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‘The English Way of War, 1360-1399’

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Abstract

This thesis challenges the orthodox view that the years 1360 to 1399 witnessed a period of martial decline for the English. Several reasons are advanced to support this hypothesis: the problems of hindsight and perception (as in a comparison with the periods directly before and after the one under consideration), the fact that the ‘strengths’ of England’s enemies have been overly praised, whilst the ‘weaknesses’ of the English have been overly emphasized and her achievements either ignored or belittled. There are, however, two central arguments against the hypothesis of decline. The first is that the changes that occurred in the structure and recruitment of armies in the first-half of the fourteenth-century had by the second-half of the century, and certainly after the resumption of the Anglo-French war in 1369, profoundly altered the composition of the English military-community; the men who fought within these armies. Increasing demands from the crown for military service, not to mention exogenous demands for English soldiers, coupled with increasing fiscal expense for the individual to fight, meant that the social composition of the community changed. War became increasingly the preserve of a nascent, professional, (at least by the standards of the day), fighting force whose military experience stretched over decades. That England possessed such a fighting force, compared to those of her enemies, strongly counters the notion of a military decline.

The second major argument against military decline in this period is that the English ‘conduct of war’ has long been misunderstood, and overly denigrated, due to this lack of clarity. The English, far from being on the back-foot and at the mercy of their enemies, were actually pursuing an aggressive, battle-seeking strategy, to win a decisive engagement and quickly end the conflicts in which they fought. This strategy, also employed in the first-half of the fourteenth-century with great success, was both desirable, and a financial necessity, in the period under scrutiny.

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List of Abbreviations

<i>Anonimalle</i>	<i>Anonimalle Chronicle, 1333-1381. From a MS Written at St Mary's Abbey, York</i> (ed.) Galbraith, V.H. (Manchester, 1970)
<i>Ayton, Knights</i>	<i>Ayton, A. Knights and Warhorses: Military Service and the English Aristocracy under Edward III</i> (Woodbridge, 1994)
<i>B.I.H.R.</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
BL	British Library
<i>Black Prince's Register</i>	<i>Register of Edward the Black Prince</i> , 4 vols. (ed.) Dawes, M.C.B. (1930-33)
<i>C.C.R.</i>	<i>Calendar of Close Rolls</i>
<i>C.F.R.</i>	<i>Calendar of Fine Rolls</i>
<i>C.I.M.</i>	<i>Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous</i>
<i>C.I.P.M.</i>	<i>Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem</i>
<i>C.P.R.</i>	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i>
<i>Contemporary Chronicles</i>	<i>Contemporary Chronicles of the Hundred Years War from the works of Jean le Bel, Jean Froissart and Enguerrand de Monstrelet</i> (ed.) Thompson, P.E. (1966)
<i>Court of Chivalry</i>	Harris, Sir Nicholas, <i>The Controversy between Sir Richard Scrope and Sir Robert Grosvenor Controversy in the Court of Chivalry</i> vol. 2 (London, 1832)
<i>Econ.H.R.</i>	<i>Economic History Review</i>
<i>E.H.R.</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>Foedera</i>	<i>Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae etc.</i> , (ed.) Rymer, T. revised edn. by Clarke, A.F. et al, 4 vols. In 7 parts (1816-69)
<i>Froissart, Chron.</i>	Froissart, Jean, <i>Chroniques de J. Froissart</i> (ed.) Luce, F., Raynaud, G., Mirot, L. and A. 15 vols. (1869-in progress)
<i>Froissart, Ouvres</i>	Froissart, Jean, <i>Oeuvres de Froissart. Chroniques</i> (ed.) Lettenhove, K. de, 25 vols (1867-77)
<i>I.H.S.</i>	<i>Irish Historical Studies</i>
<i>Issues</i>	<i>Issue Roll of Thomas de Brantingham, Treasurer of England, 44 Edward III, A.D. 1370</i> , (trans.) Devon, F. (1835)
<i>J.B.S</i>	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
<i>J.M.H.</i>	<i>Journal of Medieval History</i>

<i>J.R.S.A.I.</i> Knighton	<i>Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland</i> Knighton, H. <i>Knighton's Chronicle 1337-1396</i> (ed.) Martin, G.H. (Oxford, 1995)
<i>Lanercost</i>	<i>Chronicle of Lanercost, 1272-1346: Translated with Notes by Herbert Maxwell</i> (2009)
Le Baker	Baker, Galfridi de Swynebroke <i>Chronicon</i> (ed.) Thompson, E.M. (Oxford, 1889)
<i>M.M.H.</i>	<i>Journal of Medieval Military History</i>
Mézières, <i>Songe</i>	Mézières, P. <i>Le Songe du Vieil Pèlerin</i> , 2 vols, (ed.) Coopland, G. W. (1969)
<i>O.D.N.B.</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (online edn.)
<i>P.P.</i>	<i>Past and Present</i>
<i>P.R.I.A.</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy</i>
<i>P.R.O.M.E.</i>	<i>The Parliamentary Rolls of Medieval England, 1275-1504</i> (ed.) Given-Wilson, C. et al (CD-ROM, Leicester, 2005)
Palmer, <i>Christendom</i>	Palmer, J.J.N. <i>England, France and Christendom, 1377-99</i> , (1972)
<i>Scalacronica</i>	Gray, Sir Thomas, <i>Scalacronica 1262-1363</i> (ed.) King, A. (Surtees Society, 2005)
<i>Scotichronicon</i>	Bower, Walter, <i>Scotichronicon</i> , 9 vols. (ed.) Watt, D.E.R. (1989-98)
<i>St. Denis</i>	<i>Chronique du Religieux de Seint-Denis</i> , 6 vols. (ed.) Bellaguet, L. (1839-52)
Sumption, <i>Divided</i>	Sumption, J. <i>The Hundred Years War, Volume III: Divided Houses</i> (2009)
<i>T.R.H.S.</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
Walsingham	<i>The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham (1376-1422)</i> , trans. Preest, D., Introduction and Notes Clark, J. G. (Woodbridge, 2005)
<i>Westminster</i>	<i>Westminster Chronicle, 1381-1394</i> (ed.) Hector, L.C., Harvey, B.F. (1982)

I: INTRODUCTION

The student of English military history is well served by the fourteenth century. From the Anglo-Scottish wars of the 1290s through to Richard II's Irish campaigns of the 1390s, the whole century was awash with conflict. On land and at sea English soldiers fought in Scotland, Wales, Ireland, France, the Iberian Peninsula, Italy, the Low Countries, on various crusading ventures against Muslims, pagans, 'schismatic' Christians and, in some cases, in England against each-other. These theatres of war were active at different times with diverse causes yet all – even the long-standing enmity between England and Scotland – were intrinsically linked, at some stage or another, to the greater struggle between England and France that has come to be known to posterity as the Hundred Years War (1337-1453).¹ England and France had been at war before 1337 of course, and they certainly came to blows after 1453, leading some scholars to postulate a lengthier period of conflict.² Nor was the Hundred Years War one continuous period of conflict. Hostilities were punctuated by periods of truce, and, on two occasions, in 1360 and 1420, were ostensibly settled by treaty.

Unsurprisingly a period so rife with conflict has come under intense scholarly attention, and not only from modern day commentators. The fourteenth century was a remarkably self-conscious age:

'Its achievements and failings were remorselessly analysed by the chroniclers, lawyers, social commentators and poets of the time. From Chaucer and Gower in England to Eustache Deschamps and Christine de Pisan in France, contemporary writers were convinced that they

¹ Long-term causes and longevity of the conflict. Overviews: Allmand, C. *The Hundred Years War: England and France at War c.1300–c.1450* (Cambridge, 1988), 6-36; Curry, A. *The Hundred Years War* (1993), 1-31 calculated that there were over 30 'countries' involved in the conflict at some stage, 123. Palmer, J.J.N. 'The War Aims of the Protagonists and the Negotiation for Peace,' *The Hundred Years War* (ed.) Fowler, K., (1971), 51-74. Conflicts elsewhere in Europe were tied into the struggle, not sideshows to the 'main-event' as Eduard Perroy categorised the war in Iberia: *The Hundred Years War, with an Introduction to the English Edition by D.C. Douglas*, (1951) 157.

² Bordonove, G. *La Guerre de 600 Ans* (Paris, 1971); DeVries, K. 'The Hundred Years Wars. Not One but Many' *The Hundred Years War Part II: Different Vistas* (ed.) Kagay, D.J., Villalon, L.J.A. (Leiden, 2008), 3-36; Fowler, K.A. *The Age of Plantagenet and Valois: The Struggle for Supremacy, 1328-1498*, (1967); Scott, H.M. 'The Second "Hundred Years War", 1689-1815' *Historical Journal* 35, (1992), 443-69; Smalley, J. *The Four Hundred Years War, 1066-1453* (Lewes, 1990).

were living through fascinating times: times of great wickedness and great achievement, of intense personal heroism and collective mediocrity, of extremes of wealth and poverty, fortune and failure'.³

As a result of this scrutiny a clear consensus has emerged regarding the English war effort throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth-centuries, one which was influenced by, and in-turn influenced, that of England's primary enemy of the period: France. The best way to describe this process is by thinking of English military fortunes in these two centuries as being akin to the lapping tide on a beach. In other words England experienced periods of military ascendancy over its enemies followed by periods of general decline and stagnation. This "wave model" of English military fortunes in the fourteenth and fifteenth-centuries, though never explicitly labelled as such, has been generally accepted by scholars as one which accurately describes the English war effort in these years.

This is clearly apparent in demarcations created by historians of the Hundred Years War in particular with the conflict divided into distinctive phases reflective of the general scholarly consensus on the progress of the conflict. During the first phase of conflict, the 'Edwardian War' (1337-1360), Edward III, though not initially successful in his conflicts with both Scotland and France, was able to reverse the slump of his father's reign, ushering in a period of unprecedented success culminating in the signing of the treaty of Brétigny (1360) which granted the English near unprecedented levels of territory in France.

Edward's transformation of his country's martial fortunes from the position existing a generation earlier was remarkable. The reign of his father, Edward II, was near universally seen as the darkest time of English military prestige, with Henry Knighton, remarking that 'two Englishmen were hardly a match for one feeble Scot'.⁴ After the successes of Edward III only glowing praise was heaped upon English martial exploits.

³ Sumption, *Divided*, xii.

⁴ *Vita Edwardi Secundi: The Life of Edward II*, (ed.) Child, W. R. (Oxford, 2005), 97-99; Knighton, H. *Chronicon* (ed.) Lumby, J.R. (1895) I, 451.

Jean le Bel called English soldiers ‘the noblest and most valiant fighters anyone knows,’ and likened Edward III to ‘a second King Arthur’.⁵ More telling still are the words of the Italian poet Francesco Petrarch, writing in 1360:

“In my youth the Britons, who are called Angles or English, were taken to be the meekest of barbarians. Today they are a fiercely bellicose nation. They have overturned the ancient military glory of the French by victories so numerous that they, who once were inferior to the wretched Scots, have reduced the entire kingdom of France by fire and sword to such a state that I, who had traversed it lately on business, had to force myself to believe that it was the same country”.⁶

By 1389 and the end of the second ‘phase’ of the Hundred Years War – the Caroline War (1369-89) – the picture has been seen to have once again changed dramatically. A combination of the royal minority of Richard II, the young king’s desire for peace with France, and a French resurgence under the leadership of Charles V, resulted in a period of English military deterioration and the loss of a large amount of territory they had won in 1360. In 1389 the French author and partisan, Philippe de Mézières, could gleefully write that:

‘Although you [the English] succeeded in capturing the King of Scotland and triumphed by God’s leave on the awful battlefields of Crécy and Poitiers ... now as we speak you hold scarcely a hundredth part of these two kingdoms’.⁷

The English, it has been argued, did not regain the ascendancy again until the reign of Henry V in the Lancastrian War (1415-22), with Henry’s untimely death seeing the French gradually regain their momentum. The result, by 1453, was the near-complete removal of English territory in France.⁸ Only a slimmed-down Gascony and the Calais pale remained in English hands.

⁵ *Chronique de Jean le Bel*, (ed.), Viard, J., Déprez, E., (Paris, 1905), I. 118,156.

⁶ From *Petrarcae Epistolae Familiares*, quoted in Boutruche, R. ‘The Devastation of Rural Areas during the Hundred Years War and the Agricultural Recovery of France’ *The Recovery of France in the Fifteenth Century* (ed.) Lewis, P.S. (1971), 26.

⁷ Mézières, *Songe*, I, 396-8, quoted in Sumption, *Divided*, 1.

⁸ Jones, M, *Agincourt. 1415* (2005), 1-4, argued that Henry V’s victory of Agincourt was the point at which the malaise was reversed.

It is the contention of this thesis that the ‘wave-model’ of English military fortune in the fourteenth and fifteenth-centuries requires serious re-evaluation, specifically with regards to the second half of the fourteenth century; from the treaty of Brétigny in 1360 to the deposition and probable murder of Richard II in 1399. This period in particular has been seen by scholars, both present-day and contemporary, as one of significant military decline from the glory days of Edward III.⁹ What grounds are there for a re-evaluation? Firstly, until relatively recently with the publication of the third volume of Jonathan Sumption’s narrative account of the Hundred Years War, *Divided Houses*, this period has been largely ignored by scholars. That this has been the case is unfortunate but not wholly unexpected. It is only natural that English historians in particular would want to focus on the periods of the early to mid-fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, where conventional wisdom dictated that their countrymen had performed admirably. Military historians in particular, with their love of the study of those flash-points of conflicts, battles, were, like bees attracted to honey, drawn towards the great engagements of the conflict: Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. Simply put the vast majority of scholars are more interested in periods of military “success” rather than “failure”.

Secondly, and most importantly, the ‘wave model’ is far too simplistic for a conflict that was multi-regional, nor does it account for the complex political, economic, social, cultural, and of course military changes that were taking place, not just in England but all over medieval Europe in this period. Indeed, the chief problem with conducting any analysis of military success and decline is by what criteria a country’s military fortunes are to be judged. Are we to look at the results of battles, conquest of territory, the provisions and effects of peace treaties, military tactics, the influence of prominent individuals such as a king or general and the level of support these individuals had from the wider fighting men of the kingdom, or the administrative structures which allowed a country to muster, equip, transport, victual, and pay its armies? All these should be taken

⁹ For example: Allmand, *The Hundred Years War*, 23-5; Jones, *Agincourt*, 29-30, 36-37; Prestwich, M. *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages: The English Experience*, (1996), 5-6. Curry, *The Hundred Years War*, has a somewhat ambiguous view. Though she states that ‘the military efforts after 1369 should not be written off as a reflection of [England’s] former or later glories’, (74), she concludes that ‘the Franco-Castilian alliance of 1368 was a major factor in the decline of English fortunes thenceforward’, (128).

into account, but even here there are problems of historical interpretation, chiefly that of hindsight. In other words, does the second half of the fourteenth century only appear to be a period of decline because it is sandwiched between two periods of remarkable success?

The words of contemporaries, on the face of it such a reliable barometer of the opinion at the time to the events they were describing, are also fraught with difficulties of interpretation. Quite apart from the fact that all contemporaries had their own biases, to varying degrees, of the events they were relating, they, like modern scholars, constructed their thoughts and left them for posterity with the benefit of hindsight. This is inescapable. It is rare that the thoughts and opinions of contemporaries are “fresh”; that is current to the events they described. It is known, for example, that both the English poet John Gower and the chronicler Thomas Walsingham, changed their opinions of Richard II as his reign progressed, the king’s repressive and autocratic style in the later years of his reign tarnishing the memories of his earlier years when, as a teenager, he bravely played a leading role in placating the rebels during the Peasants’ Revolt.¹⁰ That such opinions have undergone a process of reflection does not necessarily make them any less valid, but warns us of the care that must be taken than when interpreting such material. It is questionable, for example, that Jean le Bel would have written of Edward III as a second King Arthur had he composed his work during Edward’s dotage when other contemporaries like John Gower were remarking that the king was far more interested in his mistress Alice Perrers, having ‘abandoned his buckler to seek battle in bed’.¹¹

It is also certainly possible to question whether the second half of the fourteenth century saw an English decline at all. The eminent historian J.W. Sherborne, for example, drew attention to the fact that English armies were not as poorly documented as was once thought and made many observations that would form the basis for subsequent martial scholarship on the period. The first scholar to challenge the notion of English military

¹⁰ Taylor, J. *English Historical Literature in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1987), 250-51.

¹¹ Le Bel in *The Wars of Edward III: Sources and Interpretation* (ed.) Rogers, C.J. (Woodbridge, 1999), 53; ‘Mirrouir de l’Homme’ ll. 22814-15 *The Complete Works of John Gower*, vol. i (ed.) Macauley, G.C. (Oxford, 1899-1902), 251.

decline in the second half of the fourteenth century seriously, however, was Professor J.J.N. Palmer in the 1970s.¹² He argued that far from being a 'decline' for English arms and international prestige the period was in fact one of particular vibrancy, especially with regards to military activity.¹³ He pointed to the fact that the fighting in this period was far more intensive than prior to the treaty of Brétigny. 'Fourteen major and a handful of minor expeditions were launched against France and her allies after 1369, only nine before 1360',¹⁴ and the average length of campaigns post 1369 was double that prior to 1360. Not only were periods of service longer but the geographic spread of the conflict was widened as first Castile, then Portugal and finally Flanders and Guelders joined the fray. It is telling, he argued, that the major set piece battles of this phase of the Hundred Years War were fought in Flanders and Iberia, where previously they had all taken place on French soil; evidence that the conflict was escalating.

Palmer certainly did not deny that the French experienced something of a resurgence during this period, putting this down to the French leadership of Charles V and his uncles and to more successful methods of utilising France's inherent advantages: the fact that she was larger, richer, and more populous than England. He fervently disagreed with the view, however, that this French resurgence was at the expense of the English. Even during Edward III's dotage and the minority of his grandson, 'it is difficult, if not impossible, to pinpoint any military or political reverse which can be attributed to poor leadership, divided counsel, or sheer incompetence'.¹⁵ Quite the contrary, he argued that despite the greater resources at Charles V's command the French king consistently refused to fight, no matter the provocation. English armies were shadowed and harassed by French forces which made no attempt to engage them,

¹² Sherborne drew on pioneering work of historians like H.J. Hewitt on army organisation and composition in earlier fourteenth century armies: *The Organisation of War under Edward III* (Manchester, 1966). Sherborne's most important work was: 'Indentured Retinues and English Expeditions to France, 1369-80,' *E.H.R.* 79 (1964), 718-46. This and several of his other most important articles were reprinted in: *War, Politics and Culture in Fourteenth Century England* (ed.) Tuck, A. (1994). Palmer conducted much research into various facets of the period and produced a number of articles (see bibliography). The majority of his arguments are summarised in: Palmer, J.J.N. *England, France and Christendom, 1377-99*, (1972).

¹³ For much of what follows: Palmer, *Christendom*, 1-25.

¹⁴ *Idem*, 1.

¹⁵ *Idem*, 5. Although Bailey, C.C. 'The Campaign of 1375 and the Good Parliament' *E.H.R.* 55 (1940), 370-383 points to one possible instance.

probably because attempts to do so earlier in the century had resulted in disaster. Then, when the English armies returned home the French would resume their attacks on English-held lands in south-western France. Consequently English commanders were able to traverse the French countryside with near impunity. Thus French 'success' was bought at a high price; the strategy 'avoided the possibility of defeat, but at the cost of the chance of victory'.¹⁶ At first this fact was eclipsed by the relative ease in which French forces pushed the English out of Aquitaine without recourse to pitched battle. However, as the English forces became more concentrated, and their frontiers smaller and easier to defend, their strength grew.

In short, Palmer's argument was that the Anglo-French war post Brétigny until the end of the fourteenth century was not a period of English military decline and French success; but simply an alteration of the way in which the war was conducted. It was, in effect, a military stalemate. The French, despite their inherent advantages, could not force the English out of the south-west or Calais, but the continuing, indeed arguably exacerbating problems the English faced in trying to finance their war effort, not only in France but on a number of fronts, forced on them the adoption of a defensive strategy of acquiring a ring of fortresses. These 'barbicans of the realm' around the French coast acted as strong-points from which the garrisons could sally forth, joining English field armies, to damage large swathes of the French countryside and put pressure on the French crown to come to a diplomatic accord. In addition to holding Calais, Bordeaux and Bayonne, in 1378 Brest was acquired from the duke of Brittany and Cherbourg from the king of Navarre. Throughout the rest of the period attempts were made to add to these holdings. English forces attempted to take Harfleur, St. Malo, Nantes, Sluys, and on several occasions (1381, 1382 and 1389) La Rochelle, whilst in 1383 Bishop Despenser managed to temporarily acquire most of the Flemish coast between Gravelines and Blackenberghe. Indeed in some respects it could be argued that far from being a period of English military decline and or military stalemate the latter fourteenth century was in fact one of sustained offensive activity, with English armies pillaging the French countryside, whilst an increased naval effort with eleven major fleets launched from 1369 to 1389

¹⁶ Palmer, *Christendom*, 6.

increasing the pressure on the French, and on her trading lanes in particular.¹⁷ Furthermore the ring of English fortresses, though expensive to maintain, could easily be supplied from the sea. This is not to say that English naval forces had things all their own way. The French launched several amphibious raids on the English south coast, on one occasion in 1377 sacking Rye and Hastings and burning Gravesend.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the net result of all this, so went Palmer's argument, was a situation of military stalemate in which neither side could wear the other down.

Unfortunately, despite the work of Sherborne and especially Palmer, the prevailing hypothesis of English military decline in the second half of the fourteenth century has largely remained. Anne Curry, for example, called Palmer's work 'a controversial study of English war policies in the time of Richard II,' while more recently Jonathan Sumption wrote that:

'There are few darker periods of England's history than the last three decades of the fourteenth century ... The one sided treaty of Brétigny ... embodied England's territorial claims at their grandest and most ambitious, drawing lines across the map of France from which another generation of English diplomats was unable to retreat with honour. Prisoners of their own triumphs, the English were condemned to see the conquests of the past thirty years overrun by the armies of the King of France in less than ten. ... Rarely has *nemesis* followed so quickly and directly upon *hubris*'.¹⁹

The Treaty of Brétigny, then, is still seen as the point where it all began to go wrong for the English. For this author's part, aside from the fact that the period had been largely ignored since the 1970s and that the wave model is too simplistic, the greater problem with the prevailing hypothesis of decline in this period is that it is increasingly at odds with modern scholarly research into English military organisation, the conduct of war, and the body of men who fought in English armies: the English military community. A brief examination into the recent scholarship in these fields highlights why a further investigation of the English military performance during the later fourteenth century is

¹⁷ Idem, 7.

¹⁸ Hewitt, H.J. 'The Organisation of War' *The Wars of Edward III*, 287.

¹⁹ Curry, *Hundred Years War*, 182; Sumption, *Divided*, xi.

not only justified, but a vital requirement, if we are to gain a better understanding and insight into the period.

The first area in which scholarship is shedding new light, not only onto this period but onto medieval warfare in general, is the debate as to the role of pitched battle in medieval warfare. The current scholarly consensus is that battles in medieval warfare were quite rare, usually did not resolve the conflicts in which they were fought, and played a secondary role to that of raiding activities and sieges in the wide panoply of military activity.²⁰ While battles may have been important for enhancing the prestige of their victorious participants, so the argument runs, they ultimately were avoided by medieval commanders as a matter of course due to the inherent risk of defeat. Battles have also been seen as a poor determinant of the overall success and failure of a country's military prowess. Is a battlefield defeat, for example, the fault of the army's organisation, its battlefield tactics, its personnel, a general's poor grasp of logistical considerations or, simply, the result of an uncontrollable factor such as the weather (certain types of weapons like arrows, for example, are impossible to fire when the fletching is wet) or plain bad luck? Thus while providing a brief 'snap-shot' of the relative strengths or weaknesses of the combatants, it is argued, battle provides no longer term insight into overall military performance. In other words one could win the battles – as the English did against France in the Hundred Years War – but ultimately lose the war; hence the distrust scholars have had in according them anything other than a transient significance.

The question of the role of battle in medieval warfare is especially significant for the post 1360 period of the Anglo-French conflict. The general consensus is that the objective of English commanders on campaign was to cause as much damage as possible on their *chevauchée* raids across the countryside. The purpose of this exercise was to demonstrate to the French people that the Valois dynasty and the French nobility were failing in their obligation to protect them, highlighting that real political and military power lay with English, in the hope of weakening the French government to the point that they would come to a diplomatic accord. Battle was seen to be avoided by English

²⁰ For example: Bachrach, B. 'Medieval Siege Warfare, A Reconnaissance', *J.M.H.* 58 (1994), 119-33.

commanders unless there was no other option open to either side. This, however, does not sit well with our knowledge that the French king, Charles V, explicitly orders his commanders not to engage the English in battle no matter the provocation.²¹ Why, if the English commanders were also not willing to commit to battle, was Charles V so explicit in his desire that his commanders also avoid it? Even if the French king feared that wounded French pride might cause members of the nobility to offer the English battle thoughtlessly, it would hardly have been necessary to publicly restrain them in such a way if both sides were keen to avoid confrontation. There is only one logical explanation – English commanders were, in fact, *actively seeking* the French in the field in an attempt to create another Crécy or Poitiers in the belief that another hammer blow on the scale of these two triumphs would once and for all settle the war in favour of the English.²² This idea is a radical one and challenges, to the very core, scholarly thinking on the subject of the role of battle in the medieval psyche, in warfare in general, and on the general English war aims of the period. For the nobility in particular, for example, given their desire to fight in pitched battles, it seems obvious that they would clearly want to seek battle out, not avoid it.²³ It is evident that the role of battle warrants further investigation.

An equally fruitful area of recent scholarly investigation which has advanced considerably in recent years and challenges the current hypothesis about the English war effort in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is the idea that English armies experienced something akin to a ‘medieval military revolution’ over the course of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. This entailed, as Andrew Ayton put it, ‘changes ... in the structure and composition of [English] armies, in the methods by which they were recruited, and in the ways in which they were employed, both strategically and tactically’. The net result of these changes was that the country emerged from these transformations

²¹ Contamine, P. *War in the Middle Ages*, (trans.) Jones, M. (1984) 228; Sumption, *Divided*, 16.

²² This idea for the earlier fourteenth century was recently proposed in Rogers, C.J. *War Cruel and Sharp: English Strategy under Edward III, 1327-1360*, (Woodbridge, 2000), 8.

²³ One of the most famous examples of this desire was the haste with which Thomas, duke of Clarence, sought to seek an engagement with the French in 1421 which ultimately led to his death as he had missed the glorious victory at Agincourt six years earlier due to ill-health. Jones, M. *Agincourt 1415* (2005), 6-7; Harriss, G.L. ‘Thomas, duke of Clarence (1387–1421)’, *O.D.N.B.*, (Oxford 2004; online edn, Sept 2010), [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27198>, accessed 10 Oct 2010].

as ‘a front-rank military power’.²⁴ Though there is not universal acceptance of the ‘revolutionary’ nature of these changes, that change did occur is undeniable. Yet if this was the case then how can the English war-effort, spearheaded by these reformed armies, have experienced a military decline? Clearly this warrants further investigation.

The final, and indeed most important, area of study which has advanced considerably in the last three decades and is important not just for study into the late fourteenth century but the whole of the Middle Ages is the idea of an ‘English military community’, the fighting men who formed the English military forces of the period. Studying the community is important because it is intrinsically linked to both the function of battle in war and the idea of a military revolution. Both, after all, were driven by the military community. Up until relatively recently, however, relatively little research had been done into this most important of areas of military research. Ayton, for example, complained in the mid 1990s that we knew less about Englishmen who fought in the king’s armies than about those who sat in medieval parliaments.²⁵ Fortunately study into the English military community has received a much needed boost in the last decade-and-a-half with important studies being undertaken into the whole military community, or select sections of it by, for example, David Simpkin, Adrian Bell, and Andrew Ayton himself.²⁶ This process has been aided incalculably by the recent completion of *The Soldier in Later Medieval England* project which has made available online in a searchable database of virtually all of the extant retinue, muster rolls, garrison lists, and enrolled letters of protections and attorneys for the period 1369 to 1453 from the British

²⁴ Ayton, A. ‘Sir Thomas Ughtred and the Edwardian Military Revolution’ *The Age of Edward III* (ed.), Bothwell, J.S. (Woodbridge, 2001), 109-10.

²⁵ Ayton, *Knights*, 1.

²⁶ Ayton, A. ‘Armies and Military Communities in Fourteenth-Century England’ *Soldiers, Nobles and Gentlemen: Essays in Honour of Maurice Keen* (ed.) Coss, P., Tyreman, C. (Woodbridge, 2009), 215-39; Idem, ‘Military Service and the Dynamics of Recruitment in Fourteenth Century England’ *The Soldier Experience in the Fourteenth Century* (ed.) Bell, A.R., Curry, A. (Woodbridge, 2011), 9-60; Idem, ‘The English Army at Crécy’ *The Battle of Crécy, 1346*, (ed.) Ayton, A., Preston, P. (Woodbridge, 2005), 159-252 is an excellent summary of recent research. Bell, A.R. *War and the Soldier in the Fourteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2004); Simpkin, D. *The English Aristocracy at War from the Welsh Wars of Edward I to the Battle of Bannockburn* (Woodbridge, 2008). This work built upon foundations laid by Phillipe Contamine into the military community of France and, to a lesser extent, that of Philip Morgan on the community of medieval Cheshire: Contamine, P. *Guerre, État Et Société à la fin du Moyen Age: Études sur les armées des rois de France 1337-1494* (Paris, 1972); Morgan, P. *War and Society in Medieval Cheshire, 1277-1403* (Manchester, 1987).

Library and National Archives.²⁷ This has made the process of prosopography and nominal-record-linkage a far more manageable task. There is certainly room, however, for further investigation in the military community in the second half of the fourteenth century to be undertaken, not least with regards to its social composition. For example, is Morgan's definition of a narrowing social base of the military community in this period justified or does it require broadening? What of those men who took no active part in the fighting but had the *potential* to do so, once omissions are made for the young, the old, the infirm, and those with disabilities which prevented them from performing active service such as the provision that all men between the ages of 16 and 60 owed military service in times of national emergency like the threat of invasion? Should these men not be seen as constituting part of the community? Furthermore, is the idea of one single military community too rigid? Should we in fact see a series of inter-locking regional and social groups which formed the wider community? Did men serve in a single or multiple theatres of war? Did the vagaries of war allow social mobility within the community/communities? Were there, and did contemporaries make distinctions between, different types of military service? How martially experienced were members of the community; and were the vast majority of England's fighting men seasoned or occasional campaigners? Why did men perform military service: profit, glory, adventure or a career choice? If it was the latter then does this reflect an increasing 'professionalization' amongst the community? How did the massive social upheaval caused by the Black Death, and the fact that England and France were at peace from 1360 to 1369, affect the community, if at all? Finally, to what extent were the community as a whole behind the English war effort in the period? Tuck made the case that the Scottish war during the reign of Edward III was unpopular, arguing that 'although the victory at Halidon Hill gave Edward a temporary and illusory supremacy, the war otherwise did little to enhance Edward III's military reputation. The chroniclers report the campaigns in muted terms, and give little impression of a will to war'.²⁸ Was this simply an Anglo-Scottish phenomenon or did it change according to the region in which the English were

²⁷ Online: <http://www.icmacentre.ac.uk/soldier/database/>

²⁸ Tuck, A. *Crown and Nobility: England 1272-1471* (2nd edn. Oxford, 1999), 91-92.

fighting? Clearly there are many questions still to answer and this work hopes to go some way towards addressing them.

From the brief sketches of some of the important issues above it is clear that the second half of the fourteenth century is badly in need of an in-depth study into the practices, conduct, and organisation of the English war effort. Central to this study are the fighting men of the English military community. It was these men who prosecuted the war effort, who the 'revolutionary' changes in army structure, organisation, and personnel dramatically effected, and who, if there was such an occurrence as a 'military decline' in the period, were the ones who both contributed and shaped it.

Though ideally an army-by-army analysis of the military community from 1369 to 1399 would be beneficial for this period this is not possible due to restrictions of both space and time imposed on a work of this nature. Instead a selection of three armies has been made which portray some of the key developments that were occurring in the period. The three forces which have been chosen – Lionel of Clarence's Irish expedition of 1361-62, Sir Robert Knolles' campaign in France in 1370, and Richard II's first Scottish venture in 1385 – have all been picked out for three main reasons. First of all these three expeditions have hitherto attracted little scholarly attention; and in the case of 1385 there is something new to say. Secondly, the aim has been to try and select expeditions that cover as wide a geographic and chronological time-frame as possible. Finally, all these campaigns have interesting facets in their organisation, structure, personnel, and results of their martial activities on campaign, which mark them out as worthy of further investigation. Clarence's expedition sits at an important juncture in the development of both the military community and English armies; Knolles' expedition had a near unique organisational structure, system of pay, and was the only campaign of the entire period in which the army disintegrated in the field; and finally Richard II's Scottish campaign saw the last ever medieval summons of the feudal levy.

Before this analysis can be undertaken, however, it is necessary to have a wider understanding of the source materials available for the study and of what they can tell us about the changing nature of the military community in this period. This is the subject of chapter II. Chapter III looks to define the groups within society which deserve to be considered as constituting the English military community in the second half of the fourteenth century and how this had changed from the first part of the century. With these considerations in mind chapter IV looks at the three armies in question; whilst chapter V expands the discussion to the more general English war effort during the period under consideration, particularly to challenge the idea that battle was unimportant and show how it can be argued that the English war effort in this period has been misunderstood. The purpose of this analysis is to answer the two primary questions of this thesis. Firstly, did England experience a military decline in this period; and if not then what actually occurred? Secondly, what changes occurred within the English military community in this period and what effect did this have on the English conduct of war?

II. SOURCES FOR THE STUDY OF THE FOURTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH MILITARY COMMUNITY

The study of later fourteenth century armies and the personnel that fought within them raises many questions, both about the armies themselves and the men that fought within them. Though the sources cannot hope to provide comprehensive answers to all questions they can certainly provide some answers if one is prepared to do enough digging. Increasingly detailed record keeping in England was by the end of the thirteenth century producing a variety of documentation relating to various aspects of government but it was it was during the fourteenth century that the volume increased exponentially.¹ This growth was stimulated by war. Longer periods of conflict, involving increasingly large numbers of men, paid the king's wages and requiring funding from taxation granted by parliament as well as loans by private individuals, necessitated more intensive and meticulous record keeping.² As a consequence scholars studying English armies and the personnel that fought within them in the fourteenth century are blessed with a wealth of source materials, both in content and volume, not available for earlier periods.

Inevitably of course scholars are still confronted with the familiar pitfalls inherent in source usage. As has been aptly pointed out they are often 'varied, bulky, sometimes enigmatic, in the main not available in printed form', often abbreviated, sometimes in a bad state of preservation, and fraught with interpretative difficulties.³ To further complicate matters there was no single department with the sole responsibility of administering military affairs. Consequently source materials are scattered across different government departments and record collections. Documentary survival is another common problem with much of what was produced not extant in the present day due to loss, destruction, or unsuitable conditions for preservation. Though admittedly familiar territory this has not stopped scholars unfamiliar with military records making misleading assumptions about the nature of military service, the conduct of war, and the organisation of medieval English armies.

¹ Clanchy, M.T. *From Memory to Written Record, England 1066-1307*, (2nd edn. Oxford, 1993), 44-74.

² Buck, M.C. 'The Reform of the Exchequer, 1316-1326' *E.H.R.* 98:387 (1993), 241-60; Harriss, G.L. 'War and the Emergence of the English Parliament, 1297-1360' *J.M.H.* 2 (1960), 35-56.

³ Ayton, *Knights*, 3.

The claim, for example, that the English war effort waned after the Treaty of Brétigny is not borne out by the surviving evidence. Indeed, it seems that a process of increased militarisation took place amongst the English gentry that gathered apace as the century progressed, stimulated by successes in the French war earlier in the century, diverse opportunities for service in frequency and geographic location, and the inducement of pay; all at a time when the war effort has traditionally been seen to have been going badly. Such unsubstantiated claims about military decline would hardly be allowed to pass muster if methodological practices on the use and interpretation of military records were on a par with those for, say, parliamentary records, study based upon decades of meticulous scholarship. Unfortunately, though developing at an increasing rate, rigorous methodological processes for the study of English medieval military records are in their relative infancy and much of the information they include has often been taken at face value leading to misinterpretation and misunderstanding.

An inevitable consequence of the patchy survival of records has been to dictate research, or lack of it, into particular field armies. Comparatively little has been written on the personnel and organisational structures of Richard II's Irish campaigns in the 1390s compared to his Scottish campaign of 1385 for this very reason. A look at the table below of the documentary survivals of the three armies under scrutiny in this work illustrates the point.

Table 2.1: Documentary Survivals for the Campaigns to Ireland (1361-64), France (1370), and Scotland (1385)

Document Type	Clarence's (1361-64)	Knolles' (1370)	Richard II (1385)
Indentures	Selected Retinues	Selected Retinues	None now extant
<i>Vadia Guerra</i> accounts	Some limited information	Limited information on the Issue roll.	On the Issue roll
Protections	Handful	Yes	A handful
Attorneys	Handful	Yes	A handful
Pardons	No	Yes	No
Retinue Rolls	Selected Retinues	Incomplete survival	No
Court of Chivalry	No	No	Yes
Additional Documentation	Some minor	Related garrison list	List of feudal summonses.

In short the documentary survival is different for nearly every army. Discrepancies in focus are also based upon other criteria. Sometimes particular

campaigns have come under scrutiny because they possess unique or interesting facets. Expeditions with major military engagements, those which had major political ramifications, interesting organisational structures and/or were led by members of the royal household, have inevitably been subject to greater scrutiny than some of their less illustrious counterparts. Indeed the lack of focus placed upon the armies of the fourteenth century, when English military performance has traditionally been seen to have been in decline, is particularly unfortunate and in need of remedy although large strides have been made in that direction with the Reading-Southampton database.⁴ While an invaluable resource the work of the research team has served to further highlight just how limited the information is for certain armies of this crucial stage of the Hundred Years War.

Inevitably the vagaries of documentary survival also dictate how far the careers of members of the English military community can be reconstructed. There is also the problem that most sources are usually unrepresentative of the community as a whole. This is because the *raison d'être* of many of these materials was to protect the legal and financial interests of propertied members of the military community. It is these men, from peers of realm down to the tenurial smallholders within the parish gentry, who appear most frequently in the sources.⁵ The vast majority of men who constituted English field forces in the fourteenth century of the fourteenth century – a large number of the men-at-arms and virtually all of the mounted archers – remain virtually hidden from view.

Complicating matters further is that the rise of the gentry within the military community makes social distinctions between combatants more difficult to fathom.⁶ The armies which took the field with Edward I and Edward II were very different beasts from those which ravished the French countryside under Edward III and his successors. According to Ayton, amongst the men-at-arms at least, something in the region of three-quarters of the men who served in the armies of the period were of

⁴ Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues', 718-46 made the first steps on the road to the study of these later armies. See: 'The Solider in Later Medieval England' online:
<http://www.icmacentre.ac.uk/soldier/database/index.php>

⁵ For those at the 'bottom end' of the noble stratum: Given-Wilson, C. *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages* (London, 1987), pp. 71-73.

⁶ Chapter III, 70-75.

sub-knightly status and it seems many were making a career of soldiering.⁷ ‘They are also a most interesting, heterogeneous group, consisting of men awaiting inheritances, younger sons who were never likely to inherit, members of modestly endowed families hovering perilously close to the level of richer peasantry and ... men from the yeomanry or below, whose status had been enhanced by a career in arms’.⁸ Though records like muster rolls provide the names of a good portion of these individuals the records are by no means complete, forcing us to turn to other sources which tend to be weighted in favour of propertied members of the military community. Whilst it is certainly possible to determine the names of some of these ‘lesser’ men it is often difficult, if not nigh on impossible, to connect disparate records to one another – the process of nominal record linkage – to create career profiles due to the ambiguity as to whether a man of the same name in two records is the same individual. Whilst this is also true of men higher up the social ladder, those of higher status are more recognisable because they are fewer in number and because their ennoblement makes them distinctive, notwithstanding the problem that there was no standardised spelling of men’s surnames. The same cannot be said of men of more humble origins with a relatively common surname. It is still a leap of faith to connect two separate entries in different service records together and claim that it is the same man. What, for example, can be made of a man like the esquire Thomas Poley who was recruited to serve as a man-at-arms for Richard II’s Irish expedition in 1399?⁹ Is this the same Thomas Poley, also described as an esquire and serving as a man-at-arms, who served in the retinue of Sir John de Wingfield during the earl of Arundel’s naval expedition in 1388 and indeed at sea again the year before in 1387?¹⁰ The careers of archers are more problematic still because their generally lower social standing meant their names might not be recorded at all and we have even less chance of discerning whether they were one-time campaigners, men with long-term military careers, or indeed whether men served as both a man-at-arms and a mounted-archer during their careers-in-arms, as their fortunes fluctuated. Even determining familial links between men with the same surname is problematic because we cannot be certain if these men were related without further prosopography, and in the majority of cases we will probably never

⁷ Sherborne, ‘Indentured Retinues’ 718-46, argues that by the latter decades of the fourteenth the ratio of sub-knightly to knightly was something like 9:1.

⁸ Ayton, *Knights*, 5.

⁹ E101/42/12 m.9.

¹⁰ E101/41/5 m.11d; E101/40/34 m.17.

know. For example, there were two men with the surname 'Codyngton' who served on the earl of Arundel's naval expedition of 1387, John and William, both as archers.¹¹ Based upon this evidence alone we could surmise that they were related, yet if this was the case then why did they serve in separate retinues? What of other men called Codyngton? Is the Raulyn Codyngton, an esquire serving as a man-at-arms in the earl of Buckingham's 1380-81 French expedition, related to William and John or indeed the esquire Thomas Codyngton who served in Arundel's naval expedition in 1388?¹² Though these are men of differing social status such familial links are not impossible. It is equally possible, of course, that none of these men are related and that the surname 'Codyngton' merely was used by the clerks who compiled the rolls for men who came from any one of the four of the places called Coddington in England, in Cheshire, Derbyshire, Herefordshire, and Nottinghamshire..

The problem of identifying periods of military service is compounded by the fact that on many occasions a significant number of men were not included in 'official' government records. There were foreign troops, like the Bretons who joined Lancaster's *chevauchée* in 1373, partially paid by the English Exchequer, although such instances were infrequent, as was gratuitous service by this period.¹³ There may also have been members of the royal household who did not receive exchequer wages because they were already in receipt of a fee. Taking Richard II's Irish campaign of 1394-95 as an example, it has been estimated that something in the region of 5,000 men-at-arms and archers were in the king's pay. This figure, however, does not include the Cheshire archers, members of the royal household, or contingents of militia recruited within Ireland for the campaign, which would put the number of actual combatants at 8,000-10,000.¹⁴

It is clear, therefore, that we will never be able to determine the exact composition of any one medieval English army in its entirety. This being the case it is also true that we will never know the number of men who constituted the English military community in the fourteenth century – a global figure as it were – nor be able to determine with certainty the number of individuals who were militarily active at

¹¹ E101/40/33 mm. 17d, 3d.

¹² E101/39/9 m.3; E101/41/5 mm.1d, 11d.

¹³ E403/409, mm.4-19. Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues', 10-11.

¹⁴ Lydon, J. F. 'Richard II's Expeditions to Ireland' *J.R.S.A.I.* 93 (1963), 141-142.

any one time. This latter point is particularly regrettable as achieving it would allow us to trace English military commitments as they developed over a number of years and to perceive how external factors, like finance and governmental priority, played a part in the fluctuations. All we can hope to achieve is a partial reconstruction of armies of the period and ‘information about *parts* of careers of a *proportion* of the military community’.¹⁵

Yet such negativity surrounding the sources should not blind us to their strengths. On a most basic level they can provide an approximate number of troops within a particular force. Naturally, establishing complete figures for any medieval army is fraught with pit-falls, but the sources are often on firmer ground with the types of troops raised for a particular campaign, which can help establish recruitment patterns and commitments. Structural frameworks of the retinue sizes and compositions of individual armies can also be established if the material exists in sufficient quantities. Whilst it is lamentable that many combatants are hidden from view, we can certainly attempt nominal record-linkage for the careers, in war and peace, of many of the men whose names we do possess, even allowing for the deficiencies and interpretative problems inherent in the sources. Within the military sphere, in addition to the geographic destination of service, it may be possible to identify individuals who served together on more than one occasion. If such associations occurred frequently it may be possible, using a broader range of sources than the purely military, to trace the reason behind repeated martial association such as inter-personal relationships based on familial, social, or geographic ties, or indeed whether one man was a liveried retainer of another. If a man often led a company of soldiers, and these men can be identified serving with their captain on more than one occasion, long extinct martial retaining patterns and recruitment networks can be highlighted. Similarly, if an individual was often himself a retainer and the captains he served under can be identified, then it might be possible to say something about military service with regard to ‘captain loyalty’.

So far this discussion of the documentation for the study of the English military community and the armies with which they fought has looked at the sources in terms

¹⁵ Ayton, *Knights Warhorses*, 139.

of their ‘global’ strengths and deficiencies. It would now be prudent to turn our attention to the specifics of the individual types of sources in order to understand how they are utilised in conjunction with one another to reconstruct medieval English armies and the military community.

In the first half of the fourteenth century the first port of call for any study of English armies and the English military community are the pay rolls; the *vadia guerre* accounts. These are a rich source offering a ‘systematic captain by captain schedule of an army’s retinues, with details of personnel numbers, periods of service, and pay due’.¹⁶ They are also the most representative sources of the military community that we possess, containing information about peers of the realm down to common soldiers. It is unfortunate, then, that the large documents covering whole armies do not survive for campaigns post 1360. After this date most armies were recruited by indenture, with captains accounting individually at the exchequer. It was the documents generated by these administrative procedures that replaced, and largely superseded, the traditional *vadia guerre* records. Other exchequer records like the *Issue Rolls*, containing details of advances and instalments of pay, also help fill some of the gaps left by the loss of *vadia guerre* accounts. They are invaluable sources for reconstructing army size and provisional structure because by the second half of the fourteenth century they tend to mention personnel numbers where they generally did not do so before, providing a record of monies paid out by the exchequer, before and/or during and after the campaign. Though they cannot be regarded as full pay rolls, in lieu of these documents they often provide the best information on the pay and structure of an army that we possess.¹⁷

It would be easy to assume for those campaigns that we do possess *vadia guerre* accounts, given the quality and detail of the information offered, that these records are all that is required for a study of a fourteenth century English army. However, the content of these accounts should not be taken at face value.¹⁸ The first reason for this assertion is that not all the men who served in an army appear in these records. There were non-combatants like groomsmen and personal servants of wealthy combatants

¹⁶ Ibid. 139.

¹⁷ Such as in the case of the 1385 expedition, chapter IV, 183-184.

¹⁸ For what follows Ayton, *Knights*, 139-155.

who tended equipment and who will often have made private agreements with individual soldiers. There will also have been men serving for charters of pardon although in this period these became increasingly scarce.¹⁹ However, it is to administrative factors that we must turn if we are to discover why large numbers of men do not appear in the pay rolls. In some cases troops receiving pay at a particular time may not have been on active service when their wages began, such as being on the march to a departure point on the official date of embarkation. The most telling problem with determining troop numbers from pay rolls, however, is that the accounts indicate that the personnel of these armies maintained their manpower strength for extended periods of time. This is clearly a fallacy, for armies evidently suffered casualties. Putting aside the issue of fatalities in combat it stretches credulity that there would have been no decreases in manpower as a result of desertion, absences, or other miscellaneous withdrawals. Admittedly some of the payrolls *do* indicate changes in manpower, indicating the number of ‘man days’ – *vacaciones* – in which particular combatants were absent.²⁰ Even if the instances of these *vacaciones* are taken into account, however, there are a large number of rolls which state that the number of men in active pay remained the same throughout the entire campaign. There seems to be two possible explanations for this. The first is that captains were serving with more men than they had contracted with and that it was this pool of replacements that were filling the gaps left by dead comrades. While this may have been the case on a small scale it seems unlikely that there would have been large numbers of unpaid men hanging around on the fringes of armies waiting for the chance of a fee, especially considering the increased demand for soldiers in the second half of the fourteenth century as opportunities for service increased. Unless these men were funding themselves then it seems unlikely that captains would be paying for the upkeep of these men. While the *regard* payment could have been allocated to this task it seems highly unlikely as this would have eaten into captains’ profit margins.²¹

¹⁹ See below, 30-35.

²⁰ See Stafford’s in Ireland, chapter IV, 219-222.

²¹ The *regard*, introduced in the 1340s, has been described as a kind of bonus payment, paid quarterly at the rate of 100 marks per 30 men-at-arms although this may have varied. Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 86; Prince, A.E. ‘The Indenture System under Edward III’ *Historical Essays Presented to James Tait*, (ed.) Edwards, J.G., Galbraith, V.H., Jacob, E.F. (Manchester, 1993), 292-93. Ayton, *Crécy*, 193, has suggested it may have been used by captains to meet the cost of overheads on campaign.

The second explanation for administrative ‘neatness’ on the payrolls may have been fraud by captains: claiming pay for men who had died and pocketing the money themselves. Doubtless this did happen, ‘but whether muster and review controls were quite as lax in the fourteenth century as has sometimes been suggested is open to question’.²² Neat accounts with no casualties would have seemed as suspicious to contemporaries as they do today. Though it is not possible to rule out the possibility of bribery of some clerks by military captains this cannot account for every instance. The answer lies, according to a convincing argument by Ayton, ‘that “tidy” pay rolls were the result not of fraud but of mundane clerical practices, which involved the manipulation and summarisation of the figures before they appeared in the final *vadia guerre* accounts’.²³ Throughout the course of a campaign there would have been various absences and fluctuations in an army’s strength as men were killed, joined as reinforcements, deserted or left for some other reason. To save themselves time and prevent complicated calculations it seems that clerks provided figures that were an approximate estimation of the forces strength in terms of its pay. What was important was not that the exact number of men and types of troops present but that the correct payment was made. In this respect the man-at-arms on the pay roll takes on the form of a convenient accounting device as is evidenced by Walter Dalby’s accounts for Stafford in Ireland 1361-64.²⁴ This can hardly have been an isolated incident with large numbers of these ‘neat’ accounts indicating common practice. How accurate, then, are these pay accounts which purport to provide the strength of armies? Without detailed prosopography on a campaign by campaign basis this is difficult to say, especially in the absence of muster rolls, but such evidence warns against taking the information provided by these accounts at face value. Though certainly more reliable than the estimates of chroniclers for the size and structure of armies, if one is not aware of these short-comings the possibility of constructing an historical argument on a house-of-cards is great. It is therefore impossible to utilise these sources to provide either a global figure for the size of the military community or the number of men-in-arms at any one time. The fact that they are incomplete, the issue of garrison troops

²² Ayton, *Knights*, 149.

²³ *Idem*, 152.

²⁴ See 222.

and those men serving abroad as mercenaries and further afield, makes this, though desirable, an unattainable goal.

What other forms of documentation can be used to fill some of the gaps or provide additional information about fourteenth century armies and their personnel? For a start there are indentures of retinue and muster rolls. Indentures, increasingly prevalent by the fourteenth century, were military contracts between captains and the crown by which the latter stipulated to the former the number and types of men which the captain was to provide for a particular campaign, the rate of pay based upon rank, the time that the force was to muster for disembarkation, the total length of service, and the *regard* payment that was to be made to the captain.²⁵ As well as agreements between Crown and retinue captains, prominent members of the military community like John of Gaunt also retained men in their service in both peace and war.²⁶ Though these were not usually contracts for life those that were represent the long-term commitment of an individual to a prominent nobleman and are suggestive of a strong bond between them. It is uncertain how often such indentures of retainer were taken out and thus how many men were serving their captain as a result of these documents but it is unlikely that the most prominent captains like Gaunt could easily have recruited the massive retinues they did without recourse to these permanent retainers, extending their recruitment reach as they did so. By bringing together all the extant indentures for any one campaign it is thus possible to estimate, however tentatively, an army's overall strength, structure, and major personnel.

Indentures are, of course, not without their drawbacks. Though we may gain the names of a number of captains in a particular army we are unlikely to know the names of the men they brought to war with them in their retinues unless they are mentioned in another source. Furthermore it is impossible to know how many indentures were issued for a particular campaign and thus what percentage of them we possess for a

²⁵ Though rates of pay did vary the standardised rates were: 13s 4d a day for a duke, 6s 8d for an earl, 4s for a banneret, 2s for a knight, 1s for a man-at-arms, and 6d a day for a mounted-archer. Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 50; Prince, 'Indenture System', 283-297. Indentures: Lewis, N.B. 'An Early Indenture of Military Service, 27 July 1287' *B.I.H.R.* 13 (1935), 85-89; idem, 'An Early Fourteenth Century Contract for Military Service' *B.I.H.R.* 20 (1944), 111-18.

²⁶ Walker, S. *The Lancastrian Affinity 1361-1399* (Oxford, 1990), 262-284, 292-303; Armitage-Smith, S. *John of Gaunt's Register* (2 vols. 1911).

particular army if we cannot cross-reference them with some other document.²⁷ Another problem is that indentures only provide the *proposed* numbers a captain hoped, and the crown expected him, to recruit. How often captains were unable to fulfil their quota and how great this deficiency was is open to debate although perhaps the numbers demanded by the crown were a maximum that was expected and a figure that a captain raised, as long as it was around the mark of expectation, was acceptable.²⁸ Indentures then while evidently useful are to be used, like many other martial sources, with caution.

Muster rolls were the 'sister' documents to indentures, compiled at the point of disembarkation or very near to this time so that the royal clerks could record the actual number of men a captain had retained compared to those he had contracted to raise. They were working documents, taken with the army on campaign, for the purpose of paying men's wages and recording the names of combatants present at muster and periods of *vacaciones*. We are fortunate that some of these documents survive for armies in the second half of the fourteenth century because of the near universality of indentured service: the muster roll submitted, along with the indenture, at the time of accounting and thus preserving both. With a series of these records it is possible for us to view geographic and long-term recruitment patterns of different captains over a period of time. Cornell, for example, has used them extensively for his study of Anglo-Scottish border garrisons of the fourteenth century.²⁹ They are most interesting documents because they provide lists of names of combatants from all sections of the medieval army and allow us to view a force's numerical strength as it stood at a particular time.³⁰ It is a shame we do not possess more of these documents for they show the dynamics of the military retinue, in detail, at operational level. As it is what they provide is an interesting window into forces as they appeared in the field; a snap-shot of the past.

The drawbacks of muster rolls, barring of course their small number compared to other types of documents of the period, are very similar to those of *vadia guerre*

²⁷ See, for example, the problem of indentures for 1385, 185-86.

²⁸ Cf. Sherborne believed captains found it difficult to fulfil their quotas. 'Indentured Retinues', 744-45.

²⁹ Cornell, D. 'English Castle Garrisons in the Anglo-Scottish Wars of the Fourteenth Century' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Durham, 2006).

³⁰ See discussion of use in 1387 and 1388: Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 52-68.

accounts; suspicious neatness indicative of ‘trouble-saving fiction’.³¹ The other problem with them, admittedly a problem of many military sources, is that they tantalise by revealing limited information about the qualification, in terms of the standard of a man’s mount and equipment, required for him to muster and receive the king’s wages. On occasion sources clearly indicate that a minimum standard was required although what this standard was is open to question for phraseology employed was usually vague.³² The costs of war for an individual were certainly on the increase during the course of the fourteenth century as armour and weaponry became more expensive, even if the quality in terms of the cost of horseflesh was decreasing in value as the great warhorses – *destriers* – were abandoned in favour of lighter, more nimble horses, more suited to the rigours of the *chevauchée*.³³ The only thing we can be certain about is that if men arrived at muster with mount and equipment not deemed an adequate standard, whatever that may have been, they were either turned away or at most served at reduced wages.³⁴ Again, as with pay-rolls, we must be careful of statistical information that these records purport to provide.

If indentures marked the intention of a captain to serve with a specified number of men, and the muster rolls show the force in action during the campaign, then the retinue rolls of individual captains show the force that the captain was claiming payment for after the expedition had finished. Like muster rolls, retinue rolls provide the name/s of the captain as well as the number and name of various types of troops, their length of service, and any *vacaciones*. Sometimes it is also possible to utilise these documents in an attempt to reconstruct the ‘primary-groups’ of men which coalesced to form the wider retinue.³⁵ The weaknesses of these sources are a combination of those for muster rolls, indentures, and pay rolls, namely that we have no way of knowing the extent to which the tidiness of the information presented is a result of administrative juggling to make the figures add up. We can also not be sure

³¹ McFarlane, K.B. *The Nobility of Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), 16.

³² E.g. that he should be ‘covenablement mountez et appareillez’. E101/68/2 no.6. A minimum standard had certainly been required for the ‘feudal’ host: Chew, H. *The English Ecclesiastical Tenants-in-Chief and Knight Service* (Oxford, 1932), 87-88; *Select Charters* (ed.) Stubbs, W. (9th edn. Oxford, 1957), 466.

³³ Ayton, A. ‘Arms, Armour, and Horses’ *Medieval Warfare: A History* (ed.) Keen, M (Oxford, 1999), 186-208.

³⁴ Ayton, *Knights*, 92. Cf. *Northern Petitions* (ed.) Fraser, C.M., Surtees Soc., 194 (1982 for 1981), 62-63.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 223-226.

the extent to which these retinue rolls represent both the structure and size of the army as a whole, the only way to attempt to answer these questions being to conduct detailed prosopography with related sources.

If a large number of pays rolls, indentures, muster, and retinue rolls, survived for every army then despite their interpretative problems these sources would form the bedrock of study into the armies and military communities of the period. Unfortunately in many instances this has not been the case and for a considerable number of expeditions historians are forced to turn to ancillary documents in an attempt to glean important information. These subsidiary sources are generally weighted in terms of content towards individual members of the military community, the rank-and-file men-at-arms and mounted archers who formed the backbone of English armies. This of course makes them an invaluable resource. If any estimation were ever to be made about the size and social composition of the military community we need to identify as many of these individuals as is possible. Inevitably of course, whilst useful resources, the ancillary documentation is fraught with interpretative difficulties that can trap the unwary scholar.

Horse inventories/appraisals, and the *restauro equorum* accounts, so crucial for the study of armies in the first half of the fourteenth century, had all but disappeared by the second, seemingly discontinued by the middle of the 1360s.³⁶ Fortunately we still possess a large number of letters of protection and attorney to aid us in our endeavours. The former were taken out by members of the military community to protect themselves from legal skulduggery, such as the seizure of their lands and chattels or accusations they were not fulfilling their obligations in local government, while they were absent on campaign. The latter were for when an individual appointed a second/s to ensure that 'seigniorial administration continued unhindered' on their estates.³⁷ Both these types of documents survive in substantial numbers and are the only statistically significant source for campaigns in which no other records survive, often providing the names of hundreds of the rank-and-file soldiers of whom

³⁶ Ayton, *Knights*, 5-7, 49-137. A set for Clarence's Irish expedition (E101/28/11) are some of the last examples.

³⁷ Holmes, G.A. *The Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth Century England* (Cambridge, 1957), 75.

we would otherwise be ignorant.³⁸ What is more, some of these records provide information about individuals' origins, as well as the captains and commanders under whom they served; information which would otherwise not be forthcoming. When such records exist in considerable numbers as they do for a number of fourteenth-century expeditions it is sometimes possible, even if no other records survive, to construct a skeletal framework for an army and individual retinues as well as offer tentative conclusions about the geographic origins of its personnel and thus something about the recruitment networks that were utilised to muster them. Once again however these sources must be treated with caution. They are statements by an individual of *intent* to serve and are no guarantee of actual service and this raises two major questions about their validity as source records. Firstly, what proportion of serving combatants actually took out protections/attorneys? Secondly, of the number that *did* take out these legal precautions, how many actually performed the stated service? In attempting to answer these questions the deficiencies of protections and attorneys are revealed.

The destination of a campaign certainly had an impact on the number of those who seem to have taken out these legal safeguards. There are certainly more protections and attorneys enrolled in the Chancery files for those serving in France than in Scotland because men knew they would likely be away for longer. There is thus the potential problem that we may know more about the careers of those who served in France than those who served in, say, Scotland. Sir Guy Brian, for example, took out protections and/or attorneys on three separate occasions for service at sea and in France in the 1370s yet he does not seem to have done so for the Scottish campaign in 1385 in which he participated.³⁹ Other examples could be sighted but clearly protections and attorneys present a picture of service that is distorted in favour of continental service. Furthermore, by no means did every member of the military community who performed martial service, regardless of destination, take out a protection or attorney for their service. The reason is that these documents represent the propertied, landholding section of the military community; most likely, but by no

³⁸ Their enrolment was dependant upon the campaign. Those to France were enrolled on the Gascon or Treaty rolls (C61 and C76 respectively), those to Scotland on the Scotch Rolls (C71) while those for Ireland, and a few for France and Scotland, appear on the Patent Rolls (C67 [Supplementary] and printed in the *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 52 vols. 1232-1509 (London, 1891-1916).

³⁹ C76/54 m.12-13; 62 m.20; 63 m.15; *Foedera* vii, 475.

means exclusively, men-at-arms. 'For the most part excluded are sons awaiting their inheritances, landless younger brothers and men of obscure origins making a career of soldiering'.⁴⁰ Thus whilst these documents would seem at first glance to present a more representative, if fleeting, picture of an army, this is far from the case. Moreover it might easily be the case that not all the protections/attorneys that were once extant in the fourteenth century of the century have survived or have been enrolled on the final Chancery record. To check whether this is the case we would need to cross-reference the final Chancery roll with the *fiat* warrants, the prior requests for protections and attorneys by captains for their men which by the 1350s captains were sending to the office of the Privy Seal rather than directly to the Chancellor. Unfortunately a large number of these warrants were destroyed in a fire in the early seventeenth century but we do still possess the Privy Seal bills authorising the issue of the protections.⁴¹ With this in mind the protections/attorneys can, when used collectively, show the origins of their recipients, and thus the army as a whole, at least amongst the wealthy members of an army who deemed it necessary to take them out. It has been estimated that in the armies prior to 1360 the percentage of men who took out protections and named attorneys ranged roughly from c.20 per-cent to as much as two thirds.⁴² Post 1369, though the figure for Knolles' 1370 army seems to continue the trend, by the 1380s at least numbers had dropped considerably.⁴³ For Arundel's two naval expeditions in 1387-88 the figures are 4 percent and just less than 3 percent and for Richard II's 1385 Scottish expedition the figure is less than one percent.⁴⁴ Evidently the social composition of the military community was changing by these later decades with fewer men of the landholding classes taking up the sword than before. This of course does not necessarily mean that those replacing them were not up-and-comers themselves merely that they were not major landholders.⁴⁵

Ultimately, whilst these figures are indeed a useful guide, we will probably never know the precise proportion of men who took out protections and attorneys

⁴⁰ Ayton, *Knights*, 162.

⁴¹ Brown, A.L. 'The Authorisation of Letters under the Great Seal' *B.I.H.R.* 37 (1964), 130-31.

⁴² The geographic destination of an expedition played a part; 38 per-cent for the three Breton expeditions in 1342-43, two thirds for the campaign in the Low Countries in 1338-39, and c.20 per cent for the Roxburgh campaign (1334-35). Ayton, *Knights*, 159, ft.110.

⁴³ About 750 out of an army of c.3,500-4,000 men, chapter IV, 169.

⁴⁴ Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 75, 77 (Arundel 1387-88); chapter iv, 151

⁴⁵ Composition of the military community, chapter III, 61-132.

though it can probably be surmised that more were sought in the first half of the fourteenth century than the second. As a consequence we will also probably never know the answer to our second question posed of these documents: how many of those that did take out these legal protections actually performed the military service they had proposed? The problem was that the legal immunity (in terms of the protection of property it offered) that these documents provided essentially postponed any form of litigation that was currently in the process of being completed. This offered the opportunity for unscrupulous individuals to abuse the system by taking out a protection and then failing to appear at muster. The government was clearly aware of this problem and the second half of the fourteenth century saw a large number of protection revocations enrolled at the Chancery when miscreants were caught. On the printed *Calendar of Patent Rolls* there are no less than 633 revocations listed from 1358 to 1399.⁴⁶ The proliferation of enrolled revocations in the later fourteenth century may be indicative of a tightening up of the muster and review process. It might also have an entirely innocent explanation: that some potential recipients may have made no arrangements to collect the letters or decided they did not need one after the initial request had been sent out. Whilst these may account for a minority of the revocations many others, the vast majority, nevertheless seem to represent a growing incidence of fraud and defaulting amongst protection/attorney recipients as evidenced by the standard phraseology of these documents that the protection has been revoked because the individual ‘tarries on [his] own business’.⁴⁷ Evidently this is an issue that requires much greater scrutiny by scholars; suffice here to say that protections and attorneys in their various guises are far from the goldmine of information on the rank-and-file members of English armies that they first appear.

Another of the ancillary military sources which reveal additional detail about structure but particularly about the personnel of fourteenth-century armies are charters of pardon.⁴⁸ These, as their name suggests, were instances where men performed military service in return for a royal pardon for crimes they had committed. Though there are some recipients of knightly status the vast majority of pardons seem to have

⁴⁶ For example: *C.P.R. 1381-85*, 290, 408.

⁴⁷ *C.P.R. 1385-89*, 276.

⁴⁸ The warrants appear on the Privy seal (C81). The final enrolments appear mainly on the Patent rolls and other main rolls series whilst scattered information can be found within the series of Ancient Correspondence (SC1) as well as some originals in local archives.

been issued to men from the lower end of the social spectrum due to the fact that the vast majority of recipients do not appear in any other martial records. These men had probably been ostracised by their local communities and were using military service as a means of social rehabilitation. They were certainly a useful tool for the government when it came to the recruitment of men for military operations, at least in the first phase of the Hundred Years War. As well as removing the most unruly elements from medieval society and directing their energies towards more constructive pursuits it also allowed English kings to supplement their forces with large numbers of men who did not require pay for their service, the expiation of their crimes deemed a sufficient reward. The number of pardons issued varied from campaign to campaign and may in some instances have added a significant number of men to the paid strength of an army, somewhere in the region of 5-10 percent at least for armies prior to 1360.⁴⁹ One intriguing mystery about those serving for pardons is where they were placed within the structure of an army. Were they distributed evenly amongst the various retinues to ensure that they did not cause discord amongst the ranks or were they placed into one large company to be closely monitored? The only real evidence there is to go with regards to this is the occurrence of what appears to be a 'felons company' of archers serving the earl of Cornwall in 1335 at their own cost and two units serving in Scotland.⁵⁰

Nevertheless the pardons act as a useful tonic for scholars, helping to balance the lob-sided picture of the propertied members of the military community which most martial sources provide. If a series of these records survive for a particular captain it is sometimes possible to tentatively reconstitute a portion of his retinue and perhaps even indentify the small companies which made up the larger body. They are also a useful resource for the information they provide on the criminality of fourteenth-century England. We can see from the table below for example that the vast majority, over two-thirds, of pardon recipients in the second half of the fourteenth century were serving for a remission of the crime of murder with theft another common problem for English local authorities to deal with.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Ayton, *Knights*, 146.

⁵⁰ Idem, 146, ft. 39; Nicholson, *Edward III and the Scots*, 130, 174.

⁵¹ By the middle of the fourteenth century it seems popular opinion prevailed that for some crimes, like treason, there should be no hope of pardon. Bellamy, J.G. *The Law of Treason in England in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2004), 174.

*Table 2.2: Pardons issued for good and long military service 1358-99 on the Patent Rolls*⁵²

<i>Type of Crime</i>	<i>No. of Instances of Crime</i>	<i>Percentage of Occurrence of Crime (% to 1 d.p.)</i>
Aiding and abetting a felon	19	1.6
Theft (of property)	122	10.6
Attempted murder	5	0.4
Robbery (of person)	69	6.0
General felony (unspecified)	23	2.0
Assault	18	1.6
Rape/Ravishing	29	2.5
Trespass against the peace and prison breaking	41	3.6
Kidnap	14	1.2
Murder	791	68.5
Murder in self-defence	23	2.0
Total	1154	

Though pardons can clearly tell us a great deal about this unruly element of English armies of the period we must be careful of reading too much in to the figures provided above. The reason for this is because the vast majority of these tabulated figures relate to pardons that were issued prior to 1370. In the first half of the fourteenth century the number of pardons issued by the Crown steadily increased from campaign to campaign reaching an apogee for the Crécy-Calais expedition for which several thousand were issued.⁵³ Numbers remained relatively high up until the Reims campaign (1359-60) where around 700 are listed on the Patent Rolls but thereafter the number enrolled dips dramatically.⁵⁴ Sir Robert Knolles' 1370 campaign is the last of the fourteenth century expeditions for which pardons were granted in any real number with just less than a hundred. Thereafter they can be numbered in handfuls for all the rest of the campaigns until the end of the century.⁵⁵ Though the practice of utilising pardons to facilitate recruitment seems to again have

⁵² There were 968 individuals with an enrolled pardon on the *Patent Rolls* and 1154 crimes.

⁵³ This was an increase from Edward I's reign: Hurnard, N.D. *The King's Pardon for Homicide before A.D. 1307* (Oxford, 1969).

⁵⁴ For the vast majority *C.P.R. 1358-61*, 375-403.

⁵⁵ Chapter IV, 164-166. Knolles' army seems something of an anomaly when compared with other armies post 1360. Less than 200 were enrolled for all military activity 1360-69 though admittedly England was officially at peace with both the French and the Scots during this time. After 1370 only around 150 were issued for the remainder of the century.

picked up during the early fifteenth century being, 'brought to a fine art by Henry V,' the dramatic decline in the intervening years is deeply puzzling.⁵⁶

One explanation may be that all available documentation has not survived to the present day. It has been shown thanks to the survival of a fragmentary pardon roll for example that for the Breton campaign of 1342-43 not all of the pardons issued were listed on the Treaty roll.⁵⁷ This can hardly have been an isolated incident. Another possibility is that for some reason the government began enrolling pardons elsewhere, their virtual disappearance thus the result of a change in administrative practice. If this is true then it is a change that has eluded the attention of several notable scholars.⁵⁸ The only explanation that seems to fit the evidence is that the crown must have drastically reduced the numbers of pardons that were issued after c.1370. What was the reason behind this? Aside from the fact that some would have felt that it was morally questionable to allow large numbers of criminals to be re-integrated into the population for a stint of military service, a bigger concern as far as the government was concerned was the potential of fraudulent practices.⁵⁹ In the same way that a man could request the issue of a protection or letter of attorney prior to a campaign so too could a criminal request a pardon, duly appear on the pardon roll, and then fail to materialise at muster. We should thus be careful with taking the information provided in pardons at face value. Admittedly the government was aware of the potential of fraud as early as the 1330s during which time measures were taken in an attempt to remedy the problem although it remained an issue into the 1350s if petitions to Parliament in 1351 and 1353 are anything to go by.⁶⁰ If fraudulent practice was the primary motivation behind the reduction in the number of pardons granted then perhaps the events of the campaign of 1370, the last campaign in which they were

⁵⁶ Carpenter, C. *Locality and Polity. A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401-1499* (Cambridge, 1992), 370.

⁵⁷ Ayton, *Knights*, 163, ft.129.

⁵⁸ In correspondence that I have had with Dr Adrian Bell, Dr David Simpkin,, Dr Helen Lacey and Dr Andrew Ayton, there has been no indication that this was the case.

⁵⁹ The moral case was apparent to the English population at large as the problem of re-integrating not only pardon recipients but de-mobilised soldiers into the population in times of peace caused a large amount of social unrest. Only the issuing of pardons, however, was blamed: Hewitt, *Organisation of War*, 173-75.

⁶⁰ Legislation attempting to prevent fraudulent pardon issue had been made in the Statutes of Northampton (1328) and Westminster (1330). A petition made by the community of the realm to the king in the parliament on 1334 indicates that it was still a problem. *Statutes of the Realm i.*, 257, 264; Phillips, S. 'The Parliament of February 1334' *P.R.O.M.E.*, petition 3; Ormrod, M. 'Parliaments of Feb. and Oct. 1339, 1351, and 1353' *P.R.O.M.E.*, 1351, item 26 no. xvi; 1353 item 41.

issued in any great number, was something of a tipping point. The events of the campaign would suggest this. The army, composed of a seemingly large criminal element, disintegrated in the field and was virtually annihilated by the French.⁶¹ However the role of the army's criminal element cannot have been solely to blame for this. Though doubtlessly a disruptive element, they were not present in great enough numbers to fragment the army so spectacularly with, as far as we are aware, just over 50 men out of 3,500-4,000 in receipt of a pardon on this expedition.⁶² The only possibility that can be suggested as to why pardons declined so spectacularly after this expedition is that the events of 1370 exacerbated a trend that had been well underway since the mid-1340s. Whilst only a minor contributory factor to the army's failure (dissension between the retinue captains being far more important) pardons were perhaps used as scapegoat in the subsequent enquiry into the army's failure, and this only cemented in the mind of government officials what many had already been thinking; that pardons were an unreliable recruitment tool. Perhaps too the decline in the number of pardons resulted from the fact that they were no longer needed with an increasingly militarised population thanks to the ever increasing demands of war, meaning that recourse to unruly elements in society for military service was no longer necessary. They may also diminish in number because the government had adequate resources in manpower from the population at large willing to serve and thus did not need to resort to the unrulier elements of society. If this was the case it would certainly help challenge the notion that the war was becoming less popular amongst the general population in the decades after Brétigny.⁶³ Whatever the reason for the change in pardon policy evidently, as far as the government was concerned, the use of pardons for military service was no longer a viable recruitment tool after c.1370.

There is however an alternative solution to the question as to why the number of pardons declined; they were no longer being requested. If, as seems likely, we are correct in our assumption that the military community was becoming increasingly the

⁶¹ *Anonimale*, 63.

⁶² Chapter IV, 164.

⁶³ Both N.B. Lewis and A.E. Prince, for example argued that the war was becoming less popular and cited the emergence of *regard* payments as symptomatic of the need for the government to make military service more attractive. Lewis, N.B. 'The Last Medieval Summons of the English Feudal Levy, 1385' *E.H.R.* 73 (1958), 12; Prince, A.E. 'The Indenture System under Edward III' *Historical Essays in Honour of James Tait*, (ed.) Edwards, J.G., Galbraith, V.H., Jacob, E.F. (Manchester, 1933), 292. See 125-126.

preserve of the gentry during the second half of the fourteenth century then it is logical to assume that the number of pardon recipients would decrease considerably. This is because as the social composition of those performing martial service increased, pardon recipients, often from the dredges of medieval society, would naturally have been excluded. An increasing professionalization of the military community meant that there was no longer any room in English armies for men of questionable moral character with the potential to cause disruption. The armies recruited after Brétigny, barring a few exceptions, were fully mounted forces, garbed in a quality standard of military apparel. Unless those seeking pardons were of a social station that allowed them to provide these requisites of service then it is unlikely that the Crown would be willing to provide them with a pardon. Whether pardons were still being requested and were simply not being issued by the government or whether criminals, realising that they would not receive one and thus did not bother requesting them is unclear and further research is required in this area.

The same can be said of exemptions; the privilege given to an individual by the crown to be exempted from performing various civic duties in their locality from serving on juries to being an arrayer of men-at-arms and archers. To my knowledge these have hitherto never been utilised by historians for military purposes.⁶⁴ This is surprising given that as local administration was the preserve of the gentry and those higher up the social scale, it may be possible to detect the names of a few old soldiers coming to the end of their careers. Unfortunately these enrolments rarely state the reason the exemption is being granted and if information is provided it is often ambiguous. Rarely do they specifically refer to military service like that of John de Gyslyngham who was exempted in 1362 because ‘he has served long in the king’s wars’ or Sir Thomas de Shardlowe two years earlier for ‘good service for the war in France’.⁶⁵ We cannot even be sure that those being granted exemptions were old men being relieved of duties best left to younger generations. Even Shardlowe may have been exempted only because he had performed some notable feat of arms on campaign and was thus rewarded by being relieved of the oft tedious job of local administration. We might infer however that at least some of these men were indeed old soldiers who were effectively retiring. Whilst it is of course not a certain link it

⁶⁴ Found on the Patent Rolls, e.g. *C.P.R.* 1381-85, 214-15.

⁶⁵ *C.P.R.* 1358-61, 426; 1361-64, 253.

might be possible that John James of Wallingford granted an exemption on 15 April 1392 ‘in consideration of his age and weakness’ was the same man who nearly two decades earlier had served as a man-at-arms in France and at sea.⁶⁶

The testimony of chroniclers can also offer useful information about medieval armies and their personnel. On occasion this might include the names of men of whom no other record of participation on an expedition survives.⁶⁷ A man might also be deemed worthy of mention if he performed some notable deed or was wounded, killed, or captured during an engagement.⁶⁸ One of the biggest problems with chronicles is that they are almost universally aristocratic in their perspective. The rank-and-file though occasionally mentioned in conjunction with their noble captain, are hardly ever mentioned by name. Furthermore these sources often display a degree of bias based upon their authors’ own particular view or nationality. There is also the possibility of corrupt name forms, inaccurate information, and, more sinisterly, pure invention. The estimates of the size of armies are also often questionable. ‘As a rule of thumb, medieval chroniclers can be given some credence when they are reporting the size of their “own” armies, and when the totals they give are not too far out of line with the figures we know from pay records ... Reports of fourteenth-century armies in excess of 30,000 are probably never accurate, and estimates of “enemy” forces are often greatly exaggerated’.⁶⁹

Finally, there is one further set of records to which the historian can turn to cast further light upon the English military community of the later fourteenth century; the proceedings of the *Court of Chivalry*. This court, presided over by the Constable and Earl Marshal, dealt with, amongst other things, disputes between aristocratic families over who had the right to display particular armorial bearings. Though this might seem a triviality to modern sensibilities, as Lord Scrope remarked in 1391 “the highest and most sovereign things a knight ought to guard in defence of his estate are his troth and his arms”.⁷⁰ Though armorial disputes were relatively common during the second half of the fourteenth century as increased levels of campaigning brought

⁶⁶ *C.P.R. 1391-96*, 45; C76/56 m.28; E101/33/9 m.2.

⁶⁷ Sir, for example, Sir John Seton in 1370: chapter IV, 154.

⁶⁸ For an example of a notable feat of arms performed by Richard de Baskerville the younger, on the Reims campaign: Gray, T. *Scalacronica* quoted in Rogers, *The Wars of Edward III* 178-79.

⁶⁹ Rogers, *Wars of Edward III*, 23.

