often sparse.¹⁰³ Indeed, it has recently been argued that parliament was not important for the nobility, as they had the possibility of advising the king outside parliament as well.¹⁰⁴ It seems, however, to be very optimistic to assume that all the peers had easy access to the king.¹⁰⁵ If this argument were true it would be particularly the lesser barons, not having the same frequent contact with the king as the magnates, who would have more interest in participating in parliament and having their opinion heard there.

Although the evidence is meagre, John Lovell III, first Lord Lovell, is known to have attended some of the parliaments to which he was summoned. In the Parliament of 1300 a complaint was filed against him by Isabella Attelane concerning his acts against her and others of her parish.¹⁰⁶ He was summoned to Great Councils and was also summoned to the coronation of Edward II.¹⁰⁷ In 1309 he was one of the thirty-five barons who witnessed a letter of complaint to Pope Clement V.¹⁰⁸ John Lovell's involvement in the crisis of 1309/10 shows his participation in the political development of his time.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰² Roskell, 'Problem of the Attendance, pp. 153-204; see also Chapter 1, p. 26.

¹⁰³ 'the lords' attendance was frequently spasmodic, and at times so embarrassingly scanty as to have a very deleterious effect on parliament's capacity to proceed with its business,' Roskell, 'Problem of Attendance', p. 198.

¹⁰⁴ Carpenter, *Wars of the Roses*, p. 36-37.

¹⁰⁵ see Chapter 1, p. 23.

¹⁰⁶ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. i, 60b; In the same parliament John Lovell 'sued a plea' concerning a writ; *ibid.*, 84b.

¹⁰⁷ *Parl. Writs*, vol. ii, div. ii, p. 17.

¹⁰⁸ *Annales Londoniensis*, vol. i, p. 162.

¹⁰⁹ see below, p. 179 and 183.

Though we cannot know how often he attended, he was apparently actively taking the opportunity to participate in the government.

John Lovell VII, the most important of the Lords Lovell, was to a greater degree than any of his ancestors or descendants involved in the actual workings of parliament. Particularly after his dismissal from court and his return to it in 1388 he was constantly prominent in parliament, during the reign of Richard II and well as that of Henry IV. Already before 1388, he had been appointed to confer with the Commons in April 1384. He was trier of petitions in several parliaments.¹¹⁰ In the fifteen parliaments summoned between 1390 and 1407 he was a trier of petitions in ten. He was appointed as one of the noblemen to confer with the commons in 1402.¹¹¹ He was also present at the first parliament of Henry IV, where he, with a large number of prelates and magnates and other barons, consented to the secret imprisonment of Richard II.¹¹² In the same parliament he was cited as a witness of his good intentions by the Duke of Aumale.¹¹³ He attended the parliament of 1401 when he was one of the noblemen who declared Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent, and the other rebels of 1400 traitors.¹¹⁴ In 1402 he was appointed to a committee to meet in the Tower of London.¹¹⁵ A different kind of involvement with parliament developed in 1406 when John Lovell resigned from the council on the grounds that he had several pleas pending before parliament which would clash with his duties as a councillor.¹¹⁶ One of the pleas, his conflict with William Doyle over the possession of the manor of Brackley (Northamptonshire), was taken up by parliament again¹¹⁷ but not resolved until long after John Lovell VII's death.¹¹⁸

John Lovell VII was the member of his family who was most actively involved in parliament. His involvement in the workings of parliament together with his activities in war¹¹⁹ as well as in administration helped the family regain its place among the peers. Indeed, John Lovell VII's particular involvement in 'high politics' sometimes seems to fit more with the concept of a 'new man' than of a man who can rest reassuredly on his family's tradition. On the other hand, his marriage to Maud Holland and the fact that he was a member of a old baronial family gave him more social prestige than other 'new

¹¹⁰ see Chapter 2, pp. 56.

¹¹¹ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. iii, 486b.

¹¹² *Rot. Parl.*, vol. iii, 426b-427a.

¹¹³ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. iii, 449b.

¹¹⁴ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. iii, 459b; *CPR*, 1401-1405, p. 122.

¹¹⁵ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. iii, 519b.

¹¹⁶ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. iii, 573a.

¹¹⁷ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. iii, 573b.

¹¹⁸ see Chapter 2, p. 60.

¹¹⁹ see above, p. 144.

men' had.

Looking at the evidence of the other Lords Lovells' participation in parliament, it becomes obvious that their involvement was parallel to their activity in military service. William Lovell III, who after early service in France retired from war, was also inactive in parliament. In 1453 he was exempted from attending parliaments and great councils.¹²⁰ His son, John Lovell IX, was trier of petitions for England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland,¹²¹ at the same time that he became involved with the faction of his father-in-law, John Beaumont.¹²² Francis Lovell was trier of petitions in both of the parliaments to which he was summoned, the last parliament of Edward IV's reign in 1483, and Richard III's only parliament in 1484.¹²³ At the time of the latter, Francis was Lord Chamberlain, while the parliament of 1483 took place soon after he had been created viscount. For different reasons, both John IX and his son Francis were involved in national politics and attended parliament as part of this involvement.

Contrary to Christine Carpenter's assessment that parliament was not important to the nobility as they had access to the king outside its sessions, it seems that it was precisely those barons who had contact with the king for other reasons who were particularly active in parliament. Though parliament was important, the barons of England did not mainly define themselves according to whether or not they were summoned to parliament. As we have seen, it made little difference to John Lovell V's career outside parliament that he never received an individual summons. The frequency with which they attended parliament was mainly influenced by their interest in taking part in national politics generally, rather than being an attempt to assert their membership of this elite. Those lords who participated in the other aspects of central government, namely John III, John VII, Francis and to a lesser extent John IX, can also be found to be actively involved in the workings of parliament. For the nobility, parliament was an important place in which to participate in central government. The Lords Lovell were either involved in all aspects of national politics or in none.

4.1.2.1.3. Councils

Next to parliaments, several kinds of councils were employed in the government of the realm. The Great Council was in many respects similar to parliament: the nobility received individual summonses to its sessions, and before the mid-fourteenth century

¹²⁰ *CPR*, 1452-1362, p. 74-75.

¹²¹ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. v , 345b.

¹²² see below, p. 184.

¹²³ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. vi, 196b and 237b.

representatives of the gentry and towns were occasionally summoned as well.¹²⁴ On some occasions, notably the great council of 1342, a number of men were summoned who did not belong to the peerage, but afterwards received summonses to parliament.¹²⁵ The work done by the Great Council was to a great extent the same as that done by parliament; indeed, often affairs that could not be brought to a close were later discussed in the Great Council. However, the Great Council had, unlike parliament, no right to grant taxes. Because the summonses to Great Councils were no longer issued under the great seal after the mid-fourteenth century, copies of the writs were not kept in the archives of central administration. No exact information survives about the men who were summoned or even the frequency with which these assemblies were called.¹²⁶ Though there is some information to be gathered about the work of the Great Councils, no detailed evidence for any Lovells attending can be found.

Next to the Great Council a smaller council existed, usually called the king's council or the continual council 'to distinguish it from the larger body known to the contemporaries as the great council'.¹²⁷ Though there was a constant attendance by members of the nobility and the higher clergy 'the main brunt of the work fell on the officers and the feed clerks, knights and esquires.'¹²⁸ While 'magnates certainly did not show great enthusiasm to attend' the council, 'the chancellor, treasurer and keeper were always the backbone.'¹²⁹ According to McFarlane the continual council had by the reign of Henry IV developed an *esprit de corps*.¹³⁰ It is sometimes seen as a force opposed to the king, curbing the sovereignty of the monarch.¹³¹ Though occasionally the council was indeed used to force decisions on the monarch which were against his own ideals, usually king and councillors worked together constructively.¹³²

Two Lords Lovell, John Lovell VII and Francis Lovell, were members of the king's council. As usual there is little known about Francis Lovell as a member of this council,

¹²⁴ For a discussion on the origins of the Great Council see H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, *Parliaments and Great Councils in Medieval England* (London, 1961), pp. 12-24; for Great Councils in the Early Fifteenth Century see McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings and Lollard Knights*, (Oxford, 1972), p. 82-83.

¹²⁵ for example Robert Bourghier and Henry Scrope of Masham, Powell and Wallis, p. 349.

¹²⁶ Ormrod, p. 109.

¹²⁷ J. L. Kirby, 'Council and Councillors of Henry IV, 1399-1413' *TRHS* fifth ser. 14 (1963), p. 35; Another name 'privy council' 'is something of an anachronism', *ibid.*

¹²⁸ McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings*, p. 85.

¹²⁹ A.L. Brown, 'The King's Councillors in Fifteenth-Century England', *TRHS* fifth ser. 19 (1969), pp. 110 and 116.

¹³⁰ McFarlane, *Lancastrian Kings*, p. 86.

¹³¹ Kirby, 'Councils and Councillors', p. 37.

¹³² John Watts, *Henry VI and the Politics of Kingship* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 83-86.

his attendance, or work there.¹³³ John Lovell VII was a member of the council during the later years of Richard II's reign.¹³⁴ John VII kept this position in the early years of Henry IV's reign and attended the meetings with some frequency.¹³⁵ John Lovell's presence is also noted repeatedly in the minutes of the council. He is also recorded as being present on some occasions when signet letters by Henry IV were given to the council.¹³⁶ Though John Lovell's attendance was infrequent compared to that of the administrators, it shows that he was indeed active in the council and not only a member by name. An interesting aspect of John VII's career as a councillor and close advisor is the fact that John Lovell did not witness charters during the reign of Henry IV,¹³⁷ while during the reign of Richard II he is one of the four barons to witness more than a few charters.¹³⁸ There seems to be no reason behind this development. John Lovell VII not only came through the change of dynasty in 1399 without a break in his career, he seems to have become more important during the reign of Henry IV. The only other sign that might indicate that John Lovell had lost some of his status after the usurpation of Henry IV is that he was styled a king's knight only during the reign of Richard II.¹³⁹ However, as these are the only two indications of any kind of tension existing between John VII and Henry IV, the reasons behind which are completely unknown to us, it seems to be unjustified to postulate any serious deterioration of either John Lovell's positions at the royal court or in his relationship to the King. Perhaps the personal relationship between John VII and Henry IV was not as close as that between John and Richard II had been.

During the last fifteen years of the fourteenth century John Lovell was active on commissions dealing with complaints and appeals against judgments of the Courts of Chivalry¹⁴⁰ and Admiralty.¹⁴¹ It has been postulated that these courts had developed as extensions of the royal court.¹⁴² If this was the case, John Lovell's frequent

¹³³ He is called a councillor in two grants to him; *CPR*, 1476-1485, pp. 478, 487. Unfortunately the *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council* do not include the reign of Richard III.

¹³⁴ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 84.

¹³⁵ Of 247 days recorded, John Lovell VII attended definitely on 27 days; Kirby, 'Council and Councillors', pp. 61-64, according to Brown on 29 occasions; A.L. Brown, 'The Commons and the Council in the Reign of Henry IV', *EHR* 79 (1954), p. 30;

¹³⁶ *Calendar of Signet Letters of Henry IV and Henry V (1399-1422)*, J.L. Kirby (ed.) (London, 1978), pp. 74, 81, 82, 85.

¹³⁷ Kirby, 'Council and Councillors', p. 45.

¹³⁸ Chris Given-Wilson, 'Royal Charter Witness Lists 1327-1399', *Medieval Prosopography* 12 (1991), p. 50-51.

¹³⁹ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 285.

¹⁴⁰ *CPR*, 1391-1396, pp. 71, 306, 390, 589, *CPR*, 1396-1399, p. 28.

¹⁴¹ *CPR*, 1388-1391, pp. 159, 412, 431 and 491.

¹⁴² G.D. Squibb, *The High Court of Chivalry. A Study of the Civil Law in England* (Oxford, 1959), pp. 12-15. See Chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion.

appointments to these commissions would indicate that he was an active member of the king's council. However, other theories see no connection between either court and the council.¹⁴³ Nevertheless, John VII was through these commissions involved in an important part of central government, the appeal against one of the central courts of England. Among the appeals against a decision taken at the Court of Chivalry is the case between Thomas Baude and Nicholas Singleton about the right to bear the arms *goules three chevrons argent*.¹⁴⁴ John Lovell himself had been involved in a suit with the Lord Morley about the right to bear a certain coat of arms in 1385.¹⁴⁵ In the same year John Lovell had been a commissioner in the dispute between Henry Grosvenor and Richard, Lord Scrope of Bolton.¹⁴⁶ Richard Scrope was for a time a member of the commission to deal with the appeal of Thomas Baude.¹⁴⁷ The appeal was a protracted affair; the first commission to which John Lovell was appointed was established in November 1393, the third one in June 1395. Though it might be somewhat exaggerated to call John Lovell an 'expert' in cases of disputed coats of arms, he certainly had previous experience in this area. The other cases dealt with include questions of prisoners and ransom, breach of arrest and military service. The commissions usually included, in addition to other noblemen like Richard Scrope or John of Gaunt, a number of professional judges. The mixed composition of these commissions ensured that men with the necessary expertise in the law were present as well as others whose status gave the commission the expected dignity and importance. John Lovell also served on a repeatedly re-appointed commission dealing with a complaint by Queen Anne.¹⁴⁸ He was appointed to a commission of oyer and terminer regarding the insurrection in Kent in 1401¹⁴⁹ and a commission dealing with the prisoners taken in the Scottish Wars in 1403.¹⁵⁰ The latter was again a question usually dealt with at the Court of Chivalry.

As we have already seen above, John Lovell VII was more heavily involved in the workings of the central government than most other Lords Lovell. John Lovell's attendance can also be seen as fitting with his possible position as a 'new man', as they were more regular in attending than the peers who had inherited their status,¹⁵¹ examples

¹⁴³ Keen, 'Jurisdiction and Origins', pp. 159-69.

¹⁴⁴ *CPR*, 1391-1396, pp. 332, 531 and 576.

¹⁴⁵ see Chapter 5.4.

¹⁴⁶ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, pp. 219-20.

¹⁴⁷ *CPR*, 1391-1396, p. 531.

¹⁴⁸ *CPR*, 1388-1391, pp. 208, 210, 214, 215.

¹⁴⁹ *CPR*, 1399-1401, p. 516-17.

¹⁵⁰ *CPR*, 1401-1405, p. 213.

¹⁵¹ Brown, 'King's Councillors', p. 117.

of this being Walter Hungerford and John Tiptoft, knights who later became peers.¹⁵² However, there were a number of peers, like the Lords Cromwell and Scrope, who 'became assiduous councillors'.¹⁵³ Most of these men, both those who had newly risen or were about to rise into the peerage and peers of old families, also held offices.¹⁵⁴ John Lovell VII, however, did not. He seems to have been in the ambivalent position of being neither a 'professional' administrator, as for example was Lord Cromwell, nor a peer from a long established dynasty who could rely on his family's traditional position. As there is little material about the influence the different men in the council had and the exact influence of the councillors on the government cannot be established, we cannot determine what position John VII actually had in these institutions. His constant reappointment to the council and to important commissions indicate that he was a useful participant in their working.

4.1.2.2. *Offices*

The holding of office is another feature of the involvement of the nobility and gentry in the working of the realm.¹⁵⁵ In the course of the fourteenth century most of the high offices in the administration of the realm, the posts of chancellor, treasurer and keeper of the privy seal, were slowly taken over by the lay aristocracy.¹⁵⁶ Of course, often one or several of these offices were still filled by a cleric, but the lay aristocracy had a chance to become more closely involved than in previous centuries. Several families used this new possibility for advancement, as for example the Scropes of Bolton, the de la Poles, the Bourghiers and the Hungerfords, to name but a few.

The Lovells of Titchmarsh never filled one of the high offices of state. As discussed above, most of the Lords Lovell did not pursue the career of a courtier or professional administrator; it is therefore not surprising that they did not hold office. It is, perhaps, remarkable in the case of John Lovell VII who was actively involved in the administration, being a member of the king's council and participating actively in parliaments. However, John Lovell was not a professional administrator or lawyer like most of the laymen who held these offices. His involvement in the administration of the realm was not of the kind that would qualify him for holding one of these administrative posts.

¹⁵² *ibid.*, p. 108.

¹⁵³ *ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ see below.

¹⁵⁵ for grants of offices see above, Chapter 3, p. 89, and below, p. 170.

¹⁵⁶ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, pp. 70-71.

Most of the laymen who held office in the second half of the fourteenth and in the fifteenth century were barons. A number of them were the first members of their families to rise into the peerage. One example is Richard Scrope of Bolton, who was successively chancellor, treasurer, and steward of the household.¹⁵⁷ His appointment as treasurer occurred in the course of the first parliament to which he was summoned.¹⁵⁸ Though it is certainly true that his first summons was also caused by his military activities, the administrative service rendered by him and his father was surely the cause for his appointment as treasurer. His son, William Scrope, was treasurer in the last years of Richard II's reign. The Scropes of Bolton (as also their relatives the Scropes of Masham) were a family who had risen through administrative service and remained active in administration for a long time. Another family who rose through service and continued to be active in administration in the following generations were the Bourghchiers. Robert Bourghchier was a professional lawyer and the first layman ever appointed to be chancellor.¹⁵⁹ At the time he was not yet a member of the peerage but received a summons to the great council of 1342 and was summoned to parliament from 1348 onwards. Henry Bourghchier, the first Lord's great-grandson, was exceptionally active, being the longest serving treasurer in the fifteenth century. The men who held administrative offices were usually active in military service as well, as for example Richard Scrope. To be able to fill these offices adequately, it was useful if not necessary to have some knowledge of the law, which, as has been suggested above, is why no Lovell ever occupied them.

By contrast, families which had risen to the peerage through military service only rarely provided office-holders. Though, as we have seen above, John Lovell VII was in some respects a new man, he followed the example of other long-established families. These lords and men who had risen to the peerage through military service were often appointed to the post of steward of the household. For example, Guy Bryan, first summoned in 1350, was steward between 1359 and 1361, and Thomas Percy, first Earl of Worcester and a younger brother of the Earl of Northumberland, was steward from 1393 to 1399 and again from 1401 to 1402. The steward was an 'officer of national importance'.¹⁶⁰ The stewardship was not one of the three great offices of state mentioned above, but the person holding it was a public figure, for example he was 'a sort of public prosecutor for the king in trials of important persons'.¹⁶¹ Unlike the chancellor, treasurer

¹⁵⁷ Vale, vol. i, p. 83.

¹⁵⁸ Powell and Wallis, p. 370.

¹⁵⁹ Powell and Wallis, p. 333.

¹⁶⁰ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 74.

¹⁶¹ *ibid.*

and keeper of the privy seal, the steward, like the chamberlain, did not need to be a professional administrator. Both steward and chamberlain were officers whose position demanded less knowledge of the law, but were close to the king. Most of the Lovells, including John VII, had not sufficient standing within the government to gain such an office.

Francis Lovell is the exception in his family. Even he did not hold any of the three administrative offices of state. Francis Lovell's position at the royal court was not due to his involvement with national politics, the workings of the royal court or even his substantial wealth, but solely to his connection to Richard III. After the unexpected death of Edward IV and the take-over by Richard, Duke of Gloucester, Francis Lovell rapidly rose in importance. He replaced William Hastings as Lord Chamberlain and Anthony Woodville as Chief Butler.¹⁶² He had already been appointed Chief Butler during the 'reign' of Edward V¹⁶³ but it seems that a second appointment was deemed to be necessary.¹⁶⁴ As has been mentioned above, Francis Lovell was a member of Richard III's privy council. He also became a Knight of the Garter in 1483,¹⁶⁵ an honour only previously bestowed on one other member of his family, his great-great-grandfather John Lovell VII.

Like the steward, the Lord Chamberlain was not chosen for his skills in administration. Though sometimes both were counted with the keeper of the privy seal, treasurer and chancellor to be the five principal officers of state¹⁶⁶ there was a clear differentiation between the three administrative posts and the two household officers. Originally the Lord Chamberlain was the deputy of the Chief or High Chamberlain, a position which had become hereditary by the early thirteenth century.¹⁶⁷ As the Lord Chamberlain was in constant attendance on the king¹⁶⁸ he was always a person whom the king could trust. His close contact with the monarch gave the chamberlain a position of high importance. More important, the Chamberlain was 'responsible for controlling both written and personal access to the king.'¹⁶⁹ This gave him a position of power hardly reached by any other member of the royal household. His influence meant that often the chamberlain attracted the envy and hostility of other members of the court, and he was

¹⁶² *CPR*, 1477-1485, p. 365.

¹⁶³ Horrox and Hammond, vol. i, pp. 79-80.

¹⁶⁴ *Coronation of Richard III*, p. 250.

¹⁶⁵ *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, Appendix B.

¹⁶⁶ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 74.

¹⁶⁷ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, pp. 8-9.

¹⁶⁸ He was 'the closest personal servant of the king', Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 72.

¹⁶⁹ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 72.

criticised for abusing his position to gain undue influence over the king.¹⁷⁰ The Lord Chamberlain was also in charge of the treasure and jewels stored in the king's chamber and several of the other members of the household had to submit their accounts to him. He was to oversee the proper equipment of the king's chamber.¹⁷¹ Should the Lord Chamberlain be absent from court, he was supposed to appoint a deputy who would perform his duties. Unfortunately, no records survive that would allow us to judge whether deputies were in fact appointed and who they were.

It is the appointment of Francis Lovell as Lord Chamberlain and his actions after the Battle of Bosworth that are the main basis for the deduction that the relationship – or we may safely assume friendship – between him and Richard III was close. The appointment is also a clear indication that Francis Lovell's position was indeed determined by his personal links rather than due to his administrative skills, or even his position as a rich nobleman. The post of Lord Chamberlain gave Francis Lovell a position of great possible importance, influence of a nature, however, that left few or no marks in the official records. It is not clear how much and in what ways Francis actually influenced his royal friend, though the fact that he was regarded as a person of utmost importance by his contemporaries is known from the fact that Francis received substantial gifts to secure his good-will.¹⁷² Despite this position in the highest echelons of government, Francis Lovell made remarkably little impact on the narrative sources of his and later times.¹⁷³ Though his post as Lord Chamberlain marks him as one of the great and influential men, he remains an astonishingly shadowy figure to the historian. The lack of any overtly hostile reaction or even comments – except the famous doggerel by Collingbourne – may indicate that he refrained from using his position of trust to influence Richard in his favour, or if he did use his position it was not overtly. The fact that Francis only held the post for a couple of years contributes to the scarcity of material as well. On the other hand, Richard III's regime never lacked critics, both during his protectorate and later, and as Chamberlain, Francis would be an obvious target for criticism.

¹⁷⁰ A number of Chamberlains became the victims of hostile factions of the court, so for example, Simon Burley, who was executed on the initiative of the Lords Appellants in 1388, or William Scrope of Bolton, Earl of Wiltshire, executed in Bristol in 1399, Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 73.

¹⁷¹ 'This chamberlayn besyly to serche and ouersee the kinges chaumbres and the astate made therein to be according, first, for all the aray longing to his propyr royall person, for his propyr beddes, for his propyr boarde at mele tyme for the diligent doying in weruyng thereof, to his honour, and pleasure; to assigne keruers, cupberers, assewers, fescyans, almonsters, knyghts, or other worshifull astate for the towell, and for the basyn squiers for the body o to the attendaunt.', *The Household of Edward IV. The Black Book and the Ordinance of 1478*, A.R. Myers (ed.) (Manchester, 1959), pp. 105-6.

¹⁷² 'He was recognized by contemporaries as an effective line of contact with the king and as such was a regular recipient of gifts from those anxious for royal favour, including Selby Abbey and the corporation of Salisbury.', Horrox, *Richard III*, p. 222.

¹⁷³ see Chapter 2, p. 72.

In addition to his position of Lord Chamberlain, Francis also held the post of Chief Butler of England. The post required him to collect the customs due on imports of wine, the butlerage. This custom of 2s. per tun of imported wine was introduced in the *Carta Mercatoria* of 1303 to replace the old prise. This change from payment in kind to payment in money extended the rule granted the year previously for merchants of Aquitaine to all alien merchants. This custom was later called 'butlerage' as the butler had the duty of collecting it.¹⁷⁴ The Chief Butler himself did not visit the various ports to collect the butlerage but appointed deputies. Apart from the collection of the butlerage the Chief Butler was also responsible for supplying the royal household with wine. Working from the information of the keeper of the wardrobe and the steward, the Chief Butler was to purchase the amount of wine necessary for the royal household and ensure that it was stored where it was to be consumed.¹⁷⁵ The Chief Butler was also responsible for purchasing the wine which was to be given as alms to religious houses or individuals.¹⁷⁶ Again we do not know in any detail how Francis Lovell filled his office as Chief Butler. The replacements of deputies in several ports are recorded,¹⁷⁷ though Geoffrey Frank and William Catesby are the only two deputies with whom Francis Lovell is known to have previous connections. It seems unlikely that Francis Lovell was deeply involved in the daily routine work the office might include. His other positions, particularly that of Lord Chamberlain, would prevent him from paying great attention to his duties as Chief Butler. As Lord Chamberlain, Francis Lovell had to be in constant attendance of the King and could not possibly have 'travelled largely independently of the household',¹⁷⁸ which would have been necessary had he intended to perform his office of Chief Butler. It seems also questionable whether William Catesby was actually actively involved in the collection of the butlerage or whether his fellow appointee Thomas Croft was effectively the deputy.

Francis Lovell was appointed Lord Chamberlain on 28 June 1483,¹⁷⁹ in the run-up to

¹⁷⁴ N.S.B. Gras, *The Early English Custom System. A Documentary Study of the Institutional and Economic History of the Customs from the Thirteenth to the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1918), p. 258.

¹⁷⁵ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 43.

¹⁷⁶ *The Household of Edward IV*, p. 174.

¹⁷⁷ Geoffrey Frank, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 13 Dec 1483, *CPR*, 1476-1485, p. 374; Richard Ruge, Southampton, 20 Nov 1483, *ibid.*, p. 375; Richard Nicholl, London and Sandwich, 20 Nov 1483, *ibid.*; Henry Davy, Ipswich and Chichester, 11 March 1484, p. 378; Richard Crowmer, Jarmouth, 4 March 1484, *ibid.*, p. 379; Morgan Kydwelly, Pool (Hartlepool), 5 March 1484, *ibid.*, p. 384; James Walton, Lynne (King's Lynn) and Boston, 24 Feb 1484, *ibid.*, p. 455; William Catesby and Thomas Croft, Bristol, Exeter and Dartmouth, 16 Aug 1484, *ibid.* p. 465; Philip Ricart, Bristol and Bridgewater, 23 Oct 1484, *ibid.*, p. 483.

¹⁷⁸ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, p. 96.

¹⁷⁹ Williams, p. 389.

Richard III's coronation.¹⁸⁰ This event showed how close Francis had become to the King and how important his family now was as a result. Not only Francis, but a large number of his relatives took part in the ceremonies of the coronation; his wife, Anna FitzHugh, his mother-in-law, Alice Neville, and her daughter-in-law, Elizabeth Borough, were three of the twelve noblewomen of the queen.¹⁸¹ Henry Lovell, Lord Morley, Francis's cousin, was the highest ranking of the king's henchmen.¹⁸² During the coronation itself, Francis Lovell carried the third sword. Originally it had been planned that Francis would carry the Queen's sceptre¹⁸³ but he exchanged functions with the Earl of Huntingdon.¹⁸⁴ Perhaps Francis was given this task 'as a friend of the King'.¹⁸⁵ It seems that the Lord Chamberlain, unlike the Great Chamberlain, did not have a traditional role to perform during the coronation. The traditional duties of the Chief Butler were given to the Earl of Arundel in the coronation, either simply because Francis performed different duties, or because his first appointment as Chief Butler was deemed to be insufficient. Next to his (unfortunately unspecified) duties as chamberlain of the household, Francis Lovell 'stode before the king all the diner tyme', that is during the coronation banquet.¹⁸⁶ Another, probably informal, function Francis Lovell fulfilled for the coronation was the purchase of the Queen's ring.¹⁸⁷ The duties Francis performed during the coronation of Richard III were not really connected to his positions of Lord Chamberlain and Chief Butler. It seems that his close personal connection to the King allowed him to take a prominent role in the proceedings, and probably had an influence on the parts his family were given in the ceremonies.

The fact that no Lord Lovell held any of the three administrative offices of state might seem surprising. It should be remembered that these officers, chancellor, treasurer, and keeper of the privy seal, were generally men who were deeply involved in the administration of the realm. Of the Lords Lovell, only John Lovell III and John Lovell VII partook in the affairs of central government long enough to hold any position of

¹⁸⁰ On the same day, Edward Grey was created Viscount Lisle, see below; around this date Richard also created Viscount Berkeley Earl of Nottingham, and Lord Howard was given the Mowbray inheritance of the duchy of Norfolk, Powell and Wallis, p. 527.

¹⁸¹ *Coronation of Richard III*, p. 34.

¹⁸² *ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁸³ *ibid.*, p. 218.

¹⁸⁴ This is presumably the origin of the mention of Francis Lovell in the 'Devize for the Coronation of Henry VII', where Francis Lovell is given the task of carrying one of the Queen's sceptres.

¹⁸⁵ *ibid.*, p. 249.

¹⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 250.

¹⁸⁷ In the margin of the Little Devize for the coronation a note is written, 'Remembre A Ryng that Lovell shall ordeyne for'. This note is presumably written by Richard III himself, *ibid.*, p. 224, n. 120.

power there. However, just as they were uninterested in becoming professional soldiers and never took important military positions for extended periods, so were they unwilling to invest their energy in becoming professional politicians. Holding an office like treasurer or keeper of the privy seal was a full-time occupation, leaving little time for other interests. Francis Lovell's position at the royal court and his holding of two important offices were highly exceptional. However, as he was deeply involved in the politics of the royal court, he lost the connections his family had previously held in the localities.¹⁸⁸ This of course was not the inevitable consequence of taking on a central office. Previous Lord Chamberlains, like William Hastings, were able both to fulfil their post as Lord Chamberlain and to remain active in the localities.¹⁸⁹

4.1.3. Baronial Service

The medieval baronage demonstrated considerable variation in its attitude towards national or high politics. Some of these differences in outlook were determined by the wealth of the barons, but also by the individual ambitions of the men. While military service, in some form, seems to have been an aspect of aristocratic life that hardly any baron could avoid completely, involvement in the actual government was much more voluntary. However, the examination of the Lords Lovell has shown that those men who were more than casually involved in high politics were active both in war and government. This seems to be true at least for a large number of other barons, though some concentrated more on the administrative side, others on the military side. The discussion has also demonstrated that the Lovells, like many other baronial families who had earned their place in the peerage through military service, did not occupy the administrative offices of the realm. However, some barons were able and willing to take these posts and achieved positions of great influence. Neither in military service nor, particularly, in administrative service were the barons, at least the richer ones, overawed by the magnates.

¹⁸⁸ see Chapter 3, pp. 130-31.

¹⁸⁹ Horrox, *Richard III*, p. 222.

4.2. Patronage

'Government was for most men a question of the distribution of patronage; when men talked about the king's singular opinion as undesirable they were thinking mostly of the enormous patronage at his disposal.'¹⁹⁰ This statement by K.B. McFarlane, taken out of context, may seem to oversimplify the complicated system of government of late medieval England; however, the question of patronage was indeed one of the crucial problems facing English kings. It was the question of misdirected gifts which again and again prompted those who felt passed over to take action against the king. The importance of patronage has been questioned recently,¹⁹¹ as the nobility was not financially dependent on it. It is possible that the importance of patronage has been over-emphasized, but as the examples given below will show, its proper or incorrect distribution sparked several conflicts during the late middle ages. The aristocracy in general, and the nobility in particular were not financially dependent on patronage, but were nevertheless keen on receiving their share of grants. The patronage they received from the king allowed them in turn to distribute it to men of lesser standing. Patronage might not have been all-important but it confirmed the nobility in their position close to the king.

Patronage from the king towards the nobility, which is the focus of this section, was not only in the form of material rewards, though these are better documented, but also in the form of non-material rewards. Very often the latter cannot be determined, as they only occasionally left their mark in the written records. One aspect of non-material patronage which can be discussed is the granting of a title, in the case of the Lovells of Titchmarsh the Viscounty granted to Francis Lovell. Sometimes the grant of a title was accompanied with the grant of land or money, but not in all cases, as often the recipient, like Francis Lovell, had enough income to support his new status.

4.2.1. Rewards for service

In the previous chapter some aspects of the grants received by the Lovell family have already been discussed.¹⁹² But in addition to the question of when these grants were made and whether the lands granted to the Lovells coincided with the already existing land-holding pattern, the problem has now to be addressed from a different point of view. Looking at the problem from the other 'end', the centre of power, the questions arising

¹⁹⁰ McFarlane, *Lancastrian Knights*, p. 87.

¹⁹¹ see above, p. 139.

¹⁹² see Chapter 3, pp. 88-90.

are which of the Lords Lovell were rewarded with grants and what forms these grants took. Additionally, an attempt will be made to establish a pattern for when the grants were made and – if possible – why the king rewarded the Lovells with land, offices or wardships. As has been described in the previous chapter, grants of land in perpetuity were extremely rare. Though the king controlled the largest patronage, he still had less than his subjects wanted him to dispense. Temporary grants, grants of offices and wardships were therefore more common than permanent grants of land. Grants of offices also give an indication of the amount of influence a person was expected to be able to wield. Though the recipient was generally not expected actually to perform the office himself, it was expected that he could enforce the appropriate implementation of office through his deputy.

John Lovell VII was the first Lord Lovell who received grants of greater significance.¹⁹³ Several grants of land were made for a limited time period, at least one of which was renewed when the first period had expired.¹⁹⁴ John Lovell was also the only Lord Lovell to be granted wardships: in 1386 the wardship and marriage of Elizabeth Mautravers and in 1387 the wardship and marriage of Philippa and Elizabeth Bryan. In 1392 John Lovell, John Golafre and John Devereux proclaimed ignorance of a grant of the wardship of John Hastings, son of the Earl of Pembroke.¹⁹⁵ Comparing the dates the grants to the John Lovell's activities, most can be linked to specific events. The grant of Devizes was made immediately in the aftermath of the Peasants' Revolt, probably as a reward for John VII's actions during and in the immediate aftermath of the revolt. In 1381 John Lovell had been appointed to a commission to arrest the rebels, preserve the peace and suppress insurrections,¹⁹⁶ and the next year he served on a commission to break up unlawful assemblies.¹⁹⁷ The grant he received in 1395 has to be seen in connection with his participation in Richard II's Irish expedition.¹⁹⁸ Both the grants of Fremantle Park and Corfe Castle were certainly linked to John Lovell's timely desertion of Richard II. Of course, not all of the grants received are so obviously bound to specific events. No specific event can be found to explain why the Mautravers and Bryan wardships were granted to John Lovell. However, these grants had consequences. John Lovell received them in the years before he was removed from the court as one of the

¹⁹³ For a full list of the grants received by John Lovell VII and the other Lords see Chapter 2.

¹⁹⁴ In 1381 he was granted the Hundred of Catsash (Somerset) for ten years, *CFR*, 1377-1383, p. 280; the grant was extended for another ten years in 1391; *CFR*, 1383-1391, p. 353.

¹⁹⁵ *CCR*, 1389-1392, p. 544; the grant had been revoked in 1391, *CPR*, 1388-1391, p. 413.

¹⁹⁶ *CPR*, 1381-85, pp. 73, 84. 86.

¹⁹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 120.

¹⁹⁸ The original grant was made in Kilkenny, *CPR.*, 13891-95, p. 552.

people accused of having used their malign influence on Richard II. Receiving two important wardships this close to each other – even though John Lovell was prohibited from marrying his son to Elizabeth Mautravers – on the one hand gives a unequivocal sign of the closeness of John Lovell to the centre of power; on the other hand it confirms the opinion expressed by McFarlane above that all too often the men criticised as giving evil counsel to the king were those who received the greater share of patronage. The warranty notes of these grants indicate that although John Lovell was a person close to the king, he was not part of Richard's inner circle. Most of the grants to John Lovell were warranted by the privy seal.¹⁹⁹ This indicates that John Lovell was a courtier, but not one of the King's close friends, as Richard II usually used the signet to warrant grants to them.²⁰⁰ The only exception is the grant of the castle of Corfe in the immediate aftermath of the usurpation of Henry IV, which was warranted by the King himself.²⁰¹ This is evidence not only of the exceptional circumstances under which this grant was made, but also indicates the importance Henry IV gave to John Lovell's support.

William Lovell III received a small number of royal grants. They were far fewer in number than those received by his grandfather.²⁰² Two of the important grants, the life constablership of Wallingford Castle (Berkshire)²⁰³ and the grant of some lands in Oakford (Dorset) for ten years,²⁰⁴ were made in the years 1450 and 1451 respectively, a time in which William Lovell was also courted by Richard, Duke of York.²⁰⁵ Though the grants might not be directly intended to dissuade William Lovell from joining forces with the Duke of York, they were, however, made in a time of growing political unrest and the government thought it was worthwhile to ensure the continuing support of the Lovells. John Lovell IX was granted the forest of Wychwood explicitly for his good service against the Yorkists.²⁰⁶

The grants received by Francis Lovell were remarkable and another proof of his high position within the royal court.²⁰⁷ Next to grants of land he was also granted several offices, for example the constablership of Wallingford Castle, with the honour of

¹⁹⁹ For example the grant of the borough and town of Vyse; *CPR*, 1391-1396, p. 552, and the grant of the keepership of the Castle and Forest of Devizes, *CPR*, 1381-1385, p. 62.

²⁰⁰ Tuck, p. 68-69.

²⁰¹ *CPR*, 1399-1401, p. 182.

²⁰² see Chapter 2, p. 66.

²⁰³ *CPR*, 1446-1452, p. 333.

²⁰⁴ *CFR*, 1445-1452, p. 211-12.

²⁰⁵ McFarlane, *England*, pp. 233-34.

²⁰⁶ *CPR*, 1452-1461, pp. 534-35.

²⁰⁷ see Chapter 3, p. 89.

Wallingford St. Valery and the four and a half Chiltern Hundreds²⁰⁸ held formerly by John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk.²⁰⁹ It is interesting to see that these offices had been granted to Francis's grandfather, William III. John de la Pole and his wife Elizabeth had been Francis's guardians after the rebellion and death of Richard Neville, his original guardian. The continuous possession of these offices by the Lovells and John de la Pole indicates a quasi-hereditary claim on Wallingford Castle. Most of the grants Francis Lovell received were intended to strengthen his, and ultimately Richard III's, position in the South; the possibility that he received the lands forfeited by William Norreys, his sister's father-in-law, as a kind of guardian has been mentioned in the last chapter.²¹⁰ However, as has been discussed earlier, Francis Lovell did not use his lands to create a presence in the localities but concentrated his energy on the royal court. The strategy to bolster Richard III's support in the South failed; Francis Lovell had lost contact with his family's connections to such an extent that he called on William Stonor to support Richard III against Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, ignorant of the fact that Stonor had already joined the rebellious Duke.²¹¹

The examination of the timing of the grants received by the Lovells shows that there were two occasions when they tended to receive grants from the king: either the recipient had to be close to the king, as particularly Francis Lovell was, or there had to be an imminent cause which entitled the recipient to a gift. Of course, not all the grants can be explained by either of these reasons, but the exceptions are very rare indeed.

4.2.2. Viscounty

Next to the grants of lands, wardships and offices, another, usually cheaper, possibility for rewarding his liegemen was for the king to elevate them in rank. This possibility was used by the English kings in different ways. Some monarchs were reluctant to create new titles, for example Edward I. Others used this method in abundance, often criticised for it by their contemporaries as well as by modern historians.²¹² The number of titles used grew in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; in addition to the earl, the titles of prince, duke, marquess and viscount were introduced. Though 'merely' a title, the elevation to a

²⁰⁸ *CPR*, 1477-1485, p. 365.

²⁰⁹ J.A.F. Thomson, 'John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk', *Speculum* 54 (1979), p. 536.

²¹⁰ see Chapter 3, p. 89.

²¹¹ see Chapter 3, p. 133.

²¹² Often quoted examples are the earls created by King Stephen and Empress Matilda in the civil war, another were the elevations made by Richard II which were 'offensive to contemporary ideas', Kirby, 'Council and Councillors', p. 89.

higher rank was a desirable reward in a society which was highly conscious of hierarchy. Even within the different ranks of the titled nobility a grading was expected and fierce quarrels developed over precedence.²¹³ Often this question was addressed in the creation itself. Sometimes the elevation to a new rank was accompanied with a grant of land or an annuity to enable the recipient to support his new position; Edward III bestowed lands and money on some of the newly created earls in 1337;²¹⁴ Richard II used the forfeited lands of the Earl of Warwick and the Duke of Gloucester to endow the newly created 'duketti' in 1397.²¹⁵ It was not only the bestowing of lands or money on such men that caused resentment among the other nobles. The elevation of Robert de Vere to marquess was resented as this gave him, the poorest earl, precedence over the other earls.²¹⁶

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Lovells of Titchmarsh had through several profitable marriages and the ensuing inheritances accumulated enough lands for William Lovell III's income to surpass that of the poorer earls.²¹⁷ As elevation into the titled peerage was not an automatic process linked to an individual's income but a favour granted by the king, other factors influenced the date and occasion of the bestowing of a title on the family. John Lovell VII was deeply involved in the politics of the court of Richard II and therefore might have been a candidate for a promotion; however, he was not wealthy enough to become an earl.²¹⁸ The title of viscount, a rank lower than that of earl, was not yet introduced at this time. John Lovell's connection to Richard II might have warranted that he receive a title, but it was not close enough for him also to be granted the necessary income to support the rank of earl. It was only with Francis Lovell that the family was rich enough and also sufficiently closely connected to the court to gain elevation into the titled nobility. His grandfather, William III, might have achieved enough income to surpass the poorer earls, but his reluctance to become involved in national politics left him without the necessary connections to receive a promotion in rank.

The first viscount created in England was Francis Lovell's maternal grandfather, John Beaumont. In the course of the parliament held in Reading in January 1440, Henry VI elevated John Beaumont to this new rank. He was granted 20 marks to support his new position. It seems that the introduction of this new title was conceived parallel to John

²¹³ For example the Earl of Warwick and the Earl of Norfolk were arguing about precedence in parliament in 1405, Powell and Wallis, p. 437, and again in 1425, *ibid.* p. 453.

²¹⁴ Ormrod, p. 58.

²¹⁵ Steel, *Richard II*, pp. 239-40.

²¹⁶ Tuck, p. 85; see also Chapter 1, p. 13.

²¹⁷ see Chapter 3, pp. 99-102.

²¹⁸ see Chapter 3, pp. 99-100.

Beaumont's French title as Count of Bologne. He later became *vicomte* de Beaumont, his ancestor's lands in France. Similarly, Henry Bourgchier, the second nobleman to be created viscount, around 1446, was Count of Eu.²¹⁹ No actual patent of the creation survives for Henry Bourgchier, so it is uncertain whether he was granted a similar sum of money as John Beaumont. At the time of Henry Bourgchier's elevation into the ranks of the titled nobility, John Beaumont received a guarantee that his rank was to have precedence over any other viscounts to be created later.²²⁰ It has been observed that Bourgchier was 'never equal, in the strictest sense, to Beaumont, and indeed on official occasions he was normally placed among the lesser barons, while Beaumont sat with the earls.'²²¹ Already at this point an internal hierarchy among the viscounts was obvious. The third viscount was created in 1451 when John Talbot, Lord Lisle was elevated to this rank.²²² In April 1481 William, Lord Berkeley was created viscount; this and the cancellation of his debts, was a compensation for the surrender of his part of the Mowbray inheritance to the Crown.²²³ The rank of viscount was, as the newest addition to the titles, still unusual at the time of Francis Lovell's elevation. However, there were a number of precedents. The different viscounts were not of the same status, as the example of Viscount Beaumont and Viscount Bourgchier makes clear.