⁷⁰ *C.C.R. 1389-92*, 518.

large groups of combatants together more frequently only records relating to three cases have survived: that of the Yorkshire Lord Richard Scrope of Bolton against the Cheshire knight Sir Robert Grosvenor to bear the arms *azure a bend or*; that between John Lord Lovel and Thomas Lord Morley of the rights to the arms *argent a lion rampant sable crowned and armed or* (both of which emerged during the campaign of 1385); and that between Sir Edward Hastings and Reginald Lord Grey of Ruthyn from the first decade of the fifteenth century.⁷¹ Whilst this is of course regrettable the information from the cases that do survive, particularly those from the later fourteenth century, provide invaluable information for historians of the fourteenth century military community. 'The bulk of the surviving records of the armorial disputes before the *Court* consists of the depositions of witnesses selected by the protagonists to give evidence concerning possession of the contested arms'.⁷² These witnesses appeared before the tribunal and answered a series of questions about when and where they had seen the protagonists either bearing the arms or in some other capacity. In doing so the deponents revealed not only elements of the past martial career of the protagonist whom they were representing but also a skeletal profile of their own career-in-arms.

In the Scrope/Grosvenor, Lovel/Morley cases the Court heard the testimony of c.1,000 individuals, both lay and ecclesiastical, with evidence relating to military service, the tournament, and heraldry away from the campaign arena such as within religious institutions which the deponents had endowed, clothing, armour and elsewhere.⁷³ Indeed so prevalent were the badges in religious institutions that they must have been 'literally festooned with armorial glass and depictions of donors'.⁷⁴ The depositions themselves are certainly varied in their content. Some are short giving only basic information whilst others are highly detailed, adding much colour to a

⁷¹ Nicholas, N.H. *The Scrope and Grosvenor Controversy* (2 vols. London, 1832); Stewart-Brown, R. 'The Scrope and Grosvenor Controversy, 1385-1391' *T.R.H.S. of Lancashire and Cheshire* 89 (1938 for 37), 1-22. Ayton, A. 'Knights, Esquires and Military Service: The Evidence of the Armorial Cases before the Court of Chivalry' *The Medieval Military Revolution: State, Society, and Military Change in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (ed.) Ayton, A., Price, J.L. (1995), 81-104; Keen, M. 'English Military Experience and the Court of Chivalry: The Case of Grey v. Hastings' *Guerre et Société en France en Angleterre et en Bourgogne, XIVe-XVe Siècle* (eds.) Contamine, P., Giry-Deloison, C., Keen, M. (Lille, 1992), 123-42; Idem, *Origins of the English Gentleman: Heraldry, Chivalry and Gentility in Medieval England c.1300-1500* (2002), chapters 3-4.

⁷² Ayton, 'Armorial Cases', 83.

⁷³ A substantial portion of material for both Lovel and Morley is missing, Lovel's roll starting with deposition 157. Ayton, 'Knights and Esquires', 86.

⁷⁴ Coss, P. *The Knight in Medieval England 1000-1400* (1993), 89.

man's career in arms and providing information which would not otherwise be forthcoming. The esquire John Blundell for example is only known to us through a solitary protection issued on 29 April 1383 for taking part in the bishop of Norwich's 'crusade' that year. If this Blundell is the same man who gave evidence at the Court of Chivalry then we also find that he took part in the Reims campaign in 1359-60, the French campaign with Gaunt in 1369, and was again in France in the 1370s.⁷⁵ Furthermore the names of a large number of men, particularly those of sub-knightly status, are revealed to us of whom history would be entirely ignorant were it not for these depositions. The esquire Adam Hullok, giving testimony in favour of Lord Morley, does not appear in any of the standard military sources and yet his testimony reveals that he too served on the Reims campaign, Lancaster's 'viage vers l'isle de Cawes' in 1369, and went to Scotland under Lord Roger Scales in 1385.⁷⁶

Another fascinating aspect of these depositions is the information they provide about the ages of combatants. In many instances the witnesses provide their age as it was in 1385-86. In other instances combatants' ages can be tentatively calculated from the information they provided on the number of years they had spent in arms. This age-related information should be utilised tentatively. As there were no birth or census records compiled in the Middle Ages calculating the age of all but the highest echelons of society is extremely difficult. Several respondents, like Esmond Breton and Sir John Straunge, stated that they were around ('*ou entour*') a particular age but even this was more precise than an individual like Sir John Conestable of Halsham who ambiguously described himself as being 40 years of age and more. Even for men whose age was given we are left frustrated by their seeming reticence about their careers. Sir John Massy of Tatton for example (interestingly a cousin of Grosvenor but supporting Scrope) claimed he was fifty years old at the time of the 1385 expedition and that he had been in arms for thirty years and more. This meant he was old enough to have taken part in the Poitiers campaign in 1356 yet he only refers to two periods of service, one in 1385, the other in 1383.⁷⁷ This cannot surely have been his only martial experience in over 30 years of campaigning. Furthermore, given the age of some of the deponents, it is extremely disappointing that we do not have more

⁷⁵ (Lovel v. Morley) C47/6/1 dep. 51, record 169-71.

⁷⁶ (Lovel v. Morley) C47/6/1dep. 61, record 186-88.

⁷⁷ *Court of Chivalry II*, dep. 1, page, 262-264.

information about some of the campaigns in the earlier part of the century; the vast majority referring to campaigns after Crécy-Calais (1346-47). Admittedly there would have been fewer men alive who could remember the campaigns of the 1320s and 30s but there was surely more men who could remember the opening salvos of the French war in the 1330s than testified to it. Whilst faulty memory may have played a part, especially some of the older witnesses like the esquires Reginald Fyfhide and William Wollaston, who claimed they had been first armed at Bannockburn nearly 70 years earlier, this does not explain the reticence of some of the younger men to mention earlier periods of service like John Blundell who probably served on Norwich's crusade in 1383 yet failed to mention this service in his testimony.⁷⁸ He was hardly alone in this respect. It is clear that the vast majority of witnesses in these armorial cases only provided information relating to certain expeditions in which they served. Undoubtedly the main reason why witnesses were selective in their testimony was because they were restrained by the direction of the questioning. Blundell, supporting Morley's claim, evidently only deemed it necessary to mention those expeditions on which he had seen the arms in question. Neither Morley, nor any of the other protagonists who brought witnesses before the court, can have served with Norwich in 1383, for example, as not one witness in any of the cases stated that they themselves had been on this expedition when clearly some of them had.⁷⁹ We must also be aware of the potential that at least some the witnesses provided false information in an attempt to sway the Court's decision. However 'although the regular appearance of stock phrases might suggest that "coaching" had taken place, it should be remembered that the depositions were essentially responses to a prescribed list of questions, and that the court registrar may well have sought to simplify what must have been a demanding secretarial task by employing simple, shorthand phrases whenever possible'.⁸⁰

With these limitations in mind the information the testimonies provide are invaluable resources for scholars studying the fourteenth-century military community. They provide the names of members of the military community who would be lost to history without their depositions, men like the esquire John Raven, veteran of Sluys,

⁷⁸ Ibid. deps. 186, 210, records 392, 408.

⁷⁹ For instance Sir John de Brewes and Sir Thomas Trivet: C76/67 m. 17.

⁸⁰ Ayton, 'Knights, Esquires', 89.

Crécy, the sea battle off Winchelsea and the Reims campaign as well as a few extra names for some of the smaller and lesser well known expeditions launched in the fourteenth century like Sir John de Brewes who fought in the Battle of Mauron in 1352.⁸¹ Testimony of military careers from the men's own mouths instantly supplies a career profile that detailed prosopography might take months to accomplish. True there may have been some men who lied about their past careers to bolster the testimony of their man. Considering however that testimony was given under oath, in front of other well-informed soldiers, any man caught lying would have faced severe censure and quite probably ostracism, a severe risk in an age in which a man's honour and self-worth were entwined within his reputation.

More importantly as regards to the military community we can see from the depositions that, as just over half of the deponents who gave evidence stated that they were esquires, or at least we can infer that they were given that they were not knights, indicates that, by the 1380s at least, esquires – or at least those from the upper echelons of the gentry on a par with some knights – were regarded as worthy members of the chivalric community at this time. That there were also a large number of knights (also of the gentry) who gave testimony does not disguise the fact that esquires were becoming increasingly important within the community; that they were called before the enquiry and that their words were given equal weight to that of their knightly colleagues is indicative of this change. What is more from these testimonies we can see that English armies of the period were made up in the most part of seasoned veteran warriors whose careers had stretched in some instances to forty years and more. Though there were men who were at the beginning of their military careers like the Lord Roos and Lord Dacre (being 3 and 7 years in arms respectively) the vast majority of combatants had extensive martial experience.⁸² Of those who either stated the length of time they had been in arms or it can be calculated from their testimony almost all had been in the saddle more than ten years and the vast majority over 20. Indeed 40 years plus was not uncommon. Whilst it is certainly true that the witnesses will have been selected precisely because they were able to relay the details of campaigns that were in some cases over half a century previously (reflected in the average age of the witnesses, 50) it does not detract from the fact that a large number

⁸¹ *Idem*, 90; *Court of Chivalry II*. (Scrope v. Grosvenor), dep. no. 44, page 208-210

⁸² *Ibid.* dep. nos. 23, 26. pages 412, 413, 423-425

of witnesses relayed military careers that spanned a number of decades. This is an even more potent point when it is remembered that most of these testimonies were not even full career profiles. Were this the case many of the careers of these witnesses would surely prove longer and more varied than they currently appear.

It has often been argued that regular and repeated military service in the fourteenth century was driven by the fact that many combatants were permanent retainers of one captain or another.⁸³ It is certainly possible to detect some men who were indeed permanent retainers like Sir Laurence Dutton who was of Grosvenor's affinity or blood (although he interestingly enough was called by Scrope) from the witnesses in the *Court of Chivalry*.⁸⁴ It seems however that the vast majority were not tied by any formal bonds of permanent retention. There also appears to have been a difference between service and retaining patterns of knights and esquires. In his investigation into the Lovel/Morley deponents, Ayton illustrated that knights, though often lifetime acquaintances of the deponents, rarely served under their banner. They tended to avoid 'permanent commitment to a single magnate, preferring to enlist in a series of different war retinues during their careers in arms'. Their worth as witnesses was generally based upon their service on the same expeditions as the deponent they were supporting. Esquires on the other hand tended to have actually served with the man that their testimony supported. These ties however 'seem to have been informal ... based perhaps upon friendship, perhaps upon the shared circumstances and interests' rather than formal, contractual bonds of retention.⁸⁵

How representative a sample of the English military community were these witnesses? Detailed prosopography and nominal record linkage from the *Court of Chivalry* records along with the broad spectrum of military related documentation, reveals that the armies of the second half of the fourteenth century consisted of large numbers of veterans with multifarious campaigning experiences. Though some men might have spent their entire lives serving in an Anglo-Scottish border garrison or in the English lordship in Ireland, and indeed there were those who only roused themselves and took up arms on a solitary occasions as far as we can tell, like Sir

⁸³ For example: Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, 42-50.

⁸⁴ *Court of Chivalry* II (Scrope v. Grosvenor), dep. no. 5, pages 265-266.

⁸⁵ Ayton, 'Knights, Esquires', 93-4.

Henry Arderne in 1385, a large number, perhaps the vast majority seem to have had extensive military careers on multiple fronts.⁸⁶ Though a great deal more prosopography must be done to state the case for definite at the very least the core of experienced men in English armies in this period was not negligible.

Evidently from the above discussion the sources for the study of the English military community and the armies in which they served are a varied collection of documents with their own contribution to the general whole. It is only through nominal record linkage and detailed prosopography that historians can attempt to recreate some of these armies and their personnel's careers. On the one hand it is remarkable that we know anything at all about them, on the other, highly frustrating that the information provided is fraught with interpretative problems, omissions, and conventions obvious to those who compiled them but which to the modern eye are highly enigmatic. It is akin to attempting a jigsaw puzzle without all the pieces and with only a vague idea as to what the finished picture is supposed to be. Perseverance is well worth the effort. The period from Brétigny to the deposition of Richard II, so often dismissed as a period of military decline and stagnation, was actually a time of dynamic martial activity. At worst they were a time in which the foundations of the later successes were built, at best a time when the military machinery of the English government continued the developments in recruitment, military tactics and organisation of earlier times. Their success is seen in the fact that these systems, originally introduced so that large-scale military operations could be undertaken without the presence of the king, allowed the continued prosecution of the war at a time of great political instability and uncertainty. It is only through an in-depth study of the sources that this becomes apparent.

⁸⁶ Issue Roll Easter, 8 Richard II no. 508. There was a Henry de Arderne, esq. who appeared in France in 1373-74 (E101/32/39 3d; C76/56 m.33) and a Sir Henry Arderne exempted in 1380 from performing local administration as well as 'being keeper of a castle, city, or town' *C.P.R. 1377-81*, 440.

III: DEFINING THE MILITARY COMMUNITY

i. The Parameters of the Study

The term ‘military community’ is a modern invention, applied at both regional and national levels, in numerous theatres of war, and over various periods of history, as a short-hand way of describing those individuals who undertook military service.¹ Unfortunately it is here that consensus on the subject ends. In part this is due to the relatively embryonic – though steadily developing – historiography of the subject. What made an individual a member of a military community? Was there a single group or were there distinctive entities, based upon regional, social and/or service activity? If it was the latter, then what were the relationships between these constituent groups; could a man occupy a position in more than one; and were there social demarcations within groups and the community as a whole? Was it possible for a man from outside the military community to become part of it? How many fighting men did the community encompass? If we are to comprehend and judge the success of English military endeavours in the second half of the fourteenth century we must know more about the men who undertook these ventures: the ‘English military community’. The purpose of this chapter is to attempt a resolution of some of these questions. Though naval operations and garrison duty in England’s various theatres of war were important to the English war-effort, and are touched upon in this chapter, our main focus for discussion are the field armies that the English government raised from 1360 to 1399. It is through these forces that we can both identify, and define, exactly who comprised the English military community.

¹ Contamine and Morgan were among the first to coin the term and it has been adopted with enthusiasm. Contamine, *Guerre, état et société à la fin du Moyen Âge. Etudes sur les armées des rois de France, 1337-1394* (Paris, 1972); Morgan, P. *Medieval Cheshire, 1277-1403*, chapter IV. The pioneer for the use of the term for fourteenth-century English armies is Andrew Ayton. See for example: ‘The English Army at Crécy’ *Crécy*, 159-252; Idem, ‘Armies and Military Communities’, 215-39. See also: Green, D.S. ‘Edward the Black Prince and East Anglia, An Unlikely Association’ *Fourteenth Century England, III* (ed.) Ormrod, M.W. (Woodbridge, 2004), 93-98. For wider chronological use: Ailes, M.E. *Military Migration and State Formation: The British Military Community in Seventeenth-Century Sweden* (Nebraska, 2002); Henig, M. ‘Artistic Patronage and the Roman Military Community in Britain’ *Journal of Roman Archaeology, Supplementary series*, 34 (1999), 150-64; Henry, G. *The Irish Military Community in Spanish Flanders 1586-1621* (Dublin, 1992).

Before we can begin our investigation we must define the group of men to whom we are referring. This is because at various junctures in the fourteenth century there were substantial numbers of men who fought for the English crown who may not have thought of themselves as being English; a view of them shared by their contemporaries. In the first half of the century, for example, there were men like Sir Walter Mauny, a Hainaulter, who first came to England in the household of Philippa, Edward III's queen, and who fought in the English king's wars for the rest of his career.² He was far from alone: there were also Gascons who fought under the Black Prince, like the renowned knight Sir Jean de Grailly, *Capitain de Buch*; the Anglo-Irish nobility, descendants of those who had created the English lordship in Ireland; Bretons who fought due to John de Montfort's close ties to the English royal house; Welshmen like John Goutier with Gaunt in Iberia;³ and an unknowable number of military freelancers who found their way into English service, like the Scot John Tolof who served under John Neville in Aquitaine in 1378, the Navarrian esquire John Dartassho who was in the Berwick garrison in 1383, the Lombard, Bartholemew Dast, who fought in France in 1373, or the German, John Maghlem, who served at sea under Sir Robert Hales in 1377.⁴

Though it is an imperfect qualification for consideration as being part of the 'English' military community, the men who can potentially be considered to be within the military community are, for the purposes of this study, those who were born in England. The reason for this classification is that, as Andrew Ayton argued recently, a military community was, 'first and foremost a community of the mind ...of shared mentality, skills and perhaps focus: of shared identity'.⁵ In the same way that a man like Sir John Hawkwood, who established himself as a successful military commander in Italy in the 1360s, would doubtlessly still have considered himself as being English, so too would Gascons and Bretons, though fighting for the English crown, have felt their own 'national' loyalties. Breton support for the English cause, for example, was based not on any real overriding desire to see Edward III or his successors as King of France, but rather to preserve the relative autonomy of the duchy from interference from the French crown; they were Bretons, not Englishmen.

² Sumption, J. 'Mauny, Sir Walter (c.1310–1372)', *O.D.N.B.*, online edn., (Jan 2008).

³ C76/70 m.11.

⁴ C61/91 m.5; C71/63 m.8; C76/56 m.29; C76/61 m.23.

⁵ Ayton, 'Armies and Military Communities', 216.

In a similar vein we can discount any foreign mercenary troops as being part of the community.

A far thornier issue is presented by those who either fought on a consistent basis for the English crown, or who considered themselves English by descent. Before he rebelled against English rule in 1400, for example, the Welshman Owain Glyndŵr fought on several occasions for the English crown; and there were certainly other 'Anglicised' Welshmen who had long-careers-in-arms in English armies.⁶ Sections of the Anglo-Irish nobility are an even more of a vexing problem for, as will be seen in chapter IV, they had a growing sense of their own distinctive 'Irish' identity. For the purposes of this work we shall include both within the bound of the 'English' military community. This is a purely pragmatic decision, and it is, of course possible to exclude one or both.

Inclusion within the English military community was not, of course, based on birth alone. It is the contention of this work that for a group within medieval society to be considered as a constituent part of the military community it must satisfy a number of martial criteria: military effectiveness, training and discipline, mentality, length of service, and experience. There are of course no universal rules for inclusion within the community but it is hoped that the discussion in this chapter will both validate the decision for their use and highlight the fact that the community was far from a static conglomeration of men. It constantly underwent change as socio-economic groups within society either became martially relevant or obsolete. To understand these fluctuations, it is first necessary to understand the changes that were taking place within English armies during the course of the fourteenth century, as these changes had a profound effect on the composition of the community.

⁶ Bell, A.R., Chapman, A., Simpkin, D. 'Owain Glyndŵr'; Chapman, A. 'David le Hope and Sir Gregory Says', *Soldier Profiles* from *The Soldier in Medieval England Project*, online: <http://www.icmacentre.ac.uk/soldier/database/SoM/December2007.php>; <http://www.icmacentre.ac.uk/soldier/database/September2008.php>. (accessed Sept, 2010).

ii. The Medieval 'Military Revolution'

Armies in England since at least the Conquest had changed very little in their composition. They consisted of two martial arms – peasant infantry and heavy cavalry – operating independently of one another, with occasional recourse to continental mercenaries.⁷ The cavalry, consisting of the nobility and those on the cusp thereof, the sergeants (*servientes*), were raised as and when required by the Crown by the system of obligation which has become known as the 'feudal' system.⁸ Historians tend to avoid use of the term 'feudal' because of its imprecise meaning, ranging from any system by which men owed service, to the relationship between a man and his superiors in the social hierarchy. Nonetheless, and as David Simpkin has recently argued, the expression remains 'the most appropriate way of describing the military service rendered by tenants-in-chief in return for the lands, predominantly knights' fees, which they held in chief'.⁹ When the crown wished to raise a large army it issued a general feudal summons requiring all men who owed military service due to obligation, both lay and ecclesiastical, to participate (such as in 1314, 1322, and 1327).¹⁰ It could also issue individual summons to the king's most prominent tenants-in-chief. Those receiving personal or general summons either served in person with their retainers or proffered their service to others to fight in their stead.¹¹ Philippe Contamine has estimated that William I could count, in theory, on the *servitum debitum* of 5,000-6,000 knights, though this number was never raised, and a more accurate estimation of manpower by the reigns of the first two Edwards by David Simpkin gives 'an aggregate of around 8,000 individual men-at-arms [knights and sergeants who] went to war between 1272 and 1314'.¹² The infantry, though some may have been serving as a result of obligation, were recruited, by the reign of

⁷ Mercenaries: Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 147-57. Even when attempts were made to combine them, such as that by the earl of Warwick in 1295, the men-at-arms still fought on foot. Morris, J.E. *The Welsh Wars of Edward I* (Oxford, 1901), 256.

⁸ *Servientes* were becoming increasingly pre-dominant amongst the cavalry by the reign of Edward I: Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 91.

⁹ Ibid. 152 ft.2. For the term's ambiguity: Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 57-82.

¹⁰ Prestwich, M. 'Cavalry Service in Early Fourteenth-Century England' *War and Government in the Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of J.O. Prestwich* (ed.) Gillingham, J., Holt, J.C. (Woodbridge, 1984), 147-58. The last successful feudal summons was issued by Edward III in 1327 for the Weardale campaign: Lewis, N.B. 'The Summons of the English Feudal Levy, 5 April 1327' *Essays in Medieval History Presented to Bertie Wilkinson* (ed.) Sandquist, T.A., Powicke, M.R. (Toronto, 1969), 236-49, although there was another unsuccessful attempt in 1385: see chapter IV, 181.

¹¹ For the mustering process: Chew, *Ecclesiastical Tenants-in-Chief*, 83-94.

¹² Contamine, *War*, 53; Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 68, 156.

Edward I, via commissions of array in the shires. They were far more numerous than the cavalry, reaching a peak in the Edward I's reign and constituting, at the very least, around three-quarters of an army's fighting strength. These men were organised into units of twenties, hundreds, or thousands under *vintenars*, *centanars*, and *milénars*.¹³

The reign of Edward I marked something of a watershed in the development of English armies. They began to undergo a series of structural changes that were to continue, and gain momentum, into the fourteenth century. By the end of Edward III's reign, there had emerged a new type of English army, that Andrew Ayton has termed 'structurally-uniform', replacing the old 'feudal' ('structurally-hybrid') forces of the past.¹⁴ 'In broad brush-stroke terms, the feudal host, based upon the compulsory, unpaid provision of companies of men-at-arms by tenants-in chief in fulfilment of their military obligations, had been superseded by contract armies, consisting of paid volunteers'.¹⁵ Indeed so profound were these changes that it has become *au-fait* amongst historians to describe them as an English or Edwardian medieval 'military revolution'.

The genesis of the idea of a military revolution was first proposed by Michael Roberts in the 1960s for Swedish armies from 1560-1660, who argued that changes in these forces were so profound that they deserved to be considered revolutionary and the idea of a military revolution was quickly adopted by scholars of other periods.¹⁶ Medievalists have been quick to highlight that many of the supposed changes that have been seen by early-modernists like Roberts as being 'revolutionary' – including the supplanting of heavy cavalry with infantry; the introduction of universal pay; the rise in the size and cost of armies; and the time in which armies spent on campaign –

¹³ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 115-17.

¹⁴ Ayton, 'Armies and Military Communities' 215-17.

¹⁵ Ayton, A. 'English Armies in the Fourteenth Century' *The Wars of Edward III: Sources and Interpretation* (ed.) Rogers, C.J. (Woodbridge, 1999), 304.

¹⁶ Roberts, M. *The Military Revolution, 1560-1660* (Belfast, 1956). For a potentially earlier genesis: Oman, C.W.C. *The Art of War in the Middle Ages*, (rev. and ed.) Beeler, J.H. (New York, 1953), 162. For subsequent adoption: James, R. *Henry VIII's Military Revolution: The Armies of Sixteenth-Century Britain and Europe* (2007); Parker, G. *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800* (Cambridge, 1988); Black, J. *A Military Revolution? Military Change and European Society 1550-1800* (Basingstoke, 1991).

in fact had, to varying degrees and with some exceptions, precedents in the medieval period.¹⁷

At first glance the idea of a military revolution accords well with the wave model of English military efforts in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.¹⁸ English armies, having undergone tactical and organisational reform during the later-thirteenth and early fourteenth-centuries, gained military ascendancy over their enemies until those enemies either emulated the English methods or adapted their own practices accordingly, resulting, by the second half of the fourteenth century, in a period of English military decline, or at the very least of stagnation. This idea is, however, far too simplistic. Indeed Ayton and Price, for example, have questioned the whole validity of a military revolution. They ask how a ‘transformation which took place over such a long period – perhaps from the early fourteenth to the end of the eighteenth century – [can] be usefully be called a revolution at all’; and indeed whether the change in fact occurred at a more sedate pace than might befit a ‘revolution’.¹⁹ Other critics, like Kelly DeVries, allege that the idea of a military revolution falls into the trap of ‘technological determinism’,²⁰ which holds that technological developments in the military sphere give one particular group or armament supremacy for a period of time until new developments overtake it. What this amounts to is, in effect, an ideology of history as an unending arms-race.²¹ This view is not without any merit – changes in English bow design from short to long from the 1250s, for instance, had by the first half of the fourteenth century given the English a crucial advantage on the battlefield over their enemies²² – but it is also over-

¹⁷ A good recent overview: Ayton, A., Price, J.L. ‘Introduction: The Military Revolution from a Medieval Perspective’ *The Medieval Military Revolution: State, Society and Military Change in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (ed.) Ayton, A., Prince, J.L. (1995), 1-22. Prestwich, M. ‘Was There a Military Revolution in Medieval England?’ *Recognitions: Essays Presented to Edmund Fryde* (ed.) Richmond, C., Harvey, I. (Aberystwyth, 1996), 19-38; Rogers, C.J. ‘The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years War’ *J.M.H.* 57, (1993), 258-275. Reprinted with additions: *The Military Revolution Debate* (ed.) Rogers, C.J. (1995).

¹⁸ Introduction, 2-4.

¹⁹ Ayton and Price, ‘Introduction’, 17. For further discussion and critique: Murray, W., Knox, M. (eds.) *The Dynamics of Military Revolution, 1300-2050* (Cambridge, 2001).

²⁰ See for example: DeVries, K. “Catapults are not Atomic Bombs”: Towards a Redefinition of “Effectiveness” in Pre-modern Military Technology’ *War in History* 4 (1997), 454-70.

²¹ Some examples: White Jr., L. *Medieval Technology and Social Change* (Oxford, 1962); Southern, P. ‘Men and Mountains, or Geographical Determinism and the Conquest of Scotland’, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquities of Scotland* 126 (1996), 371-386.

²² Rogers, C. ‘The Development of the Longbow in Late Medieval England and “Technological Determinism”’, *J.M.H.* 37:3 (2011), 321-341. This refuted claims that change had not occurred: Hardy, R., Strickland, S. *The Great Warbow: From Hastings to the Mary Rose* (2005).

simplistic. It does not adequately cater for factors such as regional differences, terrain, and the military-political objectives of belligerents;²³ nor indeed is it easily reconcilable with the remarkable success had by English armies in the early-to-mid fourteenth century in dismounting to fight.²⁴ This was not based upon any technological development but on tactical effectiveness.²⁵

The ‘military revolution problem’ has been skilfully tackled by Clifford Rogers. He argued that, far from there being a single military revolution in Europe, there were in fact several from around 1300-1800, each of which dramatically altered warfare for a short space of time. They occurred in all areas of war – infantry, artillery, cavalry, navy, and fortification – and he proposed a scientific model first formulated by S.J. Gould and N. Eldridge in 1972, known as ‘punctuated equilibrium evolution’, to explain the process. This theory espoused the idea that species evolved by a process of ‘short bursts of rapid change interspersed with long periods of near stasis rather than constant, slow alteration’.²⁶ Rogers argued that there were periods of revolutionary martial change which defined warfare for an extended period of time until the next revolutionary change re-defined the martial landscape. The application of the term ‘military revolution’, therefore, can still be aptly applied to the developments that occurred in England during the early-to-mid fourteenth century. We must firstly consider these changes before assessing how they affected the composition of the military community.

‘The most fundamental of the changes affecting the structure and composition of English armies [in the early decades of the fourteenth century] was the replacement of retinues of heavy cavalry and companies of arrayed infantry, recruited and functioning in separate contingents, by wholly mounted ‘mixed’ retinues composed of men-at-arms and archers’ in roughly equal numbers.²⁷ The process by which these

²³ For criticism of Lynne White junior’s technological determinism with regards to the stirrup: DeVries, K. *Medieval Military Technology* (Peterborough, Ontario, 1992) 99-111; Hilton, R.H., Sawyer, P.H. ‘Technical Determinism: The Stirrup and the Plough’ *P.P.* 24 (1963), 90-100. Nor did new military technology always mean the abandonment of the old. Phillips, G. ‘The Obsolescence of the *Arme Blanche* and Technological Determinism in British Military History’, *War in History*, 9:29 (2002), 39-59.

²⁴ Below 54-55.

²⁵ Ayton, *Knights*, 26-7; Idem, ‘Arms, Armour, and Horses’, 187.

²⁶ Rogers, ‘Military Revolutions’, 277.

²⁷ Ayton, ‘Ughtred’, 110.

new mixed-retinues were recruited had also changed. Instead of men serving in person due to a system of obligation, or proffering their service to others, these new mixed-retinues were recruited and managed by captains who had contracted with the crown to supply an agreed number of men, at set rates of pay and lengths of service. These contracts – or ‘indentures’ as they became known – were not new. They had been used to recruit garrisons during the Scottish wars in the early fourteenth century and indeed when England found itself fighting simultaneously, at least on those fronts in which the king was not present.²⁸ By the second half of the fourteenth century they had become the pre-dominant method of raising armies. Why had such a change occurred?

First of all, the structurally-hybrid armies of the past had proven increasingly unsuitable for the demands of war. On a purely practical level, by the last decades of the thirteenth-century, the ‘feudal’ system as it had come into being since the Conquest was overly complex as a means of military recruitment. Though feudal summons were not issued for every campaign, a combination of reduced quotas required of tenants, the failure of the campaigns of 1314, 1322 and, crucially, Edward III’s first martial venture in 1327, highlighted the growing inadequacies of the system. As the demands of war increased, obligatory service of the traditional 40 day period of service was often inadequate for campaigns within the British Isles, and fiercely opposed if attempts were made to utilise it for expeditions outside the kingdom.²⁹ Attempts to extend the bounds of obligatory service under the first three Edwards up until the 1350s proved highly unpopular. After a 1352 petition to parliament it was virtually abandoned, barring Richard II’s brief attempt, and that largely for financial reasons, in 1385.³⁰ Furthermore, the process from the issuing of summons to the appearance of troops at muster was laborious, and their numbers not guaranteed to meet expectations. Undoubtedly a system in which a pre-agreed number, and type, of troops were specified to appear at muster had its advantages over a system whereby men could proffer their service to others or pay a fee, *scutage*, in lieu of service. The indenture system also ensured, as far as we can tell, that those men serving within the new mixed-retinues did so through their own volition rather than by obligation. Few

²⁸ Ayton, *Knights*, 11-12.

²⁹ Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 118.

³⁰ For details of feudal obligation relating to military service: Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 57-81.

men fighting in the structurally-hybrid armies of the past will have gone as far as Hugh fitz Heyr who reportedly went to Scotland with Edward I in 1300 with a bow and one arrow as he was obligated to do, fired his arrow, and promptly returned home, but the story indicates that at least some men in these hybrid-armies will have been reluctant combatants.³¹

Practical benefits were thus important; but the hand of fate was also significant. It has already been observed that none of the field-armies Edward III led to war in person utilised indentured retainers. This means that the 'royal household in arms' was a thread of continuity stretching from the armies of Edward I until at least the Irish campaigns of Richard II in the 1390s.³² However a combination of the dotage of Edward III, the twin deaths in quick succession of both the king and his son and heir the Black Prince (Edward of Woodstock) in 1376-77, and the absence of the Black Prince in Aquitaine for much of the 1360s, proved to be highly critical in the establishment of the indenture system as the norm. Their deaths left the ten year old Richard II on the throne and thus denied any prospect of a royally led campaign until Richard came of age. Although his royal uncles took up the reigns of conflict, they crucially, utilised indentures to raise their forces. This precedent came to be the established practice. Thus the indenture system, 'a mechanism designed to fill the administrative vacuum which appeared when the king was not leading the army in person, and the clerical staff of the royal household were not on hand to supervise the distribution of wages and deal with related matters', became the predominant method of raising field armies in the second half of the fourteenth century.³³

The provision of near universal pay for military service was also a key factor in the disappearance of obligatory service and the emergence of contract armies. Pay for military service was not, of course, an innovation. At some level it had been in use for centuries whether it was for mercenary troops or as a small re-imbursment paid to cover men's expenses.³⁴ Up until the early decades of the fourteenth century it was

³¹ Coss, *Knight in Medieval England*, 102.

³² Ayton, *Knights*, 11; Given-Wilson, C. *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance, 1360-1413* (1986), 63-66; Prestwich, M. *War, Politics and Finance under Edward I* (1972), chapter II.

³³ Ayton, 'English Armies in the Fourteenth Century', 25.

³⁴ Contamine argued it was 'less like a proper professional salary than as a sort of campaign indemnity allowing temporary warriors to meet supplementary expenses'. *War*, 94.

still *de rigueur* amongst at least some members of the higher nobility, like Thomas of Lancaster in 1316, to refuse pay for military service because of the perceived loss of face amongst his contemporaries.³⁵ Others were not as principled. In the same year as Lancaster's refusal the earl of Hereford agreed to serve the king with 100 men-at-arms for a fee of 2,000 marks in wartime whilst in 1322 the earls of Arundel, Warenne, Norfolk, and Kent, all received wages from the Crown.³⁶ Although the acceptance of pay under these circumstances may have been down to the personal debts of the recipients like Arundel and Norfolk a changing attitude can certainly be detected. By the Scottish wars of the 1330s, pay had become the norm for virtually all soldiers on campaign, and by the second half of the fourteenth century daily rates had become standardised based upon rank and martial function: dukes 13s. 4d.; earls 6s. 8d.; bannerets 4s.; knights 2s.; non-knightly men-at-arms 1s.; mounted-archers 6d.; and the increasingly rare foot-archers 3d.³⁷

Other financial incentives also played a role, all of which were part of the terms of service offered to campaigners. These included, from the 1340s, an additional bonus payment known as the *regard* for men-at-arms on continental campaigns, 'seemingly intended as a supplement [their] pay to help cover the ever growing cost of plate armour', and the appraisal of a man's primary warhorse prior to campaign so that recompense could be claimed for any beast maimed or killed during an expedition.³⁸ Indeed *regard* was particularly important after horse compensation (*restauro equorum*) disappeared from the 1370s.³⁹ *Regard* had been introduced in 1345, paid to captains at a quarterly rate of 100 marks for every 30 men-at-arms. 'Whether at this time [it] was passed onto the men-at-arms themselves (in which case representing a supplementary payment of about 6d. per day) or was retained by the captain towards his overheads is not certain', but on balance the latter seems more likely.⁴⁰

³⁵ Maddicott, J.R. *Thomas of Lancaster: A Study in the Reign of Edward II*, (Oxford, 1970), 246.

³⁶ Prestwich, M. *The Three Edwards: War and State in England, 1272-1377*, (2nd edition, 2003), 59.

³⁷ Ayton, *Knights*, 11-12; Prince, 'Indenture System', 283-97; Idem, 'The Payment of Army Wages in Edward III's Reign' *Speculum* 19 (1944), 137-60; Hewitt, *Organisation*, 36. There were occasional fluctuations: Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 84-5.

³⁸ Ayton, A. 'English Armies in the Fourteenth Century' *Arms, Armies and Fortifications in the Hundred Years War* (ed.) Curry, A., Hughes, M. (Woodbridge, 1999) 24-25; Idem, *Knights*, 84-137.

³⁹ The reasons behind the disappearance of *restauro equorum* are complex. Ayton, *Knights*, 120-38.

⁴⁰ Ayton, *Crécy*, 193. *Regard* was not always paid at this standard rate: Idem, *Knights*, 110-13.

The revolutionary changes in the structure of English armies also seem to have been a response to changing tactical needs. During the first decades of the fourteenth century infantry based armies, won a series of what were, on the face it, remarkable battlefield victories. At Courtrai on 11 July 1302 Flemish militia defeated the French heavy-cavalry of Robert II of Artois; on 15 November 1315 infantry of the Swiss confederation crushed the Austrian cavalry at Morgarten pass; and between 9-12 November 1330 an army comprised largely of Wallachian peasants defeated a Hungarian cavalry-based army three times their number at Posada.⁴¹ The English were no strangers to this phenomenon, receiving a stark lesson first at Loudon Hill in 1307 and then far more humiliatingly at Bannockburn in 1314. Defeats such as these were a complete shock to the ruling elites of medieval Europe and struck at the heart of their belief in aristocratic battlefield superiority. In response, the English made three key tactical changes: the abandonment of heavy cavalry *destriers* in favour of smaller, nimbler, and more agile horses; dismounting to fight in set-piece engagements; and the use of mass archery.

By 1360 there was a noticeable 'decline in the quality of warhorses employed by English armies'.⁴² Though wealthy noblemen still continued to bring their great *destriers* on campaign these horses remained in the baggage train; they were now purely for display.⁴³ This is not to say that the horses being ridden to war were inferior in terms of their health and demeanour; rather that these smaller mounts no longer cost as much as before because they were smaller animals. This resulted from a conscious policy tailored towards campaigning strategy, first in Scotland and then in France. Prior to the Weardale campaign in 1327, for example, Edward III issued a royal proclamation that all willing to serve should bring 'swift, strong and hardy *rouncies* to ride and pursue' the Scots.⁴⁴ The king had clearly realised the military advantage which such horses brought on campaign, as noted by the chronicler Jean le Bel, who served in the king's army in 1327. Le Bel highlighted the advantages in

⁴¹ Ayton, *Knights*, 26-9, ft.3, 26; DeVries, K. *Infantry Warfare in the Early Fourteenth Century: Discipline, Tactics and Technology*, (Woodbridge, 2006 edn.), 9-22, 191; Rogers, 'Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years War', 247-57; Verbruggen, J.F. *The Art of Warfare in Western Europe during the Middle Ages: From the Eighth Century to 1340*, 2nd revised edn. (Woodbridge, 1997), chapter 3.

⁴² Ayton, *Knights*, 256. For more detail, 194-256.

⁴³ For example the earl of Stafford's *destrier* was worth 80 marks but he also had a trotter worth a more 'modest' £20. E101/28/11 m.3

⁴⁴ *Rotuli Scotiae, I.* (ed.) Macpherson, D. et al (1814), 208.

mobility the Scots' smaller horses possessed over English *destriers* in the difficult Scottish terrain.⁴⁵ Unfortunately the records do not confirm whether the king's demand for smaller, nimbler mounts, was heeded in 1327 though Le Bel's testimony would suggest that it was not.⁴⁶ Although northerners, attuned to fighting the Scots had already begun to copy their enemy's *modus operandi* it seems likely the message had not struck home to the wider military community until 1327.⁴⁷ When the message had been absorbed, however, the English won spectacular victories against their enemies at Dupplin Moor (1332), Halidon Hill (1333), Auberoche (1345) Crécy (1346), Neville's Cross (1346), La Roche-Derrien (1347), Poitiers (1356) and Nájera (1367). They would probably have won more in the second half of the fourteenth century had their enemies not followed a policy of avoiding battle.⁴⁸

The decline in the size and value of English horses was not, of course, the main reason for these battlefield successes. Though English armies, first in Scotland and then in France and elsewhere on the continent, used their mobile mounts to conduct lightning raids – *chevauchée* – across the countryside, in an attempt to draw their enemies to battle, this was not the reason they won the engagements. The *chevauchée* brought their enemies to battle, but it was the English battlefield tactics which were to bring them their great successes. The first of these tactics, (the second of the tactical innovations mentioned above) following the examples of the early fourteenth century, was dismounting to fight on foot using pikes and other pole-arms as the Scots had done at Bannockburn.⁴⁹ The practice was clearly successful, and remained in use well into the fifteenth century as an Italian visitor to England noted in 1483.⁵⁰

The last of these tactics was the significantly increased use of archery. Use of archery on the battlefield was not, of course, anything new, but it was the scale with which the English employed them which was truly revolutionary. In terms of

⁴⁵ Le Bel, *Chronique*, in: *The Wars of Edward III*, 7-8.

⁴⁶ Ayton, *Knights*, 103, 140 ft.6; Rogers, *Cruel*, 10-26.

⁴⁷ Tout, T.F. 'The Tactics of the Battles of Boroughbridge and Morlaix' *E.H.R.* 19 (1904), 711-15. Ayton, *Knights*, 40 ft.81, 41,43,45,200, shows the comparative values of border magnates' horseflesh in the first decades of the fourteenth century compared to those not attuned with border fighting.

⁴⁸ Particularly Charles V, chapter V, 254-256, 270, 289-90.

⁴⁹ *Le Baker*, 51. See also: *Scalacronica*, 136-7; Tout, T.F. 'Some Neglected Fights between Crécy and Poitiers' *E.H.R.* 20 (1905), 727-8.

⁵⁰ Goodman, A. *The Wars of the Roses: Military Activity and English Society, 1452-97* (1981), 175, 195, though he has argued that the Wars of the Roses actually saw the re-emergence of cavalry fighting on a much greater scale, 179.

numbers, though some have doubted how quickly applied and universal the change was, it has been shown by scholars, that mounted-archers and men-at-arms were recruited in roughly equal numbers. Pre-dominance of one over the other was almost always in favour of the archers; in the latter stages of the Hundred Years War recruitment was sometimes as much as 10:1 in favour of archers over men-at-arms.⁵¹ Prestwich has argued that the integration of archers into mixed-retinues ‘was probably the product of a move towards administrative simplicity, rather than being dictated by military logic’ and cost could certainly have been an issue, (for every man-at-arms the crown could recruit two mounted-archers), but the scale with which mounted-archers were recruited, particularly in the second half of the fourteenth century, suggests otherwise.⁵² In either event, and though some have doubted the effectiveness of the longbow on the battlefield, the effect of massed archery, from the testimony of the chroniclers, was devastating.⁵³ It could be equally effective against both cavalry and in breaking up massed infantry formations; indeed such was its effectiveness against the former at Crécy that it probably stimulated the development and more extensive use of horse barding.⁵⁴ Even when the French dismounted themselves and-attempted to advance on foot at both Poitiers and Agincourt, the fact that they had not developed a tradition of military archery themselves meant that their unsupported infantrymen were cut down by the incessant rate of fire of the English archers.⁵⁵ English archery, therefore, ‘frequently proved devastating, and the longbow was a true battle-winning weapon’.⁵⁶

While the organisation of men-at-arms and archers into mixed retinues may have been new, the tactics of the *chevauchée*, dismounting to fight, and the use of

⁵¹ Allmand, C. *Lancastrian Normandy, 1415-1450: The History of a Medieval Occupation* (Oxford, 1983), 200; Ayton, *Knights*, 14-15.

⁵² Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 125.

⁵³ For arguments against the effectiveness of massed archery: Keegan, J. *The Face of Battle: A Study of Agincourt, Waterloo, and the Somme* (1978), 78-116.

⁵⁴ *Eulogium Historiarum sive Temporis*, (ed.) Haydon, F.S. (1858-63), iii. 211; Le Bel, 103; Ayton, *Crécy*, 298, 325, 373; Nicholson, R. *Edward III and the Scots: The Formative Years of a Military Career 1327-1335* (Oxford, 1965), 86-90, 132-7.

⁵⁵ Below 58, 266-68. Though the French utilised mercenaries armed with crossbows, which were more accurate, the longbow's rate of fire easily exceeded it. A good archer could hit a target at 300 yards (though the range may have been double this) and fire 10 arrows a minute: Hardy, R. *The Longbow: A Social and Military History* (1992), 54. Though a crossbow required less training the rate of fire was slower, and the range much less (at least at Crécy): Ayton, *Crécy*, 370 ft.60; DeVries, *Military Technology*, 40.

⁵⁶ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 324.

archery on the battlefield, certainly was not.⁵⁷ How then do we explain the fact that they clearly appeared to be so in the eyes of contemporaries, both English and continental?⁵⁸ The only explanation is that, in terms of medieval living-memory, these changes in tactics *were* revolutionary. If the average life-expectancy in the Middle Ages was c.50-55 years medieval living memory was probably little over a century with folk tales and fables providing links to the more distant past.⁵⁹ Changes in the military sphere, though they may not have been 'new' in the strictest sense of the word, would have been *perceived* as being so by contemporaries. Even learned ecclesiastics who were almost always the chroniclers and historians of their day, were clearly not experts in medieval warfare. Illustrations in the *Maciejowski Bible* for example, while portraying accurate representations of mid-thirteenth-century armour, clearly show no understanding of their effectiveness against the weapons of the day.⁶⁰ Chroniclers and artists may have had a rudimentary understanding of battlefield tactics, the composition of forces, and made often unreliable estimates of army strengths, but they almost certainly did not possess extensive knowledge of the military practices of past centuries. It is the novelty to contemporaries of the changes which made them revolutionary.

Nevertheless, it is hard to explain why 'only in the case of the English...did a major battlefield catastrophe (Bannockburn) herald a complete and permanent reappraisal of tactical methods'.⁶¹ It is certainly true that the French, for example, had been dismounting their men-at-arms during the middle decades of the fourteenth

⁵⁷ See for example: Gillingham, J. 'Richard I and the Science of War in the Middle Ages' *War and Government in the Middle Ages*, (ed.) Gillingham, J., Holt, J.C. (Woodbridge, 1984), 78-91; McGlynn, S. 'The Myths of Medieval Warfare' *History Today* 54, (1994), 28-34. For similarities in the east: Marshall, C. *Warfare in the Latin East, 1192-1291* (Cambridge, 1992), chapter 5.

⁵⁸ *The English in Portugal, 1367-87: Extracts from the Chronicles of Dom Fernando and Dom João* (ed.) Lomax, D.W., Oakley, R.J. (Warminster, 1988), 179-80, 260-63; Russell, P.E. *English Intervention in Spain and Portugal in the Time of Edward III and Richard II* (Oxford, 1955), 379-80, 384-86; *Scalacronica*, 55; Cafferro, W. *John Hawkwood: An English Mercenary in Medieval Italy* (Baltimore, 2006), 48-49; Mallet, M.E. *Mercenaries and their Masters. Warfare in Renaissance Italy* (1974), 36-38.

⁵⁹ Howell, C. *Land, Family and Inheritance in Transition: Kibworth Harcourt 1280-1700* (Cambridge, 1983). For difficulties of calculating life expectancy: Poos, L.R. 'Life-Expectancy and "Age of First Appearance" in Medieval Manorial Court Rolls' *Local Population Studies* 37 (1986), 45-52; Schofield, P.R. *Peasant and Community in Medieval England 1200-1500* (London, 2003), 91-93.

⁶⁰ The sword/axe may have bitten into the metal it was not enough to cleave through it though such a blow would leave the wearer dazed and quite possibly concussed. *Weapons that Made Britain: The Sword*, (Dir.) Cheadle T., Pagliero, G. (Pres.) Loades, M. (Prod.) Channel 4 (UK, 2004).

⁶¹ Ayton, *Knights*, 26.

century; and by Nicopolis in 1396 they were certainly doing so.⁶² The Scots' practice of dismounting to fight stimulated English practice, and in Ireland the Gaelic-Irish had long fought on foot or on lightly armed hobelars, something which may or may not have been the fore-runners of English mounted-archers.⁶³ It seems that 'English' tactics were not adopted wholesale, however, because of a combination of the particular circumstances of the various theatres of war, the obstinacy of military elites to cling to their traditional martial practice of fighting on horseback, and the prohibitive costs of adopting the 'English' system. In France these difficulties were added to by the nobility's fear of the lower orders, heightened by the *Jacquerie* peasant uprising in the summer of 1358, which prevented the development of a tradition of military archery. Consequently, 'John the Good and then Charles V and his successors...preferred, on the one hand, to employ crossbowmen from Spain, Italy and Provence and, on the other, to request from a number of towns small bodies of archers and shield bearers'.⁶⁴ On the declaration of truce between England and France in 1384 Charles VI's administration sought to bring French archery onto par with that of the English by forbidding the playing of all games except those with the bow and crossbow. This seems to have proved a remarkably successful move for soon French archers were beating English ones at the butts. Once again, however, fear of social subversion saw Charles limiting the number of archers that could be raised in each region, so that the people took up "other games and pastimes as they had previously".⁶⁵ It was only in England that defeat turned to victory, probably as a result both of Edward III's force of personality in adopting the change and of the traditional martial elite's realisation of its battlefield effectiveness.

What effect did all these changes in universal pay, battlefield tactics, and retinue structure have on the size of English forces in the second half of the fourteenth century?

⁶² Atiya, A. *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages* (New York, 1970), 453-55.

⁶³ Jones, R. 'Re-Thinking the Origins of the 'Irish' Hobelar' *Cardiff Historical Papers* (2008) 1-21.

⁶⁴ Contamine, *War*, 133.

⁶⁵ *Idem*, 217. Bradbury, J. *The Medieval Archer* (Woodbridge, 1985) 169-70, for fear of social insurrection amongst the European establishments.

*Table 3.1: Provisional Sizes of Major English Expeditions in the Late-Thirteenth and Fourteenth-Centuries*⁶⁶

Year	Commander	Destination	Men-at-arms	Mounted-Archers	Total
1277	Edward I	Wales	-	-	c.15,500
1282	Edward I	Wales	750	(8,000 infantry)	c.9,000
1294-95	Edward I	Wales	unknown	(21,000 infantry)	c.25,000
1296	Edward I	Scotland	-	-	c.25,000
1297	Earl of Surrey	Scotland	-	-	c.10,000
1297	Edward I	Flanders	895	(8,000 infantry)	c.9,000
1298	Edward I	Scotland	c.3,000	-	c.14,000
1314	Edward II	Scotland	c.2,500	c.15,000 (foot)	c.17,500
1319	Edward II	Scotland	-	-	c.10,000
1322	Edward II	Scotland	-	-	c.22,000
1324-25	Earl of Surrey	France	-	-	c.11,000
1327	Edward III	Scotland (Weardale)	-	-	Unknown
1332	'Disinherited'	Scotland	c.500	c.1,000 (combination of mounted and foot)	c.1,500
1333	Edward III	Scotland (Halidon Hill)	-	-	c.9,000
1334-35	Edward III	Scotland	-	-	>c.6,200
1335	Edward III	Scotland	-	-	c.13,500
1336	Henry of Lancaster	Scotland	-	-	6,500 ⁶⁷
1337	Earl of Warwick	Scotland	-	-	c.3,500
1337-38	Arundel/Salisbury	Scotland	-	-	c.4,000
1338-39	Edward III	Cambr�sis-Thi�rache	1,800	1,100 (1,700 foot-archers)	4,600
1340	Edward III	Sluys and Tournai	c.2,000	c.2,000	c.4,000
1341-42	Edward III	Scotland	1188	385	2,891 ⁶⁸
1342-43	Edward III	Brittany	-	-	c.3,650
1346	Archbishop of York et al	Scotland	-	-	c.6,000
1346-47	Edward III	France	2,800	2,800 (8,000 infantry)	c.14,000
1355-56	Edward III	Scotland	3,000	c.3,000	c.6,000
1356	Black Prince	France	3,000	2,000 (plus 1,000 infantry)	6,000
1359-60	Edward III	France	4,000	5,000	c.10,000
1361-64	Clarence	Ireland	197	670	867 ⁶⁹

⁶⁶ Figures taken from: Ayton, *Cr cy*, 15, 167-8, 189; Idem, *Knights*, 293-95 for various campaign references; Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 10; Johnston, D. 'The Interim Years: Richard II and Ireland, 1395-99' *England and Ireland in the Later Middle Ages: Essays in Honour of Jocelyn Otway-Ruthven* (ed.) Lydon, J.F. (Dublin, 1981), 446-55; Lewis, N.B. 'The Recruitment and Organisation of a Contract Army, May to November 1337', *B.I.H.R.*, 37, 1-19; Idem, 'The English Forces in Flanders, August-November 1297' *Studies in Medieval History presented to F.M. Powike* (ed.) Hunt, R.W. et al (Oxford, 1948), 310-18; Morris, J.E. 'Mounted Infantry in Medieval Warfare' *T.R.H.S.* 3:8 (1914), 102; Phillips, S. *Edward II* (2010), 227, 344, 426, 465; Prestwich, M. *Edward I* (1997), 179, 481; Idem, *Plantagenet England: 1225-1360*, (2007), 151; Prince, A.E. 'The Strength of English Armies under Edward III' *E.H.R.* 46:183 (1931), 353-71; Rogers, *Cruel*, 34,70,97,82,161,193,338,352; Saul, *Richard II*, 279; Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 17; Sumption, *Trial*, 547; Idem, *Divided*, 518.

⁶⁷ Two columns of c.6,500 men followed by a much smaller *chevauch e* under Edward III: Rogers, *Cruel*, 98, 108, 110.

⁶⁸ Ayton, *Knights*, 108, calculated from E36/204, fos. 102r-4r, (including many hobelars, some foot and some non-combatant workers: this includes the household staff, but not the king himself).

1367	Castile	Black Prince	-	-	c.9,000
1369	Gaunt	France	1,500	2,758	6,000
1370	Sir Robert Knolles	France	2,000	2,000	4,000
1372	Edward III	Naval	-	-	6,000
1372	Lord Neville	Brittany	480	480	960
1373	Gaunt	France	3,032	2,893	5,925
1375	Cambridge	Brittany	1,990	1,985	3,975
1378	Gaunt	Naval	2,500	2,500	5,000
1379	John de Montfort	Brittany	650	650	1,300
1380	Buckingham	Brittany	2,581	2,610	5,191
1381	Edmund of Langley	Portugal	1,500	1,500	3,000
1383	Bishop of Norwich	Flanders	2,500	2,500	5,000
1384	Scotland	Gaunt	c.2,000	c.2,000	c.4,000
1385	Richard II	Scotland	4,590	9,144	13,764
1386	Gaunt	Castile	1,600	2,000	3,600
1387	Arundel	Naval	1,107	1,390	2,497
1388	Arundel	Naval	1,578	2,014	3,592
1394	Richard II	Ireland	-	-	7,000
1399	Richard II	Ireland	-	-	4,500

It is immediately apparent from this table that, barring armies that took part at Crécy, on the Reims campaign in 1359-60, and in 1385, the size of English armies in the second half of the fourteenth century had dramatically decreased from some of those that had fought in the late-thirteenth and early fourteenth-centuries. It is important to remember, however, that we are not comparing like with like. The armies of the earlier period were composed primarily of arrayed foot-soldiers, who were perceived by contemporaries as possessing little in the way of martial value, and a smattering of heavy-cavalry. The armies in the second half of the fourteenth century, by contrast, were arguably more martially potent because of their increased mobility through all soldiers being mounted. Furthermore the introduction of near-universal paid service from the troops, and the fact that they were serving as a result of volition, can only have made this forces more martially effective in the field. They were arguably a highly disciplined fighting force, displaying a nascent ‘professionalism’ in seemingly devoting a large part of their time to soldiering.

⁶⁹ This was the only major interlude into Ireland before Richard II’s Irish expeditions.

iii. The Effect of the Military Revolution on the Composition of the Military Community in the Second Half of the Fourteenth Century

It is clear that the military-revolution of the early to mid-fourteenth century significantly altered the structural framework and tactical methods of English armies. What a man like Sir Thomas Ughtred, who fought both at Bannockburn and on the Reims campaign nearly half a century later, made of the changes is anyone's guess.⁷⁰ If he considered them at all, however, he would doubtlessly have noted that many of the men with whom he stood shoulder-to-shoulder in battle-order outside the gates of Paris in 1359-60 were of very different social origins to those men with whom he had ridden into battle against the Scots in 1314. In other words the changes that had taken place had profoundly altered the social composition of the military community.

What groups within society, therefore, should be included within the bounds of the military community in the second half of the fourteenth century; and how had the community's composition changed over the course of the fourteenth century? There was a long-established tradition in England that every able-bodied man between the ages of 16 and 60 should be ready to bear arms, both for local and/or coastal defence and in cases of national emergency, usually the threat of imminent invasion.⁷¹ The Statute of Winchester (1285), itself based upon earlier assizes of arms such as that of Henry II (1181), stipulated the obligation that every man between the said ages should possess arms appropriate to his means – based upon the amount of lands and chattels he possessed – on a sliding scale.⁷² Edward III, clearly understanding the need for manpower for his campaigns in the first half of the fourteenth century, re-enacted and extended these provisions in the 1330s, specifying that every man with an income of £2-£4 a year was to possess a bow and arrows, a sword, and a knife. Doubtless the king also relied on the stipulation in the Winchester statute that invited 'all others', that is, men who were underneath the lowest specified qualification of obligation (anything

⁷⁰ Ayton, 'Ughtred', 109, 130.

⁷¹ For example: *C.P.R. 1377-81*, 574; *1381-85*, 588-90;

⁷² *Statutes of the Realm*, (ed.) Luders et al., 11 vols. (1810-28), I., 96-98 (Winchester). *English Historical Documents*, II. *1042-1189*, (ed. and trans.) Douglas, D.C., Greenaway, G.W. (1955), 416-17, (Assize). Both doubtlessly had echoes of the pre-conquest past: Abels, R.P. *Lordship and Military Obligation in Anglo-Saxon England* (1988), 58-79, 97-115. For more on military obligation: Hewitt, *Organisation*, 1-27; Powicke, M.R. *Military Obligation in Medieval England: A Study in Liberty and Duty* (Oxford, 1962).

less than 40s), to possess a bow and arrows or a crossbow and bolts, a gisarme (poleaxe), knife and lesser arms, or those with less than 20 marks, a sword, knife and lesser arms.⁷³

Does this therefore mean that all men capable of bearing arms should be considered members of the military community? Whilst the case is compelling it is the contention of this study that the answer is in the negative. What the recourse to all those between the ages of 16 and 60 to bear arms in times of necessity represented was the *potential manpower* of the English Crown, *not* the total strength of the military community. It is the contention of this work that inclusion within the bounds of the community should be based upon a number of important criteria: a high level of military effectiveness, training and discipline, equipment, mentality, length of service, and military experience.

Military effectiveness is the hardest to assess. At the most basic level it is the degree to which different types of soldier were able to perform their martial role and how successful they were in this task. It also encompasses a number of the other criteria listed above; the training and discipline of troops, their mentality, experience, and calibre of equipment, for example, all had a direct influence upon martial effectiveness. But how is it to be judged? It has been frequently argued, for example, that English armies in the second half of the fourteenth century were less martially effective than they had been in the first. The best ways to judge effectiveness, in the opinion of this author, is through contemporary views of martial performance.⁷⁴

The mass of the peasantry who constituted the arrayed levies in the thirteenth and the first decades of the fourteenth century fail to satisfy a number of the above criteria. Admittedly the vast majority of evidence regarding the wider population's contribution to martial endeavours comes from the learned, and usually therefore wealthier, sections of society so there is evidently the potential for bias. Nevertheless the view of the performance in warfare of the 'lower orders' is unanimously poor. They are seen to have been notoriously unreliable, prone to desertion, and ill-

⁷³ *Foedera*, 2:2, 900-1.

⁷⁴ These points are discussed in this chapter, and for contemporary views of martial performance see 266-268.

disciplined; ultimately preferring the plough to the pike.⁷⁵ Whilst they almost certainly provided their own equipment⁷⁶ – as the statutes mentioned above stipulated – the literary and pictorial evidence shows that the calibre of this equipment was poor and for the most part inadequate, especially when compared to that of the nobility.⁷⁷ War meant hardship and risking life and limb with little tangible benefit barring perhaps the potential for looting after a battle. Though admittedly our evidence is scarcer still for their length of service Michael Prestwich is probably not far wide of the mark when he argued that whilst there may have been those who served in the levies on multiple occasions, ‘it is rare to find any corps of infantry maintained in being for longer than a single expedition’, evidently denoting a lack of military experience.⁷⁸

This is not to say, of course, that there were not some amongst the peasantry who were well versed in the use of arms and who shared the warrior mentality of their social superiors. Though there is no evidence of any formal military training, be it in combat or drill, in the Middle Ages until the late fifteenth century at the very earliest, this does not mean that it did not take place, particularly at an individual level.⁷⁹ Without some form of training, for example, it would have been extremely difficult for English commanders to manoeuvre the large forces, especially those of the infantry, with any efficiency; though if, and when, this took place is anyone’s guess.⁸⁰ At a company-command level the English levies of arrayed infantry were under the supervision of a number of overseers whom we might tentatively describe as military ‘officers’ though not in the modern sense. These levy-commanders were denoted in the sources dependant on the number of men whom they had charge: *centenars* with 100 men; *millenars* with 1,000 men; and *vintenars* with 20. Socially these men ‘tended ... to be drawn from lower down the social scale than the ... members of the

⁷⁵ *C.P.R. 1339-41*, 72; Prestwich, M. ‘Edward I’s Armies’ *J.M.H.* 37:3 (2011), 237-39; Idem, *Armies and Warfare*, 124, 128-29; Idem, *The Three Edwards*, 68; Rogers, *Wars of Edward III*, 305. Cf. Simpkin, *English Aristocracy*, 47, for noble desertion.

⁷⁶ Of at least this was provided for them by their local community: Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 139-40.

⁷⁷ *The Holkham Picture Bible Book* (ed.) Hassall, W.O. (1954), f. 40. (Ill-disciplined): Bradbury, J. *The Medieval Archer* (Woodbridge, 1985), 83.

⁷⁸ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 129.

⁷⁹ Evidence of training: *C.P.R. 1354-58*, 95, 1367-70, 42; *The London Eyre of 1276* (ed.) Weimbaum, M. (1976), no. 18. Also see depictions in the *Luttrell Psalter*: BL Add. MS. 42130 fol. 147v.

⁸⁰ Hewitt, *Organisation*, 94.

aristocracy', but they were probably men-at-arms rather than being of peasant stock.⁸¹ Perhaps it was these men who were responsible for drilling and training the levies – though we cannot, of course, be certain.

Nevertheless, and whilst there may have been individuals who were well-versed in the practice of arms the weight of evidence is sufficient to rule out the mass of the peasantry from inclusion within the military community both within structurally-hybrid, and structurally-uniform armies.⁸² As Prestwich aptly put it: 'it has to be doubted whether the...system, relying as it did on local levies of inexperienced peasants and townsmen, could have done much to deal with a major invasion force, had the French ever been able to organise one'.⁸³ Which groups within society then, ought to be considered as constituting the English military community in the second half of the fourteenth century?

Few scholars, if any, would disagree with the notion that the nobility – the earls, lay lords, and, from 1337, dukes – and the upper echelon of the gentry – the knights – should be included within the ranks of the military community.⁸⁴ As the leaders of political society they acted as the traditional vanguard of the English military machine. The reason for this continued pre-eminence was based not only on their social standing, but arose also because they had proven to be highly martially effective, first on horseback and then of foot as a result of extensive martial training.⁸⁵ In addition they had traditionally been the only members of society who could afford, both financially and in terms of time, to equip and train themselves. Young noblemen's lives, not just in England but elsewhere in Western-Europe, were virtually mapped out from birth.⁸⁶ Whether brought up within their own family, or the family of a another noble household, both eldest and younger sons, even though the latter

⁸¹ Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 55. Cf. David Bachrach who, at a recent conference, argued that these men represented a nascent 'professional' fighting force amongst the ranks of the peasantry: Bachrach, D. 'Edward I's Centurions: Professional Fighting Men in an Era of Militia Armies' *The Soldier Experience in the Fourteenth Century* (ed.) Bell, A.R., Curry, A. et al (Woodbridge, 2011), 109-128.

⁸² Admittedly they had ceased being used by the time structurally-uniform armies had become established though see: Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, 218-19 for one such utilisation.

⁸³ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 142.

⁸⁴ The aristocracy were the very upper-tier of the nobility; the royal family and the titled nobility, i.e. earls, dukes, barons, and lay lords.

⁸⁵ This was seen as being the case throughout the Middle Ages. For twelfth and fourteenth century examples: Hovedon, R. *Chronica* (ed.) Stubbs, W. (1868-71), ii. 166. Pisan, C. *The Book of Deeds of Arms and of Chivalry* (trans.) Willard, S. (ed.) Willard C.C. (Pennsylvania, 1999), 78.

⁸⁶ For what follows: Given-Wilson, *English Nobility*, 3-9

might not expect to inherit, probably received the same education up until the age of about twelve, including a basic grounding in military training as well as other academic and social skills which befitted their social standing. One such benefactor of young noblemen, Henry of Grosmont, was said to train his young men ‘to be learned, and brought up in his noble court in school of arms and to see noblesse, courtesy and worship’.⁸⁷ The extent to which this practice for war resembled something like modern military ‘drill’ is unclear but, given the importance of fighting in units of various compositions throughout the fourteenth century some ‘team’ combat must have been commonplace.⁸⁸ Given the physical exertion required to fight in full-armour for an extended period of time, for example, Mike Loades has suggested that medieval soldiers operated some form of relay or ‘buddy’ system in which “they constantly took turn and turn about in the thick of the fighting”; though it should be remembered that extensive training and wearing of armour would surely have been undertaken to the extent that their use in combat did not hamper men in the slightest.⁸⁹ Indeed, along with a favourite warhorse a man’s weapons and armour will have been some of his most treasured possessions that might mean the difference between life and death. Though probably few were as energetic in their dedication to military training as the eulogising biographer of the French knight, Marshal Boucicaut, described his patron, training in arms clearly marks out the nobility as forming the indelible core of the military community.⁹⁰

The *Court of Chivalry* records are useful in showing the time at which young men took up arms on campaign. The youngest deponent whose age can be determined with certainty is Sir Leonard de Kerston, aged 21 at the time of the enquiry, though he does not provide the number of years he has been in arms. Others were reputedly even younger than this. The esquire Richard de Croft, at 30, claimed he had been in arms for sixteen years meaning that he would have been 14 when he first campaigned in about 1370. He was certainly not alone in this teenage undertaking. Sir John de Loudham le fitz, for example, was also 14; Sir William de Lye was 15, the esquire

⁸⁷ Idem, 3 ft.7.

⁸⁸ DeVries, *Infantry Warfare*, 2; Showalter, D.E. ‘Caste, Skill, and Training: The Evolution of Cohesion in Medieval Armies from the Middle Ages to the Sixteenth Century’ *The Journal of Military History* 57 (1993), 407-30.

⁸⁹ *Weapons that Made Britain: The Sword*, (Dir.) Cheadle T., Pagliero, G. (Pres.) Loades, M. (Prod.) Channel 4 (2004).

⁹⁰ Contamine, *War*, 216-217.

John Cresswelle, Sir William Nevill, and the famous Geoffrey Chaucer, were 13, and Sir John Lovell was the tender age of 12 according to his testimony.⁹¹ It can be doubted how much actual fighting, if any, these adolescents undertook, especially considering the results of dental forensics on bodies excavated at the fifteenth-century battle of Towton (1461), which showed the average age of combatants at the battle to have been 29.2 and identified only eleven as being aged 16-25.⁹²

Not only did many of these men start campaigning at a young age they also fought frequently over a number of years. Men like the 70 year old esquire John Garlek, who claimed to have been in arms for 60 of those years, may have been at the extreme, but careers-in-arms numbering two and three decades were not uncommon.⁹³ Despite only socially reflecting the knightly class and the upper, and perhaps middle, levels of the gentry, these witnesses highlight the fact that, as Andrew Ayton has pointed out in a recent article, this level of experience amongst the men shows that the upper-echelons of the military community were as experienced in arms in the second half of the fourteenth century as they had been before, something which goes a long way towards negating the idea of a 'military-decline' in this period.⁹⁴ Experience and length of service naturally went hand-in-hand. This would certainly serve to support Gorski's recent argument that military service was undertaken throughout a nobleman's life as a complement to local administration, and that we should not think of those performing shire administration as a venerable 'dad's army' while the younger men battled the king's enemies.⁹⁵

With increased exposure to the rigours of campaign came, hopefully, military discipline amongst the elite. It is therefore surprising that military ordinances governing soldierly behaviour are remarkably rare in the second half of the fourteenth century. Orders regulating the division of spoils for Sir Robert Knolles' army in 1370 survive, as do the first formal set of ordinances from the 1385 Scottish expedition.

⁹¹ C 47/6/1 dep. nos. 52, 64; *Court of Chivalry*, vol. II. (Scrope v. Grosvenor), dep. nos. 4, 7, 13, 22, 34, 38, 46, page numbers: 175-6, 265, 328-329, 404-412, 442-443, 450-452.

⁹² Boylston A. et al 'Physical Anthropology' *Blood Red Roses: The Archaeology of a Mass Grave from the Battle of Towton, 1461* (ed.) Fiorato, V. et al (Oxford, 2000), 45-59.

⁹³ Chapter II, 36-42; chapter IV, 192-98.

⁹⁴ Ayton, A. 'Military Service and the Dynamics of Recruitment', throughout but especially 45-55.

⁹⁵ Gorski, R. *The Fourteenth-Century Sheriff: English Local Administration in the Late Middle Ages* (Woodbridge, 2003), 140-46.

These may, or may not, have drawn, according to the *Acta Bellicosa* from a set of orders were issued by Edward III for the Crécy campaign, which are no longer extant.⁹⁶ The plea roll for the 1296 campaign to Scotland detailing nearly two hundred offences allegedly committed by members of the English force north of the border may also have contributed to these later ordinances.⁹⁷ Barring these instances there is seemingly little else. It is likely, however, that ordinances were drawn up for the vast majority, if not every campaign, especially by the mid-fourteenth century.⁹⁸ One can only wonder as to the effectiveness of such orders but the fact that those of Henry V during his campaigns in Normandy probably drew upon earlier examples suggests a degree of effectiveness.⁹⁹ Although the matter is not free from all doubt, ‘the impression is...that military discipline was reasonably well maintained’.¹⁰⁰

What bound the training, experience, and discipline together, of course, was the martial mentality of the noble class – the sense that they *belonged* at the forefront of the English war effort. Adherence to the martial ideals of chivalry and its attendant culture certainly strengthened the position of the nobility within the community. Much has been written about the relationship between the nobility and chivalry. ‘It is a word that was used in the middle ages with different meanings and shades of meaning by different writers in different contexts’.¹⁰¹ It pervaded all areas of noble secular and religious life from governing courtly love, the treatment of women, rules of behaviour towards ones social equals, inferiors and superiors, and conduct in warfare, to the need to free the Holy Land from the infidel. The chronicles of the period are filled with notable and heroic deeds performed by those at the forefront of military society, revelling in noble deeds both for their glory and, perhaps, as a didactic tract for others to follow. Even the pragmatic veteran of the Anglo-Scottish wars, Sir Thomas Gray, though perhaps including the tale because he considered the

⁹⁶ (1370) BL, Cotton Caligula D III, no. 44; (1385) BL Cotton Nero D VII, Keen, M. ‘Richard II’s Ordinances of War 1385’ *Rulers and Ruled in Late Medieval England* (ed.) Archer, R.E., Walker, S. (1995), 33-48; (1346) Ayton, *Crécy*, 62-72. For earlier examples: Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 179-180.

⁹⁷ E39/93/15; ‘A Plea Roll of Edward I’s Army in Scotland’ (ed.) Neville, C.J. *Miscellany from the Scottish History Society XI*, 5th ser., iii. (1990), 7-133.

⁹⁸ Although Michael Prestwich recently argued he did not believe Edward I did so: Prestwich, M. ‘Edward I’s Armies’ *J.M.H.* 37:3 (2011), 233-244.

⁹⁹ Curry, A. ‘The Military Ordinances of Henry V: Texts and Contexts’ *War, Government and Aristocracy in the British Isles c.1150-1500: Essays in Honour of Michael Prestwich* (Woodbridge, 2008), 214-49.

¹⁰⁰ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 181.

¹⁰¹ Keen, M. *Chivalry* (Yale, 2005 edn.), 2.

actions foolhardy, could not help but mention the story of Sir William Marmion who, donning a helm with a crest of gold, attacked the Scots alone outside Norham castle, the ‘most dangerous place in Britain’, to impress a noble lady; an action in which he nearly lost his life had it not been for the intervention of the castle’s constable.¹⁰² English social commentators of the fourteenth century like Chaucer also show the importance of chivalry to aristocratic martial culture. In his introduction of the knight in the prologue of the *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer describes him as,

“A Knyght ther was, and that a worthy man,
That fro the tyme that he first bigan
To ridden out, he loved chivalrie,
Trouthe and honour, fredom and curteisie”.¹⁰³

Though there has been debate as to what Chaucer was trying to imply with his description of the ‘perfect knight’, it seems evident that the knight, was clearly based, if not on one individual, then on a series of such characters.¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless, it is clear that the chivalric *mentalité* of the nobility was central to their *raison d’être*. Indeed the nobility should, arguably, always be considered as forming an integral part of the military community. Men of wealth and high birth, for example, could still be found at the head of the then British forces well into the nineteenth-century.

Yet whilst undeniably a part of the community, and continuing to monopolise positions of command, it has been noted that there was a steady decline in the number of knights – who though forming the upper echelons of the gentry still formed a significant section of the martial elite – in England from the time of the Conquest.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² King, A. ‘A Helm with a Crest of Gold: The Order of Chivalry in Thomas Gray’s *Scalacronica*’ *Fourteenth Century England I* (ed.) Saul, N. (Woodbridge, 2000), 21-36, for discussion of the incident.

¹⁰³ Chaucer, G. *Canterbury Tales*, from: *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd edn. (ed.) Benson, L.D., Robinson, F.N. (Oxford, 1988), 24, lines 43-46.

¹⁰⁴ Jones, T. *Chaucer’s Knight: The Portrayal of a Medieval Mercenary* (1980), argued that the portrayal of an idealised knight was a satire. Cf. the more compelling argument: Keen, M. ‘Chaucer’s Knight, the English Aristocracy and the Crusade’ *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (ed.) Scattergood, V.J., Sherborne, J.W. (1983), 45-61; Luttrell, A. ‘Chaucer’s Knight and the Mediterranean’ *Library of Mediterranean History I* (1994), 127-8. Recently it has been argued that the knight is actually Philippe de Mézières. Vander Elst, S. “‘Tu es pèlerin en la sainte cite’: Chaucer’s Knight and Philippe de Mézières’ *Studies in Philology* 106 (2009), 379-401.

¹⁰⁵ Denholm-Young, N. ‘Feudal Society in the Thirteenth-Century: The Knights’ *Collected Papers of N. Denholm-Young* (Cardiff, 1969), 84; Quick, J. ‘The Number and Distribution of Knights in Thirteenth Century-England: The Evidence of the Grand Assize Lists’ *Thirteenth Century England I* (ed.) Coss, P.R. Lloyd, S.D. (Woodbridge, 1986), 114-123; Coss, P.R. *Lordship, Knighthood and*

It has been demonstrated that from about 1,250-1,500 at the beginning of the fourteenth century their numbers dwindled to no more than a few hundred by the 1430s, despite a brief revival under Edward I.¹⁰⁶ The reasons for this are unclear. Outbreaks of plague from the mid-century would certainly have whittled down numbers, as would the fact that knighthood was not hereditary in England, even if most sons of knights who did not go into the Church might expect to receive the honour themselves. The two most likely reasons that can be advanced are, firstly, that the assumption of knighthood brought with it greater social and especially administrative responsibilities, above all the often onerous task of jury service; and secondly, that the costs of maintaining knightly status will have been a large deterrent, especially to those who only just fell into the £40 income per-annum qualification.¹⁰⁷ Many gentry families who were increasingly able to support knightly status were evidently declining to do so. The crown seems to have been well aware of this problem. Several attempts were made throughout the fourteenth century to impel those with the requisite amount of landed income to taken up the honour of knighthood – in 1312, 1316, 1324, 1325-6, 1333, 1334-5, 1344, 1356, and 1377 – or else force them to pay a fee to avoid it; a process known as *distrainment of knighthood*.¹⁰⁸

That there were fewer knights in society is reflected in the proportion of knights fighting within English armies during the course of the fourteenth century. In the late thirteenth and early fourteenth-century knights constituted between roughly 15-25 per cent of the overall strength of English armies.¹⁰⁹ After about 1370 this had fallen dramatically.¹¹⁰ Only around 13 per cent of the men who undertook Gaunt's *chevauchée* in 1373 were of knightly status or higher, and the total was as low as 5-6 per cent in the campaigns of 1375 and 1380.¹¹¹ Clearly this fact had telling repercussions for the composition of the military community. Whilst the number of

Locality, A Study in English Society c.1180-c.1280 (Cambridge, 1991), chapter vii; idem, *Knight in Medieval England*, 70-71. Sumption, *Divided*, 740, argued that this was a symptom of a reduction in the terms of service for Englishmen and that it also had a detrimental effect on recruitment. This fails to recognise that this was a wider social trend rather than a military problem.

¹⁰⁶ Given-Wilson, *English Nobility*, 69-71.

¹⁰⁷ Gorski, *Sheriff*, 96.

¹⁰⁸ This had risen from c. £20 in the thirteenth century. Powicke, *Military Obligation*, 71-81; Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 15-17. Example: *C.C.R 1354-60*, 319.

¹⁰⁹ Ayton, *Knights*, 228-29.

¹¹⁰ If not before. For example, only 19 out of 97 men – just fewer than 20 per cent – in Stafford's Irish retinue were of knightly rank or higher between August and November 1361, including the earl himself, and between this date and June 1362 it never rose more than 22 per cent. E101/20/25.

¹¹¹ Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues', 729-30, 732, 744-45.

knights serving remained high as a percentage of the *overall number of knights in society*, the actual number serving fell.

By the second half of the fourteenth century, new groups of men were stepping into this void; non-knightly men-at-arms of the gentry, and mounted-archers, were accompanying the nobility to war in such numbers that ‘scions of ancient gentry families...now locked into a tactical system based upon co-operation with bowmen...might well find themselves wielding the sword alongside men-at-arms who owed their status to good fortune and ability rather than birth’.¹¹² To date the vast majority of the men-at-arms and mounted-archers are the least understood elements of English armies in the later fourteenth century. Whilst we possess the names of thousands of these individuals from the surviving military records we know very little else about them. Everything from their level of training and military experience to their social standing within medieval society remains open to conjecture. Even identifying individuals within the wider mass of names is problematic because, unlike some of their more celebrated and titled companions-in-arms, the process of nominal record linkage is fraught with interpretative difficulties.¹¹³ The majority of these men therefore remain shadowy figures on the periphery of our historical knowledge. This is not to say, however, that nothing can be said of them. Indeed, the fact that these men made up the vast bulk of the personnel of English armies means that discussion of them is vital for an understanding of the composition of the English military community.

Let us turn our attention first to the men-at-arms. Technically speaking all soldiers, from dukes paid 13s 4d a day through to the lowest ranking esquire paid 1s, served as men-at-arms. It is with the non-knightly men-at-arms, however, with whom we are concerned here. In the structurally-hybrid armies of the early fourteenth

¹¹² Ayton, *Knights*, 22. Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 23, has demonstrated that 714, or 84 percent, of the knight’s bachelor whom it was possible to identify in the county section of the Parliamentary roll of arms had performed military service at least once between 1272-1314. Simpkin, D. ‘Total War in the Middle Ages? The Contribution of Landed Society to the Wars of Edward I and Edward II’ *The Soldier Experience in the Fourteenth Century* (ed.) Bell, A.R., Curry, A. (Woodbridge, 2011), 61-94. Cf. Spenser, A. ‘A Warlike People? Gentry Enthusiasm for Edward I’s Scottish Campaigns, 1296-1307’ *The Soldier Experience*, 95-108, who argued that Edward I’s wars were deeply unpopular amongst the nobility and that participation levels were very low. To my mind Simpkin’s research is by far the more convincing.

¹¹³ Chapter II, 18-19.

century these men, variously described as sergeants (*serviens*), valets (*valetti*) or esquires (*scutiferi*), were those who had traditionally aspired to knighthood, and complemented the heavy-cavalry forces of their noble and knightly companions in-arms in ever increasing numbers from the last decades of the thirteenth century. By the beginning of the fourteenth century they constituted the majority of these cavalry forces, although by about the middle of the century changes in battlefield tactics meant that they no longer fought on horseback.¹¹⁴ It is important to remember, of course, that these men, whom we might loosely label as being ‘gentry’, were not a single social group. Unlike the nobility, whom we can define as titled aristocracy and those in receipt of a personal summons to parliament by the end of the fourteenth century,¹¹⁵ the ‘gentry’ were a rather amorphous collection of the ‘middling-sort’ within society. By the last decades of the fourteenth century three levels of the gentry can be recognised: knights, esquires and gentlemen.¹¹⁶ Whilst knights’ title marks them out as distinctive within the gentry it does not mean that they formed a separate and distinctive group within the gentry itself. Some knights were doubtlessly affluent and would have hoped that in the fullness of time they would receive a personal summons to parliament, thus marking out their social elevation into the nobility. For others, however, such a distinction was highly unlikely. Many knights were little better off than esquires, indeed some esquires were in all probability wealthier than some men who were already knights; ‘descendants of landed families who could count knights in their ancestry’.¹¹⁷ Yet for every one of these wealthier esquires there will have been far more who we might term ‘parish gentry’, who were nowhere near as wealthy as their more celebrated companions in arms but who could consider themselves wealthy enough to sit above the ranks of the peasantry.¹¹⁸ ‘Gentlemen formed the bottommost rung of gentry society’.¹¹⁹ Like those above them in the

¹¹⁴ At Falkirk in 1298, for example, the *valetti* constituted 74 percent of the total number of men-at-arms in receipt of Crown pay. Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 91.

¹¹⁵ Given-Wilson, C. *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages* (1987), 55-57.

¹¹⁶ See: McFarlane, K.B. *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), 268-78, for a discussion of the terminology in the fourteenth century.

¹¹⁷ Keen, *Origins*, 73. For the fluid boundaries between knights and esquires: Bennett, M. ‘The Status of the Squire: The Northern Evidence’ *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood I* (ed.) Harper-Bill, C., Harvey, R. (Woodbridge, 1986), 1-11.

¹¹⁸ For further discussion: Coss, P. ‘Knights, Esquires, and the Origin of Social Gradation in England’ *T.R.H.S.* 6:5 (1995), 155-78; idem. ‘The Formation of the English Gentry’ *P.P.* 147 (1995), 38-64; Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, 16-24.

¹¹⁹ It has been argued that they did not really emerge as a constituent part of the gentry until the fifteenth century, but the evidence from the *Court of Chivalry* of Henry Hoo and Philip Warrenner

gentry pile they are nigh on impossible to define, the titles employed in official documentation for these men often interchangeable with that of the yeomanry who themselves formed an ill-defined mass below the gentry.¹²⁰ Gentlemen were men from diverse backgrounds, ‘urban as well as rural, professional as well as leisured’.¹²¹ Some scholars have made attempts to define what exactly constituted the gentry in financial terms, with those with landed annual incomes of £200-300 at the top end to those with as little as £10 at the bottom.¹²² Nevertheless it certainly appears that there was a growing appreciation by the second half of the fourteenth century at least of gradations amongst the gentry themselves, that may have been obvious to contemporaries but which are difficult for scholars to identify. It is more than likely that those at the very top of the gentry pile, the scions of knightly families, and esquires, felt little if any kinship or unity with the vast majority of the men of their military rank. That two witnesses before the *Court of Chivalry*, Henry Hoo and Philip Warenner, deemed it worthwhile to mention that they were of *gentil sanc* (‘gentle blood’) is highly indicative of an awareness of social gradations amongst the gentry themselves; they were making it clear that they were ‘gentlemen’ but not ‘esquires’.¹²³ Indeed, the only thing connecting the ‘gentry’ together in any meaningful martial way was that they were paid the same daily wage by the Crown for their military service.

How many men can we consider as constituting the ‘gentry’ in the second half of the fourteenth century? Furthermore, given that English martial commitments were becoming increasingly geographically diverse, frequent, and more demanding in terms of recruitment, how were these needs met considering the decimation of the population caused by the Black Death?¹²⁴ Given-Wilson estimates the number of ‘gentry’ families in England in the fourteenth century to have been around 9,000-

(Lovel v. Morley) C47/6/1 dep. no. 10,11, 173, 176, records 39-45, 46-50, 341, 344, would suggest otherwise. Saul, N. *For Honour and Fame: Chivalry in England, 1066-1500* (2011), 166.

¹²⁰ Ross, J. ‘Essex County Society and the French War in the Fifteenth Century’ *The Fifteenth Century*, 7 (ed.) Clark, L. (Woodbridge, 2007), 56-57.

¹²¹ Saul, *Honour*, 166.

¹²² Dyer, C. *An Age of Transition? Economy and Society in England in the Late Middle Ages* (Oxford, 2005), 97; Keen, M. *Origins of the English Gentleman* (Stroud, 2002), 109-10

¹²³ Ayton, ‘The English Army at Crécy’, 202-3.

¹²⁴ It has been estimated the population halved. Campbell, B.M.S. *A Social History of England, 1200-1500* (ed.) Horrox, R., Ormrod, W.M. (Cambridge, 2006), 234.

10,000.¹²⁵ Though we cannot know the exact number of men this constituted, and indeed how many soldiers died as a result of the plague, the fact that large English armies continued to be frequently recruited suggests that gentry numbers within society must have been remarkably robust. ‘There is no way of knowing how fully the armies of the period had exploited the pool of available manpower, but they are nevertheless indicators of the *minimum* size of the kingdom’s overall military community’.¹²⁶ That the army of 1385 could recruit somewhere in the region of 13,000-15,000 men is indicative of this. As discussed in chapter IV, the fact that recruitment quotas largely continued to be met, is highly indicative that despite the decimation of the population, there were still large numbers of men of the gentry, and indeed the ‘yeomanry’ who made up the vast-majority of the mounted-archers, who were willing to perform military service in this period, despite some claims to the contrary.¹²⁷

The reasons for this robustness are complex, but lie in a number of factors. The first is that the gentry were becoming increasingly militarised from the reign of Edward III onwards, the direct result of the changes wrought by the military revolution. The increased demands of war engendered repeated military service amongst the gentry to the extent that many men became frequent military campaigners. In an important article published in late 2011 Andrew Ayton demonstrated from an analysis of the Morley witnesses from the *Court of Chivalry* that at least the upper-and middle levels of the gentry who are represented in the records displayed an extremely high level of militarisation. Moreover, he contends that these records should be seen as representative of the gentry as a whole in the second half of the fourteenth century:

‘We should not imagine that the army of 1369, nor even the Peace of Brétigny, marked a clear watershed – an end and a beginning – as far as army personnel were concerned... For every fighter from the first ten to fifteen years of the French war who retired from the fray for good after 1369, there was another who continued to enlist into the 1370s and, in some cases, the 1380s, thereby maintaining in the armies of that period a significant thread of continuity from the era of English military successes... If our sample group indicates that

¹²⁵ Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility*, 72-73.

¹²⁶ Ayton, ‘Dynamics of Recruitment’, 37.

¹²⁷ Chapter IV, 141. Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, 45, 80; Sumption, *Divided*, 777, both argue that warfare was becoming less popular amongst the gentry.

repeat-serving knights, esquires, and gentlemen were as common as ‘occasional’ soldiers in the late fourteenth century, and probably more so, it would mean too that, in terms of accumulation of experience within the military community, nothing had changed since the first half of the century’.¹²⁸

This increased militarisation of the gentry can further be detected in the growing prevalence of armorial bearings within society. From the middle of the fourteenth century an increasing number of gentry families began adopting their own coats-of arms – thus becoming armigerous – something which had hitherto only been the preserve of the nobility. On what authority they had done this is unclear, perhaps none but their own.¹²⁹ Nevertheless by the 1440s Nicholas Upton remarked in his book on the laws of war that:

“In these days we see openly how many ... men through their service in the French wars have become noble, some by their produce, some by their energy, some by their valour and some by other virtues of which ... ennoble men. And many of these have upon their own authority taken arms to be borne by themselves and their heirs.”¹³⁰

This commentary could equally apply to the fourteenth century. Whether or not these men were adopting the modified heraldic devices of their social superiors, as in the case of the Talbots of Norfolk, or an entirely new emblem, it seems that the practice was relatively widespread.¹³¹ This might explain why the government did not, despite the decreasing number of knights in society, make any attempt to force *distrainment of knighthood* after 1377; even this instance was probably the result of the new king’s reign.¹³² Prior to this there had not been any attempt at *distrainment* since 1356. It seems clear, therefore, that the upper echelons of the gentry at least were, by the second half of the fourteenth century, deemed to be socially elevated to the extent that the crown saw no need to try and increase the number of knights in society for

¹²⁸ Ayton, ‘Dynamics of Recruitment’, 50-51.

¹²⁹ Saul, N. *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981), 24.

¹³⁰ Wagner, A. R. *Heralds and Heraldry in the Middle Ages: An Inquiry into the Growth of the Armorial Function of Heraldry* (2nd edn, 1956), p. 125

¹³¹ Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, 22-23, notes that when John de Kingston was challenged to a duel by a French knight in 1389, Richard II raised him to the estate of an esquire and gave him the right to bear a heraldic device. ‘The grant ... was couched in the form of an ennoblement. The rank of an esquire was seen as a social distinction, and it could apparently, like knighthood, be conferred by the King. Moreover, the acknowledgement of gentility at the same time as the grant of arms suggests that gentility was coming to be identified exclusively with the armigerous’.

¹³² *Ibid.* 39.

military or administrative purposes; the wider gentry, of whom the knights were of course a part, were now aiding knights in performing both these roles.¹³³

If the gentry, who constituted the vast majority of the men-at-arms, were a far from a heterogeneous group then the same can certainly be said of the mounted-archers. They were not, of course, the European equivalents of the Oriental horse archers or similar troops encountered in Muslim armies during the crusades, both of whom fired from horseback. While some English archers may have done this, the pictorial and literary evidence points to the fact that English archers rode to the point of engagement and dismounted to fight.¹³⁴ By the 1350s, again despite the losses in the population caused by the plague, they had become the most-predominant type of soldier in English armies, or at least English royal armies.¹³⁵ It has been well attested by both their contemporaries and modern scholars that these soldiers were highly martially effective, using mass volleys of arrows to break up enemy formations, or at least severely weaken them, allowing the men-at-arms to finish them off. In one example, from many, Thomas Walsingham graphically described the battle at Dunkirk in 1383 between the English ‘crusaders’ and the Flemish.

‘He [Sir Hugh Calvelay] drew them up in line of battle, placing the archers in fixed positions ... in the procedure for the fight. The enemy indeed, when they saw our men had now set out against them, with shouts ran to meet them. ... But among all and before all it was our archers who on that day deserved praise and glory. For they sent such a rain of flying arrows upon the enemy that at the end of it no more armed warriors were still on their feet than if the very arrows had been piercing bare bodies. Such was the density of the flying arrows that the sky grew dark as if from a black cloud, and such was the frequency with which they were loosed that the enemy dare not lift up their faces.’¹³⁶

¹³³ It has always been argued that up until about the 1340s, the intention was to increase the number of knights available for military service: Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, 241-4, 259; Idem, *Origins of the English Gentry* (Cambridge, 2003); Powicke, *Military Obligation*, 71-81; Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, 38-47. Cf. Crouch, D. *The Image of the Aristocracy in Britain 1100-1300* (1992), 146-47, who argued that the purpose was to increase the number available for shire administration. Gorski, *Sheriff*, 84-101 counters this by pointing out that there was an increasing prevalence of landholding and particularly office holding by men of sub-knightly status during the fourteenth century which implies that unless these ‘new’ men were considered unsuitable for the task then the purpose must have been to increase the number of fighting knights. One wonders why Richard II’s government did not attempt to force *distraint* to ease the realm’s financial problems.

¹³⁴ There are a few instances of foot-archers serving in the second half of the fourteenth century such as in 1361-62 (E101/30/25) though it is likely this was for garrison service. See also the use of the term ‘armed archer’ in the garrison of St. Sauveur in Normandy in 1371 (E101/31/18).

¹³⁵ Ayton, ‘Dynamics of Recruitment’, 39.

¹³⁶ Walsingham, 201-2.

Yet despite this undoubted effectiveness in combat we have very little information about these mounted archers other than a large number of their names. The possibility that they were the descendents of the *hobelars* who had been utilised in Anglo-Scottish border garrisons and in Ireland during the late thirteenth and early-fourteenth centuries, who had disappeared in the 1340s at around the time the military assessment of the time stipulated that a man possessing £10 worth of landed income should provide for, or serve in this capacity, can be dismissed.¹³⁷ An order issued in March 1335 stipulates that a hobelar should be armed not as an archer but as a cavalryman, indicating that the majority of these men may have become absorbed within the men-at-arms.¹³⁸ Were the mounted archers of the second half of the fourteenth century, therefore, of the same social stock as the peasant infantry who fought in the structurally-hybrid armies of the late thirteenth and early fourteenth century? Was the process of creating a mounted-archer simply a matter of putting a foot-archer in the saddle; in other words it was the recruiting context rather than the social calibre of the men that had changed? Or were they, as is always assumed, men of higher social standing than their infantry forebears, who we might tentatively describe as being of ‘yeoman’ stock, ‘men of some standing in local society’, a cut above the rest of the peasantry, who in the mid-1340s military assessment had at least £5 worth of annual income?¹³⁹ The issue of the mounted archers’ social origins is crucial because it directly effects our perception of the military community. If the mounted archers of the second half of the fourteenth century were of the same social stock as the arrayed infantry levies of the past – who we earlier excluded from the community – we must re-assess the notion that the social position of the ‘average’ combatant within the military community in the second half of the fourteenth century was greater than it had been in the first part of the century. In other words this would mean that the social standing of the ‘average’ combatant remained virtually unchanged throughout the fourteenth century; the decline in the number of knights

¹³⁷ The disappearance of the hobelar is a mystery in itself which requires further investigation. Cornell, ‘Castle Garrisons’, 19-21 has shown how they disappeared from English garrisons at the same time as field armies; Jones, ‘Hobelar’ 1-21; Lydon, J.F. ‘The Hobelar: An Irish Contribution to Medieval Warfare’ *The Irish Sword* 2:5 (1954), 12-16; Morgan, *Medieval Cheshire*, 37-49; Morris, ‘Mounted Infantry’, 77-102; Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 52. Ayton, *Crécy*, 177, has shown that at least some hobelars were present at the battle.

¹³⁸ *Rotuli Scotiae*, I, 328-29. His weapons were to be a sword, knife, and lance.

¹³⁹ Morgan, *Medieval Cheshire*, 41. *CPR 1343-1345*, p. 495. Ayton, *Knights*, p. 16, ft. 33; Idem, *Crécy*, 215-24.

within the gentry being counterbalanced by the rise of the wealthier esquires, and the archers, if they were of peasant stock, remaining outside the community.

Though it has never been satisfactorily proven, most scholars tend to agree that the mounted archers who came to the fore in the mid to late fourteenth century came from a more lofty social position than their arrayed infantry forebears, and that we should therefore consider them as being part of the military community.¹⁴⁰ Whilst the study of the origins of mounted archers is a huge research topic yet to be comprehensively tackled, and we must be mindful that ‘much would depend on [men’s] individual circumstances ... it is not easy to generalise’, some evidence can still be presented to back up this theory.¹⁴¹

Two key determinants of social standing within medieval society are land ownership and wealth. If the mounted archers in the second half of the fourteenth century were of higher social standing than the infantry levies of the past then we would expect to find evidence of mounted archers possessing both in the sources. One of the greatest problems we face in identifying individuals in medieval sources is, of course, problems associated with nominal record linkage; whether a name appearing in one source is the same individual of the same name appearing in another record.¹⁴² Any connections made between different sources must therefore be made in the knowledge that record linkage, whilst made with a large degree of care, can never be entirely certain under all circumstances.

No study has yet to make a serious attempt to make a link between mounted archers and minor landholders in medieval England though some initial work has been done within studies focussed on other topics.¹⁴³ Adrian Bell, for example, whilst

¹⁴⁰ Ayton, *Crécy*, 218-221; Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 143; Morgan, *War and Society in Medieval Cheshire*, 41.

¹⁴¹ Ayton, *Crécy*, 221.

¹⁴² See chapter II, 17-20.

¹⁴³ In a recent article published online in conjunction with the *Soldier in Medieval England Project*, D. M. Large attempts to tackle this question. Large, D. M. ‘Using the *Poll Tax* to Identify Medieval Archers’? online May 2010: http://www.icmacentre.ac.uk/soldier/database/large.php#_ftn1, accessed 20/09/2011. The basic premise of the work, as the title suggests, is that the *Poll tax* records can be potentially used to identify archers. Unfortunately the implications of this are not really explored, especially with regards to military service. It does, however, provide useful information for magnate and landed connections, perhaps hinting at greater levels of retinue affinity (i.e. regional ties) than is perhaps realised in a number of retinues.

showing connections between retinue captains and their men in his study of Arundel's naval expeditions of 1387 and 1388, has shown that a number of the archers on these expeditions held lands of their own. The archer John Kyng, serving in the retinue of Sir William Brienne in 1388, for example, had holdings in Pallingham in the hundred of Bury; John Leche, serving under Sir William Elmham in 1387 had holdings in Bourne, Sussex, as did his fellow archers John atte Hall, Richard Mareschall and John Fuller, all of whom served in the retinue of the Earl Marshal. Two other archers, Robert Kyng and Wauter Smyth, also held lands in the county.¹⁴⁴ Whilst one might argue that these were naval expeditions as opposed to land campaigns, and therefore that these archers were not mounted, the pay they received for their service was the standard rate of 6*d* a day that had become established by this time. Additionally Bell also demonstrated that some of these men had also served on land based expeditions. John Kyng, for example, served in Arundel's retinue in Gaunt's expedition to France in 1378, whilst Wauter Smyth was with Sir William de Windsor in France in 1380-81.¹⁴⁵

Determining how typical these men were of the 'average' mounted archer is a daunting undertaking. A potentially invaluable line of enquiry has recently been made possible by the transcription and publication – county by county – of the medieval *Poll Tax* returns by Carolyn Fenwick.¹⁴⁶ These three taxes, collected in 1377, 1379 and, famously, in 1380-81, were designed 'to include all those who did not contribute to the fifteenths and tenths (the usual source of taxation on moveable goods) but who could afford to pay some tax, most notably those with rents and wages which the customary subsidy had not taken into account'.¹⁴⁷ As a consequence they are one of our most precious resources for the study of the wider medieval population in the later fourteenth century, providing the names of hundreds of people of whom we might otherwise be ignorant, as well as including vital information about occupations, martial statuses, and households. In 1377 a flat rate was set that every lay man and woman, married or single, was to pay one groat (4*d*.) except for true and genuine mendicants. In 1379 all married and single men, and single women, of sixteen years

¹⁴⁴ Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 123-4. To gain this information he made extensive use of: *Two Estate Surveys of the Fitzalan Earls of Arundel* (ed.) Clough, M. (Sussex Record Society, 1969).

¹⁴⁵ Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 123-4.

¹⁴⁶ Fenwick, C. C. (ed.) *The Poll Taxes of 1377, 1379 and 1381*, 3 volumes, (Oxford, 1998-2005).

¹⁴⁷ *The Poll Taxes*, v.1, xxiv.

and over were to pay from one groat to 10 marks (4*d.* – £6 13*s.* 4*d.*) in a set schedule based on social standing, again excluding genuine paupers. Thus, for example, an earl or widowed countess was to pay £4; each baron, banneret, and knights who could spend as much as a baron, and each widowed baroness and baroness, was to pay 40*s.* (£2), each bachelor and squire who ought, by statute, to be a knight and each widowed lady of men of this standing were to pay 20*s.*, and so forth.¹⁴⁸ Finally, in 1380, all lay men and women, married and single, aged fifteen years and over were to pay three groats (1 shilling) each such that the number of shillings was to equal the number of taxpayers in each vill, everyone should pay according to their means, the rich should help the poor, and that no single person or married couple should pay more than sixty groats (20 shillings, or £1) or less than 1 groat (4*d.*). Genuine paupers were to be exempted, and no one was to be charged in more than one place.¹⁴⁹ If, as we suspect, mounted archers of this period were indeed men of higher wealth and social origin than the arrayed infantry levies of the past, then it stands to reason that they would appear in these tax records, their ownership of land – and thus payment of taxes – indicative of this higher status. In other words the *Poll Tax* records may make it possible, for the first time, to place some flesh on the bones of the theory that these mounted archers were men of more elevated social origin than the infantry levies of the past.

We must be careful, however, when utilising these sources to argue the case for more affluent mounted archers in the second half of the fourteenth century as there are a myriad of problems with their content and our interpretation of it. The common problem of nominal record linkage between these tax returns and the martial sources we possess is evident, but there are other, just as pressing problems. The first is how we should use the content of the tax records. Those from the 1377 collection are less useful for identifying potential mounted archers because, as stated above, the tax was paid at a flat rate of 4*d.* and as a result of this just about everyone (except the very poor) can be expected to appear among the taxpayers. Furthermore ‘many of the returns [for 1377] record only the householders’ names and the number of people for whom they are, apparently, paying tax’¹⁵⁰ and consequently, if a mounted archer was

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, xv.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, xiv-xvi.

¹⁵⁰ *The Poll Taxes*, v.1, xix-xx.

not the head of a household, he will more than likely not appear in the records for this year, even if he were paying the tax. More problematic for the 1377 records, however, is that the flat rate prevents us from seeing any differences in socio-economic standing amongst the payees that *are* listed, because everyone was expected to pay the same, regardless of their personal wealth. To detect those of higher standing, therefore, it is primarily to the records from 1379, and to a lesser extent 1380-81, that we must turn because these were *graduated Poll Taxes*, especially 1379 with its set schedule of payment based upon social station.

Yet this raises the issue of how mounted archers are to be socially classified which, as we have seen, is no easy task. Whilst we may suspect that they were from a more socially elevated position than their infantry forebears this does not mean that they formed anything like a single unitary social group which means that all were assigned to a particular wealth band in the 1379 collection. In the same way as the ‘gentry’ is a catch-all term for men whose social backgrounds will have ranged from scions of ancient knightly families with *gentil sanc* running through their veins to *nouveau riche* merchants, (with little if any sense of collective ‘kinship’ between the two), the ‘yeomanry’, who it is always assumed constituted the vast majority of mounted archers, will also have been a socially diverse, and heterogeneous, ‘group’. Interestingly provision was made in 1379 that ‘each squire not owning lands, rents of castles, who is in service *or arms*’ should pay 40*d.* with this probably encompassing a number of the men-at-arms.¹⁵¹ Unfortunately no such stipulations exist for mounted archers. If these men do indeed appear within the *Poll Tax* records in this year it is likely to have been within either the lower end of: ‘all lesser merchants and artificers who have profit from the land, according to the extent of their estate (from 6*s.* 8*d.* down to 6*d.*)’; or single and married men over the age of sixteen, paying 4*d.*¹⁵² Neither definition is particularly helpful. Similarly the qualification in 1381 that all those of fifteen years and over should pay 1*s.*, and ambiguously that the rich should help the poor, does little, along with the provisions for the other taxes, to aid the task of reconstructing the social origins of mounted archers.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, xv.

¹⁵² Ibid, xv-xvi.

There are also a number of problems with the *Poll Tax* records and our interpretation of them for identifying mounted archers. The first problem is their state of preservation and survival to the present. There are far more records of some counties, and of each tax, than for others. For example, the survival of the records for the West Riding of Yorkshire is vast. Only five of the 577 indentures drawn up for the collection of the 1377 tax have failed to survive and documents relating to the whole of the county have survived for 1379, meaning ‘it is the only place [in the country] where a comparison can be made between the number of taxpayers in 1377 and 1379’.¹⁵³ Similarly all ‘the documents are in excellent condition, with very few requiring the use of the ultra-violet lamp’.¹⁵⁴ The contrast with a county such as Dorset could not be more marked. Fenwick shows that ‘three hundred and thirty three indentures were drawn up for the 1377 poll tax; none have survived, [whilst] the 1379 returns are in poor condition and are so fragmented that it was impossible to reconstruct any of the documents’.¹⁵⁵ The collection in many counties in 1380-81, of course, was severely disrupted by the Peasants Revolt in 1381 and unfortunately for a county like Worcestershire a patchy record of the city of Worcester in 1377 and 1381 is all there is to go on. It goes without saying that such poor survivals make any reflection of the true number of mounted archers in these records difficult to quantify.

More worryingly with regards to the content of the *Poll Tax* records was the scope and potential for evasion by potential taxpayers. This was certainly recognised at the time, particularly in 1381, and has long been acknowledged by scholars.¹⁵⁶ Fenwick has recently made a case on a number of grounds that the scale of this evasion has been greatly exaggerated, arguing for the 1381 tax in particular that the time of collection, previous heavy taxation (meaning that many who had qualified previously were now exempt), and differing criteria for eligibility all contributed to reduced yields as much, if not more so than evasion. She concluded that:

‘Evasion on the scale envisaged by some commentators cannot be substantiated. ... [It] was virtually impossible without the connivance of the local taxers, who had been selected because they knew the number and financial circumstances of their fellow villagers. ...

¹⁵³ *The Poll Taxes*, v.3, 256.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 256.

¹⁵⁵ *The Poll Taxes*, v.1, 145.

¹⁵⁶ For an early example: Oman, C. *The Great Revolt of 1381* (Oxford, 1906), 27-29.

Very few individuals could have evaded payment by pretending to be too poor, or by concealing themselves and their dependants or by “*taking to the woods*”.

This may well have been the case but it is certainly clear that evasion did take place as Fenwick herself concedes.

‘While being local provided the collectors with the necessary knowledge to levy the taxes, it also detracted from the desire to use that information simply for the benefit of the Crown. It is more than probable that local collectors, anxious not to antagonise their neighbours by levying the taxes too rigorously, helped by ignoring members of the household who were on the borderlines of exemption and conniving at under-assessment. ... [They] had to strike a balance between the desire not to aggravate their fellow villagers, on whom they depended, and the need to satisfy the Crown’.¹⁵⁷

It is clearly possible that even if mounted archers were not deliberately avoiding the collectors then some of their number might have evaded the collectors’ nets by virtue of the fact that they came from large families who were already paying a substantial amount. There is also the possibility that some archers avoided payment legitimately. The inhabitants of the Palatinates of Chester and Durham, and the inhabitants of the Cinque Ports and the men of that liberty, were traditionally exempt from taxation and this seems to have remained the case for the three *Poll Taxes*, though in the case of the latter there is evidence that at least some inhabitants were assessed if they held lands elsewhere.¹⁵⁸

There are a whole host of other potential reasons why mounted archers may not appear in large numbers on the *Poll Tax* records. At the most basic level there are evident difficulties with surname evidence with various spellings, sometimes very different spellings, of the same name making nominal record linkage highly problematic. Even if two names *can* be matched it is difficult to be sure with complete certainty that they are the same individual. Another potential reason for the absence of a number of mounted archers is that they may not have been deemed wealthy enough by the collectors. Given that these men were more than likely individuals with a greater level of affluence than missile troops in the first half of the fourteenth century,

¹⁵⁷ *The Poll Taxes*, v.1, xxvi.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, xxi-xxii.

and that they more likely than not provided their own mount and equipment (see below), this seems a remote possibility. It is highly likely, of course, that the fact mounted archers will have come from diverse economic backgrounds might have meant that at least *some* will have escaped paying tax on the grounds of not possessing a large amount of landed income.

Another explanation for their absence – linked to the discussion above regarding large families, and failing to qualify for taxation on grounds of insufficient wealth – is linked to the position at least some mounted archers will have held in their family, and their motivations for military service. One of the most contentious issues about military service in this period is what motivated men to take up arms in the first place. For those higher up the social scale, martial *mentalité* and a sense of duty will certainly have played a part. But what of mounted archers who occupied the lower rungs of the community? It is certainly likely that some archers will have been imbued with the *mentalité* of their social superiors, and that, most likely, the prospect of enhancing one's social position through the acquisition of wealth on campaign were highly motivating factors.¹⁵⁹ The crux of the matter, however, is that if the mounted archers came from families that had benefited economically from the upheavals of the plague in the mid-fourteenth century, then why would they take the risk of impoverishing themselves by supplying the mount and arms of a mounted archer? The explanation may be that it was younger sons or male relatives who were not expected to inherit the family holdings who became mounted archers. Military service would have provided the chance for these men to make their own fortune, an alternative career path and a chance to avoid sibling rivalries and family strife.¹⁶⁰ Consequently mounted archers in this social position will not have appeared on the tax records because they were not the heads of their households. Much, of course, depends on which poll tax is being considered, (1377 in particular generally only mentions the head of the household) and the detail that collectors went to in their own records; some were very diligent and recorded a large amount of information about individuals and their families, others did not.

¹⁵⁹ See below, 105-115, for discussion of the mentality behind martial service.

¹⁶⁰ See, for example, the chapter on inheritance in: Hanawalt, B.A. *The Ties that Bound, Peasant Families in Medieval England*, (Oxford, 1989).

A further reason why mounted archers may not appear is that we are looking for them in the wrong place. It is highly likely that whilst some archers will have returned to their home county after a campaign, or retired there in old age, others will have settled elsewhere. Whilst many medieval people were probably not as mobile as those in later centuries the potential for relocating one's home always remains a possibility. Without some clue appearing in unrelated sources, such as a court case or a manorial record, we are entirely ignorant of such instances. It is thus probable that some men will have been assessed for tax in a different county to that of their birth and, as a result, are missed when checking the records of their previous 'home' county. Unless we check each and every tax record for every single mounted archer over the whole of England, a daunting and difficult task, then this possibility always exists. Even if such a survey were undertaken the difficulty of nominal record linkage would increase still further. Whilst not an exact science, men of the same name are more likely to be the same individual if two sources describe them as being from the same locality. What of men who held lands in more than one county? A small number of more affluent mounted archers with the good fortune to hold lands in multiple counties, perhaps as inheritances from friends or kinsmen, will have paid the tax in their principal residence. Yet if the man changed his principal residence, or we believe it to be in a different county to what it was in reality, then the individual will likely be missed.

A similar problem arises when considering the problem we have with the dates of documents under scrutiny. It is important to remember that the *Poll Tax* records provide a brief, and incomplete, snap-shot of a portion of medieval society during three instances within a four year period. If an individual had not yet risen to prominence in their local community by this date, or if they had fallen on hard times to the extent that they no longer had the means to pay the tax, their former affluence will be lost to us. There is also the very real possibility that archers do not appear in the *Poll Tax* is that, quite simply, they were not present in England at the time of the collections. Though there was no stipulation in any of the taxes that those engaged in military service were exempt from payment one has to wonder how exactly those who were abroad, at sea, or even in a garrison far from home, were expected to pay. True enough if they were minor village landholders their families may have paid in their stead, but the potential for errors and general evasion, would have been a logistical

nightmare for the collectors and in all likelihood meant that men did not appear in the records.

A final potential reason for the non-appearance of archers within the *Poll Tax* records may relate to the City of London. It is often said that the capital acts as a magnet for people from all walks of life. The city, after all, was the heart of the English government, trade, and home to some of the wealthiest and most important men in the kingdom, and the middle ages were no exception to these attractions. Despite the dangers of providing accurate population figures in this era it has been estimated that the population of the city in the early fourteenth century prior to the plague was c.40,000 – 60,000 and in 1370 it has been estimated to have been between 30,000 and 40,000, about three times the size of the next largest English cities like York and Bristol.¹⁶¹ For such a substantial population to be maintained, especially considering the prevalence of disease in the cramped conditions of the city, it required there to be a constant stream of immigrants from the shires.¹⁶² Given this large migration to the city it is not unreasonable to assume that a number, perhaps a large number, of soldiers made their way to the capital in search of employment for their martial talents. It therefore stands to reason that at least some of the mounted archers from the shires for which we have searched in the *Poll Tax* returns, and perhaps many who have not been checked, were resident in the city rather than in their county of origin. It is highly unfortunate, therefore, that ‘no returns survive for any of the poll tax collections in London’ with only the Remembrancer rolls providing any information, and very few names, relating to the collection within the city.¹⁶³ It is therefore highly probable that archers would appear were these records to have survived, even if the problems of determining their original origins would make them much harder to identify. This absence of records for London might also go a long way towards explaining the near total absence of the royal archers.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶¹ Thomson, J.A.F. *The Transformation of Medieval England 1370-1529* (1983), 4. See also: Barron, C.M. *London in the Later Middle Ages, Government and People, 1200-1500* (Oxford, 2004), 237-42. These estimates may even be conservative with perhaps as many as 80,000 in 1300: Dyer, C. *Everyday Life in Medieval England* (2000), 284

¹⁶² McSheffrey, S. *Marriage, Sex, and Civic Culture in Late Medieval London* (Pennsylvania, 2006), 9.

¹⁶³ *Poll Tax*, v. 2, 61.

¹⁶⁴ Below 87-89.

With all these limitations of the *Poll Tax* records in mind let us see if they can provide valuable information about the socio-economic status of mounted archers in the second half of the fourteenth century. Our first task is to identify the geographic origin of some of the mounted archers whose names we possess. Unfortunately most ‘major’ military records of the second half of the fourteenth century – muster/retinue rolls, pay rolls and Issue rolls – either do not provide extensive lists of combatants’ names, or provide the names but mention nothing else about them other than their military rank. We are thus left with the arduous task of trying to determine everything else about the individuals in question. It is the ancillary martial sources like letters of protection and attorney to which we have to turn to provide this information.¹⁶⁵ Sadly our task of trying to identify mounted archers in these records is made all the more difficult because the vast majority of these documents were generally concerned with, or taken out, by men-at-arms. From 1369 to 1400 not one attorney recipient, and only 23 individuals in receipt of a protection, are specifically listed as being archers. Of these 23 men, for only 9 individuals do we possess information about their geographic origins.

*Table 3.2: Archers of Known Geographic Origin in Receipt of Letters of Protection, 1369-1400*¹⁶⁶

Name	Date ¹⁶⁷	Captain	Location	Origin
Robert Darnall	11/8/1374	John of Gaunt	Overseas	Yorks.
Henry Haverange	8/6/1380	-	France	Flintham, Notts.
John Marriot	11/8/1373	John of Gaunt	France	Hallamshire, W.R. Yorks.
John Milward	18/04/1383	Bishop of Norwich	Overseas	Exeter, Devon
John Pope	26/05/1383	Sir William Scrope	Aquitaine	London
John Salesbury	18/02/1388	Sir William Beauchamp	Calais	St. Edwardstowe, Glous.
John Sergeant	26/11/1382	-	Cherbourg	London
Juanus Walsman	07/05/1384	Sir William Brian	Mark	Herefordshire
Thomas Weston	26/05/1383	Sir William le Scrope	Aquitaine	London

Whilst it is certainly possible that other recipients of protections may have been mounted archers (martial rank is not usually specified in these documents) the fact that only 23 men after 1369 until the end of the fourteenth century are specifically mentioned in this capacity would suggest that these men were exceptional, given what

¹⁶⁵ For more detailed discussion of the different types of source materials see chapter II, 15-43.

¹⁶⁶ C61/96 m. 10; C76/56 m.10; 64 m. 6; 67 m. 17, 19; 68 m. 4; 72 m. 14.

¹⁶⁷ Day then month.

we know about social standing of the vast majority of the men who normally took out these legal safeguards.¹⁶⁸

Pardons for military service are of little more help. Though these documents tended to be issued to the lower echelons of the military community – men more likely to be mounted archers – the dramatic decline in the issue of these documents from c.1370 for the rest of the fourteenth century lessens their utility.¹⁶⁹ From 1358 to 1399 only three men – Roger Aspeden, Henry Morice and William Symond – are listed as being archers and were pardoned for their actions, and for only one of these men, Roger Aspeden, do we possess any geographic information.¹⁷⁰

A more fruitful source of information comes from the personal bodyguards of mounted archers of Edward III and Richard II. The maintenance of a personal entourage of archers – known as the ‘king’s archers’ – went back at least as far as Henry III’s reign. Up until the latter part of Richard II’s reign the normal practice was to employ twenty-four archers in this capacity, all receiving the standard 6*d.* a day for a mounted archer.¹⁷¹ After the unsuccessful campaign to Scotland in 1385, perhaps because he was growing more insecure in his position, Richard began expanding their numbers considerably, and it has been estimated that he could call on the service of 67 king’s archers by 1397.¹⁷² Gillespie has also shown that as well as ‘king’s archers’ there were also ‘archers of the livery of the crown’ who formed a separate body from the king’s archers. The distinction between the two groups is blurred to the extent that historians have often viewed them as one body of men, all displaying Richard’s badge of the white hart, with the common belief that the king grafted the ‘archers of the crown’ onto the existing ‘king’s archers’ he had inherited from Edward III after 1385. This was not the case. Richard actually distributed two forms of livery: the well-known badge of the white hart, and that of the crown. The latter had long been used and was probably distributed most widely, whilst the former seems to have been first distributed at the Smithfield tournament of 1390 and was the one to gain notoriety

¹⁶⁸ In other words men-at-arms, see chapter II, 27-28.

¹⁶⁹ For discussion of pardons and their disappearance, 30-35.

¹⁷⁰ Roger Aspeden was from Lancashire and had served as an Archer of the Crown under The Black Prince. He was convicted and pardoned for murder in late January 1378, *C.P.R. 1377-81*, 101. Henry Morice was pardoned for murder: *C.P.R. 1358-61*, 366. Symond: *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 12.

¹⁷¹ Gillespie, J.L. ‘Richard II’s Archers of the Crown’ *J.B.S. 18:2* (1979), 15.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 21. For the 1385 campaign see chapter IV, 179-200.

because of its subsequent adoption by Richard's Cheshire archers later in the decade.¹⁷³ The distinction between the two groups, barring their different livery, was probably related to their role: the archers of the crown serving as Richard's own men whilst the king's archers were attached to the institution of the crown, rather than just the person of the king. Gillespie also points out that men denoted as being 'yeomen of the livery of the crown' should also be seen as being mounted archers. This is because not only were they paid the standard mounted archer's wage of 6d. a day, but they also appear in the records in 1390, after the Appellant-led government had attempted to curb the number of Richard's personal archers. In response Richard seems to have adopted the terminology of yeoman of the livery as opposed to archer of the livery 'as a means of circumventing the parliamentary ordinance on numbers'.¹⁷⁴ Neither the king's archers nor the archers/yeomen of the livery of the crown should be confused with the infamous Cheshire archers that Richard raised during the final few years of his reign that numbered in the hundreds, as part of what in effect amounted to a private army from the region, and earned the ire of contemporaries.¹⁷⁵ Discounting these Cheshire men as a special case, Appendix IV, which collates all of the king's archers and archers/yeomen of the livery of the crown known from the *Patent* and *Close Rolls*, shows a remarkable number of men for whom we can find geographical information, largely due to the fact that many of them received their wages from the proceeds of their locality. In all, of the 96 men in Appendix IV we possess geographical information for no fewer than 69 individuals.

How representative were these men of the 'typical' mounted archer? Positions so close to the person of the king as these were no doubt highly sought after and, as such, only the *crème de la crème* of those able to fulfil the role will likely have been selected.¹⁷⁶ Similarly, as Gillespie has shown that the wages of these men was often in arrears, an individual in one of these positions would have to have been wealthy

¹⁷³ Saul, N. 'The Kingship of Richard II' *Richard II: The Art of Kingship* (ed.) Goodman, A. and Gillespie, J.L. (Oxford, 1999), 55 ft. no. 70; Gillespie, J.L. 'Richard II's Cheshire Archers' *Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* 125 (1974), 5-6.

¹⁷⁴ Gillespie, 'Archers of the Crown', 19.

¹⁷⁵ Though sympathetic to Richard, an account by two Cistercians of the 'perjury' of Henry Bolingbroke noted of Richard's Cheshire archers that: 'On their shoulders they wore the badge of the white hart resplendent, but among the common people there was much talk of the extortions practiced by them'. *Chronicles of the Revolution, 1397-1400* (trans. and ed.) Given-Wilson, C. (Manchester, 1993), 154.

¹⁷⁶ How men were selected for these positions is unknown.

enough to survive for extended periods of time from their own resources.¹⁷⁷ Furthermore, if the argument expressed below is valid, that many of the mounted archers in the second half of the fourteenth century were displaying a nascent professionalism, then we have to wonder how representative these royal archers were of many of their contemporaries, considering that whilst some had ‘extensive martial interests and were career soldiers’, others spent the majority of their time performing non-military roles in various other capacities both in the royal household and in the shires.¹⁷⁸ Indeed as royal archers, many of whom will have been expected to be near constant companions of the king, we have to wonder how often they performed active martial service, even if there is evidence that some of them served other lords concurrently with the king, and fought abroad when royal duties allowed.¹⁷⁹

Probably more representative of ‘typical’ mounted archers are those listed on the retinue rolls of war captains. Take, for example, the roll of men attached to the earl of Stafford for his part in the expedition to Ireland 1361-62.¹⁸⁰ Though a large number of the men listed in this document are of the earl’s personal retinue, for which we have no geographic information, there are also a large number of mounted archers – about 130 – listed by county who seem to have been attached to the earl’s forces. Whilst this is evidently useful for our study of archers in the *Poll taxes* we must treat the information with caution. Stafford’s retinue dates from 1361-62, nearly two decades before the *Poll tax* records were created. Evidently the passing of so much time makes the connection of names between the two sets of records highly problematic. Far more useful for our purposes are the retinue rolls of captains from the 1370s and 80s. Two campaigns that were taking place a little closer to the time in which the *Poll Taxes* were being collected were the naval expeditions led by the earl of Arundel in 1387 and 1388. As has been highlighted above, Adrian Bell has already made prosopographical connections between some of the archers that served on the earl of Arundel’s naval campaigns and their landholdings within the domains of the earl.¹⁸¹ It would certainly be beneficial to include these men within our survey. It would also be prudent to look at some of the war captains from other campaigns close to the tax returns. If we select captains of whose geographic origins we are aware, and then

¹⁷⁷ Gillespie, ‘Archers of the Crown’, 22-23.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 24. For the argument related to nascent professionalism see below, 135-136.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 25-6.

¹⁸⁰ E101/28/15.

¹⁸¹ Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 123-4, above 77-78.

search the tax returns of their ‘home’ counties for mounted archers from their retinue, it might be possible to identify other archers in the *Poll Tax* records. Such a search will of course only identify men local to a captain, perhaps those from his own estate, and thus the men to whom he likely turned to first to form his retinue, rather than the freelance ‘professionals’ who were becoming increasingly abundant during the second half of the fourteenth century.¹⁸² Nevertheless this may act as an important strand to our investigation, bearing in mind, of course, the difficulties of nominal record linkage. To this end three captains with modestly sized retinues have been chosen from campaigns near to the assessment. The first is David Holgrave of Northumberland, who accompanied the earl of Buckingham in 1380 with a retinue of 77 men (40 archers); the second is Sir Matthew Redmane of Westmorland who held the garrisons of Roxburgh and Carlisle in 1381-82, and was active on the Scottish Marches between 1383 and 1385 under the earl of Northumberland with, all told c. 256 men¹⁸³ cumulatively from the three expeditions (c.152 archers).¹⁸⁴ The third is Laurence de Seybrook of Gloucestershire who served as a captain under Sir William Neville in his naval expedition of 1374 with a retinue of 80 men, 41 of whom were archers.¹⁸⁵

We are thus left with a varied sample of mounted archers for our second task: correlating names from the martial sources with the relevant county *Poll Tax* records. How many of our mounted archers can be shown to appear among the taxpayers? A number of the archers that Adrian Bell identified as landholders in Sussex certainly appear in the *Poll Tax*. John Kynge paid 6*d.* in 1379 and there were several men in the county named John atte Halle paying between 4*d.* and 6*d.* in the same year. The same was true of Richard Mareschall, (or men with similar surname derivation) all paying 4*d.*, suggesting that at least two of these men were the archers who had served with Arundel in 1387 and 1388. John Fuller (or ‘Fullere’) also appears in 1379, also paying 4*d.*¹⁸⁶ Despite these findings, however, it seems that the vast majority of evidence

¹⁸² Chapter IV, 144-146.

¹⁸³ Based on the fact that some men appear twice on the same roll and on more than one of the three stints of service.

¹⁸⁴ (Holgrave) Sherborne, ‘Indentured Retinues’, 22, ft. 124, E101/31/9 m.1; (Redmane) see Appendix V, 345, E101/531/29 m. 2, 6; E101/39/11 m. 3, BL Cotton Roll XIII m. 1.

¹⁸⁵ *C.P.R.* 1389-92, 704; E101/33/15 m.2.

¹⁸⁶ *The Poll Taxes*, v.2, 582, 583, 586, 589, 597, 598, 601, 606, 613. Only Wauter Smyth (Smith) and John Leche who Bell identified do not appear

from the other sources is not promising for strengthening the argument that mounted archers in the second half of the fourteenth century came from a more elevated social position than their infantry forebears. Let us take these materials in turn. Of the nine men from the protections list from table 3.2 only two appear in the *Poll Tax* returns for their relevant county – John Mariot from Yorkshire, and John Salesbury from Gloucestershire¹⁸⁷ – whilst a third, John Darnall from Yorkshire, can only be added very tentatively, if at all, based on uncertain surname evidence.¹⁸⁸ The appearance of Roger Aspeden, one the Black Prince's 'Archers of the Crown', in the *Poll Tax* of 1379 paying 4*d.* in Oswaldwhistle, Lancashire, is certainly helpful but hardly adds much weight to the argument for more socially elevated mounted archers.¹⁸⁹

More damaging still for the argument of socially affluent mounted archers is the evidence presented when attempting to correlate the names of men who were Archers/Yeomen of the Crown with the *Poll Tax* records.¹⁹⁰ It is unfortunately not possible to check all of the sixty-nine names for men of whose geographic origin we can ascertain. The returns for London and Huntingdonshire are no longer extant, Wales was not included in the assessment, and it seems that Chester was exempted due to its position as a palatinate; if it made a contribution the returns do not survive.¹⁹¹ This knocks the number of archers can be checked down to fifty-seven. Of these men the search for them in the *Poll Tax* returns is hampered by the fact that the records for each county survive in different quantities and quality. For some counties like Devon and Buckinghamshire, for example, virtually nothing survives.¹⁹² Even despite these limitations, given the undoubted prestige of these positions, one might assume that the men filling them would appear extensively in the tax returns. This is not the case. Only six men – John Alayn (Wiltshire), John Archer (Essex), William

¹⁸⁷ John Mariot is listed with his wife Johanna paying 4*d.* in Bradfield (in Hallamshire including modern Sheffield) *The Poll Taxes*, v.3, 318. John Salesbury of St. Edwardstowe, Gloucestershire, appears in the rolls for 1381 with his wife Isabella, both of whom paid 12*d.* He is also listed with the abbreviated word 'vebbugg' which could refer to an occupation of some kind, the payment of 12*d.* perhaps suggesting a now retired archer. *The Poll Taxes*, v.2, 264.

¹⁸⁸ There was a Robert 'Danyell' wife his wife Juliana paying 4*d.* in Barnby Dun, W.R. of Yorkshire (1379) and a different man with the same name with his wife Alicia, also paying 4*d.* in 1379; a Robert 'Daniell' paying 4*d.* in Aston, W.R. Yorkshire in the same year; and a Robert 'Donell' paying 4*d.* in the *Villat' de Wales* in the same year. There is also evidence of a potential family member, Thomas Darnal with 'Betrix' wife, paying 4*d.* in Hadnsworth, W.R. of Yorkshire, in 1379. *The Poll Taxes*, v.3, 309, 323, 335.

¹⁸⁹ *Poll Tax*, v.1, 447.

¹⁹⁰ Listed in Appendix IV, 332-335.

¹⁹¹ *Poll Tax*, v. 1, xxi; v.2, 61.

¹⁹² For the various documentary survivals for each county see relevant county entry: *Poll Tax*, v.1-3.

Hunt and Richard Kyng (both Sussex), John Kenne (Hampshire), and Adam de Peynkhurst (Surrey) – out of the fifty-seven appear by name in the returns for their relevant county, and highly tentative links based on surname evidence only can be made for two other men.¹⁹³

The six who appear by name are certainly an interesting group. John Alayn, from Fovant in the Cadworth hundred in Wiltshire, was certainly an affluent man of some standing in his community, being described as one of the *probi homines* (good men) of the region and it is certainly possible that he may have been an affluent archer in the king's service. William Hunte of Sullington, Sussex, paying 4*d.* in 1379 may also have been a royal archer and the same can be said of the aptly named John Archer in the 1377 assessment in Colchester, Essex.¹⁹⁴ Similarly Richard Kyng the, Archer of the Crown, is explicitly described as being from Boxgrove in West Sussex which does not appear in the tax return.¹⁹⁵ He may, however, have been one of the Richard Kyngs who appear in Oving and Iping in the county, both paying 4*d.* in 1379, or even the same Richard Kyng who paid 12*d.* in Chichester in the same year, with a servant paying 4*d.*¹⁹⁶ It is always possible, of course, that any of these taxpayers were not royal archers, and of the other two men legitimate doubts as to whether the individual in the tax return is the man of the same name who was a royal archer can be raised. John Kenne, paying 6*d.* in the Isle of Wight in 1379 seems like a probable candidate to have been a royal mounted archer, but the *Poll Tax* record also states that he was a weaver (*textor*). Whilst we know that royal archers were not exclusively in attendance on the king at all times this seems an unlikely alternative occupation for a royal archer. Adam de Pynkhurst who appears in the *Poll Tax* in the 1381 reassessment in Southwark, Surrey, is an even more interesting case. He paid no less than 6*s.* 8*d.* and had two servants paying 4*d.* and 6*d.* respectively. The large payment made by Pynkhurst may be offset somewhat by the facts that he also seems to have

¹⁹³ Aleyn: *Poll Tax*, v.1, 34, 48; Archer: *Ibid.*, 201, 220; Kenne: *Ibid.*, 338; Hunte: *Poll Tax*, v.2, 586; Kyng: *Ibid.*, 597, 600, 629; Pynkhurst: 2: 237-38. Tentative surname evidence: John Knightingley, v.1, 89; Nicholas Radenham, v.1, 91, 93, 111, 114. Surname links in Yorkshire for 'Monketon' and 'Vauser': *Poll Tax*, v.3, 139, 140. Please see these references for the discussion of the individual archers below.

¹⁹⁴ It is unlikely, though not impossible, to have been the John Archer from Belchamp St. Paul's in the Hinckford Hundred in 1381 paying 2*s.*, described as *labor* (labourer), *Poll Tax*, v.1, 220.

¹⁹⁵ *C.P.R.* 1389-92, 5.

¹⁹⁶ The high payment of 12*d.* may be explained by the fact the this Richard Kyng was also paying for the tax for his wife Agnes.

been paying for his wife, and that in 1381 all men and women should pay at least one shilling, much higher than in previous *Poll Taxes*.¹⁹⁷ Nevertheless, even if he was paying only half of the 6s. 8d. for himself then this was still three times the amount the average person was expected to contribute. Whether or not a mounted archer, even a royal one, could be expected to pay such a large amount, or whether this was common practice for men of such a prestigious station, is open to conjecture.

Even if, despite difficulties with the sources and nominal record linkage, it has been possible to identify six of royal archers in the *Poll Tax* returns then this is a paltry number of the fifty-seven we are able to check. That so few of those who we assume represent the elite of the mounted archers appear certainly dents the argument for mounted archers in this period in general being more socially affluent. Why these royal archers do not appear is unknown but a possible explanation is that the men occupying these positions were resident in and around the City of London, of which records are no longer extant.¹⁹⁸

The mounted archers from the earl of Stafford's 1361-62 retinue also do not appear in the tax returns in great number. Looking at a sample of 50 names from the list, (forty from Worcestershire and ten from Shropshire) only three men – Thomas de Bleley (Shrops.), John Hale and Nicholas Walker (Worcs.) – appear by name in the tax records.¹⁹⁹ Even considering the fact that two decades had passed between the two sets of records this does little to support the idea of an increasingly affluent yeomanry taking up the role of mounted archers in the second half of the fourteenth century. However there are another nine men from our sample of 50 whose family names appear several times in the *Poll Tax* records, even if the individual from Stafford's roll does not appear by name.²⁰⁰ Indeed Nicholas Walker appears alongside a number of male relatives, probably his father and brothers.²⁰¹ Whilst this hardly denotes that

¹⁹⁷ *Poll Tax*, v.1, xvi.

¹⁹⁸ Above 85.

¹⁹⁹ A number of individuals appear with the name Thomas de Bleley or derivations of in Shropshire, for example: *Poll Tax*, v.2, 385, 400, 403. The same is true of John Hale and Nicholas Walker: *Poll Tax*: v.3, 128, and as a 'corvisor' 130 (other entries throughout the county as a common name); *ibid.*, 129, Nicolas Walker paying 6d. in 1381.

²⁰⁰ Several 'Tailles/Taylors' for William Taylor; two Richard and three John Dyers for William Dyer, several 'Chapmans/mons' for William Chapman. The like for Albrightons, Webbes, Prybolts, Chandelers, Hyntons and Howeleys: *Poll Tax*, v.2, 385, 388; v.3, 128-31.

²⁰¹ *Poll Tax*, v.3, 129.

some of our mounted archers paid the *Poll Tax* it warns us of the potential that whilst the archers themselves may not have appeared some members of their families may have, denoting a level of wealth within the family itself. It is also important to note that the records for these counties, Worcestershire in particular, are largely incomplete, making any meaningful nominal record linkage difficult.

The appearance of archers in the rolls of the three war captains that were selected is mixed. Only one man of the forty archers – John Archer (Archier) of Shilbottle – is listed in the esquire David Holgrave’s 1380 retinue when the names of the men in the retinue are checked against Holgrave’s home county of Northumberland in the *Poll Tax* returns.²⁰² This initially is very surprising considering that, as is highlighted in chapter IV, captains will have turned to local men first and foremost to fill their retinues.²⁰³ Even if the method of surveying the captains home county will likely miss freelance ‘professional’ soldiers who were becoming increasingly prevalent in this period we would expect to find more than one man. The lack of appearance of Holgrave’s archers can more than likely be explained by the fact that the survival of the *Poll Tax* records for Northumberland are scant. No returns survive for either 1379 or 1381 and the only records for 1377 are for the Coquetdale ward, though unusually amongst 1377 returns they are nominative lists. A few more archers from Laurence Seybrook’s retinue, four out of forty-one or just under ten percent, appear in the returns for his home county of Gloucestershire, all paying the minimum 12*d.* in the 1381 assessment.²⁰⁴ This number of men may appear small but it may be mitigated somewhat by the fact that virtually all the returns for Gloucestershire are for 1381, when mass evasion of the tax has been noted by both contemporaries and modern scholars.²⁰⁵ Checking the men of the three retinues of Sir Matthew Redmane (the garrisons of Roxburgh and Carlisle in 1381-82, and the force in the Scottish Marches from 1383 to 1385) in the *Poll Tax* records provides similar results. Of the 150 or so individual archers that served under Redmane on these three occasions 15 men – or ten percent – can be identified in the *Poll Tax* records in his

²⁰² *Poll Tax* v.2, 269.

²⁰³ Chapter IV 140-148.

²⁰⁴ Nicholas Aleyn, John Chanderler, Richard Baker, and John Chamberlain: *Poll Tax*, v.1, 263, 268, 274, 279.

²⁰⁵ See above 81-82.

home county of Westmorland.²⁰⁶ There are also some archers' family name that appear, even if the archer himself does not, suggestive perhaps of service from within local families. Furthermore the survival of the records from Westmorland relate only to the 1379 collection in the barony of Westmorland, and many records within those that survive are illegible. For at least fifteen archer's names to appear in such a limited sample is suggestive of evidence, limited though it may be, of at least some of the individuals from his locality whom Redmane could draw upon to form the core of his retinue. If we extend the survey of the archers in Redmane's retinue further to the counties of Cumberland and Northumberland – thus men not quite of his locality, but certainly within his recruitment reach as an important figure amongst the northern gentry – we can add the names of another six men whose names appear in the tax returns.²⁰⁷ We must be careful, of course, when analysing this evidence for the three counties. Nominal record linkage, as has been stressed previously, is a difficult business, especially for those lower down the social scale. Many common surnames like 'Dobson' appear multiple times and when men also had a common forename like 'John' we can never be sure if any of the men in the tax records are the John Dobson, mounted archer, who served with Redmane. Furthermore some names appear in multiple counties; the name John Robynson (Robinson), for example, appears in all three of those surveyed.²⁰⁸ Yet despite these problems at least *some* of the men that appear in the tax records of the three counties will likely have been mounted archers, forming the core of Redmane's archers to which he could add freelancers. Indeed more men might appear if more records for the three counties were extant. The Northumberland and Westmorland records, as has already been mentioned, survive only for limited regions and for single years (1377 and 1379 respectively), and the same is true of those for Cumberland, with only a nominative list from Carlisle in 1377 now extant. It might seem surprising that only four archers from Redmane's garrison at Carlisle – John Sadeler, John de Calton, John Daweson, and John Roson – appear in the *Poll Tax* record for the town.²⁰⁹ However when it is remembered that it was often stipulated in indentures during the 1380s and 90s that a significant

²⁰⁶ John Robynson, John Dobynson (Dobson), John Taylour, John Willeson, John Adekynson, William Fisser, John be Bek, Thomas Cook, John Thommeson, Thomas Dobson, John de Hoton, William Hudson, John del Syle, John Stevenson, Robert Walker: *Poll Tax*, v.2, 693, 695-702.

²⁰⁷ Cumberland: John Sadeler, John de Calton, John Daweson, John Roson (*Poll Tax* v.1, 91-94); Northumberland: Robert Barker, Thomas de Rok (*Ibid.*, 266-271).

²⁰⁸ *Poll Tax*, v.1, 91, 93; v.2, (Westmorland) 693, 699, 701, 702, (Northumberland) 268.

²⁰⁹ Though other names do appear and they have been included amongst the men from Westmorland.

proportion of a garrison's troops, at least on the northern border, should not be recruited from the locality of the fortress and should be from further south, probably in the main to prevent desertion, this becomes more understandable.²¹⁰

The only slightly disappointing feature of the results for Redmane's retinue analysis – in terms of giving weight to the argument for more socially affluent archers in the second half of the fourteenth century – is that in the only county from the three surveyed that featured a graduated *Poll Tax* (Westmorland in 1379), only one man, Robert Walker of Ravenstonedale, paid more than the most basic amount of 4d.²¹¹ Does this denote that the men paying the basic rate of the taxes both here, and in our other examples, were not socially affluent enough to be mounted archers? The problem is that there is no real way of comparison; we cannot be sure if the arrayed infantrymen who fought in the late thirteenth, and first decades of the fourteenth century, would have been affluent enough to qualify to pay the 4d. in 1379, for example, or whether they would have been excluded on the grounds of poverty. It does seem likely, however, that those infantry levies of the early fourteenth century would have been able to pay the *Poll Tax*, had one been raised in the early decades of the fourteenth century. After all, 'four pence was not an enormous sum, about a day's wages for a carpenter or two-thirds of a day's wages for an archer'.²¹² Yet this does not mean that the mounted archers, largely paying 4d. in the *Poll Tax* returns, were not more affluent than the arrayed levies of the past. Those at the very top of the 'yeomanry', men like Robert Walker of Ravenstonedale, fit into the lowest end of the bracket in 1379 of: 'all lesser merchants and artificers who have profit from the land, according to the extent of their estate (from 6s. 8d. down to 6d.)'.²¹³ For the vast majority of the archers, however, falling into the 'everyman' bracket of 4d. minimum, suggests that there was a great difference in wealth between individuals paying this basic rate. This flat rate, after all, in theory covered everyone from those whose wealth meant they were just below the 6d. bracket down to those just above paupers

²¹⁰ *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland*, vol. iv (ed.) Galbraith, J.D., Simpson, G.G. (Edinburgh, 1986), no. 360. All but 20 men-at-arms and 20 archers within a garrison of c. 100 in Roxburgh in 1386 were to be 'strangers' from the southern side of the county of Richmond and Craven. Cornell, David 'English Castle Garrisons in the Anglo-Scottish wars of the Fourteenth Century' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Durham, Oct. 2006), 204-13.

²¹¹ He paid 6d. *Poll Tax*, v.2, 702.

²¹² Sumption, *Divided*, 276.

²¹³ *Poll Tax*, v.1, xv-xvi.

who could afford nothing at all. Within this group thus fell a huge swathe of the medieval population; it is hardly surprising that most of the mounted archers of whom we have information are included within this number, even if they represented the ‘elite’ of this group.

Nevertheless, it seems on the face of it that few of our sample of mounted archers appear in the *Poll Tax* records. Consequently, any hope of strengthening the argument for more socially affluent mounted archers in the second half of the fourteenth century appears impossible. Indeed that so few appear might even suggest that the very notion of the upwardly mobile yeoman archer in this period needs revising. It is very important to remember, however, that there are a myriad of problems with these records and our interpretation of them. We can only speculate as to how many men the reasons highlighted above reduced the number of mounted archers who appear in the *Poll Tax* returns. The two major problems that have been encountered are the difficulties in ascertaining where mounted archers originated in the first place, and even when this has been possible the problems with the tax records themselves, as well as our interpretation of their content, makes detailed prosopography and nominal record linkage a near impossible task. All that can be said with certainty is that, despite the difficulties, and as far as can be ascertained within reasonable doubt, at least *some* mounted archers appear in the *Poll Tax* records. This in itself is significant, especially those paying more than the standard 4d. in the graduated tax of 1379. It shows, at least on some level, that at least some of their numbers were becoming moderately affluent, to the extent that they qualified for paying the higher echelons of a tax on wealth and property, denoting an elevated social status.

Turning away from the *Poll Tax* records, a second indicator of wealth – amongst both men-at-arms and mounted archers – is the acquisition by individuals of their own mounts and equipment for war. This is a highly important issue. If men were having their arms and armour provided for them by their military captains, their locality, or from a central store, and if this was a regular practice, ‘it would make more likely a continuing military role for the less prosperous sections of the rural population’.²¹⁴

²¹⁴ Ayton, ‘Dynamics of Recruitment’, 40.

Conversely if men were providing their own military apparel then this would suggest that war was increasingly, if not exclusively, the preserve of the more affluent sections of medieval society. Surprisingly there is little definitive information regarding this important point and we are left to interpret the circumstantial evidence we do possess. The rising costs of military equipment in particular would suggest that if men were providing their own they were at least wealthier 'yeoman' status.²¹⁵ Some evidence certainly suggests that at least some men had their equipment provided for them. In 1346 some mounted archers were 'equipped and sent to muster by £5 *per annum* landowners seeking to discharge their military assessment', though this probably represents the last vestiges of traditional custom, with the government attempting to supplant, or at least supplement, the system by introducing a new landed-income based military assessment.²¹⁶ Another interesting example of the provision of arms comes from the Irish campaign of 1361-62 where orders stipulated that some of the mounted and foot archers recruited via commissions of array in Lancashire were to be furnished with 'bows, arrows and other suitable arms', but that this was not to extend to the provision of mounts as these men had 'horses of their own'.²¹⁷ Why on this occasion the horses were not provided is baffling and it would be intriguing to know more about this. Perhaps these arrayed troops came from the nearby highly militarised county of Cheshire, the desperation of the government requiring the arrayers to cast their net for soldiers more widely which naturally made them turn to the neighbouring county?²¹⁸ Perhaps some local wealthy merchant or lord had provided the horses for these archers at a profit? It is certainly not inconceivable that there were horse traders in England who, seeing the increasing prevalence of mounted soldiers in English armies by the middle of the fourteenth century, saw the opportunity to profit from this, and began providing horses on the market in increasing numbers. There was certainly a well-established practice of royal horse breeding and trading in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, even if this was for great *destriers* rather than nimbler mounts required in the conflicts of the mid-to-late fourteenth century,²¹⁹ and the changing needs of war must have necessitated that this practice continued, with private horse traders, both English and

²¹⁵ Below, 120-122.

²¹⁶ Ayton, *Crécy*, 221.

²¹⁷ *C.C.R. 1360-64*, 329; *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 21, 36, 329.

²¹⁸ Morgan, *War and Society in Medieval Cheshire*, 35.

²¹⁹ Ayton, *Knights*, 24-25, footnotes 82-84. See also orders for Peter de Pimbo to go across the sea to purchase great horses for Edward III at the start of his reign. *C.P.R. 1327-30*, 418.

foreign, scenting the chance of a profit. Indeed, this must have occurred for unless the government was willing to foot the huge bill for providing all soldiers with multiple mounts these animals must have come from private horse breeders, be they merchants or business-minded aristocrats like the earls of Arundel in the fourteenth century.²²⁰ Perhaps Reginald Shrewsbury and Thomas Athekoc, described in the *Patent Rolls* in 1396 as ‘hackneymen’ and acting for other ‘hackneymen’ of Southwark, Dartmouth, Rochester, and towns between London and Dover, who seem to have run a fairly extensive horseback transport service in the south-east, whereby horses could be rented for specific journeys, were the kinds of entrepreneurs who turned their hand to selling mounts to men-at-arms and archers?²²¹ J.M.W. Bean has pointed out an example from the early fifteenth century where archers were present ‘at the horsing’ of their captain, perhaps denoting the occasion where they received their mounts from their patron.²²² Whether the troops going to Ireland in 1361 were having their equipment provided simply because they had been raised via commissions of array, because the government was having trouble recruiting men for what was often seen as an unprofitable, and unfashionable theatre of war, or because this was merely common practice, is unclear. The fact that this was purely for arrayed troops – crucially not those serving entirely voluntarily via indentures – does suggest, however, that on this occasion at least, special provision was required to equip these men from lower down the social ladder. If men were having their equipment provided for them then one potential source of this equipment was the large stockpile of arms and armour kept at the Tower of London. In a recent article Thom Richardson has shown that the levels of this equipment fluctuated considerably during the fourteenth century.²²³ In 1324 the armoury’s holdings were paltry:

‘The only plate defences were 43 bacinets covered in white leather, purchased for £4 15s. 3d., and there was no mail at all. ... In 1330 [there was] 48 old, worn-out aketons, 50 bacinets (the same leather-covered set), 101 kettle hats, 10 *a viser* and one *endorre*, 50

²²⁰ Given-Wilson, C. ‘Wealth and Credit, Public and Private: The Earls of Arundel, 1306-97’ *E.H.R.* 106 (1991), 18 and footnote 7.

²²¹ *C.P.R. 1391-96*, 712-713.

²²² Bean, J.M.W. *From Lord to Patron. Lordship in Medieval England* (Manchester, 1989), 239.

²²³ Richardson, T. ‘Armour in England, 1325-99’ *J.M.H.* 37:3, (2011), 304-20.

feeble old pairs of plate gauntlets, [and] 74 feeble and damaged shields with the arms of the king'.²²⁴

The general trend, however, was an increase as the century ran its course, particularly in plate armour which began to appear in larger quantities during the 1360s and 70s. There are two observations which are made in this article which are important for our purposes. The first is that, evidently, equipment was lent out from the store. For example, 300 'old and worthless' examples of *cerotheres* (a form of plate gauntlet) lent out for the Crécy campaign were returned in 1353.²²⁵ Unfortunately Richardson does not state to whom this equipment was lent. From what we are told, however, it seems that the biggest fluctuations occurred during times of royally led expeditions, or at least for those led by princes of the blood. For example the number of mail shirts (*habergeons*) in the armoury, which had numbered as many as 1,956 in 1369, had fallen to 628 in 1399, 'partly to be explained by the issue of 500 mail shirts for Richard II's expedition to Ireland that year'.²²⁶ Whether equipment was lent solely to army commanders, or to retinue captains on an individual basis, and what the terms of these loans were, is unclear. However, if this equipment was lent out mainly, or primarily, for royally led campaigns, (including those led by princes of the blood), then it suggests that it was intended, in the main, for men from the king's own military affinity, and perhaps for the affinities of his relatives. It would certainly make sense for all the men of the king's retinue, and those of his wider affinity, to wear a standardised form of equipment when riding to war if only to indicate that the royal retinue was the most numerous and prestigious contingent of an army, as opposed to the 'rough and ready' appearance of some of an army's other retinues, caused by the recycling of armour and men serving with the best equipment they could lay their hands on.²²⁷ The argument for martial uniformity in the royal contingent is certainly strengthened when it is considered that some entries in the Tower inventories describe items of equipment, particularly shields, displaying the arms of the king, like:

'the majority (540) of the pavises in the armoury in 1353....painted white, with a garter in the centre of each containing an escutcheon ... [whilst a] special group of 100 were large,

²²⁴ Ibid., 305.

²²⁵ Ibid., 316.

²²⁶ Ibid., 309.

²²⁷ See below, 121-122 ft. 317 for armour recycling.

with leaves of silver gilt and with an escutcheon with the arms of the king within a garter'.²²⁸

It makes sense that the royal repository of arms should be used to equip the manpower of the household division. After all, in this respect, the king was simply behaving like a super magnate and perhaps leading captains had their own armouries, from which some at least of their men were equipped. Until Richardson's thesis on this subject becomes available, however, much of this argument regarding the provision of armour to the 'royal retinue' remains purely conjecture.²²⁹

The second important observation made in Richardson's article is that 'the main work of the Tower armoury developed during the period into the provision of massive quantities of bows and quivers of arrows'.²³⁰ The stock of longbows rose from 682 in 1353 to 15,553 in 1360, fell to 5,303 in 1369, fell to 1,260 in 1379, rose again to 7,636 in 1388, fell once more to 2,328 in 1396 and dwindled back to 842 by 1405. These figures do not take into account the quantities that were brought into the Tower and issued again too quickly to appear on a receipt or remain, such as the 20,417 that were issued for the Crécy, Calais and other campaigns between 1344 and 1351.²³¹ What is to be made of these figures? It is important to remember that any observations made are based without the knowledge of to whom these bows (and presumably quivers of arrows too) were issued and that it is not possible to make concrete assertions, indeed without extensive supply and demand figures any assumptions made can only be a matter of conjecture. Nevertheless the figures would suggest that, despite a few fluctuations where the numbers rose in the late 1370s and 1380s, the general trend, from the high-point of just over 15,500 in 1360, was one of a dramatic fall to fewer than a thousand by 1405.

How can the fluctuation in bow numbers, and indeed in the existence of central, and perhaps captains' own weapon stores be explained in the context of the social position of mounted archers in this period? It is possible to reach two diametrically

²²⁸ Richardson, 'Armour in England', 319. As Richardson suggests, these were likely for naval service.

²²⁹ This is currently ongoing at the University of York, provisionally titled: 'Medieval Inventories of the Tower Armouries, 1320-1410'. <http://www.york.ac.uk/history/postgraduate/phil-phd/research-students/> (as of 3 October 2011). Accessed 22 February 2012.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, 320.

²³¹ I would like to offer my most sincere thanks to Thom Richardson for providing me with these figures during our personal correspondence: Richardson, T. Email correspondence, 19 November 2010.

opposed conclusions about these figures. The first is that the fall in the number of bows suggests that, whilst there were fluctuations, in general more were being issued from the Tower's stores as the fourteenth century progressed, particularly in the 1390s. In other words men were not providing their own bows, with the increase in issue denoting that to raise the types of army necessary to meet English military commitments in this period the crown was forced to meet the rising costs of providing weaponry from its own pocket. This would make it possible for there still to be a role for those of peasant stock within the military community, even at this stage in the fourteenth century. Whilst this is certainly a possibility the argument fails to hold water when the alternative interpretation of the figures is considered: that the decline in number within the Tower stores denotes that mounted archers were increasingly, if not exclusively, providing their own weapons. This is certainly the more logical argument. Though bows did not carry the same social power in the medieval consciousness as swords, soldiers nevertheless would surely have preferred their own, personal, bow, rather than one arbitrarily supplied from a central store; a weapon that met their own specifications and preferences for weight and balance.²³² The argument for the decline in the number of bows in the Tower denoting personal provision of them by archers is further strengthened when it is considered that the alternative viewpoint depends largely on the idea that the number of Tower bows in circulation remained constant. Without detailed knowledge of the issue and receipts of the weapons from the stores it is difficult to say for certain, but it is highly unlikely that there was anything like a constant number on the Tower's books. To be sure, those that were lost or broken (even considering that some doubtlessly lasted a number of years, perhaps decades if they were well looked after) could be replaced, and clearly some of those issued were returned, (the figure of over 20,000 that were issued 1344-51 would surely have been impossible without a constant stream of weapons to and from Tower's stores), but why would the government go to the expense of paying to replace old bows, given that men likely preferred using their own weapon? The fact that the numbers within the Tower's store decreased is significant. As it largely coincides with the disappearance of arrayed troops from English armies this would

²³² This is discussed in Mike Loades' recent monograph on swords: 'Swords are icons. They are symbols of rank, status, and authority; the weapons upon which oaths were sworn, with which alliances were pledged and by which honours were conferred. Swords represent cultural ideas and personal attributes, They stand for justice, courage and honour'. Loades, M. *Swords and Swordsmen* (Barnsley, 2010), xiii.

suggest that numbers fell because they were no longer needed to supply peasant infantrymen. Those that remained in the Tower may thus have been for issue to archers of the crown, members of the royal retinue on campaign or, simply, as spares that could be called upon in an emergency. The weight of evidence thus suggests that the mounted archers of the second half of the fourteenth century were providing their own bows which would suggest an increasing professionalism, and perhaps wealth, of men serving in this capacity. In a similar vein the existence of central stores does not necessarily mean that mounted archers, and indeed men-at-arms, did not provide their own equipment. The rising costs of equipment may certainly have meant that *some* men may have had their equipment for them, but is it really likely that captains from the ranks of the gentry could have been expected to provide equipment for the men of their retinues, in some cases for hundreds of men? Though it is only conjecture it is likely that if large numbers of men were provided with equipment it will have been in the service of the retinues of aristocrats and peers of the realm, men like Gaunt who could afford the costs of equipping hundreds of men. Even this is unlikely, as even ‘super magnates’ would surely have been unwilling to squander their wealth on equipping the lowliest knights, esquires, and mounted archers in their retinues.²³³

A final consideration that might indicate a growing affluence amongst mounted archers in the second half of the fourteenth century is the issue of their pay. If the majority of mounted-archers had their horses and arms provided for them – meaning they were likely of the same social standing of the foot-archers of the past – then why would the crown double their wages to 6*d.* a day? The logical answer is that they were paid more precisely because they were providing these themselves, in particular for the maintenance of a horse on campaign. If an archer were not providing his own horse, which may have happened on a few occasions, it may have been the case that his captain kept back a part of the archer’s pay if the captain were providing and maintaining the archer’s mount.

²³³ Below 120-122.

Therefore the arguments presented above, indicate that the image of the yeoman archer in the general prologue to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, as the elite of village society, remains a difficult one to shake.²³⁴

‘A Yeman hadde he and servantz namo
 At that tyme, for him liste ride so,
 And he was clad in cote and hood of grene.
 A sheef of pecok arwes, bright and kene,
 Under his belt he bar ful thriftily
 (Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly;
 His arwes drouped noght with fetheres lowe),
 And in his hand he baar a mighty bowe.
 A not heed hadde he, with a broun visage.
 Of wodecraft wel koude he al the usage.
 Upon his arm he baar a gay bracer,
 And by his side a swerd and a bokeler,
 And on that oother side a gay daggere
 Harneised wel and sharp as point of spere;
 A Christopher on his brest of silver sheen.
 An horn he bar, the bawdryk was of grene;
 A forster was he, smoothly, as I gesse’.²³⁵

He seems to have been representative of many of the men whom Chaucer recognised from the changing society of the later fourteenth century, both an ‘inclusive category of combatant, and one from which individuals might launch a bid for military and social advancement’ into the ranks of the gentry.²³⁶ Whilst Sir Robert Knolles is perhaps the most famous example of a man rising from relative obscurity, perhaps beginning his career as a mounted-archer, all the way to the upper-echelons of the military hierarchy, he can hardly have been alone in this respect.²³⁷ At the same time there will also have been men coming the other way; impoverished former gentry families who could no longer afford to furnish the arms and mount of a man-at-arms.²³⁸

²³⁴ Thompson, K.J. ‘Chaucer’s Warrior Bowman: The Roles and Equipment of the Knight’s Yeoman’ *The Chaucer Review* 40 (2006), 386-415.

²³⁵ Chaucer, G. *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd edn. (ed.) Benson, L.D. (1988), 25, lines 101-117.

²³⁶ Ayton, ‘Dynamics’, 40-41.

²³⁷ Jones, M. ‘Knolles, Sir Robert (d. 1407)’, *O.D.N.B.* (online edn, May 2009).

²³⁸ Ayton, ‘Dynamics’, 40-41.

It should hopefully be obvious from the above discussion that, along with the nobility, both the non-knightly men-at-arms of the gentry, and mounted-archers largely stemming from the yeomanry, should be considered as constituent parts of the English military community in the second half of the fourteenth century. They clearly displayed their martial effectiveness through their conduct in the field. Both men-at-arms and archers, mounted on light horses, dismounting to fight in mixed-retinues and relying on the power of the longbow, were tactically suited to the wars that the English government was attempting to fight; of devastation of enemy territory in the hope of bringing them to battle. Though it might be argued the increasing predominance of mounted archers was the result not of a realisation of their effectiveness but of financial necessity – at wages of 6*d.* per day the crown could recruit two mounted-archers for every one man-at-arms – and that their success was a symptom of luck rather than design, this idea can be rejected. Their martial effectiveness was key; their cost-effectiveness merely a bonus. If the recruitment of mounted-archers in large numbers was merely a financial rather than a military expedient, then the practice of recruiting arrayed foot-archers paid only 3*d.* a day, would surely have continued.