On 4 January 1483 Francis Lovell was created Viscount.²²⁴ The elevation of Francis Lovell to the rank of viscount is certainly due to his close relation with Edward IV's younger brother, Richard. A description of the ceremony is preserved in a British Library manuscript.²²⁵ He was accompanied by two of his relatives: his father-in-law, Henry FitzHugh, and his young cousin, Henry Lovell, Lord Morley.²²⁶ It might be unusual that Francis Lovell was not accompanied by two viscounts as he should have been, as the ceremony was conceived to parallel the creation of an earl.²²⁷ It is possible that the tradition was disregarded, as there was only one viscount, William, Viscount Berkeley, in England at that time. The other viscount, William, second Viscount Beaumont, Francis's maternal uncle, was imprisoned.²²⁸ As Francis Lovell's elevation to viscount

²¹⁹ Powell and Wallis, 468-69.

²²⁰ Powell and Wallis, p. 474.

²²¹ Woodger, p. 56.

²²² Powell and Wallis, p. 527.

²²³ Powell and Wallis, p. 522-23.

²²⁴ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 224.

²²⁵ British Library, Add Ms. 6113, fol. 126d; a transcript of most of the description can be found in *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 224, n. h.

²²⁶ Powell and Wallis, p. 524.

²²⁷ Powell and Wallis, p. 414.

²²⁸ Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 66.

did not take place during parliament, the question of precedence is disregarded in the account. By the time of the next parliament, Francis was the senior viscount as Viscount Berkeley had been created Earl of Nottingham by Richard III. Francis was summoned to parliament as 'Francisco Vicecomiti Lovell, Chl'r'; his writ was enrolled before the second viscount, Edward Grey, Viscount Lisle.²²⁹ Edward Grey, son of Elizabeth Woodville and her first husband, Lord Grey, had inherited the estates of his father-in-law, John Talbot, Viscount Lisle, in 1475 and was created Viscount Lisle by Richard III on 28 June 1483.²³⁰

Francis Lovell's elevation to the titled nobility did not significantly change his position. Still, it is an important sign of the wealth and importance the Lovells had obtained. John Lovell VII's wealth (particularly if not taking his wife's estates into account) might have been regarded as not sufficient for him to support the dignity of a title. However, his grandson, William III, had enough income to allow the elevation into the ranks of the titled nobility.²³¹ William Lovell, however, did not actively participate in the politics at the centre of the government but chose to concentrate his activities on the localities. Landed wealth on its own was not enough to rise within the ranks of the aristocracy; promotions were only achieved by aristocrats who were involved at the centre of power, the court, or had close connections to the most powerful magnates, who could themselves provide enormous patronage and could influence the King's use of patronage. Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was one of these men, and the elevation of Francis Lovell to a viscounty is a definite indication that Richard was willing to use his influence with his brother, Edward IV, for the benefit of Francis. Though there are no firsthand references to the relationship between the Duke of Gloucester and Francis Lovell, this influence on his behalf was continuous with Francis's appointment as Lord Chamberlain, Chief Butler, Knight of the Garter and member of the king's council after Richard's accession to the throne, as well as Francis's conduct after the battle of Bosworth.

As Francis Lovell disappeared after the battle of Stoke, only two years after his elevation into the ranks of the titled peerage, it is impossible to conclude definitely that the acquisition of a title did not change the position the family held either in the centre or in the localities. However, there was definitely no great gulf separating the titled peers – particularly the lowest rank of viscount – from the barons.²³² It is possible (one could

²²⁹ The summonses to the parliament of spring 1483 were sent out before his elevation, on 15 November 1482, Dugdale, p. 472; summonses for the parliament 1484, Dugdale, p. 475.

²³⁰ Powell and Wallis, pp. 521 and 527; Several accounts stating that Francis Lovell was created viscount by Richard III seem to mix up his elevation with that of creation of Viscount Lisle, see *The Coronation of Richard III*, p. 273, n. 57.

²³¹ see Chapter 3, pp. 100-1.

²³² As the example of the seating arrangement for Viscount Bourgchier makes clear, see above.

even say likely) that in different circumstances Francis Lovell might have risen further in the ranks of the nobility. Of the newly created viscounts mentioned above, two, Henry, Viscount Bourghier, and William, Viscount Berkeley, were further elevated to Earls. Henry Bourghier became Earl of Essex in 1461,²³³ fifteen years after becoming a viscount; William Berkeley was created Earl of Nottingham (one of the titles of the Mowbray inheritance he had surrendered to Edward IV)²³⁴ in 1483, a mere two years after he joined the titled magnates. He was further elevated by Henry VII who made him marquess in 1489.²³⁵ Though of course purely speculative, it seems that it would be relatively safe to assume that had Richard III reigned longer, Francis Lovell might have been elevated to the rank of an earl as well.

²³³ Powell and Wallis, p. 508.

²³⁴ Powell and Wallis, p. 527.

²³⁵ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 155.

4.3. Crises and Survival

The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries saw a significant number of political crises. Successful and unsuccessful risings were initiated against the king. Some of them aimed at changing the style of the government (usually by replacing the group of people around the monarch); others attempted to supplant one king with another.²³⁶ The aristocracy as a group was inevitably involved in the political struggles that the king and his advisors were facing. The participation of the aristocracy in the government of the realm, and in particular their position as the ‘natural advisors’ of the king,²³⁷ made them the group of people who were most affected by the actions of the monarch. The political crises in which the aim was a change in the style of government were far more frequent than those in which the objective was the replacement of the ruling monarch.

Only after attempts to change the government’s methods were without lasting success did some people risk everything by trying to overthrow the king. Sometimes the exact aim of the rebellion was not always clear to contemporaries: Henry IV started his usurpation by claiming his right to his father’s estates and ended up deposing his cousin Richard II. However, there was a fundamental difference between a movement of opposition to the rule of the individual monarch and a rebellion to replace the king with another ruler. This difference has to be acknowledged as it strongly influenced the noblemen’s decision to participate or not. The following discussion will therefore deal with the two different kinds of unrest, the opposition to the king’s politics and the attempts to replace him.

4.3.1. Baronial Opposition to the Crown

The two hundred years discussed in this thesis saw a large number of political crises – some serious, others mere squabbles – about the conduct of some of the men surrounding the king. Inside as well as outside parliament, it was the men who were involved in the government of the realm who opposed the king’s politics and attitudes. It is perhaps, therefore, not surprising that very often the Lovells of Titchmarsh were not involved in

²³⁶ McFarlane describes this period, ‘as the first great revolutionary epoch in English history. During it kings were seven times driven from the throne by force, while five rulers and two heirs presumptive met with violent ends.’ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 5.

²³⁷ This fact is repeatedly stressed in discussion about the nobility. Woodger for example states, that ‘the barons of England were expected to take a responsible part in the government of the realm’, Woodger, p. 45. Nearly the same words are used by Jack in his discussion of the Greys of Ruthin, Jack, ‘Greys of Ruthin’, p. 42. Similarly, Richmond states, that ‘they [the nobility] could not escape the responsibilities inherent in their political position.’ Richmond, ‘Nobility’, p. 79.

the political crises of the time. Some Lovells, as we have seen above, were not active participants in high politics and could avoid entanglement in the political crises. John V, for example, was not involved in the crises of 1340-41, perhaps not necessarily out of choice, but because the family had lost a significant amount of their status.²³⁸ William Lovell III stayed well clear of the continuing struggles during the reign of Henry VI. Despite his wealth, which would have enabled him to achieve a position of influence, he decided not to take the risks connected with politics in the unsteady days of Henry VI's minority and rule. At other times the head of the family was a minor and therefore could not become actively involved.²³⁹

However, the Lords Lovell could not always avoid any entanglement in political crises, nor were they all interested in doing so. Political activities were not only dangerous but also rewarding.²⁴⁰ On several occasions we find the Lovells involved prominently in baronial oppositions to the Crown: John III partook in the crisis of 1297 when a number of barons criticised the politics of Edward I, and the crisis that led to the appointment of the Ordainers in 1310-11, while John VII was involved in the crisis of 1387-88. These crises were resolved peacefully and the Lovells did not actually have to take up arms against or for the king. It was always a pivotal point in a political crisis when the political opposition turned into an armed confrontation between the king and his supporters on the one side and his opponents on the other. The crisis of 1322, in which Thomas Lovell of Titchwell participated, is a classic example of the final stage of a long and intense quarrel between a large part of the aristocracy and the king and his friends. After a long period in which a political settlement was sought, the confrontation finally turned into open warfare. Though strictly speaking outside the scope of this thesis, it is therefore worthwhile to examine Thomas Lovell's participation in the conflict.

John Lovell III, just after receiving his first summons to parliament, was one of the noblemen who on 22 August 1297 appeared at the exchequer to protest against a tax raised by Edward I to finance his war with Philip IV.²⁴¹ At this time John Lovell III appears to have been a member of the household of one of the leaders of the noble opposition, Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk and Earl Marshal. Together with other members of Roger Bigod's household, John III is included in the list of those men to receive a pardon for their actions.²⁴² Previously, John Lovell had been asked, together

²³⁸ see above, p. 151.

²³⁹ As for example the upheavals during the last decade of Edward II's reign, though they influenced the fate of the Lovells indirectly, see below, p 183.

²⁴⁰ see above, p. 168.

²⁴¹ Powell and Wallis, pp. 288-89.

²⁴² *Documents Illustrating the Crisis of 1297-98 in England*, Michael Prestwich (ed.), Camden Society fourth ser. 24 (1980), p. 157.

with the Sheriff of Oxfordshire, to collect the fines granted by the Church.²⁴³ John III had also received a summons to serve with the king overseas.²⁴⁴ It was in connection with this military summons that Roger Bigod and Humphrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford and Constable, had refused to co-operate with the king.²⁴⁵ John Lovell's appearance at the exchequer shows him acting as a member of Roger Bigod's household, which turned out in force to support the Earl's complaints. The fact that Roger Bigod was related by marriage to John Lovell III, being married to Alina Basset, the cousin of John Lovell II, was probably an additional motivation for John III to join the Earl's opposition. However, neither his belonging to Hugh Bigod's household, nor his distant relationship with the Earl would have forced John Lovell to oppose Edward I openly. It seems unlikely that John III would have supported Hugh Bigod, had he not been convinced of the validity of the complaints raised.

John Lovell III's appearance in the faction opposing Edward I's policies was a curiously isolated incident. Neither before nor after the complaint at the exchequer is there any indication that John Lovell was disaffected with the king or his politics. Shortly before the crisis, in 1296, John III was acting as marshal of the king's army in Scotland; a year after the conflict we find John Lovell in Flanders with Edward I. At this time John III seemed to have held a position of confidence, as he was sent back to England to raise urgently needed funds for the King.²⁴⁶ John Lovell III continued to be actively involved in the Scottish Wars and there is no sign of any protracted disagreement between Edward I and John Lovell. The conflict of 1297 seemed to have been an isolated incident.

After Edward I's death, John Lovell III found himself involved in the first major crisis of Edward II's reign. In the course of the parliament of 1309, which John Lovell III attended,²⁴⁷ Edward II had agreed to accept a list of articles against various grievances.²⁴⁸ The attempt to settle the differences between a large part of the baronage and the king was not successful. A year later, Edward II had to agree to the election of twenty-one 'ordainers'.²⁴⁹ John Lovell is implicated in the developments leading up to the election. The index of the *Rolls of Parliament* states that he is 'one of the Ordainers to manage the Affairs of Government and the King's Household'; however, the text indicates that John Lovell was only one of the noblemen who was involved in the

²⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 53; see also Prestwich, *Edward I*, pp. 432-33.

²⁴⁴ *Parl. Writs*, vol. i, p. 282.

²⁴⁵ *Documents illustrating the Crisis*, p. 5.

²⁴⁶ see above, p. 146.

²⁴⁷ see above, p. 155.

²⁴⁸ Powell and Wallis, pp. 271-72.

²⁴⁹ *Annales Londonensis*, vol. i, p. 172.

arrangements that led up to the election of the Ordainers.²⁵⁰ He was not one of the Ordainers elected. Like the other men involved, John Lovell supported the idea that the ordinances should not infringe on the king's prerogative. A letter declaring this is included in the *Liber Custumarum* of London. The editor, H.T. Riley, calls signatories of the letter 'Ordainers', though they were obviously not the twenty-one men elected in 1310.²⁵¹ It seems that the use of the term 'Ordainers' has changed since the Rolls of Parliament and the *Liber Custumarum* was published and is now only applied to the men elected and not to all who were involved in the events leading up to their election. John Lovell III did not take a particularly prominent part in the conflict. This was probably due to his relatively minor position. However, his age (he was approximately 65 in 1310 and died in October of the same year) and experience would have given his opinion some weight. Of course, we do not know how much of his position in this conflict was determined by his rank and age, but it seems that John III was willing and able to take an active role in a delicate situation. His attitude towards the King in this crisis was moderate, similar to the stance he took in the crisis of 1297; the King could be criticised but his position at the head of government was untouchable.

The crisis of 1387-89 saw a Lord Lovell at the receiving end of criticism. John VII was one of the fifteen men and women expelled from court and put under the obligation to return only when parliament gave its consent. The group of courtiers had incurred the envy of men less favoured by Richard II – or who at least thought they were excluded from their deserved position by these courtiers. The women and men were 'more typical of Richard's court than the few favourites',²⁵² as for example Robert de Vere and Simon Burley. Though deemed to exert undue influence on the king and receive a greater share of patronage than they deserved, they were not the main target of the attack of the Appellants. Had there been no attack on the general style of rule of Richard II, which criticized mainly his overly lavish patronage towards his favourites, and their unduly great influence on government, the position of the abjured men and women at court would not have caused opposition.

John Lovell VII had connections in the localities with some of the men attacked in 1387, as has been discussed in the previous chapter, for example with the chief justice Robert Tressilian, who was one of the people executed in 1388. Richard Abberbury and William de la Zouche were two more men with whom John Lovell was previously connected.²⁵³ Guy Bryan, whose granddaughters' wardship and marriage had been

²⁵⁰ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. i, 443.

²⁵¹ *Munimenta Gildhallae Londoniensis*, vol. ii, p. 200.

²⁵² John L. Leland, 'The Abjuration of 1388', *Medieval Prosopography* 15 (1994), p. 116.

²⁵³ see Chapter 3, pp. 127-28.

granted to John Lovell the previous year,²⁵⁴ was another of those abjured. He later enfeoffed John Lovell and John Devereux, settling land on his daughters.²⁵⁵ Guy Bryan had been an important figure in the reign of Edward III and was by 1388 an elderly statesman of about seventy-seven. Another man who was expelled from court was Hugh Burnell, cousin of John Lovell VII. Hugh Burnell had been granted the keeping of Bridgenorth Castle just prior to the events of 1388.²⁵⁶

The men and women expelled from court were a very varied group, and an attempt was made by Leland to find common characteristics between them. His approach is to be criticised for being both too general and too narrow. On the one hand, he stresses the links the expelled had with the King and his family and their connections between each other. This in itself is not remarkable. The men and women were courtiers and their connections to the King and Queen and other courtiers were natural. There were many more courtiers who had similar links but who were not expelled from court. On the other hand, Leland does not investigate the position and links between the people he is dealing with thoroughly enough. According to Leland the reason for John Lovell VII's expulsion from court, for example, was his previous connection to Richard Abberbury.²⁵⁷ That he was equally connected with Robert Tressilian seems to have escaped Leland's notice, a fact that would certainly have weighed more against him in the eyes of the Appellants than his link to Richard Abberbury. Leland also neglects the fact that the Lovells were at this time indirectly related to the King; Thomas Holland was not only Richard II's half-brother but also John Lovell's uncle by marriage. The fact pointed out by Leland that many of the abjurers had links to Queen Anne should not, as such, be surprising. It is more astonishing that a number of the men and women expelled from court kept and increased their contacts to each other after 1388. John Worth had enfeoffed John Lovell VII together with John Devereux in a settlement of land for his wife, Blanche, Lady Poynings, one of the three women expelled from court.²⁵⁸ John Beaumont, also expelled from court by the Lords Appellant, later served on the commission with John Lovell that had been created on complaint of Queen Anne.²⁵⁹ It is difficult, if not unnecessary, to find uniting characteristics between the men and women expelled from court, except that they were all courtiers who had enjoyed the patronage of the King.

It took John Lovell and several of the other banished courtiers only a very short time to

²⁵⁴ see above, p. 169.

²⁵⁵ *CPR*, 1385-1388, p. 500.

²⁵⁶ Leland, p. 131.

²⁵⁷ Leland, p. 136.

²⁵⁸ *CPR*, 1388-1391, p. 428.

²⁵⁹ see above, p. 160.

return to court, and they obviously came quickly to terms with the changed situation. John Lovell and John Devereux were on the commission selling the lands of those less fortunate men who were exiled or executed by the Lords Appellant.²⁶⁰ In 1394, John Lovell, Hugh Burnell and Aubrey de Vere, another abjurer and the uncle of Robert de Vere, who was driven into exile by the Appellants, were some of the men who pledged for the loyalty of one of the Appellants, Richard FitzAlan, Earl of Arundel.²⁶¹ At this time the conflict between Richard II and his former opponents was to all appearances over. However, as the pledge of loyalty shows, the antagonism between the King and the former Appellants still endured. John Lovell VII seems to have tried to strengthen his ties to the men who had been opposed to Richard II.²⁶² John VII, like his ancestor John Lovell III, attempted to find a moderate position and avoid being identified with any faction at Court. His attempts were successful as he was able to continue his position at the royal court without break after the usurpation of Henry IV, even though he had been strongly involved in Richard's government.

John Lovell VII also had connections with several other important men; for example John Neville, Lord Latimer, enfeoffed him in the settlement for his wife.²⁶³ Most of John Lovell VII's associates had interests in the same localities as he had. However, he also had close links to a few men, like John Neville, with whom he was only in contact at the Court. It seems that John VII actively tried to keep connections with as many different factions as he could. It is therefore difficult to see him as a part of a 'second generation' of a court clique, as Nigel Saul postulates.²⁶⁴ This 'second generation' of courtiers were those men who replaced the court clique destroyed in the crisis of 1387-88. However, unlike the other men mentioned by Saul, for example William Scrope and the Hollands, John Lovell did survive the usurpation of Henry IV, mainly because he did not only have links with Richard II and his faction.²⁶⁵

It is possible that John III and John VII were able to keep their moderate position as the conflicts were not accompanied by armed conflicts – the small army led by Robert de Vere was summoned on short notice and not representative of the supporters of Richard II. On the occasions when political quarrels turned into war, it was much more difficult for the aristocracy to stay neutral, though the possibility always existed. The conflict

²⁶⁰ *CPR*, 1388-1391, p. 107.

²⁶¹ *CCR*, 1392-1396, p. 368.

²⁶² He was also one of the feoffees of Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of York, *CCR*, 1392-1395, pp. 399-402, and of Thomas Mowbray, Duke of Nottingham, *CIPM*, vol. xvii, no. 269.

²⁶³ *CPR*, 1405-1408, pp. 147, 212, 337, 340.

²⁶⁴ N. Saul, *Richard II* (New Haven and London, 1997), p. 248.

²⁶⁵ see below, p. 183.

between Edward II and his barons, culminating in the battle of Boroughbridge and ultimately in Edward's deposition, found one of the Lovells, Thomas Lovell of Titchwell, fighting in armed opposition the King. Thomas's nephew, William, a younger son of John III, was not involved in the conflict. Thomas Lovell had been retained by Thomas of Lancaster in 1317, when the Earl as well as the King were expanding their retinues as the political situation in the country deteriorated towards civil war. Thomas Lovell's nephew, William Lovell, was retained by Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke. Thomas Lovell served under Thomas of Lancaster in the battle of Boroughbridge. As the Earl of Pembroke was not actively involved in the defeat of the Earl of Lancaster, William Lovell was presumably not affected by the conflict. Thomas Lovell lost his estates temporarily but was pardoned soon afterwards, and his lands were returned, some of them as late as 1325.²⁶⁶ Comparing the fate of the two younger sons, Thomas and William Lovell, it seems that perhaps their position as younger sons made them ultimately dependent on their lord, and so their participation in this conflict was less determined by their own choice than by his. The connection to their lords certainly did influence the lives of these two men. It was, however, not a forgone conclusion that as retainers they had to follow their lord slavishly. Thomas Lovell could have deserted Thomas of Lancaster as so many of his other retainers did. He chose to stay with his lord and accept the consequences of his behaviour.

4.3.2. Dynastic Changes

Inevitably, the Lovells of Titchmarsh were involved in rebellions that not only aimed to change the style of government or the group of people influencing the king, but also sought to replace the king. Participating in these risings was dangerous, not only for the life and limb of the participant, but also for the fate of the family. Choosing the wrong side in a dynastic struggle could result in forfeiture of the estates and permanent damage to the fortune of the family. It is repeatedly stressed that while death was forever, forfeiture seldom was.²⁶⁷ But forfeiture could also be forever, and even if the family's lands were regained after some time, even the temporary loss of income was always a major setback in the history of any family. However, involvement in dynastic struggles could bring spectacular profits and improve the position of a family. The 'spectacular change of sides' of the Greys of Ruthin at the battle of Northampton in June 1460²⁶⁸

²⁶⁶ For references see Chapter 2, pp. 47-49.

²⁶⁷ 'But if death was irreversible, political misfortune was not', Rosenthal, *Nobles*, p. 37.

²⁶⁸ Jack, 'Greys of Ruthin', p. 66.

helped boost their family's fortunes. The men who helped Edward III to oust Roger Mortimer were richly rewarded,²⁶⁹ as were those faithful (or desperate) who spent years in exile with Henry Tudor.²⁷⁰ The participation in rebellious uprising was risky but could be profitable. As with their participation in baronial opposition, we have to examine when the Lovells were involved in these upheavals and try to seek for the reasons behind their participation.

Even though Francis Lovell was still under age during the second phase of the Wars of the Roses he became involved in the disputes because his guardian, the Earl of Warwick, and his father-in-law, Henry FitzHugh, were both active participants in this struggle. It was deemed necessary to include Francis and his sisters in the pardon granted to his father-in-law. In times of rebellions and risings, minors like the Lovells were hardly ever left completely untouched by the political struggles. Not only those children who had a claim to the throne, like Edmund Mortimer or Edward, Earl of Warwick, son of George, Duke of Clarence, but also less important minors were bound up in the conflict by their guardians' activities. Wardships, even in peaceful times, often had negative effects on the wards' estates, a tendency which was certainly aggravated if the guardian changed repeatedly.²⁷¹ John Lovell V, whose long minority spanned the second half of Edward II's tumultuous reign, was caught in the struggles as well, as his wardship changed hands a number of times during this period.²⁷²

On three occasions the Lords Lovell were actively involved in a rising against the king. John Lovell VII (like most other men of his rank) accepted the usurpation of Henry IV without struggle. John IX supported Henry VI continuously until the battle of Towton, in which he fought. After the accession of Edward IV he accepted the change of dynasty quickly. Francis Lovell fought on the side of Richard III against Henry Tudor and stubbornly refused to come to terms with the new king. The main difference between these events is that while John IX and Francis Lovell supported the ruling monarch (at least originally), John VII joined the side of the usurper. Given the sweeping nature of Henry IV's take-over, this may have been as much an acceptance of political realities as an embrace of the new dynasty for ideological reasons. In the earlier discussion it has become clear that John Lovell VII had established connections with the noblemen opposed to Richard II, as for example the Arundels.²⁷³ There are some indications that

²⁶⁹ Bothwell, p. 16.

²⁷⁰ Chrimes, pp. 53-54.

²⁷¹ Waugh, *Royal Wardships*, p. 233.

²⁷² see Chapter 2, pp. 49-50.

²⁷³ see above, p. 181.

John Lovell was disenchanted with Richard II and his court at this time,²⁷⁴ but he had not disassociated himself from the court and it is likely that he would never have risked his position and career in openly defying the King. The completeness and swiftness of the usurpation indicates that the nobility was estranged from Richard II.²⁷⁵ Whether the nobility and gentry joining Henry's triumphal journey through England were in favour of deposing Richard II or only supporting Henry's claim on his inheritance is a moot question. The aristocracy turned out in numbers *against* their king. John VII with his connections at the royal court probably had a good idea of the situation and threw in his lot with the side most likely to succeed. John Lovell was successful because he was able to use his connections with both sides of the conflict.

John IX and Francis faced completely different situations. Both were defending the ruling monarch. The fact that John Lovell IX was married to the daughter of John Beaumont, Viscount Beaumont, created a link to one of the quarrelling parties. John IX was not able to remain outside the struggle, nor did he want to. It was together with his father-in-law that he tried to defend the Tower against the Yorkist forces. Another interesting aspect which at least gives an indication of where the family's loyalties lay is that Alice Deincourt, widow of William Lovell III, was the governess of Edward, Prince of Wales until 1460.²⁷⁶

John Lovell IX changed his allegiance after the outcome of this phase of the Wars of the Roses had become obvious. He received a pardon and the return of his forfeited estates. Though his enduring loyalty to Henry VI caused some problems for John IX,²⁷⁷ it generated no major setback to the family fortunes. John Lovell's relationship to one of the most active partisans of Henry VI certainly influenced his own actions and the side of the conflict he choose to fight on. Additionally, by this stage of the Wars of the Roses it was nearly impossible to ignore the struggle.²⁷⁸

The difference between Francis Lovell and his ancestors is that he refused to accept the new king, Henry Tudor, after the battle of Bosworth. It is very likely that Francis Lovell, if he had wanted to, would have been able to reach an arrangement with Henry VII after the battle of Bosworth. He had survived the fighting and by fleeing the field evaded the

²⁷⁴ see Chapter 3, pp. 126-28.

²⁷⁵ The disquiet included all parts of the society, as Steel has pointed out. 'The country was in short ripe for a revolt even before Henry appeared.', Steel, p. 264.

²⁷⁶ see Chapter 2, p. 66.

²⁷⁷ see Chapter 3, p. 93.

²⁷⁸ Richmond, 'Nobility', p. 79.

executions that immediately followed the battle. Whether his rank would have saved him from summary execution or whether his close relationship to Richard III would have condemned him cannot be determined. After the battle, Henry VII could not afford to refuse the allegiance (real or pretended as the case may be) of his dead opponent's supporters. If he wanted to end the conflict as quickly as possible, he could not estrange those willing to accept him as King: refusing their feigned or real devotion would only push them harder to support another candidate as heir to Richard III. Even men who had a vested interest in continuing the fight against Henry – John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, and heir apparent of Richard, or close relatives, foremost among them Richard's illegitimate son, John – were taken into the grace of the new king. Francis Lovell, however, decided not to seek the pardon of Henry Tudor. With stubborn determination he continued to fight against Henry VII. The other members of his family, his brothers-in-law, Richard FitzHugh and Brian Stapleton, his cousin Henry Lovell, Lord Morley, all joined the new king. The father-in-law of his sister Frideswide, William Norreys had even shared Henry Tudor's exile in France. After Henry became King, William was reinstated in his estates previously held by Francis Lovell.²⁷⁹ It seems likely that there would have been enough people who would be able to try to influence Henry VII in pardoning Francis. Francis Lovell's failure to reappear in any of the risings against Henry VII after the battle of Stoke is one of the main factors which speak for the theory that he died during or shortly after the battle.²⁸⁰

While in these instances the Lovells were actively involved in uprisings, despite the dangers inherent in this behaviour, William Lovell III did not take an interest in 'high politics'. During the reign of Henry VI he usually remained detached from the factious quarrels that dominated the long reign. Unlike his grandfather John Lovell VII or his wife's brother-in-law, Ralph Cromwell, he seems not to have taken an active part in politics at court. This in turn enabled him to remain aloof from the continuous quarrels at the court. Others, like Ralph Cromwell or the Bourghiers, who tried to stay out of the struggles for the favour of Henry VI, were inevitably drawn into one or other faction. William Lovell was, of course, also 'lucky' in not being related to any of the quarreling parties. By dying before the quarrel turned into outright civil war, he was not forced to take sides.

However, neither rank nor relations forced the individual nobleman into taking part in

²⁷⁹ see above Chapter 3, p. 89.

²⁸⁰ See Chapter 2, p. 75.

the struggles about the throne.²⁸¹ As a classic example John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, can be cited. Despite the fact that he was not only one of highest ranking noblemen of the realm and, more importantly, the father of Richard III's heir-apparent, John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, he did not participate in any of the conflicts in the latter stages of the Wars of the Roses and even survived the rebellion of his son against Henry VII without losing any land or attracting the ill-will of this notoriously vindictive king. Another successful fence-sitter was Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, who did not actively participate in the Wars of the Roses. He was neither a warrior nor a politician and therefore could 'successfully avoid the responsibility of his position.'²⁸² Though 'to opt out meant the sacrifice of their inherited responsibility as patrons of a territorial clientèle, the local expression of their lordly status ... a surprising number preferred to lie low.'²⁸³ Similarly, relationships did not force people to intervene in the dynastic struggles. John Lovell IX could have chosen to stay at home despite his connection to the Beaumonts. John Lovell VII was, after all, a nephew of John Holland, Earl of Huntingdon, who rebelled against Henry IV in January 1400, but he did not join him. Obviously the links with other families influenced the decisions of the individual aristocrat but they did not overrule other considerations, those of loyalty to the monarchy, either to the principle or to individual kings, or the prospects of which side was likely to be victorious.

The Lovells were for a long period successful in surviving the political and dynastic upheavals of their time. On occasion the Lovells, like other barons and even titled magnates 'opted out' of their expected role. On occasion, as for example during the first phase of the Wars of the Roses (1455-1461), the conflict had permeated the aristocracy and it was increasingly difficult to avoid being identified with the factions. By 1460, the entire aristocracy was polarized into two camps; even those who had tried to stay out of the struggles had been entangled. Noblemen who could stay outside a dynastic conflict also had to give up their position in the government of the realm and in the wars. Francis Lovell would not have been able to remain neutral during the usurpation of Henry VII, as he was too closely associated with Richard III; he could, however, like most others, have accepted the change of dynasty, as his father and John Lovell VII had done. John Lovell VII particularly displayed the greatest skills in surviving political conflicts and dynastic change. Perhaps after the first experience of the crisis of 1388 he learned to balance his alliances between the different factions at court. Ultimately it was the acceptance of

²⁸¹ 'No obligation could deprive the esquire of the ability to judge the political prospects for himself and come to the correct decision.' McFarlane, *England*, p. 254. What was true for the lowly esquire is certainly even more true for the more independent baron.

²⁸² Richmond, 'Nobility', p. 81.

²⁸³ McFarlane, *England*, p. 245.

political reality that determined the survival of a noble family. Francis Lovell's refusal to accept Henry Tudor was the unmaking of the family, along with the fact that he did not have any children.²⁸⁴

²⁸⁴ see Chapter 2, pp. 78-79.

4.4. Conclusion

The role of the barons in national politics has often been neglected in research. The discussion in this chapter has shown that they could wield great political power, if they chose to become involved in national politics. The influence at their disposal was partly determined by their landed wealth. However, more important than this was their ability and willingness to serve the King, either in the wars he waged or in the government of the realm.

McFarlane stated that military service was more rewarding than administrative service.²⁸⁵ In the light of the examination in this chapter this assessment seems to be oversimplified, as both military and administrative service could be extremely profitable for a baronial family. During the reigns of Edward I and Edward III the way into the parliamentary peerage was certainly military service. During the phases in which the war with France was successful for the invaders, such participation could be very profitable. At other times administrative service was a better way of advancement. While Edward III created his friends as earls in preparation for the coming war, under Edward III's successors closeness to the king was the only reason for promotion. Men like Ralph Cromwell or Henry Bourghier advanced through their participation in administration, not military service. Both men were in their own right very influential; their power was partly based on their wealth but also on the influential positions they held in government.

Was the baronage, or indeed the nobility, dependent on the king? The barons were certainly dependent on the monarch for advancement. If a nobleman wanted drastically to improve his position, the shortest way was indeed either through military or administrative service. However, it was not the ambition of all the barons rapidly to rise into the titled nobility. Not only were not all of the barons interested in quick advancement, many probably shied away from the potential dangers of involvement in military as well as administrative service. Men like William Lovell or the de la Zouches were content to concentrate their energies in the localities, increasing their wealth, though not their status, by fortuitous marriages. Unambitious men like these were not necessarily dependent on the king. They depended on a stable central government indirectly to enable them to live peacefully in the localities. There were families like the Montagues, described by McFarlane, who, after advancing into the titled nobility, remained dutiful servants of the Crown.²⁸⁶ Similarly, the Bourghiers were a family with a strong tradition of service to the Crown. In other families, however, the actions of the head of the family were less

²⁸⁵ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 162.

²⁸⁶ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 159-61.

dictated by tradition than by individual ambition. The Lovells had a varying history of participation in central government and war.

It was perhaps due to the fact that John Lovell VII had to reassert his position within the baronage that he was particularly involved in war and administration; it might also be that it was his marriage to Maud Holland which brought him closer to the royal court. Of his descendants, however, only his great-great-grandson actually took part in national politics, and this was not necessarily because he felt obliged to do so but because his lord and friend happened to become king. In the previous chapter it emerged that the baronage was automatically involved in the administration of the localities. Their involvement in 'high politics' was purely dependent on the individual's ambition.

5. Representations of Power

The previous two chapters were devoted to examining the involvement of the Lovell family in politics; family politics, local politics and national politics and how these spheres influenced each other. In addition to the developments of the family's fortunes, it is necessary to address the question of how the family represented itself to the society in which they lived. It was by these outward signs that the aristocracy was judged by their contemporaries. The status of the members of the ruling class was shown through the grandeur of their residences,¹ the lavishness of their patronage and the way in which the family remembered its ancestors. Though the Lovells were only of moderate importance in comparison with the higher nobility, they were among the small, powerful elite which ruled England in the later middle ages.

The sense of dynasty displayed by aristocratic families in and around their residences and burial places is of particular interest to us. Often the identity of the medieval nobility is seen as strongly connected to their sense of lineage. Medieval noblemen, according to this argument, saw themselves less as individuals than as 'stewards' of the family, who administered the family's estates for a certain period.² In his choice of where to live and where to be buried, the nobleman could show his deference to his dynasty. Geography and dynasty would act together, and his *caput honoris* would become the centre of his administration and remembrance. As Chris Given-Wilson sums up: 'Here [at his *caput honoris*] he would build his castle, the symbol of his lordship... and nearby would be the chief religious house patronised by the family, often indeed founded by it, where successive generations of lords and their families would be buried.'³

But were the actions of the medieval nobleman indeed completely dictated by his sense of dynasty? In the previous chapters we have seen that the individual Lords Lovell acted and reacted to their surroundings in very individual ways. Some of their behaviour was motivated by their society, but much was determined by their own interests and ambition. In their choice of the religious houses they supported and the residences they built, the Lovells showed a similar tendency to individualism. There are some gaps in our knowledge about the places where the Lords Lovell and their families actually lived and only a few Lords' burial places are known, but the information we have shows that the

¹ 'It [the country house] was an image-maker, which projected an aura of glamour, mystery or success around its owner. It was visible evidence of his wealth.' M. Girouard, *Life in the English Country House. A Social and Architectural History* (Harmondsworth, 1980), p. 3.

² Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 245.

³ Given-Wilson, *Nobility*, p. 11.

Lovells had highly individual aspirations determining their choice of residence and burial place. One of the differences between the nobility and gentry, as Christine Carpenter points out, is that while the former kept the links to the religious foundations of their ancestors, the latter changed the place of their residence and burial place as the changing shape of their estates required. Particularly in this respect the minor nobility resembled the gentry.⁴ This may have been another reason for the repeated change of residence and burial place of the Lovells.

Another aspect in which the nobility showed their sense of dynasty was their use of heraldry. Indeed, heraldry will dominate a large part of this chapter. The different purposes for which the family used heraldic devices, particularly to commemorate their ancestry, will be discussed. Additionally, the latter half of the chapter will analyse the confrontation between John Lovell VII and Thomas Morley at the Court of Chivalry about the right to bear the arms *argent, a lion rampant sable crowned and armed or*. The analysis of this conflict allows a thorough discussion of the influence of heraldry on all aspects of medieval life.

⁴ Carpenter, *Locality*, pp. 255-56.

5.1. The Lovell Residences

The residence of a nobleman was more than the place where he lived: it was a status symbol.⁵ Here his tenants, friends and associates would meet with him and judge his status and his rank by the house in which he resided. However, these houses were not mere status symbols: they also had a functional purpose. Many considerations influenced the different styles of lordly residences; changes of society and its fashions, new possibilities created by technological developments, like the increasing availability of glass,⁶ as well as military advancement. The most important development in this area on the continent was the growing use of cannons in warfare. However, this development had no particular influence on architecture in England.⁷ Moreover, except in those areas of England particularly endangered by invasions (along the south coast, the Welsh and Scottish borders) the necessity for strong defences became less important in the later middle ages. Sieges were, despite the frequent internal conflicts, unusual in this time; for example during the Wars of the Roses no major, long-term siege was conducted.⁸ Next to the technical changes in warfare and building, social changes influenced the life-style of aristocratic families as well. The use of permanent retinues and the growing stratification of society, for example, had its influence on the design in which residences were built.⁹

Particularly in the fifteenth century, another issue came to influence the design of newly built residences: already at this time, noblemen seem to have begun to have a set image of what a castle should look like. This can be seen from the two forms of residence most popular during this time: the manor house and the tower house. The open manor house, mainly built to provide comfort to the residents, usually included some form of defensive structure. The later tower house, though at least in appearance more like the traditional keep, was also designed to provide greater comfort than its predecessors. Indeed the mixture between these elements, the defensive apparel and comfortable

⁵ 'The foremost symbol of status was his castle'. N.J.G. Pounds, *The Medieval Castle in England and Wales. A Social and Political History* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 296.

⁶ Though glass 'remained something of a luxury throughout the Middle Ages', Richard Marks, *Stained Glass in England in the Middle Ages* (London, 1993), p. 92, it was used increasingly in private residences, also as a means to show off the owner's wealth, Girouard, *Country House*, p. 53.

⁷ In fact Pounds argues against the theory that it was the introduction of cannons that was the decisive factor for the abandonment of the tradition castle, Pounds, pp. 252-55. Thompson equally rejects this connection, comparing the development of the English residences with those in France where the increasing use of guns was significant and caused the development of a completely new type of castle, M.W. Thompson, *The Decline of the Castle* (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 38-42.

⁸ Pounds, p. 249.

⁹ Pounds, pp. 274-75.

interior, often causes modern researchers to disclaim that the later medieval residences were castles at all, and to argue that if anything they were 'show castles'.¹⁰ In fact, even the open manor houses were sometimes trimmed to comply with the image that the late medieval nobleman had of the correct appearance of his residence.¹¹ This concern for appearance demonstrates how important the symbolic aspects of these houses were to their owners.

The main residences usually lay in the centre of the family's estates.¹² However, like medieval kings, the barons and greater lords led itinerant lives. They divided their time between their residences in the localities and their houses in London. If their estates were widespread they presumably also moved between several residences there. Unfortunately, few records survive that indicate where the barons spent their time and show how often they moved between their residences.¹³ There are indicators of continuous residence (for example the presence of fish ponds) but these do not always prove that the house was continuously used as a residence.¹⁴ Licences to crenellate equally give some indication as to which houses were preferred by their current owners. However, not all lords obtained a licence to crenellate before starting a building project, while others did not in fact rebuild their houses though they received a licence.¹⁵ The licence the barons acquired, unfortunately, 'tells us nothing about the structures they built.'¹⁶ We therefore cannot determine from the licence alone whether a residence was completely rebuilt, or whether, as was often the case, only improvements to existing buildings were made. Only when other evidence and archaeological research exists, can the licences be used to indicate when work on a building was started.

The Lovells did change the place of their main residence repeatedly. The places that were no longer used soon fell into disrepair, proving that 'the history of the castle is indeed largely a history of abandonment.'¹⁷ Similarly, some castles that used to be major

¹⁰ 'since their object was evidently mainly to impress by a martial face rather than act as a serious fortification.' Thompson, *Decline of the Castle*, p. 18.

¹¹ 'The more the real castle disappeared the stronger the craving of the noblemen to give his house extra dignity and status by the addition of towers, gatehouse or keep or even to dress it up to look like a castle', Thompson, *Decline of the Castle*, p. 72.

¹² see above Chapter 3, p. 97.

¹³ Pounds, pp. 263-64.

¹⁴ see above Chapter 3, pp. 98-99.

¹⁵ Licences to crenellate seemed to have been acquired 'simply because their owners, great or small, desired it and went through the bureaucratic routine.' C. Coulson, 'Freedom to Crenellate by Licence. An Historiographical Revision', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 38 (1994), p. 93. Failure to acquire a licence was not prosecuted by the crown, *ibid.*, p. 110.

¹⁶ Pounds, p. 262.

¹⁷ Thompson, *Decline of the Castle*, p. 4.

residences of their previous owners were abandoned by the Lovells, for example Acton Burnell, the great tower house built by Bishop Robert Burnell in Shropshire. It continued to be the main residence of the Burnells, but was never used as a residence by the Lovells and fell into disrepair after William Lovell inherited the Burnell estates.¹⁸ The three buildings discussed here were not the only residences in the hands of the Lovell family. They certainly owned a house in London, off Paternoster Row, called Lovell's Inn.¹⁹ It is also likely that they owned and used other houses. Francis Lovell for example presumably frequently resided on one of his northern estates.

Three Lovell residences, separated as well by the time of their construction as in space, will be discussed here: Titchmarsh Castle (Northamptonshire), from which the family derived its (official) name; Old Wardour Castle (Wiltshire), the favourite residence of John Lovell VII; and Minster Lovell Hall (Oxfordshire), the place still most closely associated with the Lovell family.

Chronologically the first of the three residences discussed here is Titchmarsh Castle (Northamptonshire). The estate had been part of the inheritance of Maud de Sydenham, wife of John Lovell II.²⁰ It became the main residence of the Lovells in the later thirteenth century. In 1304, John Lovell III received a licence to crenellate his castle there.²¹ However, the buildings had already fallen into disrepair by 1363.²² The date is significant in itself as it indicates that the castle was allowed to deteriorate to a state of uninhabitability during the long minority of John Lovell VII. This shows that some guardians did indeed let their wards' estates decay and go to waste – a complaint raised recurrently throughout this period.²³ The castle, which gave the Lovells their name, had been their main residence for only a comparatively brief period between the late thirteenth and mid-fourteenth century. By this time the centre of the Lovell lands had decidedly moved to Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Wiltshire.²⁴

The only remains of the once impressive castle at Titchmarsh is a rectangular moat. In 1887, the castle-ground was excavated after the search for stones unearthed some walls

¹⁸ C.A. Raleigh Radford, 'Acton Burnell Castle', in E.M. Jope (ed.), *Studies in Building History* (London, 1961), p. 96; see Chapter 3, pp. 90-91.

¹⁹ *CIPM*, vol. xix, no. 405; Mary D. Lobel and W.H. Johns (eds.), *The British Atlas of Historic Towns*, vol. iii, *The City of London from Prehistoric Times to c. 1520* (Oxford, 1989), p. 79.

²⁰ see Chapter 2, p. 42.

²¹ *CPR*, 1301-1307, p. 290.

²² A.J. Taylor, *Minster Lovell Hall (Oxfordshire)* (Ministry of Works, London, 1947), p. 2; see also N. Pevsner, *Northamptonshire* (London, 1961), p. 432.