How far were the non-knightly men-at-arms and mounted-archers imbued with the martial mentality of their social superiors? This is one of the thorniest questions about the military community to answer, and was briefly touched upon above.²³⁹ One of the biggest problems, of course, is that the large bodies of gentry and yeomanry have left little record of their thoughts and motivations for service and we are thus left to infer them from the available evidence. Flight from personal domestic problems like crime and debt, landless younger sons who did not expect to inherit their parents' property, an escape from impoverishment and declining status at home, even a sense of adventure, will all have swelled the ranks of English armies. However, there are two opposing points of view on what served as the primary motivator for military service amongst scholars. The first sees these men as being primarily motivated by the pursuit of wealth and financial gain. The opposing view argues that these men drew their desire to serve from less worldly, more psychological and idealistic concerns:

²³⁹ See above, 63-64, 67-68.

the traditional chivalric appeals of fame, honour and glory, echoing the motivations of the upper echelons of the community.

The pursuit of wealth and personal profit as a motivation for military service is well recognised throughout history and the later fourteenth century was no exception with a large body of evidence to support it.²⁴⁰ The introduction of near universal paid service may certainly have encouraged some men to fight, with rates based upon martial rank standardised by the early fourteenth century.²⁴¹ Yet the provision of pay as a motivational factor for military service should not be over exaggerated. The rates of pay were not high and remained the same after their establishment for the remainder of the fourteenth century, even despite a general rise in wages across the board in the later fourteenth century. Moreover, pay was often late, and the rates were hardly sufficient to support the provision of an individual's mount and military apparel, though much depended on whether a captain paid his men promptly or waited until he received (often late) disbursements from the crown.²⁴² In addition there is evidence that captains who contracted with the Crown sometimes offered less favourable rates to their own recruits, allowing them to pocket the difference.²⁴³ For the men-at-arms there was, by the second half of the fourteenth century, the payment of *regard* in addition to men's pay. The purpose of this payment – 100 marks for the service of 30 men-at-arms for the captain – has been debated but it seems that 'it was intended as a contribution towards the expenses of preparing for war'.²⁴⁴ Yet whilst a welcome boon for men-at-arms it can hardly have acted as a driving incentive to perform military service. The individual man at arms may not have received any of this money, and even if he did it is unlikely that the amount he received would have managed to cover all the expenses that he incurred in preparing for war.²⁴⁵ In other words pay, (and *regard* for the men-at-arms), as an incentive to martial service for

²⁴⁰ McFarlane, K.B. *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), wrote that there was: 'no pretence of fighting for love of king or lord, still less for England or for glory, but solely for gain', 21.

²⁴¹ Above, 48, 52-53.

²⁴² Below, 125.

²⁴³ Goodman, A. 'The Military Subcontracts of Sir Hugh Hastings, 1380' *English Historical Review* 95:374 (1980), 114-220; Walker, S. 'Profit and Loss in the Hundred Years War: The Subcontracts of Sir John Strother, 1374' *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 58 (1985), 106.

²⁴⁴ Ayton, *Knights*, 110.

²⁴⁵ Prince, 'The Indenture System under Edward III' 293-294, who believed it acted as a bonus payment solely for the captain, as did Sumption, *Divided*, 740-741. Cf. Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues and English Expeditions to France', 743, ft. 6, believed that it was divided equally amongst the men-at-arms.

members of the military community, especially the bulk of the non-knightly men-at-arms and mounted archers, was not a major factor.

Performance of exceptional military service could lead to social elevation and this was probably more of a motivational factor than has often been recognised. Sometimes men were knighted on campaign with an accompanying grant to allow them to maintain their new rank, like George Felbrigg in 1385, and John de Ipres, who received an annuity of £20 from John of Gaunt after being knighted at Nájera.²⁴⁶ Yet such instances were a rarity. For the majority of combatants such elevation was little more than a dream though minor favour could be gained from good martial performance. John Cloworth, for example, ‘for good service in the wars’ was granted the office of the Chief Crier of the Common Bench in Ireland in April 1385.²⁴⁷ At the very least the performance of notable or exceptional military service could lead to an exemption from performing the often onerous tasks of local administration in the shires such as in 1360 when Sir Thomas de Shardelowe was exempted from being put on ‘assizes, juries, attainments or recognitions, and from appointment as trier of the same, sheriff, escheator, coroner, constable or keeper, collector of tenth, fifteenth, aid, wool or other quota or subsidy, arrayer of men at arms, hobelars or archers, or other bailiff, officer or minister of the king, against his will’ for good service rendered in the war in France.²⁴⁸

Far more lucrative were the gains which could be made during the course of campaigning. The capture and ransoming of prisoners and the acquisition of booty through pillaging enemy territory were the most sure-fire ways men could make their fortune. This was most lucrative in France, whose aristocracy were among the wealthiest in Europe. Men who were able to capture a high-ranking enemy prisoner could live comfortably from the profits for the rest of their life. In the aftermath of the battle of Poitiers in 1356, for example, there was an unseemly ruck amongst English soldiers to capture the French king, Jean II, who momentarily feared for his life as several men tugged at his clothing. He was only saved by the arrival of the earl of

²⁴⁶ *C.P.R. 1385-89*, 18; Ayton, *Knights*, 227, ft.141.

²⁴⁷ *C.P.R. 1381-85*, 576.

²⁴⁸ *C.P.R. 1358-61*, 426. For onerous nature of local administration and it being avoided: see, for example: Gorski, R. ‘Justice of Injustice? England’s Local Officials in the Later Middle Ages’ *Outlaws in Medieval and Early Modern England: Crime, Government and Society, c. 1066-1600* (ed.) Appleby, J.C., Dalton, P. (Farnham, Surrey, 2009), 59.

Warwick.²⁴⁹ The theory behind the ransom system was that once an individual of high-rank had been captured either he or his family would arrange for his captor to receive a set sum for the release of his prisoner, usually paid in instalments. In reality this was often a long drawn out process, with negotiations over the ransom amount sometimes taking years, and the amounts agreed upon were never paid in full.²⁵⁰ On rare occasions, though it was frowned upon, a prisoner released on parole to collect his ransom sometimes absconded, despite the social stigma.²⁵¹ As a result a 'second hand' market in the sale of prisoners developed in which men sold the custody of their prisoners for an immediate sum of ready cash. Edward III was one of the primary speculators in this market, buying the ransoms of the most prominent prisoners and those of political significance.²⁵² For those at the lower levels of the military community it was difficult to negotiate the ransom process successfully. Social convention and the rules of war dictated that a potential captive should only submit to a man of at least equal social status to himself. This often led to disputes as to who had made the initial capture and often meant that the claims to a share of a ransom from a man of lower social origin would likely fall on deaf ears. After the battle of Poitiers the Count of Dammartin was initially captured by the esquire John Trailly who removed the count's bascinet, sword, and gauntlet, as a sign of the capture. Trailly subsequently left his prisoner, presumably to effect other captures, and Dammartin was approached, and perhaps fearing for his life surrendered, to two further men, the last of whom was sensible enough to bring him to the earl of Salisbury. Not surprisingly in the subsequent legal wrangling in was the earl's claim that was upheld.²⁵³ Yet despite all these difficulties there were winners. John de Coupland, a minor Northumbrian landowner described as 'only a poor simple man', for example, had the good fortune to capture David II of Scotland after Neville's

²⁴⁹ Froissart, *Chroniques* (Penguin ed. by Brereton, G. 1978), 142; Sumption, *Trial*, 245.

²⁵⁰ Muniz Godoy, Master of the Order of Calatrava in Aragon was captured at Nájera and his capturer, John Kempton, only succeeded in extracting the ransom payment in 1400, 43 years after the battle. Sumption, *Fire*, 556-557.

²⁵¹ The most famous example is that of Louis of Anjou, son of Jean II, who was acting as a hostage for his father while the latter tried to raise his ransom after being captured at Poitiers. Louis escaped and Jean, displaying the highest social conventions of the age, returned to English captivity. Sumption, *Trial*, 499,527. See also: Walker, S. 'Profit and Loss in the Hundred Years War: The Subcontracts of Sir Hugh Strother, 1374' *B.I.H.R.* 58 (1985).

(<http://www.deremilitari.org/resources/articles/walker.htm>) viewed 26/07/08.

²⁵² For a lengthy discussion of ransoms and their potential pitfalls: Sumption, *Divided*, 764-73. For an example of ransom for political purposes: Jones, M. 'The Ransom of John de Bretagne, Count of Penthievre: an Aspect of English Foreign Policy, 1386-8' *B.I.H.R.* 45 (1972), 7-26.

²⁵³ *Black Prince's Register* iv, 339,379,381; Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 105-106.

Cross in 1346 and was awarded an annuity of £500 and raised to the status of a banneret.²⁵⁴

Unsurprisingly for men of lesser social standing it was far easier to enrich oneself by stealing from the enemy. Froissart, for example, noted that many Englishmen returning from Castile in 1387 had become enriched on the campaign with saddlebags full of plunder.²⁵⁵ Those serving in garrisons in particular had ample opportunity to enrich themselves, by extracting protection money – *patis* – from the local population, selling safe-conducts to those passing through the garrisons' locality, and plundering the surrounding countryside.²⁵⁶ Unlike in France whose soldiers were allowed to keep whatever they could pilfer, English soldiers had to give a proportion of their gains to their captain, who in turn was to provide a proportion to the king. Up to c.1360 it seems that the captain claimed half, and his superior – the king – took a half of his half, but this was reduced to a third, probably because of the disappearance in the 1370s of the *restor*, the payment made as compensation for lost horses.²⁵⁷ It is unfortunate that more indentures, like that between John of Gaunt and Nicholas de Atherton from 1370, which specified various amounts for different parties in both ransoms and booty have not survived but 'it must...be doubted whether in practice such conditions could be enforced; it would be a remarkably honest soldier who declared all his gains'.²⁵⁸ Despite such restrictions there was money to be made from the plunder of war. Walsingham recounts two stories in particular in which private enterprise was rewarded. In the first, in order to prevent the depredations of pirates in the North Sea, the men of Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Hull took it upon themselves to launch a naval sortie in 1380 and were fortunate enough to capture a Scottish ship, containing 'goods estimated to be worth seven thousand marks'. On hearing this, the earl of Northumberland demanded a share of the spoils, only for his demands to be rejected by the northerners, 'in typical fashion ... wildly breathing fire from their

²⁵⁴ Andrew of Wyntoun, *Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland II* (ed.) Laing, D. (Edinburgh, 1872-79), 433; *C.P.R. 1345-48*, 370; Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 101. While capturing the king he is said to have had two of his teeth knocked out for his troubles. Nicholson, R. *Scotland in the Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1974), 147.

²⁵⁵ Froissart, *Chron.* xiv, 132.

²⁵⁶ Hay, D. 'Booty in Border Warfare' *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society* 3:31 (1954), 145-66; Sumption, *Divided*, 742-43.

²⁵⁷ *C.P.R. 1389-92*, 125.

²⁵⁸ Ayton, *Knights*, 129-130.

²⁵⁸ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 103; 'Indentures of retinue with John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, enrolled in chancery, 1367-1399' *Camden Miscellany* 22:4:1 (ed.) Lewis, N.B. (1964), 88.

nostrils with faces distorted in anger'. As the earl plotted to deprive the northerners of their gains an un-named man from Hull who had taken part in the expedition, himself denied a share, 'went back home [and] returned unexpectedly after a few days with an armed force and made off with the captured ship and its booty'.²⁵⁹ In a separate incident Walsingham recounts how the men of Portsmouth and Dartmouth,

'Crossed the Channel with a small force and sailed into the Seine. There they easily sank four enemy ships and sailed off with four other ships and the barge of the lord of Clisson, ... Even the most avaricious of Englishmen were deservedly able to satisfy their greed and relieve their need with the wine, weapons and other booty that they obtained from these ships'.²⁶⁰

The prospect of booty and gaining ransoms was clearly a huge lure. If a man were lucky enough he could make money from the spoils of war beyond his wildest expectations. Given such evidence it appears that the case for plunder and booty being the primary motivating factor behind service of members of the military community in the second half of the fourteenth century is a strong one.

Profit, however, should not be seen to be the only motivation behind military service. Andrew Ayton has pointed out that in many areas in which the English fought, indeed nearly everywhere but France, prospects of profit were minimal and even in France there were very different levels of opportunity.²⁶¹ Similarly in a recent synthesis of modern work Nigel Saul, whilst not disagreeing with the fact that booty gave men an incentive to fight, has made the case that the more pressing motivations behind military service were idealistic concerns like the chivalric mentality and honour, best associated with those from the upper echelons of the military community, arguing that 'if, for some, it was the appetite for profit and gain which was the main spur for enrolment, this was by no means the case for all'.²⁶² Two grounds are advanced to support this idea. The first is that the lure of booty has been overstated. Whilst there is insufficient evidence to draw up a balance sheet of profit and loss from men who performed military service it is argued that it is dangerous to

²⁵⁹ Walsingham, 108.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 226-27.

²⁶¹ Ayton, A. 'War and the English Gentry under Edward III' *History Today* 42:3 (March, 1992), 37.

²⁶² Saul, *Honour and Fame*, 127.

read too much into the examples of a few individuals who are not necessarily representative cases of the military community as a whole. The benefits of war profits were not felt evenly throughout the country and within the community itself; 'by no means all the gentry felt the trickle-down effect of wages, protection money and ransom income'.²⁶³ Evidence can certainly be found to support this view. The old soldier, Sir Thomas Fogg, would complain to anyone who would listen that service with John of Gaunt had cost him a huge amount of money for little gain.²⁶⁴ Sir Hugh de Lymme was another man clearly down on his luck for as the war was coming to a close in 1389 he was granted £20 a year at the Exchequer as he had,

'served all his life in the wars of the late king and the king with the king's father and other lords, and in the king's company in his late expedition to Scotland, and who has long had the rank of a knight without having house, rent, furniture (*mobilia*) or aught else to live upon and support his estate, and who is deeply in debt to divers men who have made advances of money to him to buy food and clothing'.²⁶⁵

There was also the real danger, at least for those higher up the military community, of being captured. Whilst capture was obviously preferable to being killed in combat, this could, and often did, prove financially ruinous. Sir John Bouchier, who was captured on the Breton march in 1371, is a case in point. After more than two years of incarceration a ransom of 12,000 francs was agreed with his captor, about three times the revenue of his English estates. Due to the rare survival of a particularly moving letter he wrote to his wife, we can see how he tried to excuse himself of the shame, dishonour, and ruin he had brought on the both of them by agreeing to such a hefty fee. Fearing for his health he wrote:

'My true, beloved wife, I charge you by the love we bear each other to sell or mortgage all that we have, sparing nothing, for he whose health is broken has truly nothing left at all'.²⁶⁶

These men's stories were not unique though the crown did occasionally provide help with paying ransoms.²⁶⁷ For instance Edward III provided 20*l.* at the end of

²⁶³ Ibid., 124.

²⁶⁴ Sumption, *Divided*, 743.

²⁶⁵ C.P.R. 1389-92, 125.

²⁶⁶ Sumption, *Divided*, 768-9.

October 1370 to John Peek, John Child, Richard Chaundell, Richard Brown, William Gowerd, Richard Frere, and three others ‘taken in the war abroad by the French enemies, and detained in prison at the town of St Omers in France’.²⁶⁸ It is also true that the wealthier esquires and knights – the top end of the gentry – might be lucky enough to avoid death in battle and be captured to raise modest ransoms as happened, famously, to Geoffrey Chaucer for whom Edward III contributed £16 for the payment of his release in 1360.²⁶⁹ For the majority of other combatants, the bulk of the gentry and certainly the mounted-archers, however, there would have been little chance of such intervention or even of being captured in the first place; they would have been slain as not worth of ransom.

Even when men did profit from military service the benefits of this were not spread evenly. In areas of high martial recruitment like Cheshire the appearance of ‘war churches’ – funded by returning soldiers – denotes that some men, and some regions, benefitted more from England’s wars than others.²⁷⁰ More tellingly, the number of battles – where the most likelihood of taking prisoners existed due to the number of combatants involved – in which substantial numbers of prisoners were actually taken, was small, with only Poitiers yielding a great number.²⁷¹ ‘It is true that the big ransom prizes impressed contemporaries by their sheer scale, but they were not productive of a major shift in wealth from one side of the Channel to the other’.²⁷²

The second ground which suggests that booty was not the primary motivating factor behind martial service, is that the war turned increasingly sour for the English in the second half of the fourteenth century: in essence the argument that England experienced a military decline.²⁷³ Drawing upon the writings of John Gower,

²⁶⁷ King, A. “According to the Custom used in the French and Scottish Wars”: Prisoners and Casualties on the Scottish Marches in the Fourteenth Century’ *J.M.H.* 28 (2002), 263-90.

²⁶⁸ *Issues*, 344.

²⁶⁹ Rogers, *Cruel and Sharp*, 410, ft. 140.

²⁷⁰ Saul, *Honour and Fame*, 124-5.

²⁷¹ Ayton, ‘War and the English Gentry’, 36. For battle playing a more prominent role in warfare than has often been realised in this period, chapter V, 272-312, although the point about there being few battles being big enough for ransoms to be taken remains valid.

²⁷² Saul, *Honour and Fame*, 125.

²⁷³ Saul, *Honour and Fame*, 122, 130-31.

Geoffrey Chaucer, Thomas Walsingham, and Sir John Clanvowe, Saul linked this martial decline to contemporary perception of a failure in chivalric knighthood.²⁷⁴

‘The turning of the tide presented English commentators with a problem. How was their nation’s appalling failure in arms to be explained? Since, in the commentators’ view, the war was a just one, and the king was simply seeking vindication of his rights, there could only be one answer. God’s instruments were inadequate – English knights were corrupt and sinful. The nation was being punished for the lapses of those who were supposed to be its champions’.²⁷⁵

Whether this criticism came from the perspective that English knights were becoming too weak, effeminate, lazy, and avaricious (Gower, Chaucer and Clanvowe) or were not being aggressive enough in their martial pursuits (Walsingham), in the eyes of these commentators, the decline in English knighthood and the martial decline in the English war effort were one and the same thing. Under these twin factors of an over-emphasis of the profits of war and the failing English war effort it can potentially be argued that, whilst booty was important, ideological concerns continued to be as much, if not more, important spurs for military service than the uncertain potential of material gain, especially in the lean decades of the Anglo-French war after 1369 for the rest of the century. In addition it could also be argued that even those who were motivated primarily for profit may have viewed this as a pursuit of honour; in the medieval mind profit and honour were not mutually exclusive, one conveyed and lent weight to the other.²⁷⁶

There is certainly merit to this argument of a varying degree of motivations behind military service. However, in the view of the present author it does not convincingly persuade enough to change the over-riding view that it was the lure of booty which served as the primary motivation for military service amongst the majority of combatants of the English military community, especially those well below the aristocratic and knightly world of learned chivalric culture. There surely were those who fought solely for romantic ideals like honour, adventure and fame, men like Henry Bolingbroke, the future Henry IV, who campaigned with the Teutonic

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 128-34.

²⁷⁵ Ibid., 131.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 127-28. Ayton, ‘War and the English Gentry’, 40.

knights in the summer and autumn of 1390 where there was far less prospect of material gain, at least in terms of ransoms. Indeed ‘the expedition ... cost almost £4000. ... All Henry received from his German hosts was thanks, but he had clearly enjoyed the experience, and as late as 1407 spoke warmly of the Teutonic knights.’²⁷⁷ The image of military service as being primarily about honour and the performing of noble deeds was certainly the image Froissart sought to highlight in his historical writings: ‘brave men [fight] to advance their bodies and increase their honour’.²⁷⁸ Some may even have been fighting for a nascent patriotism, engendered by constant conflict with the fighting men of France, Scotland, and elsewhere. Perhaps the fact that, as mentioned above, esquires began to take up their own heraldic devices indicates that they aspired to be associated with aristocratic martial culture. For the vast majority, however, it seems that there were more pragmatic concerns not least because the later decades of the fourteenth century witnessed an increasing prevalence of parvenu, professional soldiers, for whom profit must have been important.²⁷⁹ After all, if the vast majority saw military service as a way of enhancing their social station through the accumulation of wealth, then surely it was the accumulation of the wealth itself that was the most important motivational factor; without it the social advancement could not occur.

Therefore, the criticism by contemporaries of the attitude and motivations to fight of Englishmen in this period should be taken at face value. John Gower, for example, one of the most outspoken critics of the knightly classes in particular, wrote that: ‘The knight whom the sake of gain moves to enter into battle will have no righteous honour ... I see now that honour is now neglected for gold’.²⁸⁰ He echoed these sentiments in his *Confessio Amantis* (c.1386-1393) in which he criticised the three estates of society (government, church and people) and the aristocracy in particular when he wrote that war, both in a just or worldly cause, only attracted the unscrupulous.²⁸¹ Geoffrey Chaucer agreed with Gower. In his short poem ‘The Former Age’ he lamented what he saw as the covetous and sinful nature of his own times compared with the ‘blisful lyf, a paisible (peaceful) and a swete’ of former ages.

²⁷⁷ Brown, A.L., Summerson, H. ‘Henry IV (1367-1413)’ *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford, 2004), online edn. (Sept. 2010), accessed 11/03/2012.

²⁷⁸ Quoted from Saul, *Honour and Fame*, 127.

²⁷⁹ For the growing professionalism of the military community see below, 135-136.

²⁸⁰ Gower, J. *The Major Latin works of John Gower* (ed.) Stockton, E.W. (Seattle, 1962), 207.

²⁸¹ Saul, *Honour and Fame*, 129.

‘What shoulde it han availed to werreye (war making)?’ asked the poet, ‘Ther lay no profit, ther was no richesse’.²⁸² The chroniclers too, from both sides of the Channel, were quick to recognise, and criticise, the increasing prevalence of profiteering as the primary motivation behind military service. Philippe de Mézières reported distastefully that many men only fought ‘for presumption or loot’.²⁸³ Meanwhile Walsingham notes on several occasions mentions profit as a reward for military service, thereby highlighting its importance to soldierly motivation.²⁸⁴ On one occasion in 1378 he recounts how an English fleet, tired of waiting for the Duke of Lancaster,

‘made for the high seas [thinking it] more glorious to live on spoils taken from the enemy while at sea rather than from provisions looted on land from the inhabitants. When they had ploughed the pathways of the sea for several days, they were met by an armed force of Spaniards. Both fleets soon engaged in combat, and, *led on by a desire for booty*, fought a battle without further delay’.²⁸⁵

Indeed for Walsingham it was not the financial motivations of English fighting men that were the problem, it was both the increasingly prevalent sloth in the pursuit of arms, and growing ‘effeminacy’ of the knightly classes, which were of bigger concern.²⁸⁶ In other words criticisms of avarice reflect the major motivation behind military service for many individuals: profit and wealth. They were not only and primarily a criticism, and reflection, of contemporary perceptions of the declining standards of the chivalric ideal in society.²⁸⁷

Although the primary motivating factor behind military service was arguably, therefore, personal profit, the inclusion of the gentry and yeomanry within the bounds of the military community should not be questioned. This is because the personnel of structurally-uniform armies in the second half of the fourteenth century were becoming increasingly professional. To be sure, they were not ‘professional’ soldiers in the modern sense of the word; there was not yet any state-driven training-in-arms, drill, barracks, permanent regimental structures, or standing armies; though arguably

²⁸² Chaucer, Geoffrey, *The Riverside Chaucer*, 650-51, lines 1, 25-6.

²⁸³ Mézières, *Songe*, i. 530-1.

²⁸⁴ For example: Walsingham, 108, 204, 233, 239.

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 64.

²⁸⁶ Walsingham, 248; Saul, *Honour and Fame*, 130-34.

²⁸⁷ Saul, *Honour and Fame*, 128-34, in which he analyses these criticisms and argues that they represent contemporary perception of the declining English war effort in the later fourteenth century.

garrison troops may be considered as being a nascent form of the latter.²⁸⁸ But this does not mean that English fighting men of the period cannot be considered as professional by the standards of the time. This is because the evidence suggests a growing number, perhaps representing the vast majority of men-at-arms and archers in this period, were performing military service as their primary vocation. The *Court of Chivalry* records, for example, indicate that the upper echelons of the gentry had military careers stretching over a number of decades and it would seem that they were representative of a large number of men of their rank.²⁸⁹ Although detailed prosopography and nominal record-linkage is always a task fraught with interpretative difficulties, it is possible to build up skeletal career profiles.

Let us take the captains who served with Robert Knolles in France in 1370, from Appendix V, as a cross section of men-at-arms.²⁹⁰ Some, like the nineteen year old Westmorland esquire, Matthew Redmane, were just beginning their military careers whilst others, like Sir Thomas Moreaux, household knight of Edward III, had been in arms since at least the mid 1350s. These men, and their companions, clearly had varying levels of martial experience and had served in various theatres of war, both before and after 1370. The Gloucestershire knight, Sir Gilbert Giffard, serves as a classic example. He received a letter of attorney to cover his service ‘beyond the seas’ in 1366’, served in the first French expedition after the resumption of the Anglo-French war in 1369 and again, as a captain, with Knolles in 1370. He ventured to sea once more in 1371-1372 with Sir Ralph Ferrariis and in naval operations with Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford, and participated in Gaunt’s 1373 *chevauchée*. By this stage in his career he had clearly come into royal favour, granted 50*l.* a year at the Exchequer. Later, presumably in his twilight years, he seems to have become something of a businessman, being described as a knight and merchant of Gloucestershire, owing goods to the value of £160 to Thomas Hungerford, merchant of Wiltshire in 1380. Whether martial service over at least two decades had provided the funds he required to go into business in later life is unclear. Nevertheless he was certainly not alone in having a fairly extensive martial career. Nor was such service limited to knights. Matthew Redmane (though he was knighted in 1373) was still

²⁸⁸ Below, 130-132, although this idea is refuted.

²⁸⁹ Ayton, ‘Dynamics of Recruitment’, 45-55.

²⁹⁰ Appendix V, 336-348.

militarily active into the 1390s. The Yorkshire esquire, Nicholas Skelton, also had martial experience stretching over thirty years, under at least three English kings, from c.1369 to 1400. Of other men who served in 1370, like the esquire David Merton, we can ascertain no information at all.²⁹¹

It is unfortunate that we cannot reconstruct the careers of the mounted-archers as easily. This is because even less information survives relating to mounted-archers due to the fact that many of these men seem to have been of yeoman stock, and thus they were less likely to appear in military records like letters of protection and attorney because of their relatively lowly social status within the community. There are also the obvious problems of nominal record linkage for both surnames, and indeed forenames, to contend with. Nevertheless if we choose some men with more unusual surnames – thus making it less likely that occurrences of their name in the sources represent multiple individuals – then a few skeletal career profiles emerge. John Pecok (Peacock) served in 1369 in France under the command of Aymer de St. Amand, and on the naval expeditions of 1374, 1387, and 1388.²⁹² John Justice served with Edward III upon the seas in 1372, and with the earl of Northumberland on the Scottish Marches from 1383 to 1385.²⁹³ He may also have done well enough from this service to afford to equip himself, from 1375, as a man-at-arms, for a man of this name served in France under Edmund of Langley in this year.²⁹⁴ The archer John Pope appears in several martial sources. If these are all instances of the service of the same man he served twice with Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford, in 1371 and 1372, whilst from 1372-74 he was with Gaunt at sea and in France.²⁹⁵ In 1383 the name appears with Sir William le Scrope in Aquitaine (here described also as a goldsmith).²⁹⁶ Finally Thomas de Sherbourne seems to have fought at the varying frontiers of the English war effort. He received a letter of protection for service in the Calais garrison in April 1373, was in the Scottish West March with Lord Walter Fitz Walter in 1384, and had a protection revoked for service in the Cherbourg garrison, Normandy, in 1390 as he ‘tarried in London on his own affairs’.²⁹⁷ Despite the

²⁹¹ Ibid., 343.

²⁹² E101/33/25 m.1; 40/33 m.14; 41/5 m.2; C76/52 m.9.

²⁹³ BL_Cotton_Roll_XIII.8, m.3; E101/31/35 m.1; C76/55 m.23.

²⁹⁴ E101/34/3 m.3; 34/5 m.3.

²⁹⁵ E101/31/15 m.2; 32/20 m.5d; 32/26 m.2d.

²⁹⁶ C61/96 m.10.

²⁹⁷ C76/56 m.29; E101/39/38 3d; *C.P.R. 1389-92*, 299.

problems of nominal record linkage for men of this rank at least some mounted archers clearly were more than infrequent campaigners. When it is considered, as Palmer noted, that the actual length of service within field armies had increased by the second half of the fourteenth century – double what it had been in the first phase of war – this suggests not only an increase in the level of martial experience but also a concomitant increase in the level of professionalization amongst men who might be away from their homes and families for months at a time.²⁹⁸

How do we reconcile this view with Philippe de Mézière's observation that there were two distinctive types of soldier in the second half of the fourteenth century: occasional and frequent campaigners who fought under different martial circumstances in what he called war 'with the host' and war 'on the frontiers'?²⁹⁹ Jonathan Sumption, while agreeing that there was indeed an increasing professionalism amongst English soldiery, supported the Frenchman's argument:

'War with the host was fought by large field armies commanded by the King or a Prince of his blood in which most of the participants were occasional soldiers serving to justify their status. The war on the frontiers was fought mainly by professionals in permanent service. The last three decades of the fourteenth century were pre-eminently the age of the frontier war... It was a war of sieges border raids and skirmishes, aimed primarily at controlling territory and fought by troops drawn from permanent garrisons and fixed bases.'³⁰⁰

These 'frontiersmen' were the ones who did best from the war in terms of booty because they were largely garrison troops, involved in constant raid and counter-raid against the enemy. They were near permanent campaigners, often away from friends and family for months, even years at a time. Sir Hugh Browe put his finger on the difference between the occasional 'prestige' campaigners and those for whom fighting was increasingly a primary vocation in the evidence he gave to the commissioners before the *Court of Chivalry*. In particular, he could not say whether the Scropes had borne the contested arms for they had fought primarily in the field armies of the

²⁹⁸ Palmer, *Christendom*, 2.

²⁹⁹ Mezieres, *Songe*, ii. 403.

³⁰⁰ Sumption, *Divided*, 733-34.

period, whereas he had served for nearly 20 years ‘in the garrisons and companies of France’.³⁰¹

However, this demarcation between those who fought regularly and those who only fought occasionally, perhaps on ‘big’ expeditions led by the king, is in the view of this author highly questionable. It is true to say that there *will* have been some men from amongst the nobility, gentry, and yeomanry who were only occasional campaigners. But to argue that these men were numerically significant enough to form a distinctive group is to stretch credulity. Many of the witnesses before the *Court of Chivalry*, for example, had careers stretching over a number of decades, yet Sumption saw them as only occasional campaigners.³⁰² This is to overlook the incomplete nature of the testimonies. Men were not providing their full careers-in-arms, only a selection of campaigns relevant to the man whose right to bear arms they were defending. We must remember that the campaigning experience that these witnesses, the upper-echelons of the military community they represent, and indeed the community as a whole, is not fully represented by either the *Court of Chivalry* or other military records. Even the excellent *Soldier in Later Medieval England* project only covers part of the military careers of the men it lists. If the esquire John Nowell who fought under the earl of Arundel in 1388 is the man of the same name and rank who had fought at sea over a decade earlier in 1371-72, and indeed in France with Sir William de Windsor in 1380-81, should we consider that these were his only periods of service over two decades, and thus that he was an infrequent ‘war of the host’ campaigner?³⁰³ Indeed he may well have been the ‘Jannekin Nowell’ whose career-in-arms was recently summarised by Fowler.³⁰⁴ Similarly was the Yorkshire esquire, Lionel de Otterburn, who can be seen to have served on at least four occasions over a period of a decade and a half – with the earl of March in France in 1374, in the garrison of Roxburgh castle in 1386, and on both of the earl of Arundel’s naval

³⁰¹ *Court of Chivalry*, I. 82. Andrew Ayton makes the point, however, that Browe’s testimony cannot be taken at face value because as he was courted by both sides in the *Court of Chivalry* case he made his differentiation between the two types of service because he wanted ‘to distance himself from the mainstream military context that had preoccupied the Scropes, the point being that Browe was not a supporter of their claim to the disputed arms’. Ayton demonstrated from the military administrative records that in fact Browe *had* seen service in both major field armies and in garrison service. Ayton, ‘Dynamics of Recruitment’, 53, ft. 169.

³⁰² Sumption, *Divided*, 736.

³⁰³ E101/41/5 m.16; E101/31/28 m.3; E101/39/7. Not to mention the large number of protections that give no indication as to the status of their recipient.

³⁰⁴ Fowler, K.A. *Medieval Mercenaries: The Great Companies* (Oxford, 2001), 20-21.

expeditions in 1387 and 1388 – a man who served extensively, or only as an occasional campaigner?³⁰⁵ Whilst these periods of service may represent the entirety of these men's career it is far more likely that this evidence only represents periods of service *in the pay of the crown*. Aside from the fact that records of royal service are incomplete records of 'official' government driven martial activity, both men more than likely fought far more extensively than the records indicate in freelance martial activity. Of soldiers' 'extra-curricular' martial activities we know very little from the sources of the English government. For example, after the Treaty of Brétigny large numbers of English *routier* bands did not return home and began ravaging the French countryside causing strong feelings on both sides. The French monk Jean de Venette vented his anger at them calling them, 'sons of Belial ... who assailed other men with no right and no reason other than their own passions, iniquity, malice and hope of gain'.³⁰⁶ Henry Knighton, on the other hand, described them as being 'brave and battle-hardened men, experienced and vigorous, who lived by what they could win in war'.³⁰⁷ Many of these men doubtlessly made their way into Italy to fight in the service of the Italian princes. This included, of course, the famous 'Sir' John Hawkwood, but there were certainly others.³⁰⁸ An agreement between the mercenary White Company and the Marquis of Montferrat of 22 November 1361 names several of the company's captains, including Hawkwood, such as Andrew Belmont, who was renowned for his good looks, William and Gilbert Boson, Gilbert Folifoot, John Stoucheland, Robert de Thorborough, Adam Scot, and others.³⁰⁹ Of these men (barring Hawkwood) listed above, only William Boson's name appears in English martial sources in the second half of the fourteenth century, in a protection to go overseas in the retinue of Sir Walter Hewitt in 1373.³¹⁰ It is difficult to say whether or not this is the same man mentioned in the agreement of 1361, as the William Boson of 1373 is listed as being a knight, though given Hawkwood's dubious assumption of knighthood the link for Boson is not as tentative as it might first appear. Whilst it is true that some of these men may have died in their foreign campaigns the point is that

³⁰⁵ (1374) C76/57 m.10; (1386) C71/65 m.5; (1387) E101/40/33 m.15; (1388) E101/41/5 m.6.

³⁰⁶ Venette, John de, *The Chronicle of Jean de Venette* (ed.) Newhall, R.A. (trans.) Birdsall, J. (New York, 1953), 106.

³⁰⁷ Knighton, 183

³⁰⁸ See: Caferro, W. *John Hawkwood: An English Mercenary in Fourteenth-Century Italy* (Baltimore, Maryland, 2006), 31-96.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 45, appendix 2, 349-50.

³¹⁰ C76/56 m.26.

these men, and others who appear only fleetingly if at all in English martial sources, in fact had seemingly extensive military careers outside of purely 'official' English service, of which we have little or no record.

The observation that war was becoming increasingly professional, and thus occupying an increasing amount of men's time, is important when considering that war was becoming increasingly expensive during the second half of the fourteenth century. It was no longer possible, unless he was extremely wealthy, for a man to be able to dip his toe into the military world as and when he felt like it. As the majority of individuals seem to have had to provide their own equipment by the second half of the fourteenth century, certainly their mounts, and the costs of war were rising fast, it is unlikely that a man would invest a substantial amount of money in buying his own equipment and then only use it occasionally.³¹¹ Obviously the wealthier the individual the better calibre of equipment he could afford, but there do seem to have been minimum standards that were required, at least for men-at-arms.³¹² Whether this extended to mounted-archers is open to conjecture, but the fact that Edward III repeatedly promulgated an amended version of the Statute of Winchester during the 1330s, specifying that a mounted-archer was to possess bows, arrows, a sword and a knife, would suggest that a minimum standard of this equipment was also expected, and inspected, for all men at muster.³¹³ Whilst it has been demonstrated that the value of horseflesh had decreased around the 1350s due to the smaller, nimbler, mounts men were taking on campaign, this owed more to tactical requirements of campaigning than a desire to lessen the financial burden of campaigning.³¹⁴ In any case, even these 'less valuable' mounts still represented a not insubstantial outlay for a prospective soldier, especially as many men might have multiple mounts with them.³¹⁵

³¹¹ The crown continued to provide equipment for arrayed levies until at least the 1360s: chapter IV, 215. Hewitt, *Organisation*, 63-73, though even in these instances men were required to provide their own mounts. There was also a large stockpile of equipment at the Tower which may possibly have been used for spares and/or replacements. Above 99-101.

³¹² Ayton, *Knights*, 101, shows how there was a minimum standard of mount and personal arms of men-at-arms in the garrisons in Ponthieu in 1366.

³¹³ *Foedera* 2:2, 900-1. For a colourful yet probably largely accurate description of a muster outside La Rochelle in 1372: Froissart, *Chroniques*, viii. 78-9.

³¹⁴ Ayton, *Knights*, 195; Idem, 'Arms, Armour, Horses', 187-88; Sumption, *Divided*, 751-53.

³¹⁵ Chapter IV, 167.

Similarly expensive were men's arms and armour. Whilst full suits of plate armour did not appear until well into the fifteenth-century there was a gradual emergence during the second half of the fourteenth of pieces of plate that protected the most vulnerable parts of the body. These were worn by the wealthier members of the military community in conjunction with traditional mail and their acquisition has been estimated, for a full kit, at around £10-15 for a man-at-arms.³¹⁶ Though we should not of course under-estimate the fact that recycling of armour was rife and that men served with whatever they could get their hands on, this was a substantial expense for any individual, not even taking into consideration the cost of his mount. Even mounted-archers, whose equipment consisted of perhaps a steel cap and boiled leather armour costing all told about £2, would have found the provision of this a not inconsiderable expense considering that they were men of more limited means.³¹⁷ To get the maximum value for money, and increase his chances of gaining ransoms and plunder, it is logical that the vast majority of men within the English military community would have fought as often as they could.

The provision of one's own equipment and mount also highlights how the social composition of the military community had changed by the second half of the fourteenth century. It had, arguably, become more socially exclusive. As we have already seen the number of knights within society had fallen, even if the proportion of knights from amongst the men of this rank serving remained high; whereas at the other end of the scale the large infantry levies of arrayed peasant husbandmen within English armies disappeared entirely by the second half of the fourteenth century. Whilst these factors partially cancel each-other out, the fact that knights continued to serve and the peasant levies disappeared meant that the social origin of the 'average' combatant in the military community rose as other members of the gentry – namely the increasingly affluent esquires – stepped into the vacuum. Thus the disappearance of arrayed peasant infantry levies left the community as consisting of the aristocracy and nobility (as they always had been), the gentry (who despite the decline in the number of knights were supplemented by the increased contribution of wealthier esquires serving as men-at-arms), and the yeomanry, representing the elite of peasant

³¹⁶ James, L. 'The Cost and Distribution of Armour in the Fourteenth Century' *Transactions of the Monumental Brass Society* 10:4 (1967 for 1966), 226-31.

³¹⁷ Morgan, *Cheshire*, 154-5. I would like to thank Karen Watts from the Royal Armouries in Leeds who drew my attention to the calibre, types, and practice of armour recycling.

society. All these groups within the community were men who, as far as we know and barring the odd exceptions, had enough disposable income to buy their own equipment and mount, unlike the large body of arrayed infantrymen of the past.

Where had the wealth of these men come from, particularly the mounted archers and the increasingly affluent esquires of the gentry? It seems that both groups were the fortunate beneficiaries of the economic and social upheavals caused by both famine and plague in the first half of the fourteenth century.³¹⁸ Labourers, for example, had begun to charge more due to manpower shortages and thus increased demand for their services, despite attempts by the government to regulate their wages.³¹⁹ By the 1370s this increase was intensified by the fact that there was a fall in basic food prices but no drop in wages.³²⁰ ‘In so far as these [developments] can be used to measure the standard of living of the people, they suggest that the condition of the peasantry improved markedly’.³²¹ There were even more lucrative opportunities for those lucky enough to inherit, or with enough disposable income, to acquire the vacant plots of deceased friends and relatives. ‘In most places the records suggest that survivors of the epidemic took up vacant holdings’, the cumulative produce of which in some cases may have amounted to a small fortune in the marketplace.³²² In a similar vein the *Poll Tax* returns show that few communities had a resident lord. For example, though the records are problematic as we have seen, in the West Midlands it seems that little more than one village in ten had resident gentry. As a consequence these wealthier peasants ‘could [and perhaps did] become dominant figures in a village’, enjoying the fiscal and social privileges such a position brought.³²³ It is important, of course, to avoid generalisation. Some obviously will have done far better from the economic upheaval than others and most men’s standards of living were determined, and linked, to a substantial degree, on the productivity of their lands. A series of bad harvests could obviously have a seriously detrimental effect on this new found affluence. This lends further support to the argument that these newly wealthy members of society were more than likely attracted to military service

³¹⁸ Benedictow, O.J. *The Black Death, 1346-1353: The Complete History* (Woodbridge, 2004), 377.

³¹⁹ Palmer, R.C. *English Law in the Age of the Black Death 1348-1381: A Transformation of Governance and Law* (1993), 14-23.

³²⁰ See: Bridbury, A.R. ‘The Black Death’ *Economic History Review* 26 (1973), 577-92.

³²¹ Thomson, J.A.F. *Transformation of Medieval England*, 18.

³²² *Ibid.*, 18.

³²³ *Ibid.*, 21.

primarily in the pursuit of profit; the accumulation of booty through military service might mean the difference between maintaining and enhancing ones social position and slipping back into the mass of the less affluent peasant husbandmen below. In other words we must assume that it was these newly wealthy men and their descendants, who were the soldiers of English armies during the second half of the fourteenth century, the pestilence causing an influx of new blood into the military community. At the very least it allowed newly wealthy individuals and families to mix within social circles which had hitherto been closed to them. Therefore, the mean 'average' wealth of a soldier in a structurally-uniform army was almost certainly more than that of men who had fought in structurally-hybrid forces.

The fact that men of the military community were more likely than not wealthier than their predecessors in the early fourteenth century was highly important. Though the introduction of pay for all those fighting within structurally-uniform armies (barring pardon recipients), was another key facet in encouraging professionalization, it seems that pay was rarely, if ever, on time, most probably because the English government in this period was perennially short of cash. In theory anything up to a half of the money that would be owed to the man at the end of his period of service was paid up front prior to a campaign with the rest distributed in instalments at a later date until paid in full. Frequently, however, this does not seem to have happened in practice, with captains often forced to pay the men out of their own pocket and seek reimbursement at the Exchequer. Unfortunately this left many out of pocket.³²⁴ An order of 28 January 1391, for example, granted Roger Walden, Treasurer of Calais:

'16s. 3d. on every sack of wool, 16s. 6d. on every two hundred and forty wood-fells, and 2½ marks on every last of hides shipped in all the ports of England since 30 November last and hereafter shipped, for the payment of wages due to the late captains and soldiers of Calais and the Marches thereof and in arrears, and for their continued support whilst on its defence, notwithstanding any assignments, tallies, letters or mandates heretofore made under the king's seals or the seals of his officers or ministers'.³²⁵

³²⁴ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 87-88.

³²⁵ *C.P.R.* 1389-92, 371.

The Crown was not alone in this tardiness. John of Gaunt, for example, was notorious for paying his men late.³²⁶ These late payments, however, meant that those serving within retinues had, by and large, to be both sufficiently wealthy to survive without wages for a number of months and already be in possession of their own equipment, rather than using monies received from the crown to purchase war-gear prior to a campaign. If, as mentioned above, a mounted-archer's equipment cost £2, this would have meant that a skilled building worker in the south of England earning the average 3-5*d.* a day (1340s-90s), even at the top rate, would have to work for 96 days just to provide the cost of his own equipment, not to mention the supplying of his own mounts; an unskilled building worker earning the maximum 3*d.* average in the same period would need to work for 160 days; or over five months.³²⁷ Even if some of the equipment was provided for mounted-archers, this will almost certainly not have extended to men-at-arms, whose financial burdens were even higher, even if they were fortunate enough to receive the *regard* payments rather than it disappearing into their captains' pocket.³²⁸

It is clear, therefore, that the financial problems experienced by the English government in paying the wages of its soldiers on time would have made it more likely that the social composition of the military community by the second half of the fourteenth century moved towards the more solvent members of medieval society. However, even these newly wealthy men did not have infinite financial resources. During a particularly lengthy wait to embark for a campaign overseas with the earl of Buckingham in 1380, Thomas Walsingham recorded that many of the waiting soldiers,

‘had pawned jerkins, breastplates, helmets of metal and leather, bows, lances and other kinds of weapons in order to get food, and either they would have not crossed the Channel at all owing to the lack of armour...or at least [they] would have set out completely unarmed’.

³²⁶ Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, 58-63, 69-70; Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, 220-21.

³²⁷ Dyer, C., Penn, S.A.C. ‘Wages and Earnings in Late Medieval England: Evidence from the Enforcement of the Labour Laws’ *Everyday Life in Medieval England*, 2nd edn. (2000), 167.

³²⁸ Above, 23, 106. Ayton, *Knights*, 111-120; Prince, ‘Indenture System’, 293-4. See the duke of Gloucester's attempts to prevent this practice for the naval campaign of 1387: Walsingham, 246.

Had it not been for the generosity of the wealthy London citizen, John Philipot, who repurchased their equipment, the campaign may never have set out.³²⁹

If, therefore, we accept the argument that the vast majority of men were performing military service because they saw it as a means to riches and social advancement, we might also question why, as so often has been claimed by scholars, there was a desire amongst the English, and indeed French, populations as a whole for the war to end, particularly by the mid-1380s when the burden of taxation was becoming excessive.³³⁰ If the desire for peace was near universally popular by this time then why did Michael De la Pole, and then Richard II's policy of appeasement towards France, face so much opposition? It cannot simply have been mere patriotic fervour. The inescapable conclusion is that there was more widespread support for continuing the war effort than has been appreciated. The military community, of course, was not distinct and separate from the rest of English society, and it must have been they who were the most vocal opponents of peace. The duke of Gloucester, for example, supposedly remarked that the livelihood of the 'poor knights and esquires of England depended on war'.³³¹ True enough there were other areas in which Englishmen of martial talents could find employment, on crusade or in Italy for example, but France represented their best opportunity to accrue wealth. There were, of course, men who had done very badly from the conflict and who had been left impoverished by long military service.³³² Yet just because tales of hardship can be found in the sources this does not mean that the war was any less popular than it had been in the 'glory days' of the 1340s and 50s. Even those who had not done well from the war continued to fight because it was the best opportunity they had to turn their fortunes around, desperately hoping for a big pay-day that might never come. We can see this attitude displayed after 1360 when the first extended period of truce between England and France was declared after the treaty of Brétigny. The fact that many Englishmen remained in France or sought employment elsewhere in Europe and further-afield shows there was very little desire from these men to hang up their swords and re-integrate into civilian life. Military service had offered the opportunity

³²⁹ Walsingham, 107. The fact that the men were able to pawn their equipment suggests that they owned it and it had not been provided by the crown or another wealthy patron.

³³⁰ Palmer, *Christendom*, 14,81-5,112-15,182.

³³¹ Frossart, *Oeuvres xiv*, 314.

³³² Above, 110-112 for those doing badly from the war.

of wealth and potential social advancement and men would not relinquish it any more easily in the 1380s than they had done in the 1360s. If, as some historians have argued, the English gentry were progressively disengaging from war during the last three decades of the fourteenth century, ‘this can only have been a significant trend after 1389, when opportunities for major continental expeditions ceased’.³³³

The increasing ‘professionalism’ of the English military community also suggests a degree of martial training. As we have seen earlier the only concrete proof we possess for this, in the main, concerns the nobility and gentry, though we can assume it must have taken place, if only at an individual level, amongst men lower down the social scale. Unfortunately there is no comparable fourteenth century English work to that of fifteenth-century German fencing master Hans Talhoffer, who produced several illustrated *Fechtbüchers* (literally ‘fight books’) detailing fighting techniques in both armed and unarmed combat.³³⁴ We will probably never know whether or not such techniques and training were known or prevalent amongst the English medieval population at large, but it is likely that Talhoffer was drawing upon long established traditions from all over medieval Europe. The English government was certainly keen to support the personal training in arms, particularly archery, as can be seen from statutes such as one in 1389, which demanded that practising with the bow should be undertaken on Sundays instead of playing other ‘importune games’.³³⁵ We cannot, of course, know how successful such orders were from the government, but the continued successes of archery on the medieval battlefield would suggest that a level of training did take place. We can therefore take with a pinch of salt the comments of fifteenth-century Burgundian knight Philippe de Commynes who, while acknowledging the importance of archery remarked that, “those who have never had a day’s experience of their job are more valuable than those who are well trained; this is the opinion of the English, who are the world’s best archers”.³³⁶

Aside from the nobility, gentry, and yeomanry there is one further ‘group’ within martial society who must be briefly considered. They are the pages and varlets,

³³³ Ayton, ‘Dynamics’, 56.

³³⁴ Talhoffer, H. *Medieval Combat: An Illustrated Manual of Sword-fighting and Close-Quarter Combat* (ed.) Rector, M. (2006).

³³⁵ *The Statutes of the Realm*, ii. 57.

³³⁶ *Philippe de Commynes Memoirs*, (trans.), Jones, M. (Harmondsworth, 1972), 72.

unpaid by the government and thus not included in an army's payroll strength, hired by men-at-arms and the wealthiest mounted-archers on a campaign-to-campaign basis, or perhaps peacetime servants and/or family members who accompanied their masters to war. Pages were generally young boys whose job was to perform a variety of tasks for their masters, from caring for equipment and horses to preparing food. Varlets were generally older men, perhaps old soldiers looking to fund their retirement, who performed many similar functions, but who may in some instances have fought if necessary.³³⁷ Anne Curry has identified at least some of these individuals on the 1415 Agincourt campaign, who returned home to England after the siege of Harfleur with their masters.³³⁸ The cases of men such as these demonstrate the real problems of trying to define 'membership' of the military community in hard and fast terms. When, for example, does an old soldier, perhaps serving an esquire as a varlet, become a non-combatant? It is of course difficult to say with certainty but in general men such as these should not be considered as forming a constituent part of the military community. They were primarily servants, not soldiers, and should be thought of in the same vein as camp followers such as wives, whores, and merchants, who accompanied an army for reasons other than a desire to fight.³³⁹

So far we have discussed the English military community as comprising a series of groups based upon social status, or as near as such a thing can be defined. It is important to be careful, however, when applying such labels to 'groups' within medieval society that contemporaries may not have recognised. There was clearly a demarcation between noble and common, and lay and ecclesiastical, but did the medieval mindset readily differentiate between 'gentry' and 'yeomanry', or indeed between different sections within the gentry? Was there such a thing as an English medieval 'social consciousness'? Some might argue, for example, that the *Court of Chivalry* hearings demonstrate a form of collective mentality among the armigerous community, including esquires, which excluded the rest of the gentry, though we

³³⁷ *C.P.R. 1345-48*, 538, for an instance when they may have been required to fight. Curry, A. *Agincourt: A New History* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, 2010 edn.), 269-70, shows how the king and titled aristocrats employed men from their households as servants, thus transferring the household to military wages. This may certainly have been the case for men lower down the social scale within the community.

³³⁸ Curry, *Agincourt: A New History*, 122; E101/44/30, 31.

³³⁹ Sumption, *Divided*, 731-33.

might wonder whether a great duke like Gaunt felt any social affinity to the lowliest esquire he led on campaign.³⁴⁰ The evidence for this, though purely conjecture, is that comparatively few ‘gentlemen’ were called as witnesses, indicating perhaps that they were not deemed socially elevated enough for their testimony to carry weight. Nevertheless, and whilst it is clear from the preceding discussion in this chapter that inclusion within the military community can broadly be based upon social lines, we should also remember that within these social groups there were other, inter-linking and over-lapping groups to which members of the military community belonged. In other words, we should not think of the military community as being a single group of men divided by distinctions of their social status, but rather a body of individuals who inhabited other constituent groupings which coalesced to form the wider military community.

Regional martial communities are both the most obvious and the most long-recognised of these constituent groups. The constant demands of warfare in frontier regions like the Anglo-Scottish border had, by the second half of the fourteenth century, fostered distinctive and highly militarised societies, with small-scale cross-border raiding taking place no matter the official state of diplomatic relations. Other regions, particularly Cheshire, were also highly militarised due to the close relationship between the county and the military service demands of both the Black Prince and Richard II who both held extensive lands there, both men drawing on the county’s deep martial resources as engendered by generations of conflict with the Welsh.³⁴¹ Similarly the maritime lands, particularly in the south-east, were always on a semi-permanent war footing during the majority of the fourteenth century as threats of French raiding and invasion ebbed and flowed.³⁴² It is important not to forget, however, that even inland counties such as Leicestershire, far from the volatile Anglo-

³⁴⁰ Ayton, ‘Armies and Military Communities’, 215-39.

³⁴¹ Hewitt, H.J. *Medieval Cheshire: An Economic and Social History of Cheshire in the Reigns of the Three Edwards* (Chetham Society, 1929); Morgan, *Medieval Cheshire*; Green, D. ‘The Household and Military Retinue of the Black Prince’ vol. II (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Nottingham, 1998), for the Black Prince’s connections. For Richard II’s close ties, particularly his notorious Cheshire archers: Davies, R.R. ‘Richard II and the Principality of Chester’ *The Reign of Richard II. Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (ed.) Boulay, F.R.H., Barron, C.M. (1971), 256-79; Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, 222-23; Gillespie, J. L. ‘Richard II’s Cheshire Archers’ *T.R.H.S. of Lancashire and Cheshire 125* (1974), 1-39; idem, ‘Richard II’s Archers of the Crown’ *J.B.S. 18:2* (1979), 14-29; Saul, *Richard II*, 393-94, 444-45.

³⁴² Alban, J.R. ‘English Coastal Defence: Some Fourteenth-Century Modifications Within the System’ *Patronage, the Crown, and the Provinces in Later Medieval England* (ed.) Griffiths, R.A. (Gloucester, 1981), 57-78.

Scottish border, contributed to the war effort by providing manpower for English armies.³⁴³ Even though the disappearance of commissions of array for field armies after 1369 might suggest that regional military-communities diminished, it is important to remember that retinue captains and sub-contractors continued to recruit from within their own localities as well as, increasingly by this period, from further afield, extending their recruitment reaches all over the country, symptomatic of demands for increasingly large retinues.³⁴⁴

A second type of martial-community based upon the type of military service performed has recently been postulated. Rickard, for example, has suggested that there was a group of castellans, be they owners, constables, wardens, or holders of wardships of castles, who formed a 'castle-community' based on this ownership.³⁴⁵ He does not, however, look beyond this group of castellans to see whether there were other men who consistently served in castle garrisons, nor what percentage of these castellans also performed other types of martial service. Some answers to these questions were provided by Cornell, who focused upon the wider body of garrison personnel on the Anglo-Scottish border. Though admitting the inadequacies of the source materials for such a study, he has suggested that there *was* a garrison community which comprised of men from all sections of society serving on a consistent basis as garrison soldiers. Indeed for many of these individuals it was their primary occupation. Though he may have been over-stating the point somewhat, and mixing up individual professionalism with institutional issues, when he claimed that, 'these men were to all intents and purposes a standing army in the pay of the English Crown', his research nevertheless is important for a wider observation of garrison personnel in this period.³⁴⁶ Unfortunately no scholar has yet undertaken a detailed investigation into the personnel of English garrisons in every theatre of war in the second half of the fourteenth century, but if Cornell is right that there was a distinctive 'garrison-community' then is it not possible that the same could be true for men who

³⁴³ See Table 4.5, 170.

³⁴⁴ Chapter IV, 138-48.

³⁴⁵ Rickard, J. *The Castle Community: English and Welsh Castle Personnel 1272-1422* (Woodbridge, 2002), 1-50. This community can be further divided into sub-categories: 681 private individual castle owners, 550 sheriff-constables, constables of independent royal castles, over 900 men, and constables of private castles of which only 75 are known. These figures have been criticised by Cornell for only taking into account English and Welsh castles which ignore the Scottish castles under English control. Cornell 'Castle Garrisons', 80.

³⁴⁶ Cornell, 'Castle Garrisons', 140.

served in field armies or regularly performed naval service? The idea is tempting and without further detailed prosopography our conclusions in this respect can only be made partially but it seems that this was unlikely to be the case. Some soldiers may have fought pre-dominantly in one particular type of service. The only records we have of the esquire Giles Prideuax, for example, show that he fought at sea, or at least prepared to, on at least three occasions; on Edward III's planned naval expedition in 1372, with Sir Phillip Courtenay in 1372-73, and again with Courtenay in 1374.³⁴⁷ His connections with the Courtenay family, and the fact he intended to serve under the earl of Salisbury in 1372, might suggest West-country origins and would make naval service likely given his coastal proximity. Sir Ingram Bruyn and the esquire William Ledeyes of Lancashire also appear to have fought predominantly at sea. Bruyn fought on at least three occasions in the earl of Arundel's retinue: in 1378, 1387, and 1388, though he also fought under Ralph Basset of Drayton in France in 1380 and under Sir William Elmham on Despenser's 'crusade' in 1383.³⁴⁸ Ledeyes was also at sea with Arundel in 1387 and 1388 (under Sir Robert Mountenay and Robert Giffard), and in 1374 with Sir William Neville.³⁴⁹ His only known foray on land, if he ever departed, is from a protection to serve 'overseas' under Sir Matthew Gurney in 1381, perhaps either in France or on the earl of Cambridge's frustrating Iberian campaign.³⁵⁰ In general, however, the admittedly limited evidence we possess, such as that presented before the *Court of Chivalry*, would suggest that many members of the military community had multi-faceted, and indeed multi-regional, careers in arms. The esquire John Justice was active on the continent for at least twenty years, fighting with the earl of Cambridge in 1374, Edward Lord Despenser in 1375, appears in the Sangatte garrison within Nord-Pas-de-Calais region in 1382 and was still there in 1387, and as late as 1396 (though we do not know whether this was continuous service of fourteen years).³⁵¹ The archer John Irland fought in both Ireland and France with Sir William de Windsor between 1374 and 1381 and, though a far more tenuous record linkage, it is possible that the archer Thomas de Grenhalgh who served in Sir John Stanley's standing force in Ireland from 1389 to 1392 under Nicholas de

³⁴⁷ E101/32/30 m.6; E101/31/31 m.4; E101/33/17 m.2;

³⁴⁸ Arundel: E101/36/32 m.3; E101/40/33 m.1, and 40/34 m.2i; E101/41/5 m.1. 1380: C76/64 m.3 and 5. 1383: C76/67 m.8.

³⁴⁹ E101/33/13 n.2 m.2; E101/40/33 m. 16, 20; E101/40/34 m.26; E101/41/5 m.17.

³⁵⁰ C76/65 m.11, the protection is dated 30 April 1381, the earl's fleet set sail at the end of June, Sumption, *Divided*, 431.

³⁵¹ C76/57/12; E101/34/3 and 5 m.3; C76/67 m.23; C76/71 m.4; C76/81 m.10.

Orell was the man of the same name serving under Henry IV in Scotland in 1400 in the retinue of Thomas de Radcliffe.³⁵² Does such evidence call into question the idea of even a distinctive ‘garrison-community’? Cornell himself suggests that garrison personnel often joined English field armies as they passed northwards into Scotland and then returned to garrison service once the campaign was over, and this also seems to have happened in Lancastrian Normandy in the fifteenth century.³⁵³ This does not mean however that some men did not spend the vast majority of their time in a garrison, at sea, or within field-armies, merely that it is unlikely that this will have been their only type of military service.

Linked to this idea of multi-faceted martial experience is the issue of the destination of such service. Did men by and large spread their service over a number of regions or did they pre-dominantly serve in one theatre of war? Were there, in other words distinctive military communities based on service destination? It is natural and logical to assume, as has often been done, that a larger number of men from northern England than the south served against the Scots, a larger number of southerners served against the French and so forth: that service was determined by geographic proximity. Unsurprisingly, for example, the earl of Northumberland was most concerned about events on the Anglo-Scottish border, looking darkly upon any attempts by the government to interfere with what he saw as his personal sphere of influence.³⁵⁴ It is important to remember, however, that the fact that the majority of military focus in this period was on the war with France obviously skews any attempt to identify any men who served exclusively in one theatre of war; men served there because it was the most attractive region to fight, both in terms of opportunities for service and potential profit. It is also the case that more northerners served in the French war after 1369 (indeed, after 1350), than they had during the earlier decades of the conflict. Up to about 1350 the Trent did, in effect, divide the kingdom into two recruiting zones, although there were evidently exceptions.³⁵⁵ Nevertheless the evidence from the *Court of Chivalry* and other martial records such as the example of John Irlande cited above suggests that the geographic destinations of men’s service,

³⁵² Irlande: E101/33/34 m.4; E101/33/38 m.2d.; E101/39/7 n.3 m.1. Grenhalgh: E101/41/18/14 m.14; E101/23/4 m.20.

³⁵³ Cornell, ‘Castle Garrisons’, 258. Harriss, G. *Shaping the Nation, England 1360-1461* (Oxford, 2005), 558.

³⁵⁴ Tuck, J.A. ‘Richard II and the Border Magnates’ *Northern History* 3 (1968), 27–52.

³⁵⁵ Ayton, *Knights*, 246-247.

like the types of service they performed, were multi-faceted by the second half of the fourteenth century at the latest. Nor did geographic proximity to a region necessarily determine a man's service destinations. Cornell has illustrated that the vast majority of individuals who served in Anglo-Scottish garrisons in the later fourteenth century were in fact not from the northern counties of England as would be expected, but actually from south of the Trent, although it should be remembered that some indentures specified that a proportion of a garrison's personnel had to come from further afield than the fortresses' immediate locality.³⁵⁶ He was, of course, only referring to one particular region and a specific type of military service, but the evidence from documentation relating to field armies reveals that military service on the continent was not limited to those from the south of England, especially considering the increased need for captains to extend their recruitment reaches in this period.³⁵⁷ There will have been men who served within one region through choice, perhaps in Ireland where they had territorial concerns. We must be careful, however, when attaching any sort of 'service-destination' label to such individuals because this may simply have been a case of having arrived in a region, particularly France, many stayed because of the potential for plunder, serving as *routiers* in the free companies and joining English field armies as and when they passed by.

It is evident then that the English military community was a composition of a number of different constituent, inter-locking groups based upon regional, social and, to a lesser extent, type of martial service. No one individual sat within one group. Men fell into many different categories, and more often than not had wide-ranging and multi-faceted military careers.

³⁵⁶ Cornell, 'Castle Garrisons', 205-13. Though in part this might be attributed to Richard II's attempts to break up the monopoly of the northern magnates' power in the north. Equally, of course, it could be to prevent desertions; it was harder for men to desert when they had to travel the length of the country to return home. Tuck, 'Border Magnates'; Neville, C.J. *Violence, Custom and Law: The Anglo-Scottish Border-Lands in the Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1988), 65-95.

³⁵⁷ See for example, Table 4.5, 170.

iv. Closing Remarks: The English Military Community in the Second Half of the Fourteenth Century

Let us briefly take stock of the English military community and the changes it underwent during the course of the fourteenth century. In the first half of the century, and before, the community which fought in the structurally-hybrid armies of the time was socially restrictive, its membership limited to the nobility, the small but growing band of gentry, and perhaps a smattering of garrison troops. Amongst the gentry in particular there was little by way of military experience prior to the mid-1290s. J.E. Morris argued that Edward I ‘was teaching the art of war to poor material’, and David Simpkin recently echoed these sentiments when he argued that ‘the relative scarcity of experienced warriors in his [Edward I’s] early years meant that Edward was forced to act with promethean ingenuity, forging a military community out of a realm of estate dwellers’.³⁵⁸ He, and his grandson, were clearly successful in this endeavour and by the 1310s at the latest the level of martial experience was widespread amongst knights and sergeants. By the second half of the fourteenth century, certainly after 1369 and indeed well before this, membership within the community was much more fluid and the gentry was highly militarised. Individuals could both enter and slip out of the community as their personal fortunes dictated. In many respects this reflected the changing nature of fourteenth century English society. Social commentators like Geoffrey Chaucer were alluding to the fact that they were living through times of important social change and this permeated into the military sphere. These martial changes, which had begun at different times and took effect at different rates in the reigns of the first two Edwards, had, by the middle decades of Edward III’s reign, changed the composition of the military community, the way it fought, the way it was recruited, and the structure of the armies that it fought within so profoundly that it has become *de rigueur* to refer to them as revolutionary.

Philippe de Mézières noted that there were three types of military man in the armies of the second half of the fourteenth century: noblemen who only served when the king was commanding the army; men in continuous military service like garrison troops and men-at-arms; and men of common origins who had become military

³⁵⁸ Morris, J.E. *Welsh Wars*, 30; Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 9.

professionals by choice and served for financial gain.³⁵⁹ Barring minor adjustments of the boundaries this description could equally be applied to the English military community. By this period, however, the first group were being superseded by the second and third. The only group within society who can truly be considered to have constituted anything like a permanent inclusion within the community were the martially active members of the aristocracy and nobility. These men sat at the pinnacle of medieval society, and military service was their *raison d'être*. By the second half of the fourteenth century, however, the increased demands for manpower to fight in the English kings' wars necessitated others to take up the mantle of martial service. As the number of knights in society was shrinking – and they were thus unable to meet the demand – it was their companions in arms, the non-knightly members of the gentry, who were becoming increasingly militarised and armigerous, that answered the call. Equally important by this period were the newly prosperous elite of the peasantry, whom we might term the yeomanry, who had gained their wealth largely as a result of benefitting from the calamitous effects of plague that ravaged in England in the middle decades of the fourteenth century.

All these amorphous 'groups' within medieval society can be considered as constituting part of the military community as a result of a growing military professionalism. True they were not professional in the sense that men slotted into permanent military structures which remained constant from one campaign to another, but otherwise these men began to display a nascent level of professionalism. The provision of near-universal pay for soldiers and the disappearance of obligatory service were key ingredients to this process. This growing professionalism was demonstrated by their martial effectiveness (at least when their enemies dared to face them in the field and the fact that their methods were copied by allies and enemies alike wherever they fought), the provision of their own equipment (at least seemingly by the vast majority), probable training, and most of all an increased level of service stretching in many cases over a number of decades. Indeed for many men military service became their primary vocation. Whilst those below the ranks of the nobility were probably motivated chiefly by the profit that could be gained from war, this desire may actually have increased, at the very least aided, the communities' growing

³⁵⁹ Mézières, *Songe*, I, 530.

professionalism, acting as a powerful recruiting agent. Whether or not the increasing demands, and costs of war for the individual, stimulated this professionalism, or whether it occurred as a result of the changing social landscape of medieval society in the post-plague years, is debatable. Nevertheless that there *was* an increased level of professionalism amongst the military community is undeniable, particularly after the disappearance of arrayed levies of unskilled peasant infantry. When Sir Thomas Gray noted in the *Scalacronica* that the men fighting in Normandy in the 1350s were, ‘mere commoners’, he should not be taken literally.³⁶⁰ He was actually commenting on the fact that the men riding through France at the time were not of the same social standing as the men with whom his father had ridden to war at Bannockburn in 1314. But they were not commoners in the sense that they were men of the same social stock as the old arrayed infantry levies. Instead they were the ever expanding ranks of the gentry and the elites of village society: the yeomanry. As a result of this change the military community had become the preserve of the ‘middling sort’ within society. The military community should not, however be thought of entirely upon social lines. It was composed not only of three amorphous social groups (nobility, gentry, and yeomanry), but also of a collection of different constituent parts based largely on upon geographic origin. There were certainly overlaps between groups and we should consider men as constituting several groups simultaneously.

The evidence presented in this chapter has gone some way towards helping to define the military community, particularly in the second half of the fourteenth century. It was a body displaying an increased level of professionalism. Though they may not have recognised themselves as a single community as such, stretching from the peers of the realm down to the yeoman elite of village society, they did indeed form a body of men distinctive, if not separate, from the rest of society. Without such men the English Crown could not hope to turn its military ambitions into reality.

There is one major outstanding issue relating to the military community which we have not yet touched upon. If the demands of the crown were increasing, and the size of the retinues captains were bringing to war in the second half of the fourteenth century were increasing, then surely, as captains were forced to cast their recruitment

³⁶⁰ *Scalacronica*, 152, 156.

nets wider, the personal cohesion within retinues – and with it the martial effectiveness of the military community – would be lessened? This may have been true, at least initially, but the increasing professionalism of the community at large will have gone a long way towards addressing this problem. This certainly warrants further investigation and is the subject of the next chapter.

IV. THE ENGLISH MILITARY COMMUNITY IN ACTION

i. Retinue Recruitment Networks and Army Structure

The reconstruction of the two major facets of English medieval armies - their personnel and organisational structure – has long been a goal of historians. An army's personnel, in particular, is vital to understanding how it operated in the field. This is far more so for medieval armies than those of other periods because English medieval forces were impermanent bodies, only in the field for a finite time with no permanent organisational structures in which the individual could be subsumed. The operation of medieval armies in the field was thus heavily influenced by their personnel and their success or failure often determined by the relationships between the men. As we have seen, however, the task of reconstructing the personnel of any English medieval army is fraught with difficulties. A more manageable task is the reconstruction of individual armies' organisational structures although even here the sources are often problematic. Nevertheless, with the emergence of structurally-uniform armies in the second half of the fourteenth century the primary building-blocks of English armies became the mixed-retinues of men-at-arms and mounted-archers. It is how these bodies were recruited, and how they fit into an army's overall structure, with which we are concerned.

The study of military retinues is a subject that is very much in-vogue with recent research focusing on areas including how their inherent strengths and weaknesses influenced the operational efficacy of the wider army network in the field, the types of men who comprised the retinues, the links between captains and men, and how they were recruited.¹ The purpose of this chapter is threefold. Firstly it seeks to summarise the latest research and apply it to the circumstances of English armies in the later fourteenth century. Second it is to attempt the reconstruction, as fully as is possible, of three English armies of the period to analyse how the military communities that composed them were involved in their genesis, and whether the relative strengths and weaknesses of the links between these retinues affected their operational efficiency.

¹ Ayton, 'Armies and Military Communities'; Curry, A. 'Personal Links and the Nature of the English War Retinue: A Case study of John Mowbray, Earl Marshal, and the Campaign of 1415' *Liens Personnels, Réseaux, Solidarités en France et Dans les Britanniques XIe-XXe siècle* (ed.) Gazeau, V. et al (Paris, 2006), 153-67; Green, D. 'The Later Retinue of Edward the Black Prince' *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 44 (2000), 141-151.

Finally it is to try to answer one of the central questions of this thesis, whether the emergence of the retinue based armies of the second half of the fourteenth century in any way influenced the so-called 'English military decline' of the period.

A retinue can be described as a body of men attendant upon an important personage and in medieval England it was these men who accompanied their leader to war.² In structurally-hybrid armies a captain's retinue consisted of a number of elements. Firstly there was his *familia*. These men were often permanently resident in his household, perhaps young noblemen not expected to inherit, living with the lord to learn the art of war and experience a correct noble upbringing, or they might be a lord's kin by blood or marriage.³ The second group were indentured retainers, paid an annual fee to serve their lord in peace and war. This type of retainer emerged in the last decades of the thirteenth-century, probably due to traditional household retainers being numerically inadequate to meet increased recruitment demands; 'extending the *familia* rather than [acting] as a radical departure from it'.⁴ Finally, and most numerically significantly, there were men who had close, but undocumented relationships with a captain. These men were not formally indentured to a captain because there was no need; their relationship based on locality, kinship, friendship, tenurial ties and so forth.

As the fourteenth century progressed men within retinues served for pay rather than as a result of obligation. Initially paid service – coined 'bastard-feudalism'⁵ – was seen by scholars to have eroded the bonds between captains and their men.⁶ In recent years however, this view has been successfully challenged.⁷ Research has shown that whilst there may have been some men who served in various retinues with

² It was once thought captains had separate war/peacetime retinues. This now seems unlikely. Hicks, M. *Bastard Feudalism* (1995), 68; Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, 84.

³ Lewis, N.B. 'The Organisation of Indentured Retinues in Fourteenth-Century England' *T.R.H.S.* 4²⁷ (1945), 29-39; Given-Wilson, *English Nobility*, 2-7.

⁴ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 88-92; Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 117-118. For examples: 'Private Indentures for Life Service in Peace and War 1278-1476' (ed.) Jones, M., Walker, S. *Camden Miscellany XXXII*, 5:3 (1994); McFarlane, K.B. 'An Indenture of Agreement between Two English Knights for Mutual Aid and Counsel in Peace and War, 5 December 1298' *B.I.H.R.* 36 (1965), 200-10.

⁵ The term appears first in print in 1885 in Charles Plummer's introduction to an edition of Fortescue's, *Governance of England*, Fortescue, Sir John, *The Governance of England: Otherwise Called the Difference between an Absolute and a Limited Monarchy* (ed.) Plummer, C. (Oxford, 1885), p. 15-16.

⁶ E.g.: Cam, H.M. 'The Decline and Fall of English Feudalism' *History* 25 (1940), 216-233.

⁷ Crouch, D. 'Debate: Bastard Feudalism Revised' *P.P.* 131 (1991), 165-203.

little to no captain loyalty, the vast majority of men in the retinues of structurally-hybrid armies displayed remarkable fidelity to one particular captain.⁸ Andrew Ayton, for example, has recently shown that 65 percent of those who can be identified to have served in the earl of Warwick's retinue at Crécy had accompanied him to war on at least one previous occasion and the number may have been much higher given the incomplete survival of the sources.⁹ Such high-levels of retinue stability were the result of the personal relationships that captains had with their men. As the Crown demanded increasingly large retinues for war, especially in the early decades of the reign of Edward III, captains began to increasingly rely on sub-contractors or sub-retinue-captains to bring contingents of men-at-arms and archers with them to muster. For Warwick's retinue at Crécy, for example, one of the earl's bannerets, Sir Thomas Ughtred, provided a number of men from his east Yorkshire estates.¹⁰

Retinue captains thus acted as the hubs around which English medieval armies were built. Whilst not possessing close personal ties with all the men in his retinue – the knights, esquires, and mounted-archers brought by the sub-captains being a prime example – a captain at the very least had a close personal relationship with the sub-captains themselves. A retinue's *esprit des corps* thus came from the relationship between the retinue captain and his lieutenants, and the lieutenants' relationships with the men they brought with them, be they individuals or groups – comradeship groups – which came together to ensure the retinue's stability. Though a retinue captain's force was certainly not the same every time he went to war the secret to prolonged stability was maintaining a core group of lieutenants whom he served with on a regular basis. It was thus both horizontal and vertical connections, (between the men of the retinue, with other retinues, and to their commander and ultimately the army's leader), which truly provided retinues with cohesion and 'dynamic stability'.¹¹

This system evidently had tactical and disciplinary benefits in the field. Men who fought together regularly would certainly have built up a rapport with their comrades, aiding their performance in the heat of combat. At a grand-operational-

⁸ Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 119-41; Spenser, A. 'The Comital Military Retinue in the Reign of Edward I' *Historical Research* 83 (2008), 46-59.

⁹ Ayton, 'Dynamics of Recruitment', 16.

¹⁰ Ayton, 'Ughtred', 188-90.

¹¹ Idem, 'Dynamics of Recruitment', 11-16 at 16.

level this would allow the potential to perform complex manoeuvres and campaign strategies.¹² This is not to say that there were not weaknesses with this system; its very strength – the social and personal links between commanders and men – could prove to be its greatest weakness. If a retinue commander or his lieutenants were killed in battle then this would severely weaken the overall cohesion of the retinue. It is not hard to imagine that many medieval engagements revolved around the battle standards of prominent army personnel, the termination or capture of important personages the ultimate aim of combatants.¹³ While individual comradeship groups might continue to function it is likely that once the commander was removed the force would degenerate in small bands of men though to what extent men would have fought on should this happen requires further research. Similarly, if the bonds between and amongst the captains and men were weak or non-existent in the first place, then the force ran the risk of disintegrating entirely. Admittedly given the close knit retinues of structurally-hybrid armies this was unlikely but the potential remained.

The emergence of structurally-uniform armies saw four trends become immediately apparent about the organisation of retinues and thus the armies that they constituted. The first is that, by and large, the number of retinues within armies decreased dramatically.¹⁴ In the Breton expedition in the autumn of 1342, for example, there were no fewer than 53 retinues and this was one of the smaller expeditions; at Crécy there were 78.¹⁵ Whilst some structurally-uniform armies still had a reasonable number of retinues – 35 for the two forces constituting Gaunt's army in 1369, for example – the general trend was a reduction in the number of retinues.¹⁶ In effect the numerous smaller retinues coalesced under fewer captains to form larger retinues, some of which took on the dimensions of small armies in themselves. Consequently these 'super-retinues' increased numerically in terms of manpower.¹⁷

¹² Idem, 'Armies and Military Communities', 232-33.

¹³ Ayton, A. 'From Muhi to Mohács – Armies and Combatants in Later Medieval Transcultural Wars' *Transcultural Wars from the Middle Ages to the Twenty-First Century* (ed.) Hans-Henning, K. (Berlin, 2006), 243-45.

¹⁴ Two of the three armies in this work analysed in detail, 1370 and 1385, were exceptional in this respect and not typical of the general trend.

¹⁵ Ayton, *Knights*, 265-66; Idem, *Crécy*, 245-51.

¹⁶ See: Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues', 4, 11, 13; Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 56, 64-5.