²³ Waugh, pp. 79-80, 233-34; also Michael Hicks, 'The Beauchamp Trust, 1439-87', in Michael Hicks, *Richard III and his Rivals. Magnates and their Motives in the Wars of the Roses* (London, 1991), p. 350.

²⁴ see Chapter 3, pp. 124-25.

(Figure 1).²⁵ There are indications that several buildings successively occupied the site.²⁶ It seems that an earlier manor house on the site had been protected by a circular wall. The moat, which was presumably added to the site between 1304 and 1311,²⁷ encloses a larger area than the circular wall²⁸ and replaced the earlier defences. Inside the moat, remains of a wall and three of the multiangular towers at its corners were discovered. Titchmarsh, typical for its time, was indeed built as a 'proper', defensible castle. The residence was of an impressive size and character and denotes the high rank of the Lovells in this time. The martial character of Titchmarsh Castle reflects not only the fashion of its time but also the position of the nobility as military leaders, which was as yet almost unchallenged. John Lovell III, under whose initiative the castle was enlarged, was very much a part of this military elite and had earned his promotion into the peerage through his service in the king's wars.²⁹

The second residence, Old Wardour Castle, was acquired by John Lovell VII as a part of the Laurence St. Martin inheritance;³⁰ it soon became his favourite residence. Unlike Titchmarsh Castle, the Castle at Wardour remained in good condition, even though John VII's grandson, William Lovell III, preferred to reside at Minster Lovell. Wardour was used continuously as a residence until the mid-seventeenth century. The Arundells, who owned Wardour from the mid-sixteenth century, even styled themselves 'Arundells of Wardour'. Only few alterations were made during this time and the building remained in the shape John Lovell VII had created. However, during the Civil War Wardour Castle was besieged twice.³¹ Lady Blanche Arundell, holding the castle with only twenty-five men who were 'partly aided and partly hampered by a considerably number of female servants', was able to withstand the attack of 1,300 parliamentarians for nine days.³² The length of the siege shows that even though Wardour was not mainly a military fortress³³ it could be defended easily. As the castle was badly damaged by the two sieges

²⁵ see plan of the castle ground, p. 196, taken from H.E.L. Dryden, 'The Castle of Titchmarsh, Northamptonshire', *Associated Architectural Societies, Reports and Papers* 21 (1891), pp. 248-52.

²⁶ *ibid.*, p. 245.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 248.

²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 244.

²⁹ see Chapter 4, pp. 149-50.

³⁰ see Chapter 3, p. 87.

³¹ The Arundells were prominent Royalists. The castle was first besieged by the parliamentary host under Sir Edward Hungerford, after its surrender the parliamentary forces 'did much wanton damage' to the castle and its land. The building was then garrisoned with parliamentary troops and besieged by Henry, third Baron Arundell of Wardour, R.B. Pugh and A.D. Saunders, *Old Wardour Castle* (2nd ed. London, 1991), pp. 19-23.

³² Pugh and Saunders (1991), p. 19.

³³ 'the emphasis at Wardour is on architectural effect rather than on defence', Laurence Keen, 'Excavations at Old Wardour Castle, Wiltshire', *Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine* 62 (1967), p. 67.

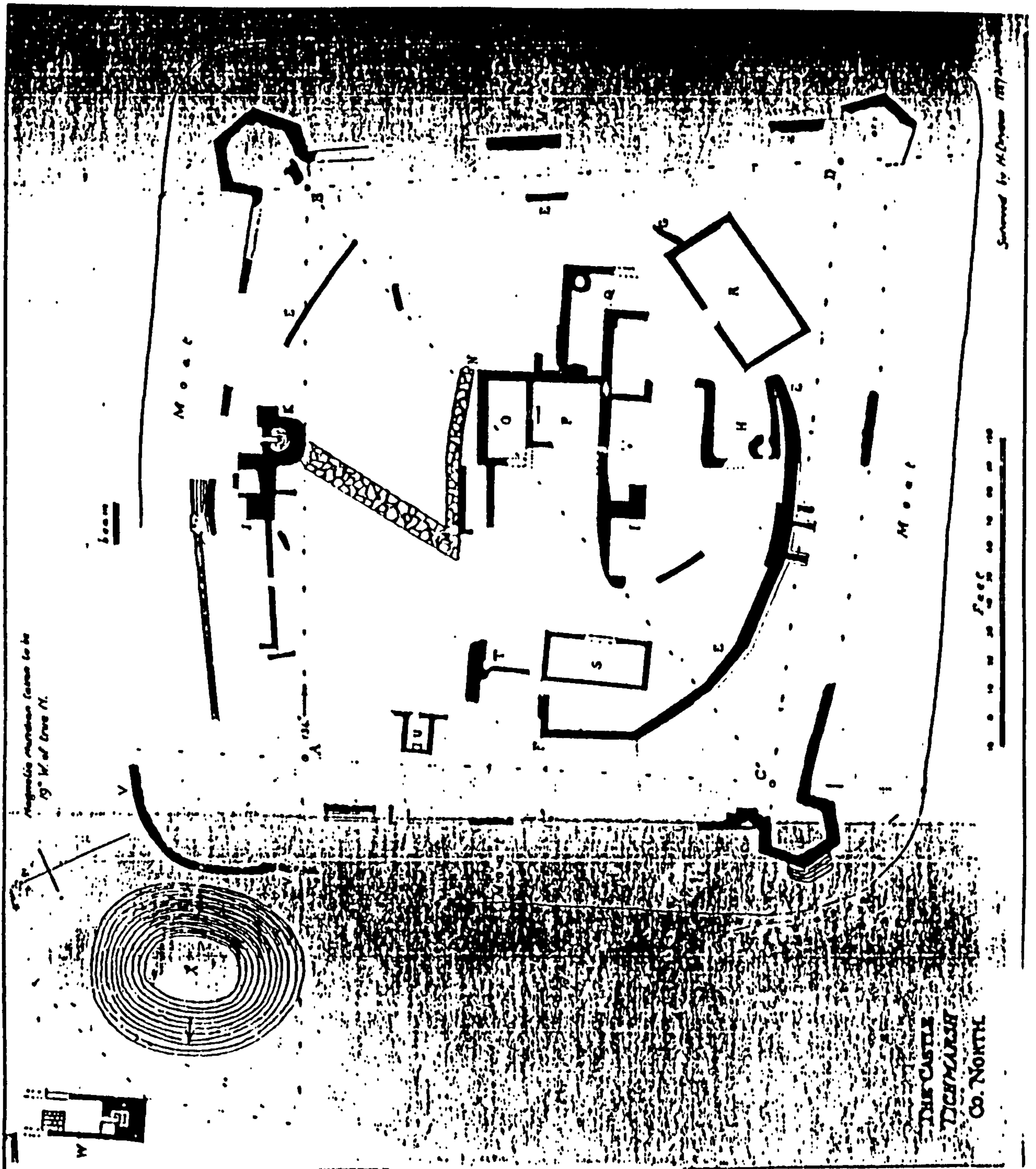


Figure 1:

Excavations at Tichmarsh, from H.E.L. Dryden, 'The Castle of Tichmarsh, Northamptonshire', *Associated Architectural Societies, Reports and Papers* 21 (1891).

themselves and the parliamentary soldiers who were stationed in the castle, the Arundells, on recovering their property, decided to build a new residence. The ruins of the old castle were incorporated in a romantic garden. To this day the remains of the castle are still impressive and 'sufficient ... for a fairly full mental reconstruction'.³⁴

Old Wardour Castle was built after February 1393, when John Lovell VII received the licence to crenellate. The design of the castle is extraordinary. Though tower-houses were not unusual – Acton Burnell Castle, mentioned above, as well as Ralph Cromwell's castle at Tattershall fall into this category – most of these houses had a much simpler plan with a square basis, often with protruding towers at the corners. Wardour Castle, with its hexagonal shape, is nearly unique in this country.³⁵ Mark Girouard recently pointed out the stylistical link of Wardour Castle to a line of royal castles with a similar basic plan.³⁶ Though these castles differ in execution, the main idea is the same: a multiangular or round castle surrounding a inner court of the same shape. Most of the castles included smaller towers of the same shape as the castle at large. Wardour Castle resembles most closely the Château de Concessault (Département of Cher), both sharing a hexagonal plan. However, unlike the other buildings Wardour Castle does not incorporate smaller towers but instead was designed with two rectangular towers at the sides of the main entrance (Figure 2).³⁷ Wardour also bears a strong resemblance to Queensborough Castle. Like this royal residence, the shape of the castle itself is echoed by the surrounding wall (Figure 3).³⁸ It is unknown whether John Lovell or the architect of the castle decided on the unusual shape for the castle. The resemblance to Concessault would indicate that John Lovell VII rather than the architect was the originator of the castle's unusual shape; he might have seen the château while he was on campaign in France.³⁹

It has been suggested that William de Wynford was the architect of Wardour Castle,⁴⁰

³⁴ *ibid.*, p. 5.

³⁵ Another, later, hexagonal building is the Yellow Tower of Gwent at Raglan Castle, built between circa 1430-45 by William ap Thomas, a powerful marcher lord, Wood, p. 171.

³⁶ The castles mentioned by Girouard are Castel del Monte, Frederic II's castle in southern Italy, Bellver on Majorca, the now destroyed Queensborough Castle of Edward III in Kent and Concessault in France, Mark Girouard, 'Wardour Old Castle – I', in *Country Life* (Feb 14, 1991), p. 44.

³⁷ see plan of Old Wardour Castle, p.198, taken from Pugh and Saunders (1991), pp. 8-9.

³⁸ Girouard, 'Wardour Old Castle', pp. 44-45; see also plan, p. 199, taken from Pugh and Saunders (1991), p. 16.

³⁹ 'The inspiration for Old Wardour clearly came from France, perhaps a result of Lord Lovel's campaigning there during the Hundred Years War', Pugh and Saunders (1991), p. 3.

⁴⁰ Wood, p. 170; this theory is also mentioned – though tentatively – by Pugh and Saunders: 'Some scholars, notably John Harvey (...), have convincingly suggested that it could be by William Wynford, who was one of England's finest architects', Pugh and Saunders (1991), pp. 3-4.

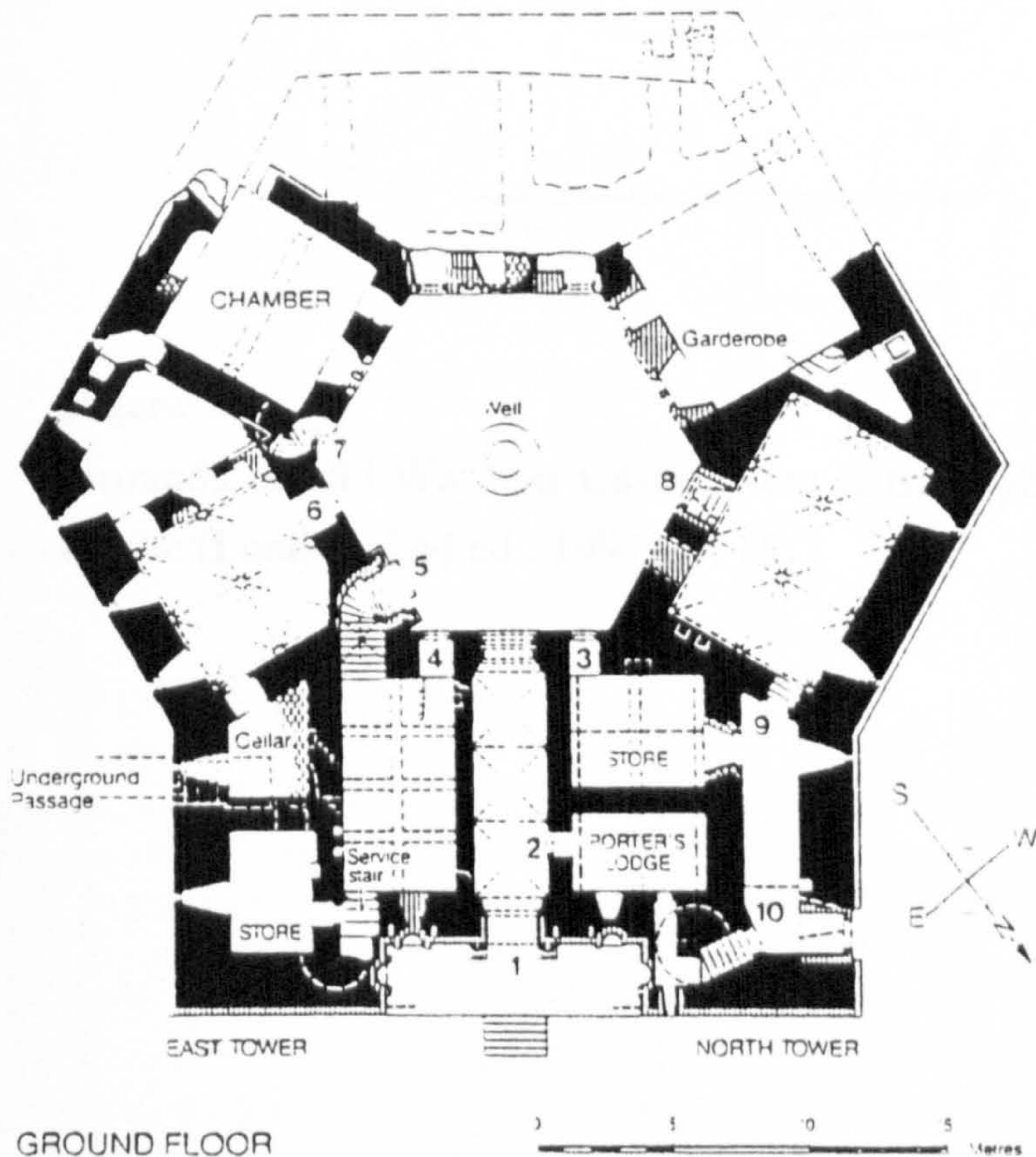
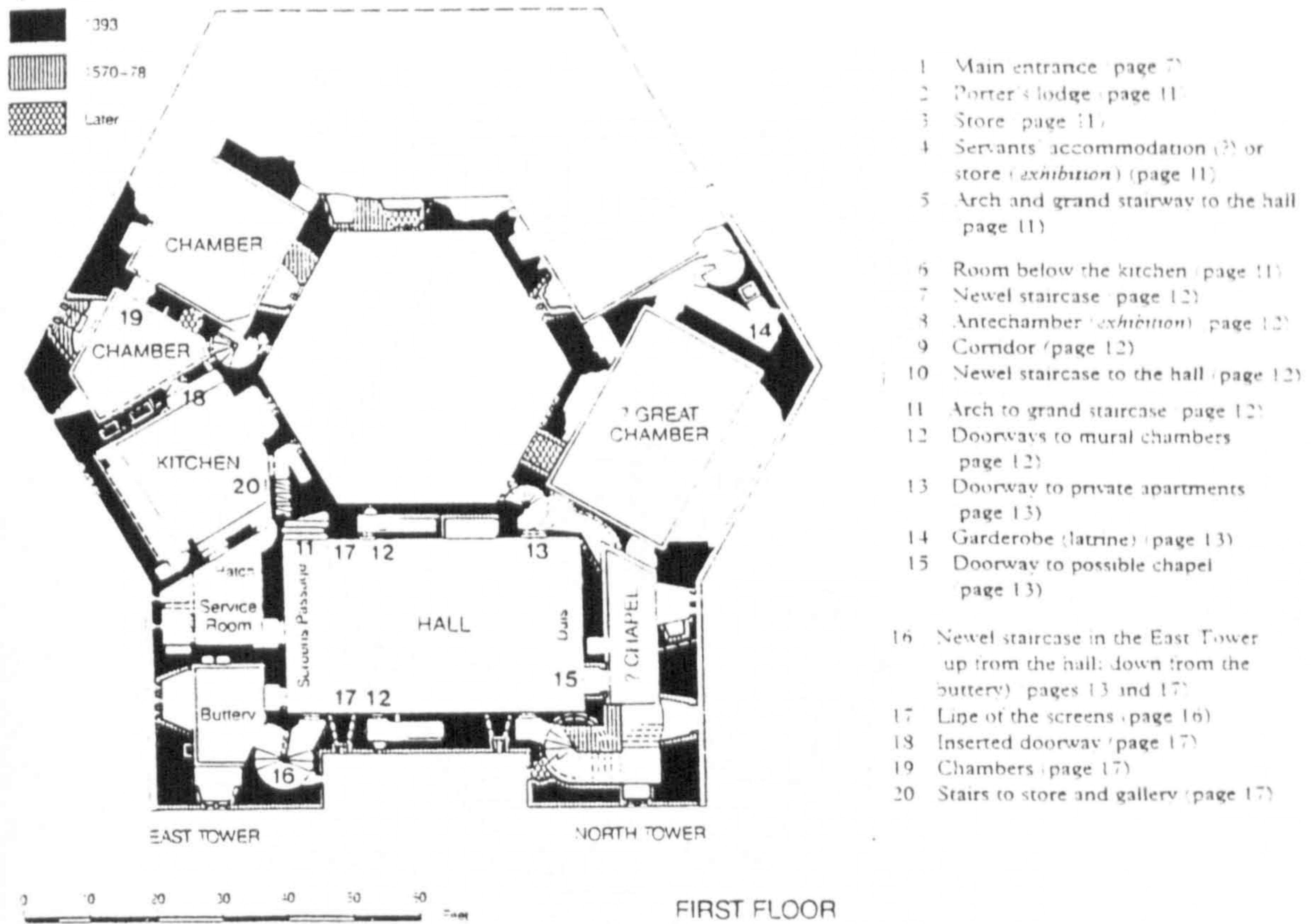


Figure 2:
Old Wardour Castle, from R.B. Pugh and A.D. Saunders, *Old Wardour Castle* (London, 2nd ed., 1991), pp. 8-9.

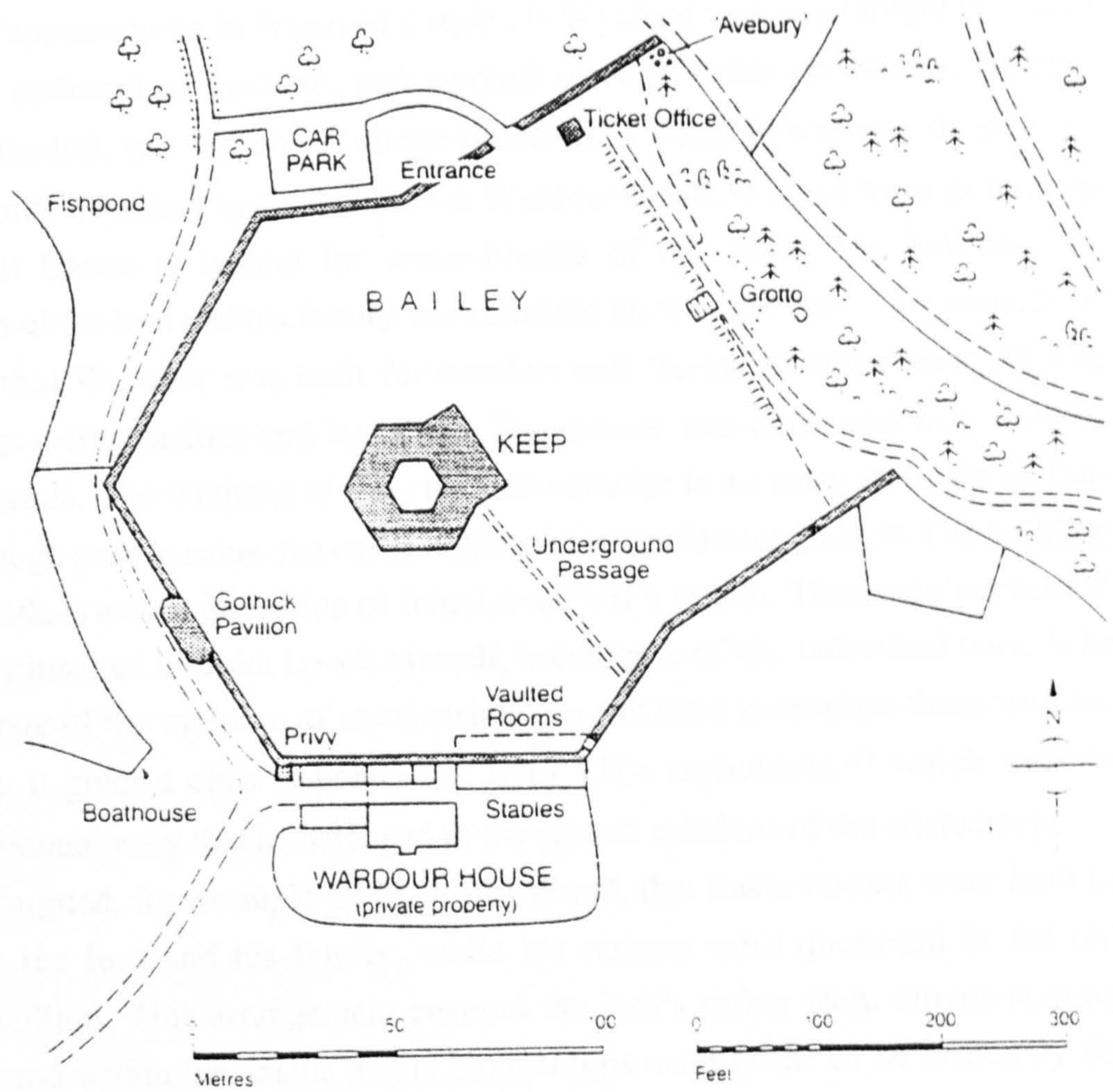


Figure 3:

Grounds of Old Wardour Castle, from R.B. Pugh and A.D. Saunders, *Old Wardour Castle* (London, 2nd ed., 1991), p. 16.

as the building 'appears to be in Wynford's style'.⁴¹ Wynford was what might be styled a 'fashionable' architect of his time, and worked amongst other on Windsor Castle, Winchester Cathedral, and Queen's College (Oxford).⁴² There is however no positive evidence to identify Wynford as the architect of Wardour Castle.⁴³ Apart from its unusual shape, Wardour Castle is typical for tower-houses of this kind. The hall and the accommodation of the lord and his family were situated on the first floor. The remains of these indicate that Wardour was built for comfort and 'lavish entertainment'.⁴⁴ The private lodgings were spacious and luxurious. The outside was decorated with flowers and animals' heads. The vaulting of the entrance corridor is an early example of fan-vaulting.⁴⁵ Though now in ruins, the castle still indicates its former glory.⁴⁶ The building of Wardour Castle is a clear indication of John Lovell VII's wealth. The castle's eccentric shape, probably inspired by John Lovell himself, is evidence of his individual taste. If he was indeed aware of the tradition of royal residences and tried to emulate these with his new residence, it gives a clear indication of John VII's aspirations,⁴⁷ which were to demonstrate ostentatiously that he belonged to the highest echelons of the aristocracy.

It has been argued, for example by Margaret Wood, that tower houses were built to accommodate the lord and his family, while his retinue were quartered in the old residential buildings. This arrangement ensured the lord's safety from threats coming from without and within the castle, as his hired troops were prone to be bribed by the lord's enemies.⁴⁸ The notion that the late medieval lord had a 'standing army'⁴⁹ is hardly accurate. Moreover, if this army was so unreliable that the lord had to protect himself and his family against it, the entire arrangement would have been worse than useless.⁵⁰ The

⁴¹ John Harvey, *English Mediaeval Architects. A Biographical Dictionary down to 1550* (Gloucester, rev. ed. 1984), p. 354.

⁴² *ibid.*, pp. 352-56.

⁴³ Harvey constructs a connection between the two men as John Lovell was a guest of William Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, in 1394. Wynford worked on several building projects of Wykeham at this time, *ibid.*, p. 354.

⁴⁴ R.B. Pugh and A.D. Saunders, *Old Wardour Castle* (London, 1968), p. 15.

⁴⁵ Girouard, 'Wardour Old Castle', p. 46.

⁴⁶ Xenia Taliotis lavishes praise on the castle in a recent English Heritage publication: 'Attributed to William Wynford, the greatest of medieval architects, there was no other castle like it in England.' Xenia Taliotis, 'Reminders of War and Peace', *Heritage Today* 48 (March, 1998), p. 28.

⁴⁷ 'The size and pretensions of such houses were an accurate index of the ambitions – or lack of them – of their owners.' Girouard, *Country House*, p. 3.

⁴⁸ The troops 'were liable to be bought over by a rival with more pay and to turn against their master', Wood, p. 169.

⁴⁹ 'The lord now had a standing army of professional soldiers,' *ibid.*

⁵⁰ 'The argument, ..., that these late medieval tower-keeps were designed to protect the lord from their own insubordinate retainers dies hard, but is completely without foundation.' Pounds, p. 272; see also Girouard, *Country House*, p. 75.

reasons behind the ‘return of the tower keep’⁵¹ in the later middle ages was less the new danger originating now from within the castle walls, but rather the increasing wish of the aristocracy that their residences should *look* like castles. Additionally, this design enabled the several levels of the household to function in their own spaces. Thus ‘increasing social stratification [was] repeated in architecture’.⁵²

The third residence of the Lovell family is Minster Lovell Hall. Minster Lovell was one of the earliest estates the Lovells held in England⁵³ and one of the main residences of the family.⁵⁴ William Lovell III rebuilt the house in the 1430s.⁵⁵ The manor remained the main residence of the Lovells until the forfeiture in 1485. Richard III was a guest of Francis Lovell there.⁵⁶ It is here, in a cellar, that according to one theory, Francis Lovell hid after the battle of Stoke.⁵⁷ Henry VII granted the manor to his uncle, Jasper Tudor, Duke of Bedford, and visited the manor himself on several occasions. The manor changed hands repeatedly in the following two centuries.⁵⁸ Around 1747 the house was eventually abandoned and large parts of the buildings dismantled.⁵⁹

Minster Lovell Hall is a fairly typical if impressive manor house. The buildings surround three sides of a square; the fourth side towards the River Windrush is closed off by a wall (Figure 4).⁶⁰ However, even this obviously nonmilitant manor house includes a few characteristics typical of a more traditional castle. The form itself is based on the castle built around one or more courtyards.⁶¹ The great tower at the south-west corner is similar in design to a tower house. It seems to be a later addition to the house, as part of the adjoining west wing had to be rebuilt.⁶² The hall, situated in the north wing of the house, was ‘unusually lofty’⁶³ and was heated by a central fire

⁵¹ Pounds, p. 269.

⁵² *ibid.*, pp. 274-75.

⁵³ see Chapter 3, p. 86.

⁵⁴ It seems likely that John Lovell VII lived here before the completion of Wardour, as he is styled ‘of co. Oxford’, see Taylor, *Minster Lovell Hall* (1947), p. 2.

⁵⁵ The licence William Lovell received to enclose parts of the royal forest of Wychwood has to be seen in connection with the building project, *CPR*, 1436-1441, p. 250.

⁵⁶ Williams, p. 389.

⁵⁷ see Chapter 2, p. 75.

⁵⁸ Taylor, *Minster Lovell Hall* (1947), p. 2.

⁵⁹ Taylor, *Minster Lovell Hall* (1958), p. 20.

⁶⁰ see plan, p.202, from Taylor, *Minster Lovell Hall* (1958).

⁶¹ Sudeley Castle, built by Ralph Boteler, and South Wingfield, built by Ralph Cromwell, around the same time, fall into this category, Pounds, p. 268.

⁶² Taylor, *Minster Lovell Hall* (1947), p. 7; Similarly, William Hastings added a tower to Ashby-de-la-Zouche Castle, after he was granted the manor in 1464, T.L. Jones, *Ashby de la Zouche Castle, Leicestershire* (Ministry of Public Buildings and Works, London, 1953), pp. 5-7.

⁶³ Wood, p. 289.



Figure 4:
 Minster Lovell Hall, from A.J. Taylor, *Minster Lovell Hall. Oxfordshire* (English Heritage)(1958), pp. 12-13.

place,⁶⁴ – a strangely archaic feature as most houses built at the time had fireplaces built into the walls.⁶⁵ The house was designed to provide comfortable rooms for the lord and his family. This can be seen from the ‘sumptuous private rooms’.⁶⁶ Even the quarters of the lord’s personal attendants included fireplaces.⁶⁷ The remaining decorations, for example the elaborate tracery in the room under the chapel,⁶⁸ the decorated vaulting of the entrance porch,⁶⁹ and the patterned path leading to the porch (Figure 5),⁷⁰ show that Minster Lovell Hall was a splendid residence, built mainly for the comfort of those living there. Additionally, it also displayed the wealth of its builder to the world.⁷¹

The three residences demonstrate two things clearly, the high status of the family and the individuality of the builders. All three, even the earliest, Titchmarsh, were great houses, showing that the Lovells belonged to the ruling class of England and could afford to build in a grand scale, providing living quarters not only for themselves, but also for their retinue. The individual style of the three residences is also fascinating. The changes reflect the development of architectural styles: the move away from castles built mainly for defence to residences that were in fact ‘well-protected homes’.⁷² The two different styles of Old Wardour Castle and Minster Lovell Hall additionally give us some indication of the interests of their builders. John Lovell VII built a very eccentric and impressive tower house, which not only showed his status but very probably his personal taste as well. Minster Lovell Hall, on the other hand, is a country estate, tucked away in the romantic valley of the River Windrush in the middle of Wychwood forest. It is a place where William Lovell III could spend his time away from the bustling court full of intrigue.

The different Lords Lovell not only changed the style of their residence, but also the region in which they resided. Though the three residences are all situated in the south Midlands, it is obvious that the Lovells did not feel bound to reside at the places where their ancestors had lived. Wardour was even part of an estate which had only recently been purchased by John Lovell VII, another aspect which likens him to other ‘new men’,

⁶⁴ *ibid.*, p. 58.

⁶⁵ Girouard, *Country House*, p. 34.

⁶⁶ Wood, p. 78.

⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p. 185.

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. 132.

⁶⁹ Taylor, *Minster Lovell Hall* (1947), p. 3.

⁷⁰ see p. 205.

⁷¹ ‘He [William Lovell] was thus a great landholder and an extremely rich man, facts which are reflected in the scale of the surviving of the buildings at Minster Lovell.’ Taylor, *Minster Lovell Hall* (1947), p. 2.

⁷² Pounds, p. 249.

whom he resembled in so many respects.⁷³

⁷³ see Chapter 4, pp. 160-61.



Figure 5:
Patterned Path Leading to Minster Lovell Hall, Author's photograph.
(Original in Colour)

5.2. Piety and Remembrance

The Lovells of Titchmarsh showed a remarkable lack of continuity in their choice of residence: nearly every generation moved the family's *caput honoris* into a different county. As medieval aristocrats accorded great importance both to religion and to the memory of their ancestors, we might expect to find more continuity in the Lovells' religious patronage and their choice of burial places. It seems likely that there existed a church or monastery in which successive generations of Lovells were buried. The establishment of a chantry, the family mausoleum, according to Christine Carpenter, symbolized the social and geographical arrival of a family.⁷⁴ Continuous patronage of and burial in one religious foundation would not only strongly identify the family with the place; it would also show – after a time – the antiquity and therefore the dignity of the family. As with so many other areas of their lives, we do not have complete information about the piety of the Lovells as expressed in their patronage. We do not even know the burial places of all the Lords Lovell. The evidence, patchy as it is, points however in a completely different direction than that set out above. The Lovell's piety and remembrance was largely determined by the individual lords' personal taste. However, they were not completely free in their choice. It is necessary to examine how much their individual tastes were influenced by their rank and society.

Norman families who acquired land in England shortly after the Conquest often founded, usually near their new residences, cells of those monasteries with which they had close connections in the 'old' lands. The Lovells were no exception to the rule. Close to the early Lovell estates in Minster Lovell, Elcombe, Asthall and Docking, cells of the priory of Ivry were established.⁷⁵ As most of our information about these alien priories derives from the time when they were in the control of the English king (during the wars with France, so no revenue from England should aid the enemy)⁷⁶ and particularly from the time of their 'dissolution', the image we get is one of little efficiency. Most of these alien priories were hardly functioning by the beginning of the fifteenth century.⁷⁷ The men who were granted the keeping of the alien priories often furthered their deterioration.⁷⁸ Additionally, the families who once founded them had little interest in

⁷⁴ Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 229-31.

⁷⁵ see Chapter 2, pp. 32-33.

⁷⁶ Alison McHardy, 'The Effects of War on the Church: The Case of the Alien Priories in the Fourteenth Century', in Michael Jones and Malcom Vale (eds.) *England and her Neighbours, 1066-1453. Essays in Honour of Pierre Chaplais* (London and Roncerverte, 1989), p. 279.

⁷⁷ A.J. Taylor, 'The Alien Priory of Minster Lovell', *Oxoniensia* 2 (1937), 103-117.

⁷⁸ The main responsibility for the decline of the alien monasteries is usually seen to lie with the 'outsiders imposed as keepers inflicted severe economic damage upon them', McHardy, p. 283.

their upkeep by the later middle ages. The Lovells themselves even profited from the suppression of the alien priories, as Minster Lovell and its cells were on several occasions granted to them.⁷⁹ To receive the revenue of the alien priories was certainly more in William Lovell III's interest than to see the funds (little as they were) go to Normandy. In 1441, the rent of the alien priory of Minster Lovell and its subordinate cells, held by William Lovell at this time, as well as the reversion of it, were bestowed on King's College, Eton, presumably by William Lovell III himself.⁸⁰ An interesting aspect is that the memory of the alien priory in Minster Lovell was long lasted. By the early eighteenth century the ruins of Minster Lovell Hall was thought to have been the building of the alien priory.⁸¹

Michael Hicks has demonstrated in his research on the pious foundations of the Hungerfords how in this family every generation supported their own foundations rather than those created by their ancestors.⁸² The Lovells show a very similar tendency to individualism. Though perhaps less sophisticated than the Hungerfords, the Lords Lovell also supported separate religious houses. No monastery was particularly favoured by the family and the three (possibly only two) burial places we know of were also located in different places. We have to try to discover why certain places were favoured. It might be possible, for example, that the places where the Lovells decided to be buried were always close to their respective favourite residences and their burial places remained close to the changing location of the main residence. However, the choice of burial place might simply be determined by the Lovells' individual tastes, in religious houses that they had already patronized during their life-time.

In his will John Lovell VII declared that he wished to be buried in the Hospital of St. James and St. John in Brackley (Northamptonshire).⁸³ He also bestowed a black vestment adorned with golden stars with a cope and other clothing of the same colouring on the hospital. The warden of St. James and St. John was John Brockhampton, who held the post in plurality with the Hospital of St. Leonard, Brackley, and the vicarage of St. Michael, Northampton.⁸⁴ John Brockhampton was also one of the main receivers of

⁷⁹ Grant of Minster Lovell to John Lovell VII, *CFR*, 1368-1377, p. 225; to Maud Holland, *CFR*, 1405-1408, p. 130; to William Lovell III, *CFR*, 1437-1445, p. 39.

⁸⁰ *VCH*, Buckinghamshire, vol. ii, p. 153.

⁸¹ A.J. Taylor, *Minster Lovell Hall* (1985), p. 16.

⁸² 'Well-acquainted with church services and the most up-to-date developments, the Hungerfords had clear-cut individual preferences, which they expressed in coherent liturgical forms, general highly personal and owing nothing to dynastic, parental or marital example.' Hicks, 'Piety and Lineage', p. 167.

⁸³ British Library, Add. Ms. 39,992 N. The Manuscript is a transcript of the original will, now in the Lambeth Palace Library, made by G.L. Harrison and presented to the British Library in 1919.

⁸⁴ A copy of the bull issued by Alexander V is kept in Magdalen College; Oxford, Magdalen College, Brackley, 187d, M. Northants, II, 768.

John Lovell VII.⁸⁵ The choice of this Hospital as his burial place is surprising as it is distant from John Lovell VII's favourite residence at Wardour (Wiltshire). The Hospital itself seemed to have been experiencing difficulties already at the time of John VII's death. In 1411, the Archdeacon of Taunton was ordered by papal mandate to make an inquiry into its statutes, which, according to the brethren there, were obscure and needed amending.⁸⁶

The Hospital at Brackley had been founded by Robert Beaumont, Earl of Leicester, whose heart was buried there in 1168.⁸⁷ Robert Beaumont was the brother-in-law of William Lovell I.⁸⁸ Brackley was part of the inheritance of Maud Holland and had been patronised by her family. Robert Holland, Maud's grandfather, and his father, another Robert Holland, were buried in the Hospital of St. James and St. John.⁸⁹ Maud Holland, who was the main executor of her husband's last will, made some efforts to transform the Hospital into a house of Dominican friars.⁹⁰ However, no significant progress seems to have been made and after Maud Holland's death in 1423, the plans were developed no further. When John Brockhampton died in the same year, an inquisition discovered that there were no brethren resident at the Hospital.⁹¹ The untimely death of Maud Holland, before she could complete her plans, and the fact that her son John Lovell VIII had predeceased her and her grandson William III was a minor, were probably the reasons why the project to establish a Dominican Friary was never realized. It seems, however, that Maud Holland had not given her full attention to this project. After all, she had fifteen years after her husband's death to accomplish the scheme, but no significant progress had been made at the time of her own death. John Lovell himself seems to have been similarly unconcerned about the details of his burial and the obsequies to be held after his death, and left all details to his wife's discretion. It is of course possible that these arrangements had been discussed earlier. Nevertheless, the fact that John VII entrusted his wife with his funeral arrangements shows that he relied on her to fulfil his wishes. The Hospital was re-established in 1425, but on a smaller scale.⁹²

⁸⁵ see Chapter 3, p. 100.

⁸⁶ *VCH*, Northamptonshire, vol. ii, p. 152.

⁸⁷ Crouch, *Beaumont Twins*, p. 95.

⁸⁸ see Appendix 2, Figure 2, The Beaumont Family.

⁸⁹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. vi, p. 531.

⁹⁰ *VCH*, Northamptonshire, vol. ii, n. 15, *CCR*, 1419-1422, p. 189.

⁹¹ *ibid.*

⁹² The Hospital was without inhabitants since the death of John Brockhampton in the early years of the fifteenth century, and had already been given to the Bishop of Durham by Maud Holland. As the conversion into a religious house envisaged by her never took place, the hospital was returned to the Lovells, *Bridges*, vol. i, p. 151.

If a family tradition can be established regarding Brackley, it is in a series of half-hearted attempts to reform the hospital. Early in Richard II's reign, John Lovell VII paid the brethren then living at Brackley to retire in preparation for a new establishment,⁹³ but apparently this did nothing to actually improve the situation there. J. Rosenthal, in his rather confused description of the history of the Hospital, states that it had fallen into ruin and was without inmates when the Lovells acquired it.⁹⁴ This obviously contradicts the evidence from the Lovell papers that indicates that a number of brothers were resident there. Another example is the half-hearted re-establishment of the Hospital in 1425. Francis Lovell finally sold the Hospital to William Waynflete in 1484, who used it as part of his endowment of Magdalen College.⁹⁵ In the arrangement made between Francis Lovell and William Waynflete, the only obsequies to be held by the new college were those for Francis Lovell and his wife. No reference is made to his ancestors buried in the Hospital.⁹⁶ The history of the Hospital shows not only that the original founders were not particularly concerned with the fate of their foundation, but also that their descendants cared only little for their ancestors' burial place. This negligence again, causing the dissolution of the Hospital, is an additional reason why the tomb of John Lovell VII (and perhaps that of his wife) is not preserved.⁹⁷ The history of Brackley, however, was far from exceptional. The history of St. Katherine's Hospital in Heytesbury is similarly disorderly. In the end it was simply the fact that Margaret Beautreux, the granddaughter-in-law of the original founder, had her own interests in the foundation and finally managed to set it up, sixty years after the first plans were made.⁹⁸

While the negligence of the proposed foundation and ultimately the burial place of John VII by his family is a startling reminder that their ancestors might not be as important to the medieval aristocrat as we expect, the reason why he decided to be buried in Brackley is easy to explain. Brackley may have had no previous link to the Lovell family, but it was the burial place of his wife's family. The fact that John VII decided to be buried next to the Hollands also indicates how important his link to this family was to him. Not only did he adopt the family name,⁹⁹ but he also combined the Lovell arms with that of the

⁹³ Oxford, Magdalen College, Brackley, D 114.

⁹⁴ Rosenthal, *Purchase of Paradise*, p. 70-71; in the same paragraph he states that *Francis Lovell* annexed the Hospital by 1425, thirty years before he was born.

⁹⁵ see Chapter 3, p. 94.

⁹⁶ *VCH*, Oxfordshire, vol. iv, *The City of Oxford*, p. 194.

⁹⁷ *Northamptonshire*, Nikolaus Pevsner (London, 1961), p. 109.

⁹⁸ M. Hicks, 'St. Katherine's Hospital, Heytesbury', in Michael Hicks, *Richard III and his Rivals. Magnates and their Motives in the Wars of the Roses* (London, 1991), pp. 120-126.

⁹⁹ see above, Chapter 4, p. 154.

Holland's, as will be discussed below.¹⁰⁰ The connection to the Holland family was obviously of utmost importance to John Lovell VII.

William Lovell III chose a different site for his burial place. In his will he wishes to be buried in the church of Greyfriars Convent in Oxford.¹⁰¹ Unlike his grandfather, William Lovell gave detailed instructions in his will to his executors about the obsequies which he wished to be performed for his soul: a thousand masses should be said within eight days of his death.¹⁰² It was common practice to have a large number of masses said for one's soul. Richard Beauchamp, for example, directed that 5,000 masses were to be said.¹⁰³ A chapel and tomb for William III and his wife, Alice, were to be built in Greyfriars Church, and two priests were to be employed and paid £20 wages. The church was to receive £133 6s. 8d., partly in cash, partly in ornaments for the church.¹⁰⁴ William Lovell's wishes seemed to have been fulfilled; a now destroyed 'small structure' in the north aisle of Greyfriars Church has been identified as the tomb and chantry of William Lovell. The dissolution of the monasteries, however, meant that the tomb was destroyed.¹⁰⁵ William Lovell also bequeathed £5 each to the Blackfriars, Whitefriars and Augustinian friars in Oxford, and £40 to the Abbey of Bruerne. It is in this last endowment that we can find a family tradition. John Lovell VII had granted the abbot of Bruerne the reversion of some lands in 1392.¹⁰⁶ The two incidents, however, hardly constitute a continuous patronage of this Abbey.

If we accept that William Lovell was indeed buried in Oxford, the tomb still surviving in St. Kenelm's Church, Minster Lovell, must be that of his son John IX. The Church had been rebuilt by William III at about the same time as Minster Lovell Hall. It is possible that some of the figural decorations in the church depict William III and his wife Alice.¹⁰⁷ As the former existence of William Lovell's tomb in Oxford is speculative, the question of for whom the tomb in Minster Lovell was made remains unanswered. Not only are the arms on the tomb restorations made in the nineteenth century, but their program does not allow us to identify who lies in the tomb.¹⁰⁸ The tomb can stylistically

¹⁰⁰ see below, p. 223.

¹⁰¹ *Lincoln Diocesan Documents*, p. 72.

¹⁰² 'And I wol that within viij dayes after my dethe a M^l Messes to be don for my soule.' *ibid.*

¹⁰³ Hicks, 'Beauchamp Trust', p. 341.

¹⁰⁴ *Lincoln Diocesan Documents*, p. 73. In the first codicil appended to the will, William Lovell III specifies that the two priests were to be secular priests with a degree in the divinities or at least masters of arts and should be good preachers. The priests were to be appointed by the current Lord Lovell, *ibid.* 77.

¹⁰⁵ *VCH*, Oxfordshire, vol. iv, The City of Oxford, p. 367.

¹⁰⁶ A messuage, a caracute of land, 30s. rent, and half a virgate of land, *CPR*, 1391-1396, p. 181.

¹⁰⁷ Brochure about Minster Lovell, no author, no date, bought in St Kenelm's July 1998, pp. 3-4.

¹⁰⁸ see below, pp. 229 and 230.

be dated to the third quarter of the fifteenth century.¹⁰⁹ The figure of a knight in the plate armour of this time is shown lying on the tomb, his hands folded. On his right side the figure has a dagger, on his left a sword. His head is resting on a helmet with a lion as its crest. His feet are resting on another lion. Five figures are depicted around the sides of the tomb, two female weepers on the north side, St. Christopher on the west end of the tomb, and the Virgin Mary and St. Margaret on the south side (Figures 6 and 8).¹¹⁰

Lamborn (and following him at least the writer of the guide of St. Kenelm's Church) argues that the figural program clearly identifies the tomb as that of William Lovell. He points out that William Lovell had been a founding member of the guild of St. Christopher in Thame:¹¹¹ 'the presence of St. Christopher as the patron saint upon the tomb at Minster thus suggests that William Lovel is the person commemorated by it.'¹¹² The two female saints represented, according to Lamborn, William's wife Alice, whose name gave her a special link to the Virgin Mary, and her sister Margaret, who had died only a few months before William III. When we choose to read the evidence like this, the decorations do indeed point to the conclusion that the tomb is William Lovell's. However, it does not clearly prove it. The saints chosen to decorate the tomb were among the most popular saints in England at this time. It is even possible that Alice Deincourt ordered this tomb to be made for her son, who predeceased her, dying in 1465.

As the information about the burial place of William III and John IX is inconclusive, it is difficult to reach any certain conclusions about the reasons behind their choice of burial places. William Lovell III, whether he was buried in Oxford or Minster Lovell, decided on a location much closer to his main residence than did John VII. Either of the places were presumably chosen because of his own religious preferences, not to indicate his connection to another family. This can be seen as an indication that William III was much more certain of his own and his family's status in society than his grandfather had been. It is tempting to assume that William Lovell III chose to be buried in Oxford, due to some preference for the Franciscans that has left no other surviving documentation. If this was the case, the grave in Minster Lovell was therefore John IX's, who after his early and – as far as we can determine – sudden death was buried in the nearest church, St. Kenelm's.

A third tomb, in Holy Trinity Church in Hinton (Northamptonshire) has been

¹⁰⁹ E.A. Greening Lamborn, 'The Lovel Tomb at Minster', *Oxford Archeological Society Report* 83 (1937), p. 13.

¹¹⁰ see below, pp. 212, 229 and 230.

¹¹¹ *CPR*, 1446-1452, p. 180-81.

¹¹² Lamborn, 'Lovel Tomb', pp. 17-18.



Figure 6:
Knight on the Lovell Tomb, St. Kenelm's Church, Minster Lovell, Author's
photographs.
(Original in Colour)

identified as being that of William Lovell III.¹¹³ However as this tomb has no description and no other record supports this theory, the tomb can be safely disregarded in favour of either the destroyed tomb in Oxford, or the tomb in Minster Lovell as the last resting place of William III.

Few other indications have survived about the Lovells' piety. There are a number of other religious houses that the Lovells patronised. John Lovell III founded a chapel of St. Stephen in St. Mary's Church in Titchmarsh before 1293. This is the kind of foundation that we might expect from a baron at this time. Though the Lovells moved their residence away from Titchmarsh during the fourteenth century, they kept an interest in St. Stephen's Chapel for nearly two hundred years.¹¹⁴ John Lovell VII had a strong connection with Salisbury Cathedral. He bestowed a vestment of white cloth with golden eagles on it 'cum toto apparato eidem vestimento pertinente' to this church and a 'librum evangelicorum' out of which the daily gospel should be read.¹¹⁵ Salisbury Cathedral was also the recipient of the Lovell Lectionary, a magnificent manuscript. As its heraldic decoration is of particular interest, the manuscript will be discussed below.¹¹⁶ William Lovell III again granted some land to the monastery in Erdebury (Warwickshire).¹¹⁷ Even though he was one of the founding members of the guild of St. Christopher in Thame, no indication of any further link with this foundation has survived. Francis Lovell shows in his religious life a strong link to the north, as might be expected. He was a member of the Corpus Christi Guild in York.¹¹⁸ He also had licence to found a guild in Abingdon, but there is no further evidence about the subsequent history of this foundation.

In the research on other families, for example the studies on the Scropes and Bourghiers, their piety and remembrance as expressed in their religious foundations and burial places has been neglected. It is therefore difficult to compare the behaviour of the Lovells with other families of their rank. The few incidences of religious patronage we know of are in favour of a large number of different religious houses. The burial places are in separate places as well, and on at least one occasion distant from their residences.

¹¹³ 'In the north aisle are two ancient monuments without inscription. On the one is the effigies of a man completely armed, lying on his back with a dog at his feet. On the other side is the effigy of a woman in the same posture. These are supposed to be the monuments of the Lord Lovel and his Lady.' Bridges, pp. 177-78.

¹¹⁴ In 1462, Alice Deincourt made the last known presentation, *VCH*, Northamptonshire, vol. iii, p. 148.

¹¹⁵ 'ad legendum in ed evangelia cotidiana', British Library, Add. Ms. 39,922 N.

¹¹⁶ see below, p. 223.

¹¹⁷ *CPR*, 1441-1446, p. 392.

¹¹⁸ see above Chapter 2, p. 69.

The main conclusion regarding the religious patronage of the Lovells is that it was highly individual and not dictated by family tradition. Some families established a family mausoleum, often in a religious house they founded, and generation after generation were buried there.¹¹⁹ However, this was not a general rule followed by all aristocratic families. One has to consider that during the middle ages there was not even a royal mausoleum. Westminster Abbey only acquired this status retrospectively.¹²⁰ Considerations other than tradition were influencing the families. Proximity to the main residence was an important factor. If the family moved to a different residence, the favoured religious house often changed as well. Special devotion to a certain religious house or the intention to illustrate the connection to previous patrons of the place could also determine the choice of burial place of an individual lord.

¹¹⁹ For example the FitzAlan Earls of Arundel who almost invariably chose to be buried in Colne, *Complete Peerage*, vol. i, pp. 207-43.

¹²⁰ In 1400, of those kings buried in England only three, Henry III, Edward I and Edward III, were buried in Westminster, while three, John, Edward II and Richard II, were buried in other religious houses; in 1500, Henry III, Edward I, Edward III, Richard II and Henry V were buried in Westminster, but John, Edward II, Henry IV, Henry VI and Edward IV were buried elsewhere.

5.3. Heraldry

5.3.1. Introduction

Signs and symbols have always been used as means of identification. By the middle of the thirteenth century coats-of-arms had become important symbols of the nobility. They were collected by chroniclers – notably Matthew Paris – and heralds, and a specific language to describe them had been invented.¹²¹ Rules regulating the adoption and use of arms were not yet established at this time and only slowly came into being during the next centuries; many aspects of heraldry were indeed only regulated in the sixteenth century.¹²² Heraldry, particularly in the early years of its general use, was inconsistent and it was not unusual for individuals to change their arms at will. During the next centuries supporters and crests developed, equally unregulated and originally as mere decoration around the shield of arms.¹²³

Coats-of-arms were not always regarded as being the property of one family. Particularly in the early days, men adopted the arms of their lord, sometimes, but not always, differencing them.¹²⁴ The Lovell arms, *barry nebuly or and gules*, belong to this group of arms. The earliest existing version of the Lovell arms is John Lovell II's seal on a grant dating from late years of Henry III's or the early years of Edward I's reigns. The seal shows three bars *nebuly* with a three pointed label.¹²⁵ Later his arms are recorded in the Camden Roll (c. 1280) and the Charles' Roll (c. 1285) as *barry undy or and gules, a label azure*. The arms are clearly derived from those of the Justiciar Philip Basset: *barry undy or and gules* (also in the Camden Roll and Charles' Roll as well as in the St. George's Roll, c. 1285, and Heralds Roll, c. 1279).¹²⁶ Philip Basset was John Lovell II's uncle, and the adoption of the Basset arms give some foundation to the speculation that the connection to the Basset family brought the Lovells in closer contact with the

¹²¹ A.R. Wagner, *Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages* (London, 1956), p. 18.

¹²² The College of Arms, for example, was founded in 1484, Thomas Woodcock and John M. Robinson, *The Oxford Guide to Heraldry* (Oxford, 1988), p. 140. Cadency marks, distinguishing the arms of younger sons from those used by the head of the family were invented in about 1500, *ibid.*, p. 66.

¹²³ *ibid.*, pp. 81-83, 94-97.

¹²⁴ Wagner, p. 19.

¹²⁵ R. Ready, 'Note of a Grant of Lands at Docking (co. Norfolk?) and Seal With Unusual Inscription Appended', *Archaeological Journal* 37 (1880), p. 328, the unusual inscription is: 'Signum eius cuius egis.'

¹²⁶ Gerard J. Brault (ed.), *Rolls of Arms Edward I (1272-1307); Heralds Roll, Dering Roll, Camden, Roll, St George's Roll, Charles' Roll, Segar's Roll, Lord Marshal's Roll, Collins' Roll, Falkirk Roll, Guillim's Roll, Caerlaverock Poem, Galloway Roll, Smallpece's Roll, Stirling Roll, Nativity Roll, Fife Roll, Sir William le Neve's Roll* (London, 1997), vol. ii, pp. 266 and 33-34.

royal court.¹²⁷

Another coat-of-arms used by the Lovells is the Sydenham arms: *gules, three padlocks or*.¹²⁸ Unlike the Basset arms, the Sydenham padlocks mainly appear in decorations.¹²⁹ The padlock does, however, appear as part of the 'full achievement' of the coat-of-arms. From the fifteenth century onward the mantling of the Lovell crest is powdered with padlocks.¹³⁰ The continual use of the Sydenham arms shows that the link to this family, particularly perhaps the lands inherited from Maud de Sydenham, was regarded as an important turning point in the history of the Lovell family.

How little the use of arms was controlled at this time can be seen by the slight variations of the arms used by John Lovell III.¹³¹ The arms recorded most frequently were indeed those on which the later Lovell arms were based, *barry undy or and gules*.¹³² The St. George's Roll depicts the Lovell arms as *vairy gules and or, a label azure*. This is probably a mistake, though given the variations of arms common at this time, John Lovell II might have used this variation as well.

A related coat-of-arms, *Barry undy or and azure, on a chief argent a demi-lion rampant gules* (Sir William le Neve's Roll, *temp.* Edward I) of 'Munsire Lovel' may have been used by the Lovells of Titchmarsh, but may also be the arms of a unrelated family.¹³³ However, it was more usual for families with the same name to adopt different arms. Richard Lovel of Castle Cary, for example, used a seal *crusily a lion rampant*.¹³⁴ In the Parliamentary Rolls his arms are recorded as *or, crusily a lion rampant azure*. The John Lovel who in the Carlisle Roll (1334) is given the arms *or, crusily a lion azure with a label gules*¹³⁵ can therefore be identified as one of Richard Lovel's sons. The Lovels of Barton Bendish (Norfolk) used the arms *argent, a chevron azure between three squirrels gules*.¹³⁶ Two different Basset families can also be differentiated by their arms. While

¹²⁷ see Chapter 2, p. 39.

¹²⁸ B. Burke, *The General Armory of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales* (London, 1884), p. 992.

¹²⁹ see below, pp. 223, 229 and 230.

¹³⁰ For example on a seal of William Lovell, PRO E210/11136; and on the garter stall plate of Francis Lovell. His arms are surrounded by a garter, crowned with a helmet whose mantling is powdered with padlocks.

¹³¹ *Barry undy or and gules, a bend argent* (Camden Roll, c. 1380); *Barry undy or and gules, a bend sable* (Charles' Roll, c. 1285); *Barry undy or and gules, a bend azure* (Collins' Roll, c. 1296); *Or, three bars undy gules* (Guillim's Roll, c. 1295-1305), Brault, pp. 266-67.

¹³² Lord Marshall's Roll (c. 1295); Falkirk Roll (1298); Smalpece's Roll (c. 1298-1306); Stirling Roll (1304), *ibid.*

¹³³ *ibid.*, p. 266.

¹³⁴ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 205, n. c).

¹³⁵ D.H.B. Chesshyre and T. Woodcock (eds.), *Dictionary of British Arms. Medieval Ordinary* (London, 1997), vol. i., p. 209.

¹³⁶ Burke, p. 624.

Philip Basset and his family used the arms mentioned above, another Basset family used variations of the arms *paly or and gules, a canton ermine*.¹³⁷ It may be that these families did not consciously adopt different arms to stress their distinctiveness, but it was probably in their interest to do so.

On the other hand, the members of the same family used the same coat-of-arms with slight alterations. This enabled them to show their membership of the larger family group but also marked them out as individuals. John Lovell of Snotescombe, the illegitimate son of John Lovell II, differenced the arms with a *label azure each point charged with three mullets or* (Segar's Roll, c. 1285) or, in another case, *a label azure semy of mullets argent* (Parliamentary Roll, c. 1312).¹³⁸ Thomas Lovell of Titchwell also differenced the arms.¹³⁹ That there were no rules which demanded differencing is shown by the fact that Thomas Lovell also used the undifferenced arms of *barry undy or and gules* (Lord Marshall's Roll, 1295).¹⁴⁰ Sometimes the differencing used had its own significance. William Lovell, younger son of John Lovell III, was a retainer of Aymer de Valence,¹⁴¹ and used the arms *barry undy or and gules, a label Valence*.¹⁴² This coat-of-arms clearly symbolized both his belonging to the Lovell family as well as his allegiance to Aymer de Valence.

The practice of combining coats-of-arms developed in parallel with the general use of arms and was similarly unregulated at first. The combination of two arms, like William Lovell's method of differencing, can be used to indicate an alliance. Otto IV, German king and Roman emperor, for example, halved the German arms with the English royal arms to symbolize his close link to his uncle Richard I.¹⁴³ The practice of quartering the arms of the husband and the wife was a Spanish convention, which was probably introduced to England by Eleanor of Castile.¹⁴⁴ The quartering of arms acquired a more controversial quality when Edward III combined the English and the French arms, not to illustrate an alliance, but as a symbol of his claim to both the English and the French crowns. The combination of arms was used both as a symbol of allegiance or to signify

¹³⁷ Brault, pp. 33-34.

¹³⁸ Brault, p. 267.

¹³⁹ *Barry undy or and gules, a bend azure* Stirling Roll, c. 1304; Parliamentary Roll, c. 1312; and *Barry undy or and gules, a bend or*, First Dunstable Roll, 1309, *ibid*.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid*.

¹⁴¹ see Chapter 2, p. 46.

¹⁴² Brault, p. 267.

¹⁴³ Richard Vaughan, *Matthew Paris* (London, 1958), p. 251. Otto grew up at the English court and was created count of Poitou and Duke of Aquitaine by Richard I. Otto's election to German king was financed to a large extent by Richard I.

¹⁴⁴ Woodcock and Robinson, p. 24-25.

the claim to an inheritance.

Particularly when employed in the latter way, the combination of coats-of-arms shows that they were from very early on seen to represent the family's inheritance. This phenomenon is particularly obvious when men adopted the arms of their mothers as a symbol for their right to her estates. One early example is Waleran, Count of Meulan.¹⁴⁵ Similarly, Thomas Holland, Earl of Kent, used the arms of his mother, Joan of Kent.¹⁴⁶ Nicholas Burnell adopted not only his mother's name but also the Burnell arms, *azure, a lion rampant sable crowned and armed or*, after he had inherited most of the Burnell estates.¹⁴⁷ The land was linked to both the name and the arms of the family who owned them. Occasionally, the inheritance of an estate was made under the condition that the new owner would adopt both the name and the arms of the old owner.¹⁴⁸

It is tempting to assume that John Lovell VII adopted his wife, Maud Holland's, arms and name in imitation of Nicholas Burnell's assuming the name and arms of the Burnells to fortify his claim on these estates. John Lovell was the first baron to use both his and his wife's name.¹⁴⁹ A seal of John Lovell VII dating from about 1385 shows both arms impaled, the Lovells' arms dexter and the Hollands' sinister. The same design is shown on a seal of Maud Holland dating from about 1387.¹⁵⁰ Combining the arms and using the name signifies the claim of John Lovell to both baronies. It also constantly reminded his contemporaries of his connection to the Hollands. The combination of the arms by impaling was only used by the Lovells for a brief period; soon the family used the Lovell arms quartered with the Holland arms.¹⁵¹ Not only John Lovell VIII but also his younger brother Robert used the Lovell and Holland arms on their seals, the latter with a mullet as differencing in the first quarter.¹⁵² The seal-dies the Lovells used in this period are very

¹⁴⁵ In fact, this case is even more complicated, as the arms are related to his mother's second marriage; Richard Marks and Ann Payne, *British Heraldry. From its Origins to c. 1800* (London, 1978), p. 11.

¹⁴⁶ Thomas Willement, *Heraldic Notices of Canterbury Cathedral with Genealogical and Topographical Notes* (London, 1837), p. 101, n. y.

¹⁴⁷ see Chapter 2, p. 47.

¹⁴⁸ Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 253.

¹⁴⁹ Powell and Wallis, p. 437.

¹⁵⁰ W. de Birch, *Catalogue of Seals in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1894), vol. iii, p. 204.

¹⁵¹ This coat-of-arms was used by Thomas Willement to date a roll of arms from the time of Richard II. 'The only statement of which the editor is aware, calculated to create the opinion that the Roll was compiled subsequently to the year 1397, is that Lord Lovell and Holland is said to *quarter* the arms of Lovell'; Thomas Willement (ed.), *Rolls of Arms of the Reign of Richard the Second* (London, 1834), p. vi. What induced him to link the fact that John Lovell quartered his arms with Holland to the year 1397 unfortunately remains unsaid.

¹⁵² The seals of Maud Holland and three of her sons are attached to a charter confirming a land transaction, PRO E42/278.

finely executed. Particularly the matrices of Maud Lovell and Robert Lovell, but also John Lovell's, are exquisitely carved and include many small ornaments.¹⁵³ Like John Lovell, Maud used both families' names. The legend of her seal reads: 'sigillum : matildis : dne : lovel : et : de : holand.' Both her sons only used their father's name on their seals.¹⁵⁴ William Lovell III used both titles.¹⁵⁵ The lands and presumably connections which the marriage of John Lovell and Maud Holland brought into the family were important enough to be permanently remembered.

William Lovell III's marriage to Alice Deincourt, co-heiress of the Deincourt and Grey of Rotherfield baronies, brought another large estate into the family. William Lovell also included the arms of his wife in his own. On the quartered arms of Lovell and Holland, a scutcheon of pretence is placed with the quartered arms of Deincourt and Grey of Rotherfield.¹⁵⁶ The difference in design may indicate that the rule of placing the wife's arms on a scutcheon of pretence became more common in the fifteenth century; it may also indicate that William Lovell chose this form as both his and his wife's arms were quartered already. The rule to include the arms of a wife who was an heiress on a scutcheon of pretence was not yet binding, as for example John Smert, Garter king of arms (1450-78), quartered his arms with those of his wife, Katherine Bruges.¹⁵⁷

Even at the end of the fifteenth century the changing of arms was not strictly regulated. Francis Lovell's arms as depicted on his garter stall plate do not follow any rules now accepted. The shield is divided quarterly, 1) Lovell, 2) Deincourt, 3) Holland and 4) Grey of Rotherfield with a scutcheon of pretence of Burnell. This is one of the few occasions on which the Lovells included the Burnell arms in their combined arms.¹⁵⁸ The addition of these arms on a scutcheon is unusual. Probably the main reason for depicting the arms in this way was that it was the simplest way to combine five coats-of-arms.¹⁵⁹ The representative nature of the arms, each standing for a barony, is reinforced by the fact that Francis Lovell also listed all five titles on the stall plate.

This accumulation of arms and titles of the separate baronies inherited was by no means a convention followed by all aristocratic families. The de la Zouches of

¹⁵³ Maud Lovell's seal is on the cover of Roger H. Ellis, *Catalogue of Seals in the Public Record Office, Personal Seals*, vol. i (London, 1978).

¹⁵⁴ John Lovell's seal on PRO, E42/293 reads: 'sigillum · iohannis · domini · lovel.' Robert Lovell's on PRO, E 42/268: 'sigillu · robert · lovell.'

¹⁵⁵ PRO E210/11136.

¹⁵⁶ The Deincourt arms were: *azure, billey a fess dancetty or*; the Grey of Rotherfield arms were: *barry argent and azure, a bend gules*.

¹⁵⁷ Woodcock and Robinson, p. 123.

¹⁵⁸ see below, The Lovell-Morley dispute, p. 233.

¹⁵⁹ Quartering by uneven numbers is not usual, Woodcock and Robinson, p. 125.

Harringworth, for example, used only their original arms, *gules semy with bezants or, a quarter herime*,¹⁶⁰ though by the end of the fifteenth century they had also acquired the baronies of St. Maur and Lovel of Castle Cary.¹⁶¹ But particularly when the inherited estates were of greater value than the original lands of the family, the arms were generally added to the family's own. One famous example is the addition of the Hastings arms to those of Grey of Ruthin after the Greys inherited the Hastings' Earldom of Pembroke.¹⁶²

5.3.2. Heraldry as Decoration

Heraldic designs were used as decoration from the mid-thirteenth century onwards. The trend was started by Henry III, who had the nave of Westminster Abbey decorated with shields depicting the arms of the European monarchs and of the most important noble families of England.¹⁶³ The idea of using heraldic designs as decoration was probably derived from temporary tournament pavilions, which were usually decorated with the arms of those men who participated in the tournament. The fashion of decorating architecture with heraldry spread fast through the country. Not only did the nobility adorn their residences with heraldic emblems, but churches and monasteries also became places where the nobility and gentry could display their arms. Coats-of-arms were displayed not only in coloured glass windows, on walls and tombs, but also on banners given to the religious houses to commemorate the dead. Even the vestments the priests wore were embroidered with the arms of their patrons.

Medieval noblemen had several reasons for displaying their arms in prominent places. Obviously, the multi-coloured coats-of-arms were very decorative. Additionally, the arms were a symbol of the family and showed their presence and influence. The function of the decoration depended also on where the arms were displayed, whether they were decoration inside the family's residences or whether they were shown in a more public place, for example on the outside of their residence and in churches. Unfortunately, many of the shields which once decorated medieval churches have since been lost. This is especially true for the coats-of-arms displayed in the fragile glass windows.

From the heralds' visitations, which sometimes recorded coats-of-arms displayed in churches, we have some information about the armorial glass now lost. The Lovell arms

¹⁶⁰ Burke, p. 1153; these arms are a derivation of the arms of the de la Zouches of Ashby de la Zouche. However, it seem that the de la Zouches of Harringworth occasionally used the undifferenced arms, see below, p. 228.

¹⁶¹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. xii, II, pp. 945-46.

¹⁶² see below, p. 236.

¹⁶³ John Cherry, 'Heraldry as Decoration in the thirteenth century', in W.M. Ormrod, *England in the 13th Century. Proceedings of the 1989 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford, 1991), pp. 129-30.

were displayed in the windows in three churches in Oxfordshire, St. Mary's Church in Cogges, St. Bartholomew in Ducklington and St. Kenelm's Church in Minster Lovell itself. The glass in Minster Lovell was not in a good condition by the time the decorations were noted down in the seventeenth century. The window showed the Lovell arms quartered with the Holland arms.¹⁶⁴ The only other arms recorded are those of Edward the Confessor and St. Oswald, who have no known specific connection with the Lovell family. Given the unfortunately bad condition of the glass when the decorations were recorded, this meagre result is not surprising. In the other two churches additional, related arms were depicted alongside the Lovell arms. In Cogges the windows were decorated with thirteen shields of arms, most of which were destroyed during the Civil War, among them the Lovell arms and the arms of the Greys of Rotherfield.¹⁶⁵ Rotherfield, the *caput honoris* of the Grey of Rotherfield barony, is close to Cogges. It is possible, though unlikely, that the appearance of both coats-of-arms was caused by both families living close to the church. It seems more likely that both decorations were paid for by William Lovell after his marriage to Alice Deincourt and that other shields depicting the Holland and Deincourt arms were destroyed. The decoration of the lost glass of St. Bartholomew in Ducklington had an even clearer connection to the Lovells. Ducklington was one of the earliest acquisition of the Lovells. In the windows of the church three single shields once showed the Lovell, Holland and Deincourt arms.¹⁶⁶ The combination of these three arms certainly shows that the windows were commissioned after the marriage of William Lovell to Alice Deincourt and should be interpreted as a symbol of their influence in the area. The church in Ducklington also once held decorative bosses of the Lovell and Sydenham arms.¹⁶⁷ The beams of the rectory house in Ducklington were also decorated with shields emblazoned with the Deincourt and Grey of Rotherfield arms and 'heraldic emblems associated with the Sydenham and Holand families'.¹⁶⁸

Similarly, in Northamptonshire heraldic glass depicting the Lovell arms can still be found in some churches. In the parish church of Titchmarsh the arms of Francis Lovell were still visible in the seventeenth century.¹⁶⁹ The Lovell arms once decorated stained glass windows in St. Peter's, Lowick, and St. Mary's, Everdon. In the latter church another window existed depicting a kneeling figure with a shield of arms and the label

¹⁶⁴ Peter A. Newton, *The County of Oxford. A Catalogue of Medieval Stained Glass*, Corpus Vitraerum Medii Aevi, Great Britain 1 (London, 1978), p. 153.

¹⁶⁵ Newton, p. 70.

¹⁶⁶ Newton, p. 90.

¹⁶⁷ *VCH*, Oxfordshire, vol. xiii, p. 148.

¹⁶⁸ *ibid.*, p. 142.

¹⁶⁹ Richard Marks, *The Medieval Stained Glass of Northamptonshire*, Corpus Vitraerum Medii Aevi, Great Britain 4 (Oxford, 1998), p. 277.

'MONS: JOH: LOVEL'. As the Lovell arms in this church were impaled with the Holland arms, the figure certainly represented John VII.¹⁷⁰ In St. Katherine's Church, Irchester, the arch above the door and one of the buttresses are decorated with a variation of the Lovell arms, *barry nebuly and in chief an escallop*. A William Lovell, who might have been a son of William Lovell, the younger brother of John IV, had estates in Irchester.¹⁷¹ It seems likely that more decorations depicting the Lovell arms were destroyed before they could be recorded. Northamptonshire was one of the counties in which the Lovells had strong interests and it is clear that they wanted to symbolize their presence and influence with these decorations. It is particularly interesting that even Francis Lovell's arms can be found in Northamptonshire, although he had otherwise little connection with this county.

The Lovell arms also appear at sites some distance from the family's centres of power. In the cloister of Canterbury Cathedral, which was rebuilt between 1395 and 1414,¹⁷² a coat-of-arms showing the quartered arms of Lovell and Holland can be found.¹⁷³ The shields commemorate those families whose donations financed the building of the great cloister.¹⁷⁴ While Willement identifies the arms as those of John Lovell VIII,¹⁷⁵ it seems more likely that they were the arms of John Lovell VII, who unlike his son was a prominent courtier and more likely to contribute to this building project. Moreover, in the Chapter House of Canterbury Cathedral, a shield with the same coat-of-arms and the inscription 'Dns Johannes Lovell, et Matilde uxor eius'¹⁷⁶ clearly identifies the owner as John Lovell VII.

Though our knowledge of the use of heraldry to demonstrate the presence of the Lovell family is sadly defective, we do find the arms in close proximity to the Lovell residences and those of John Lovell VII, a man of national importance, in the most important cathedral of England. While in this case John VII could demonstrate that he belonged to the elite of the country, generally heraldic decorations were used to show the area of influence a family had. The fact that there is considerable evidence of decorations using both the Lovell arms as well as that of their wives in Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire, confirms that these were the central counties of the Lovell estates.

¹⁷⁰ *ibid.*, p. 127-29, 61.

¹⁷¹ *ibid.*, p. 109.

¹⁷² Francis Woodman, *The Architectural History of Canterbury Cathedral* (London, 1981), p. 164.

¹⁷³ Willement, *Heraldic Notices*, pp. 80; the arms are displayed in the west walk of the cloister, A.W.B. Messenger, *The Heraldry of Canterbury Cathedral*, vol. i, *The Great Cloister Vault* (Canterbury, 1947), p. 16.

¹⁷⁴ Margaret Babington, 'Foreword', in Messenger, p. 2.

¹⁷⁵ Messenger also identifies the arms as those of John Lovell VIII, Messenger, p. 98.

¹⁷⁶ Willement, *Heraldic Notices*, pp. 154-55.

5.3.3. The Lovell Lectionary (British Library, Harley 7026)

The Lovell Lectionary survives only as a fragment. It was discovered by Joseph Holland, who assumed it was commissioned by one of his ancestors.¹⁷⁷ Though the manuscript includes two genealogies, neither is contemporary with the main body of the book.¹⁷⁸ Neither indicates how Joseph Holland might have been related to the Lovells. The manuscript was re-assembled from fragments and some of the folios were bound in reverse (ff. 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 19). Of the original manuscript, 18 folios survive (not counting the first three, which are later additions) it also contains another two unrelated folios bound in at the back. The lectionary only contains a number of gospel readings for special holidays.¹⁷⁹ It was not, as Kathleen Scott suggested, a massive book of c. 1000 folios.¹⁸⁰ The book is extraordinary in every way: not only is the size of the folios quite large, but the text itself is unusual. John Lovell VII commissioned the manuscript for Salisbury Cathedral. It was illuminated by John Siferwas and at least two other painters.

The manuscript, even in its fragmentary and damaged form, is a marvellous example of late medieval craftsmanship. Indeed, the large presentation scene on f. 4d. is a unique picture (Figure 7).¹⁸¹ Both the size of a 'small panel painting', and the portrait-style, are singular for its time. The two figures shown on the picture are usually identified as John Lovell receiving the book from the illuminator John Siferwas. Recently Kathleen Scott has argued against this interpretation. According to her opinion the picture shows John Lovell VII handing the commissioned book to 'the abbot of the Benedictine house responsible for producing the Lectionary or as the one of the regular canons of Salisbury

¹⁷⁷ Kathleen L. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts. 1390 - 1490*, vol ii. Catalogue and Indexes (London, 1996), p. 61.

¹⁷⁸ K. Scott only mentions the shorter genealogy on f. 4; the ff. 2 and 3 on which a longer genealogy is painted is also a different material than the rest of the manuscript and seems to be of more modern date than the rest of the text. Surprisingly, Scott calls John Lovell VII, 'John Holand, Lord Lovel (d. 1408)'. As none of the direct descendants of John Lovell VII bore the surname 'Holand', it seems to me that Joseph Holand was actually not related to the Lovells.

¹⁷⁹ Janet Backhouse, 'Later Gothic Manuscripts 1390-1490 by Kathleen Scott (*A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles*, ed. J.J. Alexander, vol vi)' Review, p. 3. I am indebted to Richard Marks for lending me a manuscript copy of this review.

¹⁸⁰ Scott, p. 62.

¹⁸¹ 'Nothing in the previous century of English book illustration – or in contemporary 15th-century illustration – would prepare one for the magnificent introductory picture of Lord Lovell and the monk.' Scott, p. 62, see p. 224.



Figure 7:
 John Lovell VII and John Siferwas, Lovell Lectionary, from Kathleen L. Scott, *Later Gothic Manuscripts. 1390-1490* (London, 1996), vol. i, colour plate 7.
 (Original in Colour)

Cathedral'.¹⁸² Katherine Scott argues that the latter is unlikely as there are no precedents or imitations of presentation scenes in this style.¹⁸³ However, as the picture itself is unique, the argument loses some of its validity. The inscription on the lower frame (*ffrater Johes Sifer Was*) would definitely indicate that the second figure is indeed the illuminator. Janet Backhouse also argued that the traditional interpretation of the picture is correct because Siferwas is also shown in liturgical vestments in the Sherborne missal.¹⁸⁴ No doubt has been raised that the figure in a fur-collared red gown, wearing a black hat, represents John Lovell VII. The picture shows him as an elderly man with the pointed beard typical for this era. The inscription on a scroll wrapped around a column at the left explains the occasion for which the book was commissioned: *Orate pro anima domini iohannis louell qui hunc librum ordinavit ecclesie cathedrali Sarum pro speciali memoria sui & uxoris.*

Other illumination, in the book reinforce the apparent purpose of commemorating the union between John Lovell and Maud Holland. The miniatures depict repeatedly and in various forms the Lovell and Holland arms, on their own or combined with each other: f. 5, for example includes two shields of the Lovell arms quartered with Holland, a shield of these quartered arms impaled with the 'Salby' arms,¹⁸⁵ another shield with the Lovell arms quartered with the Holland arms impaling the Zouche arms. On the left border, a shield of the Lovell arms is surmounted by a helmet covered in mantling in the colours of the Lovell arms, surmounted by a coronet with a dog as its crest. The backdrop of this miniature is also of importance, being a dark-blue backdrop powdered with golden padlocks, the Sydenham badge. The padlock also appears in the centre of the bottom border. With some variations, the program of this page is repeated on the other similarly illuminated pages. On f. 8 a miniature in the text shows the quartered arms of Lovell and Holland supported by two angels. In the left border next to it, a dog is depicted wearing a helmet with a coronet and mantling in gold and blue, the Holland colours. The mantling itself bulges out over the head in a bizarre bump, apparently the Holland 'crest' as it is repeated in the other depictions. The dog sits above a golden padlock. The lower border of f. 10 has a shield of the Sydenham arms in the left corner. To its right are the Lovell arms with the helmet (with Lovell mantling, coronet and dog, as above), the quartered arms of Lovell and Holland surrounded by a Lancastrian SS-collar, the Holland arms

¹⁸² *ibid.*

¹⁸³ *ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ Backhouse, p. 3; Janet Backhouse also dismisses the description of the picture as a frontispiece, 'since it is very deliberately placed at the end of what was originally several pages of gospel readings', *ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ The only identification I have been able to make was with the Salborn family whose arms were *azure, three piles or*, Burke, p. 890.

surmounted by the Holland helmet. Unfortunately the shield on the right has been destroyed.¹⁸⁶

The illuminations clearly indicate the importance that John Lovell VII gave to his marriage to Maud Holland. The book shows all signs of celebrating and commemorating the union of the two houses of Lovell and Holland. Some references are made to earlier fortuitous marriages of the Lovell family: the inclusion of the Sydenham arms shows that the arms were regarded as of great importance to the family as well. Another interesting aspect is the depiction of the Lancastrian SS-collar, illustrating that John Lovell's support of Henry IV was perhaps more whole-hearted than might have been expected. The collar is painted in red and blue, colours that derive from the main colours of the Lovell and Holland coats-of-arms, red symbolizing the Lovells and blue the Hollands. Even the official badge of the house of Lancaster was thus appropriated to represent the two houses of Lovell and Holland.¹⁸⁷

John VII's decision to commission this extraordinary book corresponds with the unusual style of the castle he built in Wardour. Johannes Siferwas, the most important of the three illuminators of the manuscript, was one of the three artists who established International Gothic in English book illumination.¹⁸⁸ Siferwas was working in the south west of England, presumably Somerset.¹⁸⁹ Though the Lovells had some estates in this part of the country, there seem to have existed no closer ties to the counties of the south west. Perhaps they had been brought in contact with him through another patron of the illuminator.

5.3.4. The Heraldic Decoration of the Lovell Tomb, Minster Lovell

The place where heraldry was most openly used by the aristocracy to commemorate the noble lineage of their families was on their tombs. Soon after the development of 'true heraldry', shields painted with the family's coats-of-arms were used to decorate the sides

¹⁸⁶ The remaining pages are illuminated as follows: f. 6 is an exact copy of f. 5; f. 7d shows the Holland shield surmounted by a helmet with Holland mantling and crest in the left border and the quartered arms of Lovell and Holland in the centre of the lower border; f. 9 shows the quartered Lovell and Holland arms with a Lovell helmet floating above it, the dorse of this folio (originally the front) has a Holland helmet in the centre of the bottom border; f. 11 shows a shield of Lovell and Holland quartered; f. 13 the Sydenham arms. f. 14 doesn't have any heraldic designs, but the dog depicted in the left border might be interpreted as a reference to the Lovell crest; f. 17 shows a miniature of a padlock.

¹⁸⁷ Doris Fletcher, 'The Lancastrian Collar of Esses: its Origins and Transformation down the Centuries', in James. L. Gillespie (ed.), *The Age of Richard II* (Stroud, 1997), p. 195.

¹⁸⁸ Marks and Morgan, p. 25.

¹⁸⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

of tombs.¹⁹⁰ Often the tombs displayed a large number of arms, not only of the family itself but also of related families. Thomas Chaucer's tomb in Ewelme is decorated with twenty-four shields-of-arms, including not only the arms of Thomas Chaucer's mother, Philippa Roet, and those of his wife Maud Burghersh, but also the arms of his daughter's husbands and a number of high-ranking relatives, as for example Philippa's royal nieces and nephews, children of John of Gaunt and Katherine Swynford.¹⁹¹ The Chaucer tomb may include an unusual number of arms, but the depiction of coats-of-arms became a near integral part of tombs of the aristocracy.¹⁹²

Unfortunately only one Lovell tomb survives in St. Kenelm's Church in Minster Lovell.¹⁹³ The sides of the tomb are decorated with ten shields of arms. The paint of the shields was renewed when the tomb was restored in the nineteenth century, the restoration based on a visitation made by Richard Lee, Clarenceux King of Arms, in 1574. Since this first restoration more work seems to have been done on the shields on this tomb. In his discussion of the Lovell Tomb, Lamborn states that the restorers of the tomb must have consulted Richard Lee's report alone, which has, as Lamborn admits, 'comparatively few notes and most of those legible with difficulty.'¹⁹⁴ As there are more shields on the tomb than described by Lee, the restorers also included a coat-of-arms which belonged in fact to a different tomb.¹⁹⁵ However, the arms described by Lamborn as wrongly added to the canon of Lovell arms cannot be found on the tomb today.

Lee recorded only the decoration of six of the shields. However, since we have established the connections of the Lovell family it is possible to identify the six arms as follows. (The description is that of R. Lee, the identification of the arms mine.)

- 1) gules semy bezants or (Zouche of Harringworth)
- 2) barry tricked ar. and b. an undescribed bend (Grey of Rotherfield)
- 3) barry nebuly (Lovell) impaled with gules, three padlocks or (Sydenham)
- 4) azure, a lion rampant sable, crowned or (Burnell)
- 5) quartered, i) Lovell, ii) Sydenham, iii) Grey of Rotherfield, and iv) Zouche
- 6) quartered by six i) Lovell, ii) Deincourt, iii) Holland, iv) Grey of Rotherfield, v) Holland, and vi) divided per fess, in chief Sydenham, in base Zouche.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁰ For example on the tombs of Henry III and Eleanor of Castile, Paul Binsky, *Westminster Abbey and Representation of Power. 1200-1400* (New Haven and London, 1995), p. 110.

¹⁹¹ E.A. Greening Lamborn, 'The Arms on the Chaucer Tomb at Ewelme, with a note on the early medieval history of the parish', *Oxoniensia* 5 (1940), pp. 80-90.

¹⁹² Marks and Payne, p. 13.

¹⁹³ see above, p. 210, 236.

¹⁹⁴ Lamborn, 'Lovell Tomb', p. 14.

¹⁹⁵ 'an eagle in a flowered tressure on a field tricked b, with a crest, a sitting dog, above the shield,' which seems in fact belong to the tomb of John Vampage, Lamborn, 'Lovell Tomb', pp. 15-17.

¹⁹⁶ Lamborn, 'Lovell Tomb', p. 14 and plate 4.

The arms *gules semy bezants or* were originally the arms of the de la Zouches of Ashby de la Zouche: the arms of the de la Zouches of Haringworth were differenced by a *quarter hermine*. There was no reason for the Lovells to include the arms of the de la Zouches of Ashby de la Zouche among the decoration of this tomb. Either the arms were described incorrectly or the de la Zouches of Haringworth used the undifferenced arms after the extinction of the senior branch of the family.

In a later description, Richard Symonds recorded nine coats-of-arms on the tomb. His record mostly concurred with Lee's description. The first four arms can be identified with those described by Symonds on the south side of the tomb (Zouche, Grey of Rotherfield, Lovell impaling Sydenham and a blank shield), and the differences in his description of the shields on the north side can be explained by the increasingly faded paint. Symonds describes the first shield as quarterly i) and iv) Lovell, ii) three padlocks, and iii) two bars debruised by a bend. This may indeed be the same shield as described above as 5), with the last quarter wrongly interpreted as Lovell instead of Zouche. If the painting on the shields had further faded, the golden bezants/roundels on a red background might indeed have been mistaken for the Lovell arms.¹⁹⁷ Additionally, a shield with only the Sydenham arms is shown on the north side and a shield with the Lovell arms and one with the three padlocks of the Sydenhams decorated the west end of the tomb.¹⁹⁸

In its present state, the decoration of the Lovell tomb does follow Symonds's and Lee's descriptions; on the south side, the arms are 1) Burnell, 2) Lovell impaling Sydenham, 3) Grey of Rotherfield and 4) de la Zouche (Figure 8).¹⁹⁹ The west end is decorated with the Lovell arms and the padlocks of Sydenham. The north side has the following arms: 1) quartered, i) Lovell, ii) Sydenham, iii) Grey of Rotherfield, iv) de la Zouche, 2) and 3) quartered by six, i) Lovell, ii) Deincourt, iii) Holland, iv) Grey of Rotherfield, v) Burnell, vi) divided per fess in chief Sydenham, in base de la Zouche (Figure 8).²⁰⁰

Lamborn gives transcriptions of the two descriptions by Lee and Symonds, and uses them in his attempt to identify the person buried in the tomb. Unfortunately, he does not pay any specific attention to the arms themselves. He does not even identify most of the coats-of-arms, perhaps assuming that the reader would know their significance already.

¹⁹⁷ Similarly the second shield he describes as on the North side is described as quartered in six and is probably the one described above as 6). (i) Lovell, ii) Deincourt, iii) blank, iv) two bars and a bend, Grey of Rotherfield, v) blank, vi) same as i)). An additional shield showed the same design.

¹⁹⁸ Lamborn, 'Lovell Tomb', pp. 15-16.

¹⁹⁹ see below, p. 229.

²⁰⁰ see below, p. 230.