¹⁷ David Simpkin calculated the average retinue size of English forces 1282-1314 to be 5.2 men but argues that this figure is un-naturally inflated by the large retinues of 1311-14; discounting these years

By the Reims campaign the duke of Lancaster had well over a thousand combatants within his retinue and though this army was exceptionally large, and Lancaster exceptionally wealthy, this was hardly an isolated example; it was a trend evident even in captains lower down the social scale.¹⁸ The average size of known retinues in Knolles' 1370 expedition was 88.5 though this is skewed somewhat by the 600 and 500 taken by Knolles and Sir John Minsterworth respectively. Removing these two men makes the average 57.73; considering the humble origins of many of these men this was not an insubstantial number.¹⁹

The second noticeable trend about retinues in this period is that it seems to have become increasingly common for rates of repeated-service amongst retinue personnel to diminish considerably.²⁰ In his study of the two naval campaigns led by the earl of Arundel in 1387 and 1388, for example, Adrian Bell has shown that whilst a relatively high, 66 per-cent, of retinue captains served on both expeditions, only 30 per-cent of the knights; 38 per-cent of the esquires; and 20 per-cent of the archers, served with the same captain on both occasions.²¹ Similarly Andrew Ayton, whilst admitting that the evidence is patchy and relying only on enrolled protections, has shown that only 9 out of 24 men from Warwick's retinue in 1372 were with him in 1373, the percentage made smaller still by the fact that the earl's retinue doubled in size between these two campaigns.²² Looking below the aristocratic nobility the same trend can be detected, even in examples that at first appear to initially point to the contrary as can be seen from the table below.

the figure is 4.7: *Aristocracy*, 159-62, table 2.2). By 1322 the average size of banneret's retinue had risen to twenty-one, in Scotland in 1341-42 it was thirty: Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 42.

¹⁸ For the expedition of 1380 for example the earl of Buckingham's retinue consisted of something in the region of 2,500 men: E364/15 m. 41d; E101/393/11 fo. 79v.

¹⁹ E101/30/25 m.1.

²⁰ One of the first to note this was Simon Walker, *Lancastrian Affinity*, 50-1. Though much work remains to be done the availability of service records for 1369-1453 by the *Soldier in Later Medieval England* project has made the task more manageable.

²¹ Bell, *War and the Soldier*, 56, 65-6, 96-101.

²² Ayton, 'Dynamics of Recruitment', 24 ft. 57.

Table 4.1: Continuity of Service with Sir William de Windsor in Ireland 1371-76²³

Troop Type	Period of Service and % of Men present from Previous Period of Service							
	1371-72		1374		1374-75		1375-6	
'Archer'	0	-	0	-	0	-	19	-
'Armed Archer'	59	-	419	52.5%	409	82.3%	393	85%
Men-at Arms	50	-	223	34%	420	86.5%	208	84%
Retinue Total	109		642		629		601	

Clearly it appears that there was a high-rate of re-service amongst Windsor's men, but a closer look reveals that this was not necessarily the case because service in the retinue from 1374-76, though accounted for separately at the Exchequer, actually represents one long stint of service over a two year period. Thus it is unsurprising to find retinue stability for these years as high as 85 per-cent. The important figures (highlighted in the table) are those between Windsor's two stints in the lordship, the first in 1371-72 and the second beginning in 1374. These percentages of returning soldiers, between a third and a half, are more in-line with what others studying retinues of the period have found, even if the figure for the men-at-arms is somewhat high. Looking a little deeper, however, the figures may be even less than they appear. Only 14 men-at-arms out of 299 who served in the lordship from 1371-76 – 4.5 per-cent – served for the full five years and the figure for the archers is similar: 30 out of 522 (armed archers), or 5.7 percent. Alternatively of the 840 men who served with Windsor in Ireland from 1371-76 only 44 – 5.2 per-cent – were present for the entirety of the service. The real litmus test of Windsor's retinue continuity/stability is measured in a comparison between his retinue in Ireland and that which served with him in France in 1380-81. Only 34 men out of the 840 – a mere 4.04 per-cent – who served in Ireland with Windsor in the 1370s, some as late as 1376, were present in 1380-81. Even allowing for the fact that these were vastly different theatres of war, and the general unpopularity of Ireland as a destination for military service, these figures represent a paltry rate of repeated service.

The third noticeable trend is the disappearance of arrayed troops, indeed the virtual disappearance of obligatory service, from English field armies by the second half of the fourteenth century.²⁴ That this did not have an appreciable effect on overall retinue size shows the extent to which retinues had grown by this period. The fourth

²³ E101/31/25; 33/34; 33/35; 33/38.

²⁴ See 51-52.

trend was the gradual emergence of knights and esquires of no more than regional prominence, commanding some of the new ‘super-mixed-retinues’ in this period. Numerous examples of this could be cited: Robert Bland in 1388, Benedict Botteshale in 1374, James Cotenham in Ireland in 1395-97, and William Guildford in 1369, to name but a few.²⁵ Though a few men of sub-knightly status commanded retinues in the earlier half of the century, like John de Houton in Scotland in 1336, these were a minor exception to the rule.²⁶

How do we explain these four developments, what stimulated them, and how did they affect the composition of later fourteenth century retinues? In terms of the impetus for these changes the answer is simple enough. Exogenous influences – the increasing prevalence of war on several fronts on the continent necessitating English martial intervention – caused demands for both armies to be raised, and men to fight, to increase considerably. This did not alter the core recruitment methods for English retinues. Yet no matter how extensive a captain’s traditional recruitment networks were, however, they were not sufficient to satisfy the needs of recruitment that were demanded of captains after c.1360. Indeed the fact that, on average, the size of retinues increased dramatically during the second half of the fourteenth century suggests that retinue captains must have extended their ‘recruitment-reach’ – that is the military communities they had access to through their own resources and through those of their sub-captains – dramatically.²⁷ It seems that, whilst not on all campaigns and in all instances, captains were largely able to meet the increased retinue size demands placed upon them. How was this achieved? The only likely solution is that they were forced to look beyond their established recruiting networks and place a greater reliance on sub-contractors with whom they had no previous ties as well as recruit from amongst the general pool of un-attached, freelance ‘professional’ soldiers within the realm.

With this in mind a number of questions immediately present themselves: who were these un-attached men; how many were available for service at one time; how were they recruited; what were the consequences of their increasing pre-dominance in

²⁵ E101/41/5; 33/17; 41/39.

²⁶ BL Cotton MS. Nero C. VIII fo. 44r.

²⁷ Ayton, ‘Armies and Military Communities’, 217-21.

retinues; and, perhaps most crucially of all, did their appearance effect the performance of English armies in a detrimental way suggesting that they contributed to a military decline?

The thorniest question of all for scholars is who exactly these freelancers were. The evidence from our discussion of the composition of the military community in the previous chapter suggests that these men were the emerging 'middle-order' within English martial society; the gentry and yeomanry, who had profited from the social upheavals caused by the Black Death.²⁸ The gentry in particular, at the very least its upper echelons, had become increasingly militarised as the fourteenth century progressed. We will probably never know the exact proportion that could be considered militarised by the second half of the fourteenth century. However, if David Simpkin's calculation that nearly eighty-five per cent of the knights who appear in the Parliamentary Roll of Arms of c.1312 were militarily active is correct, then this is highly indicative that martial traditions must have become deeply ingrained by the later fourteenth century and it is highly likely that this experience also prevailed amongst those lower down the social scale.²⁹ A search of the Reading/Southampton muster rolls database reveals thousands of men in military service who were below knightly status that would suggest that the wider gentry population had indeed, by this period, become imbued with martial traditions and practice. The increasing prevalence of armorial bearings and adoption of heraldic insignia by the 'elite' of the gentry, particularly esquires, in the second half of the fourteenth century is further proof of their increasing involvement in war.³⁰

How many of these freelancers, were available to be drawn upon and how were they recruited? No satisfactory answer for the number of freelancers, indeed for the size of the English military community as a whole, will ever be satisfactory for the sources are not extensive enough but the numbers must have been robust. This seems a contradiction when it is considered that the Black Death and subsequent outbreaks of plague from the middle of the fourteenth century have been said to have decimated

²⁸ For example newly wealthy individuals who were paying the *Poll Tax* in the late 1370s and early 1380s, see 78-97.

²⁹ Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 22-4.

³⁰ Chapter III, 74. Ayton, 'Armies, Military Communities', 221.

the population by as much as half.³¹ The abandonment of commissions of array for armies at this time may be symptomatic of this but the fact that there were increased demands on English soldiery in the second half of the fourteenth century, not just from the crown but from a myriad of other areas – particularly in the *routier* companies – and that the Crown's demands continued to be met suggests that the manpower-pool was extensive.³² Even with the aid of the recent *Soldier in Medieval England* project, we can only provide an educated guess as to numbers. However, taking the oft-used figure of 10,000 gentry families, we might deduce the number of these men to have been perhaps about 40-50,000 if each family on average provided four individuals who were capable and willing to bear arms.³³

How these new retinues were recruited is also a difficult question to answer. Despite fewer retinues within structurally-uniform forces than there had been before retinue captains remained armies' recruiting agents. Similarly at the centre of retinues remained the captain's most intimate followers and confidants; be they formally indentured retainers or un-contracted friends, neighbours, and kin.³⁴ Retinue commanders also continued to rely on sub-contracting with other captains to provide the men they needed.³⁵ How captains recruited freelancers is much harder to ascertain. Some were doubtlessly companies of professional soldiers, acting as an 'off the peg' company for the captains who hired them. Others will have been 'clusters of knights and esquires from a particular locality who served together regularly'.³⁶ On occasion letters of protection and attorney are invaluable in identifying such groups, at least if a group of freelancers were relatively wealthy, because these documents sometimes provide the name of the captain with whom men were serving and also the date the document was enrolled. Though not an exact science (as in if a clerk simply enrolled a large number of protections on the same date) freelancers serving in a company, and indeed, men from formally recruited sub-retinue contingents, would more than likely have enrolled together either in person or by their captain as and when they came into

³¹ Campbell, 'The land', 234.

³² Though it should be noted that licences to go on Crusade were only granted in extensive number in periods of Anglo-French peace: Tyerman, C. *England and the Crusades 1095-1588* (Chicago, 1988), 278-9, 289-90; Ayton, 'Dynamics of Recruitment' 21-22.

³³ Given-Wilson, *English Nobility*, 69-73.

³⁴ E.g. the four Redmanes serving in the Roxburgh garrison in 1381-2 (E101/532/29 m.2)

³⁵ Goodman, A. 'The Military Subcontracts of Sir Hugh Hastings, 1380' *E.H.R.* 95 (1980), 114-220. Sherborne draws attention to other examples: 'Indentured Retinues' 742-44.

³⁶ Ayton, 'Armies and Military Communities' 224.

his service. For instance on 15 August 1361 Sir Robert de Grendon, John de Tetlyburgh 'le fitz', William de Lancastre, Thomas de la Chambre, Thomas, William and John de Peito, John Burnel, Humphrey de Stafford, and Thomas de Sutton were all issued letters of protection in Berkshire to serve Lionel earl of Ulster in Ireland, suggesting that they may have formed such a group.³⁷ Other examples could be cited, but it is imperative to remember that dates of enrolment are no absolute guarantee that these men formed a comradeship group within a wider retinue. In the example above from August 1361 it is logical to assume that as there were only a small number of men enrolled on this date we are dealing with a sub-retinue grouping. Yet it is possible, for example, that they happened to collect their letters on the same day and they were completely unconnected. Looking again at the earl of Ulster's men in 1361 we see that men had their protections and attorneys enrolled for service with the earl on several dates between 12 July 1361 and c.20 May 1362.³⁸ It is quite possible that, on days when a large number of men were enrolled, such as on 15 August, they were actually an amalgamation of two or more groups who appeared together on the same day. This is even more probable with enrolments for the larger expeditions. It is unlikely, for example, that the 93 men who enrolled for service with Gaunt in 1369 were part of a single sub-retinue grouping unless it was a particularly large one.³⁹

Did recourse to large groups of freelancers have a detrimental effect on the efficacy of the military community by reducing retinue-level stability? Naturally one assumes that large numbers of socially disconnected freelancers in armies would not have had strong bonds, if any at all, to their retinue captain. Initially too this would seem to give credence to those who would argue that the English military community experienced a decline in these years with armies failing to operate as well as they had done in the past because of this lack of social cohesion. It is the contention of this thesis, however that this was not the case. To best illustrate this argument let us turn to three English field armies of the period: Sir Robert Knolles' 1370 *chevauchée*, Richard II's 1385 Scottish expedition, and the retinue of Ralph earl of Stafford within the army of Lionel, duke of Clarence, in Ireland in 1361-62. All these expeditions have been seen as failing to achieve their objectives but, as will be seen, even when

³⁷ C.P.R. 1361-64, 50.

³⁸ Idem, 40, 45-46, 49-51, 54-55, 87-88, 90, 128, 130, 155, 194, 226.

³⁹ C76/52 mm.9-17 (Gaunt); C76/67 mm.16-17.

things did go wrong it was hardly the failure of the changes in army recruitment and composition that had taken place by the second half of the fourteenth century.

ii. Sir Robert Knolles' *Pontvallain Chevauchée*, July-December 1370

Sir Robert Knolles' *chevauchée* through northern France between July and December 1370 is arguably the most fascinating English expedition of the entire fourteenth century.⁴⁰ While it maintained many of the hallmarks of a 'traditional' structurally uniform medieval army – the recruitment of mixed-retinues, the utilisation of recruitment networks by captains, and the provision of pay for a large number of the troops – in other organisational and structural respects it was without parallel. The men's pay was at double the normal rates but only for the first three months of the expedition, the command structure was un-conventional at both senior and retinue level and, interestingly, many of those serving for a charter of pardon had their writ issued prior to the campaign rather than after it, for service to be rendered. It was also the last campaign in the fourteenth century for which pardons were issued in significant number. In addition it was also the only English force of the entire period which literally came apart at the seams in the field due to bickering amongst its leaders and their sub-ordinates. In effect what occurred was the wholesale disintegration of the bonds between the captains – the hubs of the army – which, when scrutinised, were seemingly brittle before the campaign though hindsight may cloud judgement. Regardless of the reasons behind its frailties the newly appointed French Constable, Bertrand du Guesclin, was able to confront and defeat the English in pitched battle, temporarily reversing Charles V's Fabian strategy, and in the process dealing the English a major military and psychological blow. To more fully comprehend the failings of this army it is necessary to examine its organisational and structural framework, its command hierarchy, the bonds – or lack of them – between its captains, and the general personnel of the force to see how these differed from other armies of the period and what bearing, if any, these factors had on why it imploded so spectacularly.

The extent to which these tasks can be achieved is, of course, determined by the sources. At first glance the expedition seems to be poorly documented with

⁴⁰ Several chroniclers mention the campaign: *Anonimale*, 63-65; Cabaret d'Orville, J. *La Chronique de Bon Duc Loys de Bourbon* (ed.) Chazaud, A.M. (Paris, 1876), 24-29; *Chronique de Normandie du XIVe Siècle* (ed.) Moliner, A.E. (1882), 349-52; *Chronique des Quatre Premiers Valois: 1327-1393* (ed.) Luce, S. (Paris, 1862), 207-8; *Contemporary Chronicles*, 309-11; Cuvelier, J. *Chronique de Bertrand du Guesclin*, ii, (ed.) Charrière, E. (Paris, 1839), lines 17,751 – 18,506. The best modern narrative accounts: Delachenal, R. *Histoire de Charles V* (5 vols., 1909-31) iv, 301-42; Fowler, *Mercenaries I*, 289-97; Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues' 6-7; Sumption, *Divided*, 61-114.

Sherborne, one of the first modern scholars to study the expedition in detail, stating that evidence ‘is confined to an incomplete retinue list’.⁴¹ This is not true. Detailed prosopography reveals several other sources which allow a fuller picture of the army to be drawn. These include two seemingly, though not, identical lists of captains and the sizes of their retinues; an additional, bracketed, list of captains that hitherto seems to have been either ignored or missed by scholars; letters of protection and attorney; pardons; other calendared documents in the *Patent, Close, Inquisitions Post-Mortem* and *Inquisitions Miscellaneous*; a retinue roll for the garrison at St. Sauveur (1370-71); contemporary narrative accounts; a disciplinary ordinance; and several documents relating to the campaign’s organisation prior to departure.

The organisation of this army is one of its most fascinating aspects. Though, as we have seen, the second half of the fourteenth century saw the emergence of captains of upper-gentry status, military command remained the preserve of the upper-echelons of the nobility. The appointment, therefore, of Sir Robert Knolles on 20 June 1370 to command an English army in France for two years with 2,000 men-at-arms and 2,000 mounted-archers must have come as a shock to many contemporaries.⁴² Knolles, at about fifty-years-old and with a profitable career as a *rou-tier* captain on the continent in the 1350s and 60s, was a man of relatively modest origins.⁴³ In a society where rank and status were central to political authority many leading members of the nobility would not serve under the command of a man they deemed to be a social inferior, as reflected by the status of many of the captains who led retinues on the expedition.⁴⁴ This perceived lack of authority may even have permeated into the rank-and-file for the troops seem to have been unruly before they even set sail for France.⁴⁵ Knolles seems to have been aware of these problems for on 13 June he sealed an agreement to share command of the expedition with Sir Alan Buxhill, Sir Thomas Grandison, and Sir John Bouchier, providing the army’s leadership with some social gravitas. Buxhill had been Constable of the Tower of London since 1366 and was also current Under-Chamberlain of the royal household;⁴⁶ Bouchier had served with the Black Prince in Aquitaine for a number of years while Grandison, a

⁴¹ Sherborne, ‘Indentured Retinues’, 7.

⁴² E101/68/4 no. 90.

⁴³ Jones, M. ‘Knolles, Sir Robert (d. 1407)’, *O.D.N.B.*, online edn. (2009).

⁴⁴ Table 4.4, 161-62.

⁴⁵ *Foedera* 3:2 897-98.

⁴⁶ In addition to agreeing to participate on the campaign he was granted a gift of £100. *Issues*, 203.

Garther knight, was related to the aristocratic Bishop of Exeter.⁴⁷ Their agreement specified that all profits were to be shared equally in proportion to the size of each captain's retinue.⁴⁸ Accordingly, on 1 July, all four men were appointed as king's lieutenants in France.⁴⁹

Knolles' connection to these three joint commanders is unclear. He may have fought with them before in France but it is equally likely that they were the only men of status who he could find to undertake what was, in effect, a campaign based on a financial gamble, for the decision to appoint Knolles in the first place was almost certainly because of the Crown's scarcity of funds.⁵⁰ It seems the expedition was envisaged as something of an experiment in martial financing. Knolles was paid a fee of £1,000 for a year and the king promised to provide and pay for shipping the men to France; fairly standard practice. Where this expedition differed crucially, however, was that Edward III proposed to pay wages and *regard* at double the normal rates but only for the first three months. Henceforth the army was expected to pay for itself by accumulating profits, ransoms, and plunder.⁵¹

The gamble nearly paid off. The army was successful in acquiring a substantial amount of booty and able to keep itself in the field far longer than the initial three months. Had divisions not arisen between the army's captains the model may have been utilised again. The fact that dissension occurred, however, was directly the result of this novel financing. Though there were wealthy captains like Lord Walter FitzWalter who one might expect to find commanding a retinue in a more traditionally funded army, the vast majority of captains on this venture seem to have been either young, militarily in-experienced men, seizing the opportunity of a speculative campaign that might win them renown, or those down on their luck who hoped the campaign would help them re-invigorate their fortunes.⁵² These men could not afford for the expedition to fail. The case was perfectly highlighted in the initial break-up of the army. In November, when Knolles wanted to retire to winter in

⁴⁷ Sumption, *Divided*, 68

⁴⁸ *Foedera* 3:2 897. This decision was clearly made prior to the formal announcement of Knolles' involvement on 20 June.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 894-95.

⁵⁰ Chapter V, 251-253.

⁵¹ Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues', 7.

⁵² Sumption, *Divided*, 69-70.

Brittany, this made perfect military sense; it being favourable to do so in friendly as opposed to hostile territory. Captains like Sir John Minsterworth, however – risk-takers who had staked much on the success of the campaign – accused Knolles of being an “old brigand”, for wanting to protect his own gains and keeping more than his fair share.⁵³ Captains like Minsterworth needed to continue extorting protection money and ransoms to pay their men and enrich themselves. Had they followed Knolles’ course of action their unpaid men would probably have deserted them in droves. In short financial concerns over-rode martial ones. Edward III, seemingly aware that this might happen had, before the expedition even set sail, made Knolles, Buxhill, Bouchier and Grandison, put their seals to a document, on 5 July, that required them to give guarantee of their good behaviour, promising to ensure the army kept together, and that if divisions did arise over material gains they would be speedily resolved.⁵⁴ No such promises however could stop greed clouding judgement.

The case for the army breaking up as a result of weak bonds between the retinue captains thus appears irrefutable. But was it also as a result of the failure of the army’s structure and personnel? Both these facets of the army are difficult to determine. For attempting to discern the structure – how the retinues fit together to form the army – there are two major sets of sources: lists of the army’s retinues, and letters of attorney, protections and pardons. Given that Knolles agreed with three other captains to share command of the army one might assume that the structure of the force would mirror this arrangement with four, large, distinct retinues. This however is not the impression provided by the sources.

The main source for the captains of this expedition is a set of the documents, described as a retinue list by Sherborne. This description is misleading as it firstly implies a record of captains’ names followed by those of their men, and secondly that it represents a single document. Neither is true. A better description is two *lists of retinues* detailing captains’ names with the numerical size of their contingents along with prests received by some of these men – and a third more enigmatic document in

⁵³ *Anonimalle Chronicle*, 64.

⁵⁴ BL, Cotton Caligula D III, no. 44.

which the names of the captains from the first two lists are included, with some additions, with all these names grouped together into various bracketed groups.⁵⁵

Table 4.2: E101/30/25 mm.1-2 – Captains and Retinue Sizes for Knolles' 1370 Expedition⁵⁶

Surname	Forename	Status	Men-at-arms ⁵⁷	Archers	Prest?
Knolles	Robert	Knight	300	300	Yes
Grandison	Thomas	Baron	100	100	Yes
Minsterworth	John	Knight	200 (inc. 10 knights)	300	Yes
Redemane	Matthew	Esquire	150	150	Yes
Dumner	Edmund	Knight	20 (inc. 6 knights)	20	Yes
Bussy	William	Knight	10 (inc. 1 knight)	10	Yes
Giffard	Gilbert	Knight	30	30	Yes
Baunfield	Thomas	Knight	20 (inc. 1 knight)	20	Yes
Aysterby	John	Knight	10 (inc. 1 knight)	10	Yes
<i>Lucy⁵⁸</i>	<i>William</i>	<i>Knight</i>	<i>2 (m1); 0 (m2)</i>	<i>2 (m1); 0 (m2)</i>	<i>No</i>
Riburgh	William	Esquire	25	50	Yes
Merton	David	Esquire	10	10	No
Louthre	John	Esquire	4	4	Yes
Gourneye	John	Knight	3	3	No
See	Richard	Esquire	4	4	Yes
Skelton	Nicholas	Esquire	4	4	Yes
Ughtred	Peter	Esquire	6	6	Yes
Aveneale	John	Knight	15	15	No
Ughtred	Thomas	Knight	30	30	No
Plumpton	Robert	Knight	30	30	No
Fyton	Richard	Knight	30	30	No
Malet	John	Knight	30	30	No
Caun	Thomas	Knight	60 (m1); 24 (m2)	60(m1) 24 (m2)	Yes
Trivet	Thomas	Knight	1	0	No
Sondes	Richard	Esquire	10	10	No
Strange	Piers	Esquire	10	10	No
<i>Zouche</i>	<i>William</i>	<i>Baron</i>	<i>140</i>	<i>140</i>	<i>No</i>
Lisle	John	Knight	40 (m1); 60 (m2)	40(m1); 60 (m2)	Yes
FitzWalter ⁵⁹	Walter	Baron	40	40	Yes
Moreaux	Thomas	Knight	20	20	Yes
Symond	Thomas	Knight	20	20	Yes
Wauton	John	Esquire	0 (m1); 1 (m2)	0	No
Totals			1,374 (1,357)	1,498 (1,480)⁶⁰	

The two lists of retinues initially appear the same with thirty-two captains – three bannerets, nineteen knights, and ten esquires given in the same order. There are, however, subtle differences. The second list, due to its presentation, appears to be a

⁵⁵ Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues', 7. (E101/30/25 mm.1-3 respectively). Prince, 'Army Wages', 158, was mistaken in describing this document as a statement of receipts and issues.

⁵⁶ Original order retained.

⁵⁷ Including the captain himself.

⁵⁸ All entries in *italics* denote the captain and his retinue likely did not serve.

⁵⁹ E101/30/25 m.3 suggests Walter FitzWalter did not serve as his name and payments for his men are crossed out though he must have as he was captured and had to mortgage his lands to pay his ransom: *C.P.R. 1374-77*, 191.

⁶⁰ The number in brackets denote the totals on manuscripts 1 and 2 respectively.

later, 'neater' copy of the first and though this is not proof in itself it would appear to be the case. What we are probably seeing are two drafts of the same document, a 'working' copy and a final version. Two amendments would support this case. Sir William de Lucy, listed as serving with two men-at-arms and two archers on list one, has had his name struck through and does not appear on the second list. This suggests that though he initially intended to serve he probably did not do so. Similarly the esquire John de Wauton has had his name squeezed in at the bottom of the second list. Additionally we may also note discrepancies between the sizes of captains' retinues on the two lists. Sir Thomas Caun's retinue, for example, is reduced between the two lists whilst the opposite occurs in the case of Sir John de Lisle.

Despite these minor discrepancies it would be easy to assume that these two retinue lists provide the structural framework of Knolles' force, the army comprising thirty-two individual retinues. This is not the case. If, for example, this was a true reflection of the army's structure then we would assume that all the individual captains would be receiving prests for their men. Yet of the thirty-two men listed as captains only nineteen are in receipt of prests. While in itself this is not proof that these men did not act as captains it is strange that they did not seemingly receive this standard term-of-service. A logical solution to the conundrum is that those men not in receipt of prests were in fact sub-captains/lieutenants in one of the other retinues. This would have the effect of reducing the number of retinues in the army, making it more in line with other structurally-uniform armies. Tempting though this solution is, however, there are problems with it. If those 'captains' listed without prests were sub-contractors for one of the larger retinues like Knolles' then why are they not listed under his name, clearly denoting that this was the case? Why, moreover, if they were sub-contractors, were they listed separately at all?

If further proof were needed that the two lists do not provide the complete structural framework of the army we should also note the mention of some captains who do not appear on the list as taking part on the campaign by contemporary narrative sources and other official documents. Froissart mentions one of Knolles' close confidants, Sir John Seton for example, and we know that Hugh le Despenser, Sir William de Neville and Sir John Clanvowe featured prominently for they were

captured and ransomed by the French.⁶¹ It is possible that Seton was one of the knights in Knolles' retinue whilst the other captains may have already been commanding garrisons in France and joined the army when it arrived on the continent. More difficult to explain away is the absence in the lists of two of the army's joint commanders, Buxhill and Bourchier, both of whom can be expected to have had substantial retinues of their own. Attempting any tangible reconstruction of the army's structure therefore requires more than these two lists. Fortunately other sources are at hand.

The third 'bracketed' list, bundled together with the other two, has been, as far as can be ascertained, entirely ignored by scholars.⁶² It appears to be a list of wages and/or prests paid to various individuals – presumably captains – in dated order, suggesting payment upon arrival, between 14 May and 28 June 1370. These facts aside, however, it remains highly enigmatic. There are discrepancies between the number of retinues and the forces being paid when compared to the other two lists but, most compellingly of all, is that fact that captains are bracketed together.

⁶¹ *Contemporary Chronicles*, 143; Fowler, *Mercenaries* I, 294; Froissart was notoriously unreliable with names.

⁶² E101/30/25 m. 3.

Table 4.3: 'Bracketed' Retinue List of Captains and their Associates, 1370⁶³

Captain Name ⁶⁴	Name(s) of Bracketed Associates* ⁶⁵	Monies for Men-at-Arms and Archers Respectively
John de Louthre	Richard atte See; Nicholas de Skelton	4:4
Richard atte See	John de Louthre; Nicholas de Skelton	4:4
Nicholas de Skelton	Richard atte See; John de Louthre	4:4
William Bussy	John de Aysterby; <i>Galfrid de Elkington*</i>	10:10
John de Aysterby	William Bussy; Galfrid de Elkington	10:10
Thomas de Baunfield	Walter de la Lee; William Riburgh	20:20
Peter Ughtred	Walter de la Lee; Matthew de Redmane	6:6
Edmund Dumner	Robert de Knolles; John Minsterworth; Matthew Redmane	20:20
Matthew Redmane	John Minsterworth; Edmund Dumner; William Riburgh; <i>Robert Strickland*</i>	150:150
John Minsterworth	Edmund Dumner; <i>Miles de Pembrugge*</i> ; Matthew Redmane; <i>Richard Seymore*</i> ; William Riburgh; <i>Sir Thomas Faucomberge*</i>	200:300
Thomas de Grandison	Gilbert Giffard; Thomas Caun; John Bouchier	200:200 ⁶⁶
Gilbert Giffard	Thomas Grandison; Thomas Caun	30:30
Thomas Caun	Robert Knolles; Thomas Grandison; Gilbert Giffard; <i>John Baddeby*</i>	120:124 ⁶⁷
John de Lisle	Thomas Grandison; Gilbert Giffard; <i>John de Tychebourne*</i>	60:60
William Riburgh	Robert de Knolles	25:50
Thomas Moreaux (jr.)	<i>Alan de Buxhill*</i> ; Thomas Symond	20:20
Thomas Symond	Alan de Buxhill; Thomas Moreaux	20:20
<i>John Bouchier*</i>	Walter Fitz Walter; Thomas Grandison; John de Lisle	200:200
Walter Fitz Walter	Thomas Grandison; John Bouchier; Walter atte Lee	40:40
<i>Walter atte Lee*</i>	Alan de Buxhill; Walter Fitz Walter	10:10
John Aveneale and <i>Robert Dykeswell*</i>	Robert Knolles	20:20 ⁶⁸
TOTALS		1,173 men-at-arms 1,302 archers 2,475

Let us try and tackle these issues in turn, looking firstly at the bracketed individuals. The reason why men were bracketed together is unclear. The grouping together of several men on the same date may be entirely co-incidental with payments made as and when they appeared. On the other hand it may represent something far more tangible, suggesting a deeper connection. It seems more likely than not that

⁶³ Original order retained.

⁶⁴ All in receipt of prests/wages.

⁶⁵ An asterisk denotes that this individual was not mentioned in either of E101/30/25 m. 1-2.

⁶⁶ This is 200 more men than mentioned in either mm. 1-2 of E101/30/25.

⁶⁷ A different total from E101/30/25 mm.1-2.

⁶⁸ If Aveneale's contributed 15 men-at-arms and archers (E101/30/25 mm. 1-2) then we must assume Dykeswell contributed the other 10 men.

these men were bracketed together because they had some link to one another, perhaps standing as surety for each-other's retinue sizes and thus the payments received. The implications of this are discussed below.⁶⁹ What is important here with regards to army structure is that this document allows us to see something of the associations between captains and perhaps even the army's wider structural framework, without which we would be entirely ignorant.

Whilst the majority of individuals on this list can be identified there are nine individuals who are entirely new. Two of these men, Walter atte Lee and Robert Dykeswell, are presumably listed as captains but the identities of the other seven are somewhat ambiguous. Were men like Miles de Pembrugge and Sir Thomas Faucomberge captains in their own right and if not what role did they play in the army? Indeed why do men listed as captains in their own right in the other retinue lists appear in bracketed association with other captains on this list? Knolles himself is not listed as being a captain in the bracketed list, only an associate, of Sir Edmund Dumner, Sir Thomas Caun, William Riburgh, and of the seemingly jointly-commanded retinue of Sir John Aveneale and Robert Dykeswell. The document provides no answers.

Furthermore there are clearly manpower and retinue discrepancies on the bracketed list with payments for only 21 individual retainues compared to 31 on the other lists whilst the size of the forces being paid is 2,475 (bracketed list) compared to 2,848.⁷⁰ The most likely explanation for these discrepancies is that these retinue lists represent different stages in the army's recruitment and payment process. The fact that these three lists were bundled together may be significant but unfortunately only the bracketed list provides any dates with which we can work; seemingly compiled in stages between the mid-May and the end of June 1370. As we know from the narrative accounts for the army's departure this was fairly late in proceedings and as the latter entries state that the departure ports were Rye and Winchelsea the document must have been completed after this decision had been made, c.26 June.⁷¹ This leaves the question of when the other two lists were compiled. The issue is crucial to gaining

⁶⁹ See 173-74.

⁷⁰ This latter total depends on which of the two retinue lists is taken into consideration. Above table 4.2

⁷¹ *Issues*, 205.

knowledge of the retinue structure for if we can ascertain which document was compiled last then, even if we cannot be certain it is complete, we are probably seeing the army and its structure in the most ‘finished’ form. The two major lists were probably compiled in the order they are bundled together (i.e. as mm.1 and 2). Was the bracketed list compiled prior to these or not? It is possible to argue either case. The argument for an earlier provenance is that fewer captains and men in the retinue contingents appear in the bracketed list, suggesting that the two major lists represent a later stage in the recruitment process. The counter argument for a later provenance is that the banneret William de la Zouche who it seems did not serve on the expedition, does not appear on the bracketed list, whereas he does on the other two, suggesting that by the time of the bracketed list it was known that he would not be serving.⁷² Both arguments are convincing and the answer will probably never be known although the La Zouche and dating evidence on the bracketed list suggests a later provenance.

To gain a wider understanding of the retinue structure it is necessary to turn to the third set of sources: pardons and letters of protection and attorney. These documents are crucial for they often provide information about under whom men were serving. The documents for this army are certainly not reticent in this respect, identifying no fewer than twenty-two separate captains. Of these captains 22 captains, seven – Henry Bernard, Sir Thomas Fog, Richard Gras, Sir Richard atte Green, Sir Walter atte Lee, Sir William Neville, and John de Walden (although this might be an alternative spelling of Wauton) – do not appear in any other extant source related to the campaign.⁷³ Should these eight captains be added to the known captains from the other sources? The evidence suggests not. Unfortunately there are no extant protections or attorneys for Bernard, Fog, or Green, so we cannot be sure of their status within the army but this can probably be answered with reference to the other four.⁷⁴ The four – Gras, Neville, Lee and Walden – all have either attorneys or

⁷² After he agreed to participate Zouche received orders to escort Charles of Navarre on his passage to England as the negotiations for the campaign’s destination were still ongoing. C76/53 mm.14, 17; E364/13 m.16; *Issue*, 202; Sumpton, *Divided*, 64-67.

⁷³ C76/53 mm. 12, 15, 17, 18, 26. Although it is possible that Sir Richard atte Green may be the same man as Richard atte See and both could potentially be Richard atte Lease of Sheldwich, Kent

⁷⁴ An eighth ‘captain’, Constance Knolles, the wife of Sir Robert, had protections that were probably for household servants though she seems to have not taken a back seat in his affairs: Sumpton, *Divided*, 758.

protections of their own which state that they had their own captain, (Knolles for Gras, Neville and Lee; Minsterworth for Walden). This information is vital and suggests that all seven additional ‘captains’ who appear were not captains in their own right at all but sub-captains who formed part of one of the larger retinues. Indeed it is the issue of sub-contracting that may solve some of the ambiguities from all of the retinue lists for this expedition.

We must be careful, however, when attempting to determine which captains should be considered as major captains and which should be considered as minor sub-contractors. One thing that is certainly clear; given the changing social landscape of the military community we would do well not to base any distinction on social grounds. It would appear easier to make a distinction between the army’s major captains and their sub-contractors by looking at those who were in receipt of wages and prests and those who were not, men in the former case being deemed as the major, retinue captains. Utilising this criteria gives nineteen captains (who we can be fairly certain campaigned) on the major lists of retinue (E101/30/25 mm. 1-2) and eleven who were not.⁷⁵ Of these eleven – our ‘sub-contractors’ – we can identify four who personally took out protections, attorneys, or both. In each case they state their captain as being one of the nineteen ‘retinue commanders’, suggestive of a contractor/sub-contractor relationship. Even though seven of the eleven cannot be positively identified as ‘sub-captains’ it could easily be argued, given the nature of financing for the campaign and the social calibre of men it attracted, that the seven were not of sufficient wealth or property to warrant taking out legal protections, perhaps indicative of an element of freelance-soldiery within the retinue.

There is certainly merit in this argument, particularly the undoubted presence of freelancers in the army, but so simplistic a demarcation based solely on the receipt of prests and wages falls down upon two counts. Firstly, whilst ten of the eleven ‘sub-captains’ from the retinue lists on E101/30/25 mm. 1-2 are not listed as being in receipt of wages and prests on the ‘bracketed’ list (m.3) there is one man – Sir John de Aveneale – who bucks the trend. This could be dismissed as an anomaly (especially considering that this is the only jointly-commanded retinue) but it appears less so

⁷⁵ See table 4.2, 153.

when considered alongside the second problem with the simplistic demarcation based on the receipt of wages and prests. This is that fact that sixteen captains in receipt of these payments who also took out a protection or attorney are listed on these latter documents as having Knolles as their retinue commander. Whilst this problem might be deflected somewhat by the fact that Knolles was the army's commander it certainly lessens the case that demarcation between captains and sub-captains is as simple as looking at the receipt of prests and wages.

With all the conflicting information provided by the sources what can be said for certain about the structural-framework of Knolles' army? Reconstructing the army's composition in its entirety is certainly impossible but that does not mean that some attempt cannot be made using the available evidence. The army can be broken down into three distinct levels of command. At the top there was Knolles himself, in joint command with his three lieutenants. The second level of the army was the 'major captains' who commanded the army's retinues. Finally, there were the sub-contracted captains or 'minor' captains who seemingly provided manpower for the larger retinues. In this respect, barring the 'shared' command of four, Knolles' army possessed the structural hallmarks of the vast majority of English structurally-uniform armies. As ever with this force, however, things are not so transparent. There are no hard and fast rules for determining who the retinue captains were and who the sub-contractors were. Though we can say with a reasonable degree of certainty that the payment of prests and/or wages to an individual captain might qualify him as falling into the upper-bracket this is not the case on at least one occasion and we are also left to ponder the status and position of captains mentioned in the narrative sources who do not appear in any other records or, similarly, individuals who we know were captured by the French because of the payment of ransoms. More telling, however, is the information provided by the letters of protection and attorney which show that the majority of captains listed Knolles as being their superior. Do these documents simply show that Knolles was the commander of the army or do they imply that he was in charge of some sort of extended 'super-retinue' from which he could detach various contingents as they raided the French countryside? It is impossible to answer this question without further evidence coming to light and as a result we can only guess at the army's provisional structure.

Table 4.4: Provisional Structure of Sir Robert Knolles' 1370 Expedition⁷⁶

Name		Contingent Size ⁷⁷		Known Men ⁷⁸
		Men-at-Arms	Archers	
Commanders	Sir Robert Knolles (main)	300	300	487 ⁷⁹
	Sir John Bouchier	200	200	6
	Sir Alan Buxhill	1	-	135? ⁸⁰
	Thomas Lord Grandison ⁸¹	200	200	48
Probable Retinue Captains	Sir John Avene ⁸²	10	10	-
	Sir John Aysterby	10	10	-
	Sir Thomas Baunfield	20	20	4
	Sir William Bussy	10	10	-
	Sir Thomas Caun	120	124	46
	Sir Edmund Dumner	20	20	6
	Robert Dykeswell (Esq.)	10	10	-
	Lord Walter FitzWalter	40	40	5
	Sir Gilbert Giffard	30	30	-
	Sir Walter atte Lee	10	10	3
	Sir John de Lisle	60	60	10
	John de Louthre (Esq.)	4	4	1
	Sir John Minsterworth	200	300	43
	Sir Thomas de Murrieux jr.	20	20	-
	Matthew Redmane (Esq.)	150	150	28
	William Riburgh (Esq.)	25	50	-
	Richard atte See (Esq.)	4	4	-
	Nicholas de Skelton (Esq.)	4	4	-
	Sir Thomas Symond	20	20	-
	Peter Ughtred (Esq.)	6	6	-
Probable 'sub-contractors' (Knolles' retinue unless otherwise stated)	Henry Bernard (Esq.)	1?	-	3
	Sir John Clanvowe	1?	-	-
	Sir Hugh le Despenser ⁸³	1?	-	-
	Sir Thomas Fogg ⁸⁴	1?	-	1
	Sir Richard Fyton	30	30	-
	Richard Gras (Esq.)	1?	-	2
	Sir Richard atte Grene	1?	-	2
	Sir John de Gourneye	3	3	-

⁷⁶ Figures are taken mainly from E101/30/25 mm. 1-3 and C76/53 unless otherwise stated. Where there is conflict between the totals in different sources the largest number has been given; - denotes unknown.

⁷⁷ Including the captain.

⁷⁸ The number of men for whom we have a recorded name.

⁷⁹ This includes 12 men of Lord la Zouche who did not serve though his men may have.

⁸⁰ Based upon the retinue list from the St Sauveur garrison E101/30/38, E101/31/18 as well as protections and attorneys.

⁸¹ Total from E101/30/25 m. 3.

⁸² 40 men split equally between the joint retinue of Avene⁸² and Aysterby.

⁸³ Based upon mention by Fowler, *Mercenaries I*, 294-5 and an attorney of roughly the right time: C76/53 m.28.

⁸⁴ Commanded reinforcements from England: SC8/119/5939.

	Sir John Malet	30	30	-
	David Merton (Esq.)	10	10	-
	Sir William de Neville	1?	-	5
	Sir Robert de Plumpton	30	30	-
	Sir John Seton ⁸⁵	1?	-	-
	Richard Sondes (Esq.)	10	10	-
	Piers Straunge (Esq.)	10	10	-
	Sir Thomas Trivet	1	-	1
	Sir Thomas Ughtred	30	30	-
	John Wauton (Esq.)	1?	-	3
	Sir Geoffrey Worsley	1	-	1
	Total⁸⁶	3391		

Bearing in mind that this list is only provisional we can see that the number of retinues in the army – c.24 – was well in keeping with the general trend of structurally-uniform forces; that is to say fewer, but numerically larger retinues in terms of personnel. How accurate are these figures of the army's fighting strength? Like all English medieval armies we can only make an educated guess. Knolles' contract with the king stated that he was to campaign in France for two years with 4,000 men with equal numbers of men-at-arms and archers.⁸⁷ The totals provided by the three extant lists of retinues would suggest that the reality fell well short of the expectation: 2,872, 2837, and 2,475 respectively and even the cumulative figure of 3,391 provided in table 4.4 is still some 600 men short.⁸⁸ These totals should not, however, be taken at face value as we know that none of these lists present a complete picture of the army, omitting a number of retinues. Even the totals provided for known retinues are not always entirely accurate.⁸⁹

A similar problem in calculating the army's size emerges with regards to the retinue of Sir Alan Buxhill as none of the three lists of retinues mention his contingent. This is particularly damaging considering that he was one of the army's senior commanders and his retinue can be assumed to have been large. We are fortunate therefore that, as per his orders, Buxhill left Knolles' force around the middle of November to take command of the garrison of St. Sauveur, and that two

⁸⁵ Mentioned, along with Geoffrey Worsley, by Froissart as being in Knolles' inner circle: *Contemporary Chronicles*, 143.

⁸⁶ Where the total of 'known-men' is greater than the size of the recorded retinue the greater total is included.

⁸⁷ E101/68/4 no. 90.

⁸⁸ E101/30/25 mm. 1, 2, 3.

⁸⁹ The cases of Sir William Lucy and William La Zouche being case in point: Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues' 7; C76/53 m. 14.

retinue lists of the garrison survive from the time of his captaincy.⁹⁰ The lists name 118 men who served within the garrison (62 men-at-arms, 45 archers, and 11 men of un-specified status) which breaks down as 107 men on the first list and 114 on the second with a core of 103 appearing on both. How many of these soldiers had originally been in Knolles' army? According to Froissart, when Buxhill left the army he did so with 100 men, and if he is right the problem is solved.⁹¹ Yet if this statement is to be believed, unless there was a wholesale change in garrison personnel, there were only seven soldiers in the garrison when Buxhill arrived. This is highly unlikely. Unfortunately, without a prior series of St. Sauveur garrison lists we have no way of knowing the garrison's strength prior to Buxhill's arrival. Consequently any calculation of the number of men on these garrison lists who had originally fought in Knolles' army remains a matter of conjecture. Protections and attorneys provide little help with the problem. Only 9 out of the 118 men listed on the St. Sauveur garrison lists also appear in Knolles' field army and all nine give their captain's name as Knolles or one of his other captains; none list Buxhill.⁹² What makes matters even more enigmatic is the fact that there are eighteen men with protections and/or attorneys for service with Buxhill at St Sauveur and yet only two of them actually appear on the garrison's retinue lists.⁹³ Though protections and attorneys were no guarantee of service, (as was the case here as two of the eighteen men had theirs revoked), it is highly unlikely that all the remaining sixteen men did not serve for, if they had not, where are their revocations?⁹⁴ Evidently the two St. Sauveur garrison lists are as enigmatic and no more reliable a guide to the garrison's strength than the lists of retinues for Knolles' army are for that force. It is more than likely, however, that unless Buxhill was drawing the garrison soldiers from reinforcements sent from England, or from some other pool of men – perhaps other English garrisons in northern France – the vast majority of them were already present in the garrison when he arrived to take the captaincy.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ (Orders) *Foedera*, iii, 903; E101/30/38 (1370-71); E101/31/18 (1371) – garrison lists.

⁹¹ Froissart, *Chron.* viii, 2-3;

⁹² C76/53 mm.3,5,17,20,21.

⁹³ C76/54 mm.3,5,13-15,18.

⁹⁴ *C.P.R. 1370-74*, 121, 133.

⁹⁵ Reinforcements under Fogg: SC8/119/5939. There was also 1,100 men sent from England under Sir Robert Neville but this was not until Knolles was back in Brittany and thus long after Buxhill had departed for St. Sauveur: Fowler, *Mercenaries I*, 297.

Are we thus left chasing a chimera when trying to determine the size of Buxhill's contingent in Knolles' army? The answer is not quite. Payments made to Buxhill prior to the campaign totalled £129 3s. 1d., 'for the wages of himself, his men-at-arms, and archers'.⁹⁶ As a knight he would normally have received the standard 2s. a day for military service but as there were special financial expedients in operation for this campaign (double the rates of pay for three months) he could expect to pay himself 4s. per day for around 90 days.⁹⁷ This meant that Buxhill's wages came to £18 (360 shillings). If, at the rates for this campaign, a man-at-arms in his retinue were earning 2s. per day, and a mounted-archer 1s., then for a 90 day period each would earn £9 and £4 10s. respectively. If, for ease of calculation, we assume Buxhill had no knights in his retinue and that he had an equal number of men-at-arms and archers, this would mean that he was only able to afford to recruit around eight of each type of soldier costing, with his own wages, £126. When compared to the contingents led by the army's other commanders 16 men is a pitiful total. The reason for this can probably be explained by the fact that, even though Buxhill was not formally appointed as captain of St. Sauveur until 26 November, he must have known that he were to be appointed before he left England and consequently, knowing that it was not necessary to provide himself with a massive retinue given that there was a large existing garrison in the fortress, decided to raise only a modest following. It also adds credence to the fact that only 9 of the 118 men serving in the St. Sauveur garrison also appeared in Knolles' army.

We are seemingly on firmer ground with regards to those serving on the expedition for charters of pardon. We can identify no fewer than 57 individuals serving in this capacity, all bar one man seemingly in Knolles' retinue. As these men were not in receipt of pay, their service intended to expunge the crimes they had committed, it would be tempting to simply add these men to the totals provided on one of the three lists of retainues. However, as we have seen, the information provided by pardons should never be taken at face value and they were no guarantee that military service was performed, especially considering that on this expedition they were issued prior to the campaign as opposed to after it, increasing the potential for

⁹⁶ *Issues*, 81, 476, 483, 492.

⁹⁷ Hewitt, *Organisation*, 36.

fraud.⁹⁸ Though one suspects there was some administrative machinery in place to prevent this from happening the fact that the disembarkation point and date were changed on a number of occasions means that the chance of fraudsters slipping through undetected was all the greater.⁹⁹ It is thus difficult to ascertain what number of these 57 men actually did perform service, if indeed this was all the men who were in receipt of a pardon for this expedition.

Whilst the pardons for this campaign are problematic they can still tell us something about the campaign and its personnel. The very fact that they were issued prior to the campaign – for service to be rendered – is intriguing, a near unique occurrence in the second half of the fourteenth century. The most logical explanation is that Knolles and his associates had difficulty in recruiting the required number of men for the campaign. We know that Knolles was probably forced to share command of the army because he lacked the deemed social gravitas required for such an appointment. It is not beyond the realms of possibility that this difficulty went further down the social scale. Many men may have been unwilling to risk life and limb on a campaign for which wages and prests were paid for only a three month period and thus the recourse to pardons was a necessity to fill the ranks. This argument is made especially forceful by the fact that the author of the *Anonimalle* chronicle described this army of consisting of a large number of ‘diverses gentz de religione eschapez et apostates et ensemment plusours larounes et robbers de diverses gaioles’.¹⁰⁰ The fact there are only 57 pardons recorded on the *Patent Rolls* for this campaign lessens the potency of this statement somewhat.

Were there any extra pardons for this campaign of which we no longer have any record? We will probably never know but perhaps, given the comments of the author of the *Anonimalle* who noted the unruly nature of the army specifically, there may have been a separate pardon roll for the campaign which is now lost.¹⁰¹ What we can be more certain of is that the campaign of 1370 marked something of a watershed in

⁹⁸ Chapter II, 33-5.

⁹⁹ *Issues*, 205.

¹⁰⁰ *Anonimalle*, 63.

¹⁰¹ This would have to have been a separate roll as was the case for the Breton expedition of 1342 (C67/28A) as the practice of enrolling them wholesale on the *Patent Rolls* does not seem to have changed. I would like to thank Dr Helen Lacey, Dr Adrian Bell, and Dr David Simpkin, with their correspondence on this matter.

the history of pardons for military service in the fourteenth century. As we have seen the issuing of pardons for this purpose reached an apogee during the Crécy-Calais campaign and tailed off thereafter, the campaign of 1370 being the last one for which any significant number were issued.¹⁰² Though we can only speculate as to the reasons why this was the case (there does not seem to have been any complaint against their use in the parliaments of 1371 or 1372 for example) it can certainly be said that, whilst not the primary reason behind the failure of the campaign, the unruly, criminal element of the army cannot have helped in maintaining its cohesion.

Two further issues complicate assessing the size of Knolles' force, the first being the problem of non-combatants amongst protection and attorney recipients. Every medieval army had its camp followers who should not be considered as part of the army's fighting strength but the issue here is those who we assume performed military service because of their receipt of a protection and/or attorney but who may in fact have been non-combatants, employed by a retinue captain because of the specific skills of their trade. Of the 900 or so protections and attorneys we have for this campaign there are around 50 individuals who have a given occupation ranging from butchers and cap-makers to goldsmiths and heralds.¹⁰³ Were they combatants or not? All that can be said is that some of these men should certainly be included in the army's fighting strength although which occupations should and should not included as a matter for debate.

A far more important consideration with regards to calculating the size of the force is the issue of the sub-contractor 'captains' discussed above; were their contingents included in the totals given for the major retinue captains or not as this has a significant bearing on our understanding of the army's size? Though we cannot be absolutely sure it is reasonably certain that these sub-contractor/minor captains' contingents were not included in the totals of the retinue captains for if they had of been the royal clerks would surely not have bothered to include them on the lists of retinues.

¹⁰² Chapter II, 34.

¹⁰³ C61/83 mm.2,6; C76/53 m.18,19.

Though it would seem that we are no nearer to determining the size of Knolles' army there are two factors that shed some light on the matter.¹⁰⁴ Firstly, a chance mention on the *Issue Roll* dated 20 September 1370 dealing with various expenses for the campaign notes that provision was to be made for the transportation of 8,464 horses.¹⁰⁵ We should not, however, assume that this figure provides the number of combatants on the expedition. Ayton has drawn attention to the fact that the vast majority, if not all, active combatants took at least one, if not multiple, mounts with them on campaign based on his research into maritime transport allowances.¹⁰⁶ These additional beasts would not only have been re-mounts to replace injured or horses killed-in-action but also for reconnaissance purposes, baggage, and information couriers. Curry and Newhall on their research into English armies in Lancastrian Normandy in the fifteenth-century have shown that some indentures stipulated the number of horse each rank was permitted to bring on campaign: a duke 50, an earl 24, a baron 16, a knight 6, a man-at-arms 4, and a mounted-archer 1.¹⁰⁷ Though allowances might have changed between 1370 and the fifteenth-century these figures are a good starting point. If Knolles was successful in recruiting all the 2,000 men-at-arms and 2,000 mounted-archers that he indented with the crown to provide prior to the campaign, and providing the information about knights and barons provided in table 4.2 is reasonably accurate, that would mean the army required a massive 10,086 horses. This figure is clearly too large. Our closest figure to the total of 8,464 horses comes if we use the figures from the combined totals listed in the table 4.4 which would have required 8,411 horses.¹⁰⁸ It must be once again emphasized, of course, that these figures are highly speculative and do not take into account, for instance, the horses required for the missing retinue of Buxhill. All that can be said with certainty is that if the allowances for early fifteenth-century armies are similar to those allowed

¹⁰⁴ One French estimate is 4,100 strong (1,600 men-at-arms and 2,500 archers). *Chron. Jean II et Charles V* in *The Wars of Edward III*, 189. Froissart, though perhaps only counting combatants from the upper-echelons of the social stratum, numbered the army in the hundreds rather than thousands, *Contemporary Chronicles*, 142-45.

¹⁰⁵ *Issues*, 269. This is interesting considering that Knolles' force is supposed to have sailed out of England in the middle of July.

¹⁰⁶ Ayton, *Knights*, 57-59.

¹⁰⁷ Curry, A. *The Battle of Agincourt: Sources and Interpretations* (Woodbridge, 2000), 423 ft. 60; Newhall, R.A. *The English Conquest of Normandy 1416-1424: A Study in Fifteenth-Century Warfare* (New York, 1971 edn.) 191 ft. 7, 194-5, ft. 27. There is some dissension between the two as to how many a knight could take. Curry (following *Foedera* 4:2, 114-15) has them with six whereas Newhall (using E101/49/12 and *Foedera* IX, 227-33) claims it to be 24. Curry is preferred because a knight being allowed as many as an earl seems unlikely.

¹⁰⁸ For 1 baron, 47 knights (captains plus knights listed within retinues in E101/30/25 mm. 1-2), 1,590 men-at-arms (not including the knights and baron), and 1,753 archers.

in 1370 then we can say with a reasonable degree of certainty that Knolles took with him more than the 2,872 men stated on the lists of retinues but less than the 4,000 men for which he had originally contracted; probably somewhere in the region of 3,500 men. It might also be argued that Knolles intended to supplement forces raised in England with English soldiers from the garrisons of northern France, especially when it is considered that a number of these garrison soldiers were captured by the French.¹⁰⁹ How many men this might have added to the force is, of course, a matter of conjecture. Bearing in mind also that there appears to have been a constant trickle of reinforcements from England it seems reasonable to suggest that at any one time on the expedition Knolles had between 3,500-4,500 men under his command.¹¹⁰

The size of the army, whilst important, was not as crucial for its operation as the relationship between its personnel. This was especially pertinent in 1370 when the force disintegrated in the field. Our chief sources for the names of a large number of men who served on this campaign are the letters of protection and attorney along with the charters of pardon. To this number we can also add the names of some of the individuals whom we know served on the campaign but who do not appear in these sources due to the fact that they were captured by the French on the campaign and those whose names appear in the narrative sources and/or other peripheral references.¹¹¹ Taken together these sources provide the names of around 750 individuals which means that if Knolles' force was 4,000 men, we possess the names of just fewer than 20 per cent of them.¹¹² Whilst we would not expect to find the names of every active combatant it must be remembered that any assessment of the links between personnel must be considered as only a partial representation of the force. Nevertheless, it is certainly possible to highlight at least some of these connections, both geographic and social. These are important because they by and large form what would have constituted the inner-circle of the captain's retinue, the

¹⁰⁹ E101/68/4 no. 90; *Contemporary Chronicles*, 143; Fowler, *Medieval Mercenaries I*, 294-95, ft. 51.

¹¹⁰ Reinforcements: SC8/119/5939.

¹¹¹ Fowler, *Mercenaries I*, 294-95 ft. 51; *Contemporary Chronicles*, 143. An instance of a 'peripheral reference' is that of Sir Thomas le Blount, who was to go overseas with Sir Thomas Baunfield: 'Roll A 15: 1369-70', *Calendar of the Plea and Memoranda Rolls of the City of London: Volume 2: 1364-1381* (1929). www.british-history.ac.uk

¹¹² The figure of 750 is a rough estimate because of ambiguities in identifying individuals based upon surname evidence. For example William de Lee and William de Legh (C61/83 m. 6; C76/53 m. 16.

first men he turned to in recruiting his retinue before he widened the scope of his recruitment-reach.

Geographical connections are both the easiest and at the same time most difficult to make, easy in that we can place men within local and regional groupings and difficult because we cannot be certain of any other tangible connection between them without detailed prosopography. This of course makes the identification of comradeship groups based upon geographic origin highly problematic. For example, whilst we know that the tailor John Assh and the mason Geoffrey atte Well both came from Canterbury in Kent, and presumably served in Knolles' retinue as per their protections, we cannot be sure whether they knew each-other, even less whether they acted as part of a Kentish comradeship-group.¹¹³ One thing that geographic information does provide more readily is the overall origins of the army as a whole. By grouping men of the same locality together we can get a picture, incomplete as it may be, of the geographic spread of the army's personnel. This is important for it allows us to see which regions were utilised most by the forces' captains and their agents in the recruitment process which, in turn, can provide insight into the recruiting networks and reach of these captains. In effect, when looking at the geographic origins of the rank-and-file of any English medieval army, what we are studying is the imprint that its captains' recruitment-reach has left on the records. To gain this geographic information it is necessary to turn to the enrolled protections, attorneys, and pardons which on occasion specify the geographic origin of the recipient. Of the *c.*750 individuals whom we can be reasonably certain took part on the campaign we only have definitive geographic information for 290 of them; 7.25 per-cent of a force of 4,000.¹¹⁴ Any conclusions based upon such a small sample must therefore be tentatively made.

¹¹³ C76/53 m. 21.

¹¹⁴ Based upon the man's origin being specifically stated, not on toponymic 'surnames'.

Table 4.5: Known Geographic Origin of Men by County for Knolles' 1370 Army

County ¹¹⁵	No. of Certain Origin	No. of Probable Origin ¹¹⁶	No. of 'Captain' Origin ¹¹⁷	Total
Bedfordshire	4	0	0	4
Berkshire	2	0	1	3
Buckinghamshire	5	1	1	7
Cambridgeshire	1	2	3	6
Cheshire	1	0	1	2
Co. Durham (& Hexhamshire)	3	0	0	3
Cornwall	0	1	0	1
Cumbria (Cumb. & Westm.)	1	0	2	3
Derbyshire	2	1	0	3
Devon	0	1	0	1
Dorset	4	1	0	5
Essex	5	2	3	10
Gloucestershire	2	1	2	5
Hampshire	3	0	2	5
Hertfordshire	3	3	0	6
Huntingdonshire	0	1	1	2
Isle of Wight	2	2	0	4
Kent	11	1	3	15
Lancashire	5	1	1	7
Leicestershire	1	2	0	3
Lincolnshire	10	3	4	17
London	32	2	1	35
Middlesex	1	4	0	5
Norfolk	2	0	2	4
Northamptonshire	1	3	0	4
Nottinghamshire	5	0	0	5
Oxfordshire	14	3	0	17
Rutland	0	1	1	2
Shropshire	2	1	0	3
Somerset	2	1	3	6
Staffordshire	3	0	0	3
Suffolk	3	2	0	5
Surrey	2	2	0	4
Sussex	7	4	1	12
Wales	1	5	1	7
Warwickshire	6	0	0	6
Wiltshire	1	0	0	1
Worcestershire	2	1	1	4
Yorkshire (all ridings)	7	2	9	18
Given but Unidentified ¹¹⁸	18	0	0	18
Various Possibilities ¹¹⁹	18	0	1	19
Totals	192	54	44	290

¹¹⁵ Historic counties barring Cumbria (Cumberland and Westmorland).

¹¹⁶ Where it is likely, but not certain, an individual comes from this county such as William le Massy who came from 'Geldeston' which might be Gildeston, Suffolk. (C76/53 m.22).

¹¹⁷ Both 'major' and 'sub-captains'.

¹¹⁸ Where a place name is given but cannot be identified such as Wespsis. (C76/53 m.20).

¹¹⁹ Where a place name is given but there are various locations with this name such as 'Sutton' (C76/53 m.3).

There was clearly a high number of the known personnel from London whilst Kent, Lincolnshire, Oxfordshire, and Yorkshire, also provided relatively large contingents. We can also note that the stipulation that Knolles was not to recruit men from the northern counties of Northumberland, Westmorland, and Durham, as these were reserved for defence against the Scots, was also adhered to.¹²⁰ For the rest of England the table indicates that the army's personnel came from diverse geographic origins, suggestive of the volunteer aspect to the army, epitomised in proclamations like that issued on 15 May.

'To divers messengers and couriers sent to all parts of England ... to make proclamation that all men-at-arms and archers who wish to be conveyed beyond the seas in the retinue of Sir Robert de Knolles and other faithful persons of the Lord the King, in the king's service, shall equip themselves, and hasten to Southampton, at the King's charge'.¹²¹

Whilst this may certainly have been a factor it may also have been to do with captains' recruitment-reaches being both diverse and extensive. One might expect that in counties from which one or multiple captains had their primary landholdings there would be a substantial number of men serving as these captains drew upon local connections. This table apparently indicates that this was not the case. The only captain from Berkshire, Sir Thomas Baunfeld, is one of only two men we can be certain came from this county; the three Cambridgeshire captains – Sir John Aveneale, Robert Dykeswell, and Richard Gras – made up half of the men known to have come from this county and the same is true in the case of Yorkshire with nine captains making up half of the eighteen men known to have originated from there. It must be remembered, however, just how incomplete the picture of geographic origins for this army actually is and, more importantly, that captains also held lands, and thus had connections, in multiple regions. This is best illustrated with recourse to the *Calendar of Inquisitions Post-Mortem* and *Inquisitions Miscellaneous*. Through these sources, for example, we can see that Sir William Bussy, though his primary landholdings were in Lincolnshire, also had property in the contiguous county of Nottinghamshire; Sir Phillip Courtenay's landholdings were all concentrated in the south-west in Somerset, Dorset, and Devon, whilst Sir Hugh le Despenser was a real territorial

¹²⁰ E101/68/4 no. 90

¹²¹ *Issues*, 126.

heavyweight in the midlands owning properties in no less than six counties.¹²² Captains should be seen not as men of one county but as having influence over a wider region from which they drew their man-power. When our geographical information for the 1370 campaign is grouped together by region as opposed to by county a more concrete picture emerges.

Table 4.6: Known Geographic Origin by Region for Knolles' 1370 Army

Region	Total (Brackets denotes captains from the region included in the total)	Percentage ¹²³
South West (Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Dorset)	13 (3)	5.1
Wales and Welsh Border (Wales, Shropshire, Herefordshire, Gloucestershire)	15 (3)	5.9
London (London and Middlesex)	40 (1)	15.8
South East (Essex, Hertfordshire, Surrey, Sussex, Kent)	47 (7)	18.6
South (Hampshire, Wiltshire, the Isle of Wight, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire)	41 (4)	16.2
Midlands (Worcestershire, Warwickshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Rutland, Leicestershire, Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire)	55 (10)	21.8
East Anglia (Norfolk, Suffolk)	9 (2)	3.6
North East (Yorkshire, Co. Durham)	21 (9)	8.3
North West (Lancashire, Cumbria, Cheshire)	12 (4)	4.7
Totals	253¹²⁴	100

The most striking thing about these figures is that whilst the Midlands are fairly well represented, unsurprisingly given that the most captains came from this region, the dominance of men from the south east and London is undeniable, accounting for some 34 per-cent of those of known origin. The most likely explanation is that, as the capital was easily the most populous place in England, there was probably a larger

¹²² Bussy: *CIPM* v.12, 291; v.14, 211; Courtenay: v.19, 38-40; Despenser: v.18, 198-99.

¹²³ Of the 253 men of known origin

¹²⁴ Not including the thirty-seven men whose origin is given but unidentified or those for which various origin possibilities exist.

pool of unemployed manpower, criminals seeking escape from prosecution, or men willing to serve in the king's armies in general, more readily available there than anywhere else.¹²⁵ If the scope is widened somewhat an even more telling facet of the known origins of campaigners emerges. If all the counties south of the Humber are taken into account this means that no less than 87 per cent of the men of known origin for the campaign came from this extended region. Though one might expect this southern preponderance considering the larger geographic area it is slightly surprising considering that 13 of the 43 captains, just over 30 percent, came from north of the Humber. It should not be forgotten however that Knolles (and by association his captains) was ordered not to recruit men from the three northernmost counties. We should also remember once again that these figures of men of known origin only account for a tiny proportion of the total force and we should be careful when making assumptions for the whole army based upon these figures. Similarly many of the captains' men drawn from their own localities, as opposed to freelancers, may not have bothered with protections and/or attorneys. Finally, it should also be noted that as the vast majority of the men of known origin come from Knolles retinue, (around 160 of the 253), and we may be seeing the patterns of Knolles' own retinue reflected here rather than those of the army in general.

Establishing the social connections between captains and between the captains and the men is a more difficult task because whilst a link can be made based at the very least upon a shared regional affiliation we are more often than not in the dark about social connections without detailed prosopography. Connections, both geographic and social, between the captains on the expedition are easiest to determine between men on the 'bracketed' list.¹²⁶ Several men who were grouped together can be revealed to have come from the same county with their arrival on the same day also suggesting more than a geographical link. For example Sir William Bussy, Sir John Aysterby, and the esquire Galfrid de Elkington, all from Lincolnshire, received monies for service on 14 May 1370 and stood as surety for one another's claims.

¹²⁵ Russell, J.C. *British Medieval Population* (Albuquerque, 1948), 285-87, estimated the capital's population at c.35,000 from the poll tax of 1377 and guessed that prior to the plague it was probably 60,000. There has been much debate on this subject summarised in: Hatcher, J. *Plague, Population and the English Economy 1348-1530* (Cambridge, 1977), 12-20.

¹²⁶ E101/30/25 m.3.

What we are seeing here is either a regional military community or a comradeship group in action.

We can also use *Inquisitions Post-Mortem* and *Miscellaneous* to highlight geographic and thus potentially social connections, some of which without these sources we would be entirely ignorant. The best connection that can be established between two men in this army is that which existed between the Herefordshire knight, and poet, Sir John Clanvowe, and the Yorkshire man Sir William Neville. The *I.P.M.* connects them through the landholdings of the former but their association was much deeper than that of lord and tenant.¹²⁷ Both were knights of the royal household and both would later take part in crusading ventures to the Eastern-Mediterranean and North Africa, possibly fighting at Mahdia in 1390. They were again in England in May 1391 preparing to leave the country. This was more than just co-incidence for they both died in October 1391, probably of plague, and were buried together. Here, then, is an example of a deep friendship between two individuals that stretched for at least two decades.¹²⁸ Their presence in the army as members of the royal household also alerts us to a hitherto un-noticed facet of this expedition. At least two other captains – Sir Alan Buxhill and Sir Thomas Murrieux – were also chamber knights of Edward III's household, perhaps indicating that the king attempted to bolster the authority of Knolles' force by including men from his own affinity.

Even with the evidence we have from the sources at our disposal, establishing both geographic and especially social links are highly problematic. Let us take the known individuals from Sir John Minsterworth's retinue to illustrate the difficulty.

¹²⁷ *C.I.P.M.* v.13, 98, 140; v.16, 267; v.17, 447.

¹²⁸ Luttrell, A. 'Chaucer's Knight and the Mediterranean', 144-45; Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, 282-83.

Table 4.7: Retinue of Known Individuals serving with Sir John Minsterworth in 1370¹²⁹

Surname	Forename	Geographic Origin	Additional Information
Alton	Peter de		
ap Meuryk	David	Wales?	
Archier	Walter		
Austyn	John	Sibston	
Aylwy	Thomas		
Baldok	John		
Bentelay	Nicholas de		
Bettele	Ralph	Gloucestershire?	
Beverleye	Richard de		Parson of the church of Croft
Botiller	Edmund		
Bremenangre	John	Bedfordshire, Luton	
Brettevill	John, Sir ¹³⁰		
Castel	Henry de		
Caumbrugg	Henry	London	
Chaumbre	Roger de la		
Chaundos	Robert		
Child	Hugh	Bedfordshire, Shefford	
Cholne	Thomas		
Clifford	John de	Enyas?	
Cok	William	Various England, Kingston	
Cromhale	Thomas	Possibly from the village of Cromhall, south Gloucestershire	
Darches	Nicholas	Gloucestershire	
Dumbleton	John	Possibly from Dumbleton, Gloucestershire	
Faucomberge	Thomas, Sir	Gloucestershire	Held lands in Gloucestershire though they 'ought to remain to the king by reason of his forfeiture, because he adhered to the enemies of France ¹³¹
Garen	John		
Hampestede	John ¹³²		
Herdewyk	John	Northamptonshire, Daventry	
Lederedde	Walter		
Lovet	John		
Marlepitte	Geoffrey		
Martyn	Nicholas		
Myles	John	Lincolnshire, Whaplode	
Orchard	John	Various England Wilton	
Page	William	London/Warwickshire??? Kingsbury	
Pembrugge	Fulk de, Sir	Shropshire	
Rokael	Geoffrey		
Stake	John		
Staunford	John	London	Sadler
Sutton	William	Campeden	
Walden	John		

¹²⁹ C76/53 mm. 8-9, 11, 15-18, 20, 22.

¹³⁰ All three of the knights were listed as being men-at-arms, for the rest of the men no status is given.

¹³¹ *CIPM* v.17, 194.

¹³² C61/83 m. 5.

Westhull	John		Stainer (Steynour)
Whighale	John		
Wynslade	Stephen		

As can be seen we only possess the names of a small proportion of the men with whom he contracted to serve, (43 out of 500, 8.6 per-cent) and in the vast majority of cases we possess only the name. Nor is looking at the entries relating to Minsterworth in the *Inquisitiones Post Mortem* much use since, as a he defected to the French side, there is no entry relating to his death though there is an entry in the *Inquisitiones Miscellaneous* that gives some indication of his territorial holdings.¹³³ For those rank-and-file soldiers of whom we do have information we can only glean limited information. Minsterworth, despite being from Gloucestershire can only be seen to have recruited five known individuals from this region, the most prominent of which was Sir Thomas Faucomberge. This connection, however, was almost certainly based on more than a regional affiliation because we know that Faucomberge defected to the French, along with Minsterworth. Since men's affiliation to the leaders of local society did not stretch as far as treason the fact that both these men, from the same county, did so must be more than co-incidence. This is a tantalising piece of evidence towards what was clearly a life changing decision and it is unfortunate that we do not have any more information relating to these two individuals. As for the rest of his retinue Minsterworth seems only to have drawn from his wider locality of the Welsh borders on a handful of occasions such as Sir Fulk de Pembridge from nearby Shropshire. His other known men come from further afield, Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire, and London, which suggests the freelancing aspect of his company for a man who seems to have been of purely regional prominence. This is not to say, of course, that the other men of his retinue – both those whose identity we possess and those for whom we have no record – were not from Gloucestershire or the neighbouring counties. Considering that we possess the names of less than ten percent of the retinue it is certainly a high possibility. Nevertheless from the information that we do possess suggests that Minsterworth, like the majority of captains from the period, cast his recruitment net widely.

The army of 1370 was certainly fascinating. This study has shown that, whilst being a relatively poorly documented force, detailed prosopography can at least

¹³³ *C.I.M.* v.iii. no. 885.

reveal something of its structure and personnel. What can be said with certainty is that though this expedition may have been organised and commanded slightly differently to other armies of the period it was, in terms of its structure at least, typical of other structurally-uniform armies of the period. Though the evidence for the army's personnel is scanty the captains, as was typical of the period, relied both on their own, personal recruitment-networks and, increasingly, on freelancers to fill their retinue quotas as evidenced by the wide geographic spread of soldiers in a retinue like that of Sir John Minsterworth. The average size of the 24 'major' retinues on the campaign was 153 men, 113.5 if the large retinues of the army's commanders are discounted.¹³⁴ Captains like Minsterworth and the esquire Matthew Redmane, of only regional importance (at least in this stage of their careers), thus had had to rely on freelancers out of necessity, just as earls and peers of the realm had to do to recruit their contingents on other expeditions.

Why then, if the army was in this respect typical of its time, did it fracture so spectacularly? Other structurally uniform armies of the period, whilst also displaying similar weakening bonds between captains and their men because of the reliance on freelancers, did not. Men serving for pardons, whilst no doubt a contributory factor, were not the reason for the army's malaise, despite the wholesale disappearance of these documents after the campaign. The reason is undoubtedly the issue of authority. In the enquiry held after the campaign Minsterworth testified, while the majority of the rest of the army was still in France, that blame should be placed upon Knolles for failing to maintain order.¹³⁵ Minsterworth was as guilty as any man, probably more so than most, but his testimony raises a valid point that it was dissension amongst the captains which was the ultimate cause of the army's breakdown, which we can infer was down to a lack of Knolles' authority; something Edward III had explicitly tried to remedy prior to the expedition.¹³⁶ The decision to appoint Knolles was purely for financial reasons, an attempt to fight the war 'on the cheap' as it is unlikely the more traditional commanders – peers and high-ranking nobles of the realm – would have been willing to lead what was an undoubtedly risky venture without sufficient finance. This resulted in the choice of a commander who, though a successful *routier*,

¹³⁴ Table 4.4.

¹³⁵ We can deduce this thanks to the subsequent pardons issued to Knolles and Buxhill for their part in the failure of the expedition. *C.P.R. 1374-77*, 20-21; *Foedera*, iii, 963-4.

¹³⁶ BL, Cotton Caligula D III, no. 44.

did not command the respect of many members of the English nobility who would not serve under him. Consequently the only captains available were either young men at the start of their military careers anxious for glory or men down and out and willing to risk everything by gambling on the success of the campaign. It was these organisational failures resulting in the calibre of men who served, which was to blame for its failure, not martial weakness caused by extending the recruitment reach to freelance soldiers.

iii. Richard II's Scottish Expedition, July-August 1385

On 15 November 1384 the Chancellor, Michael de la Pole, stood before parliament and addressed the Commons. The situation he described was grim. England, he said, was surrounded by a ring of enemies 'all in league with one another'. There was the French who 'abound greatly in number, the Spanish who abound greatly in galleys, the Flemish...with their many great ships, and the Scots who [could] readily enter the kingdom of England on foot'. The only remedy to this malady, he proposed, was for the Commons to be generous with its grants of taxation. Richard II, now approaching his eighteenth birthday, had not yet won his spurs but 'was now wholly and most readily desirous of involving himself in labours and troubles for the defence of the kingdom' but he must first obtain 'sufficient help as befitted royal majesty'.¹³⁷ The Commons' response was to acquiesce in the government's plea for funds by granting two tenths and fifteenths along with a clerical subsidy, all told amounting to c.£100,000. What made this grant special was that it was to be collected in two parts the following year, the first instalment in March and the second in June.¹³⁸ The fact that the grant was made in this way has led to speculation as to its nature. The official parliament roll states that the grant was 'for the defence of the kingdom and the safe-keeping of the sea and marches of Scotland' on condition that,

'if it should happen that our lord the king does not strive in person against the said enemies, as described, or if a peace or truce be reached in the meantime, then the said last fifteenth which ought to be levied at the said feast of the Nativity of St John [24 June 1385], shall cease entirely, and no commission issued for levying the same'.¹³⁹

The author of the *Westminster Chronicle*, though an unofficial source for parliament, was nevertheless well informed as to its business and adds a further stipulation to the collection of the second part of the subsidy: that it was only collectable if the proposed campaign was conducted overseas; if a campaign was led against the Scots the second part of the grant would be forfeit.¹⁴⁰ Whilst this may seem like a minor detail it is vitally important for understanding the government's plans for the expedition in the summer of 1385.

¹³⁷ Given-Wilson, C. (ed.) 'Parliament of November 1384' *P.R.O.M.E.*, items 2-5.

¹³⁸ *Idem*, item 10.

¹³⁹ Given-Wilson (ed.) 'Parliament of 1384', m.7, item 10.

¹⁴⁰ *Westminster*, 102.

De la Pole's speech had given no indication of where a proposed expedition was to go. He probably had little idea himself. His policy of appeasement towards the French, doubtlessly brought on by financial necessity in an attempt to restore the government's finances through gradual disengagement, had left the English friendless in Europe and caused his own reputation at home to suffer. Nevertheless, as Saul has pointed out, victory in the Anglo-French struggle could not be allowed to go to the French by default: 'opinion at home would never stand for it'.¹⁴¹ Yet the Chancellor had few options. If military action against the French was out of the question on financial grounds then what was he to do? Though relations with Scotland were growing increasingly frosty England and Scotland were still officially at peace. Fortunately the Chancellor had his strategic dilemma solved for him. The French had been assembling an invasion fleet since the winter of 1384, the purpose of which was to be a two-pronged attack on England in co-ordination with the Scots. The first stage of this plan began to come to fruition in late May when the French admiral, John de Vienne, landed in Scotland with between 1,500-2,500 men around the beginning of June and, with his Scottish hosts, raided into the north of England. De la Pole seized the opportunity with alacrity and preparations were begun for an English army to head to Scotland. The hope was that if the Scots' threat could be nullified then the French would not risk landing further men in the north or risk a naval invasion without the English having to fight on two fronts. The English were fortunate in this respect that the actions of the Ghentois, in attacking Damme and diverting the French fleet, postponed the proposed southern invasion of England.¹⁴²

The problem with a Scottish invasion, of course, was that, if the *Westminster Chronicle* was right, the second half of the proposed parliamentary subsidy would not be forthcoming if the king launched an expedition north of the border. When the crown's well known financial problems are taken into consideration the plan to relinquish c.£50,000 appears nonsensical.¹⁴³ Another source of revenue had to be

¹⁴¹ Saul, *Richard II*, 143.

¹⁴² This is a highly abridged version of events. See: Mirot, L. 'Une tentative d'invasion en Angleterre pendant la guerre de Cent Ans, (1385-1386)' *Revue des Études Historiques*, 81 (1915), 249-87, 417-66; Sumption, *Divided*, 535-43; *Westminster Chronicle*, 120-26; Walsingham, 335-37; *C.P.R. 1381-85*, 588-592 (defensive preparations).