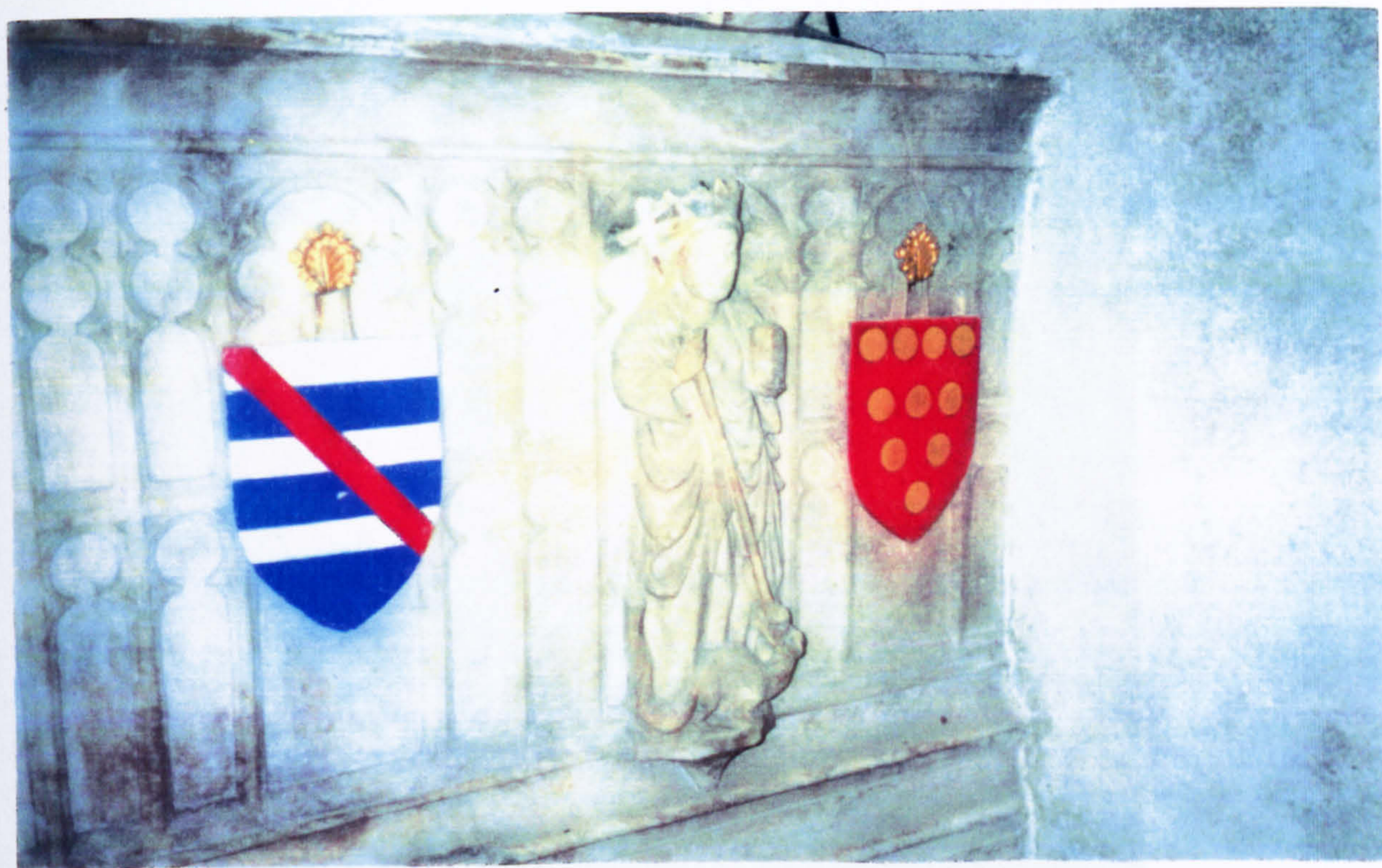


Figure 8:
Heraldic Decoration of Lovell Tomb, Author's photographs.
(Original in Colour)

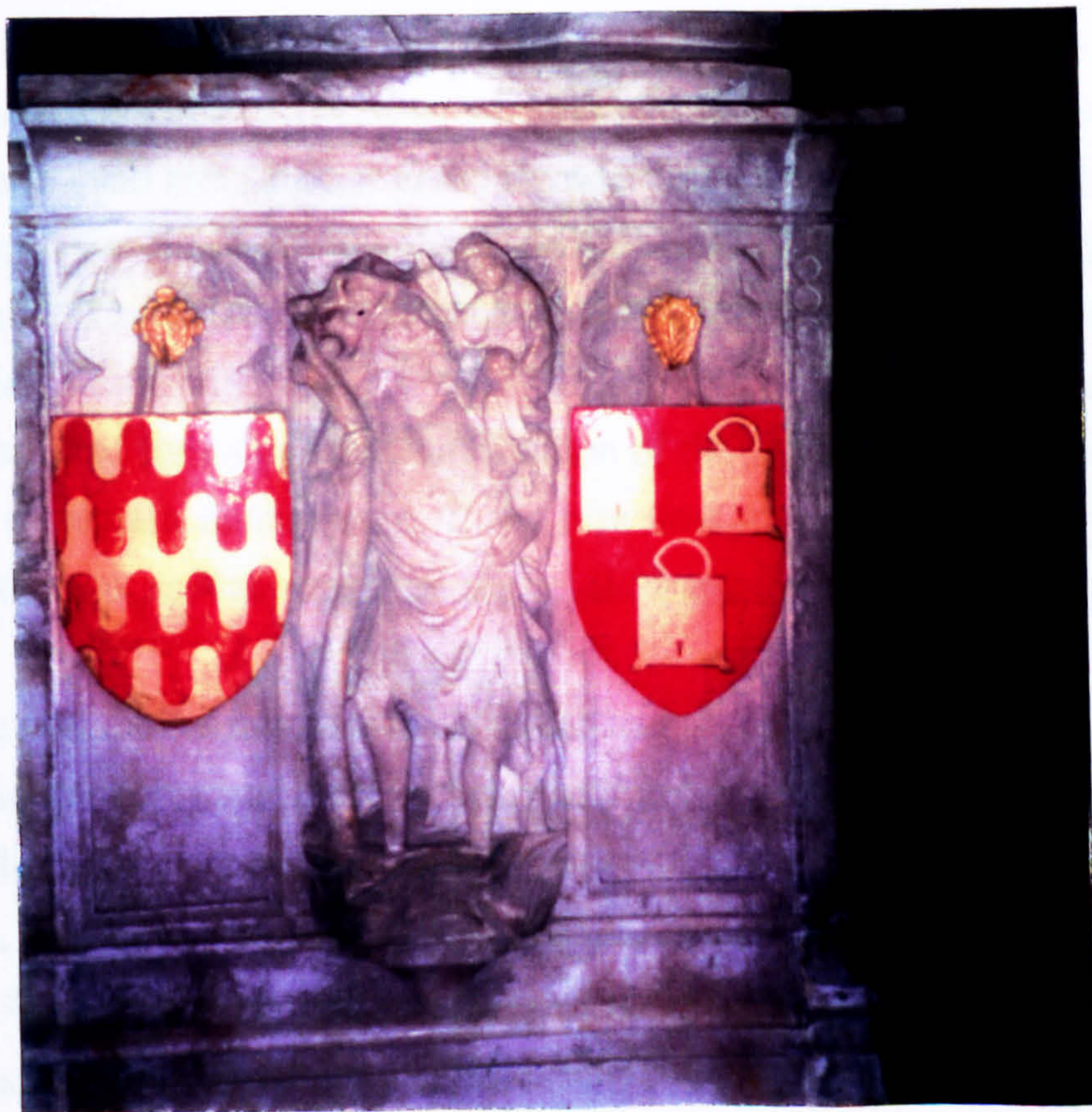
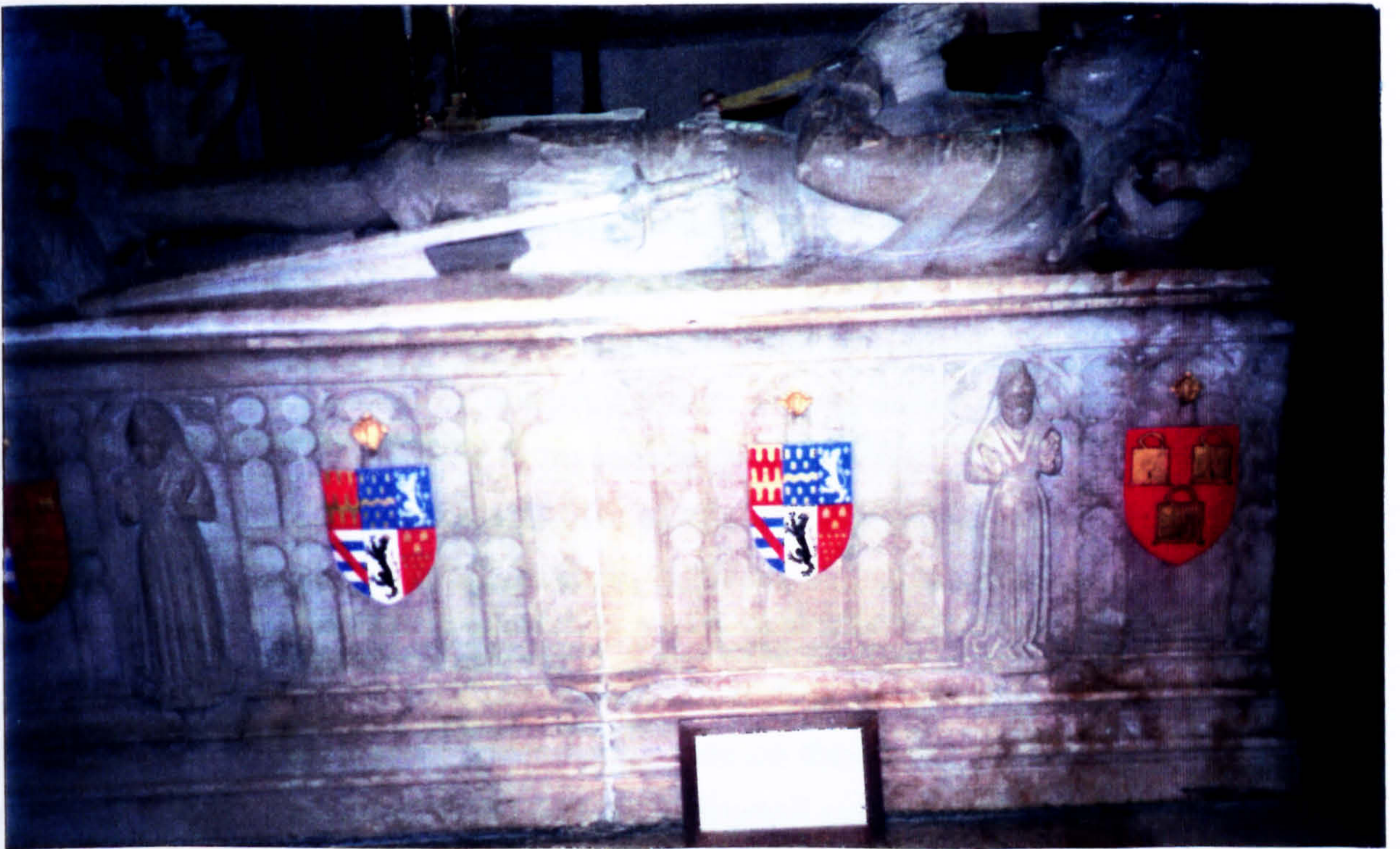


Figure 8:
Heraldic Decoration of Lovell Tomb, Author's photographs.
(Original in Colour)

Nor does he question why these arms were depicted on the tomb. Lamborn's main arguments against the knight depicted on the tomb being John Lovell IX is that the arms of the Beaumonts are not among those depicted on the tomb, though Joan Beaumont, wife of John Lovell IX, was the heiress of the Beaumont barony (which incorporated the Phelip and Bardolph baronies at this time).²⁰¹ At the time of John IX's death, his wife Joan Beaumont was only the heiress-apparent of the Beaumont barony, and her brother William was a young man of not even thirty. The absence of the Beaumont arms is therefore not surprising. There is no indication that either John Lovell IX or Francis Lovell ever used the Beaumont arms: for example on his garter stall plate Francis Lovell claims only the arms of Lovell, Burnell, Holland, Deincourt and Grey of Rotherfield. What is surprising is the prominent place the Sydenham arms are given on this tomb, they appear twice on their own, and are included in all four of the combined shields-of-arms. The Lovell arms themselves appear only once on their own, and in combination with others. While the Grey of Rotherfield and the Burnell arms are also once depicted on their own, the Burnell and the Deincourt arms appear only in the two identical shields incorporating all seven arms.

The program of heraldic decorations seems to be somewhat haphazard. In particular, the fact that the Lovell arms are not given the prominence one might expect is surprising. It would be too easy simply to disregard the entire programme as flawed. However, it shows that the modern decoration has to be regarded with some caution, particularly since even the earliest description did not record all the shields' colouring. The arms on the tomb cannot be used for a definite identification of the men resting in it. Ultimately, the question has to remain unanswered. If the now lost chantry in Oxford was William Lovell's burial place, as was suggested above, the tomb in Minster Lovell is John Lovell IX's.

Though the program of heraldry on the tomb cannot be used to identify whose tomb it is, it should not be completely disregarded as it resembles the one found in the Lovell Lectionary. The Sydenham arms recall this fortunate marriage between John II and Maud de Sydenham, and the use of the Zouche arms indicates the close connection between the two families.²⁰² The several combinations of the different arms show that the Lovell family itself never regarded its arms as something unchangeable. The incorporation of all seven arms in one shield is remarkable. The arms on the tomb, like the ones depicted in the Lovell Lectionary, reveal their decorative nature by the greater liberty in variation than those used in seals, for example. The commemoration of the family's history is definitely

²⁰¹ Lamborn, 'Lovell Tomb', p. 17.

²⁰² shown Chapter 3, p. 133-34.

the main aim of the heraldry on the Lovell tomb. Here, on this tomb, not in their continuous link with specific religious houses or their unbroken occupation of one place, we can see that the Lovells did indeed have a strong link with their past. Christine Carpenter's conclusion that 'Heraldry could indeed be regarded as the single most important source of memory of the lineage amongst the gentry' is also true for the nobility.²⁰³

Heraldry, as this chapter shows, played an important role in medieval society. As decorations, coats-of-arms were used to commemorate the past of the family. Arms of ancestors were used, even when no hereditary claim could be made to them. In the case of the Lovells, the use of the arms of the de la Zouches celebrates their continuous link to this baronial family. Indeed, heraldry was the main area in which the Lovells showed their sense of lineage. While they were not influenced in either their choice of burial places or their favourite residences by the preferences of their ancestors, the accumulation of arms indicates an intention nonetheless to commemorate a connection to them. Arms, however, could also be used to denote ownership, and in this function became increasingly identified with the estates the family held. From the early fifteenth century onwards, a family who inherited the lands of another family usually, though not inevitably, would adopt the family's coat-of-arms. The identification of arms with estates had in fact become very strong. The importance given to arms will also be discussed in the following section.

²⁰³ Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 253-54.

5.4. The Lovell-Morley Dispute

This dispute between John Lovell VII and Thomas Morley before the Court of Chivalry in 1386²⁰⁴ is one of only three cases of disputed arms of which extensive documentation has survived.²⁰⁵ This fact alone is enough to warrant a thorough discussion of this rare insight into medieval life. The dispute was also an important episode in John Lovell VII's life. This armorial dispute between two baronial families, the Lovells of Titchmarsh and the Morleys, about the right to bear the arms *argent, a lion rampant sable crowned and armed or*²⁰⁶ is an indication of the importance which aristocratic families gave to arms and the right to use them. Both families claimed the right to these arms by inheritance. Thomas Morley contended that the arms had been in his family since the Norman Conquest. John Lovell's case, however, was less straightforward: the arms were those of the Burnell family and John Lovell claimed them by right of inheritance from his grandmother Maud Burnell.²⁰⁷ As has been mentioned above, Maud Burnell settled most of her estates on her son from her second marriage with John Haudlo, Nicholas, who also adopted his mother's surname and coat-of-arms. Nicholas Burnell and Robert Morley had already confronted each other about the right to these arm during the siege of Calais in 1347. Forty years later, John Lovell claimed the Burnell arms as his own. It has to be stressed that the coat-of-arms in question was *not* the actual Lovell arms.

The complicated nature of John Lovell VII's claim gives this 'cause of arms' additional interest: why did John Lovell take up the question about a right to arms which his family did not use? The fact that John Lovell did claim the Burnell arms through his descent from Maud Burnell raises the question as to whether his right to these arms was all he wanted to claim, or whether he had a larger part of the Burnell inheritance in mind. Additionally, we have to ask why John Lovell VII brought the conflict to court at this particular time.

²⁰⁴ The depositions are all dated in between March and April 1386, even though the conflict itself lasted longer.

²⁰⁵ see below for a short discussion of the other two cases, p. 236.

²⁰⁶ For the sake of simplicity I will refer to these arms as the 'Burnell arms'.

²⁰⁷ see Appendix 2, Figure 6.

5.4.1. The Court of Chivalry

5.4.1.1. The Origins of the Court of Chivalry

The development of the Court of Chivalry has already been addressed briefly in the previous chapter in connection with John Lovell's participation in commissions of appeal against decisions taken at the Court of Chivalry and the Court of Admiralty.²⁰⁸ Though a detailed discussion about the origins of this Court is outside the scope of this thesis, it is necessary to mention a few aspects of it. The first dispute about the right to the Burnell arms broke out at the time of the Court's emergence. The confrontation between Nicholas Burnell and Robert Morley during the siege of Calais is seen as a crucial indicator of the development of the Court up to this point, though the significance of the events is interpreted differently by historians.

Squibb's investigation of the origins of the Court of Chivalry sees the Court as a commission delegated to deal with problems, which up to this point had fallen under the jurisdiction of the king's council. The development of the Court of Chivalry ran parallel with that of the Court of Admiralty and took place at approximately the same time.²⁰⁹ After the emergence of the Court of Chivalry, Squibb claims, it had the exclusive right to judge cases falling under its jurisdiction.²¹⁰ Maurice Keen on the other hand believes that the Court of Chivalry evolved from the traditional responsibilities the constable and marshal occupied in any army. The main difference between the jurisdiction of any army's marshal or constable and the Court of Chivalry was not that the latter acquired the exclusive right to deal with the problems arising during war, but that it was the only permanent court dealing with these problems.²¹¹ The different definitions see the clash between Nicholas Burnell and Robert Morley at Calais either as proof that in 1347 the Court of Chivalry did not yet exist²¹² or that it did.²¹³ There are, however, cases which under Squibb's theory should have fallen under the jurisdiction of the Court of Chivalry and were tried by the constables and marshals of armies well after the Court was established. This indicates that the Court did not acquire the exclusive right to try these

²⁰⁸ see Chapter 4, pp. 159-60.

²⁰⁹ Squibb, pp. 12-13.

²¹⁰ Squibb, p. 14.

²¹¹ Keen, 'Jurisdiction and Origins', p. 164.

²¹² Squibb, pp. 14-15.

²¹³ Keen, 'Jurisdiction and Origins', pp. 166-67.

cases.²¹⁴

The evidence of the depositions in the Lovell-Morley dispute seems to indicate that the Court of Chivalry already existed in 1347: Richard Pippleton, one of the deponents of the trial before the Court of Chivalry in 1386, stated that Edward III decided that the quarrel between Nicholas Burnell and Robert Morley should be tried before the Court of Chivalry.²¹⁵ Keen mentions another deponent, John Molham, who declared that he was the clerk to the Court of Chivalry during the proceedings at Calais.²¹⁶ He derives this information from a seventeenth-century copy of the depositions at the College of Arms. It seems that this part of the depositions is lost in the copy held at the Public Record Office. That the Court of Chivalry did not become the only court where armorial cases were heard is also shown by another story repeated by one of the deponents: John Pykerte, who spoke in favour of Thomas Morley, remembered an occasion when, during the Black Prince's campaign to Spain in 1367, Thomas Davevill challenged the right of Thomas's brother John Morley to bear these arms. The dispute was solved by John Chandos and Guichard de Angle, constable and marshall of the army, in favour of John Morley.²¹⁷

The Court of Chivalry not only dealt with the question of disputed arms, but 'enjoyed a wide and important jurisdiction',²¹⁸ dealing with all conflicts arising during campaigns or which were immediately caused by such campaigns. Nearly all the medieval records of the Court are lost, but it is possible to obtain an idea of the scope and variety of the work of the Court with the help of other sources, for example the appointments of commissions to deal with appeals against decisions taken at the Court of Chivalry enrolled in the Chancery Rolls. The Court of Chivalry dealt with breaches of safe-conduct, rights to prisoners taken during foreign wars and the disputes of ransom between several claimants.²¹⁹

²¹⁴ In 1417, for example Thomas, Duke of Clarence, constable of the army, dealt with a breach of safe-conduct in an assembly which is even given the same Latin title as the Court of Chivalry; Keen, 'Jurisdiction and Origins'; As Keen points out, Squibb's main research was the function of the Court of Chivalry in the seventeenth century and many medieval cases were only discovered in recent years, *ibid.*, p. 161.

²¹⁵ 'et pendant sur les avantdites armes en la *courte de chivalre* prepentre mons. Nichol. de Burnell de lune parte et mons Robt. de Morley dautre parte' [italics mine], PRO30/26/69, no. 171.

²¹⁶ Keen, 'Jurisdiction and Origins', p. 167.

²¹⁷ C47/6/1, no. 35; The same story is related by John de Rothyng, *ibid.*, no. 32.

²¹⁸ Keen, 'Jurisdiction and Origins', p. 159.

²¹⁹ Keen, 'Jurisdiction and Origins', p. 162; A fragmentary roll covering the proceedings of the case of the disputed ransom for the capture Count of Denia was found in the archives of Westminster Abbey and was edited by A. Rogers. He also reconstructs the development of the case from other records; the case lasted more than forty years, but only five are covered by the roll; A. Rogers, 'Hoton versus Shakell: A Ransom Case in the Court of Chivalry, 1390-5', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 6 (1962), 74-108, 7

5.4.1.2. *The Scrope-Grosvenor Controversy and the Grey-Hastings Trial*

In addition to the Lovell-Morley dispute, the records of two other armorial cases have been preserved. The most famous of all three is undoubtedly the controversy between Richard, Lord Scrope of Bolton, and Sir Robert Grosvenor.²²⁰ The documents relating to this controversy were edited in the nineteenth century by Nicholas H. Nicolas, who accompanied the original depositions with a second volume including short biographies of the deponents in favour of Richard Scrope.²²¹ A third volume with biographies of the Grosvenor deponents was never finished.²²² The depositions include descriptions of where the rival claimants had been seen using these arms and where on secular buildings, in churches and on tombs these arms could be found. Comparing the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy with the Lovell-Morley dispute and the Grey-Hastings trial, two aspects of the dispute are unusual. For one, the great difference in status between the rather obscure Cheshire knight Sir Robert Grosvenor and the influential courtier Richard Lord Scrope of Bolton, who had been steward of the royal household, chancellor and treasurer, is striking.²²³ Secondly, the fact that the question of the right to the disputed arms seems to have been the only reason why this law-suit was initiated. As will become clear in the discussion below, this was the exception rather than the rule, as in both other cases the dispute about the right to bear certain arms was closely linked to the question of the rights to estates.

Less famous than the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy is the case of Grey versus Hastings in 1409. This case took place later than both the Lovell-Morley dispute and the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy, both of which had their origins Richard II's Scottish campaign in 1385. Parts of the documents of the Grey-Hastings trial were edited in the early nineteenth century.²²⁴ In contrast to the controversy between Richard Scrope and Robert Grosvenor, the disputed arms, *or, a manche gules*, had not been independently adopted by two families, but were claimed by Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin, and Sir

(1963), 53-78.

²²⁰ To give just two examples, Woodcock and Robinson write that 'the medieval cases in the Court of Chivalry, of which the best known is that of *Scrope v. Grosvenor*', Woodcock and Robinson, p. 34. 'But perhaps the chivalric tone and martial pride of genteel society comes across best of all in the depositions of the witnesses in the Scrope and Grosvenor dispute of 1386', Maurice Keen, *English Society in the Later Middle Ages. 1348-1500* (Harmondsworth, 1990), p. 143.

²²¹ *The Controversy between Sir Richard Scrope and Sir Robert Grosvenor in the Court of Chivalry. AD. 1385-1390*, Nicholas Harris Nicolas (ed.) (London, 1832), 2 vols.

²²² R. Stewart-Brown, 'The Scrope and Grosvenor Controversy, 1385-1391', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 89 (1938 for 1937), p. 2.

²²³ *Handbook of British Chronology*, pp. 77, 86-87, 105.

²²⁴ *An Account of the Controversy between Reginald Lord Grey of Ruthyn and Sir Edward Hastings*, C.G. Young (ed.) (London, 1841) [cited after Keen, 'Constable's Court', p. 161, n. 14].

Edward Hastings as part of the inheritance of John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke, who had died without heirs in 1389.²²⁵ Initially, there had been several claimants for the lands and title of the Earl. The main part of the estates were inherited by Reginald Grey, who used some of the inheritance to pay off a rival claimant, William Beauchamp.²²⁶

The law-suit was started by Reginald, Lord Grey, when another possible heir of the Earl of Pembroke, Sir Edward Hastings, appeared bearing the undifferenced Hastings arms. The case must be seen to be closely linked to the general question of who was the right heir of the Earl of Pembroke.²²⁷ The arms were awarded to Reginald, Lord Grey of Ruthin, in 1409 and Edward Hastings was sentenced to pay the costs of the trial. Hastings appealed but was arrested as a debtor in 1416 and kept imprisoned for nearly twenty years.²²⁸ The case and its results show clearly how the involvement of a suit at the Court of Chivalry could have far more serious effects on the fortunes and lives of the participants than just the loss of the rights to the disputed arms.

5.4.1.3. The Use of the Depositions of the Armorial Cases

The depositions of the three cases of which substantial documentation exist allow an unusual insight in the lives of the medieval aristocracy. Though the depositions were most certainly not written down *verbatim* and their content is highly topical, the testimony is still a rare example of the original and more or less unmediated 'voice' of medieval noblemen. All three cases have been discussed for different reasons and from different angles. Perhaps the original approach was obviously the question discussed in the cases themselves, the use of heraldry in the later middle ages.²²⁹ As has already become clear in the preceding discussion, these proceedings have also been used by those historians who have examined the origins and functions of the Court of Chivalry.

Another approach is to focus not on the case itself but on the men who were questioned at these occasions. These men reveal many details about their own military experience in their recounting of where and when they had seen the arms in question. As many of the deponents are of a relatively low status, they would otherwise be unknown to us. This aspect has for example been the focus of the essays discussing the Grey-

²²⁵ R.I Jack, 'Entail and Descent: The Hastings Inheritance, 1370-1436', *BIHR* 38 (1965), p. 1.

²²⁶ For a description of the complicated family relations and other claimants to the estates see, Jack, 'Entail and Descent', 1-11.

²²⁷ see also Keen, 'English Military Experience', pp. 125-127.

²²⁸ Jack, 'Entail and Descent', p. 15.

²²⁹ 'The accounts of the proceedings of these three armorial cases are obviously of enormous interest to anyone concerned with the history of heraldry', Keen, 'English Military Experience', p. 123.

Hastings trial²³⁰ and the Lovell-Morley dispute.²³¹ Michael Bennett has used the material of the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy to illustrate the military experience of Cheshire society.²³²

The question of the use of memory has been addressed, and though it has been only briefly touched upon in recent studies, it is an fascinating aspect of these proceedings. Even though the written record had replaced memory by the end of the thirteenth century,²³³ in these proceedings the main source of information was still the testimony of witnesses. The commission had to rely on the memory of the deponents to recapitulate the events in which the arms had been used before and to date monuments, tombs or pictures showing the disputed arms. The trials at the Court of Chivalry, like the proofs of age discussed by Sue Sheridan Walker,²³⁴ are a mixture of the older, oral tradition and the more 'modern' trend towards written records. While the depositions, the gathering of information, more or less solely relied on the memory of the men questioned, the proceedings were then written down and recorded.

We know from other sources that the Scrope-Grosvenor Controversy, the Grey-Hastings Trial and the Lovell-Morley Dispute were not the only cases in which the use of particular arms were disputed. They are, however, the only three examples where a substantial part of the depositions have been preserved. Other cases include the case *Warbeltone versus George* over the arms *lozengy or and azure*,²³⁵ the case of *Aton versus Boynton* over *or, a cross sable surmounted by five bulls' heads argent*²³⁶ or *FitzAlan versus Poyntz* during the siege of Carlaeverock over the arms *barry or and gules*.²³⁷ It is usually argued that these cases indicate how important the right to bear certain arms was for the medieval nobleman. A typical statement about the importance of armorial bearings held in the fourteenth century is given by Brigitte Vale in her thesis on the Scrope family: 'The importance of visual symbols denoting ownership and rank in a non-literate society is something which may now be hard to appreciate.'²³⁸ Similar

²³⁰ Keen, 'English Military Experience', pp. 123-142.

²³¹ Ayton, pp. 81-104.

²³² Michael Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism. Cheshire and Lancashire Society in the Age of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Cambridge, 1983).

²³³ Clanchy, p. 1-3.

²³⁴ Sue Sheridan Walker, 'Proof of Age of Feudal Heirs', *Mediaeval Studies* 35 (1973), 306-323.

²³⁵ Squibb, pp. 14-15.

²³⁶ A.S. Ellis, 'On the Arms of de Aton', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 12 (1893), 263-266.

²³⁷ Wagner, pp. 18-19.

²³⁸ Vale, vol. i, p. 96.

opinions can be read far and wide in the secondary literature.²³⁹ An attack on the right to bear arms is equated with an attack on the status of the person bearing them. Richard Scrope's statement about the importance of arms supports this argument: 'the highest and most sovereign things a knight ought to guard in defence of his estate are his troth and his arms'.²⁴⁰ It seems that the right to bear arms was important enough for the medieval nobleman to start an expensive law-suit and risk prison and poverty to prove his right.

5.4.2. The Lovell-Morley Dispute

5.4.2.1. *The Rolls*

The depositions of the Lovell-Morley dispute are recorded on two parchment rolls. Both are now in the Public Record Office in London. While the roll with the depositions for Thomas Morley²⁴¹ has been in the care of the Public Record Office for a considerable time, the roll with depositions for John Lovell VII²⁴² was only given to the Public Record Office in 1928.²⁴³ Neither of the rolls is a record of the original court proceedings, but they are nearly contemporary records and were compiled shortly afterwards for the case of appeal.²⁴⁴ There seem to be a number of later compilations of the information contained in the rolls: Keen mentions one in a footnote as being in the College of Arms;²⁴⁵ another is in the British Library;²⁴⁶ and there is mention of another compilation in a short article in *Notes and Queries*.²⁴⁷ The number of later abbreviated copies of the rolls shows that the Lovell-Morley dispute was well known at the time these records were made. However, none of them seems to include the outcome of the trial.

Neither of the medieval rolls in the Public Record Office is complete and it is uncertain how much of either roll is lost. The roll containing the Lovell depositions seems to be

²³⁹ 'These disputes were pursued with the utmost vigour and determination because armorial bearings were at the heart of the aristocrat's sense of identity, at once marks of social status and symbols of family honour.' Ayton, p. 83.

²⁴⁰ CCR, 1389-1391, p. 518.

²⁴¹ C47/6/1.

²⁴² PRO30/26/69.

²⁴³ Ayton, p. 100, n. 30.

²⁴⁴ Ayton, p. 85.

²⁴⁵ Coll. of Arms, *Processus in Curia Marescalli*, ii, quoted from Keen, 'Jurisdiction and Origins', p. 167, n. 44.

²⁴⁶ British Library Add. Ms. 25.247. The manuscript is curiously listed as 'Lovel, John 5th baron, Duel with Lord Morley, 1395' in the finding aids. The manuscript itself is entitled 'The Manner of proceedings in a case of Armes between John Lord Lovell and Thomas Lord Morley before the Constable and Marshall Anno 1395'.

²⁴⁷ F.P. Barnard, 'Lovel and Morley Case about Arms', in *Notes and Queries for Readers and Writers, Collectors and Librarians* 79 (1928), 219-227.

more damaged than the Morley roll.²⁴⁸ The writing on the first membrane of the Lovell roll has faded badly and is hardly legible. The depositions on the Lovell roll start with the number 157; those on the Morley roll end with deposition 152. A number of depositions of the Morley roll are missing.²⁴⁹ As more than five depositions are missing, it is impossible that both rolls were counted continuously. On the Lovell roll the depositions 191 to 200 are missing. The Morley depositions are also not complete and start with number 5.²⁵⁰ A particularly unfortunate fact is that many of the deponants refer to the deposition of an earlier deponant, Esmon de Reynham, whose deposition must have been among the first four. Nearly all the deponants from the first surviving one of William Sutton to William Kyng, the 96th witness, stated that they agree with what Esmon de Reynham had reported.²⁵¹ Esmon de Reynham seems to have been a key witness and it is particularly unfortunate that his deposition is lost.

Though the Court of Chivalry, as a prerogative court, did not keep any organised records, it is still surprising that no information about the outcome of the case has survived. In the other two cases, the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy and the Grey-Hastings trial, the result can be discovered from other records.²⁵² However, despite these drawbacks, the depositions themselves are very useful for research the use of arms, military experience and memory, and additionally raise the question why the dispute was brought to trial.

5.4.2.2. *The Case of Lovell versus Morley*

The conflict brought to the Court of Chivalry erupted during Richard II's campaign into Scotland in 1385, the same campaign during which the more famous Scrope-Grosvenor controversy started.²⁵³ John Lovell VII challenged the right of Robert Morley to bear the arms *argent, a lion rampant sable crowned and armed or*.²⁵⁴ The conflict (and therefore a great part of the depositions in the proceedings) was a repetition of a similar confrontation between Nicholas Burnell and Robert Morley during the siege of Calais in 1347.

²⁴⁸ Ayton, p. 86.

²⁴⁹ Ayton, p. 100, n. 32.

²⁵⁰ The roll is also rolled up backwards.

²⁵¹ C47/6/1, nos. 5 to 96.

²⁵² At least I have found no reference to any result.

²⁵³ Nicolas, *Controversy*, vol. ii, pp. 26-27; Vale, vol. i, p. 95; 'Armorial disputes before the Court of Chivalry were fairly common during the mid- to late fourteenth century, probably because the mobilization of contract armies brought together, from all over England, an armigerous community whose ranks were now swelled by the inclusion of esquires', Ayton, p. 84.

²⁵⁴ PRO30/26/69, nos. 225, 226, 227 and more.

Unfortunately, since no independent records of this conflict have survived, the only information we have about this dispute must be derived from the depositions in the Lovell-Morley dispositions alone. Already in 1386, there seemed to be no records extant of the proceedings at Calais itself, as during the renewed controversy, the events of 1347 had to be reconstructed by questioning men who had participated in the siege or had heard about the conflict.²⁵⁵

It seems that the conflict between Lord Burnell and Lord Morley broke out earlier in the campaign at or before the battle of Crécy,²⁵⁶ but the solution was postponed till the campaign reached a quieter phase during the actual (and prolonged) siege of Calais. Some of the deponents state that Edward III feared that unrest would threaten the campaign if more conflicts like the Burnell-Morley clash should erupt.²⁵⁷ He commissioned the Earl of Northampton, as Earl Marshall, and the Earl of Lincoln, as Constable, to solve the conflict. In (presumably) several sessions in the Church of St. Pierre near Calais both sides had the chance to establish their claim. The way in which the conflict was dealt with was unfortunately not mentioned by the deponents of the Lovell-Morley dispute. We can only assume that, as in the later proceedings the men present, were asked which family, as far as they were aware, had used the arms for the longest. The proceedings were followed with interest by those present. Thomas Blount remembered that, as had been wounded earlier in the campaign and therefore could not himself be at the Church of St. Pierre, his friend Thomas West told him about the proceedings.²⁵⁸

However, despite the interest shown and the fact that a large number of important noblemen were present,²⁵⁹ the outcome of the conflict seems to have been 'forgotten' by 1386. The verdict given in 1347 was reported completely differently by the two parties just forty years later. The deponents for Thomas Morley insisted with determination that the arms were awarded to Robert Morley, grandfather of Thomas Morley. The Lovell deponents affirmed that the arms were granted to Nicholas Burnell, John Lovell VII's uncle, though Robert Morley was granted the right to bear the arms for the term of his life.²⁶⁰ The reconstruction of the proceedings at Calais was an integral part of the trial in

²⁵⁵ Wagner, p. 22.

²⁵⁶ for example William Moryb, PRO30/26/69, no. 175.

²⁵⁷ PRO30/26/69, nos. 164; Thomas Blount, *ibid.*, no 176; Robert Trolley, *ibid.*, no. 183.

²⁵⁸ PRO30/26/69, no. 176.

²⁵⁹ for example, Henry, Earl of Lancaster, Ralph Mowbray, Richard d'Amory, John Sully, John Chelveston, William de Clinton, the Earl of Pembroke, the Earl of Arundel and many more.

²⁶⁰ 'ces avantditz conestable et mareshall de volunte et comaundemet le Roy lez avantditz armes en leglise de seint suisdites adiuger per la manere et fame qe sensuit cestassavoir qe le dit mons. Robt. de Morley pro sa grand proveesse et honour quil avait fait avec ditz armes es diversez guerres et batalles morelx en ycell armes longement travaillant mesmes les armes al terme de sa vie tansoulement portuit les meires et cousines du dit mons Robt des armes avantdit le de lapportacon dicelles perpetuelment

1386. With few exceptions the deponents mentioned the conflict at Calais, not only those, who like John Breke and William Porter had actually been present,²⁶¹ but also a large number of men who were too young to have been present, as for example Oliver de Mendham, a supporter of Thomas Morley, who claimed to be eighteen in 1386.²⁶² Many of the supporters of Thomas Morley in particular only stated that they had heard about the events at Calais.²⁶³

The Court proceedings did not centre solely around the question of what happened at Calais. As in the Grey-Hastings trial and the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy, a number of different places were visited in which the arms were publicly displayed. The questions asked differ for the deponents in favour of John Lovell, from those in favour of Thomas Morley. On the Morley roll the questions are found in a separate section, while those for the deponents for John Lovell can only be reconstructed from the depositions themselves.

Table of Questions: (paraphrased from the Rolls)

D) The Question asked of the Lovell deponents

[The deponents refer to 'the first matter' etc These were however, not the only question asked. The numbering of the matters addressed is retained with the additional questions added where they appear in the dispositions.]

Name, age and status

Were they related or had other links with the man they spoke for?

1) Who has the right to bear these arms?

2) Did Thomas or his ancestors bear these arms in the presence of John Lovell or his ancestors or the other way round?

3) What information could the deponent give about the Burnells and the ancestors of John Lovell?

4) Did John Lovell or any of his ancestors challenge the Morleys for bearing these arms?

5) Was Philip Burnell an ancestor of John Lovell?

6) Did the Lords Burnell not have any rightful heirs?

7) Was John Lovell bearing the cost of the trial?

Did John Lovell use the disputed arms?

Was the judgement of Calais enforced?

Where had they seen the arms publicly displayed?

Would the greater part of the people agree with the judgement given?

Was there anything else they wanted to say ?

forbarres et excluses issuit qe apres se deceisse du sellui Robt. de Morley les avantdites armes a verroies et droit heires des Ss. de Burnell sans cleyem ou chalange des heires et cousins de mesme cellui mons. Robt. retournerent.' PRO30/26/69, no. 164.

²⁶¹ PRO30/26/69, nos. 164 and 168. Both mention that they have *seen* Nicholas Burnell challenge Robert Morley. Ayton claims that only five of the Lovell deponents had been in Calais, Ayton, p. 101, n. 54. A substantially larger number of the deponents claim to have been at Calais, many stating that they have seen the challenge.

²⁶² C47/6/1, no. 26.

²⁶³ William Werdebeck, C47/6/1, no. 93; John Pagne, *ibid.*, no. 81; John Strange, *ibid.*, no. 46 and more.

II) The Question asked of the Morley deponents

- 1) Name, age and status
- 2) Were they knights, barons or something else or esquire?
- 3) When did they go to war with the king or somebody else?
- 4) Were they vassals, feoffees, men or cousins of Thomas Morley?
- 5) How long did they know Thomas Morley and his ancestors?
- 6) Did they come on their own will or on the counsel of Thomas?
- 7) Could they declare that Thomas and his ancestors had worn the arms '*dargent a one une leon rampant de sable corone et anarme dore*'?
- 8) Did they know how the ancestors of the said Thomas got these arms?
- 9) Did Thomas and his ancestors wear it and where Thomas was most widely known?
- 10) Where and in the company of whom did Thomas and his ancestors bear these arms?
- 11) What did they know about the Calais incident with Nicholas Burnell?
- 12) Who was present as this judgment was given?
- 13) When was the judgment given?
- 14) Did Nicholas Burnell bear these arms after the judgment in the presence of the king or others?

It seems that the Lovell deponents were not all given exactly the same questions. All the deponents were asked which family had the right to the arms, whether they were related to the man they spoke for or whether they were his vassals, where and when they had seen men bearing the disputed arms and whether they knew if the right to these arms had been challenged before. Often only a few of the questions were answered. For example, to the question put before the Lovell deponents as to whether the judgement of Calais was enforced subsequently, all stated that they knew nothing of the matter. The prominence of the conflict between Nicholas Burnell and Robert Morley during the siege of Calais is immediately noticeable and not surprising, as the Lovell-Morley dispute was effectively only a repetition of the former confrontation.

5.4.2.3. Who had the right to the arms?

Obviously it is impossible today to determine a question that could as far as we know not be solved in the fourteenth century. The main source of information, the memory of the people questioned, is lost. However, we have access to documentation that would probably have been inaccessible to a fourteenth-century commission. The rolls of arms, revealing detailed information about the ownership of arms, were privately owned and not used as evidence in the dispute about arms.²⁶⁴ With the help of the rolls, a tentative answer to the question of which of the two families had the better claim to the disputed arms can be found.

²⁶⁴ N. Denhelm-Young, *History and Heraldry 1254 to 1310. A Study of the Historical Value of the Rolls of Arms* (Oxford, 1965), p. 3.

As has been discussed above,²⁶⁵ the use of these arms cannot be traced back further than the middle of the thirteenth century. The Rolls of Arms of the time of Edward I reveal that the Burnells did use several variations of the arms *argent, a lion sable*. Philip Burnell, father of Edward and Maud Burnell, is known to have used the arms *argent, a lion rampant sable surmounted by a bend gules* (Herald's Roll, c. 1279); *argent, a lion rampant sable, on a bend gules three escallops or* (St. George's Roll, c. 1285); *argent, a lion rampant sable, on a bend gules three escallops argent* (Charles' Roll, c. 1285); his son, Edward Burnell is noted to have used the arms *argent, a lion rampant crowned or* (Parliamentary roll, 1312).²⁶⁶ William Morley, father of Robert Morley, according to the Rolls of Arms used the arms *argent, a lion rampant with a forked tail sable crowned or* (Segar's Roll, c. 1285) or *argent, a lion rampant with a forked tail sable* (Falkirk Roll, 1298). Robert Morley's arms are depicted as identical to his father's in the Parliamentary Roll (1312), while the Boroughbridge Roll (1322) shows *argent, a lion rampant sable crowned or*.²⁶⁷ According to the Rolls of Arms, it seems that the Burnells had used the arms longer than the Morleys.

As has been discussed earlier, the use of arms was not yet regulated and men often varied the arms depending on their use, particularly in minor details.²⁶⁸ None of the above-named arms shows the lion as being *armed*, but during the Lovell-Morley dispute all the deponents described the lion in the coat-of-arms as 'curone et enarme dor'.²⁶⁹ However, this more likely reflects the fact that these were the arms under dispute than any concrete memory of the arms used at the instances mentioned in the depositions.

Other evidence apart from the depositions recorded on the rolls indicates that the verdict on the confrontation between Nicholas Burnell and Robert Morley at Calais was in favour of Robert Morley. In a roll of arms which has been dated between 1392 and 1397, Thomas Morley is given the undifferenced arms, while Hugh Burnell's arms are given as *argent, a lion rampant, crowned or a bordure azure*.²⁷⁰ However, if the arms were granted to Robert Morley and the Burnells were using the differenced arms, it is surprising that John Lovell was able to challenge Thomas Morley's right to these arms at all. Was the differencing through a *bordure azure* perhaps the result of the Lovell-Morley

²⁶⁵ see above, p. 215.

²⁶⁶ Brault, vol ii, p. 86. There were several other Burnells using these or similar arms but whose relationship with these Burnell's is unknown, *ibid.*

²⁶⁷ *ibid.*, p. 304.

²⁶⁸ see above, p. 216.

²⁶⁹ The first question put to each of the Lovell deponents were asked who has the right 'de poerter armes dargent one une lion rampant de sable corone et enarme dor', e.g. Moritz Bruy, PRO30/26/69, no. 221.

²⁷⁰ Willement, *Rolls of Arms*, pp. 8-9 (370-71).

dispute? If John Lovell had lost the case and was ordered to difference his arms, Hugh Burnell would presumably have to use the differenced arms as well.

In the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy the original verdict given was that Robert Grosvenor had to add the differencing of a plain silver border to the disputed arms. This decision was overturned in the appeal, as differencing by a plain border was said to suffice for cousins but not for two unrelated families.²⁷¹ If the differencing by a *bordure azure* was the verdict of the conflict between Nicholas Burnell and Robert Morley at Calais, this decision taken in 1390 raises the question of whether the Burnells and the Morleys were related. So far I have discovered no links between the two families. It seems more likely that the rule that a plain border was the appropriate differencing between relatives and not suitable for not-related families had developed between the decision taken at Calais and the verdict of 1390. A more restrictive attitude towards arms can be detected during this time.²⁷² However, if the arms were granted to John Lovell VII in his case with Thomas Morley, the differencing by a blue border would conform with the decision to the appeal in the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy: Hugh Burnell was after all John Lovell's cousin. However, it is Thomas Morley who is given the undifferenced arms in this roll. John Lovell VII's arms are described as quartering the original Lovell arms with those of Holland.²⁷³ It seems more likely that the differencing used by Hugh Burnell was a result of the decision taken at Calais, when the rules for the use of differencings were not yet fixed.

Francis Lovell included the undifferenced Burnell arms in his garter stall plate. As the contemporary Lord Morley, Henry Lovell, was not only Francis's nephew but also under age at this time, Francis Lovell was certain that his right to include these arms would not be challenged. In contrast to Francis Lovell, his nephew Brian Stapleton uses the Burnell arms with the border.²⁷⁴ This may be due to the fact that at this time Henry Parker, Lord Morley, was an important personage and would have been unlikely to pass over the appropriation of his arms by another family. The use of the arms by the Lovells and their relatives points to the conclusion that the Morleys were granted the right to these arms. Another event indicating this occurred in 1399, on Richard II's ill-fated Irish expedition.

²⁷¹ Stewart-Brown, p. 6.

²⁷² One has just to remember that in an earlier challenge of arms between Richard Scrope of Bolton and Thomas Carminow, John of Gaunt simply decided that as Cornwall, Thomas Carminow's home county, had once been an independent kingdom both men had the right to the arms, Vale, vol. i, p. 95. Indeed, John of Gaunt states simply that as both families had used the arms since time immemorial they both had the right to bear the undifferenced arms, Nicolas, *Controversy*, vol. i, p. 50.

²⁷³ Willement, *Rolls of Arms*, p. 8 (370).

²⁷⁴ Marks and Payne, pp. 34-35, no. 49.

Thomas Morley bore the arms unchallenged in the presence of John Lovell VII.²⁷⁵

Though many aspects of the Lovell-Morley dispute are and will remain confusing and contradictory, the most plausible explanation is that the arms were granted to the Morley family and that the challenge of John Lovell VII was also an appeal against the verdict of Calais.

5.4.3. Interpreting the Evidence

5.4.3.1. 'The Traditional Way': Heraldry, Military Experience and Affinities

Whatever the problems are that surround the case and the verdict reached, the depositions themselves yield an astonishing variety of information. First and foremost the dispute was about the right to bear a certain coat-of-arms. All deponents were asked where they had seen the arms and where they were known. The answers are generally very vague and most men stated only one or two counties where they remembered seeing the arms displayed.²⁷⁶ As the dispute was about the Burnell arms, monuments displaying these arms were visited: churches, tombs, liturgical vestments and stained glass windows were examined.²⁷⁷ It is therefore unfortunately not possible to determine the area in which the Lovells made their presence felt by displaying their arms. Two Lovell deponents, William Wollaston and Reinald Fyfyde, mentioned that Maud Burnell and her first husband, John Lovell IV, had divers utensils adorned with the Burnell arms in their household.²⁷⁸ Considering the fact that the depositions were taken more than seventy years after John Lovell IV's death, it certainly stretches belief that these men were able to remember the

²⁷⁵ Ayton, p. 84.

²⁷⁶ A typical deposition is for example that of John Stone, esquire, 'Et estre ceo dit ceste iurre qe les avandites touz et chestunz sur quenx il ad avant dit et depose publiques sout nottoires et manifestes et sur[s^w] ycelles labora et un gore labore publique vois et fame en la dites sege et en la comte de Wiltes et ailles per diverses lieux dengleterre et Ffrance', PRO30/26/69, no. 170.

²⁷⁷ The places visited were the parish church of St. John at Devizes, and the church of the convent of the Augustinian friars in Condiche near Oxford, where banners with the Burnell arms were kept. Philip Burnell was also buried in the church. In the same church a picture of a knight and a lady with the disputed arms and two windows depicting the arms was inspected. A matyrologium remembering (amongst others) several members of the Burnell family and a 'kalendar' mentioning the death of Philip Burnell was viewed there. In the monastery church of Oseney banners with the Burnell arms and a painting on the walls of the chapel of Our Lady were examined. In the parish church of Stratfield Mortimer, in the diocese of Salisbury, another picture of the Virgin Mary and a kneeling knight with the arms were viewed. The convent of the Ausin Friars in London was visited to inspect several vestments with the Burnell arms.

²⁷⁸ PRO30/26/69, no. 186 and no. 210. Another deponent, Hugh Camoys, remembers the arms on utensils in the household of Aline, wife of Edward Burnell; *ibid.*, no. 223.

furniture of Maud Burnell's household.²⁷⁹ Although the depositions seem to be a desperate attempt to link the use of these arms to the Lovell family, they should not be dismissed as fabrications. Both William Wollaston and Reinald Fyfyde were well-informed about the Lovell family. Neither, however, can be linked to the family through other records. It is also possible that some of the decorated utensils were still in the possession of the Lovell family or the family of some associates to whom they had been bequeathed.

The depositions in these armorial cases can not only be used to reconstruct the military experiences of the men giving their depositions, but also that of the claimants themselves and their families. Unfortunately, the Lovell-Morley dispute yields little information about the Lords Lovell themselves. Most of the deponents in favour of John Lovell only mentioned the campaigns in which Burnells took part. The earliest incident named is a campaign to Scotland, during which Ralph Fretewall, the father of Thomas Fretewall, saw Philip Burnell bearing these arms.²⁸⁰ Another campaign in which Burnells participated was the Scottish campaign in 1314 that ended in the battle of Bannockburn.²⁸¹ The siege of Calais is the last campaign where Burnell participation was mentioned. It was remarked by several deponents that John Lovell V, father of the initiator of the court case, had been present at the siege of Calais.²⁸² It is from the depositions of the supporters of Thomas Morley that we learn of one campaign John Lovell VII went on: John Lovell VII's was present at the campaign in Brittany in 1374, where he was in the company of the Earl of March.²⁸³ On both occasions the presence of a Lord Lovell at these campaigns can be substantiated by other records.²⁸⁴

Some of the men who mentioned that John Lovell had been present, argued that he was not using the arms now under dispute but different ones. John de Staple, for example, said that he had seen John Lovell 'perter et user en son banere autre armes diverses et distinctes des dites armes cestassavoir dor et de goul onudes'.²⁸⁵ Others made

²⁷⁹ William Wollaston claimed to be ninety-six, Reinald Fyfyde stated that he was eighty-five in the depositions which means they were twenty-four and thirteen respectively at the time of John Lovell IV's death, old enough to remember details like this.

²⁸⁰ PRO30/26/69, no. 206.

²⁸¹ William Wollaston, PRO30/26/69, no. 186; Reinald Fyfyde, *ibid.*, no. 210.

²⁸² William de Weyth, C47/6/1, no. 92; Edmund de Rose, *ibid.*, no. 91; Symkyn de Suyterton, *ibid.*, no. 18; John Ranen, *ibid.*, no. 6; William Sutton, *ibid.*, no. 5; The only Lovell deponent to mention John Lovell V's presence at Calais is William Wollaston, PRO30/69/26, no. 186.

²⁸³ John de Staple of Helweton, C47/6/1, no. 25; without mentioning the Earl of March: Thomas Gerberge, *ibid.*, no. 41; Oliver de Mendham, *ibid.* no. 26; John Skathelok, *ibid.* no. 24; Richard Cosyn, *ibid.*, no. 23.

²⁸⁴ see Chapter 2, pp. 53-56.

²⁸⁵ C47/6/1, no. 25; the same point is made by Oliver de Mendham, *ibid.*, no. 26, John Skathelok, *ibid.*, no. 24.

the point that, although John Lovell saw Thomas Morley bearing the disputed arms, he did not raise any complaints then.²⁸⁶ Both the fact that John Lovell had been using different arms, the 'original' Lovell arms, and that he did not challenge Thomas Morley for using the disputed arms were obviously meant to undermine his claim.²⁸⁷ John Lovell's claim to these arms while he obviously used others must have been confusing for those men who did not know of the connection between the Lovells and Burnells.

It is perhaps surprising that no close relative of the two contenders was a witness in the case. All the men were asked whether they were related to the party they spoke for.²⁸⁸ Apparently it was expected that a familial relationship would influence the stance of the deponents and therefore should be taken into consideration. A few men stated that they were distantly related to the party they supported.²⁸⁹ If the relationship was distant enough for them not to know the exact degree, it is less surprising that the relationship did not necessarily dictate their loyalty. Two of the men speaking in favour of Thomas Morley stated that they were related to the Lovells: John Strange stated that he was related to John Lovell, but insisted that he was of the alliance of Thomas Morley, though not his vassal.²⁹⁰ William Papeworth is an interesting case as he stated himself to be related in the same degree to both the Lords Lovell and the Lords Morley.²⁹¹ Unless the depositions of close relations, for example the Lovells of Titchwell,²⁹² were not all among the lost ones, it seems that their relation to the contenders barred these men from speaking in the proceedings.²⁹³

The men making their depositions for the proceedings were also asked whether they were of the affinity of the side they were speaking for, and a few admitted to having links to the claimant;²⁹⁴ but all others stated that they were neither related nor otherwise linked

²⁸⁶ Richard Cosyn, C47/6/1, no. 23; Thomas Gerberge, *ibid.*, no. 40.

²⁸⁷ The question why John Lovell VII did not object to the Morleys using the arms, will be addressed later with the question why he did challenge Thomas Morley in 1385.

²⁸⁸ A typical response is for example that of John Payne, who stated that he was 'non pas daffuanite ne de consang al partie lui produant il dit', PRO30/26/69, no. 163.

²⁸⁹ William Ellisfeld stated that he is related to the Lovells, but cannot exactly tell how, PRO30/26/69, no. 188; John Mawteby declared to be very distantly related to Thomas Morley, C47/6/1, no. 30.

²⁹⁰ C47/6/1, no. 46.

²⁹¹ C47/6/1, no. 28.

²⁹² It is commented upon by some of the Morley deponents that Ralph Lovell (of Titchwell), the cousin of John Lovell, and father of mons. Ralph, was with him during the siege of Calais, Symekyn de Suyterton, C47/6/1, no. 18, William de Weyth, *ibid.*, no. 92. As Titchwell was in Norfolk, the Morley deponents from this area were probably acquainted with this branch of the family.

²⁹³ Which can be one of the reasons why Hugh Burnell was not able to participate in the law-suit.

²⁹⁴ John Strange admits to be 'de lalliance de mons. Thomas S. de Morlee defendant et quil ne casall feoderne homager du dit Thomas partie defendant', C47/6/1, no. 46.

to the man in whose favour they spoke. Most of the deponents in favour of Thomas Morley were from Norfolk, his 'home-county', and East Anglia.²⁹⁵ In this respect his supporters resembled those of Robert Grosvenor who raised a large part of the gentry of Cheshire and adjoining counties to speak for him (most notably perhaps Owen Glendower).²⁹⁶ The men speaking in favour of John Lovell came from a larger area of the country, though mainly from the counties where the main estates of the Lovells were concentrated, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire.²⁹⁷ This reflects not only the fact that the Lovell estates were more widespread than the Morley estates, but also that the deponents were drawn from 'friends' of the family²⁹⁸ and people who were from the area where the Burnells held their lands. Unlike in the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy, where it has been shown that a large part of the deponents speaking in favour of Robert Lord Scrope of Bolton can be linked to the affinity of John of Gaunt, no such link can be established for either the Lovell or the Morley deponents.

A few of the Lovell deponents can be linked to the family. Hildebrand Barre, for example, was employed as a feoffee by John Lovell VII and acted as his attorney while he was in Ireland in 1380.²⁹⁹ However, he and the other two men with connections to John Lovell VII claimed not to be of his affinity.³⁰⁰ This may either indicate that the three deponents lied to the commission, or that they were not members of John Lovell's affinity, despite their links to him. Of the forty-nine men speaking in favour of John Lovell, only three can be directly associated with him. Two others, Thomas Wake and Thomas de la Mare, sat on a couple of commissions with John Lovell. Most of the deponents were probably of lower status. These men were not John Lovell's 'affinity'. However, they represented the group of people he usually mingled with. With the exception of the clerics who were specifically questioned about Burnell monuments in their convents and churches, the men had to be on good terms with John Lovell, as he had to be sure that the men would speak in his favour when they were questioned.

5.4.3.2. The Use of Memory

Another important point for discussion is the fact that the proceedings relied to a great

²⁹⁵ Ayton, p. 85.

²⁹⁶ Stewart-Brown, p. 12.

²⁹⁷ Ayton, p. 85.

²⁹⁸ see Chapter 3, pp. 127-31.

²⁹⁹ *CCR*, 1369-1374, p. 309; *CCR*, 1381-1385, p. 427; *CCR*, 1385-1389, pp. 297, 444; *CPR*, 1377-1381, p. 458.

³⁰⁰ Richard Brouns was a feoffee of John Lovell VII; *CCR*, 1385, 1389, pp. 297, 444; John de Ipres was another of John Lovell's attorneys while he was in Ireland, *CPR*, 1377-1381, p. 458.

extent on memory. In our world, which for any kind of 'official' investigation relies mainly on written records,³⁰¹ it is surprising how these played no part in the proceedings of the Lovell-Morley dispute. Not only were there no records of the proceedings at Calais which could be consulted, but no other written records were used. There were no records for when monuments were erected in churches and neither in the martyrologium with a prayer for several Burnells nor in the 'kalendar' mentioning the death of Philip Burnell is any date is given. In the days before church registers came into use in the sixteenth century,³⁰² most of the deponents were not even certain about their own age. Many give their age as younger than it was, as can be established from other sources.³⁰³ Generally, the depositions show an interesting view of a society much more dependent on memory than on written record. While the depositions are irritatingly vague in points where the modern reader does not expect vagueness (for example the date of death of certain people) at other points the deponents are surprisingly firm in their statements, though sometimes it is hard to believe that the detailed anecdotes were not simply invented on the spot to make their story more believable.

Particularly interesting are the different versions the deponents gave of the verdict of Calais. As has been mentioned above, there seemed to have been no written record of the result of the deliberations at Calais which could be drawn upon in the proceedings.³⁰⁴ It is quite remarkable that only forty years later two so completely different versions had developed and could be presented with equal conviction by the two sides. Even in the absence of a written record one would expect, at least from our modern point of view, that some kind of neutral record could be found. As we do not know exactly how the depositions were taken, it is difficult to decide how much the witnesses were influenced by each other or 'coached' by the men they spoke for (or, more likely, their attorneys) to give the approved version of events. It is noticeable that often depositions immediately following each other include a common aspect which no other deponent recalled.³⁰⁵ This does not necessarily indicate foul play. Some of these men were probably neighbours (and were therefore questioned at the same time) and had reminisced about their earlier experiences together many times or had discussed the events just before giving their

³⁰¹ Hence the great maxim for those involved in illicit business: 'Leave no paper trail'.

³⁰² Walker, 'Proof of Age', p. 307.

³⁰³ Very often the men state to be whatever years 'et plus'. Geoffrey Chaucer, a deponent in the Scrope Grosvenor controversy, similarly stated to be forty years and more, thought he was probably ten to fifteen years older, Nicolas, *Controversy*, vol. ii, p. 404.

³⁰⁴ see above, p. 241.

³⁰⁵ for example the depositions of Thomas Fretewall and John Grasson explaining the descent of arms in detail follow each other; PRO30/26/69, nos. 206 and 207; or the depositions of the men who stated, that John Lovell was seen bearing different arms, C47/6/1, nos. 24-28.

depositions. However, the similarity of the depositions (partly caused by the scribes as well) seems to indicate a certain amount of 'help' by the claimants.

Few of the depositions varied from the standard version. Two of the Morley deponents not only stated that the disputed arms were granted to Robert Morley but additionally mentioned that Nicholas Burnell was granted the right to bear the arms with the differencing of a *bordure azure*.³⁰⁶ Three of the Lovell deponents added another detail to the claim that Robert Morley was granted the right to bear the arms for his life. They declared that Robert Morley first lost the right to bear the arms and only after he swore never to raise his sword for his King or Christianity again, Edward III reconsidered and allowed Robert Morley to retain the arms for the term of his life.³⁰⁷ Thomas Eston brought additional colour to this story by retelling that Robert Morley swore by 'God's flesh' when he presented Edward III with his ultimatum. Though some of the depositions are probably just a mechanical reproduction of the same story, others have an authentic ring to them which makes it difficult to believe they were made up. However, one of the versions of the verdict of Calais has to be false.

For a twentieth-century audience the declaration that either of the families had used the disputed arms from time immemorial and since before the Norman Conquest³⁰⁸ seems somewhat odd.³⁰⁹ The statement that something goes back to the Norman conquest is a commonplace topos,³¹⁰ usually used interchangeably with 'from time immemorial'.³¹¹ Thomas Carminow, the Cornish knight, who once challenged Richard Scrope's right to the arms *azure, a bend or*, went even farther: he claimed that his family used these arms since the times of King Arthur.³¹² While there is no indication that Thomas Carminow could in any way prove the use of arms back to the times of King Arthur, the claim is

³⁰⁶ Henry de Hoo, C 47/6/1, no. 11; William King, *ibid.*, no. 96.

³⁰⁷ William Moryb, PRO30/26/69, no. 175; William Wollaston, *ibid.* no. 186; Thomas Eston, *ibid.*, 204.

³⁰⁸ Hugh Camoys, PRO30/26/69, no. 223; Thomas Morley himself claimed this; C47/6/1, m. 38.

³⁰⁹ though for example Nicolas's biography of Hugh Burnell starts on a very similar note: 'the family of Burnell was of great antiquity in the county of Salop', Nicolas, *Controversy*, vol. ii, p. 456.

³¹⁰ W.H.B. Bird takes the claim by Robert Grosvenor that his ancestors used the arms when they came to England with William the Conqueror serious enough. Astonished, Bird states, that even the English arms can only be traced to the twelfth century, 'Yet, here is a family of comparatively obscure position pretending that their arms date from before the conquest?', W.B. Bird, 'The Grosvenor Myth', *The Ancestor* 1 (1902), p. 176. Not surprisingly Bird can prove that the genealogy given in the Scrope-Grosvenor trial is faked. Another example of claiming rights from the Norman Conquest happened nearly a hundred years later, when Richard Woodville, Earls Rivers, claimed rights as Lord High Constable, as they had been his predecessors since the conquest, Squibb, p. 10.

³¹¹ 'a temps et per temps dont contrarie memorie de homme', William Wollaston, PRO30/26/69, no. 186; Reinald Fyfide, *ibid.*, no. 210; similar claims were made regarding the Morleys, for example by Philip Warrene, C47/6/1, no. 11, and John de Happersburg, *ibid.*, no. 112.

³¹² This is mentioned for example by Thomas Fychet, Nicolas, *Controversy*, vol. i, p. 62.

taken seriously by those who mention it.³¹³ Hugh Camoys, one of the Lovell deponents, stated that he had seen the arms on a number of Burnell graves in a village called 'Burnell' in Normandy forty years ago.³¹⁴ It seems likely that the arms Hugh Camoys saw in Normandy resembled the Burnell arms closely enough for him to construct the theory that this was the Norman home of the Burnells, particularly as the name of the village seemed to indicate a connection.³¹⁵ The claim that the arms were used by the family since the Conquest was one every family in similar situations would make. The connection to a Norman village may have given them some more credibility.

Some of the deponents knew amazingly detailed aspects of the family's past, as for example the history of why John Lovell VII had a claim on the Burnell arms. Hildebrand Barre, who is one of the few deponents with a known connection to John Lovell VII, not only recapitulated the family history; he also included the information that John Lovell V, father of the present John Lovell, inherited the manors of Sparkford, Upton and Chiriton in Somerset, Enham in Hampshire, Copenhape in Cheshire and rents of £50 in Nantwich (Cheshire) from his mother.³¹⁶ As a feoffee and attorney for John Lovell Hildebrand Barre was in a good position to know details of this kind. Another interesting facet of the settlement is mentioned by John Grasson. According to him, Maud Lovell settled all her land on Nicholas Burnell, except those she held in fee tail and the arms, which remained with her eldest and first-born son John Lovell (V).³¹⁷ Though no separate link to the Lovell family could be established for this deponent, he had a close link to the Lovell family. Obviously, they were well informed about the family; but they were presumably also more likely to lie in favour of their friends.

It is impossible to decide from a distance of more than six hundred years which of the depositions are true and which were more or less fabricated to suit the side they supported. In the end the reader has to decide which men he or she can believe and which not. Some of the depositions sound invented to bolster the argument, as for example that

³¹³ 'et la troverent per lez tesmoignes verroies qe le dit Carmynau descendit delyne armez azure ove un bende dor depuis le temps de roy Arthur encea.' Nicolas, *Controversy*, vol. i, p. 50.

³¹⁴ PRO30/26/69, no. 223; Thomas de la Mare states as well, that he knows from his father and other great man, that these arms can be found in divers villages in Normandy, PRO30/26/69, no. 222. Once more, the two depositions immediately follow each other. — However, I haven't found a place with this or a similar name in Normandy.

³¹⁵ The origins of the Burnells can not be traced further back than Roger Burnell, who might have been the father of Robert and Hugh Burnell, the latter being Philip Burnell's father; Ursula W. Hughes, 'A Biographical Sketch of Robert Burnell, with Materials from his Life,' (unpubl. B. Litt. thesis, Oxford, 1936), pp. 36-39.

³¹⁶ PRO30/26/69, no. 227, see Chapter 2, p. 47.

³¹⁷ PRO30/26/69, no. 207; Other men to mention the relationship between the Burnells and Lovells in detail are Thomas Fretewall, no. 206 and Reinald Fyfyde, no. 210.

of Maurice Bruy, who claimed that Robert Morley on his death-bed ordered that his arms should be taken to Nicholas Burnell.³¹⁸ One of the Morley deponents, Henry de Hoo, claimed that Robert Morley specifically bequeathed his arms to his son.³¹⁹ As with the two versions of the verdict at Calais, one of these depositions simply has to be wrong. William Moryb declared that Robert Morley was the first member of his family to use the disputed arms.³²⁰ This does have the ring of blatant partiality; but the fact that the Morley arms originally included lions with forked tails gives William Moryb's deposition some credibility. The knowledge of the deponents varies greatly: some, like William Wollaston³²¹ and Hildebrand Barre, had other connections with the Lovells, and it is not surprising that they know many details about the men under discussion; with others the connection might not be recorded. Others, particularly in the depositions for Thomas Morley, simply reiterated the verdict of Calais and gave no further information. These men might have been employed only to strengthen the cause of their side, and with these depositions in particular one cannot help but have the impression that the witnesses had been told what to say.

Discussing the evidence of the Lovell-Morley dispute in those contexts has produced some interesting features even though so much of information collected in the rolls is about the Burnells. We can gather information relating to the use of heraldry, military experience, affinities and family, and the importance of memory. The most interesting facts we can derive from the rolls are definitely those concerning the deponents themselves. The depositions are particularly interesting for giving us a comparatively undistorted version of medieval noblemen's statements. They are dictated by the topic of the case, the rephrasing by the scribes and (presumably) coaching to fit their statements to suit their side. Yet sometimes the 'voice' of the deponents is still 'audible' in the depositions: reading the depositions the dismissiveness towards the claim of the other side,³²² is as noticable as the indignation that John Lovell dared to claim the Morley arms, even though he had never complained about their use before and bore different

³¹⁸ PRO30/26/69, no. 221.

³¹⁹ C47/6/1, no. 11.

³²⁰ PRO30/26/69, no. 175.

³²¹ William Wollaston, whose detailed recollection of the Lovell-Burnell families have been mentioned several times, recalled another interesting aspect of the proceedings at Calais. He explained that though John Lovell V was absent during the siege he was present while the trial between Nicholas Burnell and Robert Morley was conducted. During this time John Lovell was on a pilgrimage to England instead, visiting the shrine of Thomas Becket in Canterbury and the priory "Our Lady" in Walsingham; PRO30/26/69, no. 186.

³²² William Montague, Earl of Salisbury remembers that Robert Morley was challenged at Calais by a man called "Haudlo", C47/6/1, no. 98.

arms himself.³²³

5.4.4. The reasons behind the Lovell-Morley dispute

Though the information gathered from the depositions is very fascinating, there are a few problems concerning the law-suit that remain unanswered. *Why* did John Lovell VII decide to pursue the question of which family was allowed to bear these arms? Was the possession of a certain coat-of-arms in itself worth going to court for? The process over the arms between the Lovells and Morleys lasted for a considerable time.³²⁴ But it was not only time which the proceedings consumed; they were also expensive and could have disastrous results, as the example of Edward Hastings shows.³²⁵

Additionally, why did John Lovell VII start the proceedings at this particular time? As several deponents for Thomas Morley had declared, John Lovell VII had been at least on one campaign where the Morleys had used the disputed arms without challenging their right to them. What had changed between 1374 when he was in Brittany and the campaign in Scotland in 1385? The Scottish campaign of 1385 was the last time the crown ever summoned the feudal host.³²⁶ The army which accompanied Richard II on his first campaign was, however, not fundamentally different from other armies and the men were paid as was customary by this time.³²⁷ It was, however, an exceptionally large army – ‘the third largest English army assembled in the fourteenth century’³²⁸ – and many men who had never encountered each other before met on this occasion. It was on this expedition that the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy started. However, as the Morley deponents made clear, John Lovell VII had already taken part in the campaign to Brittany in 1374 with Thomas Morley and did not challenge him then.

Since the time of the campaign to Brittany, John Lovell VII’s position had improved drastically. He had receive his first summons to parliament and had become deeply involved in the politics of the central government. Particularly around the time of the

³²³ see above, n. 286.

³²⁴ How long the proceedings took cannot be established for certain, as we do not know when the appeal, for which the rolls were apparently prepared, was heard.

³²⁵ see above, p. 236.

³²⁶ N.B. Lewis, ‘The Last Medieval Summons of the English Feudal Levy, 13 June 1385’, *English Historical Review* 73 (1958), p. 1.

³²⁷ ‘the army was, in its composition and conditions of service, of the same type as the normal contract armies which Edward III and other leaders of the Hundred Years’ War took to France and Scotland during the fourteenth century.’ *ibid.*, p. 9.

³²⁸ James L. Gillespie, ‘Richard II: King of Battles?’, in J.L. Gillespie (ed.), *The Age of Richard II* (Stroud, 1997), p. 141.

Scottish campaign itself, his activities increased remarkably.³²⁹ It was at this time that he participated in commissions and received grants from the King. His position at the royal court was influential enough for him to be expelled in 1388. In 1374, John Lovell had either not yet thought of the possibility of presenting himself as the rightful Burnell heir (as discussed below), or more likely he felt not yet confident enough in his position to attack the Morleys³³⁰ or incite the ill-will of the Burnells.³³¹ In 1385, however, John Lovell was firmly ensconced in the court circle. He may not have been a member of the closest circle around the King, but he had acquired a position and could afford to attack other baronial families. Perhaps the addition of his wife's title and coat-of-arms to his own had given him the idea of claiming the coat-of-arms of his grandmother and indirectly the barony of Burnell as well.

One question already mentioned earlier which might baffle the modern historian is why the result of the cause of arms was not recorded if the possession of particular arms was so important? The Court of Chivalry did not record its proceedings and much other documentation has since been destroyed. This may explain their non-existence today but it cannot explain the lack of records of the verdict given at Calais at the time of the Lovell-Morley dispute in 1386. Although fourteenth-century administration was not as elaborate and not as fixated on written records as its modern equivalent and relied generally more on memory, other important proceedings were meticulously written down, for example land deals and indentures of retaining, to name but a few. Would the winning side not insist on receiving written proof of the verdict, if it was of such vital importance? That the family who lost the case at Calais might have thought it wise to 'misplace' any record of their defeat seems understandable, but that the winning side was incapable of finding any kind of document confirming their claim is astonishing. One could argue that any mention of this document has been lost along with the document itself: for example, it might have been part of the lost deposition of the mysterious Esmond de Reynham in the Morley Roll. However, this line of argument would make any conclusion impossible (or possible). However, if some sort of proof had been in existence, undoubtedly this fact would have been repeated again and again. The lack of written record may indicate that, in the end, the question of arms was in itself not quite as important as is sometimes thought.

But why did John Lovell VII start the law-suit at the Court of Chivalry? The

³²⁹ see Chapter 4, pp. 159-61, 169-71.

³³⁰ William Morley, then head of the family, was a successful soldier and had inherited the office of Marshal of Ireland from his mother, Hawise Marshal; *Complete Peerage*, vol. ix, pp. 214-15.

³³¹ Nicholas Burnell, half-brother of John Lovell V was still alive in 1474, *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, p. 435.

proceedings at Calais had obviously been hampered by the fact that no evidence other than the depositions of the men who happened to be present at the siege could be consulted. Was the suit by John Lovell VII in fact an appeal against the verdict of Calais? Was it not possible for Hugh Burnell to appeal against the decision passed against his father Nicholas? Though this is a tempting supposition, it seems highly unlikely. As has been discussed in the previous chapters, the connection between the Lovell and Burnell families was never particularly close.³³² The reason for this lack of verifiable contact between John Lovell V and his younger half-brother Nicholas Burnell may not necessarily be the result of Maud Burnell's having settled most of her lands on her younger son. Although this probably did not help to improve the relationship between the half-brothers. We do not know where John Lovell V spent the long years of his wardship, whether he grew up with his half-brother or not. It seems likely that John Lovell's relationship with Nicholas Burnell would have been closer had he grown up with him. While two of the deponents in the Lovell-Morley dispute mentioned the presence of John Lovell V's cousin Ralph Lovell at the siege of Calais,³³³ none mentioned the fact that Nicholas Burnell was his half-brother. This indicates that their relationship was not widely known. There is no other indication of a personal link between John Lovell VII and his cousin Hugh Burnell. Unfortunately, no record exists of what he thought of the Lovell-Morley dispute. This is surprising as Hugh Burnell must have had an interest in the conflict. As far as we know, Hugh Burnell did not participate in the quarrel about the possession of the arms at all.

Looking at the depositions, particularly of the men who spoke in favour of the Lovells, it becomes clear that the deeper reason for John Lovell VII to claim the arms was that they were seen as part of the Burnell inheritance. Again and again we read that John Lovell V was the first-born son and heir of Maud Burnell.³³⁴ Reinald Fyfyde stated that Maud Burnell and her second husband had a son, Nicholas 'apelle' Burnell,³³⁵ which can hardly be interpreted as a sign of his appreciation for Nicholas's claim to the Burnell barony. As mentioned above, John Grasson explained the exact division of the land and that the coat-of-arms together with the land held in fee tail went to John Lovell V. He also stressed the fact that John Lovell had been the first-born son and heir. The implication was that John would have inherited all the Burnell lands had Maud Burnell not entailed

³³² see Chapter 3, pp. 127-31.

³³³ see above, n. 292.

³³⁴ 'et dez ditz John et dame Maud lui primer nee et heir', William Wollaston, PRO30/26/69, no. 186; see also Richard Brouns, whose deposition follows William Wollaston's, *ibid.*, no. 187, Thomas Fretewall, *ibid.*, no. 206, see also above, p. 252.

³³⁵ PRO30/26/69, no. 210.

her lands in favour of her younger son.

It is impossible to discover whether John Lovel VII's claim to the Burnell arms was just the first step John Lovell took towards recovering the Burnell inheritance. If he actually wanted to regain his grandmother's estates, the silence of Hugh Burnell is even more surprising. However, it seems more likely that Hugh Burnell's lack of interest indicates that John Lovell could only claim the arms. It is implausible that John Lovell would have had a chance successfully to claim the lands in the hands of Hugh Burnell, as Maud Burnell's entail was hardly challengeable. Another reason for Hugh Burnell's silence may have been the fact that he had to use differenced arms as decreed by the verdict of Calais. Perhaps the case started by John Lovell was in the interest of Hugh Burnell. Should John Lovell win the case, Hugh Burnell would be able to use the undifferenced arms.

It is most likely that John Lovell VII's main aim for starting the case at the Court of Chivalry was to reaffirm his position as the rightful heir to the Burnell estates. By claiming the right to bear the arms *argent, a lion rampant crowned and armed or*, he ensured that his position as heir became widely known again – and was set down in the proceedings of the case at the Court of Chivalry. John Lovell did not plan to challenge his cousin's right to the major part of the Burnell estates, but by claiming the arms he declared that he, or his heirs, would inherit the considerable Burnell estates in case his cousin died without male heirs (which he eventually did in 1420).³³⁶ Whether John Lovell VII's suit at the Court of Chivalry influenced Hugh Burnell when he tried to settle his lands on his three granddaughters is no more than speculation. The steps taken by John Lovell to establish himself as the rightful heir to the Burnell estates certainly did nothing to endear him to his cousin. John Lovell did *not* go to Court just to claim the right to the Burnell arms, but to claim the Burnell inheritance the arms represented. The controversy between Nicholas Burnell and Robert Morley during the siege of Calais was a convenient point for John Lovell to use as a starting point towards establishing himself as the rightful Burnell heir.

The Lovells did inherit the Burnell lands in 1420, but the arms were not generally included in the Lovell arms, with the sole exception of the garter stall plate of Francis Lovell. The fact that William Lovell did not use the Burnell arms may not necessarily indicate that the case at the Court of Chivalry was decided in favour of Thomas Morley; rather it shows that, after William Lovell inherited the Burnell lands, the arms in themselves were not important anymore.

The Lovell-Morley dispute, like the Grey-Hastings trial, was in the end a dispute not

³³⁶ see Chapter 3, pp. 90-91.

only about the right to certain arms but also about land. Two of the three famous armorial cases the issue brought to trial were far more mundane and prosaic than the question of who had the right to bear a certain coat-of-arms. This fact, however, also reinforces the importance that arms had acquired by the second half of the fourteenth century: arms symbolized estates. Sir Edward Hastings and John Lovell VII claimed the arms as part of inheritances that had not devolved to them but to other branches of their families. Arms had become not only a means to identify a person and his family, but also powerful symbols of a family's *lands*. It was with the hope of claiming the disputed estates or defending it from rival claims that these men went to Court and took the financial risks these actions entailed. Perhaps the other armorial cases fought at the Court of Chivalry did not involve disputed inheritances as well as disputed arms, were fought with less determination and therefore left no detailed documentation.

There is always the danger of trying to interpret the actions of people in the past in a way that makes them more comprehensible to us, while ignoring the facts which show that their motivations were often very different from what is now considered as usual. The question of arms and the rights to them was of great importance to medieval men and women, a fact that can also be seen from the fact that the use of arms spread to the less exalted spheres of the aristocracy and down into the non-aristocratic society³³⁷ and were acquired by towns and corporations.³³⁸ The need to regulate the use of arms is also a sign of their popularity. But the medieval nobleman also showed a sense for business and financial gain.

Comparing the three major armorial disputes, it seems that the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy, in which the disputed arms were apparently all that was at stake, was the exception rather than the norm. I have found only one attempt to ascertain whether there were other motives behind the controversy: Brigitte Vale briefly ponders the possibility that the confrontation between Richard Scrope and Robert Grosvenor was part of a larger political conflict. At this time Richard II built up his support in Cheshire, Robert Grosvenor's home county, and was at odds with Richard Scrope. Perhaps Richard II might have 'tacitly supported Grosvenor'.³³⁹ This scenario, vague as it is, lacks support from the succeeding events, as Richard II confirmed the verdict in favour of Richard Scrope and even decided that Robert Grosvenor had to adopt a completely different coat-

³³⁷ The order of Henry V that no man may assume arms if his ancestors had not born them or he had fought at Agincourt with the king; Wagner, pp. 63-64, indicates, that many men, who were seen as unfit to bear arms had adopted them.

³³⁸ Marks and Payne, p. 58.

³³⁹ Vale, vol. i., p. 105.

of-arms, rather than just difference the disputed arms.³⁴⁰ It would be a worthwhile project to investigate whether there were other considerations taken by the rival claimants.

The result of this analysis of the Lovell-Morley dispute shows that even in this case, the medieval nobleman showed surprising business-sense. The law-suit started by John Lovell VII may perhaps best be compared with the purchase of the return of land. It was not certain whether in the end the effort and money he put into the case would pay off, but as land was still the basis of power it was worthwhile trying. The medieval nobleman is often seen as extraordinarily litigious, constantly involved in some law-suit or the other to increase or defend his estates.³⁴¹ The proceedings at the Court of Chivalry were at least partially also just another means to claim land. However, the cases were also about arms and show their importance. The most famous of the three cases, the Scrope-Grosvenor controversy – at least as far as we know – was *only* about the use of arms.

³⁴⁰ see above, p. 245.

³⁴¹ Lander calls the later middle ages ‘a litigious age’, Lander, ‘Family, Friends’, p. 29.

5.5. Conclusion

The examination of how the Lovells of Titchmarsh represented themselves to their world – and to future generations – has shown one thing very clearly: the individual Lords Lovell felt in no way constrained by their reverence to their ancestors from changing either their place of residence or the choice of which religious houses they supported. There is no question that they honoured their descent from several distinguished houses, but this did not mean that they had to follow their ancestors' ideas and ideals slavishly. Indeed, it is the individuality of the different Lords Lovell which becomes even more obvious in this chapter. The accumulation of five different coats-of-arms in Francis Lovell's garter stall plate shows clearly how conscious he was of his descent from five baronial houses. However, as the discussion of the Lovell-Morley dispute has made clear, heraldry, though important in itself, became more significant as the right to estates and right to arms became increasingly interchangeable. For the Lovells, coats-of-arms were important mainly as a sign of their increased status, rather than for their commemorative aspects. It is therefore somewhat ironic that the Lovell arms survived longer than the Lovell family. Francis Lovell's nephew, Brian Stapleton, included the Lovell arms in his coat-of-arms. As the estates were forfeited to the crown, Brian Stapleton did not actually inherit his uncle's lands, but by including them he stated that he was the heir and would stake his claim should the attainder be lifted. After all, the Beaumont estates, which he had inherited in 1507 and whose arms he also adopted, had been forfeited for many years during the Wars of the Roses.³⁴² The Lovell arms were also used by John Percevel, second Earl Egmont, who was created Lord Lovel and Holland, Baron Lovel and Holland of Enmore (Somerset) in 1762.³⁴³

In this chapter the exceptional position of John VII in the family has become even more clear and confirms the analysis of the previous discussion. Perhaps the fact that John Lovell VII had to regain his and also his family's position within the aristocracy made him more aware of his status. The way in which he represented himself to his contemporaries (and to posterity) suggests him to be more self-reflective than the other Lords Lovell. Looking at his new residence at Wardour, the exceptional Lovell Lectionary and to some extent also his patronage of the Hospital in Brackley, adds a more

³⁴² see illustration of Brian Stapleton's banner in Marks and Payne, pp. 34-35, no. 49.

³⁴³ He claimed these baronies through his descent from William Lovell, Lord Morley, the younger brother of John Lovell IX. In a glorified genealogy of the Perceval family, allegedly compiled by the first Earl Egmont in 1742, descent from the Lovell and the Hollands was claimed. However, the *History of the House of Yvery* was not the product of serious research into meanwhile lost documents, but 'a most remarkable monument of human vanity', *Complete Peerage*, vol. v, p. 29, n. d) and p. 28, n. b). Woodcock and Robinson, plate 23.

individualised dimension to his standing within the family's history. He was a singular person, who was outstanding not only through his marriage, his wealth and his involvement in politics but also in his personal tastes. His increased political profile was reflected in his awareness of the advantage of constructing his own public identity. John Lovell VII was the central figure in the history of the Lovells.

6. Conclusion

In the previous chapters the history of the Lovells has been analysed from different angles and their experiences compared to those of other baronial families. However, the analysis focused very much on the individual involved in the different events, and may be accused of falling prey to the symptom both K.B. McFarlane and Christine Carpenter warned of: that 'in the search for the individual baron we are in danger of losing our sense of the class as a whole.'¹ Returning to the questions raised in the first chapter of this thesis, this conclusion will therefore look again at the baronage as a whole. Two questions were addressed in the discussion of the different aspects of the lives of the Lovells studied in this thesis: how the lives of the baronage differed from those of the titled peers on the one side and the gentry on the other; and whether the Lovells were typical of the baronage. Here these questions will be addressed once more. By pulling together the result of the preceding research, it may be possible to create a picture of the baronage as a separate group within the late medieval aristocracy.

There are several ways of defining social groups, varying not only in their terminology, but also in the criteria applied to describe the differences and the explanations used to interpret the working of medieval society. Perhaps the most famous description of societies is still that of Marx. This model differentiates classes by their control over the means of production. Feudal society consisted of the landowner, the aristocrat, who held the land, and the tenant who worked it. This classic model of a past society is one of the many in which the baronage can certainly not be seen as a separate group; the titled nobility, the baronage, the gentry, and lesser landowners fall into the same class. The internal divisions of the aristocracy were of no great interest to Marx, so it is not surprising that his model seems to oversimplify the complexity of medieval society. It shows however that not all theories examining the society of the middle ages are useful to apply to the question raised here.

There are other models available to describe the social stratification that existed in the middle ages. These have been analysed by S.H. Rigby. The broadest, and most technical term for a part of society is the 'systac', a term specifically designed to describe a definable group within the society as a whole. Systacs are 'groups or categories of persons sharing a common endowment (or lack) of power by virtue of their roles.'² The adoption of a completely new term avoids any conflict with preconceptions of the term.

¹ Carpenter, *Locality*, p. 6.

² Rigby, p. 12.

However, it is in itself confusing and the very vagueness of the definition makes it difficult to separate different systacs.

Other models of stratification include the liberal stratification theory, which identifies the multi-dimensional nature of social stratification: the position the individual holds within society is defined not by one but by a number of criteria – for example gender, race, education. Instead of Marx's clear separation of society into two classes, there are any number of smaller groups, many of which overlap. This model was originally applied to modern society but has since been used to describe medieval societies as well. Roland Mousnier, who is a follower of this theory, gives a very detailed definition of his understanding of a social group:

Every social group has imposed upon it a consensus of opinion as to its social status, that is to say, its rank, honour, rights, duties, privileges, obligations, social symbols, dress, food, coats of arms, way of life, upbringing, its way of spending money, entertainments, social functions, the profession its members should or should not have, the behaviour its members should display in their relationships with members of other groups in various situations in life and the behaviour they can expect in return, the people they should mix with and treat as friends and equals, and those they should simply coexist with and with whom they should only mix in the course of their function or through necessity etc.³

The plurality of criteria here makes a division of society more complex and (as I see it) subjective, allowing the historian to decide which of the criteria are important and where to draw the line between one group and another. Of course, this is always a problem when applying theories to an actual society. If the theory is too rigid and well-defined, it is possible that no actual example can be found to match it in reality.⁴ If the theory is more flexible it can be used in a number of ways, and is open to interpretation and criticism.