¹⁴³ This was, amongst other things, due to a decline in the customs revenues. Carus-Wilson, E.M., Coleman, O. (ed.) *England's Export Trade, 1275-1547* (1963), 51-2; Ormrod, W.M. 'Finance and

found. The government's solution was ingenious. On 4 and 13 June 1385 writs of summons were issued for a general feudal levy, the last time this was done in the Middle Ages and the first such levy for over half a century. The move proved to be deeply unpopular and the king was forced in the parliament following the campaign in October 1385 to promise never attempt to raise it again.¹⁴⁴ As N.B. Lewis rightly noted, however, the real importance of the summons was 'not that it was the *last* of its kind ... but that ... it should have been issued at all'.¹⁴⁵ Summoning the feudal levy had a double benefit. If the military community accepted it then one of the biggest costs of raising an army – the payment of the soldiers – was at a stroke removed. In the more than likely event that martial service based upon obligation proved unpopular the government could force those who did not wish to serve to pay *scutage*, a tax paid in lieu of obligation to perform military service. It was the raising of *scutage* which was the Crown's real motivation behind issuing the summons; 'a general scutage might easily produce £12,000, more than two-thirds of the cost of the army'.¹⁴⁶ In the end the scutage was never collected, perhaps an indication of the amount of animosity it raised amongst those whom were expected to pay it. Though we cannot be sure it seems that the Crown was able to overcome this fiscal obstacle by agreeing that it would drop the desire for *scutage* if the captains of the army consented to not being paid the customary *regard* which seems only to have been granted for this expedition in a handful of cases. It was this concession was probably allowed the expedition to take place.¹⁴⁷ Regardless of the reasons for its genesis, however, the fact remains that the army which was eventually raised in the summer of 1385 was undoubtedly influenced by the issuing of the feudal levy, even if the majority of soldiers served by contracts of indenture for pay, rather than because of some feudal obligation to do so.

Trade under Richard II' *Richard II: The Art of Kingship* (ed.) Goodman, A., Gillespie, J. (Oxford, 1999), 177.

¹⁴⁴ Given-Wilson, (ed.) 'Parliament of October 1385' *P.R.O.M.E.*

¹⁴⁵ Lewis, 'Last Medieval Summons', 1.

¹⁴⁶ Palmer, J.J.N. 'The Last Summons of the Feudal Army in England (1385)' *E.H.R.* 83 (1968), 773. N. B. Lewis argued in 1958 that the purpose of issuing the summons was because the king wished to restore the prestige of the monarchy as it had badly suffered during Edward III's dotage and Richard II's minority. Palmer countered this argument just over a decade later by arguing the case that it was primarily for financial reasons. Though Lewis responded with a defence of his position Palmer's convincing reply cements the argument in his favour. Lewis, 'Last Medieval Summons' 1-26; Idem, 'The Feudal Summons of 1385' *E.H.R.* 100 (1985), 729-43 (Palmer's Response, 743-46). Palmer, 'Last Summons', 771-75.

¹⁴⁷ Lewis, 'Last Medieval Summons', 9, 21-22. Although see: Ayton, *Knights*, 120 ft. 209, in which he shows that the terms of service for Scotland had not been as attractive to those in France since the 1330s. Palmer, 'Last Summons', 773-74.

Unsurprisingly, given that it was Richard II's first martial venture, the campaign of 1385 is one of the better documented expeditions of the fourteenth century. In contrast to other forces of the period, however, the documentation that can be utilised for its reconstruction is not of the usual kind. There are no muster rolls, indentures of retinue, or letters of pardon and only a handful of protections and attorneys.¹⁴⁸ Instead the army's structure can be reconstituted in as near to its entirety as we are likely to get by utilising three main sources. Firstly there is a list of tenants-in-chief – one of lay, the other ecclesiastical – that were compiled in relation to the feudal summons. Secondly there are lists of payments on the Exchequer's *Issue rolls* made to captains of the army. Thirdly, and most interestingly of all, is what appears to be an authentic document listing the structure of the army on the march, entitled *Les Ordenances de les trios batailles et de les deux eles du bataille du Roy a son primer viage en Escoce*, known as the 'Order of Battle'. Whilst there are other subsidiary sources for the campaign – chronicles, around eighty protections and attorneys, and an intriguing set of disciplinary ordinances which are the first surviving example of such regulations for an English army in history – the vast majority of what can be ascertained about this army is contained in these three major sources.¹⁴⁹

Let us first look at the two lists of tenants-in-chief compiled in relation to the feudal summons undertaken by royal command on 11 July 1384 by a John Castleton who was to prepare a list of knight's fees in the country for the council's consideration.¹⁵⁰ Unfortunately his original is no longer extant but it must have formed the basis for the summonses issued in June the following year. The first list, issued on 4 June 1385, was to the ecclesiastical tenants-in-chief: the archbishops of Canterbury and York, along with eighteen bishops and sixteen abbots, all told thirty-six men.¹⁵¹ The second, more substantial summons, was issued ten days later on 14 June to the lay tenants, 56 men in total, including John of Gaunt as King of Castile and Leon, and all eleven earls.¹⁵² This was accompanied by a more general summons

¹⁴⁸ Although some indentures were once extant, below, 185.

¹⁴⁹ The ordinances are beyond the scope of this discussion but are fascinating none-the-less. Keen, 'Richard II's Ordinances of War', 33-48; Curry, 'Ordinances of Henry V', 214-49.

¹⁵⁰ E 403/508 m. 18.

¹⁵¹ *Foedera*, vii, 473.

¹⁵² *Idem*, 474-75. See Appendix I.

on 8 June to the sheriffs of various counties on behalf of the lesser tenants-in-chief.¹⁵³ All those named were to bring their required number of men ‘*cum Equis et Armis bene munitum et paratum*’ according to their (unstated) feudal obligation and meet the king at Newcastle on 14 July.¹⁵⁴ This suggests that from the two main summonses a fairly accurate representation of the army can be ascertained; these men acting as the army’s captains.¹⁵⁵ This could not be further from the truth. To see why this is the case we must turn to our two other major sources for this army: the *Issue roll* and the *Order of Battle*.

N B Lewis long ago highlighted that the 1385 army was far from what could be considered a ‘traditionally feudal’ army, the main reason being that the vast majority of those serving did so for pay.¹⁵⁶ Though it is always possible to provide examples of men serving for pay in armies from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries – the zenith of ‘feudal’/structurally hybrid forces – the provision of pay for martial service is one of the chief hallmarks of later medieval contract armies.¹⁵⁷ The *Issue roll* for the Easter term 8 Richard II, and Michaelmas 9 Richard II, provides the names of 142 captains in receipt of pay for the campaign.¹⁵⁸ In many entries the size of captains’ contingents are also provided and in the entries where this is not the case an estimate of the size of each retinue can be made based upon a calculation of the rates of pay each man would receive for service of 40 days.¹⁵⁹ Though this period of service of 40 days does not exactly correspond with the wage rates for the men of all retinues, and though some captains received pay for less time than this, it seems that 40 days was the standard period of service envisioned for the expedition. Unfortunately, with no other surviving accounts (if indeed any were ever extant) relating to pay and length of service for the campaign, we are forced to take the information provided on the roll at

¹⁵³ *C.P.R. 1381-85*, 637-38

¹⁵⁴ *Foedera*, vii, 473. Of the two writs it was only the ecclesiastics who received what could be considered the standard feudal summons of service based upon un-paid obligation. The lay tenants received a combination of the traditional *cum servitor debito* and the non-feudal *quanto potentius poteritis*. Palmer, ‘Last Summons’, 772. For the development of the two writs: Powicke, *Military Obligation*, 98.

¹⁵⁵ *C.C.R. 1381-85*, pp. 637-38.

¹⁵⁶ Lewis, ‘Last Medieval Summons’, 7-8.

¹⁵⁷ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 83-84.

¹⁵⁸ E 403/508, 510. Lewis ‘Last Medieval Summons’ 6, gives the number as 130 but the appendix of his work names 142.

¹⁵⁹ Lewis, ‘Last Medieval Summons’, 17-21 for these men and their retinues, incorporated into appendix I. The calculation for retinue size where it is not given on the *Issue roll* is based on standard wage rates of the time, (Prince, ‘Indenture System,’ 289-91. Gaunt received £2 10s. 8d. per-day, due to his titular position as King of Castile.

face value. The problem of taking any information relating to a medieval army at face value becomes immediately apparent with even a brief glance at the summons lists and the *Issue roll*. Discounting the ecclesiastics for the moment and turning to the laymen we find large discrepancies between the two accounts on the number of captains who participated in the expedition. There are 142 captains listed on the *Issue roll* compared to only 56 on the summons lists. This is not the only difference between the two documents. Only 26 of the 56 laymen on the summons list also appear on the *Issue roll*. It is difficult to ascertain whether the remaining 30 men served on the campaign, and if they did the size of their contingents.

Only a sliver of information is supplied by the handful of protections and attorneys issued for the campaign. They are few in number probably because the short campaign that was envisioned discouraged the vast majority of combatants from utilising them. Of the ‘missing’ 30 laymen from the summons not on the *Issue roll*, for only one man, Sir John Lovell, are there protections for men in his retinue.¹⁶⁰ As it is unlikely that by this stage men would be serving gratuitously there seems to be only one explanation to this quandary. As a list of summons represented only the very first stage of army recruitment it is highly likely that the 30 men who appear only on the summons list, if they served at all, found themselves, at a later stage of the recruitment process, within one of the larger campaign retinues – perhaps as a sub-contractor captain – rather than serving as captains in their own right.¹⁶¹ Whilst highly unlikely given the lack of a martial tradition amongst the English clergy, perhaps at least a few of the ecclesiastics on the summons list may have done the same if protections for Alexander Neville, archbishop of York, are anything to go by.¹⁶²

The final major source for this army’s organisation and composition, the *Order of Battle*, is the most intriguing of all.¹⁶³ ‘Just what the authorship and origin of this document are is uncertain; there seems to be no copy of it among the public records

¹⁶⁰ Three in all: C76/69 m. 2.

¹⁶¹ For example Robert Wyloughby may well have served with his namesake John, lord Wyloughby.

¹⁶² C71/65 m.8. There are also three protections relating to service under Walter Skirlawe as Bishop of Durham (ibid.; C71/64 mm. 2-3). This must be a mistake for he was not made bishop until 1386 and must refer to his predecessor John Forham.

¹⁶³ BL Cotton, Nero D, vi. f. 91b. 92a. Printed in: Armitage-Smith, S. *John of Gaunt: King of Castile and Leon, Duke of Aquitaine and Lancaster, Earl of Derby, Lincoln, and Leicester, Seneschal of England* (New York, 1964), 437-39.

and the document itself contains no statement on the point; but ... it has been generally accepted as authentic evidence of the size and composition of the army'.¹⁶⁴ Written in French it is a list of thirty-eight men, leading thirty-six separate contingents, along with the number of men-at-arms and archers with whom they served. They are divided into three battles – the vanguard, mainguard, and rearguard – with two wings, within which the army marched and operated in the field.¹⁶⁵ Comparison between the *Order*, the summons, and the names on the *Issue roll*, provides a further layer of information regarding the army and further highlights the fact that none of these documents can be taken in isolation to represent the force. The *Order* does not add any new captains to the army, merely, confirming the presence of some of those already known from other sources. Of the 38 individuals on the *Order of Battle* (all laymen bar two) nineteen appear in all three major sources, twenty-four appear in both the *Order* and the summonses, whilst nearly all, thirty-four out of thirty-eight are listed on both the *Order* and the *Issue roll*.

We also once possessed 110 indentures taken out by captains on the expedition of which a list was made by a William le Neve in the seventeenth-century. Unfortunately the originals are either lost or no longer in existence and we are very fortunate for Le Neve's compilation, which adds another four names to our list of captains.¹⁶⁶ Twenty-two of these contracts were summarised by Dugdale in his *Baronage of England* (1675-76).¹⁶⁷ Lamentably he does not provide information relating to the size of the contingents these men contracted for but he does tell us that in twelve of the indentures the period of service was for forty days; the length of traditional feudal service.¹⁶⁸ That this is explicitly stated confirms that the crown only envisaged a short campaign (probably for financial reasons) and gives weight to Lewis's calculations of retinue sizes based upon monetary sums paid to captains, as

¹⁶⁴ Lewis, 'Last Medieval Summons', 3.

¹⁶⁵ One contingent was jointly commanded by three men (Sir John Lovell, William Botreaux, and the Lord Seymore). Two of the captains, the Archbishop of York and the bishop of Durham, are listed but the size of their contingents is not provided. Lewis, 'Last Medieval Summons', 5, gave the number of contingents as thirty-eight.

¹⁶⁶ BL Stowe MS. 440 fos. 22-23. In four instances on the list there are incongruities between the names given for individuals when compared to the other records. Ivo fitz Warren and Henry Burzebo both have their Christian name given as 'John' whilst Henry Ratford is called 'Almeric' on Le Neve's list. There are also two appearances of the name Thomas Mortimer with no indication as to whether this represents two separate men or not.

¹⁶⁷ Lewis, 'Last Medieval Summons', 8, ft.4.

¹⁶⁸ *Idem*, 8 ft. 4.

recorded on the *Issue roll*. It also confirms that the army was not a feudal force at all. The army was, to all intents and purposes, a ‘typical’ structurally-uniform force with retinues of indentured, paid, soldiers.¹⁶⁹ The combined information from these three main sources, and the information that we have from the now missing indentures, is provided in Appendix I.

From all this information we can see that there were 174 men (including the future bishop of Durham) named individually from these four sources with only nineteen individuals, all earls, lords, and higher nobility, appearing in all four record types. This does not necessarily mean, however, that this constitutes the number of actual retinues on the campaign. Those paid as ‘captains’ on the *Issue roll* may not have been retinue commanders; they may have been sub-captains who amalgamated together to form the large retinues typical of armies of the period. It is likely, for example, that Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford and his uncle Aubrey de Vere actually formed one retinue, yet the *Issue roll*, paying both men separately, gives the impression of two separate contingents. Men with much smaller ‘retinues’ are also likely to have been, in all actuality, part of a larger retinue. It is highly unlikely, for example, that the esquire William Tamworth commanded a retinue constituting just himself and a single mounted-archer. There are also instances, like that of Jacob Audley who only appears on the summons list for example, of whom we have no other record; we do not know whether he served at all, and if he did what the size of his retinue was or indeed if he even commanded a retinue. Consequently the figure provided for the size of the force in Appendix I must not be taken at face value. Nevertheless, what the table does show is that the army of 1385 was one of the largest forces to be raised by the English government in the fourteenth century.¹⁷⁰ The exact size is open to debate. The chroniclers, as ever, vary wildly in their estimates. The monk of Westminster said there were 5,000 men-at-arms but does not include ‘others of inferior position’. The monk of St. Denis is even more conservative, giving an overall strength of 4,000 men (*quattuor milia Anglicorum accedere*). Walsingham provides no numerical information at all although he does describe it as a grand ‘*imperialus exercitus*’ and makes the wild claim that: ‘it was so big that it was estimated that the number of horses upon which the king and his armed servants relied

¹⁶⁹ Lewis, ‘Last Medieval Summons’, 10.

¹⁷⁰ See Table 3.1, 59-60.

grew to be as many as three-hundred-thousand'; whilst Knighton depicts the king as being accompanied by '*flos milicie Anglie*'. Interestingly it is the often unreliable Froissart who provides a seemingly accurate estimate, giving the names of the most prominent captains and stating that there were 6,700 men-at-arms and 7,600 archers.¹⁷¹ This roughly corresponds with the figures provided by the English government's 'official' sources. The *Issue roll* gives the number of troops on campaign as 4,279 men-at-arms and 7,768 archers – 12,047 men.¹⁷² The number on the *Order of Battle* is slightly higher than this – 4,590 men-at-arms and 9,144 archers – 13,734 men, nearer to Froissart's 14,300.¹⁷³ What are we to make of these 'official' figures?

¹⁷¹ *Polychronicon*, ix., 63; St. Denis, 388; Walsingham, 227-8; Knighton, 334; Froissart, *Chron.* xi. 259, 265.

¹⁷² This was also the figure given by Lewis, 'Last Summons', 5-6.

¹⁷³ A vanguard of 5,700 men (1,600 men-at-arms, 4,100 archers), mainguard of 6,040 (2,060, 3,980) and rearguard of 1,994 (930, 1,064).

Table 4.8: Correlation of Retinue Sizes for the Army of 1385

Name of Captain ¹⁷⁴	Order of Battle		Issue Roll		Major Discrepancies
	Men-at-Arms	Archers	Men-at-Arms	Archers	
John of Gaunt – V	1000	3000	1001	2000	+ 999 (<i>Order</i>)
Earl of Buckingham – V	400	800	401	800	N/A
Earl of Nottingham – V	200	300	100	150	+ 250 (<i>Order</i>)
'Le Tynell dy Roi' (Royal Division) – M	800	2000	-	-	-
Earl of Cambridge – M/RW	150	200	201	400	+ 250 (<i>Issue</i>)
Earl of Arundel – M	140	200	100	150	+ 90 (<i>Order</i>)
Earl of Warwick – M/LW	140	300	121	160	+ 160 (<i>Order</i>)
Earl of Stafford – M/LW	120	200	120	180	+ 20 (<i>Order</i>)
Earl of Oxford – M	120	200	121	200	N/A
Earl of Salisbury – M	50	120	60	90	+ 20 (<i>Order</i>)
Chancellor (de la Pole) – M/LW	60	80	61	80	N/A
Treasurer (Segrave) – M	40	40	69	126	+126 (<i>Issue</i>)
Guardian of the Privy Seal (Skirlawe) – M	30	30	30	30	N/A
Steward of King's Household (Montacute) – M	30	30	31	30	N/A
Lord Roos – M	20	30	21	30	N/A
Lord Beaumont – M	30	40	30	40	N/A
Lord Willoghby – M/RW	50	60	40	50	+ 20 (<i>Order</i>)
Lovell, Bottreax, Seymore (joint ret.) – M/RW	100	200	-	-	-
John Devereux – M	50	80	46	70	+ 14 (<i>Order</i>)
Simon Burley – M	20	30	23	40	+ 13 (<i>Issue</i>)
Lord of Groby – M	20	30	30	40	+ 20 (<i>Issue</i>)
Lord Harrington – M	30	60	30	40	+ 20 (<i>Order</i>)
Thomas Trivet – M	20	20	20	20	N/A
Matthew Gournay – M	20	20	20	20	N/A
Aubrey de Veer – M	20	20	21	30	+ 11 (<i>Issue</i>)
Earl of Northumberland – R	400	400	400	800	+ 400 (<i>Issue</i>)
Earl of Devon – R	60	60	101	120	+ 100 (<i>Issue</i>)
Lord Neville – R	200	300	83	150	+ 277 (<i>Order</i>)
Sir Henry Percy jr. – R	100	100	60	60	+ 80 (<i>Order</i>)
Lord Clifford – R	40	60	60	80	+ 40 (<i>Issue</i>)
Lord Zouche – R	30	30	31	30	N/A
Amory St. Amand – R	16	24	17	24	N/A
Lord Berkeley – R	24	30	24	30	N/A
Thomas Percy – R	60	60	80	40	N/A
Totals	4,590	9,144	3,553	6,110	
	13,734		9,663		

As we can see, 11 captains are listed as having more men in the *Order*, 8 are listed with more on the *Issue roll*, whilst 13 have no appreciable difference at all. Such conflicting information does little to aid in the distillation of which document presents the most accurate picture of the army's size. It is tempting to think that the *Order* is likeliest candidate. It presents the greater number of men, suggestive of a

¹⁷⁴ Letter after name denotes position within army if known i.e. V: vanguard; M – Mainguard, also royal battle 'la bataille du Roy'; R – rearguard; LW – Left-wing; RW – Right-wing.

later provenance, as more men swelled the ranks of the army and as its organisational structure became clear. This theory is strengthened by the fact that the *Order* contains two contingents of soldiers not included on the *Issue roll*: a retinue of 100 men-at-arms and archers jointly commanded by John Lovell, Sir William Botreaux, and Richard Seymore; and a far more substantial contingent of 2,800 men that we can be fairly certain is Richard II's own contingent.¹⁷⁵ It is still difficult, nevertheless, to know which document should be considered the most 'comprehensive' portrayal of the army in its final form; indeed how accurate the figures provided by the respective documents actually are. We know, for example, that at least some men of this army served as a result of ecclesiastics discharging their obligatory service as this entry in the *Patent Rolls* dated 24 November 1385 demonstrates.

'Notification that the abbot of Cerne caused the service which he owed to the king for his lands and tenements, for the late expedition to Scotland, to be performed by Stephen Derby and others along with him arrayed for the war in the company of Hugh de Segrave and John Devereux, and that he is not to be further molested therefor, provided that the said Stephen kept with him during the expedition as many men-at-arms, hobelars or archers as sufficed for the abbot's service'.¹⁷⁶

It is more than likely that this was the case for other ecclesiastics. Did those serving for an ecclesiastic's obligation receive pay? Walter Skirlawe, the future bishop of Durham, is the only Churchman on the *Issue roll* in receipt of pay – presumably for his men for it is unlikely he served in person – but this does not mean that contingents provided by other ecclesiastics served gratuitously. As pay for military service was the norm by this stage it is highly unlikely that any men served for nothing. It is probable that any men serving for ecclesiastical obligation were paid by the Churchmen themselves, which would explain why they do not appear on the government pay-rolls. How many men ecclesiastics provided is a matter of conjecture. In her book on ecclesiastical tenants-in-chief Helena Chew, showed that in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth-centuries these Holy men between them recognised the obligation to provide 97 knights fees for military service.¹⁷⁷ However

¹⁷⁵ At least two of these men seem to have come from the south-west. Bottrieux: *C.P.R. 1381-85*, 499; Seymore: *C.P.R. 1399-1401*, 564.

¹⁷⁶ *C.P.R. 1385-89*, 68. The abbot was not one of the ecclesiastical tenants in chief and must have been subject to the general feudal summons of 8 June: *C.C.R. 1381-85*, 637-38.

¹⁷⁷ Chew, *Ecclesiastical Tenants-in-Chief*, 32-3.

the problem with these calculations, as pointed out by David Simpkin, was that when Chew was writing in the 1930s she did not have access to the extensive records of military service from the reigns of Edward I and II that are now available and thus her conclusions could not be definitive.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, her figures do not cover a number of the Welsh bishoprics, not to mention the fact that the service she was referring to was, at the latest, from first decade of the fourteenth century, not 1385. Unfortunately no proffer rolls for this expedition appear to have survived which might provide more concrete information. Similarly we are also left to wonder as to whether or not those lay-tenants in receipt of a personal summons or subject to the more general summons provided any 'feudal' soldiers. Could it have been the case that captains provided two types of men; those who received pay and those who did not? This seems unlikely and David Simpkin's research into obligatory service in late thirteenth and early fourteenth-century armies, whilst not providing the solution to the quandaries of 1385, nevertheless provide a likely answer.¹⁷⁹ He highlighted that it was common practice in these earlier armies for captains to provide men who performed both paid *and* the customary 40 days obligatory service during a campaign. In other words men being paid from Exchequer funds may also have been expected to spend a portion of their time on the campaign as unpaid to fulfil their captains' 'feudal' obligation. We can assume that this practice was adopted in 1385. In the event the fact that the campaign only lasted a few weeks (the end of July to 20 August) meant that this provision was negated. The salient point, however, is that if the practice of periods of paid and unpaid service highlighted by Simpkin was the model followed in 1385 we need not increase the size of the army from the figures provided by the *Order* and the *Issue roll*.¹⁸⁰

Ultimately, it is impossible to say which document, the *Order* or the *Issue roll*, can be considered as the most accurate reflection of the army's size. In all probability the answer lies somewhere between the two figures.¹⁸¹ Notwithstanding the problems that have previously been highlighted from accepting the figures given in official

¹⁷⁸ Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 178.

¹⁷⁹ Idem, 165-83.

¹⁸⁰ Saul, *Richard II*, 144-45.

¹⁸¹ There are a number of different manuscripts of the *Order* with differences confined to the figures, perhaps due to scribal error. The figures used for the purpose of this paper are those from BL Cotton Nero D vi f. 91b. – 92a printed in Armitage-Smith, *Gaunt*, 437-39. Lewis, 'Last Summons', 3, ft.4, for details of the other manuscripts.

accounts for army sizes it would be easy to assume that the figure on the *Issue roll* is the more accurate.¹⁸² All that can be said about the army's size with certainty is that it was the largest English force launched after the resumption of the French war in 1369 for the rest of the fourteenth century, and noted as being exceptionally large by contemporaries. It certainly numbered in five figures, perhaps 13,500-14,000 fighting men if the retinue sizes of men we cannot determine brought substantial contingents, not to mention large numbers of non-combatants.¹⁸³

Whilst the sources, especially the *Order of Battle*, provide extensive information about the structural framework of the army, the same abundance of detail is not forthcoming about the composition of the individual retinues. This is because the sources which would provide this information, letters of protection and appointments of attorneys, which often supply the names of many of the army's personnel, are few for this campaign. There are only 83 extant protections and attorneys combined for this expedition, covering 78 individuals; less than 1 per-cent of the army's combatants.¹⁸⁴ This was most likely due to the fact that the campaign was within the British Isles, with men knowing they could more easily return home if necessary than on an expedition on the continent. It is also likely that the issuing of the 'feudal' summons had an effect on this low number of documents. Unlike the usual practice, where protections and attorneys were issued for a lengthy period, perhaps one year, the vast majority for this campaign – 66 out of 83 – were issued for a period of only six months. This clearly suggests that men realised a shorter than normal campaign was envisaged from the outset. Under such circumstances the vast majority of those serving probably felt that the time they would be absent from their homes was negligible and they therefore decided not to take out legal safeguards.

The lack of this crucial documentation for at least the landholding portion of Richard's army means that making any deductions about the force's personnel is difficult. Indeed the number of 78 men for whom we possess documentation must be

¹⁸² Chapter II, 21-4; Ayton, *Knights*, 151-55.

¹⁸³ For camp followers: Curry, A. 'Sex and the Soldier in Lancastrian Normandy, 1415-50' *Reading Medieval Studies* 14 (1988), 17-45. Sumption, *Divided Houses*, 548 estimates the total number of people travelling north to have been c.20,000-25,000.

¹⁸⁴ C71/64 mm. 2-7; 65 mm. 7-9; 69 m. 2.

further reduced as five individuals had their protections revoked.¹⁸⁵ The remaining 73 men are hardly enough to make an analysis of the army's geographic origins meaningful; more so when only 27 of these entries provide any geographical information. All we can presume is that, given our knowledge of recruitment practices in the second half of the fourteenth century, men's retinues, and thus the army as a whole, particularly given its size, were fairly cosmopolitan.

If protections and attorneys leave us largely in the dark about the social and geographic composition of the army, one thing they do provide, albeit fleetingly, are glimpses of the practice of sub-contracting within retinues. Six protections list five captains – Sir James Berners, Sir Hugh le Despenser, Reginald Hokere, Richard Tempest, and John Windsor – who are not mentioned in any other source relating to the campaign.¹⁸⁶ The appearance of these 'captains' in the sources may, of course, be due to other factors. Perhaps they intended to serve and took out an indenture with the crown, not listed by Le Neve, but for some reason either decided not to or were unable to perform their service. This explanation, however, is unlikely because one would expect to find revocations for the men of their retinues. It is far more probable, however, that these five men were just some of the sub-contractor-captains who would have been drawn upon to provide manpower for the army's larger retinues. Sir Richard Tempest, for example, seems to have had strong connections to the north of England, serving in and around the Scottish border for much of the 1380s, most notably with the earl of Northumberland in 1384. It is certainly possible that he continued this service with the earl the following year.¹⁸⁷

If the small number of protections and attorneys are less than forthcoming about the army's personnel a greater wealth of information is available about both its combatants and their military careers by looking at the records of the *Court of Chivalry*. We are fortunate indeed that of the three cases for which there are surviving records, two of them are contemporaneous with the campaign of 1385, indeed arose on the campaign; that of the Yorkshire Lord Richard Scrope of Bolton against the Cheshire knight Sir Robert Grosvenor to bear the arms *azure a bend or*, and that

¹⁸⁵ Protections: C71/64 mm. 2, 7; 65, m. 8. Revocations: *C.P.R.* 1381-85, 530; 1385-89, 17, 34, 38, 51.

¹⁸⁶ C71/64 mm. 2, 6; 65 m. 6, 8, 9.

¹⁸⁷ BL Cotton Roll XIII.8, m. 2; E101/40/5 m. 2.

between John Lord Lovel and Thomas Lord Morley of the right to the arms *argent a lion rampant sable crowned and armed or*. These documents whilst imperfect, as we have already seen, are vital for gaining a greater knowledge of the actions of the fighting men of the period. Unfortunately for our purposes the Scrope/Grosvenor witnesses, whilst some mention the campaign of 1385, are not explicit about their presence on the expedition and it can only be implied from their testimony. Fortunately the Morley witnesses are much more explicit about their presence on the campaign and, to ensure that we are not assessing evidence for men who may not have been present, we will focus our attention only on them.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁸ The Lovell witnesses are problematic because he needed them primarily to comment on the Morley/Burnell dispute that took place at Calais in 1346-47. Ayton, 'Knights, Esquires, Military Service', 88.

Table 4.9: *Court of Chivalry* Deponents (supporting Morley) who campaigned on Richard II's Scottish Expedition, 1385¹⁸⁹

Surname	Forename	Rank	Expeditions Mentioned (including 1385)	Captain (If known, 1385 unless stated)	Age ¹⁹⁰
Breton	Esmond	ESQ	1350 (naval), 1359-60	Duke of Gloucester; Lord FitzWalter (1350); Lord Boturt (1359-60)	c.57
Brome	Robert	ESQ		Morley, Sir Thomas	c.33
Burgh	John	KNT	1350 (naval); 1359-60	Duke of Gloucester; Earl of March (1350); Earl of Northampton (1359-60)	55
Elmham	William	KNT			c.50
Gerberge	Thomas	KNT	1380	Sir Thomas Morley (1380)	c.44
Haresyk	John	KNT		Lord Scales	c.33
Hemgrave	Thomas	KNT		Earl of Stafford	c.30
Hullok	Adam	ESQ	1359-60, 1369	Lord Scales; Edmund Langley (1359-60); Earl of Hereford (1369)	c.50
Kerston	Leonard	KNT		Morley, Sir Thomas	19+
Lakyngheth	John	KNT	1370	Duke of Gloucester; Sir Robert Knolles (1370);	45
Lampete	Thomas	ESQ		Duke of Gloucester	46
Laurence	Nicholas	ESQ		Duke of York	42
Loudham	John	ESQ	1359-60; 1369	Lord Scales; earl of Suffolk (1359-60); earl of Hereford (1369)	c.40
Mandevill 'le fitz'	Thomas	KNT	1369	Duke of Gloucester; earl of Hereford (1369)	38
Mendham	Oliver	ESQ	1359-60; 1369; 1370s; 1375; 1380	Morley, Sir Thomas (1370, 1375, 1380, 1385); Lord Willoughby (1359-60); Sir William Morley (1369);	c.43
Straunge	John	KNT	1370s	Duke of Lancaster; Sir Richard Walfar (1370)	c.37
Ufford	Robert	KNT	1370s	Percy, Sir Thomas; William Ufford, earl of Suffolk (1370s)	25
Vernon	Raulyn	ESQ		Morley, Sir Thomas	24
Wych	John	KNT		Clyfeton, Sir John	24

In all there were nineteen Morley witnesses who explicitly stated that they had been present in 1385. This is evidently a very small number and we should be mindful

¹⁸⁹ C47/61/1.

¹⁹⁰ These are not precise and are in some instances based upon calculations from the time a man said he had been in arms. A '+' means that he was certainly the age he gave and more.

of the limitations of the evidence. None of these witnesses give the length of their time in arms and this can only be calculated from, at minimum, the date of their first campaign. Even this is not certain guide because, as has been well attested, these men were only providing information about when and where they had seen the contested arms, not their entire military career, and thus without detailed prosopography we are left to ponder the gaps in our knowledge. Nevertheless, we can still make some interesting observations from this evidence, bearing in mind that it must be tempered by the size of the sample.

The most striking thing about the evidence is the extent to which, in the majority of cases, they were a highly militarised group of individuals, the eldest of whom had eventful military careers stretching over three decades. The eldest, the esquire Esmond Breton, for example, had a military career that went back as far as at least 1350 and given that he gave his age in 1385 as being about 57 then in 1350 he would only have been 22, meaning that he may potentially have fought in France in the 1340s as well. Another esquire, Oliver Mendham, had a highly eventful career encompassing, according to his testimony, six military campaigns as far back as 1359-60 when he must have been in his late teens. At the other end of the scale were men like Sir Robert Ufford and Sir Leonard Kerston, seemingly embarking on the first campaign of their careers. In terms of the captains under whom men served we can see that those who provided details of multiple campaigns display evidence of the growing trend of inconstancy to any particular retinue leader during this period. Of the nine men who provide details of multiple periods of service only Oliver Mendham served with the same captain on more than one occasion; indeed he served under the Morley family – William and Thomas – on five of the six occasions he stated that he fought, perhaps suggesting some familial, social, or perhaps even formal retention. It should be remembered, of course, that some retinue level stability will have been down to different captains serving on different expeditions or even the death of a particular retinue leader. Sir Robert Ufford, for example, may well have served with William Ufford, earl of Suffolk – who we may assume was a male kinsman – more often (seemingly only once in the 1370s) had the earl not collapsed and died suddenly during a recess of parliament in 1382.¹⁹¹ Nevertheless, the inescapable conclusion of

¹⁹¹ Walsingham, 172.

these testimonies is that whilst men were, by and large, well versed in the practice of arms the level of retinue-level stability was low; as was common for the period.

How accurate are these testimonies given that we know they were not intended to be full career profiles?¹⁹² Are we really to believe that a man like Sir John de Burgh, who according to his testimony, had last campaigned in 1359-60, had not fought again for another quarter of a century until 1385? Detailed prosopography, despite the difficulties of nominal record-linkage, particularly identifying whether two entries of the same name are referring to one individual, produces extensions to nine of these eighteen men's martial careers.¹⁹³ Whilst most of this prosopography reveals one or two extra periods of service the case of Sir William Elmham shows just how limited some of these *Court of Chivalry* testimonies were when compared to a man's full career-in-arms. Sir William claimed to be about 50 years of age when he campaigned in 1385 and this was the only campaign he mentioned during his testimony before the court.¹⁹⁴ Yet if we look at the wider documentation covering military service in the second half of the fourteenth century we can find no less than *seven* periods of military service in addition to his participation in 1385, providing, of course, that all the mentions of his name in these records are referring to the same individual.¹⁹⁵ In addition to this there may well have been other periods of service, such as in *routier* companies, continental garrisons, and elsewhere, of which we have no record for Sir William and other deponents before the court. The reason that Sir William did not refer to these additional campaigns during his testimony, we must assume, was because as Morley was not present on these expeditions – or at least Elmham had not seen him there – and thus Sir William saw little point in reciting them before the court.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹² Chapter II, 40-42.

¹⁹³ Esmond Breton: (1372) E101/32/20 m.2; Robert Brome: (1373) C76/50 m.20; Sir John Burgh: (1371) naval, E101/31/15 m.1; (1372) E101/32/20 m.1; (1377-78) E101/37/28 m.2; Sir William Elmham (see below); Sir Thomas Gerberge: (1380) C76/64 m.1, this was with Morley though he did not mention it before the *Court*; (1383) C76/67 m.16; Sir Thomas Hemgrave (1372) E101/32/24 m.2; Thomas Lampete (1377) C76/61 mm. 21, 26; (1378) C76/62 m.5; Sir Robert Ufford: (1383) C76/67 m.8; Rauleyn Vernon (1380-81) E101/39/9 m.4.

¹⁹⁴ (Lovel v. Morley) C47/6/1, dep. no. 62, 150, records 189, 318.

¹⁹⁵ 1364: (attorney) *C.P.R. 1364-67*, 30; 1371: keeping the seas with Sir Guy Brian, E101/31/11 n.2, m.1; 1373: (attorney) C76/56 m. 14; 1375: C61/88 m. 8; 1379: Brittany, C76/64 m. 16; 1383: Bishop of Norwich, C76/67 m. 16; *C.P.R. 1381-85*, 476-77; 1384: Calais, C76/69 m. 28.

¹⁹⁶ For more on the incomplete nature of the Court of Chivalry accounts, Chapter II, 36-40.

Given the size of the sample we must, of course, question the extent to which these testimonies, and our extended evidence of martial careers using detailed prosopography, are representative of the army, and the wider military community, as a whole. Fortunately, in a recent article, Andrew Ayton, who looked not only at those who served in 1385 but all of Morley's witnesses who campaigned at least once between 1369 and 1385 provides invaluable insight not only into these individuals but what the *Court of Chivalry* deponents as a whole can tell us about, and how representative they were of, the wider military community.¹⁹⁷ He argued that these men were far from de-militarised. The previous argument had always been that trying to find witnesses who could remember seeing the disputed arms on previous expeditions distorted the sample in favour of those with long careers-in-arms who were not representative of the general experience of the military community; the upper-echelons of the gentry and nobility were seen to be disengaging from war in this period.¹⁹⁸ It is certainly true that the men called before the *Court of Chivalry* enquiry were indeed of *gentil sanc*. Ayton has shown, however, that whilst the *Court of Chivalry* records have a preponderance of knights and esquires this was probably more to do with a reluctance to call witnesses before the enquiry who had not yet entered the 'charmed world of the armigerous' rather than because men of experience below this social station could not be found.¹⁹⁹ Furthermore, by extending the focus to all the *Court of Chivalry* witnesses we can see that there was a wide range of ages and levels of martial experience within the military community. The treaty of Brétigny did not mark an ending nor a beginning as far as army personnel was concerned; there was a constant stream of new recruits replacing the old hands hanging up their swords. Even though retinue-level stability had diminished in terms of the accumulation of martial experience little had changed. 'The professional soldiers of sub-genteel origin were not replacing the traditional 'military class' but supplementing it and, in the case of the fortunate ones, mingling with it'.²⁰⁰ In effect what the *Court of Chivalry* records show us is that by this stage in the fourteenth century the wider English military community consisted of three types of soldier: traditional warriors whose service was rooted in traditional values and social structures; disengaged professional 'freelance' soldiers of sub-genteel origin; and

¹⁹⁷ Ayton, 'Dynamics of Recruitment', 25-33

¹⁹⁸ Keen, *English Gentleman*, 60.

¹⁹⁹ Ayton, 'Dynamics', 32.

²⁰⁰ Idem, 32-33.

genteel military careerists (a large number of whom were represented in the *Court of Chivalry* records) who straddled both the other two groups. The age and service length information provided by the *Court's* records thus represents a fascinating insight, albeit a brief and fleeting one, into the martial lives and experiences of a small section of the English military community in the second half of the fourteenth century.

If the *Court of Chivalry* deponents are representative of a large swathe of the military community in terms of experience then it is possible to argue that the army of 1385 was made up of a large number of war veterans. Sir William Berland, for example, like the men who had given testimony before the *Court of Chivalry*, had a military career stretching back until at least the early 1370s with multiple periods of service as far as can be ascertained.²⁰¹ The army's size was achieved not by relying on novelty campaigners, serving because it was the first expedition of the new king, though there will doubtlessly have been men who fit this description. Instead it was because the crown was able to gather a large number of veterans together at the same time in one place. English armies sent north of the border had always traditionally been larger than those sent to the continent, partly because those in the north of England had a vested interest in crippling the Scots' martial infrastructure, but mainly because logistically it was easier to get a large number of combatants into Scotland than it was to ship them over to France. That the armies of 1346-47, and 1359-60 were exceptionally large continental forces should not blind us to this fact. The campaign of 1385 was the first time that English attention had truly focused on the Scots for the best part of half a century. It was this reason why the army was so large as veterans deprived of the opportunity to make their name and fortune in France were diverted, albeit temporarily, against the Scots. Moreover, the fact that such a force could be raised with ease, logistically if not financially, when there were soldiers serving in garrison forces on the border, on the continent, and further afield, shows the size, strength, and vitality both in terms of personnel and experience, of the English military community in the second half of the fourteenth century.

²⁰¹ (1373) C76/56 m.20,27; (1380) C71/60 m.7.

Richard's army of 1385 was thus one of the most intriguing forces of the entire fourteenth century. The circumstances which brought it into being were a combination of the penury of the English government and the political situation across the Channel being entirely unsuitable for martial intervention. Certainly the presence of Richard II, the first English king to lead an expedition in person for a quarter-century, was a factor which stimulated a higher than normal recruitment drive, but this was not the government's purpose for issuing the last feudal summons for military service in the Middle Ages. Instead it was to levy scutage to help ease the malaise of government finances. Though this financial expedient was ultimately a failure the army which mustered in Newcastle in July 1385 was still the largest English force to take the field after the resumption of the French war in 1369, representing something of a 'who's who' of the later fourteenth-century English military community. This probably explains why, at a time when the number of knights in society was decreasing, those of knightly status or higher made up more than 50 percent of the retinue captains. For an army of this magnitude to be assembled the captains must have drawn upon extensive recruitment networks and extended their recruitment-reach to breaking point. Despite its size, which gave greater potential for first-time campaigners, the army included a large number of veterans. Whilst it cannot be proven with absolute certainty it can be assumed that service of over 20, certainly 10 years and more, was not uncommon; and this was undoubtedly the case for all English armies raised in the second half of the fourteenth century.

What veteran greybeards in Richard's army made of the campaign is anyone's guess. Perhaps they were sympathetic to the plight of a young king trying to earn his spurs, under difficult political and financial circumstances. Or perhaps they were disgusted with the conduct of a campaign that achieved virtually nothing of value, cost an extortionate amount of money, and did nothing to bolster England's military reputation. Did they think fondly back to the heydays of the 1340s and 50s and wonder where it had all gone so badly wrong? History does not record their verdicts but it is tempting to imagine, given the tendency for old soldiers to reminisce, that it was the latter. If this were the case they were not out of tune with the rest of the politico-military community. The dismal failure of the expedition, and the recriminating atmosphere of the 'Wonderful Parliament' of October-November 1385 in the campaign's aftermath, set the tone of political conflict for the rest of Richard's

reign. It would be a stretch to say that it was the failure of the 1385 campaign which was the major turning point of the reign, the juncture at which it all began to go wrong for the king. What is beyond dispute is that had events worked out more favourably for Richard in 1385 he would surely have been more successfully able to fend off criticism which led to so much upheaval for the rest of his reign. The men who donned helmets and armour for the young king's first major expedition, Edward III's experienced veterans, were certainly not to blame for the debacle.

*iv. Lionel, Duke of Clarence and the Retinue of Ralph, Earl of Stafford, in Ireland:
1361-62*

At Kilkenny on 27 July 1360 a great council of the Anglo-Irish colonists met to compose a plea for military assistance to the English government before they were overwhelmed by disparate groups of the native, Gaelic-Irish, pressing on the borders of the Anglo-Irish lordship. The plea, when it reached England, described their position in depressing clarity. Not only were the Gaelic-Irish pressing hard, in places having managed to reclaim great swathes of the English Crown's former territory, but the Irish treasury, it was claimed, was empty because a state of near continuous war with both the Gaelic-Irish and Anglo-Irish lords which the justiciar was powerless to stop.²⁰² To make matters worse the lordship was debilitated by yet another outbreak of plague, the bad governance of royal officials, and the failure of absentee English landlords to adequately defend their Irish properties. They beseeched the king 'as those who sorrowfully have endured and endure our life in maintenance of your land and rights to our power and can no longer endure ... (to send for their relief) a good sufficient chieftain, stocked and strengthened with men and treasure, of which they can live, out of England, as a noble and gracious prince is bound to do for his lieges'.²⁰³

The petition found a political and military climate more conducive to Irish intervention than at any other time in the fourteenth century with the cessation of the Anglo-French war in October allowing the English government to turn to its obligations elsewhere. The Scots had been suitably cowed with the negotiation of David II's ransom treaty in November 1357 and this only left Ireland as an outstanding issue.²⁰⁴ Edward III summoned a council and requested that sixty-seven of the most important absentee landlords attend to provide advice and counsel on the

²⁰² The justiciar had many titles throughout the centuries but his job was to be the king's personal representative in Ireland. Distinction between the 'Anglo-Irish' and the native 'Gaelic-Irish' was not as simple as it would seem; the English were often shocked at how the Anglo-Irish had adopted the ways and customs of their Gaelic neighbours. Frame, R. 'England and Ireland, 1171-1399' *England and Her Neighbours, 1066-1453: Essays in Honour of Pierre Chaplais* (ed.) Jones, M.C.E., Vale, M.G.A. (1989), 151-54. For the purposes of this chapter 'Anglo-Irish' refers to those born in Ireland but descended from early English colonists and 'Gaelic-Irish' refers to those born in Ireland, not from English stock.

²⁰³ *Parliaments and Councils of Medieval Ireland* (ed.) Richardson, H. G., Sayles, G. O. (Irish MSS Commission, 1947), no. 16. A similar petition a year earlier had not fallen entirely on deaf ears, *C.C.R. 1354-60*, 575-8, 595-6

²⁰⁴ Nicholson, *Scotland*, 160-68.

lordship. Absenteeism, evidently, was seen as one of its greatest afflictions. It has been estimated that in 1360 absentees held five-sixths of the land in the lordship, with many of these men merely taking out what profits they made from their lands and making little preparations for defence.²⁰⁵ By 15 March 1361 it had been decided that Edward's third son, Lionel of Antwerp, should lead an army to Ireland to restore the fortunes of the lordship.²⁰⁶ Lionel, through marriage to Elizabeth de Burgh, daughter and heiress of William Donn de Burgh, earl of Ulster, was himself an absentee Irish-landlord after his wife's grandmother had died at the end of 1360 and at 22 he could be realistically expected to press his claims. The absentee landlords at the council meeting were to accompany him in person or by proxy, and this was supplemented by a general order issued to the sheriffs that all those with lands in Ireland were to see to its defence.²⁰⁷ Lionel's formal appointment as king's lieutenant in Ireland took place on 1 July and just over three weeks later on 23 July he sealed a formal indenture with his father detailing the extent of his jurisdiction. He was to be advised by the Anglo-Irish council and the prominent lords who would be accompanying him to the lordship, notably the archbishop of Dublin, chancellor and treasurer in Ireland, Sir Ralph de Ferres, Sir John de Carew, Sir William de Notton, Sir Walter Dalby, clerk, and Sir Ralph Stafford, earl of Stafford.²⁰⁸

Professor J. Otway-Ruthven asserted that at some time before the army's arrival in Ireland on roughly 15 September 1361 the decision was made to place Ralph, earl of Stafford, in command of the army, with Lionel remaining its titular figurehead. Whether this was the case or not it would certainly have been wise for the aged earl to have a significant role in the army's command.²⁰⁹ Stafford represented a safe pair of hands. He was an able administrator and courtier but it was as a soldier for which his contemporaries most respected him. He had been fighting for Edward III for at least four decades and even into his sixties was showing no signs of slowing down.²¹⁰ His experience would have been invaluable to the young Prince Lionel who, despite

²⁰⁵ Green, 'Lordship and Principality', 14.

²⁰⁶ For Lionel's time in Ireland: Crooks, P. 'Hobbes,' 'Dogs' and Politics in the Ireland of Lionel of Antwerp, c.1361–1366' *Haskins Society Journal* 16 (2005), 117–48.

²⁰⁷ *Foedera* 3:2 609-11; *C.C.R. 1360-64*, 253-55. Most authors give the number of absentees summoned as sixty-four but the actual number listed was sixty-seven, fifty-eight lay, nine ecclesiastics.

²⁰⁸ *C.C.R. 1361-64*, pp. 278-79; *Foedera* III, ii., p. 621-22.

²⁰⁹ Otway-Ruthven, A.J. *A History of Medieval Ireland*, (1968), 286.

²¹⁰ Rawcliffe, C. 'Stafford, Ralph, first earl of Stafford (1301–1372)' *O.D.N.B.* online edn. May 2006).

earning his spurs six years previously, was still a relatively inexperienced military commander.²¹¹ It may have been for this reason that Stafford commanded the largest retinue in the army. Lionel may have been in command but it was Stafford who exercised the greatest military muscle.

It is primarily for this reason that this chapter will focus upon Stafford's retinue rather than the army as a whole. Whilst this is a departure from what has been undertaken previously, choosing to centre attention on one retinue allows a more detailed analysis of the personnel of this branch of the army than a more general army study. In all Lionel remained as Irish-lieutenant for nearly 5 years (1361-66) including a brief period of absence between April-December 1364. Stafford only seems to have been present within the lordship until around September 1362. Consequently discussion of this campaign will focus on the part of Lionel's lieutenancy in which Stafford and his retinue were present. The case for focussing on this expedition in particular should also be stated. This campaign occurred at an important juncture in the development of structurally-uniform contract armies. Like the Reims campaign which preceded it this expedition contained a mixture of both paid troops, raised by contracts of indenture, and also soldiers raised via commissions of array. The significance of the presence of these arrayed troops, at a time when these soldiers were beginning to disappear from field armies, hardly needs stating. Furthermore the types of soldiers within the army are different from later, more fully-developed contract armies. This force clearly contains two types of archers, mounted and foot, paid 6*d.* and 3*d.* a day respectively. The appearance of foot-archers in a field army as late as 1361-62 is indeed surprising and again serves to illustrate the importance of this force as straddling a significant juncture in the development of English armies.

Of equal importance is the way in which the captains of retinues in this army came to fill this role. Though not forced to serve and though their economic and social position made them typical of retinue leaders of the period, the government made it clear that the expectation was that those English lords who had lands in Ireland were expected to campaign in the lordship or make arrangements for others to do so in their stead. At the very least provisions were to be made to defend their Irish property.

²¹¹ Ormrod, W.M. 'Lionel, duke of Clarence (1338–1368)', *O.D.N.B.* online edn. Sept 2004.

Stafford himself, like Lionel, was an absentee landlord and it seems that the majority, if not all, of the captains who served on the expedition did so as a result of their tenure of Irish property.²¹² Though no captain was forced to perform martial service, the fact that this service was expected by the crown makes it an interesting facet of the expedition, especially considering there were some who clearly did not go, made no effort for ensuring service by proxy, nor made provisions for their property's defence.²¹³

The fact that this expedition went to Ireland is also a pertinent reason for analysis. English armies in Ireland in the second half of the fourteenth century are a relatively neglected topic. More men fought, and more money was spent, on the war effort in France than anywhere else and the bulk of the source materials clearly reflect this fact, both governmental and literary. Though government sources do exist for the Irish campaigns they are patchy at best, particularly after the initial efforts of the government in the early 1360s. Clearly the war in France was the most important conflict of the period in which England was involved, but the war in Ireland, and indeed elsewhere, should not be seen as a sideshow. Though Ireland was probably not yet seen as the back-door into England as Wales and Scotland were, and though the Gaelic-Irish were never a threat to England itself, 'its significance was that it was an increasingly expensive distraction at a time when England's resources were already tightly stretched'.²¹⁴

The issue of the men who served in Ireland is also an interesting and certainly under-scrutinised topic. Whilst prosopographical studies of individual armies, garrison service, and the English military community in general are beginning to reveal details about the careers of men who campaigned for long periods of time in France and Scotland little focus has been placed upon their Irish careers, or indeed those of men who may have served exclusively in the lordship. Admittedly this can to an extent be attributed to a lack of documentation and the predominance of continental warfare. This does not mean, however, that the documentation is inadequate for at least some small undertaking to be made. We do not know, for

²¹² Rawcliffe, 'Stafford, Ralph' *O.D.N.B.* online, May 2006.

²¹³ Below, 210-211.

²¹⁴ Sumption, *Divided*, 13.

example, whether military service in Ireland was the preserve of relatively few English-born soldiers outside of those who had particular territorial interests in the lordship, nor whether those men that did fight there had extensive campaigning experience elsewhere. The motivations of those men that did fight in Ireland, from all levels of society, whether they had a territorial stake or not, also remain elusive. Booty and profit would certainly have been a motivational factor but there were no lucrative ransoms that could be won in Ireland compared to elsewhere. The King's Irish enemies were also seen by the majority of Englishmen as inferior enemies than the French. There was far more glory to be achieved on the continent. As ever, though he may have been exaggerating slightly, Froissart captured the mood when he declared that the Irish,

‘never leave a man for dead until they have cut his throat like a sheep and slit open his belly to remove the heart, which they take away. Some who know their ways, say they eat it with great relish. They take no man for ransom’.²¹⁵

Whilst the study of the men in one retinue on one campaign can hardly hope to conclusively remedy the relative neglect of the careers of those who fought in Ireland, nor hope to conclusively answer questions about motivation, length of service and the like, such a focus can hope in some small way to bring some light to a much neglected topic. The study of an Irish retinue is also crucial for any study into perceived English military decline in the second half of the fourteenth century. Any study wishing to analyse this so-called phenomenon cannot overlook Irish affairs.

As with planning for any military campaign the English administration had three main logistical problems that it had to take into consideration for Lionel's Irish expedition. Firstly how many troops were to be raised for the expedition; secondly how long were these men to be in the field and what impact would this have on the financial resources of the Crown; and, finally, how were the men physically to reach their destination? All these factors were inextricably entwined and the way the English government went about solving them can tell us a great deal about what was envisaged for the expedition; in other words how much it could be expected to

²¹⁵ Froissart, *Oeuvres*, xv, 168, 410.

achieve given its resources and how far its subsequent efforts could be considered a success or failure based upon those expectations.

It is surprising, given this obvious desire to reverse the lordship's fortunes, that Lionel's army was not larger. If the English government were truly serious in its efforts then a sizeable army would have been required. Though determining the exact size of the force is, like examples we have seen for other expeditions, a difficult task, the numbers that the Crown intended to send provides a clear indication of the scale on which it envisioned operations to be undertaken. It initially appears that despite the rhetoric to the contrary the government was not overly ambitious. Preparations began for sending a force to the lordship in March 1361 but the first indication of troop numbers came on 10 May when orders were issued for archers to be arrayed. The county of Lancaster was to provide 200 archers; Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire 60 each; Leicestershire, Derbyshire, and Worcestershire 40 each; Warwickshire 30; and the king 180; all told 770 men. Though only in the case of Staffordshire was it explicitly stated that these were to be mounted-archers another order on 3 July which covers other aspects of the campaign's organisation specified that a slightly higher number of 800 archers going on the expedition were to be paid 6*d.* a day, the standard rate for a mounted-archer. Though it is not certain it is probable that these were the wage rates for the men ordered to be arrayed in May with the extra 30 men perhaps being agreed later of which we have no record.²¹⁶

A projected force of 770-800 men can hardly be considered a large number of soldiers given the numbers that had been sent to both France and Scotland in the previous few decades. It must be remembered, however, that this was only an initial, early projection of numbers for the campaign. It does not include the numbers of men-at-arms and archers that the absentee Irish lords (the captains of the expedition) could be expected to bring in their own retinues. Unfortunately there does not seem to be any record which gives the complete number of men the Crown hoped to assemble. Lionel's indenture with his father does not specify the troop numbers he was to take whilst the earl of Stafford's states that he was to serve with 100 men-at-arms and 100 mounted-archers and there do not seem to be any other indentures now extant for the

²¹⁶ Preparations: *Foedera* 3:2, 610; *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 19,21,61.

expedition.²¹⁷ Considering that the Crown had summoned over sixty absentee Irish landlords to the council in March it can be assumed that it hoped to raise considerably more than 800 men.

Some indication of the numbers envisaged for the expedition can perhaps be seen in the provisions that were made for the army's transportation. Virtually the entire western seaboard of England and the entirety of Wales were drawn into the transportation effort, presumably to increase the potential number of ships that could be impressed by the Crown for the voyage.²¹⁸ Even this measure seems to have proven inadequate. Initially it appears that the original intention was for the army to leave England in late July/early August as many of the orders for the arrest of shipping required that the men be at port 'seven days before St. Peter's Chains (1 August, thus 25 July) or on that date at the latest'.²¹⁹ Unfortunately for the English administration there seems to have been a severe shortage of available shipping. As late as 20 September hurried orders were despatched to the constable of Liverpool castle and the sheriff of Lancaster to apprehend any ships which came into ports under their jurisdiction for the transportation of soldiers to Ireland who had been left behind in Lancashire, 'for lack of ships'.²²⁰ How can we explain this? Though finding sufficient shipping was a perennial problem for English governments in the fourteenth century much larger expeditions had been sent to France which inevitably required the requisition of a far larger number of vessels.²²¹ Was it a logistical problem of sending men to Ireland as opposed to France? One might expect, after all, that as transportation fleets for English armies were invariably made up of requisitioned merchant vessels which were adapted for the purposes of transporting men, horses, and supplies,²²² it is logical to assume that there were fewer merchant vessels on the western English seaboard than the eastern because of the large amount of English trade with the Low Countries. Yet this explanation fails to hold water. In the period 1320 to 1360 the south-western admiralty generally supplied the same number of

²¹⁷ Lionel: *C.C.R. 1360-64*, 178-79; Stafford: E101/28/27 m. 4

²¹⁸ *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 17-19, 33.

²¹⁹ *Idem*, 21.

²²⁰ *C.C.R. 1360-64*, 212.

²²¹ For example: Kepler, J.S. 'The Effects of the Battle of Sluys upon the Administration of English Naval Impressment, 1340-1343' *Speculum* 48 (1973), 73-4.

²²² Sherborne, J. 'The English Navy: Shipping and Manpower, 1369-89' *War, Politics and Culture in Medieval England* (ed.) Tuck, A. (1994), 29-40, especially 29-31.

ships as those ports situated on the eastern seaboard. However, in the later expeditions to France the ports of Dorset, Devon and Cornwall started to contribute a significantly greater number of ships to the transport fleets, indeed in the last quarter of the fourteenth century the ports on the east coast, such as Great Yarmouth, actually declined quite substantially and their shipping contributions decreased, whereas south-westerly ports like Dartmouth, Fowey and Plymouth doubled their shipping numbers. Several factors contributed to this change. Increasing royal patronage to Devonshire and Cornish port towns better situated to exploit the Atlantic fisheries, and a change in the geographical direction of the French war from northern to south-western France and Iberia, certainly contributed, as did the decline of eastern ports like Great Yarmouth due to internal divisions within the town and competition from overseas, particularly the Low Countries, for the fishing stocks in the North Sea. In short, it was not merely a problem of logistics which contributed to this lack of shipping.²²³ The lack of available shipping was probably a combination of several inter-connected factors including another recent outbreak of the Black Death in 1361-62 which reduced the amount of available shipping, the financial crisis that was effecting the English government, and the collapse of the Bordeaux wine trade.²²⁴

Whilst we will probably never know the projected numbers that were intended to sail in to Ireland in 1361 what we do possess are the records of the king's clerk, Walter de Dalby, for the wages of the mariners and soldiers engaged on the expedition from 1361-64.²²⁵ These accounts show that the size of the force which eventually landed in Ireland in 1361 was only 867 men: 197 men-at-arms and 670 mounted-archers. Considering that Edward III had led an army of just under 10,000 men to the gates of Paris less than two years previously this would suggest a lack of interest in reversing the Irish lordship's fortunes.²²⁶ The size of the force, however, must be taken into context. Connolly for example, whilst conceding that the army was

²²³ Cushway, G.R. 'The Lord of the Sea: The English Navy in the Reign of Edward III', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Exeter, 2006), 359-64, argues that there was likely a significant decrease in the amount of available shipping in the last quarter of the fourteenth century.

²²⁴ Unger, R.W. 'The Tonnage of Europe's Merchant Fleets, 1300-1800' *American Neptune* 52 (1992), 255. I would like to express my extreme thanks to Dr Craig Lambert who informed me of the importance of these factors and provided valuable information with regards to the level of shipping on the east and west coasts.

²²⁵ E101/28/21.

²²⁶ E101/393/11 fos. 79r-116v. Ayton, *Knights*, 10. Comparison with the Reims campaign is probably not entirely fair given that this was an exceptional effort but the army was still small by continental standards.

small by continental standards, points out that there was no precedent for an army as *large* as that of 1361 in Ireland.²²⁷ It should also be remembered that Irish armies were often augmented by local men serving in their districts without pay.²²⁸ Thus the actual number of combatants may have been larger than the pay roll suggests, especially considering the potential for neat accounting practices.

Regardless of this, however, there is no escaping the fact that the army was small compared to those raised in the recent past. Was this the result of a lack of ambition on the part of the English administration or the failure of the absentee Irish landlords to provide adequate numbers of men? The actions of the government – sending a Prince of the blood to the lordship, the fact that the force was the largest that Ireland had yet seen for a long time, and granting Lionel extensive administrative powers – suggest that it was not a lack of ambition. Unless Edward III's administration was naïve or entirely ignorant of the military reality in the lordship it cannot have believed that a force of less than 1,000 men was adequate. The only possible explanation is that, once again, the king's ambitions were thwarted by financial constraints. The government was hardly in a position to launch a large-scale military campaign to Ireland, even if it had wanted to. Whilst it is true that by the middle of the 1360s Edward III had shed many of the financial burdens of the early years of the French wars – the reduction of the cost of maintaining the Calais garrison, the devolution of responsibility for the defence of Gascony and Brittany to the Prince of Wales and John de Montfort respectively – this had not yet been done by 1361 and, in any case, the burden of long periods of war since 1337, and the inordinately expensive Reims campaign of 1359-60, had bled the coffers dry. In addition the king also had to meet the immediate expenses of setting up the Black Prince's lordship in Aquitaine and setting up households for his other sons who were now coming of age and no parliamentary subsidies could be expected in peacetime. In short, debt continued to eat into government finances for the majority of the 1360s.²²⁹

²²⁷ Connolly, P. 'The Financing of English Expeditions to Ireland, 1361-76' *England and Ireland in the Later Middle Ages. Essays in Honour of Jocelyn Otway-Ruthven* (ed.) Lydon, J. (Dublin, 1981), 105.

²²⁸ Frame, R. 'The Defence of the English Lordship, 1250-1450' *A Military History of Ireland* (ed.), Bartlett, T., Jeffrey, K. (Cambridge, 1996), 85.

²²⁹ Harriss, G.L. *King, Parliament and Public Finance in Medieval England to 1369* (1975), 477-79, 483-7, 492, 494-5; Ormrod, W.M. 'The English Crown and the Customs, 1349-63' *Econ.H.R.* 40 (1987), 37, 39; Sumption, *Trial*, 501.

On the other hand Edward III could certainly have expected this small number of troops to have been supplemented by the contingents of the absentee Irish landlords. Evidently, given the numbers in receipt of pay on Dalby's account books, this does not seem to have happened. Only nine of the magnates summoned to the council in March of 1361 eventually accompanied Lionel whilst a further five sent proxies to be funded by their Irish estates. Others either did not bother at all or disposed of their Irish possessions to rid themselves of responsibility.²³⁰ In dismay, on 10 February 1362, five months after the expedition had set out, orders were issued to Thomas de Fournyval and no less than 52 other absentee Irish landlords to come to Ireland with men or money:

'as lately the king sent his said son with no small number of armed men to the succour of Ireland, and he has long remained there at great cost, and lost many of his men, so that he and the lieges with him are in peril from the increasing strength of the said enemies; and though the king by divers writs ordered the said Thomas, ... [and others they have] not cared hitherto to repair thither nor to send any men ... whereat the king is moved to anger'.²³¹

That seemingly only a small number of those summoned in the early months of 1361 had deigned to send any men to Ireland shows the unpopularity of the Irish cause amongst the English nobility. The most that Edward III could obtain from the absentees was a grant of the revenues of their Irish lands for two years to be paid to Dalby.²³² That he could not force them to go shows how far the English military system had developed from the days of obligatory service. Moreover, if those who, literally, had a landed interest in the survival of the lordship were indifferent to its fate then what chance did the government have of ensuring that large numbers of men who had no tenurial interests would go, especially when there was greater plunder to be had in the *routier* companies on the continent? These recruitment difficulties are reflected in the constant orders from England for more troops to venture to the lordship to increase the numbers that had initially ventured out, and replace those who had died in combat, such as the 100 or so that are reported to have been slain in one of

²³⁰ *Foedera*, 3:2, 610; Lydon J. *The Lordship of Ireland in the Middle Ages* (Dublin, 2003), 135; Watt, J.A. 'The Anglo-Irish Colony under Strain, 1327-99' Cosgrove, (ed.) *A New History of Ireland II, Medieval Ireland 1169-1534* (Oxford, 1987) 352-96

²³¹ *C.C.R. 1360-64*, 384; *Reports from the House of Lords' Committee Touching the Dignity of a Peer of the Realm*, iv. (1829).

²³² *Idem*, 384; *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 163; *C.F.R. 1356-68*, 224.

the Irish sources.²³³ These requests for additional men highlight just how hard pressed Lionel was with the resources available to him. What made matters worse was the seemingly large number of desertions that his army suffered, as evidenced by orders in early February 1362 to the sheriffs of Shropshire, Leicester, Warwick, Stafford, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire to array between them a further 230 archers and arrest any miscreants,

‘as many of the men at arms and archers who lately went at the king’s wages [to Ireland]... seeing the perils threatening there, have returned to England to the danger of the loss of the whole of that land’.²³⁴

Desertion was of course nothing new but the fact that the government felt it necessary to request that these men be urgently sent further indicates the unpopularity of the campaign.²³⁵ Considering financial problems, the reluctance of both absentee landlords and general members of the military community to serve in the region, and the recent outbreak of plague, a force of near to 1,000 men was probably all that the Crown could realistically hope to raise under the circumstances; it is remarkable that the government raised as many men as it did for an expedition to an unfashionable campaigning arena.²³⁶ Moreover, if we accept Dalby’s figure of 197 men-at-arms and 670 mounted-archers at face value a rough estimate of the wage bill for this expedition amounts to £463 15s. a month.²³⁷ For a government as short of cash as Edward III’s this was not an inconsiderable sum and perhaps this was the real reason that the army that travelled to Ireland in 1361 was so small; it was all that the government could realistically afford to spend. It might also help to explain why after the initial flurry of activity in the early years of Lionel’s lieutenancy (c.1361-62, when Stafford and his men were present) there was a gradual reduction in the number of soldiers in the lordship.²³⁸

²³³ *Chartularies of St. Mary’s Abbey, Dublin*, II (ed.) Gilbert, J.T. (1884), 395. Requests were made for at least another 650 men. *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 163, 339-40.

²³⁴ *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 168.

²³⁵ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 128-9; Hewitt, *Organisation*, 44-5.

²³⁶ Keen, M.H. *England in the Later Middle Ages* (1973), 169.

²³⁷ For 30 days at the standard rates for the troop types at the time but not taking into account extra monies paid to knights and esquires over and above men-at-arms and that there were foot-archers in the army only receiving 3d.

²³⁸ Tables 4.11 and 12, 220-221.

Bearing this in mind, exactly what activities in the lordship did Lionel's forces undertake? Green argued that such a small force was insufficient to create much of a dent against the king's enemies, and could hope only to 'police the lordship, not defeat the Gaelic-Irish'.²³⁹ Unfortunately there is little narrative information from the major English or French chroniclers about the course of the expedition. Limited information is however provided by Irish annalists and chronicles as well as some official government sources and it seems that despite the relatively poor hand the young Prince had been dealt he strove to make the best of the situation. Upon the arrival of the army in Ireland around September 1361 it seems that an effort was made to put on a show of strength. From letters that Lionel issued from Wicklow, Leinster, in late September and early October 1361 the army was in and around this region, and this may have been against the Gaelic-Irish chieftains Art and Domnal Mac Murchadha who were captured and imprisoned in 1361 and who died the following year. After a break in hostilities for Christmas the force was again in the field by February 1362 with Lionel in Drogheda (in co. Louth north of Dublin) while around Easter (17 April) Stafford was said to be in Kilkenny. In the summer an arduous war was said to be raging in Munster. Later documents speak of Lionel recovering land in northern Munster from the Irish chief Dermot MacCarthy. Meath was held, as was the coastline from Dundalk to Carrickfergus, which formed part of Lionel's Earldom of Ulster. He was also successful in securing the submissions of some of the Gaelic-Irish chieftains although these were to only prove temporary. To facilitate the war effort some of the government was moved to Carlow, although Lionel continued to use Dublin as his headquarters, renovating the royal castle there and he also sought to re-organise the lordship's administration to ensure greater organisation in the raising of taxes.²⁴⁰

These activities were at least in part due to the co-operation of Lionel's army with native Irish forces. According to J.T. Gilbert's translation of the *Chartularies of St. Mary's Abbey*, Dublin, Lionel 'proclaimed in his army that no native of Ireland

²³⁹ Green, 'Lordship and Principality' 8-9.

²⁴⁰ N.A. Dublin: *Memoranda Rolls*, xxviii, 29, 64, 122-4, 151-62, 394, 401-2; Connolly, 'Financing English Expeditions to Ireland', 108-111; Frame, R. 'Two Kings in Leinster: The Crown and the MacMurchadha in the Fourteenth Century' *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland: Essays Presented to J.F. Lydon* (ed.) Barry, T. et al (1995), 155-75; Johnston, D. 'Richard II and the Submissions of Gaelic Ireland' *I.H.S.* 22:85 (1980), 1-20; Ormrod, 'Lionel, duke of Clarence' *O.D.N.B.* online; Otway-Ruthven, *History of Medieval Ireland*, 286-89;

should approach it'.²⁴¹ This is highly unlikely and probably represents a subsequent view of the duke's lieutenancy when after five years of frustrating attempts to reverse the lordship's fortunes he issued the Statutes of Kilkenny in 1366 which attempted to curb the 'gaelicisation' of the Anglo-Irish settlers.²⁴² Furthermore payments made by Dalby to Irish soldiers in the king's service shows that Lionel was not reticent about utilising those friendly to his cause.²⁴³ He was also reported to have knighted several prominent Anglo-Irish noblemen, hardly the actions of a man distrustful of the Anglo-Irish nobility.²⁴⁴

Let us now turn to a more detailed analysis of Ralph earl of Stafford's retinue to see if it can further illuminate the actions of the army on campaign, its composition, personnel, and structural-framework. What permits such an in-depth study of this retinue are the source materials, in particular a fine example of a retinue roll which lists the names of the men, their length of service, and periods of absence (*vacaciones*), providing an indication of their wages.²⁴⁵ It is primarily a financial document, presumably submitted after the campaign for accounting purposes at the Exchequer. Though there do not seem to be any extant indentures or muster rolls for this expedition this retinue roll can be supplemented with letters of protection and attorney along with other fiscal records relating to the payment of troops and, near unique for an army post 1360, a series of horse inventories, one of the last campaigns for which these particular documents were utilised.²⁴⁶

The retinue roll can be arbitrarily divided into four distinctive sections and groups of men. The first provides lists of the men, one below the other, divided into three categories: knights (*milites*), esquires (*scutiferi*), and archers (*sagittares*).²⁴⁷ These men served for roughly eleven months, divided into bi or tri-monthly

²⁴¹ *Chartularies of St. Mary's II*, 395.

²⁴² Green, 'Lordship and Principality', 22, ft.53, has pointed out that as the annal is thought not to be contemporary after 1347 and that Gilbert's translation is ambiguous.

²⁴³ *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 61; E101/28/21 m. 9v.; Crooks, P. "Hobbes", "Dogs" and Politics in the Ireland of Lionel of Antwerp c.1361-6' *Haskins Society Journal* 16 (2005), 123-4.

²⁴⁴ Curtis, E. 'The Viceroyalty of Lionel, Duke of Clarence, in Ireland, 1361-67' (part II), *J.R.S.A.I.* (1918), 66.

²⁴⁵ E101/28/15 (5ms). Interestingly a copy of this MS exists – E101/28/16.

²⁴⁶ E101/28/11 mm.1-3; Ayton, *Knights*, 120-21.

²⁴⁷ Though described ambiguously as *sagittares* it is evident they were mounted-archers as the *vacaciones* show they were being paid 6d. a day.

contiguous periods of service: 4 August-2 November 1361; 3 November 1361-1 February 1362; 2 February-3 May 1362; and 4 May-25 June 1362; suggestive that, as was normal practice, the men were paid in roughly quarterly periods from the English exchequer as per Dalby's orders.²⁴⁸ The second section consists of a series of lists of mounted-archers specifically stated as being from the counties of Shropshire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire, Derbyshire, and Nottinghamshire. Those from Staffordshire and Worcestershire served for only nine months each, divided into three and four contiguous periods of service. These periods of service were broadly similar, though not identical, to those for the men of the first group. Those from Shropshire, Derbyshire, and Nottinghamshire are entirely different. Archers from Shropshire completed two separate periods of service between 22 August and 20 November 1361 and again between 12 August and 1 September 1362. A comparison of the names of these individuals reveals that they were in fact two different units of men. The archers from Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, though serving continuously, only did so for less than a month during the second period of service with the men of Shropshire (12-27 August 1362). The third section and group of men on the retinue list contains foot-archers from the English counties of Worcestershire, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, and Gloucestershire, and from the Welsh counties of Newport, Glamorgan, Brecon, and Gower. These infantrymen were also not present in the lordship for very long, between one and two months each. Finally the fourth section of the retinue roll lists the names of several *cementars* (stone-cutters/hewers) and carpenters along with their period of employment which fits in with the order of 3 July 1361 for paying the wages of 'hewers of stone and carpenters going...to repair castles in Ireland according to the advice of the council there'.²⁴⁹

The division of the retinue into separate contingents is based upon what can be perceived as being the circumstances of the men's recruitment, what their military role on the campaign was to have been, and where they can be thought to have fit into the army's overall structure. The fourth group, the stone-hewers and carpenters are fairly self-evident as is that of the first group on the roll. Though no documentation such as indentures of service which would prove the point are now in existence it can be said with a reasonable degree of certainty that these men – the knights, esquires,

²⁴⁸ *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 61.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 61.

and mounted-archers of whom no specific origin is given – were Stafford's own personal retinue, raised by contracts of indenture, utilising the earl's extensive recruitment reach of geographical and social networks, along with the increasingly usual practice of recruiting freelancers with whom the earl had no immediate ties.²⁵⁰ The mounted archers from the second group, and the foot-archers from the third, are more difficult to assess. There are, however, two distinctive differences between these men and Stafford's own retainers. The first is that the men of the second and third groups were raised not by indenture but by means of commissions of array, most likely those that were issued in 1361 and 1362 and that, by and large, these commissions seem to have been enacted in areas in which Stafford had extensive territorial holdings.²⁵¹ The second difference is that the arrayed soldiers seem to have had their equipment provided for them as opposed to those indentured men of the retinue who we can assume provided their own equipment and mount. In May 1361 orders were issued in various English counties, and the following summer in the Welsh lordships of Usk and Caerleon 'to cause ...archers... to be chosen, arrayed, furnished with bows and arrows and with other arms, and brought to the port of Liverpool'.²⁵² This seems to have been the case for both the foot and mounted-archers but only extended to the provision of military equipment, not mounts, as 380 mounted-archers mentioned in May 1361 (probably made up of 200 men from Lancashire and 180 that the king had ordered selected from Cheshire) had 'horses of their own'.²⁵³ This occurrence is a potentially vital piece of information with regards to both the social status of the men within this army and, those in the wider military community as a whole at this juncture of the fourteenth century. As we have seen in a previous chapter, one of the key determinants of a developing 'professionalism' within the military community is the ownership of ones own arms, equipment and, by this period, a mount, for these represented a substantial financial outlay and suggest

²⁵⁰ Connections between the earl and his son Hugh, the esquire John de Weston, and William Merssh, the latter two having served with him in the 1340s along with another twelve men who had served with him of the Reims campaign C61/57 m.5; C76/38 m.14; C76/40 m.11; *C.P.R. 1358-61*, 21,400,526. Also see below, 223-226.

²⁵¹ Sir Nicholas Beek and the esquire William de Chetewynde, arrayers in Staffs., both served as men-at-arms in the retinue. *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 21, 36, 163, 168. Although the numbers and counties do not correspond exactly. Stafford held lands where arrayed troops served in his retinue from Staffordshire, Shropshire, Gloucestershire, and the March of Wales. *C.I.P.M. vi*, no.340, 178-89.

²⁵² *C.C.R. 1360-64*, 329; *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 36.

²⁵³ *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 21, 329. These men were not part of Stafford's retinue.

that those who possessed them were more than novelty military campaigners.²⁵⁴ Further research is needed into whether or not the provision of arms for a number of the combatants (though not their mounts) in this Irish army was common practice, a particular expedient for this campaign, or particular to the Irish theatre of war. Regardless of this, the provision of arms for these men shows that, doubtlessly common with the majority of other arrayed troops, they cannot be considered as being militarised ‘professionals’ like those men who served voluntarily. Their lack of arms and vocation in war must therefore rule them out of being included within the bounds of the military community. The fact that some of these men were paid 6*d.* a day, like those of Stafford’s own retinue, should not blind us from this fact. This army therefore, lies at a fascinating juncture between the structurally-hybrid armies of the early fourteenth century and the more, ‘professional’, and structurally-uniform forces of the century’s second half. Though arrayed soldiers were again utilised in the army in France in 1369 and to a much lesser extent in 1373 the Irish expeditions of the early 1360s were the beginning of the death throes for arrayed troops within English field armies.²⁵⁵

There remains one thorny question about the composition of Stafford’s retinue. If war was becoming increasingly socially exclusive in the second half of the fourteenth century then why in this army do we still see over 200 men serving as foot-archers for 3*d.* a day? It is likely, though not certain, that these men came from the most socially modest backgrounds of all Stafford’s troops, and their presence in the army is indeed puzzling. Warfare in Ireland consisted mainly of quick moving mounted raids into enemy territory to capture plunder and booty.²⁵⁶ Unless these foot-archers were being provided with mounts, which was highly unlikely, they can hardly have been suited to Irish warfare. The only plausible explanation is that they were intended as garrison troops as opposed to offensive raiders. It would certainly have made sense for an English government short of money to employ these men on garrison duty rather than their more expensive mounted counterparts. On the other hand since the majority of these infantrymen were seemingly only in Ireland for roughly a month between August and September 1362 they can hardly have bedded

²⁵⁴ Chapter III, 121-123.

²⁵⁵ Sherborne, ‘Indentured Retinues’ 24-5. Only in 1369 were they used on anything like a large scale

²⁵⁶ Chapter V, 306-308.

down in their garrisons before they left.²⁵⁷ If other evidence could be found showing that these soldiers remained in the lordship after September 1362 we may learn more about them but until then their role is certainly enigmatic.

The inclusion of these arrayed foot and mounted-archers on Stafford's retinue roll is almost certainly because, though perhaps not initially raised by him or his agents, (though in some cases, like on those lands where he had substantial territorial holdings this may have been the case) they were attached to his contingent when the army arrived at muster. David Simpkin has recently highlighted how in late thirteenth and early fourteenth-century armies: 'many of the smaller units were attached to larger retinues...thereby increasing the organisational cohesion of the army'.²⁵⁸ Stafford's army was, therefore, following long-standing practice. Though the earl evidently controlled these arrayed units we can also see some of their internal organisational structures by the appearance of a number of men denoted as *vintenars* amongst the arrayed archers; men who formed what can tentatively be described as a rudimentary 'officer corps', commanding units of 20 men each and paid 4d.²⁵⁹ This corresponds roughly with the contingents that they appear to have commanded in Stafford's retinue, each *vintinar* seemingly in charge of, c.20-25 men, denoted by brackets.²⁶⁰

Table 4.10: *Vintenars* in Stafford's Retinue

County	Foot-Archers	No. of Vintenars	Name
Derbyshire	13	0	-
Staffordshire	17	0	-
Gloucestershire	46	2	Henry Webbe, Galfrid Carpenter
Newport	26	1	Griffe ap Ruyn
Glamorgan	20	1	Howell Veyn
Brecon	51	2	Madok ap Thomas, Madok ap Them
Gower	43	2	Jemi ap Griff Jemi ap Madok

²⁵⁷ Appendix II.