However, do these theories, and others like them, do justice to medieval society, or 'do we indeed impose our own views of society in an era where people did not see themselves in these terms at all?'⁵ Medieval people had their own views and explanations as to why society was structured as it was. These interpretations, however, varied with the purposes and circumstances of the men who created them;⁶ a monk writing a chronicle would explain his world differently from a monarch justifying his rule.

³ Roland Mousnier, *Social Hierarchies. 1450 to the present* (London, 1973), p. 25.

⁴ One example of this phenomenon is, in my opinion, Alan Macfarlane's theory of the 'peasant society'. He creates a very clear set of rules that a 'peasant society' must fulfil, only to prove that at least in England (the only country where he did research detailed enough) this society never existed, Alan Macfarlane, *The Origins of English Individualism. The Family, Property and Social Transition* (Oxford, 1978).

⁵ Rigby, p. 181.

⁶ Rigby, p. 194.

Nevertheless, it is necessary for the modern historian to adopt some kind of terminology to discuss the society of the later middle ages, even if the discussion may become anachronistic. To discuss whether or not the baronage was a definable group, or 'systac', three terms need to be taken into consideration: the order, a juridically defined group; the estate, a group constitutionally entitled to separate representation in government; and the status group, defined by a common value system and life-style each accorded different esteem.⁷ Which of these types can describe the baronage, if any? Is it possible to define the baronage as a 'systac' in itself, a group of men and their families who were 'sharing a common endowment (or lack) of power by virtue of their roles' and showed a similar pattern of behaviour?

The English baronage of the later middle ages consisted of those men who received individual summonses to parliament but held no title. The degree to which the baronage was seen as a separate systacs depended on the emergence of the parliamentary peerage as a group that was increasingly closed off from the other parts of the aristocracy. This development began at the end of the thirteenth century.⁸ Even though a 'higher nobility' existed before the evolution of the parliamentary peerage, it was less defined. With the exception of the earls, there was no legal or other clear distinction between the higher and lower nobility. There was no stratification, just a kind of fluid gradation from the poorer landowners to those whose wealth and influence was comparable to those of the earls. The only distinction that existed was that some landowners held their land by barony. However, as many men held only parts of baronies, and often very small parts, they cannot be seen as a clearly defined group. Even the special rights enjoyed by men who held by barony cannot have divided the aristocracy into separate status groups.⁹

It was over the next two centuries that the aristocracy became increasingly stratified. McFarlane, who, in his earlier writing had expressed the opinion that the aristocracy in itself should not be seen as stratified,¹⁰ changed his opinion and in his later work agreed that at the end of the middle ages, the ruling class of England was multi-layered. By the latter half of the fifteenth century, men were 'expected to know their place. In 1300, there had been no place for them to know.'¹¹ This emergence of this stratification was not caused by a single development. On the one hand the nobility became an increasingly closed group; but on the other hand the number of titles diversified, from the single title

⁷ Rigby, p. 12.

⁸ see Chapter 1, pp. 6-7.

⁹ see Chapter 1, p. 4.

¹⁰ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 7.

¹¹ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 275.

of earl in existence in 1300 to the four (viscount, earl, marquess and duke) used at the end of the middle ages. The emergence of the three titles within the gentry had other causes again. But taken together, all of these different developments worked together and all indicate an increasing awareness of status within the aristocracy.¹²

It is the division between the nobility and the gentry which is particularly important as the question has to be raised as to whether the baronage in the end had more in common with the gentry than with the titled peers. After all, the 'legal' distinction between gentry and nobility only influenced one aspect of the aristocrats lives': their attendance in parliament. Another legal distinction, the right to trial by peers, only affected a small number of barons and although an important right, had little influence on the individual baron's normal life. However, the difference between these two groups is generally considered to extend to other areas as well; for example, noblemen and gentry are seen as the two partners forming an affinity, the nobility retaining the gentry.¹³ Additionally, an 'economic gulf' is supposed to have opened between the two groups by the fifteenth century.¹⁴ However, the differences between the two groups were not as clear-cut, as has been shown throughout this thesis.

The distinction between the gentry and the nobility was based on their representation in parliament. They were, according to the definition above, two different estates. The difference became more apparent as the nobility became ever more closed. Only when the number of families whose heads attended parliament in the House of Lords was restricted, can the peerage be seen as a separate estate. However, attendance at parliament, particularly by the barons, was extremely scanty at times.¹⁵ Though it is safe to assume that the men sitting in the House of Lords regarded themselves as distinct from the gentry in the Commons, it is difficult to imagine that they developed a sense of unity, a feeling that they were a separate social group from the other participants of government. The nobility and gentry were parts of the landowning class and as such shared an interest in keeping their estates safe and profitable. Additionally, during this period, the House of Lords was the unchallenged power in parliament. It was only on a few occasions during the entire period that the two houses of parliament were actually in opposition to each other.¹⁶ The lack of another group who struggled with the nobility for control meant that there was no need for the Lords to overcome their internal differences to retain their

¹² see Chapter 1, pp. 12-13.

¹³ see Chapter 1, pp. 24-25.

¹⁴ see Chapter 1, p. 22.

¹⁵ see Chapter 1, p. 26.

¹⁶ see Chapter 1, p. 22.

position.

Outside parliament, the Lords also worked together in another administrative institution, the Great Council.¹⁷ But, as with parliament, many barons did not attend its assemblies. There are a number of theories as to why the barons, and some of the titled peers, neglected this possibility of influencing the government of the realm.¹⁸ This scanty attendance did prohibit the nobility to develop any real sense of solidarity, with some of them spending their time in parliament and the Great Councils in London, while the others were living quietly on their estates, content perhaps to influence the election of the knights of the shire.

A phenomenon that has become clear in the discussion of the Lovells is that their involvement in central government differed greatly from Lord to Lord. While some of the Lords, particularly John Lovell VII and Francis Lovell, and to some extent John Lovell III, did attend parliament regularly and participated in the work done there, others stayed away. The barons could become involved in the work of parliament and the Great Councils if they wanted to, but they could also choose not to become involved. As the nobility were the natural advisors of the king, non-involvement in parliament was effectively diminishing their status. It was therefore an option that was much harder to take the richer and more powerful the peer was. There were however some magnates who stayed aloft of high politics, particularly in times of crises.¹⁹

War was another essential part of the lives of the medieval aristocracy.²⁰ The provision of troops in the case of war was the original recompense the aristocrat had to give the king for holding land. Even though by the later middle ages military service had been replaced by monetary rents, war remained one of the fundamental occupations of the aristocracy and it is therefore not surprising to see that most barons participated in military campaigns. Every Lord Lovell did at some point of his lives participate in the king's wars. The fact that John Lovell VIII, as head of the family, was never involved in war, moreover, is easily explained by the fact that during the brief period in which he was the head of the family, no major war was conducted.²¹ Though war was an unavoidable duty of the baronage, there were great differences in the degree to which the individual baron was involved. Most Lovells were not interested in making war their career. They spent some time serving in the army, usually under the command of richer noblemen, but with few exceptions they never held command themselves. Though they avoided the possible

¹⁷ see Chapter 4, p. 58.

¹⁸ see Chapters 1, p. 26, and 4, p. 158.

¹⁹ see Chapter 4, p. 157.

²⁰ see Chapter 4, pp. 142-45.

²¹ John Lovell had accompanied his father to Ireland in 1399, see Chapter 2, p. 57.

negative consequences, notably death or capture, for most of their history they also did not profit from the wars. The most significant exception to the general lack of interest in military careers shown by the Lovell, is John III, who continuously participated in the wars of Edward I, particularly in Scotland. He held the position of marshal of the army in Scotland and was the man who received the key of Stirling Castle after the prolonged siege. John V also held a smaller command and participated in the war in France, but it is a moot question as to whether it was only his early death that prevented him from becoming an important military commander or whether he had retired from war like other Lords. Unlike the participation in the government of England, in parliaments and Great Councils, war was an essential part of the barons' lives. It was additionally a means of promotion, a means not employed by the Lovells, after their rise into the peerage, which was effected by John III's continuing participation in war. This promotion into the parliamentary peerage through service in war is typical for this time. It was only from the later fourteenth century that administrative service became an alternative route to rise into the peerage.

However, war was not only an integral part of the lives of the baronage, but also of the titled nobility and the gentry. The difference between the separate groups within the aristocracy is again one of degree. The knight or esquire could more easily forgo any participation in war than a baron, who again seems to have been able to drop out of active military service after serving for some time. The titled peers could equally choose to stay at home, though fewer did. The aristocracy was still seen as a fighting elite. Any aristocrat who choose to eschew the military responsibility of his rank lost some of his standing in the eyes of his contemporaries. War and war-like activities were the natural past-time of any aristocrat. How little other hobbies were tolerated particularly in the highest ranking men can be seen from the problems both Richard II and Edward II had. Neither of them was a typical leader in war, and particularly Edward II's interests in rowing and swimming was frowned upon by the aristocracy.²²

Another area in which the barons were invariably involved was the administration of the localities. The later middle ages were a time of increasing devolution; the control of the localities was largely in the hands of the aristocracy there and only indirectly controlled by central government. Here again a dichotomy is seen to exist between nobility and gentry: the nobility controlled the localities by controlling the gentry. The latter were the men who actually managed the counties. It was the gentry who held the offices of local administration in the counties. The baronage did in this respect differ from the gentry as they did not hold any of the local offices; like the titled peers they never

²² Prestwich, *Three Edwards*, pp. 80-81; Carpenter, *Wars of the Roses*, pp. 38-39.

became sheriff or escheator. The aristocracy were appointed to commissions in those counties in which they held considerable lands. With the increasing extent of their estates, the number of commissions to which the Lovells were appointed increased as well. On account of the sparsity of documentation, it is impossible to determine how much any baron was actually involved in local administration. While the appointments show the growing area in which the Lovells could influence local politics, the number of nominations, particular to the commissions of the peace increased generally during the fifteenth century. The appointments to the commissions of the peace and other commissions show where the centres of a family's interests were situated.²³ While the members of the commissions from the gentry received payment for attending the quarter sessions of the commissions of the peace, barons as well as titled noblemen were not compensated. The noblemen were appointed to these commissions because of their status; as the richest men in the county they could not be ignored. The lower-ranking men appointed to the commissions were usually chosen for their professional qualifications.

Barons were expected to be involved in local administration. How much they were actually active depended largely on their own interest. The difference from the greater noblemen was, however, that they could not dominate the localities. Barons did not have the resources to over-awe and retain the lesser aristocracy. However, only the richest of the magnates had this possibility. It was, additionally, not the general rule to have the greater nobility dominating the counties in which they held estates, forcing their rule on a reluctant gentry. Usually the aristocracy worked together for mutual benefit without one group exploiting the other. It is impossible to reach a general verdict of the possibilities the baronage had. The position of the barons in the administration of the localities depended on several factors: their own wealth, the interest they showed in this aspect of their lives, and also on the local situation – whether they shared the localities with other barons or a magnate. The composition and attitudes of the gentry also influenced the dynamics of local politics.

Next to the involvement in the government of the realm and in the localities, the landholding pattern of the gentry and the nobility is also seen to be significantly different. The shape of the estates of most baronial families depended on the way the family had developed. The older families, like the Lovells and the de la Zouches, held land in a large number of counties and often spread over a large part of England as well. Many 'newer' families, like the Scropes, had their estates concentrated in one area of the country, a small number of counties, bordering on each other. This was mainly due to the fact that the older families had acquired much of their estates by inheritance, often unexpected

²³ see Chapter 3, pp. 120-25.

windfalls on the death of the relative of an originally unendowed wife. It has also become clear that some families were more interested in keeping their lands compact and married women from the local gentry, while others preferred to strengthen their ties with their peers, choosing their wives from baronial families from other parts of the kingdom. The difference between those families with estates centred in one area and those whose estates were spread over a large part of the country, was not one between the gentry and the nobility but between 'old' families like the Lovells and 'new' families, like the Scropes. However, a 'new' family turned quickly into an 'old' one, as it was hardly possible to avoid inheriting lands distant from the family's own, creating a widespread and unwieldy estate.

It has been argued that some aristocrats, particularly members of the gentry, were reluctant to marry heiresses whose estates were distant from their own, as the wealth they gained was severely reduced by the difficulties arising through geographical distance: the administration of the remote lands would consume the additional profits.²⁴ It is possible that poorer knights and esquires would indeed have difficulties to manage far flung estates. Particularly in extreme cases, a knight with estates in Kent would be reluctant to marry an heiress from Cumbria. For the richer gentry and the baronage, the material gain of new estates outweighed any considerations of additional administrative costs. After all, it was not only the monetary profit land gave the lords but the prestige and status conveyed with it. Heiresses, of whatever status, were sought after by men of all ranks: Alice Chaucer, the heiress of Thomas Chaucer, attracted several men, including the Earl of Suffolk, even though her father was merely a knight. Apart from her lands, her relationship to the Beauforts was presumably also a factor which made her an attractive match.

This relationship to the great and famous men of the realm is an aspect of marriage strategies, not only of the baronage but of the entire aristocracy, which has, in my opinion, been generally neglected in recent discussion. The only occasions in which the relationships created through marriages are considered are to explain political or personal alliances, for example in times of civil war. Obviously, these links became particularly important in times of upheaval, but also in peaceful times the connection established through marriages were important and could boost the fortunes of a family, as the marriage of John VII and Maud Holland shows. In fact, most marriages that increased the Lovells estates were not actually arranged with this gain in mind, but to establish a link to an important family: the Burnells, the Hollands or the Beaumonts.

How important these new links were to the Lovells is also noticeable in the use of

²⁴ Carpenter, 'English Gentry', pp. 38-45.

heraldry. Though unfortunately little decorative heraldry has survived, the evidence shows the family using the coats-of-arms not only of the families whose lands they inherited but also of other related families, notably that of the de la Zouches.²⁵ The coats-of-arms of the families whose estates came into the hands of the Lovells were combined with the Lovell's own arms and their titles were used by the Lords Lovell. How important this claim to the arms was becomes particularly evident in the lawsuit between the Lovells and Morleys over the right to the 'Burnell' arms. The case shows that coats of arms at this time had become important not only as a device to display the membership of a particular family, but began to represent the lands of the family. The growing use and importance of heraldry was not restricted to the nobility. On the contrary, as the nobility became increasingly separated from the gentry, the use of heraldry spread even farther down into the poorer parts of the gentry.

Next to heraldry as an important way to identify openly with a particular family, the main residence and the burial place are seen to be fundamental for noble as well as gentry families to create a sense of identity. However, in this the Lovells were definitely unusual for the baronage. Though they were certainly a family who respected their renowned ancestors, it did not stop the individual Lords changing their place of residence or the religious houses they supported or chose to be buried in. No two lords whose place of burial we know wanted to be laid to rest in the same place. This great mobility or discontinuity can probably be explained by the long minorities of many of the Lords that disrupted the family's history. Those of the Lords who had been in wardship had presumably grown up with little connection to the family tradition.

Much of the life of a medieval nobleman was determined by the position he was given by birth, the wealth and position of his family. However, he could use the position into which he was put in very different ways. Much depended on his own ambition as to whether or not he exploited the different possibilities open to him. There were certain aspects of medieval life in which a baron was inevitably involved: local government and war. How much he became involved, however, depended largely on his individual ambition. He could embark on a career as a professional soldier (given that there were wars to fight) and try to make his fortune this way. Though the barons were also supposed to be involved in national politics, to fulfil their position as principal advisors of the king, it seems that it was possible not to become involved at all. Many barons were heavily involved in central government, particularly in the fifteenth century. A number of them made their careers as administrators. This was, of course, not a career exclusive to

²⁵ see Chapter 5.

barons; some magnates were also active in administration, and equally some knights were participated, often in the end rising into the peerage through their administrative service. Nor did involvement in war and local politics really set the baronage apart from the other groups of the aristocracy: both the gentry and the nobility were active in these areas as well.

An interesting aspect which has emerged from the research on the Lovell family is that most often a baron who was active in any of the areas mentioned above was generally also involved in the others. The Lords Lovell showed different degrees of ambition. John Lovell VII and Francis were highly involved in the centre of government. They also participated in the military campaigns of their time. While Francis was not particularly interested in local politics, John VII was active in this area as well. Both men's careers improved the position of the Lovells significantly. Similarly, the involvement of John III was the main cause why the Lovells became peers, even though their estates at this time were not particularly large. John VII's and Francis's involvement differed in as much as John VII position was depended much more on his own efforts, his large estates and his marriage to Maud Holland, while Francis's position was almost exclusively based on his connection with Richard III. Francis's position was therefore also much more precarious than that of his ancestor and political upheavals had a stronger impact on it. While John VII survived the usurpation of Henry IV without unscathed, Francis was much more damaged by the death of Richard III. As has been pointed out, the fact that Richard III's fall was the ultimate ruin of the family also depended on the fact that Francis chose not to come to terms with the new regime, and the fact that he disappeared without heirs. While many of the other Lords died before their ambitions could develop enough for us to be able to reconstruct them, William Lovell III is a clear example of a man who was not interested in becoming involved in the government of the realm. After a short military career, he more or less retired to his estates and, though involved in the politics of the localities, he does not seem to have been interested in dominating them.

Can the baronage be seen as a distinguishable group within the aristocracy? The clearest indication that the baronage was indeed a group separate from the other parts of the aristocracy would be if there were some signs that the barons themselves had a sense of 'group identity'. If the baronage had developed, perhaps by the fifteenth century, the notion of being different not only from the gentry but also from the titled noblemen, the question of whether or not the barons are a suborder within the aristocracy could be answered firmly in the positive. There are some indications that a hierarchy within the nobility existed, not only in parliament but also in everyday life; nobleman had to be seated according to rank, the barons lower than any of the titled peers. Sumptuary laws

described how much fur a baron was allowed to wear. However, does this preoccupation with the outward signs of hierarchy prove that the barons regarded themselves and were seen by others as a separate status group? Without the existence of personal records which indicate their own ideas and perceptions it is impossible to decide. One has to remember that the baronage, like other groups within the aristocracy, remained always a fluctuating class, with some men being elevated into it and other rising out of it. The baronage never turned into a closed caste, and it seems that their similarities with the titled magnates outweighed the difference between them. The barons were seated below the titled peers in parliament, but to deduce from this arrangement that they were a different status group would be like concluding from the seating arrangements in modern parliament that the backbenchers are in a different party than the frontbenchers. No doubt a hierarchy does exist between frontbenchers and backbenchers, but they are all members of parliament.

It has been demonstrated that while the baronage in some respects showed the same behaviour and concerns as the gentry, in others they behaved like the higher nobility. This is only to be expected from a group of men who stood in wealth and influence between the two groups (despite a few earls who were poorer than the richest barons and a few knights who were richer than the poorest barons). To come back to the three terms proposed at the beginning of the chapter, order, estate and status group, this examination of the findings of the thesis has shown that the baronage was neither an estate, as they were represented in government together with the titled peers and the clergy in the House of Lords, nor can they be described as an order. The only term that might be useful is status group. However, it seems that with the exception of their formal title there was no actual difference between the baronage and their titled peers.

Can the baronage then be seen as a separate group according to the liberal stratification theory? Looking back at the several different aspects defining groups within the aristocracy, the baronage emerges not as one but as several groups: the new barons, whose land pattern and marriage strategies were similar to those of the gentry, and the old baronial families whose estates, like those of the titled magnates, were widespread and who more often married women from different parts of the country. Similarly there were great differences between the rich barons, whose wealth and influence were similar to those of the titled nobles, and the poorer barons, who were less involved in central government and who, like the gentry, were often in subordinate positions to the magnates in the localities. Additionally, many areas of the lives of the barons were shared with the entire aristocracy. It is not really possible to see the baronage as a separate group using the theory of liberal stratification either.

Although, as Rigby points out 'the English nobility was by no means a unified or

closed legal caste,'²⁶ it also did not constitute two clearly separate groups. The most important criterion was not lineage, but property ownership.²⁷ This was the main feature that set the baronage apart not only from the magnates but also from the gentry. It was their immense wealth which enabled a few magnates to dominate the localities, but even here, only the really great titled noblemen, like John of Gaunt or Richard, Duke of York, were able to do this effectively. Lesser titled nobles, like the Earl of Westmorland and the Earl of Oxford, could not afford to spend sums of this magnitude to retain people. There were no clear differences between the different layers of the aristocracy, as far as their general outlook on life was concerned. Obviously, the possibilities changed depending on the wealth of the family. Their perspective on local and national politics depended on the extent of their estates. But most of this was more a difference of degrees than a fundamental discrepancy. The greater the difference in wealth, the greater the difference in life-style; the great magnate did indeed live a life very different from that of a small esquire, but it is difficult, if not impossible, to point out clear demarkation lines, except following those of titles and positions given to the men in the middle ages. In the end, the only real definition is that the baronage consisted of the men – and their families – who received individual summonses to parliament but did not hold an additional title.

²⁶ Rigby, p. 202.

²⁷ *ibid*, p. 204.

Appendix 1: Biographies

Eustace de Brétuil

Eustace de Brétuil was the illegitimate son of William de Brétuil. He married Isabel, an illegitimate daughter of Henry I. After the retreat of William Gael to Brittany he held the lands of his father up to his participation in the 1118-19 rebellion. His father-in-law, Henry I, ordered the mutilation of Eustace's daughters, after Eustace had mutilated other hostages. Isabel tried to kill her father but did not succeed. Eustace remained in control over Pacy; Ivry was granted to Robert Goel; the main part of the honour of Brétuil went with the marriage of Amice Gael to Robert Beaumont, Earl of Leicester. Amice Gael had previously been engaged to William Atheling.

Waleran d'Ivry

Eldest son of William Lovell I and Matilda Beaumont. He joined the rebellion of the young King Henry in 1173, but made peace with the King in 1175 at the latest.¹ He seems to have died in about 1177 when the castle of Ivry was handed over to Henry II.² With his wife, Reine, Waleran had two sons, Robert and Goel, and a daughter Maud. Together with his father he surrendered the lands in England to his younger brother William Lovell II. Robert, his heir, surrendered the Castle of Ivry to Philip Augustus in 1200 and was rewarded by the French King. He was still serving the French King in 1221. His son, another Waleran, married Agnes whose first husband had been William, Viscount of Melun. Waleran received this titled after his marriage to Agnes. Their son, Robert who was also called Robin, succeeded when still a minor. His son, again called Waleran, accompanied Louis IX on his crusade. He married Marguerite, daughter of Pierre de Moret. Their son, Robert, is the last descendent of Waleran d'Ivry, whose parenthood is certain. The following lords of Ivry, may or may not be related to the family.³

Roger the Stammerer (Roger le Bègue)

Roger the Stammerer was the third son of Ascelin Goel and Isabel, an illegitimate

¹ *Complete Peerage*, vol. viii, p. 212

² *ibid.*, p. 213.

³ Depoin, pp. 475-76.

daughter of William de Brétuil. Together with William de Pacy, the son of Eustace, son of William de Brétuil, and Count Frederick he attacked Count Waleran Beaumont's castle of Ouche, but failed to take it.⁴ He apparently – unlike his brother – supported the Angevin side during the 'Civil War'. King Stephen led an army against him and captured Roger's castles of Grossœvre in the Évrecin during this conflict.⁵

John Lovell of Snotescombe

John Lovell of Snotescombe was the elder, illegitimate son of John Lovell II. He accompanied his younger brother John Lovell III on campaign to Wales. Later he filed *assize of mort d'ancestor* against his half-brother. He was appointed to a commission of oyer and terminer in November 1299,⁶ and remained active in politics.⁷ In 1301 he was working as a judge.⁸ It is possible that he was the John Lovell who went overseas as Edward I's envoy.⁹

Giles Lovell of Snotescombe was a tenant of Edward, Prince of Wales.¹⁰ He was dead and his lands in the Prince's hand in 1361, when dower was assigned to his widow Emma.¹¹ His heir was a minor.

William Lovell

William Lovell was a younger son of John Lovell III. In 1313 he was overseas with Aymer de Valence, as were several de la Zouches.¹² In the same year he was granted a fine for marrying without licence.¹³ William was captured by the Scots during the Battle of Bannockburn.¹⁴ William Lovell went overseas several times with his lord, Aymer de Valence.¹⁵ He was one of the men left behind as hostage, when Aymer de Valence was

⁴ *Orderic Vitalis*, vol. iv, p. 474-77.

⁵ *ibid.*, vol. iv, p. 491.

⁶ *CPR*, 1292-1301, p. 477.

⁷ *CPR*, 1292-1301, pp. 29, 477; *CPR*, 1301-1307, p. 349; *CPR*, 1307-1313, p. 546; Commissions of oyer and terminer, *CPR*, 1307-1313, pp. 42, 420, 421, 423, 545.

⁸ *Calendar of Chancery Warrants*, A.D. 1244-1326, p. 133.

⁹ *CCR*, 1302-1307, p. 105, see also Chapter 2, p. 47.

¹⁰ *Register of Edward the Black Prince*, vol. iv, p. 57-58.

¹¹ *ibid.*, pp. 394, 404, 406.

¹² *CPR*, 1307-1313, p. 581.

¹³ *CPR*, 1313-1317, p. 26.

¹⁴ Phillips, p. 75.

¹⁵ *CPR*, 1313-1317, p. 672; *CPR*, 1317-21, pp. 45, 367.

taken captive by Jean de Lamouilly.¹⁶ It seems that Aymer de la Zouche and William Lovell were held captive for longer than the other four hostages.¹⁷ After the Earl of Pembroke's death William joined the younger Despenser.¹⁸ In 1332 he received Northamptonshire and the Castle of Northampton as sheriff.¹⁹

John Haudlo, second husband of Maud Burnell

Sir John Haudlo had participated in the Scottish campaigns of Edward I, though it seems only reluctantly. In 1306 he apparently left the army without permission, but he was pardoned a year later. He married Joan FitzNiel, with whom he had at least one son, Richard. After her death he married Maud Burnell, widow of John Lovell IV. Perhaps as a result of this marriage he was occasionally summoned to Great Councils. With his second wife he had at least two sons: Nicholas, who inherited his mother's estates; and Thomas, who predeceased his father.²⁰

John Haudlo's son, Richard, died only two years after his father. He had three children; one son, Edmund who died without heirs; and two daughters, Margaret and Elizabeth. The fact that in the medieval aristocracy everybody was indeed somehow related to everybody else, may be exemplified by the story of Haudlo's descendants. Elizabeth Haudlo married Edmund de la Pole, the uncle of Michael de la Pole. Her daughter, another Elizabeth, married Ingram Bryan, presumably related to Philippa and Elizabeth Bryan, and John Golafre, an associate of the Lovells of Titchmarsh.²¹

Philippa Lovell

Philippa Lovell, a daughter of John VII, married Sir John Dinham after 1402²² and before 1406, when their son, another John Dinham, was born. John Dinham was a

¹⁶ The other men were: Aymer de la Zouche, Constantine Mortimer, John Stapelton Aymer's illegitimate son Henry, and John Merlyn.

¹⁷ Philipps, p. 267.

¹⁸ Philipps, p. 257.

¹⁹ *CFR*, 1327-1337, p. 333.

²⁰ *Complete Peerage*, vol. vi, pp. 398-400.

²¹ Roskell, *House of Commons*, vol. iii, p. 199.

²² According to the *Complete Peerage*, vol. iv, p. 376, she was the daughter of John Lovell VIII and Eleanor de la Zouche, but this would make her too young to become the mother of John Dinham Jr in 1406. Moreover, the family pedigree by William Worcester has her among the children of John Lovell VII 'Philippa sponsatam domino Johannem Denham milites', Magdalen College, Oxford, Adds. 99.

retainer of the Earl of Devon.²³ According to the *Complete Peerage* Philippa Lovell married Nicholas Broughton after her husband's death in 1428 and died on 15 May 1465.²⁴

Ralph Lovell

Ralph Lovell was a younger son of John Lovell VII and Maud Holland. He graduated from Oxford University.²⁵

Henry Lovell

A Henry Lovell, who was said to be the younger son of William Lovell III, was buried in "Crossed Friar's Church" Aldgate Ward (London),²⁶ presumably the church of the cruciated friars or Crosiers.²⁷

Fulk Lovell

Fulk Lovell, whose relation to the Lovells is uncertain, was elected bishop of London after the death of John de Chishull in 1280 but resigned; Richard of Gravesend was elected instead.²⁸

Roger Lovell

Roger Lovell, who may be related to the Lovells of Titchmarsh, was Henry III's proctor at the papal court.²⁹

²³ M. Cherry, 'The Courteney Earls of Devon. Formation and Disintegration of a Late Medieval Aristocratic Affinity', *Southern History* 1 (1979), p. 93.

²⁴ *Complete Peerage*, vol. iv, p. 376-7. Francis Lovell was closely associated with Thomas Broughton.

²⁵ Emden, vol. ii, p. 1166.

²⁶ John Stow, *A Survey of London by John Stow reprinted from the Text of 1603*, Charles L. Kingsford (ed.) (Oxford, 1908), vol. i, p. 147.

²⁷ David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales* (London, 1971), p. 210.

²⁸ see *Annales Londonienses*, p. 89.

²⁹ Powicke, vol ii, 423, n. 3.

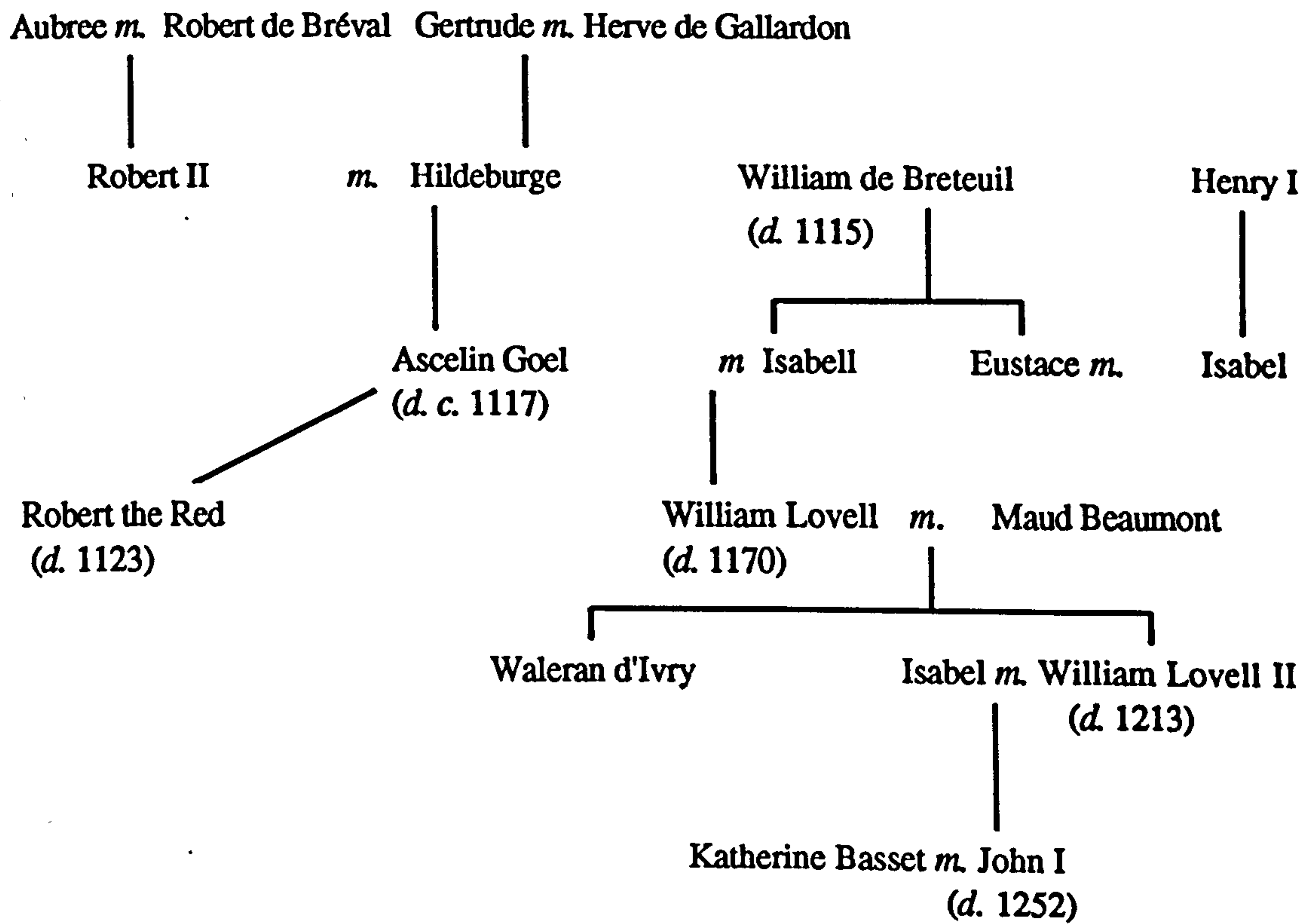
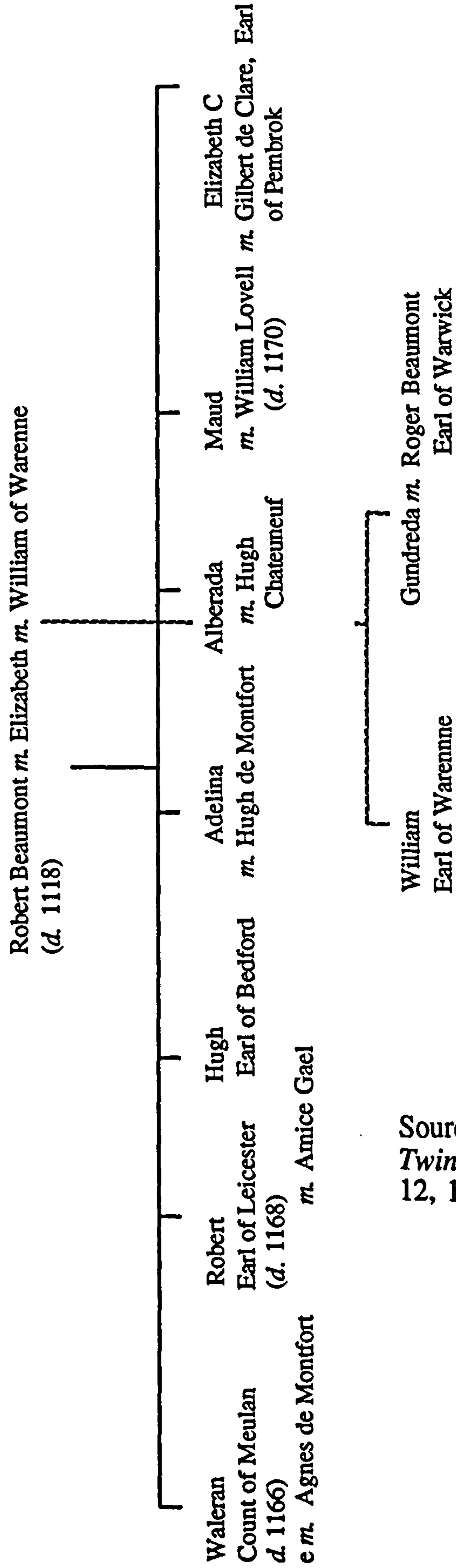
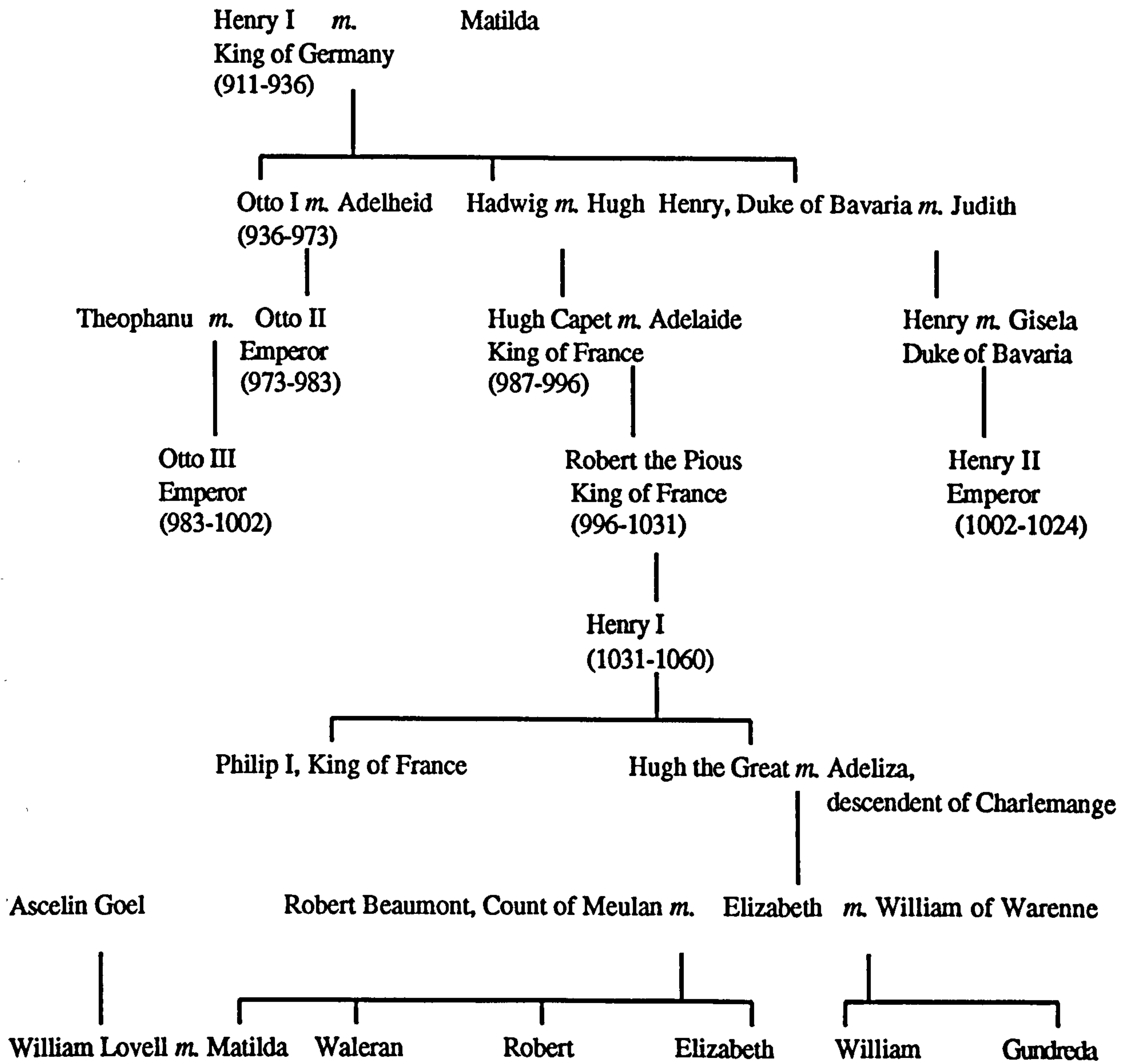
Appendix 2: GenealogiesFigure 1: The Lovells in Normandy

Figure 2: The Beaumont Family



Source: David Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 10
12, 1617.