²⁵⁸ Simpkin, *Aristocracy*, 64. See also: Chew, *Ecclesiastical Tenants-in-Chief*, 94; Lewis, 'Summons of the English Feudal Levy', 236-49; Prestwich, *Finance under Edward I*, 82.

²⁵⁹ Prince, A.E. 'The Army and Navy' *The English Government at Work, 1327-1336* (ed.) Willard, J.F., Morris, W.A. (Cambridge, Mass. 1940), i. 350.

²⁶⁰ Ayton, *Crécy*, 188-89 for how arrayed troops might have been incorporated into armies.

Only in the contingents of foot-archers are these men identified which corresponds with other, albeit limited, investigations into them.²⁶¹ This is, of course, not to say that there were not mid-level company commanders active within other areas of the retinue or indeed that there were not internal command-structures in other fourteenth-century armies. The process of sub-contracting with other captains to form a retinue would suggest this was the case, but it is something of a mystery as to why there is no mention of any *vinteners* in the foot-archers from Derbyshire and Staffordshire. There is no way of knowing why this was the case.

Taken together the four contingents of Stafford's retinue amounted to 668 men including the earl: 290 men of the earl's personal contingent (119 men-at-arms, 171 mounted archers); 135 arrayed mounted archers from various English counties; 216 foot-archers (English and Welsh); and 26 craftsmen. Discounting the probable non-combatant craftsmen this gives the earl's retinue a total of 642 active combatants. This is a substantial portion of the whole army of 867 men – 74 per cent – that Dalby was responsible for paying, providing credence to Otway-Ruthven's argument that in reality it was Stafford, not Lionel of Antwerp, who commanded the army.²⁶²

Not all of these soldiers were present at once. Appendix II shows the different groups within the retinue and the lengths of time in which they served. Even if the 'section' of the retinue a man was serving with was present this does not mean, however, that every individual from that unit was in-arms. Looking at Stafford's personal contingent, for example, only 57 out of 290 men were present for the entirety of the earl's time in the lordship. The vast majority of men served for one or two of the quarterly wage periods. For the other sections of Stafford's force retinue-stability was even less. Of those sections that served for more than one quarterly period (the mounted archers from Staffordshire and Worcestershire) only 8 out of 82 men served for the entirety. There may however been more continuity than first appears, at least if we look at the admittedly unreliable surname evidence. It seems that at least some of the men were replaced by family members. For example, the archer Walter le Bailifson served in the lordship for the first two of the quarterly periods of service (4 August 1361 – 3 February 1362). He was seemingly replaced by, William Bailifson,

²⁶¹ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 127-28.

²⁶² Above, 202.

presumably a relation, for the third quarterly period until 3 May, until Walter returned, serving until 25 June and relieving William. Several other examples of this sort of occurrence can be cited such as the archers Roger and Richard Gilbert, Richard, Henry and Thomas Coke, and the esquires Thomas and William Fort. This also does not take into account similar ‘agreements’ that may have existed between men with other familial or social bonds which we cannot ascertain.

The number of those present in the retinue was also influenced by individual periods of absence, noted as *vacaciones* on the roll, ranging from a day to as much as two months.²⁶³ The reasons for these absences are entirely unknown. It is unlikely that they were for official detachments from the retinue by Stafford such as for reconnaissance as the men would surely have continued to be paid for such instances. This leaves absences that were unsanctioned, like desertion (which is unlikely given that a man would doubtlessly be paid nothing if he left the retinue of his own volition), sickness, administrative changes such as transferring to another retinue or garrison for which a man was paid from another source, or authorised periods of leave if a man desired to return home, perhaps to resolve some business in England. Nor do we know whether the dates recorded were for single or multiple absences with clerks simply recording them as one long period for ease of accounting.

As well as providing information about the numbers of men present at a particular time *vacaciones* may also provide invaluable insight into the small comradeship groups, bands of men who often served and were recruited together, that lay at the heart of retinue formation. It is tempting to deduce that men whose absences began and ended at the same time were members of a particular comradeship group. For instance, Thomas Lord Roos, eight esquires and eighteen mounted-archers, were absent for 36 days from 29 March-4 May 1362.²⁶⁴ Without further evidence, however, we cannot know whether this was the case. Even the retinue-roll itself can pour cold water on this notion. Suspiciously, when looking at the periods of absence for the men of the retinue, it can be seen that nearly all of the *vacaciones* terminate the day that particular quarterly wage periods ended, again suggestive of neat accounting devices. It is not impossible that some of those absent for concurrent periods of time were

²⁶³ Appendix III.

²⁶⁴ Appendix III.

indeed long-standing comrades-in-arms, but we should be careful of making such assumptions.

When both the varying periods of service for different groups of men and the *vacaciones* are taken into account the fighting strength of the retinue can be roughly calculated over time.

Table 4.11: Numerical Strength of Stafford's Retinue in Ireland over time, August 1361-September 1362²⁶⁵

Date	Men-at-arms	Mounted-archers	Foot-Archers	Total	Daily Wage Bill
Aug.–mid Nov. 1361	97 (91)	170 (164)	0	267 (255)	£10 7s. 8d.
Mid-Nov. 1361–1 Feb. 1362	87 (83)	135 (100)	0	222 (183)	£8 17s. 2d.
2 Feb.–3 May 1362	67 (47)	127 (91)	0	194 (138)	£7 11s. 2d.
End of May–End July 1362	51 (30)	60 (45)	15	126 (90)	£5 5d.
Aug.–Sept. 1362	0	47	216 (215)	263 (262)	£3 17s. 6d.

The most noticeable facet of this table is that, though the number of combatants who actually served Stafford during his time in Ireland was 668, there were never more than c.260 men present with the earl at any one time. Moreover, whilst it seems that, despite a small blip between February and July 1362, numbers of over 200 were, by and large, consistently maintained, attention should be drawn to the types of troops that were present within the lordship. After the end of June 1362 the most martially potent troops – the men-at-arms and mounted archers of Stafford's personal contingent – had left to be replaced by arrayed mounted and foot-archers. This occurrence is illustrated for Stafford's personal contingent in the table below. Indeed the numbers within Stafford's personal contingent dropped steadily from the time the retinue arrived in the lordship; the earl only maintaining the promised 100 men-at-arms and archers he had agreed to serve with in his indenture of May 1361 for the first few months of the campaign.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁵ The first number denotes the total number of men if the retinue was at full strength. The second number in brackets and *italics* shows the minimum strength of the retinue if all those absent during the said period were so at once. In reality the number of men in the retinue was somewhere between these two figures. The daily wage bill is the sum if all had been present.

²⁶⁶ E101/28/27 m. 4.

Table 4.12: Numbers Present in the 'Personal' Contingent of Stafford's retinue 1361-62

Period of Service	Knights	Esquires	Mounted-archers	Total
4 August–2 November 1361	19 (16)	78 (75)	100	198 (191)
3 November 1361–1 February 1362	16	71 (67)	100	187 (183)
2 February–3 May 1362	14 (11)	53 (38)	100 (76)	167 (125)
4 May–25 June 1362	11 (6)	40 (24)	60 (45)	111 (75)

Table 4.12 also highlights a trend noted by several scholars who have looked at Lionel of Antwerp's time in Ireland; that after the initial surge in troop numbers in the lordship following the his appointment the number of men noticeably diminished. Why did both the calibre of soldiers in the lordship and, ultimately, the size of the Irish army diminish? Was it the result of casualties sustained, or a shift in strategic emphasis because after nearly a year of campaigning within the lordship, Lionel and Stafford had realised they faced an impossible task? Both may be true but a change in English policy is far more likely to have been down to financial necessity.²⁶⁷ The English government was hardly awash with cash in the early 1360s and to reduce costs the types of soldier being employed in Ireland may have been altered. Table 4.11 shows that the daily wage bill for the campaign was steadily reduced from £10 7s. 8d. to £3 17s. 6d., with the latter figure representing a near identical number of men.²⁶⁸ If the personnel change were not intended as a cost-cutting exercise then it certainly proved to be so.

The large turnover in personnel certainly sheds some light on the now lost agreements between Stafford and his personal contingent. Unless there was considerable re-organisation of Lionel's army during 1361-62 it seems that the vast majority of those in Stafford's retinue did not agree to serve with the earl for any longer than around one of the quarterly payment periods of the army. Whilst this may at first seem unlikely given the circumstances of the campaign it makes perfect sense. In the spring and summer of 1361 it was not known how long Lionel's army would be in Ireland. While it was often difficult to predict exactly how long an army would be in France, for example, the differences between campaigning in France and Ireland

²⁶⁷ Connolly, 'Financing English Expeditions', 107-8.

²⁶⁸ In this latter period it is not even certain whether Stafford was present as his pay only lasts until 25 June 1362.

were marked. In France the aim was to ravage enemy territory and cause as much destruction as possible, hopefully to quickly bring them to battle. In Ireland, with no singular over-arching political authority to defeat, the aim was to consolidate and, presumably, attempt conquests outside the bounds of the lordship piecemeal as and when the opportunity arose.²⁶⁹ In Ireland, therefore, it would hardly have been prudent to commit men to serve for an extended period of time when it was not known how long the pacification and conquest would take, especially as the Crown was short of funds. Perhaps what was envisioned was a rota system with a constant stream of fresh recruits from England. Whatever the reason, however, the problems that the lordship faced must surely have become apparent in the first few months of Lionel's tenure.

Another interesting observation that can be made by looking at the numbers and type of soldiers in Stafford's retinue is that they call into question the figure given in Dalby's account of wages for the whole army of 197 men-at-arms and 670 mounted-archers; Stafford's retinue clearly contained foot-archers who are not represented in Dalby's accounts.²⁷⁰ This leaves three possibilities: that these foot-archers were not being paid and were serving as a result of some form of obligation; that they were being paid from the proceeds of the Irish exchequer; or we are once again seeing evidence of neat accounting practices in an official fiscal document. Evidence for one of the Gloucestershire foot-archers, John Paysot, who was absent for eleven days and as a result lost 2*s.* 9*d.* in wages shows that these infantrymen were indeed in receipt of the customary 3*d.* for their rank.²⁷¹ The fact that the document is found in the collections of the English Exchequer doubtlessly makes this the source of the pay. We are therefore seeing evidence, once again, that the number of soldiers given in an official financial document is not representative of the actual number of men on campaign and that numbers of combatants in such documents often act as an accounting device for the calculation of pay. Thus the actual number of soldiers in the army as a whole may have been larger than Dalby's account suggests.

²⁶⁹ Chapter V, 306-308.

²⁷⁰ E101/28/21.

²⁷¹ Hewitt, *Organisation*, 36.

Who were the men of Stafford's retinue? Where did they come from; how many were connected to the earl by land tenure and/or social links and how many were from amongst the growing band of freelance soldiers, and to what extent did he rely on sub-contractors? In posing these questions we are, of course, referring to the earl's personal contingent, men raised via contracts of indenture or less formal, verbal agreements. These questions, like for many fourteenth century retinues, are difficult to answer. Though the earl may have had ties, particularly tenurial, to some of the arrayed contingents of his retinue, as we are unable to determine the circumstances of their recruitment (whether they were enlisted voluntarily or by coercion) it is prudent to focus on the men of the earl's personal contingent.

As ever, connections to those from the highest ranks of the social spectrum leap to the fore: the banneret, Thomas Lord Roos, several knights, and a number of the esquires. A large number of the knights in particular had familial connections to the earl. Lord Roos of Helmsley, North Yorkshire, was married to Stafford's daughter Beatrice, making Roos Stafford's son-in-law.²⁷² Sir Hugh Stafford was Stafford's heir, the esquire Richard Stafford was the earl's brother and possibly a man of the cloth,²⁷³ whilst Sir Robert Stafford was doubtlessly another close relative as, in all probability, were the two esquires, Nicholas and Humphrey Stafford. There were also several prominent individuals in the retinue, aside from family members, with whom Stafford may have had extensive social-connections thanks to frequent appearances on commissions. If familiarity did indeed engender friendship then no man was a more consistent companion of the earl than the Staffordshire knight Sir Nicholas Beek. Beek's association with Stafford went back to at least 1350 when they were named as commissioners of the peace in Leicestershire and from then on he was a near constant companion in administrative business up until his death sometime before July 1370.²⁷⁴ This association, as far as we know, culminated in Beek becoming one of the earl's formal retainers at sometime before the Reims campaign in which he served with the earl, and of course his appearance in Stafford's retinue in 1361-62, for the latter of which he also acted as one of the commissioners of array in

²⁷² She was also countess of Desmond. *C.P.R.* 1358-61, 271.

²⁷³ *Idem*, 454.

²⁷⁴ *C.P.R.* 1348-50, 526-27; 1350-54, 94; 1361-64, 285, 529; 1364-67, 203-4; 1367-70, 192, 473.

Staffordshire.²⁷⁵ Beek was certainly not the only member of the 1361-62 retinue who appears in an administrative capacity with Stafford. The esquire Richard del Lee served on a commission in Warwickshire in May 1361; Sir John Peyto of Chesterton, Warwickshire, also served on commissions with the earl in that county in 1344 and again in 1353; Sir Robert de Grendon acted as a commissioner of array in 1367 and as a commissioner of oyer-and-terminer with Sir Richard Stafford, the following year; the esquire William Chetewynde seems to have had a general association with the Stafford family, acting as a commissioner of array in Staffordshire for the expedition of 1361 and serving on another commission in 1373 with Hugh Stafford when he became earl; and Sir John de Bromwich acted as one of the commissioners of array for the expedition in Gloucester.²⁷⁶ In addition, the esquire Nicholas Lichfield, for example, acted as one of Stafford's attorneys for the campaign while another esquire, William Barber, was later described in 1367 as one of Stafford's servants.²⁷⁷ The earl also evidently enjoyed some form of working relationship with several families whose members swelled the ranks of his retinue. Whilst it is always dangerous to assume men of the same surname were related it is possible that the Baret family provided Stafford's retinue with two esquires. The same can be said of the Peytos. Sir John de Peyto and the esquire Thomas Peyto both served on the expedition while a William de 'Peito' acted as one of Stafford's attorneys for the campaign and later as a messenger for the earl in May 1367.²⁷⁸

Geographical connections between Stafford and his men can also be detected. The earl's *Inquisition Post Mortem* shows that he had extensive landholdings all over England and Wales.²⁷⁹ Though this is obvious given his status we should be careful in ascribing geographic connections between him and the men of his retinue purely on these grounds. Nevertheless it is evident that some of Stafford's connections with the men of his personal contingent were indeed partly, if not primarily, the result of geographic proximity. Several knights for example can be shown to have had their own primary landholdings in Staffordshire such as Sir Robert de Grendon, Sir Nicholas Beek and Sir William Bakepus. Other men of the retinue whose geographic

²⁷⁵ C76/38 m.14.

²⁷⁶ C.P.R. 1343-45, 413; 1350-54, 459; 1361-64, 21, 71, 430; 1367-70, 142; 1370-74, 310.

²⁷⁷ C.P.R. 1361-64, 55; 1364-67, 439.

²⁷⁸ Idem, 65; Idem, 439.

²⁷⁹ C.I.P.M. vi., n.340, 178-189.

origins can be determined with a reasonable degree of certainty also shared tenurial relationships in counties in which Stafford held property such as Sir John Peyto and the esquire John Dunheved in Warwickshire. Information on the geographic origins of the men of Stafford's contingent may also be tentatively provided by appointments to commissions, and service as castellans, in particular regions. Correlating the names of the knights and esquires of Stafford's personal contingent with the names provided in Rickard's study into castellans during the fourteenth century, for example, provides the potential geographic origins of no fewer than seventeen men.²⁸⁰ Unfortunately we cannot be certain that garrison service in a particular region denoted a local connection.

Doubtless too there were social and geographic connections between the men of the retinue themselves such as that which may have existed between Sir John de Bromwich and the Talbot family through marriage and by the fact that he and Sir John Talbot began their service together on 6 March 1362.²⁸¹ Similarly Sir Richard Stafford named one of his attorneys for the expedition as Simon de Lichfield, a man later serving with Richard on a commission of the peace, and whose male relative may have been the esquire Nicholas Lichfield who served on the 1361-62 expedition with Richard's brother.²⁸² Most notably of all was the connection between Sir Nicholas Beek and Sir Robert Grendon who were both sent to parliament in 1363 as knights for Staffordshire.²⁸³

Though admittedly the examples provided of inter-retinue connections cover only a small portion of the individuals from Stafford's personal contingent there were doubtlessly more of which the records give no indication. This is not to say, of course, that Stafford had geographic or social links to all the men in his retinue. We have already seen that whilst at the heart of the retinue was the lord, his kinsmen and close friends, the growing demands of war necessitated the employment of freelancers who had no previous links with a retinue's commander.²⁸⁴ Given its size, the vast majority of men from Stafford's 'personal' contingent probably had no social or geographic

²⁸⁰ Rickard, *Castle Community*, 142, 144-45, 228, 239, 249-50, 253, 265, 268, 283-84, 293, 295, 323-4, 349, 366 402-3, 482, 500, 556, 589.

²⁸¹ *C.P.R. 1367-70*, 473.

²⁸² *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 98; *1367-70*, 473.

²⁸³ *C.C.R. 1360-64*, 557.

²⁸⁴ Above, 144-148.

ties to the earl, serving with him simply because the Irish expedition offered another convenient opportunity to fight. Yet this in no way detracts from the strength of the links at the heart of the retinue which must have ensured solidarity at least at the core. When the strength of these bonds is compared to the lack of bonds between the men of Knolles' army in 1370, for example, the contrast could not be more marked.

Letters of protection, appointment of attorneys, and charters of pardon provide little additional detail for the retinue. Not one individual in Stafford's retinue subsequently received a charter of pardon for his service. Letters of protection and attorney are unfortunately only moderately more useful; only fourteen individuals took out these legal safeguards.²⁸⁵ On both counts this is surprising considering that, cumulatively, several hundred of these three types of document were issued for the Reims campaign just over a year previously. Given what we know about the lengths of service in Stafford's retinue we might imply from this lack of documentation that most men did not believe they would be in the lordship long enough to warrant taking out these securities. If we add our fourteen men in receipt of protections/attorneys to those for Lionel's whole Irish army for its entire duration in the lordship (1361-66), giving a cumulative total of c.100 recipients, we can add the names of a further six men who seem, initially at least, to have served in Stafford's retinue.²⁸⁶ Even given these additional six names however the number of protection/attorney recipients, and the other data we might use for assembling the geographic origins of Stafford's retinue, are too small to conduct any sort of meaningful analysis of men's geographic origins.

What some of these sources can do, however, is provide some useful information about the past and future martial careers of some of the men of the earl's retinue. It is possible to see, for example, that whilst the majority of men from the earl's personal contingent did not take out legal safeguards for their time in Ireland in 1361-62, many did so for subsequent periods of Irish service, suggesting that, as far as we can ascertain from nominal record-linkage, that they became frequent Irish

²⁸⁵ *C.P.R.* 1358-61, 186; 1361-64, 50, 87, 89, 290, 317.

²⁸⁶ *C.P.R.* 1361-64, 317; 1364-67, 34, 95, 187.

campaigners.²⁸⁷ If the scope is widened to take in service in France and elsewhere we can see that many of Stafford's personal retinue went on to serve in multiple theatres of war. As well as serving in Ireland in 1361-2 and again in 1372-73, for example, Sir Robert Ashton also served in France in 1369 and 1377, at sea in 1371, in Brittany with John de Montfort in 1374, in the Guines garrison in 1379, and at Calais in 1381. While it is true that Ashton, as well as Sir John de Bromwich, were both future justiciars of Ireland, and could thus be expected to be militarily active in the region, this was will almost certainly have been true of men from Stafford's retinue further down the social scale.²⁸⁸ Although we must be extremely careful when stating that men of the same name in military pardon records are the same man, it can tentatively be seen that twenty-two men of Stafford's 1361-62 retinue also had namesakes who received pardons in France in 1359-60.²⁸⁹ At least three of these men – the archers Henry de Baddeley and Thomas Carte, and the esquire Walter de Verney – stated that their captain in 1359-60 had been the earl of Stafford. This suggests that, for these three at least, service with the earl may have been more than a fleeting commitment, and that they had served in more than one theatre of war.

Whilst protections and attorneys add only a little to our knowledge of the retinue, documents relating to the men's horses from their transportation and appraisal, to compensation if they were killed on campaign, are a welcome tonic, despite their own inherent fallibilities. These documents, their purpose, draw-backs, and historical significance, have been discussed extensively by Andrew Ayton in his groundbreaking work on the English military community, *Knights and Warhorses*. Utilising his research on these documents, and applying it to the conditions of Lionel's Irish expedition and Stafford's retinue, allows us to place both within a wider historical framework.

²⁸⁷ For example: Sir Robert de Ashton (1363, 1364, 1365, 1372). Sir John de Bromwich (1379) and Thomas Fort, (1364). *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 317; *1364-67*, 20, 34, 187; *1370-74*, 186; *1377-81*, 402-3.

²⁸⁸ E101/32/25 mm. 2-3; C76/52 m. 25; 76/54 m. 5; 76/57 m. 13; 76/60 m. 1; 76/63 m. 6. Ashton was treasurer of Ireland from 24 October 1364-20 February 1367 and justiciar from June 1372-December 1373. Jones, M. 'Ashton, Sir Robert (*d.* 1384)', *O.D.N.B.*, online edn., Jan 2008. Bromwich, 'who had been Clarence's leading retainer, and [who was now] retained by [the earl of] March by a life retainer' was justiciar for a period in 1379-80. He also acted as an executor of the duke's will, and was left a horse by Lionel when the duke died in 1368. Otway-Ruthven, *History of Medieval Ireland*, 313.

²⁸⁹ *C.P.R. 1358-61*, 10, 370, 377, 382-83, 385-87, 393, 400, 504, 525-27, 535; *1361-64*, 8; *1370-74*, 87.

Compensation for losses of horseflesh on campaign were part of the terms of service which had emerged for continental campaigns during the early decades of the Hundred Years War.²⁹⁰ Lionel's expedition to Ireland in 1361, and expeditions launched there over the subsequent fifteen years, were the first time that the whole package had been offered to campaigners outside of France; further evidence of the desire to turn the lordship's fortunes around. Indeed, this was the first time that an Irish campaign was financed in the main from England as opposed to the Irish Justiciar serving with a small retinue with his expenses met by the Irish Exchequer.²⁹¹ Dalby's *vadia guerre* accounts (1361-64) indicate that all the English captains serving in Ireland at this time were in receipt of wages and *regard*, the latter paid at the customary rate of 100 marks for every 30 men-at-arms for a quarter year's service.²⁹² In addition, preparations for the transportation of horses were made, although our only information regarding numbers is an order for the adaption of requisitioned vessels for the construction of 440 hurdles.²⁹³

The provision of an appraisal and compensation 'service-package' for this campaign does not, however, seem to have extended to all those serving on the campaign. From the admittedly limited evidence, Ayton has concluded that only a proportion of those serving in Ireland during Clarence's time in the lordship did so with an appraised warhorse.²⁹⁴ We know that Stafford, for example, had at least two horses valued for the expedition (a *destrier* worth 80 marks [£53 6s. 8d.] and a *trotter* worth £20) but the majority of his men do not seem to have enjoyed the same luxury.²⁹⁵ Unfortunately the document on which the appraisals are listed is badly faded with only two-thirds fully legible meaning that as little c.35 can be identified

²⁹⁰ Ayton, *Knights*, 49-83 for the process from appraisal to compensation.

²⁹¹ Connolly, 'Financing English Expeditions', 104-21.

²⁹² E101/28/21 fos. 3v.-10v., 13v.-14r; E101/29/33.

²⁹³ C.C.R. 1360-64, 198. Based upon allowances for early fifteenth-century armies (Newhall, *Conquest of Normandy*, 191 n.7), which were admittedly more generous than earlier, we might expect that, at a minimum estimate, the Crown was prepared to pay the transportation costs for c.720 horses for the personal contingent of Stafford's retinue alone based upon the types of soldiers in this body of men. Allowances: earl, 24 (x1); lord, 16 (x1); knight, 6 (x19); esquires/men-at-arms 4 (x99); mounted-archers 170 (x1); Ayton, *Knights*, 58-59, ft.50-51.

²⁹⁴ Ayton, *Knights*, 118.

²⁹⁵ E101/28/11 m. 3; Ayton, *Knights*, 62-68. Stafford was not unusual amongst retinue captains for being allowed to have more than one horse appraised, indeed this was written into his indenture. E101/28/27 m. 4.

with any clarity.²⁹⁶ From the evidence that we do possess we can see that no man in Stafford's retinue had a horse valued at less than 100s. The mean value of the retinue's known horseflesh was £10 which, despite the small sample of men, must be fairly accurate when the mean of £9.5 for 21 horses lost by the earl's men on the campaign is taken into consideration.²⁹⁷ This is a slight increase from the mean of £9.4 for his retinue during the Reims campaign (1359-60) and more than the average for horses appraised for service in Ireland between 1361 and 1364 of £7.8s.²⁹⁸ Compared with the average values of horseflesh for other campaigns in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, calculated by Ayton, the figure is comparable with expeditions to Scotland in 1298 (£10.2) and 1337-38 (£10.6); slightly less than those in Flanders in 1297 (£11.2), Scotland 1311-15 (£11.9), Gascony (1324-25 - £11.6), though not as high as the apogee of warhorse values during the 1330s, 40s and 50s when the average was as much as £16.4 for the Cambrésis-Thiérache campaign of 1338-39.²⁹⁹ What does this mean of £10 tell us about the personnel of Stafford's retinue and their place within the wider military community?

We must remember several things about these figures: that they are incomplete, both for our army and the others; that our sample is small; that the introduction by the 1360s of a hundred shilling minimum warhorse value that was eligible to be appraised, 'may well have served to keep the overall level of values a little higher than would otherwise have been the case'; and that the relatively high average of Stafford's retinue is influenced by a larger number of socially elite members of the military community than the other armies of comparison.³⁰⁰ Despite such discrepancies, however, we can say, with some reservations, that Stafford's retinue, or at least the earl's personal contingent, had horseflesh valued at what would have been considered the customary level for the military community at the time; c.£6-7,

²⁹⁶ E101/28/11 m. 3. Though there may be a case for arguing that some men may have had horses appraised upon arrival in Ireland. This might explain a clause in Stafford's indenture which guaranteed re-imbursement to him of the cost of horses bought on arrival in the lordship, suggesting perhaps that a shortage of transports was envisaged: E101/28/27 m. 4

²⁹⁷ E101/28/11 m. 3; 28/21 fo. 14v.; Ayton, *Knights*, 202.

²⁹⁸ Ayton, *Knights*, 195 (table 6.1), 202 (table 6.3), 241-42, ft. 210.

²⁹⁹ Idem, 195. The general trend of valuations was an increase in value during the reign of Edward I, a levelling out under his son, a slight fall during the early phases of the Hundred Years War, an increase to unprecedentedly high levels between c.1340-1355, followed by a decline, to levels less than those of the 1280s in Wales, after 1359-60, 195-96.

³⁰⁰ Ayton, *Knights*, 198-209.

discounting the earl's own highly expensive *destrier*. Though it was not unusual for men of his status to continue to bring these great-warhorses on campaign they well knew that the realities of warfare – fast moving mounted raids on nimble horses – were no place for the heavy cavalry. To this end Stafford's more modest (but still expensive) £20 'trotter' was the mount he doubtlessly rode to war.³⁰¹ His men followed their commander's lead and brought these lesser valued warhorses that were well-suited to the rigours of the campaign. If there were documentation extant for more of the men in the retinue, particularly for the mounted-archers, then doubtlessly the average would decrease further. In this respect the men who took to the field with Stafford in 1361-62 were no different in terms of social affluence from other members of the English military community of the time; Ireland was not the preserve of men of lesser social standing and many soldiers who fought there fought in many of England's warzones in the second half of the fourteenth century.

This study of the expedition of Lionel, earl of Ulster and duke of Clarence, to Ireland in 1361-66, of which Ralph, earl of Stafford, and his retinue played an integral part, has highlighted some interesting facets of army and retinue structure, personnel, recruitment, and the way in which these were influenced by financial and political circumstances. Though the investigation has largely focused upon a single retinue the fact that this contingent of men formed the vast majority of the army in 1361-62 means that what is true for the retinue can be said to have been true for the whole of the army in these two years. The army straddles an important juncture in the development of the structurally-uniform forces that emerged in the second half of the fourteenth century and displays hallmarks of these later bodies: near universal payment of troops, the fact that its personnel was largely mounted on horses of a calibre in keeping with the current trend in theatres of war elsewhere, and the recruitment of soldiers via contracts of indenture. At the same time, however, it displayed characteristics more in line with the structurally-hybrid armies of the past: infantry archers and soldiers recruited via commissions of array. There were, of course, areas of continuity. Retinues continued to be built around a core of personnel, but increasingly, again as was typical of the time, the earl had to increasingly rely

³⁰¹ E101/28/11 m. 3.

upon freelancers with whom he had no previous connections. Regardless of whether the men of the retinue had pre-existing connections to Stafford or not, however, they did not form an 'Irish branch' of the English-military community. Though some men will have spent their entire career-in-arms in Ireland the evidence suggests that the vast majority who fought there had multi-faceted, geographically diverse, military careers, of which Irish service was only a part. Also typical of the period, indeed of any army, were the problems that Stafford and Lionel faced when dealing with large bodies of fighting men: desertion, casualties, finding replacements, and even authorised *vacaciones*. At the same time the army also displayed characteristics that were uniquely its own. The expectation that its captains were to be the absentee landlords of the Irish lordship, for example, was certainly a novelty.

That Lionel, as a Prince of the blood, was despatched to Ireland at all shows that for Edward III Ireland was by no means a minor distraction to his ambitions elsewhere. Indeed according to some recent scholarship it seems that the king's ambitions in Ireland were only one facet of a much grander scheme; no less than the reconstitution of the old Angevin Empire.³⁰² Viewed through this filter the bestowal on Lionel in November 1362 of the title of Duke of Clarence, and the fact that he was given the title of Irish lieutenant as opposed to merely being a chief-governor or justiciar, takes on a new and added significance. The language of power being used for his appointment, and the powers he was granted, particularly the authority to give general pardons and the unrestricted authority to remove officials seen to be incompetent or corrupt, were significant additions to his jurisdiction and indicate the king's desire that his son's mission be a resounding success.³⁰³

Ultimately, however, the efforts of all those who travelled to Ireland in these years, indeed for the rest of the fourteenth century, came to naught. It certainly was not for lack of effort. Green argued that Irish governors had three main tasks: pacify unruly territory and, if possible, extend the Crown's territorial holdings; establish areas of support both with dissident Anglo-Irish nobles and the more amenable Gaelic-Irish chieftains; and thirdly, exploit financial and other resources to achieve

³⁰² Chapter V, 307 ft. 408.

³⁰³ Green, 'Lordship and Principality', 20. It is significant that these powers were not retained when he was re-appointed in 1364, probably reflecting the Crown's waning interest in the project. *C.P.R. 1364–67*, 20; Otway-Ruthven, J. 'The Chief Governors of Medieval Ireland' *J.R.S.I.A.* 95 (1965), 228–29.

these aims.³⁰⁴ As governor, Lionel clearly achieved some successes in the first two, but it was in the third area, relating to finance which largely underpinned the other two, with which he was unsuccessful. Though achieving a modicum of progress in the reform of Irish finances it was not enough to reverse the lordship's fortunes. One of his chief tasks was to make the lordship self-sufficient once again. In this he was wholly unsuccessful. Between 1361 and 1367 intervention in Ireland cost the English Exchequer £43,359 15s. 5d. In addition to this the Irish exchequer paid a further £8,789 14s. 11d.³⁰⁵ Though Richardson and Sayles have argued that this additional Irish revenue was a surplus for Edward III's government in the 1360s Connolly has argued that it was used to pay the wages of men owed for military service; 'any extra money thus remained in Ireland'.³⁰⁶ In effect, Lionel was unable to wean the Irish exchequer off handouts from England. This failure was hardly the fault of the prince. He was hamstrung by the lack of resources and the unenviable situation he found when he arrived. The lordship was heavily fragmented, both culturally and politically. There were no clearly defined enemies or allies upon whose support he could count. The Anglo-Irish nobility fought each-other as often as they did the Gaelic-Irish and even when their help was forthcoming it was something of a double-edged sword. This was because the Anglo-Irish, though desiring help from England, often resented the undue influence they saw the English having upon 'their' lordship and affairs and many doubtlessly saw the loss of their autonomy as a serious price to pay for English help.³⁰⁷

Lionel's failure to reverse the fortunes of the lordship, therefore, was down to a lack of resources rather than ineptitude on his part. 'In short, [his] military successes were temporary, and the limited financial recovery he ensured only brought him into conflict with the Anglo-Irish because of demands for taxation and administrative corruption, perceived or real'.³⁰⁸ If he did not succeed in healing the lordship's

³⁰⁴ Green, 'Lordship and Principality', 18-19.

³⁰⁵ Connolly, P. 'Lionel of Clarence in Ireland, 1361-66' (PhD Thesis, Trinity College, University of Dublin, 1978), 266.

³⁰⁶ Richardson, H.G., Sayles, G.O. *The Administration of Ireland, 1172-1377* (Irish MSS Commission, 1963), 57.

³⁰⁷ Frame, R. *Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369* (Dublin, 1981), 130-31; Idem., 'Exporting State and Nation: Being English in Medieval Ireland' *Power and the Nation in European History* (ed.) Scales, L.E., Zimmer, O. (Cambridge, 2005), 143-65. Smith, B. 'Lionel of Clarence and the English of Meath' *Peritia* 10 (1996), 300.

³⁰⁸ Green, 'Lordship and Principality', 9.

wounds then at the very least he was temporarily able to stem the bleeding and he clearly wanted to succeed. When he was finally withdrawn in 1366 the prince apparently vowed in bitter frustration that he would never return.³⁰⁹ This feeling was certainly shared by his father. Not long after Lionel's departure Edward III conceded his son's mission, and perhaps his entire devolutionary policy, had failed, and that Ireland was now 'sunk in the greatest wretchedness'.³¹⁰

³⁰⁹ *Eulogium Historiarum*, quoted in Ormrod, 'Lionel of Clarence' *O.D.N.B.*, online edn. (Jan. 2008).

³¹⁰ *C.C.R 1364–68*, 482–83, 499–50.

v. *Taking Stock: The Military Community in Action*

This section of the thesis set out to look at the personnel of the English military community in the second half of the fourteenth century through the lens of the armies within which they fought. Medieval armies were organic constructions, constantly evolving and changing their personnel and organisational structures over time and if the forces under scrutiny in this chapter have proven anything it is that both armies and their personnel are not easily reconstructed. The purpose of these three studies has been to try to shed some much needed light onto the primary question of this thesis: whether or not England experienced a military decline in the second half of the fourteenth century. What have these studies added to the resolution of this question?

The political and military outcomes of the three expeditions would initially suggest that England did indeed experience something akin to a military decline. Yet simply because these three campaigns were a failure does not mean that it was the fault of the men that fought within them. If anything the English military community in the second half of the fourteenth century was in rude health. Both Edward III and Richard II's administrations launched expeditions more frequently, and which were in the field for longer than ever before. This would not have been possible if there had been insufficient manpower or if the calibre of the troops available was poor. Neither was true. The source materials used for the armies in this chapter, particularly the *Court of Chivalry* records, show that both monarchs could rely on a large number of militarily active men, the majority of whom had extensive military experience garnered over the previous decades, performing various types of military service in multiple theatres of war.

The changes in martial organisation, tactics, and recruitment that have been seen to constitute a military revolution in the first half of the fourteenth century certainly aided the development of the military community, and the development of structurally-uniform armies that they fought in. The concurrent expansion of the size of retinues, and increased demands for manpower from the crown, however, inevitably meant that the level of retinue-level stability decreased, with captains forced to look beyond traditional recruitment networks and extend their recruitment reach by employing freelancers to fulfil these quotas. It is true that some of these

freelancers may, over a period of time, have developed links or preferences for serving with a particular captain over the course of their military careers. For the vast majority, however, as far as we can ascertain from the available evidence, levels of repeat service under the same captain were low.

Yet this does not mean that the community became any less martially effective. If anything, the military community in the second half of the fourteenth century was, if not more militarily potent in these years, then at the very least on a par with what had come before. The first reason is that, whilst the connections between the captains and the men of their retinue may not have been as strong as before, those between the sub-captains whom they contracted with, and the men they brought to the retinues, will have been strong, forming comradeship groups of freelance soldiers who fought together on a consistent basis with a number of different captains. Identifying these groups is one of the most difficult tasks in the reconstruction of any medieval retinue because the sources often give no indication of the constituent parts that made up the greater whole. Nevertheless, it is becoming increasingly apparent that it was these comradeship groups that formed the building blocks of any later fourteenth century English fighting force. Medieval armies were, in effect, a spider's web of interweaving connections with the retinue captains acting as the hubs. The captains were thus the source of any medieval army's greatest strength but, conversely, they were also its greatest weakness. If they were killed in combat there was the real possibility that their retinues would dissolve into their constituent parts, the comradeship groups which had coalesced to form the retinue in the first place. Moreover if the inter-captain and captain-rank-and-file relationships were brittle, as they certainly were in France in 1370, then an army could literally come apart at the seams. That this rarely happened in the second half of the fourteenth century, at a time when the bonds between combatants were seen to be weakening, shows the strength that had become inherent within the English military community, or at least the institutional strength arising from disciplinary ordinances of which those from 1385, and to a lesser extent 1370, are the best surviving examples.

The other indication of the vibrancy of the military community in this period can be seen from our foray into the *Court of Chivalry* and other martial records. The former, whilst only representing those of *gentil sanc* and only revealing a portion of

these men's careers, show that the men who fought in English armies in the second half of the fourteenth century were just as militarily experienced as those who fought in the 1330s, 40s, and 50s. The nine years of Anglo-French peace that followed the treaty of Brétigny did not mark a lessening of martial experience within the military community, indeed the increased opportunities to fight, and the increased frequency with which those opportunities arose in the second half of the century, may even have meant that many combatants were better versed in the practice of arms than their forebears. Similarly our other martial sources, whilst only representing service in the king's armies, allows us to reconstruct as far as is possible the careers of many of the period's fighting men, many of whom had decades of military experience. It was, in effect, a conveyor belt of martial talent.

Therefore, whilst the three armies selected for scrutiny in this chapter each display characteristics that were uniquely their own, they were clearly representative of the general trends of the period in terms of organisational structure and personnel. Every army was, of course, distinctive in its own right, but all shared certain similarities that made them structurally uniform. They were organised into entirely mounted mixed retinues of men-at-arms and mounted archers under captains who had contracted with the Crown to provide a set number of troops, with the men paid standard wage rates dependant upon rank. It was in their personnel, however, that they shared the greatest similarities. English armies of the second half of the fourteenth century were manned by an incipiently professional fighting force. The largely ill-trained, ill-disciplined, and forcibly arrayed soldiers had, by 1360, largely been replaced by a newly militarised gentry and upwardly mobile yeomanry. These 'new men' did not however appear suddenly on the military scene. Social trends that had been developing since the thirteenth century such as the gradual decrease in the number of knights in society and the steadily increasing costs of war over a number of decades had seen their gradual emergence into English armies. It was the social upheavals caused by the plague and the Crown's increasing desire for soldiers who could serve for longer than an obligatory period which really saw them come to the fore. The increasing demands of the government as the fourteenth century progressed for soldiers to be deployed on several fronts, often simultaneously, meant that the military community as a whole, which had had been largely untested by long periods of continuous peace before the reign of Edward I, became increasingly accustomed to

fighting as the decades passed. By the second half of the fourteenth century it had been honed to perfection, full of experienced veterans, to the extent that foreign observers would describe them as a ‘fiercely bellicose nation’, having won significant battlefield successes and dominated England’s enemies.³¹¹

As far as the fighting men of English armies are concerned, therefore, there was no military decline in the second half of the fourteenth century. How then do we explain the perception that the conflicts, in a number of regions, had gone badly for the English? For this task we must turn from the military community to the wider English war effort.

³¹¹ Boutrouche, ‘Devastation of Rural Areas’, 26.

V: DIPLOMACY, FOREIGN POLICY, AND THE CONDUCT OF WAR 1360-99

In the introduction to this thesis we saw that, according to the traditional interpretation, the English war effort in the second half of the fourteenth century – and by association the English military community – experienced what the French historian Eduard Perroy termed ‘a decline that gradually lowered her from the pedestal to which Edward III’s genius had raised her’.¹ This was primarily a military decline, but it also encompassed political, social, and economic reversal. Though there may be kernels of truth in this hypothesis it is badly in need of revision. An increase in English military activity from 1360 to 1399, for instance, is hardly indicative of martial deterioration. Limitations of time and space, and the fact we are studying nearly four decades of activity, make it impossible to analyse every facet of these vast topics: tasks that have occupied the attention of hundreds of scholars producing voluminous work on each subject. With these limitations in mind, the purpose of this chapter is twofold. The first is to provide a brief examination of English foreign policy, principally towards France, her dependent fiefdoms, and those surrounding countries which became embroiled in the Anglo-French conflict. The purpose of this exercise is to argue that, at least at certain times and in some regions, English foreign policy has not received sufficient credit and has been wrongly denigrated.² The second aim of this chapter is to examine how the English fought, in a pragmatic sense, at a tactical and campaign level, in order to challenge the orthodox perceptions of military decline and of the role played by battle in English strategy.

Like every other political entity before and since, the English administration had both long and short-term goals in its dealings with foreign powers. To realise these aspirations it sought favourable political settlements with its rivals through a combination of war and diplomacy, reacting to short-term military and political situations as they arose. It is important to remember, however, that even long-term objectives were not set in stone; they could and did change as circumstances dictated. The availability and flow of funds, for example, were a key determinant of what could

¹ Perroy, *Hundred Years War*, trans. Douglas, D.C., 145.

² Allmand, C. ‘Diplomacy in Late Medieval England’ *History Today* 17:8 (Aug., 1967), 546-53; Chaplais, P. *English Diplomatic Practice in the Middle Ages* (2002); Curry, A. *The Hundred Years War* (1993), 122-55. Cuttino, G. *English Medieval Diplomacy*, (Indiana, 1985), 1-24, for the dangers in using modern terminology when referring to the Middle Ages.

and could not be achieved. The whims of individual rulers and aristocrats at the head of government were also highly important in the shaping of policy. One underlying influence on English policy did, however, remain a constant. All diplomatic and martial activity, whether directly or indirectly, was connected in varying degrees to the wider Anglo-French struggle of the Hundred Years War. It is logical, therefore, to begin with England's relations with France, or rather with the territories directly controlled by the French king, as opposed to the great fiefs of the kingdom, Brittany and Flanders, which only nominally and often grudgingly accepted Valois suzerainty. It is important to make this distinction because the English government had separate policies towards these semi-autonomous regions depending on how they were disposed towards the king of France at any particular time.

i. England, France, and the treaty of Brétigny: Triumph or Disaster?

The treaty of Brétigny, negotiated by England and France in early May 1360, was the most important agreement between the two countries for a century.³ In the same way that the Treaty of Paris (1259) had defined Anglo-French relations up until 1360, and the Treaty of Troyes (1420) would define them until the eventual English defeat in the 1450s, it was the Treaty of Brétigny that provided the most important influence on foreign policy in the second half of the fourteenth century.⁴ As a territorial settlement it was certainly munificent to the English. Edward III regained the county of Ponthieu, the township of Montreuil in Picardy, and retained Calais and its march. In the south-west of France the English were to hold in full sovereignty all the territory that had once belonged to their Angevin ancestors along with additional land in the region. As well as Gascony this meant Angoumois, Périgord, Limousin, Saintonge, Poitou, Rouergue and Quercy along with a strip of lands bordering Gascony in the western Pyrenees. Though this was not quite as large as the territories which the English had held at the height of Henry II's twelfth-century 'Angevin Empire' it still represented a major territorial concession by the Valois monarchy.⁵ In effect the 1360 agreement created an extended duchy of Aquitaine in full sovereignty – granted by Edward III to the Black Prince in 1362 – placing roughly a quarter of the kingdom of France into English hands. Furthermore the French king John II, still a prisoner at the Tower of London after his capture at Poitiers, was to be released for a ransom of 3,000,000 gold *écus* (£500,000) to be paid in annual instalments along with ransom payments owed to the English for sixteen other prominent French prisoners. In return for this generous territorial and financial settlement Edward III was to renounce his claim to the French throne which he had taken up in 1340, and both sides were to end relationships with allies most threatening to their opponents; France with Scotland and England with Flanders.⁶ For the next sixty years English policy on the continent

³ *Foedera* 3:1, 202-9.

⁴ Curry, *Hundred Years War*, 152-54.

⁵ Chaplais, P. 'English Arguments Concerning the Feudal Status of Aquitaine in the Fourteenth Century' *B.I.H.R.* 21 (1946-48), 203-13; Curry, *Hundred Years War*, 152-55; Palmer, 'War Aims', 51-74; Vale, M.G.A. *The Angevin Legacy and the Hundred Years War 1250-1340* (Oxford, 1990); Waugh, S.L. 'War and Conquest in the Making of Politics in Medieval England' *J.B.S.* 32:2 (1993), 170.

⁶ The extent to which the claim to the French crown was taken seriously has been hotly debated although most now agree that it was utilised as an ultimate, if unrealistic, diplomatic starting position. Cuttino, *Medieval Diplomacy*, 115; Curry, *Hundred Years War*, 152-4; 51-74; Sumption, *Battle*, 291-6. Cf. Barnie, J. *War in Medieval Society: Social Values and the Hundred Years War 1337-99*, (1974), 6-7. Palmer, 'War Aims', 55-62 for both sides of the argument.

was to maintain the territorial provisions of this agreement. In all future diplomatic dealings with the French until the final English expulsion, English negotiators would countenance no peace settlement that did not grant Aquitaine to them in full sovereignty. On this point there was no concession, regardless of the political and military situation.

Unsurprisingly given the magnitude of the settlement there has been feverish debate amongst scholars about the effect of the treaty. Despite its generous territorial settlement, a number of scholars, safe in the knowledge that it proved ultimately to be unworkable, have concluded that Brétigny was doomed from the start and a failure of English foreign policy.⁷ It has been seen as embodying ‘England’s territorial claims at their grandest and most ambitious, drawing lines across the map of France from which another generation of English diplomats was unable to retreat with honour’.⁸ Edward III has been seen to have accepted the settlement, ‘only to avoid military disaster, which he believed to be imminent’, a diplomatic smash-and-grab before the French had time to regroup.⁹ Furthermore Edward, it has been claimed, did not regard the treaty as a final settlement of the Anglo-French issue, reinforcing the defences of the south-coast after the treaty had been signed and seeking allies on the continent during peacetime in a strategy apparently intended to encircle the old enemy. Had ‘England simply exploited the weakness of a richer and more populous nation to extract a peace which was unlikely to survive its inevitable recovery’?¹⁰ Did Edward III truly believe that Brétigny would prove a lasting settlement or did he agree to its terms due to a war weariness brought on by nearly three decades in the saddle, a last chance to win something from a seemingly unending war? We will probably never know, but, following the line of argument of scholars who see Brétigny as a failure, in effect the treaty marks the beginning of the general English malaise in the fourteenth century.

⁷ Chaplais, P. ‘Some Documents Regarding the Fulfilment and Interpretation of the Treaty of Brétigny (1361-69)’ *Camden Miscellany* 19:3:80 (1952), 42-4; Delachenal, *Charles V*, chapters II-VI; Fowler, K. *The King’s Lieutenant: Henry of Grosmont, First Duke of Lancaster, 1310-1361* (1969), 209-12; Patourel, J. ‘The Treaty of Brétigny, 1360’ *T.R.H.S.* 5:10 (1960), 19-39; Perroy, *Hundred Years War*, 138; Sumption, *Trial*, 455-58; Tuck, *Crown and Nobility*, 116-18.

⁸ Sumption, *Divided*, xi.

⁹ Contamine, P. *La Guerre de Cent Ans* (Paris, 1972), 47

¹⁰ Sumption, *Trial*, 502-3.

Yet there are stronger grounds for regarding Brétigny as what many contemporaries of the time believed it to be; a great English diplomatic victory forced upon their most powerful enemy and a vindication of the excursions of the English military community over the previous two decades.¹¹ After all, as C. J. Rogers eloquently put it:

‘The campaign of 1359-60 [forcing France to negotiate] was not exactly a defeat for Edward III, and still less was it a victory for the dauphin. ... Here was an unchallenged English army laying waste to the heart of France, not a French army besieging London or ravaging Middlesex. ... For the humiliation of 1360 to have been inflicted on the mightiest realm in Christendom by a nation with only a fraction of her population and wealth, and which at the start of Edward III’s reign had been considered a military backwater, her soldiers inferior even to the ill-equipped Scots, was a remarkable achievement’.¹²

The success of the treaty is seen in the weight it was clearly given by contemporaries. As we have seen ‘almost all the conferences took it as their point of departure, and when articles of peace were agreed upon in 1393 they used the treaty as their basis and even followed this text verbatim where this was possible’.¹³ The success of the treaty can further be gauged by looking at the French reaction to it. Whilst there were those who doubtlessly rejoiced at the peace, it seems likely that large numbers of the French aristocracy were dismayed at what their king had conceded.¹⁴ Aside from the loss of prestige, the ransom payments for John II’s release would weigh heavily on French purses for a number of years.¹⁵ John’s son, the dauphin Charles, was the most vocal of all those who were disaffected by the terms of the treaty. He seems to have been of the opinion, probably rightly, that the English campaign of 1359-60 which had forced the French to the negotiating table was suffering due to lack of supplies and would not have been able to maintain itself in the field for much longer, thereby negating the need for the French to make concessions at all.¹⁶ Ideologically, he remained true to the unflinching French position that any

¹¹ Rogers, C.J. ‘The Anglo-French Peace Negotiations, 1353-60: A Reconsideration’ *The Age of Edward III* (ed.) Bothwell, J. (York, 2001), 193-213.

¹² Rogers, *Cruel*, 417, 421, also footnotes 185, 186 on the same page.

¹³ Palmer, ‘War Aims’, 71.

¹⁴ Venette, J. ‘Continuatio Chronici Guillelmi de Nangiaco’ *Chronique Latine de Guillaume de Nangis*, ii. (ed.) Géraud, H. (1843), 310-12.

¹⁵ Curry, *Hundred Year War*, 152-55; Palmer, ‘War Aims’, 51.

¹⁶ Froissart, *Oeuvres*, vi, 232, 235-6; Rogers, *Cruel*, 406.

lands held in France by the English king should be held as a vassal of the French king and not, as Brétigny stipulated, as an autonomous state in full sovereignty.¹⁷ Doubtlessly too he wanted to expunge the stain on the national honour that the defeats of the 1340s and 50s had created. According to one of the Black Prince's spies on Charles' coronation in 1364:

“The policy of the new king is to give fair replies in words to the English until such time as he has recovered the hostages who are in England, or at least the most important; and meanwhile he will make war on the king of Navarre and continue that of Brittany; and, under cover of the said wars, he will go on assembling men-at-arms; and, as soon as he has recovered the said hostages, he will make war in all parts on the English and on the principality [of Aquitaine] ... and he will recover what he has lost from the English [by the provisions of the Brétigny agreement] and finally will destroy them”.¹⁸

Accepting Brétigny as being the positive result of English endeavours over the proceeding two decades allows the diplomacy and foreign policy of the government for the rest of the century to be seen in a wholly different light. Subsequent activity attempted not only to hold the French to what had been agreed in 1360 but also to add to these gains. Moreover the campaign of 1359-60, when an English army arrayed itself for battle at the gates of Paris, goading the French to ride out and meet them in what was hoped would be ‘a decisive confrontation between Plantagenet and Valois’, gives us a clue as to the strategy that the English government employed towards the French in the second half of the fourteenth century, a strategy that has been largely misunderstood.¹⁹ It is to those strategies that we now turn.

¹⁷ Sumption, *Trial*, 445, 448; *Divided*, 15.

¹⁸ Delachenal, *Charles V*, iii, 551-3.

¹⁹ Ayton, A. ‘English Armies in the Fourteenth Century’, 303.

ii. English Policy towards France, 1360-89: Old Orthodoxies, New Perspectives

Though we must be wary of oversimplification, it can be stated that, according to the traditional interpretation, English foreign policy, and the conduct of war towards France in the decades after Brétigny can be divided into three distinctive phases. In all three of these stages it has been argued, be it militarily, economically, or in the pursuit of alliances, the English were on the back foot. We shall first examine these long-established beliefs and then analyse them in light of recent research, our aim being to show that the extent of the English malaise in these years has been vastly over-emphasized.

The orthodox interpretation of the first, peaceful phase, from 1360-69, sees a resurgent French monarchy under Charles V pursuing, with some success, the king's desire to reverse the results of Brétigny. The actions of his administration during the course of the 1360s, as dauphin and then as king, suggest that his aim was to prepare France for what he regarded as the inevitable renewal of the war. There is no evidence that this entailed trying to bring about a renewal of hostilities with the English directly; France in 1360 was a country economically and physically drained by two decades of fighting on home soil. Instead Charles' strategy was more subtle, seeking diplomatically to manoeuvre France into a position of strength.

Domestically, the French king was able to unite the often competing factions in the French political community and crush insurrection which had previously served to weaken the crown. Charles of Navarre, one of the most troublesome and intractable French vassals, who had played the French and English off against one another, particularly in the 1350s, was successfully brought to heel and his neutralisation deprived the English of a valuable potential ally. More advantageous still for Charles V was the favourable resolution of both the Breton Civil War and the issue of the Flemish succession.²⁰ In the case of the former, John de Montfort, the Breton duke, defeated his rival and despite his English connections immediately adhered to the French king. The competition between Edward III and Charles V to secure the marriage of the only daughter of Louis de Mâle, count of Flanders, was an even more notable French diplomatic victory. Flanders was vital as a consequence of its

²⁰ Sumption, *Trial*, 517-20; *Divided* 104.

economic wealth and geographic location on France's north-eastern border. Not only would the countess's new husband gain Flanders but also Artois, Nevers, Rethel, Brabant, Limbourg, and the County of Burgundy, in effect creating a Flemish 'empire' that would dominate the Low Countries. A combination of diplomatic pressure from Charles V and the overtly Francophile Pope Urban V won the marriage for the Duke of Burgundy and the prize, according to Palmer, was 'worth perhaps more than Edward's gains in Aquitaine from the Treaty of Brétigny'.²¹ Furthermore, during the nine years of peace after Brétigny, the French king undertook an extensive reform of French finances, which extended both the liability of members of the French population for taxation and the methods of collecting funds.²² Despite occasional short-falls, this brought the French far greater fiscal stability than had been the case previously.

What was English policy towards France in these years? This question is difficult to answer. On the one hand the English government actively pursued alliances on the continent, in Castile in 1362 and Flanders in 1364, in a policy of encirclement suggestive, perhaps, of Edward III's belief that Brétigny would not prove a lasting resolution to the conflict. On the other hand, the English government seems to have been wholly unprepared when war which broke out again in 1369.²³ The reason for this is seen to have been Edward III himself. Having spent the majority of his life in the saddle, the ageing king gradually retired from public life, content to let his sons and councillors run affairs in his name; 'his loss of touch does much to explain the political factionalism in England in these years'.²⁴ The result of English domestic disadvantages and the resurgent French monarchy has led many scholars to believe that if England had held the advantage over her French rivals in 1360 then by 1369 this had been forfeited.

²¹ Palmer, J.J.N. 'England, France, the Papacy and the Flemish Succession' *J.M.H.* 2 (1976), 339-364; Tuck, *Crown*, 136.

²² Henneman, J.B. jnr. *Royal Taxation in Fourteenth-Century France. The Development of War Financing, 1322-1356* (Princeton, NJ, 1971), 116-84, 348; Idem, 'France in the Middle Ages', 101-22; 'The French Ransom Aids and Two Legal Traditions' *Studia Gratiana* 15 (1972), 946-65; *Royal Taxation in Fourteenth-Century France. The Captivity and Ransom of Jean II, 1356-70* (Philadelphia, 1976), 21-83. Lot, F., Fawtier, R. *Histoire des Institutions Français au Moyen Age II* (Paris, 1958), 275-81.

²³ Tuck, *Crown*, 138.

²⁴ Idem, 138.

This belief in French resurgence has coloured traditional historical thinking about the performance of English foreign policy for the rest of the century, particularly in the second phase of activity from 1369-1380: from the recommencement of conflict to the death of Charles V. These years saw the most intense military activity of the war to date, with English and French forces criss-crossing the French countryside and that of her neighbours both more frequently and with larger forces than before. Historians and contemporaries alike have seen this decade or so in particular as being France's finest hour in the entire fourteenth century. Christine de Pisan, for example, wrote that after 1369, 'all the lost lands were re-conquered by the sword, as is well known'.²⁵ The reasons for these successes, it has been argued, were Charles V's diplomatic achievements during the nine previous years of peace, together with a number of other French advantages when war broke out again in 1369.

One of the most important was the king himself. Charles V should have been a weak and unsuccessful ruler: suffering constant ill-health, he was unable to lead his armies in person.²⁶ Yet he has been regarded both by contemporaries and modern observers as a highly successful medieval ruler, the reign marking a high-water mark in the French war effort.²⁷ From the resumption of the war until his death in 1380 the French had regained virtually all the territory in the south-west which they had ceded to the English by the Brétigny settlement. This was achieved because the force of the king's personality was backed up by arguably the most able commanders, politicians, and diplomats of the age at the peak of their power. The most prominent figures at the head of the renewed French war-effort were the king's brothers – the dukes of Berry, Burgundy and Anjou – and his brother-in-law, the duke of Bourbon. All were, by and large, loyal to the crown and provided much needed leadership and stability at a time when England was riven by political crisis and changes in personnel.²⁸ Below these royal directors were notable soldiers, like Bertrand du Guesclin and Oliver de Clisson, along with a corps of administrators like Guillaume de Melun, Archbishop of Sens, Bureau de la Rivière, and Jean de Dormans, bishop of Beauvais. These were an

²⁵ Pisan Christine, *Deeds of Arms*, 21.

²⁶ Perroy, *Hundred Years War*, 146.

²⁷ Idem, 145; Sumption, *Divided*, 15.

²⁸ Cazelles, R. *Société Politique, Noblesse et Couronne sous Jean le Bon et Charles V* (Paris, 1982), 239-40, 450-52.

experienced group of men behind the scenes who ensured that the French state under Charles V ran smoothly.²⁹

They were certainly kept busy by Charles' governmental reforms. By the middle of the fourteenth century it had become evident to French observers like Philippe de Mézières that French armies, and by association the military systems that brought them into being, were woefully inadequate to fight the more intensive conflicts of the time.³⁰ The re-organisation of the French army by Charles V in the mid 1370s undoubtedly played a role in the perceived French revival.³¹ In a series of much celebrated ordinances issued in January 1374, building upon previous attempts of his father, Charles V attempted to remedy the deficiencies.³² Whilst maintaining the use of *lettres de retenue*, recruitment of mercenaries, and though feudal military obligations continued heavily to influence the physical recruitment of armies, the structure, discipline and conduct of these armies were henceforth to be strictly regulated. Charles also continued the practice established in the later years of his father's reign of choosing not to summon the *arrière-ban* – the service of all able-bodied men between the ages of 16 and 60 – which reflected the desire, from both a political and military standpoint, to move away from reliance on large numbers of largely un-trained and ill-disciplined infantrymen. Thus the army that Charles created was, in theory, a far more disciplined body of fighting men, a largely mounted force comprising mostly 'of members of the lower-ranking French nobility', some 6,000 strong, in addition to the soldiers who acted as semi-permanent forces in the garrisons of northern France.³³

²⁹ Sumption, *Divided*, 17.

³⁰ It has been argued nothing was done after Crécy because of the upheaval it caused. Autrand, F. 'The Battle of Crécy: A Hard Blow for the Monarchy of France' *Crécy*, 285.

³¹ Contamine, *Guerre, État*, 26-55; Idem, *War*, 41-50, 119-72. It has been estimated that in 1340 the French king could mobilise 28,000 men-at-arms including 2,000 crossbowmen and 6,000 non-Frenchmen. Schnerb, B. 'Vassals, Allies and Mercenaries: The French Army Before and After 1346' *Crécy*, 268.

³² (John II): *Ordonances des Roys de France de la Troisième Race* IV (ed.) Secouse, D.F. et al (Paris, 1967-68), 67-70. English translation: *Society at War. The Experience of England and France during the Hundred Years War* (ed.) Allmand, C.T. (Woodbridge, 1998), 45-48. (Charles II) Contamine, *War*, 153-57; *Ordonances des Roys de France* V, 658-61; *Society at War*, 48-9.

³³ Allmand, *Hundred Years War*, 64; Contamine, P. 'Batailles, Bannières, Compagnies' *Cahiers Vernonnais* iv (Caen, 1964), 29-30; Delachenal, *Charles V*, iv, 226-33; Palmer, *Christendom*, 4; Tilley, A.A. *Medieval France: A Companion to French Studies*, V, (Paris, 1964) 158.

The situation in England, it has been argued, could not have been more different. Continuing a decline that had begun in the wake of Brétigny, Edward III slipped further into his dotage, diverting the greater part of his attention to his mistress and leaving the running of the government and war effort to others.³⁴ As all the earls he had created at the beginning of the war in 1337 were now either dead or as aged as the king, leadership of the war effort devolved upon Edward's sons. These men proved to be something of a mixed blessing.³⁵ Lionel of Antwerp had died in 1368 and Edmund of Langley was, although nearly thirty in 1369, a man of little military experience. Thomas of Woodstock, later Duke of Gloucester, was only fourteen in 1369 and yet to make his mark as a soldier. The heir to the throne, Edward 'the Black Prince' of Woodstock had been in Aquitaine since 1363 trying to establish himself as ruler of the independent duchy and it had been his mismanagement of the Gascon nobility which had indirectly led to the renewal of the war. He was more formal, aloof and autocratic than his father with the very men from whom he should have been drawing his support. His erratic nature, irritability and lack of patience may well have been due to a mysterious, debilitating illness, perhaps dysentery, which he contracted fighting in Iberia in 1367; but, in any case, when he finally returned to England in 1371, following the collapse of his government, he was broken in both body and spirit. By 1376 he was dead. Had he been healthy and succeeded his father he may have been able to provide the personal touch his father had perfected in leading the war effort. As it was his premature death brought his son, the ten year-old Richard II, to the throne and the uncertainty of a royal minority.

This left John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, from 1376 the eldest surviving son and the most important, uncrowned figure in English politics in the second half of the fourteenth century.³⁶ Gaunt's influence cannot be denied, but he has proved to be one of the most controversial figures of his time. Some commentators like Henry Knighton painted the duke in a favourable light, often referring to him as 'the good duke' and defending his actions at nearly every turn.³⁷ By and large, however, he has

³⁴ Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues' 3-5.

³⁵ Sherborne argued, harshly, that with: 'the exception of the prince of Wales, none of Edward III's sons was an outstanding general'. Sherborne, J. 'John of Gaunt, Edward III's Retinue and the Campaign of 1369' *War, Politics, Culture*, 97.

³⁶ Walker, S. 'John, duke of Aquitaine and duke of Lancaster, styled king of Castile and León (1340-1399)' *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford, 2004; online edn. May 2008).

³⁷ Knighton, 239-41.

been seen as an essentially ineffectual soldier and politician, squandering the government's limited resources on the impossible dream of making himself King of Castile. In a lively passage Walsingham describes an encounter between Gaunt and the king on the campaign in 1385 when the former suggests pressing across the Firth of Forth in pursuit of the Scots. The king's venomous response probably reflects Walsingham's own views on Gaunt more than those of the king.

"As for you", he [Richard] said, "wherever you have gone with an army you have lost men of mine, taking them into dangerous places through bad leadership and lack of judgement, killing them with hunger and thirst for lack of money, always thinking about your own purse, and never about mine".³⁸

Though he enjoyed brief moments of public affection, particularly during his twilight years, Gaunt spent much of his life as highly unpopular. During the Peasants Revolt in 1381, for example, the mob, blaming him for some of the failures in foreign policy in the 1370s and disliking his 'haughty demeanour', burned down his palace in London and attacked and killed his dependents.³⁹ Walsingham rarely, if ever, had a good word to say for him, hinting darkly that the duke had designs on the Crown itself.⁴⁰ This is an unfair accusation. Gaunt was consistently loyal both to his father and to his nephew, despite Richard's sometimes petulant and less than cordial attitude towards him, and he never associated himself with opposition to the court. If anything he acted as an elder statesman in the 1390s and often smoothed over relations between Richard II and his leading opponents, ensuring political stability by maintaining the prerogatives of the monarchy, no matter what his own feelings might be towards the person of the king.⁴¹ Similarly criticism of the duke's generalship is also overly harsh. Clearly Gaunt was not as celebrated, or as tactically skilled, in war than his brother Edward of Woodstock. Few of the Black Prince's contemporaries were. This does not mean that Gaunt should be seen as a 'bad' general. The military pressure he exerted on the Castilians in the 1380s, for example, culminated in the signing of the treaty of Bayonne (1388) in which the duke agreed to give up his claim on the Castilian throne

³⁸ Walsingham, 229.

³⁹ Saul, *Richard II*, 58-59; Searle, E., Burghart, R. 'The Defence of England and the Peasants Revolt' *Viator* iii (1972), 381-2, 386; Sumption, *Divided*, 427.

⁴⁰ Gransden, *Historical Writing*, 129, 138-39.

⁴¹ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, 57-62

in return for heavy financial compensation.⁴² His most notable military endeavour was the grand *chevauchée* he launched through France in 1373 at the head of c. 9,000 men, traversing the country from Calais to Aquitaine over a four month period. It is true that this raid did not engage the French in battle, and it has often been criticised for having achieved little of value, with the numbers the duke had lost through disease, particularly plague, damaging his reputation.⁴³ Yet as A.H. Burne argued nearly half a century ago the expedition was a remarkable military achievement with an English army openly flaunting the power of the English crown in France to the extent that French commentators like Roland Delachenal and the authors of the *Grand Chroniques* lauded the expedition as martially successful and a blow to French morale.⁴⁴ Even the stand-off that Gaunt endured with the French in 1369, and which has been condemned, was actually martially prudent.⁴⁵ Though the English on this occasion could have given battle, and arguably Gaunt offered it,⁴⁶ the duke evidently decided on this occasion that prudence was the best course of action to take.⁴⁷ To be sure this can be seen as ineptitude, even cowardice, and certainly the more bellicose earl of Warwick chastised the duke when he arrived at the stand-off.⁴⁸ Yet Gaunt seems to have judged that offering battle on this occasion was potentially dangerous; as is discussed in the next section though the English were arguably seeking battlefield encounters in this period this was not to the detriment of martial sense and self-preservation.⁴⁹ Gaunt was by no means a bad general, he was simply not a reckless one. The general public ire that was directed towards him seems to have been attributable to the fact that in the vacuum of royal power in the 1370s and 80s he was the most recognisable public figure at the heart of government and a target when things were seen to go wrong.

⁴² Palmer, J.J.N., Powell, B.J. *The Treaty of Bayonne (1388) with the preliminary Treaties of Tansco (1387)* (Exeter, 1988). Sumption, *Divided*, 619;

⁴³ Sumption, *Divided*, 187-202; Burne, A.H. 'John of Gaunt's Grand Chevauchée' *History Today* 9:2 (1959), 113-121.

⁴⁴ Burne, A.H. 'John of Gaunt's Grand Chevauchée' *History Today* 9:2 (1959), 113-121.

⁴⁵ For example, Walsingham, *Historia Anglicana*, i. 308.

⁴⁶ Sherborne, J. 'John of Gaunt, Edward III's Retinue, and the Campaign of 1369' *War, Politics and Culture in Fourteenth Century England* (ed.) Tuck, A. (1994), 85-86.

⁴⁷ The author of the *Anonimalle*, says that the English feared the size of the enemy but arranged their defence to so that it would have been difficult for the enemy to break them, 60.

⁴⁸ Sherborne, 'Campaign of 1369', 86.

⁴⁹ See chapter V, iii, below 295-96.

Unlike in France, where Charles V has been seen to have been a strong willed and shrewd judge of character, the courtiers who surrounded the English kings in this second phase of the war have also come in for a good deal of criticism, accused of taking advantage of their positions to enrich themselves to the detriment of the realm. In Edward III's reign these people included Alice Perrers, William, Lord Latimer, his son-in-law, John Lord Neville of Raby, and the London merchant Richard Lyons. During Richard II's minority those close to the king included Aubrey de Vere, Sir Simon Burley, Robert de Vere (nephew of Aubrey), earl of Oxford and later duke of Ireland, and Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk from 1385.⁵⁰

As Chaucer highlights in his *Canterbury Tales*, contemporaries were well aware that to wage war successfully it was necessary to possess a reliable source of income.

'I conseilte yow tghat ye bigynne no were in trust of youre richesces, for they ne suffisen noght werres to mayntene./ And therefore seith a philosopher, 'That man that disireth and wole algates han were, shal nevere have sufisaunce,/ for the richer that he is, the greater dispenses moste he make, if he wole have worshipe and victorie'./⁵¹

Here too, it has been contended, the French possessed a considerable advantage over the English from 1369-80. The English had been able to compete with the French financially in the earlier phases of the war because English wealth could more easily be tapped through parliamentary taxation and also because the English campaign strategy of ravaging the countryside, and the divisions and in-fighting amongst the French nobility, had prevented the French from reaching their full potential. The decade after the resumption of the war saw the French finally able to bring the country's greater population and wealth to bear, and achieve a greater degree of financial stability, thanks to Charles V's fiscal reforms of the 1360s.⁵² Ultimately the major French advantage was that in France the king could demand money from his subjects; English kings had to ask theirs for funds. In England a parliamentary subsidy, a major source of revenue, could only be justified when it was deemed 'a necessity' with war on such occasion. As the English were officially at peace with the French during the 1360s there were no justifiable grounds for Edward

⁵⁰ Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, 146-60.

⁵¹ 'The Tale of Melibee', lines 1649-51: *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd edn. (Oxford, 1988), 234.

⁵² Sumption, *Divided*, 56-60; Henneman, 'France in the Middle Ages', 116.

III to seek a subsidy.⁵³ Consequently there was no major parliamentary subsidy from 1357 to 1371 and the crown had to make do with its traditional rights and privileges like the receipt of the customs revenues for income.⁵⁴ Though yields of the customs revenues, the other major source of royal income by this period, were not wholly negligible during the 1360s they were far from adequate to fund extensive military campaigning.⁵⁵ Edward's reluctance to ask for funds when the war recommenced seems to have been as a result of political prudence. Unlike their French neighbours, the English had not suffered the devastation of a war fought on its soil and the population at large, un-used to heavy taxation for over a decade, might not be willing to put their collective hands-in-pockets to fund a war some might have been seen as decisively resolved in 1360.⁵⁶

In the years of peace the problems of English finance had been somewhat hidden from view. Edward III, like Charles V, had built up a small surplus in the 1360s, funded by the receipt of ransoms won over the previous two decades, and revenue generated from duties on English exports, notably of wool.⁵⁷ As in France, this surplus was dissipated by the early campaigns of the war, but unlike the situation across the Channel the English government could not rely on regular high-levels of taxation. In all, government income amounted to something in the region of £90,000 - £100,000 *p.a.*⁵⁸ This was not sufficient for purpose. Overheads which had to be met no matter whether the kingdom was at war or not amounted to *c.*£84,000 and this was before the costs of military campaigning were taken into account. Extra costs also had had to be met such as setting up households for Edward's sons and establishing the

⁵³ Harriss, G.L. 'War and the Emergence of the English Parliament, 1297-1360' *Journal of Medieval History* 2 (1976), 35-56.

⁵⁴ There were lay and clerical subsidies of 1360, though the yields were small. Ormrod, W.M. *The Reign of Edward III* (Updated edition, Gloucestershire, 2000), tables 1-2, 189-190.

⁵⁵ Idem, table. 3-4, 191-92.

⁵⁶ Sumption, *Divided*, 62-3

⁵⁷ Broome, D.M., Tout, T.F. 'A National Balance Sheet for 1362-63' *E.H.R.* 35 (1920), 26-54.

⁵⁸ Henneman, 'France in the Middle Ages', 116. Sherborne, J. 'The Cost of English Warfare with France in the Later Fourteenth Century' *War, Politics, Culture*, 60, put the figure at £96,000 *p.a.* 1369-75. English finance: Edwards, J.G. *The Second Century of English Parliament* (Oxford, 1979), 19-23; Harriss, *Public Finance*; Ormrod, W.M. 'The Western European Monarchies in the Later Middle Ages' *Economic Systems and State Finance* (ed.) Bonney, R. (Oxford, 1995), 123-62; Idem, 'England in the Middle Ages' *The Rise of the Fiscal State in Europe, c.1200-1815* (ed.) Bonney, R. (Oxford, 1999), 19-52; Idem, 'Net Revenue from Clerical Taxes on Incomes, 1272-1485' *European State Finance Database*: <http://esfdb.websites.bta.com/Table.aspx?resourceid=11652>.

Black Prince's court in Aquitaine, all of which ate in royal revenues.⁵⁹ Whilst the customs grant had been renewed in 1362, which would have been a help to English finances, it was at half the previous rate and wool exports were beginning to wane after a high-point from 1353-62, a process which would continue for the rest of the century.⁶⁰ At the same time there was an equally dramatic rise in the number of units of cloth being exported and traded in both foreign and domestic markets.⁶¹ The salient point is that whilst the crown was able to gain some benefit from this boom in cloth exports this was nowhere near enough to compensate it for the drop off that had occurred in the wool market as the duty which parliament allowed it to charge on cloth was not as lucrative as that on wool. This is hardly surprising considering that parliament was packed with business and tradesmen who had no desire to see their profits diminished. As it was the crown had to struggle on with its hand-to-mouth existence for much of the second half of the fourteenth century. Indeed lack of finance was the dominant domestic political issue for successive English administrations for the rest of the century with nearly every parliament coming to grief over financial disputes.

It has been argued that English fiscal troubles directly influenced her foreign policy in these years, colouring English thinking with a defensive mentality. Once the initial shock of the French offensive had been absorbed, and much land lost, English strategy was to 'acquire a ring of fortresses around the coast of France' and several attempts to this effect were made throughout the war.⁶² The additions of Brest and Cherbourg to Calais, Bordeaux, and Bayonne in effect created a series of 'barbicans of the realm'. The purpose, according to the government's response to a complaint in parliament in 1378 that the strategy was expensive, was that,

'Gascony and the other strong places which our lord the king has overseas are and ought to be like barbicans to the kingdom of England, and if the barbicans are well guarded, and the

⁵⁹ Sherborne, 'Cost of Warfare' 56-7; Harriss, *Public Finance*, 487. Connolly, 'Financing English Expeditions', 117; Richardson, H.G., Sayles, G.O. 'Irish Revenue, 1278-1384' *P.R.I.A.* 62:C:4 (1962), 93, 100.

⁶⁰ Ormrod, W.M. 'The English Crown and the Customs, 1349-63' *Econ.H.R.* 2:40, 37-39; Idem, 'England in the Middle Ages' 33, fig. 1.11.

⁶¹ Dyer, C. *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages. Social Change in England c.1280-1520* (Cambridge, 1989), 49-85, 151-87, 196-210; Thomson, *Transformation of Medieval England*, 56-64, 380-1.

⁶² Palmer, *Christendom*, 7.

sea safeguarded, the kingdom shall find itself well enough secure and in those barbicans our said lord the king has good ports and entries through which to harass his adversaries whenever he chooses, and can undertake the task'.⁶³

When coupled with an increased naval effort – eleven major English fleets were launched from 1369-89 – the barbican strategy proved to be relatively successful.⁶⁴ Barring some French raiding of the south coast, it kept the war on the French side of Channel and made the best use of the disparity between the two realms in terms of manpower and finance.

The death of Charles V on 16 September 1380 and the political instability this brought to the French kingdom only confirmed in the minds of many contemporaries what became increasingly apparent as the decade progressed: that peace was desirable. During the third phase of the conflict in this period, from 1380-89, the clamour for peace grew steadily not only in England but in France too. Over the course of the 1370s it had become obvious that neither side was strong enough to end the war with a decisive victory. Though, during the early years after 1369, French armies had succeeded in re-capturing large swathes of the land which had been granted to the English in 1360, they had not proved strong enough to force the English from France. There were two reasons for this. The first was largely the result of the war strategy – the barbicans of the realm – that the English had employed during the 1370s. As the extent of English territorial holdings diminished their forces became more concentrated, effectively making them stronger. Secondly was Charles V's express orders that the English were not be engaged in a set-piece battle unless the odds were overwhelmingly in the French favour.⁶⁵ The strategy of avoiding battle had both advantages and disadvantages. It prevented the French from being exposed to the possibility of another crushing defeat. Charles V's forces were content to shadow English armies on the march until they returned home, at which point they could continue their assault on English territory. Yet, as Palmer succinctly put it, the strategy 'avoided the possibility of defeat, but at the cost of the chance of victory'.⁶⁶ The English were too entrenched for them to be removed without the balance of

⁶³ Martin, G. 'Richard II: Parliament of 1378, Text and Translation' *P.R.O.M.E.*

⁶⁴ Sherborne, J. 'The English Navy: Shipping and Manpower, 1369-89' *P.P.* 37:1 (1967), 163-75; Idem, 'The Battle of La Rochelle and the War at Sea, 1372-5' *B.I.H.R.* 42:105 (1969), 17-29.

⁶⁵ Sumption, *Divided*, 16.