Figure 3: The Beaumont Ancestors



see above, Figure 2:

Figure 4: The Basset-Lovell Connection

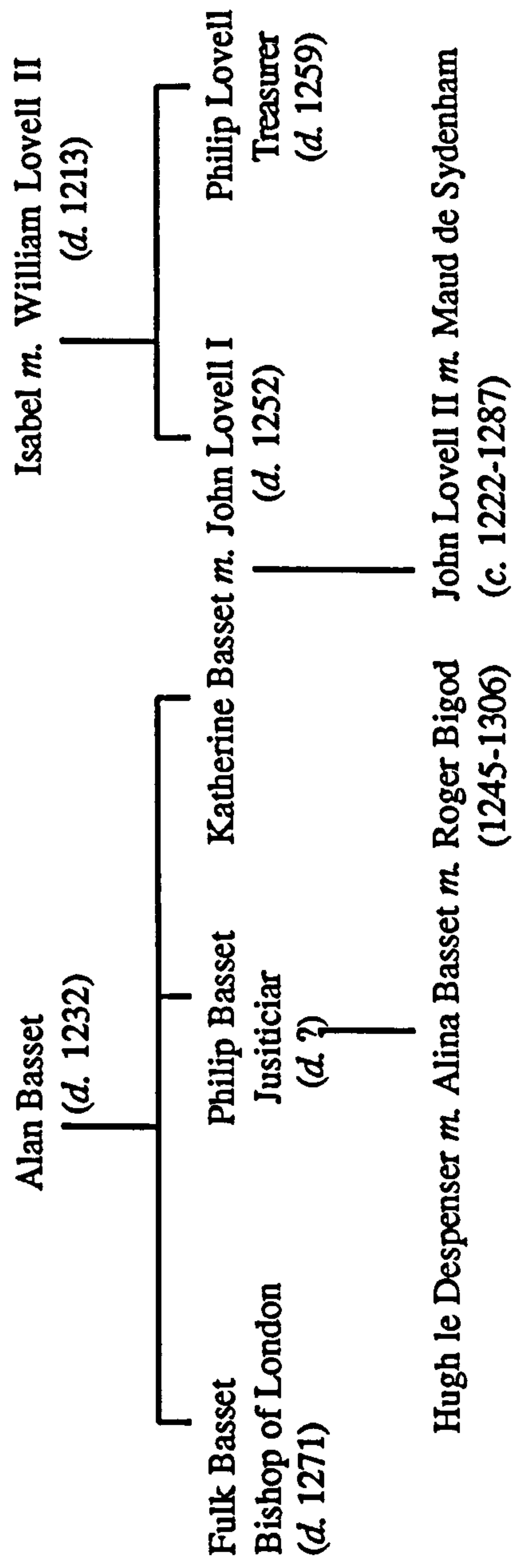
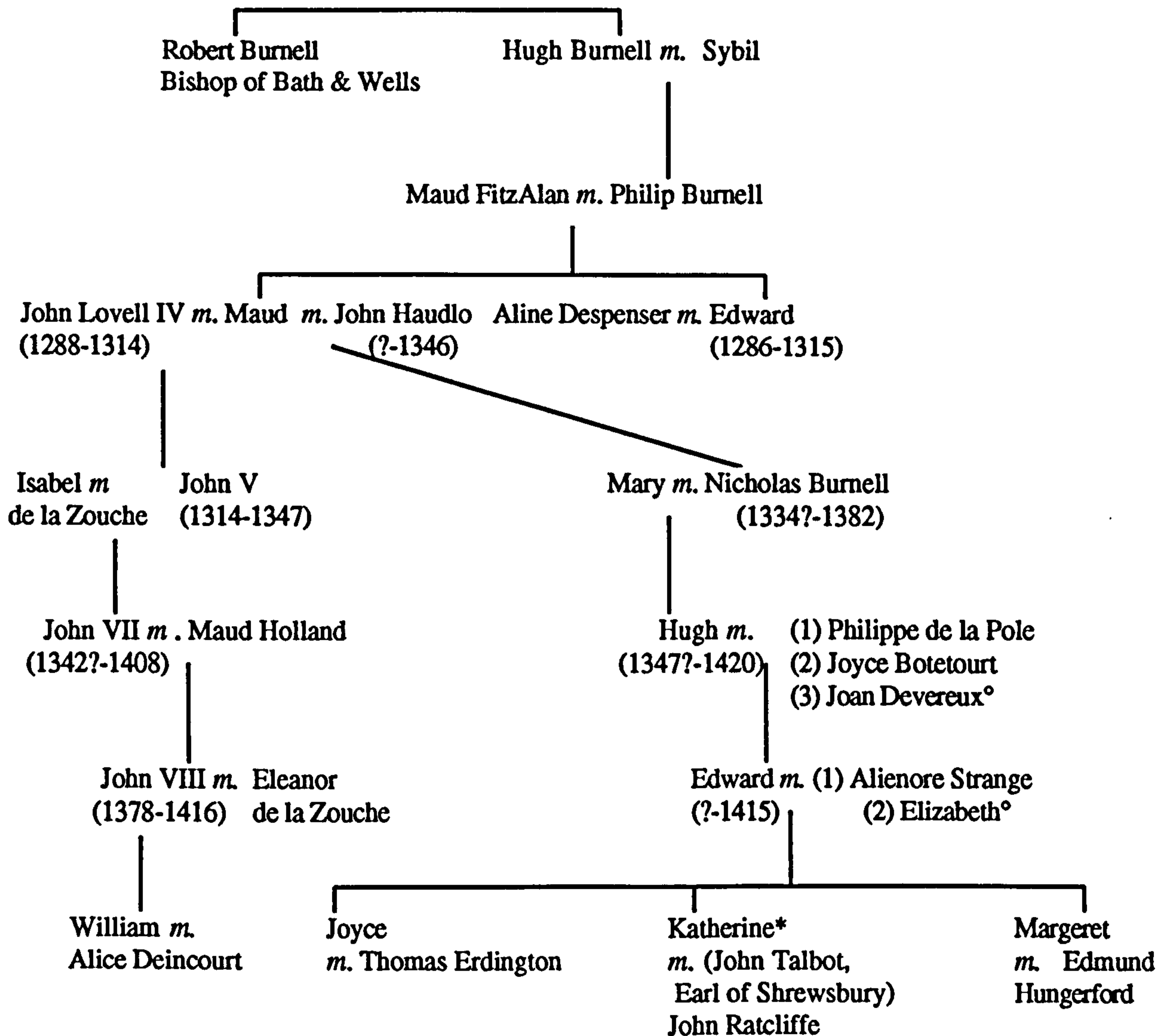


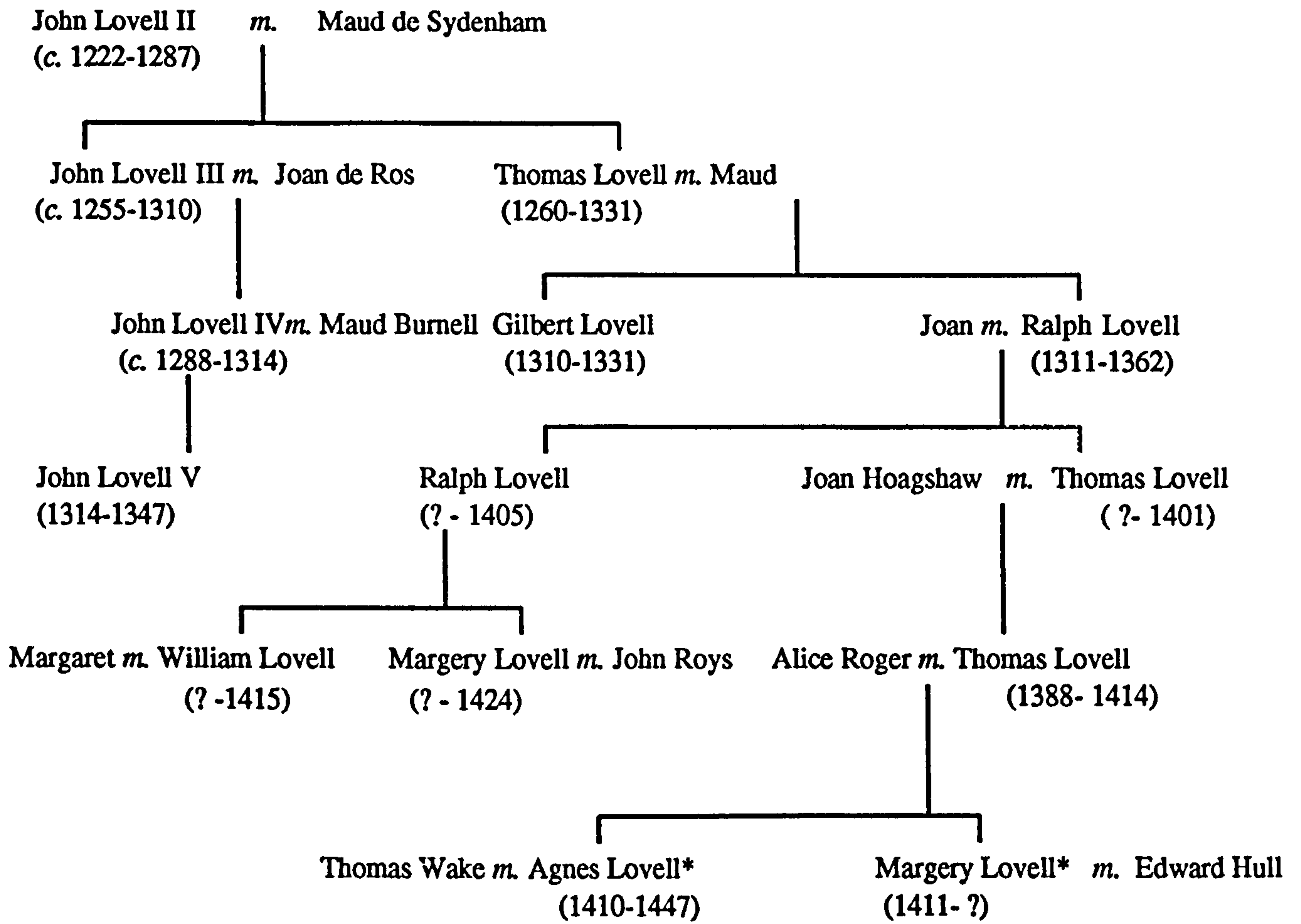
Figure 6: The Burnell Family



° Unfortunately the article in the *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, p. 235, on which this pedigree is based does not specify which of the wives is the mother of the offspring.

* according to the *Complete Peerage*, vol. ii, pp. 435-6, she married John Ratcliffe as her first husband and John Talbot as her second husband before 1421. However, this seems unlikely.

Figure 7: The Lovells of Titchwell (according to Edward Hull).



* For a discussion of the actual relationship between Agnes and Margery Lovell and the Lovells of Titchmarch see P.S. Lewis, 'Sir John Fastolf's Lawsuit over Titchwell, 1448-55', *Historical Journal* 1 (1958), 1-20.

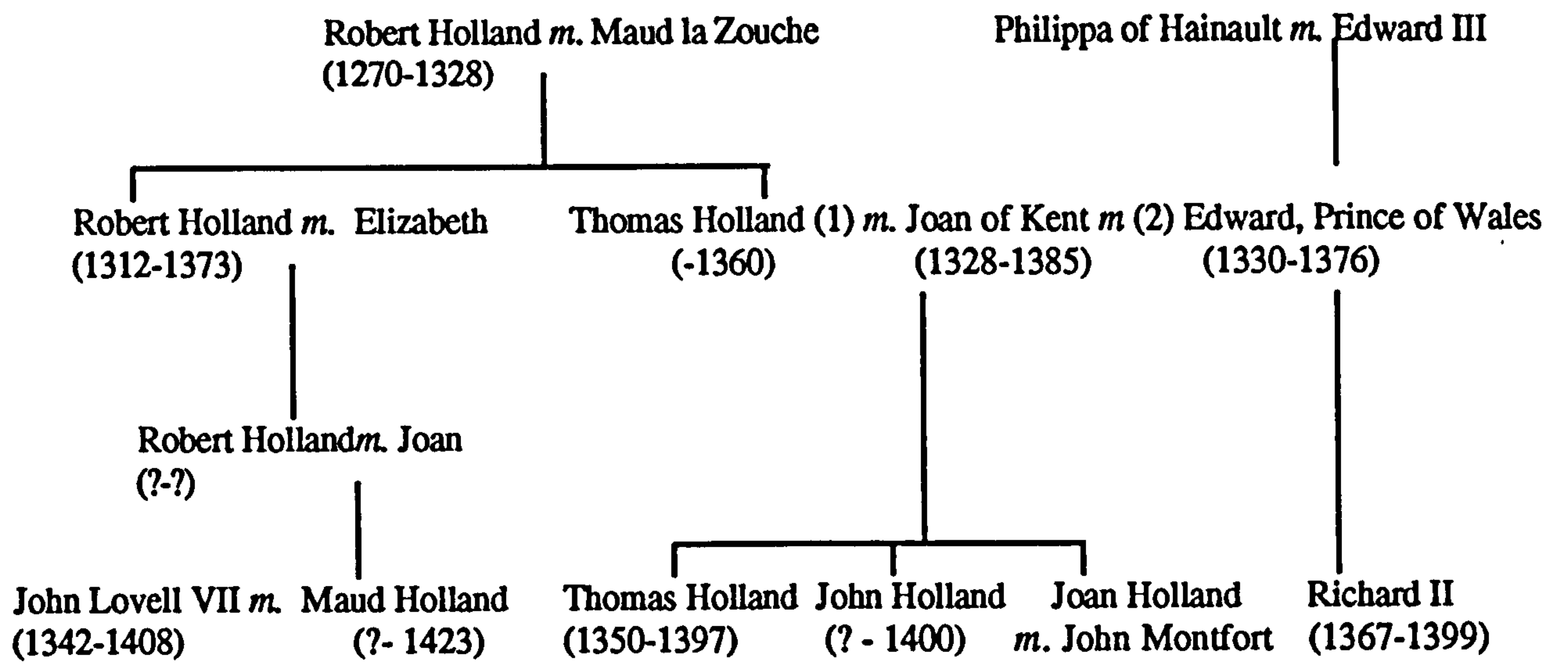
Figure 8: The Holland Family

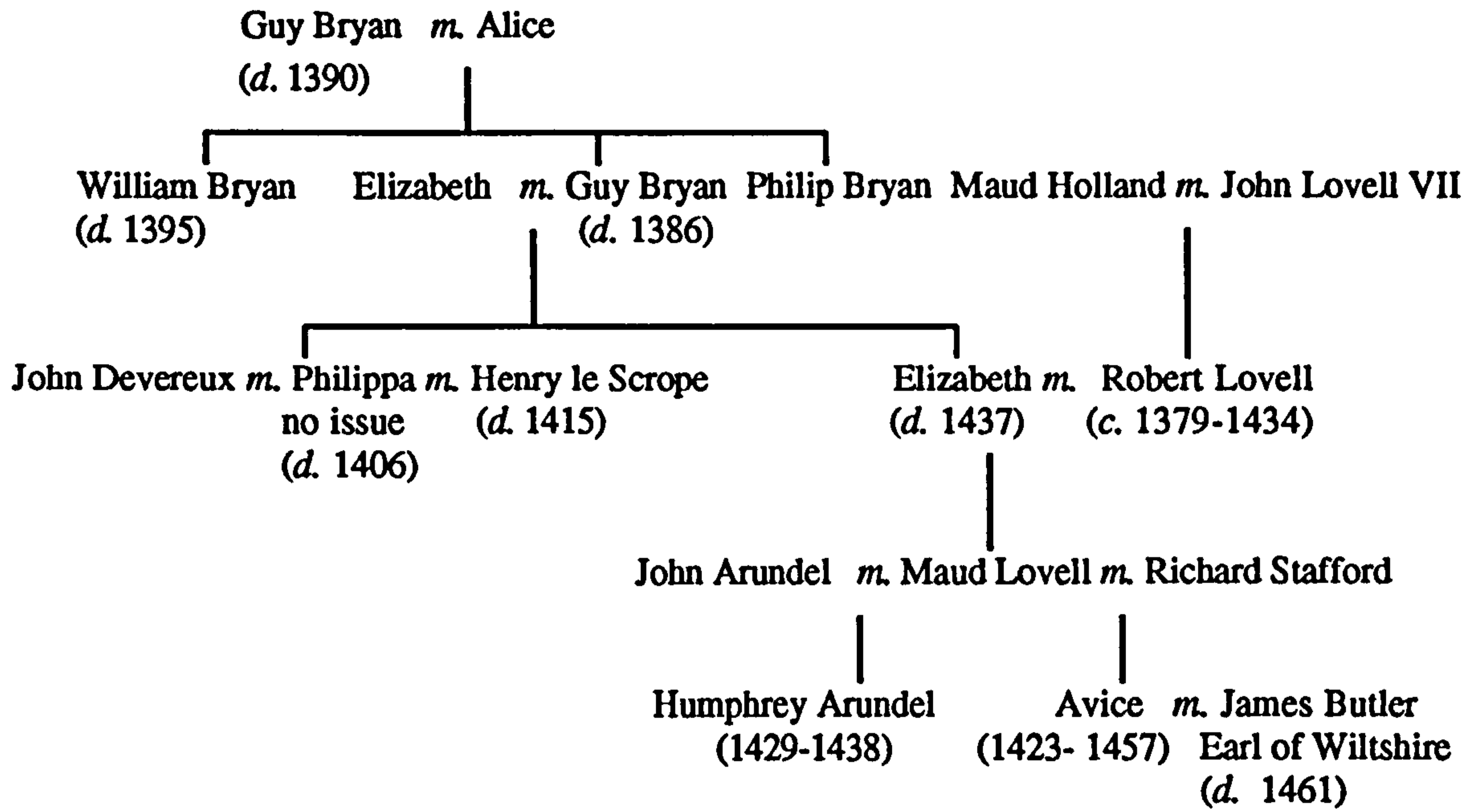
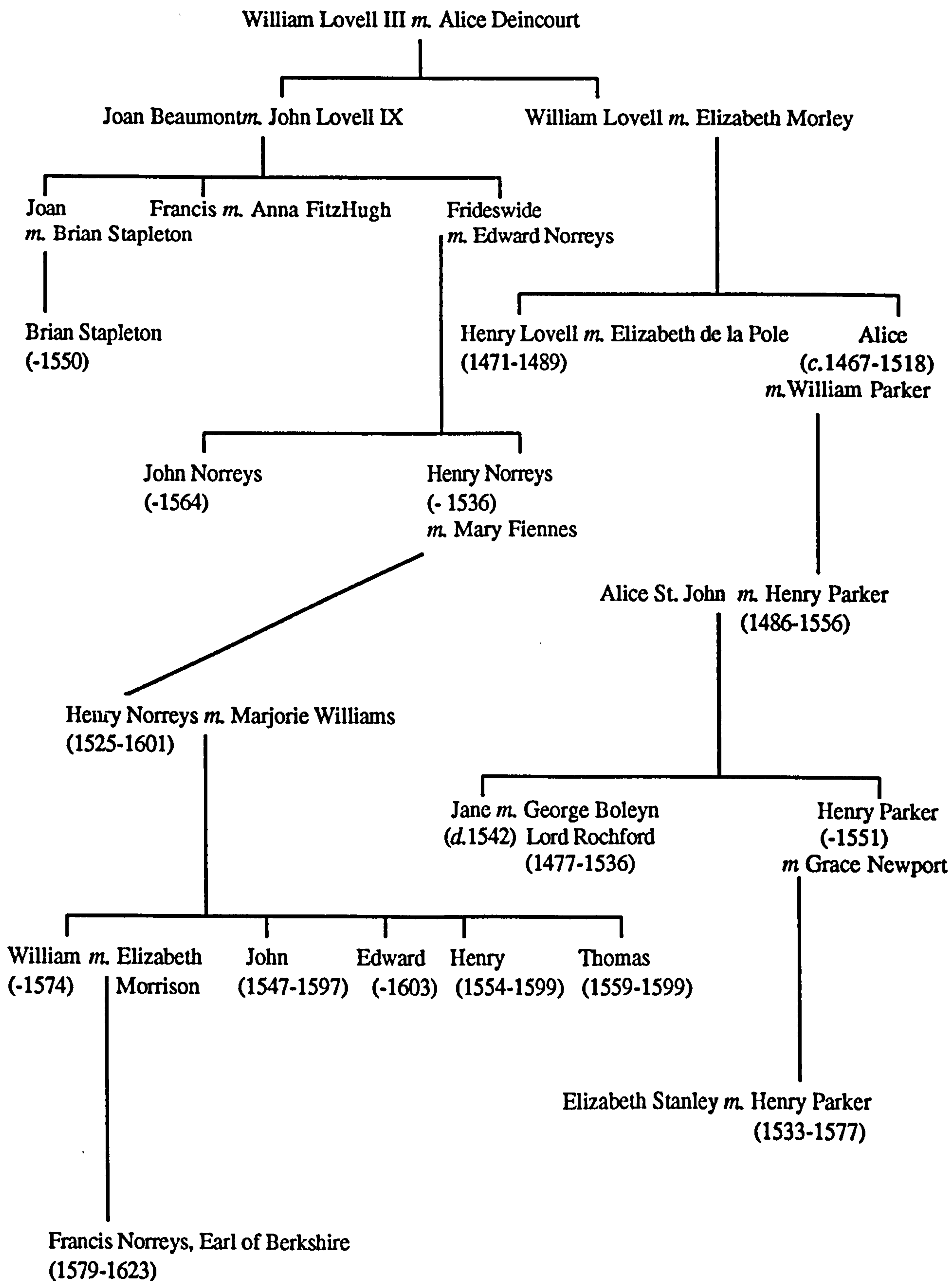
Figure 9: The Bryan Family

Figure 10: The Lovell Descendants

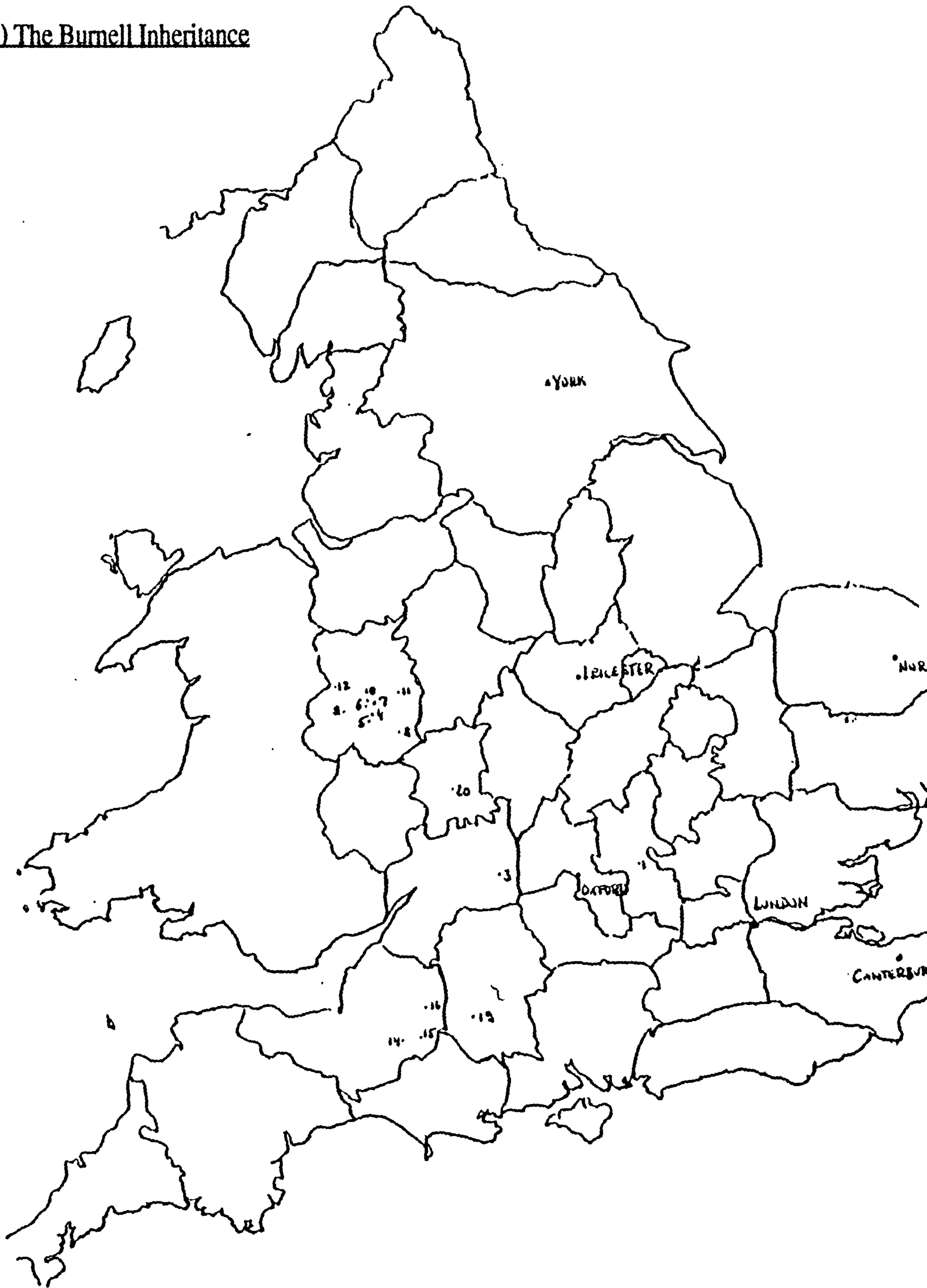


Appendix 3: Maps

1) The Lovell Estates in 1297



2) The Burnell Inheritance



No.	Name	Specification
Buckinghamshire		
1	Broughton	manor
2	Great Crawley	manor
Gloucestershire		
3	Little Rissington	manor
Shropshire		
4	Acton Burnell	manor
5	Acton Pigott	manor
6	Condover	manor
7	Cound	land
8	Eudon Burnell	manor
9	Longden	manor
10	Norton	manor
11	Wellington	manor
12	Woolstaston	manor
13	Knight's Enham	manor
Somerset		
14	Sparkford	manor
15	Chirton	manor
16	Upton Noble	manor
Staffordshire		
17	Kinver	manor
Warwickshire		
18	Broughton	manor
Wiltshire		
19	Upton Lovell	manor
Worcestershire		
20	Upton Snodsbury	manor
21	Wick Burnell	manor

Map-Number	Name, county	Specification
Lancashire		
1	Up Holland	manor, patronage of priory
2	Hals	manor
3	Horell	manor
4	Dalton	manor
5	Lancaster	7s. rent
6	Samlesbury	manor
7	Leck	advowson
8	Walton	manor
9	Wigan	manor
10	Nether Kellet Chorlegh	manor a wood called 'Halegh'
Leicestershire		
11	Bagworth and Thornton	manor messuage called 'castle', ponds (not restocked), pasture called 'Lyndrych' (B), close of underwood called 'Thorniclos' (T)
12	Shepshead	third part of the manor a messuage, 80 a. land, 5 a meadow and £9 rent
13	Leicester	6s. 8d. rent
14*	Laughton	advowson
15*	King's Norton	manor
16*	Carlton Curlieu	manor
Northamptonshire		
17	Brackley	manor
18	Hals	manor
19	King's Sutton	manor
20 ¹	Thorpe Waterville	manor
21	Achurch	manor
22	Aldwinkle	manor, 5 a. wood, advowson advowson of St. Peter
23	Chelveston	manor
24	Holland's Manor	
Lincolnshire		
25	Croxton	patronage of St. John the Evangelist, 20 a land "as glebe"?
Staffordshire		
26	Yoxhale	manor, incl. park with deer and fishery
Rutland		
27	Ridlington	manor
Warwickshire		
28*	Solihull	manor
29*	Seckington	manor
30*	Halford	mill
Wiltshire		

31*	Wanborough	manor
Oxfordshire		
32*	Chinnor	third of manor
34*	Sibford Gower	overlordship
35*	Shipton	manor
Derbyshire		
	Shalops	smaller portions of land
	Whodlam	
	Stondale	
	Foxlow	

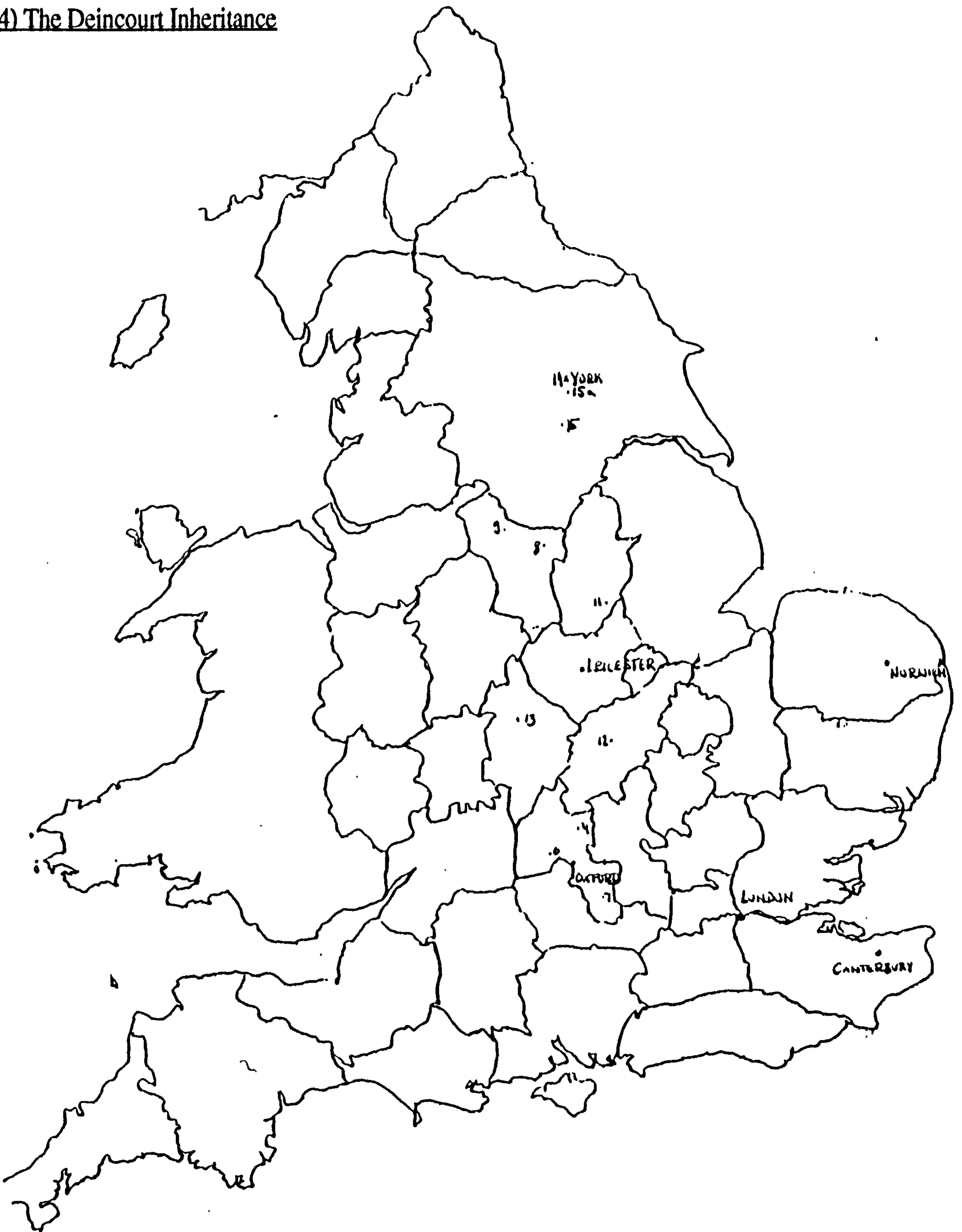
¹ The manor was held in tail male. It was granted much later (1484) to Francis Lovell

* Estates of the de la Zouches of Ashby-de-la Zouche

Lovell-Estates before 1372

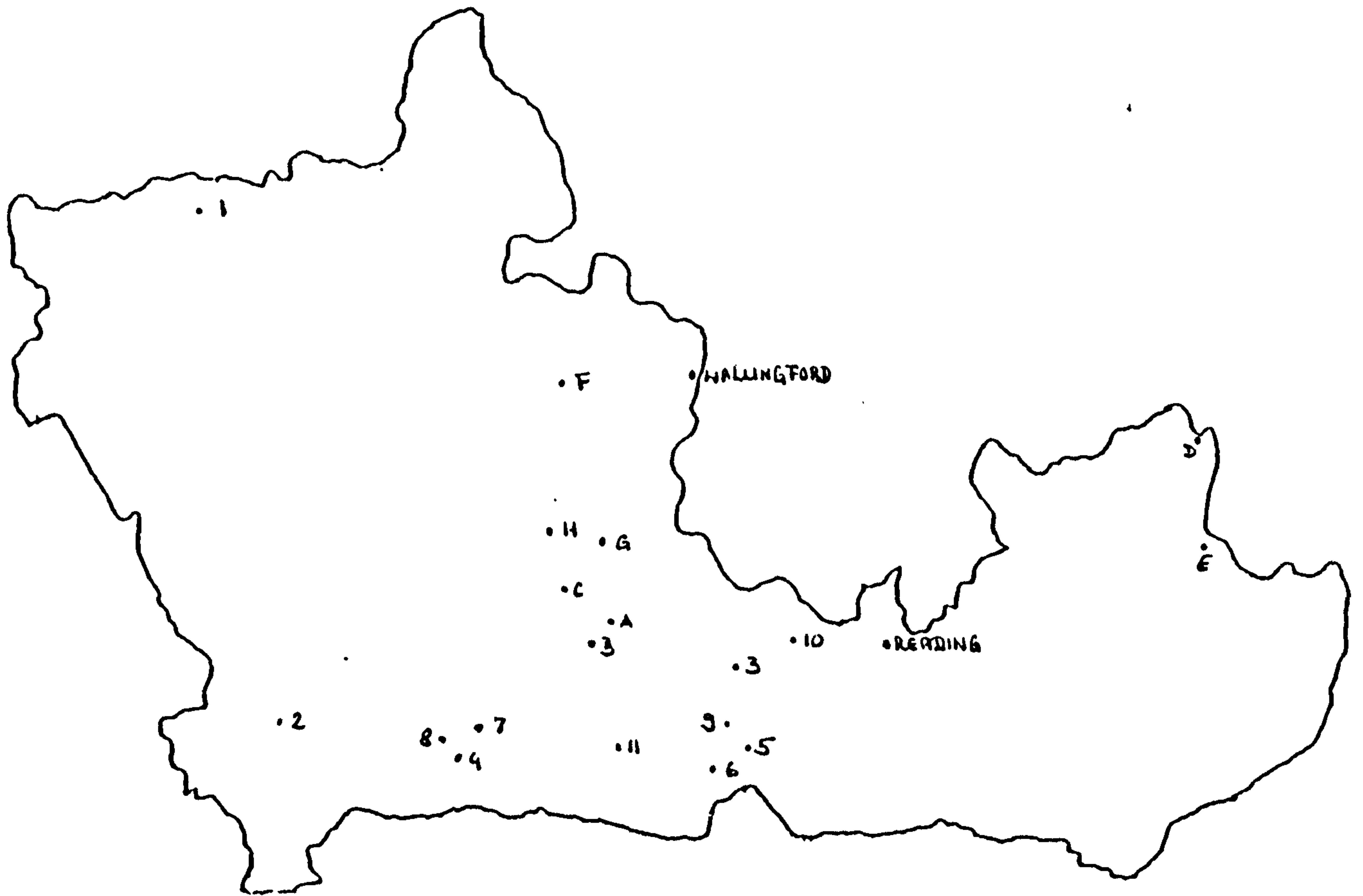
Norfolk		
A	Docking	manor
B	Southmer	manor + advowson
Northamptonshire		
C	Titchmarsh	manor + advowson
Oxfordshire		
D	Minster Lovell 'Sechehythe'	manor + advowson a toft of reeds
Somerset		
F	Badgeworth	manor
G	Chiriton 'Lokestone'	manor advowson
I	Sparkford	manor
K	Upton Noble	hamlet
Warwickshire		
L	Downton in Ardern	manor
M	Castle Bromwich	manor
Wiltshire		
N	Blunsdon Gay	manor
O	Elcombe	manor
P	Uffcot	land
Hampshire		
Q	Knight's Enham	manor
Worcextershire		
R	Henley William	manor
S	Hill in Eastham	
manor		

4) The Deincourt Inheritance



No.	Name	Specification
Buckinghamshire		
1	Wooburn Deincourt	manor
2	Great Crawlay	manor
Oxfordshire		
3	South Newington	manor
4	Fringford	manor
5	Somerton	manor
6	Cogges	manor
7	Rotherfield Grey	manor
Derbyshire		
8	Elmeton	manor
9	Helmsfield	manor
Nottinghamshire		
10	East Bridgham	manor
11	Granby	manor
Northamptonshire		
12	Duston	manor
Wawickshire		
13	Solihull	manor + lordship
Yorkshire		
City of York		
14	Askam Brian	manor
East Riding		
15	Stillingfleet	manor
North Riding		
16	Bedale	manor
West Riding		
17	Upton	manor

5) The Lovell Estates in Berkshire



- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | Carswell |
| 2 | Denford |
| 3 | Englefield |
| 4 | Newbury |
| 5 | Ufton Nervet |
| 6 | Padworth |
| 7 | Shaw |
| 8 | Speenhamland |
| 9 | Ufton Robert |
| 10 | Sulhamstead Bannister
Sulhamstead Abbots |
| 11 | Midgham |

The Norreys Estates:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| A | Yattendon |
| B | Frilsham |
| C | Hamstead Norris |
| D | Cookham |
| E | Bray |
| F | Fulscot |
| G | Aldworth |
| H | Compton |

Appendix 4: Finances

1) Oxford, Magdalen College, 36/9(Estate Papers) and Misc. 315.

<u>Estate Papers 36/9:</u>	£	s.	d.
Yoxhale (Staffordshire)	51	0	0
Bagworth (Leicestershire)	69	2	8
Shepshead (Leicestershire)	15	15	5
Hambleton (Rutland)	45	9	0
Titchmarsh (Northamptonshire)	59	0	0
	<u>240</u>	7	1

Misc. 315

income:	£	s.	d.
Titchmarsh (Northamptonshire)	91	4	4
Hals (Northamptonshire)	25	19	6
Brackley (Northamptonshire)	18	6	0
Hinton-on-the-Hedges (Northamptonshire)	32	11	9
King's Sutton (Northamptonshire)	72	0	0
Maidford (Northamptonshire)	1	0	0
Bagworth (Northamptonshire)	17	8	7
Yoxhale (Staffordshire)	53	8	4
Hambledon (Rutland)	48	0	0
Broughton (Buckinghamshire)	27	0	0
Finmere (Oxfordshire)	16	0	0
	<u>415</u>	18	8

expenses:	£	s.	d.
Brackley (Northamptonshire)	0	6	0
Hinton-on-the-Hedges (Northamptonshire)	9	4	11
Ochecote ?	4	0	0
Bec ?	0	8	3
fees (feoda soluta?)	4	0	0
baron's court	1	10	0
expensu ffore (?)	0	0	8
Liberæ fore	1	0	0
money for the lord's coffers [Lib. denari ad coffrum domini]	343	0	0
money for the lord's chamber	3	16	0
	<u>367</u>	5	10

2) Income from land, John Lovell VII (C1pm, vol. xix, nos. 404-17)
and Maud Holland (C139/6 no. 51)

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<u>Berkshire:</u>						
Denford	2	0	0			
various lands, tenements in various places	2	0	0			
<u>Buckinghamshire:</u>						
Broughton by Aylesbury	20	0	0			
<i>1/3 knight's fee</i>				1	13	4
<u>Derby:</u>						
<i>lands in divers places</i>				1	7	10
<u>Dorset:</u>						
1 mes. and 40 acr.; Brockhampton	20	0	0			
Sutton Waldron	13	6	8			
<u>Leicestershire:</u>						
Bagworth and Thornton	20	0	0			
<i>1/3 Sheephead</i>	5	0	0			
a mesuage in Lincoln	0	6	8			
<i>5 knight's fees, and several parts lands</i>				27	9	4
				12	19	4
<u>Lincolnshire:</u>						
advowson St. John, Croxton with 20 a as 'glebe'	13	6	8			
<u>London:</u>						
1 mansion and 12 shops	10	0	0			
<u>Norfolk:</u>						
Docking and Southmere	6	13	4			
<u>Northamptonshire:</u>						
advowson; Aldwincle	6	13	4			
Brackley	3	6	8			
<i>advowson of St. Jacob and St. James chantry of St. Leonard</i>				3	6	8
				2	0	0
Edgcote	16	0	0			
Hals	3	6	8			
Hinton-on-the-Hedges	13	6	8			
King's Sutton	18	0	2			
Hundred of King's Sutton	4	1	4			
1 mes and 1 caracute; Maidford	0	10	0			
Titchmarsh	13	6	8			
2 parts of another manor in Titchmarsh	2	13	4			
<i>advowson in Titchmarsh knight's fees</i>				0	8	0
				34	4	0

cont.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Oxfordshire:						
Brize Norton	2	0	0			
3 tenements and 3 virgates; Chadlington	0	6	8			
Chilson	0	6	8			
Ducklington with advowson	5	0	0			
Minster Lovell	13	6	8			
lands	0	13	4			
1/2 virgate; Shorthampton	0	2	0			
2 views of frankpledge in Shibford				0	4	0
5 acr. assart; Wychwood forrest <i>knight's fees</i>	nil			14	7	10
<u>Rutland:</u>						
Great Hambleton (for life)	26	13	4			
<u>Shropshire:</u>						
reversion of land in Romsley	(1	0	0)			
<u>Somerset:</u>						
<i>advowson in Coxton</i>				2	0	0
North Cheriton	5	6	8			
Sparkford with advowson	10	0	0			
Upton Noble						
<u>Staffordshire:</u>						
Yoxhall	7	0	1			
<u>Warwickshire:</u>						
3 knight's fees, 1/3, 1/2 and 1/6 of a <i>knight's fee</i>				16	5	0
<u>Wiltshire:</u>						
Axford and Stitchcombe	5	0	0			
Bridzor				1	8	8
Elcombe	20	0	0			
6 mes; Devizes	1	6	8			
<i>land; Hurdecote</i>				1	12	3
1/3 Mannington and reversion of remaining 2/3	1	6	8			
Knook	5	0	0			
1/2 Pulshot	6	13	4			
4 mes and 5 virg, Potterne and Marston	1	10	0			
Upton Lovell with advowson, Wardour and Knighton	40	0	0			
Salthrop	2	13	4			
Westlecott	5	0	0			
lands in divers places	5	0	0			
	347	12	7			
				119	6	5
	476	19	0			

3) Income from land, William Lovell III (C139/158 no. 28; E149/129 no. 2)Alice Deincourt (C140/47 no. 64; C140/52 no. 31)

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<u>Buckinghamshire:</u>						
lands				3	0	0
Woburn Deincourt				23	0	0
village of Woburn Deincourt				0	3	4
<u>Essex:</u>						
(Polley's manor Great Baxtim – enfeoffed)						
<u>Gloucestershire:</u>						
Resingdon				12	0	0
<u>Kent:</u>						
lands	0	0	10			
<u>Leicestershire:</u>						
lands	1	6	8			
knights' fees	38	0	7			
<u>Northamptonshire:</u>						
lands	7	5	4			
Duston				6	0	0
Titchmarsh				21	0	0
Sutton				10	0	0
<u>Oxfordshire:</u>						
knights' fees	24	1	1			
lands	2	6	0			
lands				2	10	0
Cogges, Herdwick, Rotherfeld Gray, Compton and 1/2 Fringford				3	6	8
<u>Shropshire:</u>						
land, Bridgenorth	0	4	0			
garden, Shrewsbury	0	2	0			
<u>Surrey:</u>						
Bermundesley	2	0	0			
Ketterhuth	2	0	0			
<u>Warwickshire:</u>						
Doulton also known as Wharton in Solyhull						
knights' fees	19	12	8			
Bednerford				10	0	0
Kingswood				4	0	0
Wallingford				10	3	4
Whitechurch				16	5	2
land				1	10	0

cont.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
<u>Wiltshire:</u>						
<i>land, Blakerow</i>				16	0	0
<i>Bridzor</i>				6	13	4
<i>Chilton</i>				7	6	8
<i>Elcumbe</i>				20	0	0
<i>Uffcote</i>				4	0	0
(Upton Lovell – enfeoffed)						
<i>Wanborough</i>				43	0	0
(Wardour – enfeoffed)						
<i>lands, Westlecott</i>				10	0	0
<u>Yorkshire:</u>						
<i>Bedale</i>				20	0	0
<i>Stillingfleet</i>				6	13	4
<i>Upton</i>				0	60	8
	86	19	1			
				256	12	6
	343	11	7			

4) Land held by Maud Holland in jointureBerkshire:Englefield* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Padworth* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Sulhamstead Abbots* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Sulhamstead Banaster* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Ufton Nervet* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Ufton Robert* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Dorset:Sutton Waldron^o *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Brockhampton* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Oxfordshire:Minster Lovell *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 415Northamptonshire:Brackley with Hals *CFR*, 1413-1422, p. 107-8King's Sutton *CFR*, 1413-1422, p. 107-8Titchmarsh *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 415smaller lands *CFR*, 1413-1422, p. 107-8Wiltshire:Axford* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 414Chilton Foliat* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 422Elcombe *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 414Knighton^o *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Knook^o *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Salthrop* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 422Sherston* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 422Somerford* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 422Stitchcombe* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 414Upton Lovell *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Wardour^o *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 413Westlecott* *CCR*, 1405-1409, p. 422

with the advowson

manor and hundred
with the advowsonfor life by gift of Richard
Fodefor life by gift of Richard
Fode
with advowson

* first mentioned in jointure

^o St. Martin estates purchased from Thomas Calston

5) Lands held by Alice Deincourt in jointure: CCR, 1429-1435, pp. 57-58.Buckinghamshire:

Broughton reversion of manor

Lancashire:

Dalton

Hals

Horell

Leck

advowson

Nether Kellet

Skelmersdale

Samlesbury

Upholland

Leicestershire:

Shepshead

Northamptonshire:

Hinton-on-the-Hedges

King's Sutton

Titchmarsh

reversion of manor and
advowsonOxfordshire:

Brize Norton

Ducklington

Minster Lovell

with the exception of 5 a.

Staffordshire:

Yoxhale

with the advowson

Wiltshire:

Bridzor

Chilton Foliat

reversion of manor

Hurdecote

Knook

Upton Lovell

with the advowson

Wardour

Westlecott

reversion of manor

6) Land held by Joan Beaumont at the time of her death

(all information from the inquisitions post mortem if not marked differently)

Berkshire:

Denford

Pole

Chester:Nantwich¹Gloucestershire:

Basingdon

one mesuage, 4 virgates land and 12
acres meadow

Woodford

Northamptonshire:

Brackley with Hals

Oxfordshire:Brize Norton^o

Ducklington

Little Minster

Minster Lovell^o

Calthorp

advowson

Shropshire:

Abbeton

Eudon Burnell

Acton Burnell

Holdgate

Cantlop

Millichop

Chetton

Rushbury

Clee St. Margaret

Sutton

Corston

Uppington

Cound

Wotton

Staffordshire:

Buffelhall & Tobington

some lands

Harewood

Yoxhale

with advowson

Warwickshire:

Upton-super-Snodesbury

Wick Burnell

Wiltshire:

Elcombe

Uffcote

Yorkshire:

Askam Brian

half the manor

'Deincourt's manor' in

half the manor

Baynton

Danneton

Dringham

^o settled on Alice Deincourt in 1430¹ Barbara Coulton, 'The Wives of Sir William Stanley; Joan Beaumont and Elizabeth Hopton', *Ricardian* 9 (1992), 315.

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Add. Ms. 25.247

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C47/6/1

Inquisitions post mortem:

C139

C140

E149

Ancient Deeds:

C146

E42

Particulars of Account:

E101

Ancient Petitions:

SC8

Magdalen College, Oxford:

36/9 (Estate Papers)

Misc. 315

Brackley, D 114

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