⁶⁶ Palmer, *Christendom*, 6.

power shifting considerably. Charles' instructions effectively condemned the conflict to petering out into stalemate. The strategy was also politically challenging to the French nobility who wanted to expunge the stain that the English battlefield successes had made on their collective honour whilst the population at large had to suffer at the hands of English armies who knew that they could ravage the French countryside with impunity. Only if they were severely caught off their guard, or if caught piecemeal as in 1370, would the French attack them. The French peasant who complained that he dare not get out of bed in the morning for fear of the English was surely not alone in his gloomy protestation.⁶⁷

The fact that the war had degenerated into stalemate was not the only reason that people either side of the Channel began to favour peace. Maintaining armies in the field over extended periods of time required a not inconsiderable amount of money and both sides began to feel the pinch. In England complaints from parliament over the costs of war gradually gained momentum as demands for taxation in frequency and size increased year on year. Several attempts to reform the system of public finances and extend the liability of taxation were unsuccessful.⁶⁸ What really struck the issue of over-taxation to the government was the failed collection and mass evasion of the famous 1381 Poll tax that resulted in the Peasants Revolt. The three parliaments following the uprising all refused to grant subsidies and it was the financial penury of the government that convinced Michael de la Pole, the English Chancellor appointed in March 1383, that the only way to restore fiscal health was to end the war. The De la Pole led government consistently followed a policy of peace and appeasement towards the French. The Chancellor's position was an unenviable one. He realised that parliament was unwilling and unable to fund the existing war effort, let alone pursue a more aggressive policy on the continent and followed the only course that was realistically open to him. The downside to this was that he was seen as being lenient towards the French. His policy meant that he failed to exploit potentially advantageous political situations that arose on the continent, leading to one reverse after another, each further weakening the English position abroad and his

⁶⁷ Tuck, *Crown*, 142.

⁶⁸ Thomson, *Transformation*, 261-62; Martin, G. (ed.) 'Parliament of October 1377' items 19-21; Idem, 'Parliament of 1379' items 13-18; Given-Wilson, C. (ed.) 'Parliament of November 1380' items 10-16 *P.R.O.M.E.*; *Foedera* iv. 99; Ormrod, W.M. 'An Experiment in Taxation: The English Parish Subsidy of 1371' *Speculum* 63 (1988), 58-82; Fenwick, H.C. (ed.) *The Poll Taxes of 1377, 1379 and 1381*, (Oxford, 1998), I, p xx, xxv-xxvi.

own position at home'.⁶⁹ Unsurprisingly the policy of peace was highly unpopular and extremely divisive amongst some of the kingdom's political elite, resulting in the emergence of a war party. Led mainly by the duke of Gloucester and the earl of Arundel, this faction was successful, with the other Lords Appellant, in ousting not only the Chancellor but also Richard II from power for a brief period in 1387-88. They too, however, were to find the pursuit of war ruinously expensive. When Richard resumed command of the government in 1389 a truce was swiftly agreed with the French at Leulingham, which was extended periodically until 1396 when a general truce was declared to last until September 1426. Though England and France came to blows well before this date it marked the end of the conflict in the fourteenth century.⁷⁰

For their part the French too began to favour peace in the 1380s. In the aftermath of Charles V's death his uncles fell into petty squabbling over the control of the government which severely weakened the realm. It was unfortunate from an English perspective that they were in the throes of the Peasants' Revolt at this time and unable to take advantage of the situation. Fiscally too the French government was weakened by the long-drawn out and escalating conflict. They were not immune from financial crises, though it is unlikely that Charles VI's ministers lacked two francs to rub together as Froissart claimed.⁷¹ Consequently, after the pursuit of a more aggressive policy in the 1380s, including a number of failed invasion attempts of England in the middle of the decade, by 1389 the French government was as amenable to peace as its English counterpart.

These three phases of the Anglo-French war from 1360 to 1389 are clearly a simplified representation of a highly complex set of political and martial circumstances. Nevertheless, the traditional case for French predominance in the conflict is clearly a strong one. Yet this does not mean it is an unchallengeable interpretation. Indeed, it is the contention of this work that in a number of areas, particularly the military sphere, there are grounds for re-evaluation: enough to argue

⁶⁹ Palmer, *Christendom*, 64, 44-87.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 88-179, remains the most important work on this period.

⁷¹ Froissart, *Ouvres*, xiii, 352-4; Henneman, 'France in the Middle Ages', 116-17.

that the second half of the fourteenth century was far from being a period of decline of the English war effort.

Firstly we must define what we mean exactly by 'decline' in the English war effort. Is this gauged solely by geography in terms of the loss of territory, political and military failures and reversals, the cession of territorial and diplomatic stances and claims by treaty? The answer is that it encompasses all of these things. Contemporaries were quick to criticise the war effort generally linking it to what they saw as a more general decline in the chivalric mentality of the knightly class.⁷² It is, of course, undeniable that the English controlled far less territory in France in 1389 than they had been granted by the Brétigny settlement in 1360.⁷³ On a purely territorial basis, therefore, it would appear that the English had indeed experienced a decline in their war effort. Yet this fails to take the wider picture of the conflict in these years into consideration. Other factors need to be considered before reaching a solid conclusion about the nature of the English war effort in the decades after Brétigny.

For a start, the quality of English personnel in these years has been wrongly denigrated. The 'golden generation' who had fought prior to 1360 would be a hard act for anyone to follow. The conduct of those that came to prominence after the resumption of the French war in 1369 should not, however, be seen as a catalogue of failures. It is true that there were set-backs in diplomacy and war with much territory lost after 1369. Yet as J.J.N. Palmer has pointed out 'it is difficult, if not impossible, to pin-point any military or political reverse which can be attributed to poor leadership, divided counsel, or sheer incompetence'.⁷⁴ The new men on the scene after 1369 may have struggled to emulate the standards of their forebears, but a stronger case can be made that the new generation had to face a far more testing set of circumstances than had those who had come before. Economically, the English government suffered from the fall in the value of her export trade, particularly with

⁷² As synthesis of these views, expressed by Gower, Chaucer, Sir John Clanvowe, and Walsingham (who believed the knightly classes were not being aggressive enough) are found in Saul, *For Honour and Fame*, 128-134. For the opinions of contemporaries as to Richard II and whether he was to blame for the perceived malaise: Taylor, J. 'Richard II in the Chronicles' *Richard II, The Art of Kingship* (ed.) Goodman, A., Gillespie, J.L. (Oxford, 1999), 15-36.

⁷³ For maps depicting this see: Sumption, *Trial by Fire*, 446; Ibid., *Divided*, 808.

⁷⁴ Palmer, *Christendom*, 5, though as he himself acknowledges C.C. Bailey points to a possible instance: 'The Campaign of 1375 and the Good Parliament' *E.H.R.* 55 (1940), 370-83.

regards to wool, and this left less money for the waging of war. Those fighting after 1369 also had to deal, far more than had their forebears, with the consequences of the social upheavals caused by a series of plague visitations: epidemics which drained the pool of manpower available to fight.⁷⁵ What has also contributed to the negative assessment of the new generation's military reputations is the fact that the French consistently refused to engage English armies in the field after 1369, thus robbing the men who commanded the English war effort of the chance to gain prestige and morale boosting victories. Viewed from this perspective, the conduct of Edward's sons, and their associates, takes on a far more positive light, as their achievements must be measured against a far more difficult set of circumstances. There is not sufficient space here to present in detail the careers of every titled nobleman involved in the English war effort post 1360 – there were nineteen in all – and a few examples will suffice.⁷⁶

John Hastings, earl of Pembroke, certainly made a good fist at imitating the achievements of his predecessors. His opening salvo in the French war in 1369 resulted in the capture of the castle of Bourdeilles after an eleven week siege. Along with the earl of Cambridge (future duke of York) he relieved the French siege of Belle-Perche early the following year and was involved in the Black Prince's infamous sack of Limoges in September-October. Henry Bolingbroke, earl of Derby (the future Henry IV) was also a notable soldier. He was regarded as one of the premier jousters of the age whilst in real combat he seems to have conducted himself well. He may have served with his father, John of Gaunt, in Scotland in 1384 and was certainly present in Lancaster's contingent the following year. He was to win wider recognition with his command at Radcot Bridge in 1387 which probably gained him the king's undying hatred. The return of his father from Iberia allowed him to take a step back from domestic politics and, though intending to go on crusade to Tunisia, he

⁷⁵ Dyer, *Standards*, 88.

⁷⁶ They were John Hastings, earl of Pembroke; Richard FitzAlan, earl of Arundel; Henry Bolingbroke, earl Derby; John Holland, earl of Huntingdon (half-brother of Richard II); Thomas Holland, earl of Kent; Edward Courtenay, earl of Devon; Edmund and his son Roger Mortimer, earls of March; Thomas Mowbray, earl of Nottingham and Duke of Norfolk; John, Lord Neville of Raby made earl of Cumberland in 1385 but was forced to give up the title; Ralph Neville, earl of Westmoreland; Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland; Robert de Vere, earl of Oxford; Thomas Percy, earl of Worcester; Michael de la pole, earl of Suffolk; John Montague, earl of Salisbury; William Scrope, earl of Wiltshire; Hugh Stafford, earl of Stafford; Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick. See career biographies: *O.D.N.B.* online (2004-2010).

eventually ended up fighting with the Teutonic knights against the pagan Lithuanians in 1390-91. This and his pilgrimage to the Holy Land the following year provided him with an international reputation which few of his contemporaries could match. Alongside Derby amongst the most bellicose of this group of young earls was Richard FitzAlan (1346-97), earl of Arundel. He led two naval expeditions (1387 and 1388) as an Appellant during his time in joint command of the government, and was also involved in the Radcot Bridge campaign. He continued to favour the pursuit of an aggressive policy towards the French, even when other warmongers like Gloucester had given their lukewarm support for peace. John Holland, earl of Huntingdon and half brother of Richard II, was 'a military figure of some renown' and served on most of the major military expeditions of the period.⁷⁷ The king's other half brother, Thomas Holland, earl of Kent from 1380, was equally if not as prominently involved in military operations until his death in April 1397. Edward Courtenay, earl of Devon, was only a minor when Edward III died. But when he came of age he fought on the northern border and as admiral of the west, though his career was cut short by the onset of blindness by 1400.

Evidently not all those who directed the war effort after 1369 had successful military careers. In some cases this was due to plain bad luck. Edmund Mortimer, earl of March, was only seventeen in 1369 and campaigned in France in that year, but thereafter he was left out of pocket by the abortive expedition to France in 1372 and the farcical situation in Brittany in 1375 when the English army landed in the duchy only for peace to be agreed soon after. In 1379, as one the greatest landowners in Ireland, he was appointed lieutenant in the lordship and arrived in May 1380, only for him to become ill and die in late December the following year. His son and heir Roger Mortimer did not gain possession of the earldom until 1393 and spent the majority of his short life in Ireland fighting to maintain his family's lands in the lordship until he was killed in a skirmish in 1398.

It is also true that some titled noblemen were involved in fighting far more than others, due to personal circumstances such as age, opportunity, and character; and

⁷⁷ Stansfield, M.M.N. 'Holland, John, first earl of Huntingdon and duke of Exeter (c.1352-1400)' *O.D.N.B.*, (Oxford University Press, 2004); online edn., Jan 2008
[<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/13529>]

even those whose careers can be seen as being largely successful were not without blots on their record. Arundel, for example, unsuccessfully tried to take Harfleur in 1378, and was blamed in some quarters for the failure to take St Malo in the same year. Five years later the bishop of Norwich refused to accept him as the king's representative on the Flemish 'crusade', presumably because of a personal dislike and perhaps because of a personal disdain for his martial abilities. Nevertheless, whilst it is true that the leading aristocrats of the realm were not always pulling in the same direction, it is hard to deny that collectively they represent a formidable body of fighting men. To claim that the English war effort in this period lacked high-ranking leadership is certainly stretching credulity.

Nor should the quality of the leading French magnates' martial skill be overstressed. Despite the advantages the French have been seen to possess in financial capital and senior personnel they were unable to oust the English from France entirely. Moreover the French unity of purpose in the early years of the war, which may have given them a slight advantage during Edward III's dotage and Richard II's minority, was all but dissipated by the twin deaths of Charles V and Bertrand du Guesclin in 1380. Guesclin's replacement as constable, Oliver de Clisson, was a notable soldier but he was a Breton who had fought for the English candidate John de Montfort during the war of the Breton succession and this fact, along with his military reputation, aroused jealousy and hostility amongst the king's uncles. His position remained safe whilst he remained useful to them. But whilst he retained royal favour after Charles VI took up the reigns of power in 1388, after the king's first bout of madness in 1392 Clisson lost this protection and was removed from power on charges of embezzlement.⁷⁸ Charles VI himself was not even in his teens in 1380 and in the absence at the heart of government of a king acting as a unifying influence, the ambitious royal uncles, far more than was the case in England, squabbled with each other for power.⁷⁹ Indeed, when Charles VI came to the throne there was soon an outbreak of violence amongst the common people in Paris due in the main to complaints about the nobles and excessive taxation. Walsingham recounts how,

⁷⁸ Henneman J.B. *Oliver de Clisson and Political Society in France under Charles V and Charles VI* (Philadelphia, 1996) 189-206; Jones, M. *Ducal Brittany 1364-1399: Relations with England and France during the reign of Duke John IV* (Oxford, 1970), 200; Sumption, *Divided*, 800-1.

⁷⁹ Sumption, *Divided*, 392.

‘These very nobles, who ought to have been a defence for the poor, had themselves been in need of protectors, seeing that, when they saw an English army riding through the whole kingdom and laying everything to waste through fire and sword, there had not been one of them who dared to block the English advance or even look at them, but they all like women had shut themselves away in their cities or castles’.⁸⁰

We must be careful when assessing the validity of Walsingham’s assessment of the causes of the uprising for we have no idea where his information for this passage of his chronicle came from and how well informed he was about the internal politics of the French court. If he is right, however, then the French people clearly did not see the preceding decade of the French war as having been as successful as English commentators, and subsequent scholars. In addition, the so-called unity of purpose within the French government, even during the reign of Charles V, appears questionable when one considers the layer of nobility below the royal uncles and family members: the leading regional magnates and vassals of the French king, equivalent in rank to the English earls. Relations with two of the most important in this period, Charles of Navarre and John de Montfort, duke of Brittany, were often strained.

Furthermore, the idea that the upper levels of the French military community were more militarily experienced than their English counterparts can also be challenged. It is true that when war recommenced in 1369 the military inexperience of some English commanders, like the earl of Pembroke, was plain to see, especially when compared to the French royal uncles who had spent the majority of their time fighting rebellious subjects and the *routier* bands who roamed the French countryside in the wake of Brétigny.⁸¹ A lack of experience, however, is not the same thing as a lack of talent. Close to two decades of intermittent conflict with France after 1369 provided ample opportunities to remedy the deficiency in experience and nurture nascent talent. English military commanders in the 1370s and 80s may not have surpassed the achievements of their French peers but they at least achieved parity with them.

⁸⁰ Walsingham, 114.

⁸¹ Sumption, *Divided*, 26.

It is also the contention of this work that if one looks below the level of the aristocracy to the bulk of the respective ‘military communities’ of each realm – the rank-and-file knights and esquires of the gentry, and the yeomanry of the mounted archers – the English, if not possessing an advantage in both calibre and experience when compared to their French counterparts, certainly had parity with them. This is certainly a bold and controversial claim when one remembers that the French had something of an advantage in the opening salvos of the war after 1369 and were successful in re-capturing large swathes of English-held territory in France. Nevertheless, the argument still holds water if one looks at the circumstantial evidence.

Let us look at two areas: experience and combat talent and performance. If we judge experience by the amount of military activity undertaken by individuals then recent research shows that the English military community contained a large number of men for whom fighting was, if not their primary vocation, then at the very least one which took up a large amount of their time, particularly when we look at the *Court of Chivalry* records.⁸² Whilst we must be careful about the individuals who were selected to provide information, from these records we see that English soldiers campaigned far and wide over a number of decades, evidently garnering much combat experience.⁸³ It is unfortunate that there are no records of comparable quality in the French record collections, although Michael Jones has shown, that a number of French soldiers mustered with Bertrand du Guesclin on successive occasions in 1370-71, hinting at regular campaigning.⁸⁴ What really hits home about the experience of English soldiery, however, is that the evidence from the *Court of Chivalry* suggests that those fighting after 1369 were also veterans from the earlier, pre-1360 conflict. There is also evidence that 1360 should not be seen as a break in the martial experience of the English military community. Though some may have returned to England after 1360 many, perhaps a sizeable majority, who had little talent for anything other than fighting, continued ravaging the French countryside in *routier*

⁸² See 37-42, 65-66, 192-198.

⁸³ Ayton, ‘Dynamics of Recruitment’, 25-34.

⁸⁴ *Letters, Orders and Musters of Bertrand du Guesclin, 1357-1380* (ed.) Jones, M. (Woodbridge, 2004), 342.

bands as if peace had never been declared.⁸⁵ Nor was martial activity in the ‘decade of peace’ after 1360 limited to France. Many men found their way into Iberia and became involved in the war of the Castilian succession.⁸⁶ Others found service in the wars between the city states in Italy, Henry Knighton commenting that there was a general movement back and forth of English soldiers between Lombardy and France.⁸⁷ The most celebrated and successful of these soldiers was Sir John Hawkwood who probably began his military career fighting under William Bohun, earl of Northampton, in Brittany in the 1340s but there were certainly others, ‘all veterans of the French wars, some familiar, others obscure, several undoubtedly using false names, a custom common among soldiers, particularly those wanted for crimes’.⁸⁸

Still other men went off on crusade. There has been much debate amongst scholars as to whether or not ‘crusades’ to anywhere other than the Holy Land can rightly be considered as crusades at all.⁸⁹ There must be some doubt, for example, about the expeditions against Christians which were made possible by the Schism in the Church (1378-1417) with Popes in Rome and Avignon proclaiming crusades against their rivals. The situation could easily work the other way, with Bishop Despenser’s expedition to the Low Countries in 1383 disguised as a crusade to facilitate paying for the campaign. Whilst the English court was often lukewarm about crusading, disliking French leadership in the majority of proposed projects, it is clear that enthusiasm for the activity had not diminished amongst individuals by the second half of the fourteenth century.⁹⁰ The cessation in Anglo-French hostilities in the 1360s and in the 1390s provided perfect opportunities for Englishmen to take the cross. For various reasons, and although advocates of the crusade like Philip de Mézières strongly argued for it, there was no expedition launched in this period which

⁸⁵ The most important recent works: Fowler, K. *Medieval Mercenaries: The Great Companies* (Oxford, 2001); Urban, M. *Medieval Mercenaries: The Business of War* (2008).

⁸⁶ Sumption, *Divided*, 20-1; *Trial*, 529-30.

⁸⁷ Mallet, M. *Mercenaries and their Masters: Warfare in Renaissance Italy* (NJ. 1974); Knighton, 183.

⁸⁸ Caferro, *Hawkwood*, 45, 349-50, 361-2 for names of some of these men.

⁸⁹ Housley, N. *The Later Crusades: From Lyons to Alcazar 1274-1580* (Oxford, 2001), 2-5, provides an overall summary. For contemporary criticism: Siberry, E. ‘Criticism of Crusading in Fourteenth-Century England’ *Crusade and Settlement* (ed.) Edbury, (Cardiff, 1985), 127-34.

⁹⁰ Keen, M. ‘Chaucer’s Knight, the English Aristocracy and the Crusade’ *English Court Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (ed.) Scattergood, V. J., Sherborne, J. W. (1983), 60.

attempted to re-take Jerusalem from Muslim occupation.⁹¹ Fortunately for aspiring holy warriors, crusading activity by this period had expanded to encompass military activity on several of the medieval west's frontiers: in Lithuania with the Teutonic Knights against pagans, in the Eastern Mediterranean, in North Africa and southern Spain, in the Balkans against the Ottomans, as well as on controversial, papal sanctioned expeditions against Schismatic Christians.⁹² 'No doubt there were other Englishmen besides those who joined these crusades who saw service in the east in the company of the Knights Hospitallar, joining them perhaps for some minor campaign in the course of making the popular pilgrimage to the Holy Places, but the names of such are not easy to recover'.⁹³ Indeed it seems that as well as these officially sanctioned ventures, the majority of English crusaders were men who ventured under their own steam to fight in their chosen theatre of war, their names appearing on every crusading front. Whilst crusading was an international affair the military experience gained on crusade can only have been valuable for members of the English military community in the second half of the fourteenth century.

How many Englishmen took up the cross throughout the second half of the fourteenth century, or fought in Italy, Iberia, Brittany, in the *routier* companies in the 1360s, or indeed in the permanent garrison forces in France, the Scottish border and elsewhere? This question, like the wider one as to the number of men who fought in England's wars during the period, will probably never be answered satisfactorily. All that can be said with certainty is that it was not an inconsequential number. Some indication is provided by entries in the *Patent Rolls*. From mid-October 1367 to mid-January 1368, for example, there are over 150 entries relating to licenses granted by the crown for men to go overseas.⁹⁴ Though in many entries the purpose of the journey is not made clear, it can sometimes be inferred from information provided by others. Whilst some of these men are clearly pilgrims and merchants a sizeable

⁹¹ Joint Anglo-French schemes were often mooted. *Anglo-Norman Letters and Petitions* (ed.) Legge, M.D. (Oxford, 1941), no. 173. Palmer, *Christendom*, 186-91.

⁹² For details of Englishmen on crusade: Christiansen, E. *The Northern Crusades* (1997); Housley, *Later Crusades*, 41; Idem, *Documents on the Later Crusades 1274-1580* (1996), 86-9. Luttrell, A. 'Chaucer's Knight and the Mediterranean' *Library of Mediterranean History 1* (1994), 137, 156, 140-41; Idem, English Levantine Crusaders: 1363-1367' *Renaissance Studies II* (1988), 145-46; Paravicini, W. 'Die Preussenreisen des Europäischen Adels' *Historisches Zeitschrift* 222 (1981), 124-27; Palmer, *Christendom*, 184-85; Tipton, C.L. 'The English at Nicopolis' *Speculum* 37:4 (1962), 528-40.

⁹³ Keen, 'Chaucer's Knight', 48.

⁹⁴ *C.P.R. 1367-70*, 52-59, 64-65, 70-75.

number were travelling to war as evidenced by the retinues, horses, and money they were taking with them. Thus, even in periods of official peace, large numbers of Englishmen continued to fight in various theatres of war, garnering valuable martial experience. Whilst it may have been the case that the English in 1369 were unprepared for war on an organisational level, it certainly cannot be argued that England's fighting men were anything other than battle hardened, as ready for war as they had been in the 1340s and 50s.

It is, of course, true that French men-at-arms were not idle during the 1360s. They fought largely in the same theatres of war as their English counterparts, particularly against the *routier* companies in their own country, and this would evidently have maintained their own combat effectiveness. Like their English counterparts, some of these men had fought for decades.⁹⁵ How then can it be argued that man-for-man and in terms of experience and competence English soldiery achieved at minimum parity with their French counterparts? The answer lies in two areas. Firstly it is based on the fact that large numbers of the French nobility had been wiped out at Crécy, Poitiers and elsewhere. The deaths of large numbers of men of the French military elite can only have damaged the country's fighting prowess to the advantage of her enemies.⁹⁶ Whatever casualty figures one chooses to accept regarding these two great engagements, it is clear that they were, in the words of one French source, 'a great pity, and damage irreparable for France'.⁹⁷ It is certainly true that numbers would have recovered in the near decade-and-a-half between Poitiers and 1369, but those men coming through can hardly have been as martially adept as their forebears. They were learning rather than expanding upon their talents after 1360.

The second argument against French superiority of arms carries even more weight. Ironically, it may have been the French military system itself which prevented

⁹⁵ Sumption, *Divided*, 737-38.

⁹⁶ Casualty figures amongst nobility and 'commoners'. Ayton, *Crécy*, 19, at least 2,000 at Crécy with a disproportionate number of nobles. Poitiers: *Chronique des règnes de Jean II et Charles V, tome I (1350-1364)* (ed.) Delachenal, R. (Paris, 1916), 72-3; 'Letter of the Black Prince to the Bishop of Worcester, 20 October 1356' in Riley, H.T. *Memorials of London Life in the XIIIth, XIVth, XVth Centuries* (London, 1868), 390-2. Rogers, *Cruel*, 384, for estimates of chroniclers from 800 dead to as many as 2,500.

⁹⁷ *Chronique des Quatre Premiers Valois 1327-1393* (ed.) Luce, S. (Paris, 1862), 56.

the French soldiery from gaining the superiority they craved. For a start, unlike in England, there was no tradition of military archery in France. The authorities constantly feared social insurrection, particularly after the *Jacquerie* rising in the summer of 1358, and saw the bow, the weapon of the common man, as potentially militarising the peasantry. Archery was also seen as going against chivalric rules of war of whom the French were amongst the leading advocates.⁹⁸ Both these factors combined into ensuring that large swathes of the French lower orders did not become militarily active, in effect forcing the French government to seek mercenaries to perform the function of missile troops in French armies. More importantly, however, was the fact that, despite Charles V's military reforms, which created a small, semi-permanent army of around 6,000 men in the mid-1370s, this force demonstrated the lack of martial depth below the level of the already depleted nobility.⁹⁹ In the main, this permanent force consisted of men of noble birth with largely Genoese mercenaries providing missile support.¹⁰⁰ Yet below this corps of semi-professionals it is arguable that whilst there were some individuals who can be considered to have pursued military activity as their primary vocation there was nothing in France akin in scale to the militarised English 'gentry' and body of 'yeomanry'. In France, by contrast, there was only this relatively small number of semi-professionals and the titled nobility at the top and underneath the widely denigrated local militia and recourse to the French equivalent of the feudal levy, the *arrière-ban*. In effect the French military system possessed a small group of martially experienced individuals at the top of society but a vastly smaller pool of experience below. The English, whilst also possessing the noble elite to match the French, could draw upon a larger number of what was a highly experienced 'middle-order' within English society. To this the French had no answer.

That English fighting experience was indeed on a par with that of the French can also be gauged by looking at combat capability and performance. In general, how skilled in combat were Englishmen compared with their French counterparts. This is doubtless the most difficult quality to gauge, for in the widest sense it encompasses everything from individual military prowess to fighting with others in a unit, and it

⁹⁸ Contamine, *War*, 217; Schnerb, 'Vassals, Allies' 272.

⁹⁹ Above, 247.

¹⁰⁰ Contamine, *War*, 153.

also merits consideration of factors like courage, honour, and general battlefield psychology. These wider issues are not here our concern. Instead it is, at the most basic level, how contemporaries viewed the general performance of English arms in the second half of the fourteenth century. Commentary on such matters is somewhat rare, but that which does exist provides valuable insight into English fighting techniques, skills-in-arms, and how they had built upon those that had been developed during the first phase of the Hundred Years War. The Florentine chronicler, Filippo Villani, described the English soldiers in Italy as:

“all young and for the most part born and raised during the long wars between the French and English - therefore hot and impetuous, used to slaughter and to loot, quick with weapons, careless of safety. In the ranks they were quick and obedient to their superiors.... Their mode of fighting in the field was almost always afoot, as they assigned their horses to their pages. Keeping themselves in almost circular formation, every two take a lance, carrying it in a manner in which one waits for a boar with a boar-spear. So bound and compact, with lowered lances they marched with slow steps towards the enemy, making a terrible outcry - and their ranks can hardly be pried apart. ...And they were the first to bring into Italy the fashion of forming cavalry in lances [of three men each] instead of in the old system of helmets or flags”.¹⁰¹

‘English’ tactical methods were copied in Iberia and elsewhere, indeed wherever English soldiers could be found.¹⁰² Praise for English soldiery was not of course universal. Almost within the same breath as praising the conduct of the English Villani wrote that:

‘In camp, by reason of their unrestrained dash and boldness, they [the English] lay scattered about in disorderly and incautious fashion so that a courageous enemy might easily harm and shame them. It appears by experience that they are more fitted to ride by night and steal than to keep to the field: they succeed rather by the cowardice of our people than because of their own valour’.¹⁰³

Yet it must be remembered that whilst the Italian princes may have desired the help of Englishmen in their wars the general populace, men like Villani, can hardly

¹⁰¹ Parks, G.R. *The English Traveller in Italy* (Stanford, 1954). Online: <http://www.deremilitari.org/resources/sources/villani3.htm>.

¹⁰² Russell, *Intervention*, 379-80, 384-6.

¹⁰³ Parks, *Traveller*, online.

have welcomed these foreign mercenaries with all the attendant problems that soldiers bring into a foreign land. Whilst it is true that these 'English' tactics were nothing new in the annals of military history they were seen to be novel and innovative by contemporaries, once again because of the issue of medieval living memory. This was to such an extent that they were copied in all areas in which the English fought by their allies and enemies alike and provided English fighting men with a fearsome reputation that made them sought as mercenaries all over Europe.¹⁰⁴ It was not that military reputations lingered from the earlier period of Anglo-French conflict; rather it was that reputations were cemented and re-made anew after 1369.

Clearly, then, based on evidence such as this, the English military community, if not surpassing that of the French in this period at the very least achieved equality with them, a fact that they have rarely hitherto been credited with. It is true that in the short term the superior organisational skills of Charles V, and the fact that his armies were fighting on home soil, consequently not experiencing the logistical problem of transporting an army overseas, meant that the French had the advantage in the opening salvos of the war. Yet once the English had recovered from the early French jabs they brought their more experienced military community to bear, nullifying the French advantage and effectively creating stalemate. Moreover, when Charles VI came to the throne the chaos caused by the personal jealousies of his uncles during his minority, and the king's own lapse into mental instability, undid any small advantage that French military reforms had provided, an opportunity England would capitalise on in the fifteenth-century.

The efficiency of the military reforms undertaken by Charles V and the significance of the newly created, so-called French standing army should also not be over emphasized. It was not until the reign of Charles VII that real, tangible strides were taken in this direction. The continued reliance on mercenary crossbowmen to provide missile troops shows that there was still no real tradition of military archery in France despite tentative attempts to introduce it.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, though Charles V was blessed with commanders like Du Guesclin and the duke of Anjou it is surely no coincidence that Du Guesclin's death, along with that of the king in 1380, had a

¹⁰⁴ Verbruggen, *Art of Warfare*, 106-8.

¹⁰⁵ Contamine, *War*, 217.

detrimental effect on the French war effort. Indeed the most telling point about Charles V's military reforms was that they did not endure beyond his death. In the reign of Charles VI the factionalism caused by the intermittent bouts of madness of the king, and an acute financial crisis, caused the strict standards of recruitment and discipline to lapse. Therefore, it cannot be argued that these reforms represented a French advantage in arms after 1380, especially considering the well developed systems of English recruitment and martial tactics that had long been in gestation since at least the beginning of Edward III's reign.¹⁰⁶

Furthermore, though it has been long recognised that English problems in the second half of the fourteenth century lay primarily in the realm of finance, the French system, despite Charles V's reforms, should not be overly praised despite the amount of funds that were raised.¹⁰⁷ His deathbed revocation of the *fouage*, an important tax that had underpinned much of the French efforts during his reign, undid much of the good work undertaken in the previous decade, removing vast swathes of the population from the liability of taxation.¹⁰⁸ What made matters worse was that the *Estates-General*, who had largely taken a back seat in French political life during Charles' reign, used the chaos and factionalism that ensued after his death to cancel not just the *fouage* but also the *aides*, *gabelle*, and all other taxes that had been introduced by the Crown from the beginning of the fourteenth century: a move clearly intended to re-assert the right of representative assemblies to consent to taxation.¹⁰⁹ Fortunately for the French government the situation was speedily resolved by 1384 but this series of events highlighted just how precarious French financial health could be.¹¹⁰ Neither side could maintain persistently high levels of taxation for long periods of time without running the risk of social insurrection and economic exhaustion. The French government, like its English counter-part, experienced tax revolts, continued to live a hand-to-mouth existence, and was not immune from fiscal crises. In other words, the financial peaks, and more often troughs, that both kingdoms experienced

¹⁰⁶ Above, chapter III, ii, and iii.

¹⁰⁷ Rey, M. *Le Domaine du Roi et les Finances Extraordinaires sous Charles VI, 1388-1413* (Paris, 1965), 164-76, 324-40, 390-404; Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, 11-12.

¹⁰⁸ Pisan, C. *Le Livre de l'advison Cristine* (ed.) Reno, C., Dulac, L. (Paris, 2001), 98. Sumption, *Divided*, 395-6, 399-400.

¹⁰⁹ Henneman, *Captivity and Ransom*, 298-301.

¹¹⁰ Henneman, 'France in the Middle Ages', 116; Sumption, *Divided*, 492.

militates against the argument that the period after 1360 should be seen as simply one of English ‘decline’ and French ‘success’.

No where was this more apparent than in the realm of military planning, as this was directly influenced by the lubricant of money. The English continued their earlier policy of launching mobile raiding forces throughout the French countryside, the aim being, by inflicting economic and political damage, to bring the enemy to battle for a decisive victory. The French by contrast had a problem. With Charles V’s battle-avoidance strategy what was left for the French to achieve once the initial successes of the early years after 1369 had subsided, when it became apparent that the English could not be removed from the last vestiges of their French held territory? There was no readily available ally with the strength to aid the French in their endeavour. The only option was to launch a full-scale invasion of England. Whilst the invasion scares of 1385-6 were undoubtedly alarming for the English government it must be remembered that French plans came to nought for the simple reason that they ran out of money.¹¹¹ Simply put, despite what may be perceived as the French advantage – and thus ascendancy – of finance after 1369, this was still not enough to achieve the ultimate French objective of driving the English out of France. For all the posturing of French historians like Perroy who argued that: ‘In England ... it was not possible to stop a decline that gradually lowered her from the pedestal to which Edward III’s genius had raised her’, the fact remains that it was *English armies* that continued to ravage *the French* countryside well into the 1380s.¹¹² While it is true that the Franco-Castilian alliance of 1368 provided the French with the largest and best equipped fleet on the Atlantic coast, and that the victory that these forces won against the English at the naval battle of La Rochelle in 1372 effectively handed the French control of their own coastline (the first time this had happened since the English naval victory at Sluys in 1340), the best the French could manage was small scale coastal raids.¹¹³ These actions only raised consternation in the English parliament because this had not happened since the early years of the war in the 1330s and 40s.¹¹⁴ Indeed whilst La Rochelle may have helped France stabilise her coastal waters she never gained control

¹¹¹ Palmer, *Christendom*, 66.

¹¹² Perroy, *Hundred Years War*, 145.

¹¹³ Such as in 1360 and 1377. *Chronicon Anonymi Cantuariensis* (ed.) Given-Wilson, C., Scott-Stokes, C. (Oxford, 2008), 59

¹¹⁴ Given-Wilson, ‘Richard II: Parliament of November 1384’ *P.R.O.M.E.*, item. 24.

of the Channel as the English victory at Sluys had done.¹¹⁵ The French were still unable to prevent the landing of English armies on the continent.

If the French did have an advantage over the English with regards to finance, and the tax receipts show that in terms of revenues generated they certainly did, then the advantage was only transient, covering the decade from 1369-80. In the final analysis French financial health in the second half of the fourteenth century was lukewarm at best and certainly not substantial enough for it to be considered a major advantage. The fiscal fortunes of the English and French governments were the same as the war efforts that they funded; neither side had an advantage and stalemate ensued.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Richmond, C.F. 'The War at Sea' *The Hundred Years War* (ed.) Fowler, K. (1971), 96-121.

iii: The Role of Battle in English Strategy

One of the most important arguments of this thesis is that one of the central tenets of English martial strategy towards France in the second half of the fourteenth century has been misunderstood: the importance of battlefield engagements to the English *modus operandi*. The study of military history used to be synonymous with the study of battles and was seen as the preserve of amateurs and enthusiasts rather than a subject for serious scholarship. Historians of medieval military history were doubly damned. Not only were they seen to be focusing their attention on an area perceived as possessing little value but also because, of all periods of history, strategy and tactics in medieval warfare – thus medieval battle – were seen to be ‘absolutely non-existent’.¹¹⁶ Medieval combat was seen as nothing more than a series of headlong charges and undisciplined melees in which knightly combatants, regardless of the wishes of their superiors, sought out a foe deemed ‘worthy’ enough to face. This lacuna of martial strategy was seen to have lasted in Western Europe from the fall of the Western Roman Empire to the Renaissance.¹¹⁷ Gradually this perception of medieval warfare, in terms of an appreciation of strategy, tactics, and generalship, has begun to change. The new found appreciation has largely not, however, extended to battle. Medieval military historians have been seen in the past to have over-emphasized the importance of battlefield engagements, adhering to the idea of the ‘decisive battle’ in warfare, heavily influenced through the filter of nineteenth and twentieth-century conflicts. Moreover the study of battles in medieval warfare has been seen to be flawed because set-piece encounters occupied only a small percentage of overall activity.¹¹⁸ B.T. Carey, for example, argued recently that: ‘medieval warfare revolved around the construction and control of castles and fortified towns or the destruction of the enemy’s economic resources; in fact ... warfare consisted perhaps of 1 percent battles and 99 percent sieges’.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Oman, C.W.C. *A History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages*, revised edn. (ed.) Beeler, J. (New York, 1953), 61.

¹¹⁷ E.g.: Lot, F. *L’Art Militaire et les Armées au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1946), 2, 449. Also: Keegan, J. *The Face of Battle* (Harmondsworth, 1978), 336.

¹¹⁸ Weigley, R.F. *The Age of Battles: The Quest for Decisive Warfare from Breitenfeld to Waterloo*, (Indiana, 2004), 18; Bachrach, B.S. ‘Medieval Siege Warfare: A Reconnaissance’ *Journal of Military History* 58:1 (1994). Online: www.deremilitari.org/resources/articles/bachrach/htm, intemperately questions not only the focus on battle over siege but also the methods that scholars have employed in the study of medieval military history.

¹¹⁹ Carey, B.T. *Warfare in the Medieval World* (2000), 3.

It is certainly true that battlefield encounters occupied only a small percentage of time when compared to siege and raiding activities. It is the contention of this work, however, that battle should again take its place at the pinnacle of medieval warfare. The aim is to attempt to place battle, in the Hundred Years War at least, as ‘the culminating point of a war, the major event which made sense of a campaign, the chief episode which, although limited in area and concentrated in time, was the object of all fears, expectations and hopes’; not the point of last resort for the desperate or as something blundered into by incompetent commanders.¹²⁰

How should battles be classified? This at first appears obvious: battles were fought between two opposing armies, or fleets. Yet this is too simplistic a definition. Even limiting our discussion to later medieval European conflicts (c.1250-1500) there is the simple problem: when does a ‘skirmish’¹²¹ become a ‘battle’? What criteria should be used? Are the number of men involved a determinant of ‘battle status’, the geographic space in which an engagement took place, the way the troops were raised, trained and equipped, whether the forces had a recognisable command structure, the status of the commanders, whether the fight ended the conflict in which it was fought, the number of casualties, the political ramifications of the engagement, its length? Evidently the classification and bestowal of battle status requires far more attention from scholars. Two separate combats will highlight the difficulty of the task: the ‘battle’ of Crécy and the engagement at the ford at Blanquetaque on 24 August 1346, two days before.¹²² No one would dispute the fact that Crécy was a battle with large numbers of troops fighting under royal command in a limited geographical area. Why then was the engagement fought between English and French forces for the possession of a ford across the Somme, with many of the hallmarks of Crécy two days later, not considered a battle? Was it because Blanquetaque did not end the campaign it was fought within, hindsight of the engagement at Crécy clouding our judgement and preventing the engagement at the ford from being considered a ‘true’ battle? Similarly the Battle of Boroughbridge (16 March 1322) has been bestowed ‘battle’ status and yet three days of fighting from 8-10 March at Burton Bridge during the

¹²⁰ Contamine, *War*, 228-29.

¹²¹ By skirmish we are referring to an action fought between two sides that has not been considered as being a battle, not ‘minor’ encounter(s) that occurred directly before a more general engagement.

¹²² Ayton, *Crécy*, 91-98 for action at the ford. Cf. Froissart, who claimed it was a battle: Ainsworth, P. and Godfried, C. (ed.) *The Online Froissart*, version 1.2 (May, 2011), <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/onlinefroissart>. Translation of Book I (135 v) 1-271

same civil war has not achieved similar status, either from contemporaries or later modern heritage bodies.¹²³ It is clearly not a question of numbers. Some medieval battles, like Crécy and Agincourt were large: in the case of the former about 36,000 (14,000-15,000 English and 22,000 French, not including French foot and the next day's arrivals) and at the latter perhaps 33,000 (8,000 English and 15,000-25,000 French) respectively.¹²⁴ At the battle of Grünwald (also known as Tannenberg) fought on 15 July 1410 between the Teutonic Knights, The Kingdom of Poland, and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, there were perhaps as many as 67,000 men in combat.¹²⁵ At the other extreme encounters like that at Boroughbridge, (5,000-6,000),¹²⁶ and Morlaix (30 September 1342 with the highest estimate perhaps 6,000),¹²⁷ were clearly not on the scale of other medieval battles, but were regarded as such nonetheless. Yet Blanquetaque with a respectable number of combatants, at about 3,500-4,000, is not considered to have been a battle; why? One of the main reasons that numbers are a poor determinant of battle status is that it is nigh on impossible to provide accurate figures for the number of combatants present at any one engagement, usually because medieval governments' records are often inadequate. This necessitates turning to contemporary chroniclers who, for various reasons including bias and exaggeration, are often highly inaccurate.¹²⁸ Numbers are thus too arbitrary a factor when determining battle status. In the same way that people have different ideas about when a 'group' becomes a 'crowd' the same is the case for when a 'skirmish' becomes a 'battle'; there is no universally accepted 'magic number' of combatants for one to turn into the other.

In fact, nearly all the criteria suggested above are inadequate determinants of battle status. It is always possible to find exceptions, and problems, with any rules

¹²³ Tout, T.F. 'The Tactics of the Battles of Boroughbridge and Morlaix' *The Collected Papers of T.F. Tout*, II, (Manchester, 1934), 221-5.

¹²⁴ Ayton, *Crécy*, 15, 168-9. The French figure is based upon an estimation of troops campaigning in and around Flanders in 1340, as French financial accounts for the campaign are lost. Anne Curry has recently challenged the notion that the French vastly outnumbered the English and it is her estimate for the size of both the English and French forces at Agincourt that are here included: *BBC Radio 4, In Our Time Podcast 'Agincourt'* (available online, 16/09/2004: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/features/in-our-time/archive/> at 32.06 – 32.48.

¹²⁵ Jučas, M. *The Battle of Grünwald* (Vilnius, Lithuania, 2009), 57-58.

¹²⁶ About 4,000 in the loyalist and 1,000-1,500 in the rebel force: Phillips, S. *Edward II* (2010), 408; Rothwell, H. *English Historical Documents 1189-1327* (1975), 275-6; Foard, G. 'Boroughbridge Battle and Campaign' *The UK Battlefields Resource Centre: The Battlefields Trust* (2003), online: <http://battlefieldstrust.com>, 6-7.

¹²⁷ Sumption, J. *The Hundred Years War, Volume I: Trial by Battle* (1990), 400-2.

¹²⁸ Rogers, *Wars of Edward III*, 23.

applied to judge what constitutes being considered a battle. Casualties, evidently linked to the numbers of those engaged, can hardly be used. Determining numbers of the fallen is always difficult, especially when we are often forced to use notoriously unreliable chroniclers' accounts. In any case depending upon the topography of the battlefield, the weapons and defensive armaments utilised by the combatants, and of course the size of the armies involved, casualties evidently varied from engagement to engagement. This was not least because in medieval warfare, more than any other period, adherence to notions of chivalric martial culture amongst the elite, and in particular the capturing of high-ranking enemy prisoners, was as important, if not more so, than killing them; dead men paid no lucrative ransoms. Therefore, just as with the size of the competing armies, there is no numerical marker of the slain denoting battle status. The way the troops were raised and equipped is of little if any significance. Whether it was through volition or obligation those fighting in engagements still strove to incapacitate their enemies whether in a skirmish or a battle. Certainly the designation of battle status to a combat does not hinge on whether the engagement ended the campaign in which it was fought. For every 'decisive battle' like Stamford Bridge (25 September 1066) there were numerous others, in fact the majority – the major engagements of the Hundred Years War for example – that did not. Even battles which initially appear to have been decisive were not necessarily so. Hastings (14 October 1066), for example, whilst ending Anglo-Saxon rule of England, did not end opposition to Norman rule which was arguably not achieved until after the infamous Harrying of the North in the winter of 1069-70. Similarly, whether or not an engagement had major political ramifications is no gauge of battle status. For example whilst the battle at Evesham (4 August 1265) effectively, but not entirely, ended baronial opposition to Henry III other medieval battles were not so decisive.¹²⁹ Much, of course, depends on how long one wishes to extend the effectiveness of a military engagement into the political sphere. For example the great English victories of the Hundred Years War against the French, whilst providing temporary political supremacy, were not resounding enough to finally end the war in English favour, although admittedly had Henry V not died when he did his victory at Agincourt, and the subsequent pressure this placed on the French crown, may have proved decisive.

¹²⁹ Prestwich, M. *Plantagenet England 1265-1360* (Oxford, 2005), 121.

One could certainly argue that a distinctive feature of most medieval battles was that the combatants were led by recognised commanders within forces with at least a rudimentary command structure. Even in hasty engagements or where one side took another by surprise (such as at Pontvallain in 1370), men will have coalesced, if not round their commander, then at the very least around some senior figure within their army, most likely in English armies of the fourteenth century the captain who had recruited them. Thus commanders, and command structure, were important as without these a battle, though evidently on a grander scale, would have been no different to a tavern brawl. This, however, would have been the case in a battle or a skirmish; English forces at Blanquetaque, for example, were led by recognised commanders – Reginald Cobham and the Earl of Northampton – and this engagement has not been bestowed battle status. Nor was the status of the commander any real determinant of battle status. Though the presence of royalty in the field gave an army gravitas to the extent that if it was engaged in combat then the conflict would often be seen as constituting a battle this was not always the case. Looking once again at the encounter at Burton Bridge in 1322, for example, Edward II's presence in the field has not led to the fighting being classed as a battle. Perhaps this has something to do with its length. The sporadic 'skirmishing' over a three day period has perhaps negated the importance of the engagement as a whole. Some medieval battles were relatively lengthy affairs. Towton (29 March 1461) was said to have lasted for ten hours according to some authorities and even if this is an exaggeration it was clearly a lengthy battle.¹³⁰ Hastings too lasted somewhere in the region of nine hours whilst Bannockburn was highly unusual, occurring over two days (23-24 June).¹³¹ Yet the vast majority of medieval battles were relatively short encounters, lasting a few hours at most. In any case fights not considered as being battles, such as Blanquetaque and Burton Bridge, could and did last for varying lengths of time so this too is not an adequate qualification for battle classification.¹³² Even the truism that medieval battles were limited in both space and time is inadequate criteria to denote battle status. Many medieval armed confrontations occurred within a limited geographic area, and within a time frame close enough in proximity to be considered as being a

¹³⁰ Gravett, C. *Towton 1461 – England's Bloodiest Battle* (Oxford, 2003), 68.

¹³¹ Morillo, S. 'Hastings: An Unusual Battle' *The Battle of Hastings: Sources and Interpretations* (ed.) Morillo, S. (Woodbridge, 1999), 220-21.

¹³² About

single engagement¹³³, and these are not considered as being battles. Indeed, as we have seen, many of the potential criteria that can be suggested to help identify what constituted a battle are flawed because they apply equally to what we loosely described as ‘skirmishes’; armed engagements of at least regional size and scale that have not been considered as ‘true’ battles.

Considering all these ambiguities of definition is there any way to classify what constituted a battle in medieval warfare? According to a recent article by Phillip Morgan the answer is simply one of perception; if contemporaries believed an engagement was a battle then it should be considered as being so. To contemporary eyes battle was recognised as a special type of violence distinctive from everyday warfare, an event that was ‘freshly remembered whilst all else was forgot ... the rest of the military enterprise [sinking] into obscurity’.¹³⁴ This recognition encompassed a change in how the battlefield itself was seen. ‘Battle had the capacity to transform the very nature of the ground on which [the engagement] was fought’, the site itself becoming a place of commemoration.¹³⁵ From the writings of Bede ‘we can see the emerging concept of the battlefield as a monument which might embrace both the field itself and the rest of the landscape’, which was to remain true for the rest of the middle ages, linked to an idea that went back to classical and pagan tradition about the possession of the field on which the ‘battle’ was fought conveying victory.¹³⁶

The process of transformation of the field of combat in the medieval mindset took two main forms. The first ‘act of memory’ by which the battle became an event was that it acquired a name. This, of course, is not as straightforward as it first appears as some battles were not initially given names or were known by competing names. They ‘might be topographic, toponymic, iconic or prophetic; most were negotiated through processes which ultimately controlled the memory of the event... but however chosen, changed or named, the ground itself marked the event... the

¹³³ This varies but probably within a 24 hour period to realistically be considered as constituting the same encounter.

¹³⁴ Morgan, P. ‘The Medieval Battle War Memorial’ *Harlaxton Medieval Studies XXI: Ritual and Space in the Middle Ages. Proceedings of the 2009 Harlaxton Symposium* (ed.) Andrews, F. (Donington, 2011), 283.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 284.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 285.

battlefield [itself becoming] a monument in a managed landscape, the repository for relics and the site of pilgrimage'.¹³⁷

The second act of transformation was to see the battlefield as a memorial to the slain, or to commemorate the event, often with the erection of memorial structures. This could either be a simple cross or as elaborate as a memorial church such as the foundation by William I of Battle Abbey after Hastings. During his travels through France, for example, Froissart visited the court of Gaston III, count of Foix and, during a ride with the count, came upon the Pas de l'Arrêt, close to Mascaras, in the canton of Tournay, where a notable combat had taken place between the garrisons of Lourdes and Tarbes in which the captains of the two respective forces had fought in single combat during the fight.

'To ensure that the battle be remembered, a stone cross was placed at the spot where these two squires fought and died. ... We headed straight for the cross and each said a *pater noster* for the souls of the dead'.¹³⁸

These commemorations were not always triumphalist and erected by the victors, and not all medieval battlefields received memorials, especially those won by an invading army in a foreign land, the ground of which they subsequently did not possess. But however they were remembered they remained 'important performative spaces, [often] endowed with suitable monuments and routinely the sites of memory, mourning and intercession'.¹³⁹

Battles therefore, in the eyes of contemporaries, were special events, set apart from the every day martial interactions, in which the very ground itself became a place of commemoration and remembrance. How exactly, then, did they distinguish between what constituted a battle and what did not? There are evidently no finite rules that can be applied. However, it is arguable that a military engagement came to be seen as a battle in medieval eyes if the results of the engagement proved to be decisive on the day on which the action was fought, or at least shortly afterwards, with the possession of the field after the conflict playing a key role in determining the victor. A

¹³⁷ Ibid., 286-7. See also: Morgan, P. 'The Naming of Battlefields' *War and Society in Medieval and Early Modern Britain* (ed.) Dunn, D. (Liverpool, 2000), 34-52.

¹³⁸ Ainsworth, P., Croenen, G. (ed.) *The Online Froissart*, version 1.2 (May, 2011), <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/onlinefroissart>; Translation of Book III (214 r)

¹³⁹ Morgan, 'Medieval War Memorial', 297.

battle was decisive if it gave one side a level of martial supremacy over its enemy, but usually, and more significantly, if its result had wider political impact. War after all, as Von Clausewitz noted, is the continuation of diplomacy by other means. If a military engagement exerted substantial diplomatic and political pressure on the defeated then it is logical to assume that, on some level at least, the medieval mind would bestow the epithet of 'battle' on such engagements. This was usually after the engagement had taken place; in other words once the ramifications of the fight had been felt. It could, of course, occur prior to an engagement, especially if bringing the enemy to battle was the aim of one or both parties, and the hope was that the coming fight would have substantial consequences. In 1346, for example, Edward III fully intended to engage the French forces, as he had arguably been trying to do for several campaigning seasons, and thus any action fought with the French on this occasion should be considered a battle as Edward pre-empted an engagement; the only difficulty for him was in getting Philip VI to meet him in the field.¹⁴⁰ More 'every day' military engagements like skirmishing might also have intended drive the enemy from a field, but such encounters had no wider impact than the success of arms on the particular occasion in which the action was fought. If the skirmish had provided wider political impact then it would likely have been regarded as a battle. The point is easiest to illustrate with the example of the skirmishing at Burton Bridge and the battle of Boroughbridge a week later. The former ultimately proved inconclusive and had no wider impact. The latter ended the civil strife within England decisively, for the time being at least. In other words it had palpable repercussions. The action at Blanquetaque was arguably considered a skirmish rather than a battle because it had no wider impact. True enough, it facilitated the crossing of the Somme for the English army, the direct result of which was the action at Crécy, but the action at the ford had little wider impact outside the bounds of the campaign; its political impact on the Anglo-French conflict was nil. It is only remembered as possessing any subsequent significance because English chroniclers like Henry Knighton thought the actions of Sir Reginald Cobham and the earls of Northampton and Warwick in leading the English assault were worth recording.¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Rogers C.J. 'Edward III and the Dialectics of Strategy, 1327-60'; 83-102; Sumption, *Trial by Battle*, 281, 351; Ayton, *Crécy*, 14, 35-108.

¹⁴¹ Knighton, 61. Tellingly the official French chronicle, the *Grandes Chroniques*, does not mention that any action took place there at all, noting simply that when Edward III heard that the French army was nearby: 'he abandoned his dinner and departed and moved to Saigneville, to the place called

It is important, of course, to try and avoid falling into the pitfall of adhering solely to the idea of the 'decisive' battle. A large number of medieval battles were inconclusive to the extent that, on occasion, further battles had to be fought for one side to gain the overall ascendancy. The battle of Shrewsbury (1403), for example, was a decisive royalist victory, and the battle of Auray (1364) decisively ended the two decade Breton civil war, but few battles had as clear cut ramifications. Most provided the victor a temporary dominance over their foe(s), the extent of the victory dictating the length of the superiority. This was certainly the case with the great set-piece battles of the Hundred Years War: Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. Whilst England may have won the battles but lost the war these engagements did provide English kings with a degree of strength, and ascendancy, over their enemies, albeit temporarily. In other words, therefore, for an engagement to be considered a battle it had to have wider impact than the purely military. A battlefield victory, whilst clearly important, required accompanying political pressure, and the right exogenous circumstances, to fully capitalise on the success gained in the field, otherwise a series of closely inter-connected battles would have to be fought to decide the outcome of a conflict, such as the series of battles fought between the crusaders and Saladin during the Third Crusade. This helps explain why not all battles were decisive, such as the battle of Toro (1 March 1476) in which both sides claimed the victory. In the case of the Hundred Years War for the English it was political circumstances preventing, or the inability to capitalise on, their notable battlefield successes that prevented them from winning the war.

Taking the idea that battles are classified mainly by contemporary perception, how often did they occur? Scholars like B.T. Carey, for example, have certainly argued that they were rare occurrences, in part because of the risks involved for medieval commanders.¹⁴² It is certainly true that they were not regular when compared to the general vista of military activity, but they occupied more time, certainly psychologically to contemporaries, than they are often given credit. Thomas, duke of Clarence, for example, was absent from Agincourt due to illness and the disappointment he must have felt at missing one of the greatest and most prestigious

Blanchetaque. There he crossed the river Somme with all of his host, and encamped near a forest called Crécy'. Rogers, *Sources*, 129.

¹⁴² Above, 272.

engagements for English soldiers of his generation must have been keenly felt for he rushed into battle against the French unprepared in 1422 and was slain. His justification for this seemingly fool-hardy action was demonstrated in his remonstrance with his captains prior to the engagement in which he argued that they had been at Agincourt and he had not.¹⁴³ It is therefore the contention of this work that, despite claims to the contrary, battles were at the very least not infrequent occurrences in medieval warfare. Recently both John Gillingham and Andrew Ayton have called for greater precision in the measurement of battle frequency, the latter arguing that in some regions, like east-central Europe, battles were ‘at least relatively frequent events’ during the late medieval period.¹⁴⁴ In the Hundred Years War battles do appear to be rare at first glance, yet a more detailed look suggests otherwise. Large battles on the scale of Crécy and Poitiers were indeed exceptional, with perhaps only Nájera falling into this category post 1360; but actual battlefield engagements were not as infrequent as might be supposed, especially if we look for smaller engagements that, to modern observers, do not look like battles because the numbers involved were small, but which to contemporaries were seen as being battles because they formed part of a dimension of warfare that was separate from activities like sieges and raiding that were seen as the norm. English soldiers, even if they were not the major protagonists, were involved in at least seventeen set-piece engagements between 1360 and 1399 on the continent.¹⁴⁵ A total of at least seventeen battles does not suggest that we are dealing with a rare phenomenon, especially when it is remembered that during these years the English and French were officially at peace for at least two decades. Nor do the seventeen engagements include the number of instances when two forces met in the field but did not engage one another; when a battle seemed likely to take place. These military stand-offs, of which the affair at Balinghem during Gaunt’s 1369 expedition is a prime example, deserve as much attention as the encounters which did evolve into engagements.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴³ Jones, *Agincourt*, 7.

¹⁴⁴ Gillingham, J. “‘Up with Orthodoxy!’”: In Defence of Vegetian Warfare’ *M.M.H.* 2 (2002), 150; Ayton, ‘Muhi to Mohács’, 214.

¹⁴⁵ (1362) Brignais, Le Garet; (1364) Auray, Cocherel; (1367) Nájera; (1369) Compeyre; Lussac; (1370) Pont-Vallain, Vaas; (1372) La Rochelle; (1373) Chizé; (1377) Eymet; (1382) Beverhoutsveld (a contingent of English mercenaries were present (Sumption, *Divided*, 456) (1383) Dunkirk; (1385) Aljubarotta; (1387) Radcot Bridge; (1388) Otterburn.

¹⁴⁶ Sherborne, ‘Gaunt, Edward III’s Retinue’, 77-98.

English forces were also involved in a number of engagements in Ireland, either directly as a result of English troops in Ireland, or between native Anglo-Irish and Gaelic Irish forces. The problem with deducing the number of Irish battles is the lack of attention Irish warfare received from contemporaries. Both English and continental chroniclers of the period had little interest in Irish affairs as they did not impinge upon the wider European political vista. Knighton, for example, in the entirety of his chronicle, only mentions Irish affairs on a handful of occasions, noting in passing that in 1355 for example that:

‘At this time the Scots and the Irish joined together and invaded the English zone of Ireland ... And the northern Irish, who were the king of England’s men, gathered and gave them battle, and killed 2,800 of them, and took away the great plunder and riches they had looted from the English’.¹⁴⁷

To the majority, Ireland was a strange, barbarous land, and many would have agreed with Gerald of Wales’ twelfth century assessment of a country filled with uncivilized wild men.¹⁴⁸ Unfortunately Irish annals and chronicles are often not detailed enough to be of any greater value, often only listing the name of an engagement and a few lines about the result. For example, the battle of Tochar Cruachain Bri-Ele in 1385 between the ‘English’ forces of Maeth and the Gaelic-Irish of the kingdom of Uri Failghe under Murrough O’Conor is mentioned in one Irish chronicle, simply as:

‘A victory was gained by Murrough O’Conner, Lord of Offaly and the Kinelfiachach, over the English of Maeth at Tochar Cruachain Bri-Ele; Nugebt of Maeth, Chambers and his son, and a countless host of the chief and plebeians of the English were slain’.¹⁴⁹

How many battles such as this there were, how many are not mentioned, indeed the scale of those engagements which do appear in the records, is unclear; medieval Irish warfare would benefit greatly from further investigation into this area.¹⁵⁰ There is the issue, for example, that as Irish warfare was more an exercise in raiding (there

¹⁴⁷ Knighton, 131.

¹⁴⁸ *The Historical Works of Giraldus Cambrensis* (1863), 231.

¹⁴⁹ *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters from the earliest period to the year 1616* (ed.) O’Donovan, J. (Dublin, 1856), vol. IV, 701.

¹⁵⁰ Simms, K. ‘Warfare in the Medieval Gaelic Lordships’ *Irish Sword* 12 (1975-76), 98. See also conversation between the Irish and David Bruce, Mackenzie, W.M. (ed.) *The Bruce, by John Barbour* (1909), 444-45.

were few fortified positions of which to conduct sieges), and doubtlessly on a smaller scale than that fought on the continent, the style of ‘battles’ fought in Ireland may have differed considerably from those across the Channel. We can probably deduce from what we know about Irish warfare that they were not set-piece engagements in the style of their continental cousins but rather surprise attacks, ambushes and, possibly, English attacks on fixed Gaelic encampments. We might also wonder whether English and continental chroniclers would have considered these Irish encounters as ‘battles’ at all, were they to have known about them. Nevertheless, despite these difficulties, and accepting for the purposes of this discussion that Irish battles were on a par with those fought elsewhere, based upon the perceptions of contemporaries, it can be tentatively be suggested that there were about thirteen battles involving English, or Anglo-Irish, forces, possibly more, which can be added to the seventeen continental encounters already discussed.¹⁵¹ This number of

¹⁵¹ Though some of these engagements are not described explicitly as battles their context suggests that the author considered them to be so. (1369) Lough Erne: ‘A great defeat was given by Brian O’Brien, Lord of Thomond, to the English of Munster. Garrett, Earl of Desmond, and many of the chiefs of the English, were taken prisoners by him, and the remainder cut off with indescribable slaughter’. (1373) Annaly: ‘An incursion was made by the English of Meath into Annaly ... Donough O’Farrell, with all his forces, pursued them, and slew great numbers of them; but this hero received a shot of a javelin, as he was routing the English before him, which killed him, upon which his people were defeated’. (1374) An un-named engagement where: ‘A battle was gained by Niall O’Neill over the English, in which Roche, the knight, Bogsa na-Cairge, Sandal, Burke, and William of Baile Dalat, the head of the inhospitality of Ireland, with many others not enumerated, were slain’. Also in this year: ‘Melaghlín, the son of Dermot O’Farrell, went from Annaly to Muintir-Maelmora, to wage war with the English. A fierce and sharp conflict afterwards took place between them *the Irish* and the English, in which he *O’Farrell* and many others were slain’. (1375) – Downpatrick: ‘A great victory was gained by Niall O’Neill over the English of Downpatrick, where Sir James, of Baile-atha-thid (or Alahid), the King of England’s Deputy, Burke, of Camline, and many others not enumerated, were slain in the conflict’. (1380) Un-named encounter: ‘A very great defeat was given by Magennis (Art) to the English and the people of Orior. O’Hanlon, Chief of Orior, and great numbers of the English, were slain on this occasion’. (1383) Trián Chongail: ‘A great army was led by Niall O’Neill, with his sons and the chieftains of Kinel-Owen, into Trián-Chongail, against the English; and they burned and totally plundered many of their towns. The English of the territory assembled to oppose them. Hugh O’Neill and Raibilín Savage met each other in a charge of cavalry, and they made two powerful thrusts of their spears into each others’ bodies. Rambling returned severely wounded to his house, where Mac Eosin Basset killed him, and Hugh O’Neill died the third day afterwards of the effects of his wound; and Mac Eosin Basset, he was killed by Rambling’s people the third day after the killing Rambling himself’. (1385) – To char Cruachain-Bri-Ele: ‘A victory was gained by Murrough O’Conor, Lord of Offaly, and the Kinel-Fiachach, over the English of Meath, at Tochar Cruachain-Bri-Ele; Nugent of Meath, Chambers and his son, and a countless host of the chiefs and plebeians of the English were slain’. (1394) Ros-Mhic-Thriúin; (1395) Cruachain: ‘A party of the people of the King of England set out on a predatory excursion into Offaly. O’Conor pursued them to the causeway of Cruachain, where great numbers of them were slain, and sixty horses taken from them. Another party of the people of the King of England, under the conduct of the Earl Mariscal, set out upon a predatory excursion into Ely. O’Carroll and his people came up with them, killed many of the English, and took many horses from them’. (1396) Creag: ‘A battle was gained by O’Toole over the Anglo-Irish and Saxons of Leinster, in which the English were dreadfully slaughtered; and six score *of their* heads were carried for exhibition before O’Toole, besides a great many prisoners, and spoils of arms, horses, and armour’; (1398) Eachdruim Mac n-Aodha: ‘A battle was given to the English by O’Byrne and O’Toole, in which the

engagements may also be expanded considerably if one counts those engagements between mercenary companies that included Englishmen, crusader battles such as the 1390 encounter that Henry of Derby fought in against the pagan Lithuanians, vividly described in the Westminster Chronicle, and those in Italy involving English mercenaries, particularly those that involved John Hawkwood as commander.¹⁵²

Evidently, therefore, battles were not as rare as some scholars have suggested. Accepting there was more than an insignificant number of battles in the period is highly important for our study of the English war in effort in the second half of the fourteenth century as it calls into question the traditional thinking about the whole English martial strategy and conduct of war in these years. It is true that not all of these battles were sought by the English. Pontvallain and Vaas for example were forced upon English forces by their enemies. By and large, however, it is arguable that English armies post 1360 actively sought out battlefield engagements. That this had been the case with the English in the earlier phase of the war (1337-60) was recently re-emphasized by Clifford Rogers, who has been joined by a small but growing band of scholars.¹⁵³ Indeed it can be argued that this was a more wide-spread trait of medieval military strategy than has previously been realised. It is certainly true that belligerents' objectives could be obtained without recourse to battle. Geoffrey V of Anjou, for example, conquered Normandy without fighting a single battle between 1135 and 1145; Edward I was able to defeat Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in 1277 without fighting an engagement by seizing Anglesey and cutting of the Welsh food supply; and it has been argued that even Henry V, well remembered for his victory at Agincourt, 'gained more concrete success in terms of power in France through a

Earl of March was slain, and the English were slaughtered'; (1399) *Tragh-Bhaile*: 'the sons of Henry O'Neill went upon an excursion against the English of Tragh-Bhaile. The English assembled to oppose them, and routed them, took Donnell, the son of Henry, prisoner, and killed great numbers of his people'. All from: *CELT, Corpus of Electronic Texts, The Free Digital Humanities Resource for Irish history, literature and politics. Annals of the Four Masters*:

<http://www.ucc.ie/celt/online/T100005D.html>

¹⁵² *Westminster*, 445-49. Other encounters involving Englishmen include: (1363) Canturino; (1364) First battle of Cascina; (1369) Second battle of Cascina; (1370) Sanlucar de Barrameda; (1372) Rubera; (1373) Montichiari; (1379) Marino; (1381) Rabastens, Saltes; (1385) Trancoso (1387) Castagnaro; (1396) Nicopolis.

¹⁵³ Rogers, C.J. 'The Vegetian "Science of Warfare" in the Middle Ages' *M.M.H. I* (2002) 1-19 at 19; Idem, 'Edward III and the Dialectics of Strategy, 1327-60' *Wars of Edward III*, 265-84; Idem, *Cruel*, 6-8, 230-35; Ayton, *Crécy*, 12-14; Jones, M. *Agincourt 1415* (2005); Morillo, S. 'Battle Seeking: The Contexts and Limits of Vegetian Strategy' *M.M.H. I* (2002), 21-41; Prestwich, M. *Armies and Warfare*, 11. Villalon, A. 'Battle-Seeking, Battle-Avoiding or Perhaps Just Battle-Willing? Applying the Gillingham Paradigm to Enrique II of Castile' *M.M.H. 8* (2010).

series of great sieges.¹⁵⁴ Yet even in campaigns, and wars, with few or no battles, the importance of battle itself is not diminished. As Clifford Rogers aptly put it:

‘When no battle takes place it is often because one opponent has realised that he is likely to lose an open fight, and chooses to avoid battle, even when doing so is very costly to his strategic objectives. In such circumstances *the ability to win* a battle is a very important asset for the other side, even if the ability is never put to the test’.¹⁵⁵

The importance of battle within medieval warfare can thus be seen to have come full circle. The purpose of raiding, *chevauchée* style activities, and attacking fortified strong-points and besieging them, though important for economic and prestige reasons (and though controlling fortresses was crucial to dominating territory), was primarily intended to draw out the enemy’s forces to defeat them on the field of battle. Indeed as Saul has pointed out ‘as advances in design made castles ever more difficult to take, battles were fought as a substitute for sieges, offering a quicker and more effective way to resolve disputes or secure territory’.¹⁵⁶ What, then, of the argument that battle was an ineffective arbiter of war, and often avoided, because while a defending army might be defeated in the field, if they were on home soil, they could retreat behind their walls and wait for their enemy to squander its resources besieging one fortress after another in a long-drawn out war of attrition?¹⁵⁷ Such a strategy could certainly work, but it does not take into account the realities of medieval warfare. How long, exactly, was a defending army, holed up in its great fortresses, supposed to resist? If the attacker could maintain adequate supply lines, (which admittedly was highly difficult to achieve as Edward III found during the Reims campaign) the defender would eventually run out of their own supplies.¹⁵⁸ Few sieges

¹⁵⁴ Jones, R.L.C. ‘Fortifications and Sieges in Western Europe c.800-1450’ *Medieval Warfare, A History* (ed.) Keen, M. (Oxford, 1999), 164. Tuck, *Crown and Nobility*, 7-8; Bradbury, J, *The Medieval Siege* (Woodbridge, 1992), 163, although arguably these sieges in the years following Agincourt were only made possible by the decimation of the French forces at the battle.

¹⁵⁵ Rogers, C.J. ‘The Battle of Agincourt’ *The Hundred Years War, Part II: Different Vistas* (ed.) Villalon, A.L.J., Kagay, D.J. (Leiden, the Netherlands, 2008), ft. 3, p. 37

¹⁵⁶ Saul, N. *For Honour and Fame*, 151.

¹⁵⁷ For example: ‘The strategy of a medieval campaign ... was more likely to involve an attempt to weaken one’s opponent by capturing or destroying his strongholds and depriving him of his economic resources: his land, his crops, his livestock, and his workers. This of course served a dual purpose, as the act of looting not only deprived an opponent of food and wealth, but also meant the attacker could feed and pay his own army’. Hanley, C. *War and Combat, 1150-1270: The Evidence from Old French Literature* (Cambridge, 2003), 21.

¹⁵⁸ It was impossible to besiege the city as ‘there was no secure water route from England to Reims, and without that an encircling army could not be long maintained’. Rogers, *Cruel and Sharp*, 406.

went this far. Sometimes fortified positions were taken by force. On other occasions both sides reached an accord where the defender agreed to relinquish the stronghold by an appointed date if they were not relieved by the arrival of a friendly army, as was the case with the English garrison at Stirling in the face of Robert Bruce's Scottish army in 1314. Or, more often, the attacker withdrew if supply lines could not be maintained. Whilst this fact might seem to suggest that the role of battle was less important in medieval warfare because a good number of sieges were abandoned by the attacker it is important to remember the psychological damage, and loss of prestige, that the defender would suffer as a result of having an enemy army in their territory in the first place, even if they might expect that army to leave of their own volition. The salient point is that if an attacker was not forced to leave for logistical reasons and was determined in their endeavour to take the fortified location – as Edward III was in his twelve month siege of Calais in 1346-47 – battle would still be required to oust the invading army; how would they be forced to leave militarily if the defending side would not offer them battle? When no prospect of relief presented itself the demoralised defenders of a fortress usually submitted. The castellan of the English held Lochmaben castle in 1384, for example, was heavily criticised in the *Westminster Chronicle* for surrendering the fortress to the Scots without holding out long enough for a relief force to be organised.¹⁵⁹ Thus it is likely that on many occasions *both the attacker and defender* were seeking an engagement, the attacker to swiftly resolve the issue and prove the justness of their cause, the defender to remove the invading force from their territory as soon as possible. Both sides thus scrambled to find the best ground on which to fight, as though a decisive arbiter of warfare battle was nevertheless a risky business, and commanders did not enter into it lightly. In 1380, for instance, as an English army ravaged the French countryside, on one of the rare occasions the French actually seemed like they were willing to take on an English army in the second half of the fourteenth century, the duke of Burgundy, assembled an army of about 4,000 men at Troyes, 'aiming to show himself a worthy regent ... decided to block our line of march by getting in front of our army and forcing it by some means or other to engage in battle', the English quickly circumnavigated the French forces and arrayed against them on more favourable ground, at which point the

¹⁵⁹ *Westminster*, 59.

French withdrew.¹⁶⁰ Battles therefore, or even the threat of them, were an important component of the medieval commanders' arsenal.

This view of battle-seeking counters what Prestwich has called the 'new orthodoxy', which argued that far from seeking battle, medieval commanders actively avoided confrontations.¹⁶¹ Four reasons have been proposed for this caution. The first is that battle was undoubtedly risky and this reason above all, probably explains why medieval battles were irregular occurrences in the grand panoply of military activity. No commander from any period can risk losing men needlessly, especially in the Middle Ages when limited state finances made equipping and mustering large armies a logistical nightmare. Though it was widely accepted that God was the arbiter of battles, and no state went to war without believing that right was on their side, scholars have argued that few commanders would willingly risk the uncertainty. There was always the possibility for what Von Clausewitz called 'friction'; 'the accidents, uncertainties, errors, technical difficulties or unknown factors on the battlefield, and their effect on decisions, morale, and actions, in war'.¹⁶² Thus the second reason that battle was seen to be avoided was because, it has been argued, the goals of medieval commanders could be achieved without recourse to the vagaries of a battle. If the aim was to put pressure on the enemy to come to a political settlement – as was the case with the English in France in the second half of the fourteenth century – then the best way to achieve this goal was to damage the opposition's economic infrastructure to both weaken it and demonstrate to the wider populace the inability of its ruling regime to defend its people.¹⁶³ Following this line of thinking, even if battle was joined and the enemy defeated they would merely retreat back to

¹⁶⁰ Charles VI was only a boy when his father died and Burgundy was appointed as regent of France. This had not gone down well with the duke of Anjou and it is perhaps for this reason why Burgundy wanted to put on a show of strength. Walsingham, 111-12.

¹⁶¹ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 11. Some examples from many arguing 'new orthodoxy': Allmand, *Hundred Years War*, 54-5; Fowler, K. *The Age of Plantagenet and Valois* (New York, 1967), 152; Gillingham, J. 'Richard I and the Science of War in the Middle Ages' *Anglo-Norman Warfare* (ed.) Strickland, M. (Woodbridge, 1992), 194-207; Keen, *England in the Later Middle Ages*, 135; McGlynn, S. 'The Myths of Medieval Warfare' *History Today* 44 (1994) 29-30; Showalter, D.E. 'Caste, Skill, and Training: The Evolution of Cohesion in European Armies from the Middle Ages to the Fourteenth Century' *J.M.H.* 57 (1993), online: www.deremilitari.org/resources/articles/showalter.htm; Waugh, S.L. *England in the Reign of Edward III* (Cambridge, 1991), 17.

¹⁶² De Vries, K. 'God and Defeat in Medieval Warfare: Some Preliminary Thoughts' *The Circle of War in the Middle Ages: Essays on Medieval Military and Naval History* (ed.) Kagay, D.J., Villalan, A. (Woodbridge, 1999), 86-97. Quoted in Carey, *Medieval World*, 7.

¹⁶³ Hewitt, *Organisation*, chapter 5.

their fortresses which would still have to be taken. Battle in this view is seen as not only risky but pointless.¹⁶⁴

The third reason for battle avoidance has been seen to be the influence of classical martial treatises on warfare. According to scholars like Bernard Bachrach, medieval commanders were heavily influenced by the writings of the late fourth/early fifth-century Roman strategist Vegetius, specifically his work *De Re Militari*. Vegetius synthesized a large amount of earlier military thinking, which advocated the avoidance of pitched battles and the pursuance of military goals by other means, notably sieges. It was clearly a popular work. Prior to 1300 there were 58 known manuscript copies of his treatise. Whilst this does not seem many when it is considered that there were 600 manuscripts featuring Cicero, 305 containing Ovid and 223 containing Virgil, of those classical authors concerned primarily with military matters Vegetius was clearly the most popular, ahead of Caesar, Titus Livy, and Valerius Maximus, who between them were present in 41 extant manuscripts, and Frontinus, who was present in nine.¹⁶⁵ This of course does not include references to the text in other documents, where a chronicler uses a quote from a classical account to justify or emphasize a particular point.¹⁶⁶ These facts have drawn scholars to the conclusion that the work was widely influential in medieval martial thinking.¹⁶⁷

The fourth and final reason that has been advanced to explain the avoidance of battle, or at least the fact that it was so rare, is the idea that military captains would only fight if they were on the tactical defensive. The basic premise of this idea is that, when a medieval battle did occur, the side that went on the offensive, in set piece engagements at least, usually lost, even if the element of surprise clearly could on occasion give an attacker the advantage. The fact that English armies in the fourteenth century dismounted to fight and dug themselves into defensive positions is well

¹⁶⁴ Showalter, 'Caste', online.

¹⁶⁵ ¹⁶⁵ Whetham, D. *Just Wars and Moral Victories: Surprise, Deception and the Normative Framework of European War in the Late Middle Ages* (Leiden, the Netherlands, 2009), 121-22.

¹⁶⁶ For example Bower in his *Scotichronicon* never tired of citing it. Bower, W. *Scotichronicon*, vol. ii, 306, 392, 453, 491, quoted in: Neilson, G. *Trial by Combat* (New Jersey, 2009), 224.

¹⁶⁷ Whetham, D. *Just Wars and Moral Victories: Surprise, Deception and the Normative Framework of European War in the Late Middle Ages* (Leiden, the Netherlands, 2009), 120-28; Vegetius, *The Earliest English Translation of Vegetius' De Re Militari* (ed.) Lester, G. (Hiedelberg, 1988); Bachrach, B.S. 'The Practical Use of Vegetius: *De Re Militari* during the Early Middle Ages' *Historian* 47 (1985), 239-55; Idem, 'Medieval Siege', online; Contamine, *War*, 210-12.

attested and all of the three most famous battles of the Hundred Years War – Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt – were all won when the French either chose, or were forced, to be the aggressor.¹⁶⁸ Thus, the argument runs, medieval battles were even less likely to occur and were not sought because both sides wished to have the benefit of the tactical defensive.¹⁶⁹ Unless one side was forced to be the aggressor a large number of potential engagements therefore resulted in stand-offs. Charles V was one such military thinker who clearly wished to avoid battlefield confrontations.

How, given these considerations, is it possible to contend that, extending Rogers' argument for the decades prior to 1360, English armies were actively seeking to engage their enemies on the battlefield on a the majority of campaigns in the second half of the fourteenth century?¹⁷⁰ It is necessary to make clear that this was not the goal on *every* occasion. Some raids described by the chroniclers were just that, quick sorties into enemy held territory to obtain loot and hopefully capture prisoners. In 1388 for example William Beauchamp, Captain of Calais:

‘made a mounted raid into Flanders and took considerable booty in cattle before returning to Calais. On another occasion he raided Picardy and made further hauls there of assorted livestock, all of which he brought back to Calais. So great, indeed was the abundance of animals in Calais at this time that sheep were sold for two groats apiece’.¹⁷¹

This was particularly true of naval operations where raiders would descend upon the enemy coastline without warning, grab as much as they could, and retreat to their ships laden with booty before local relief forces could arrive: classic piracy that had prevailed since antiquity.¹⁷² Nevertheless the case for English battle seeking in this period remains strong. Charles V's reticence about battle only serves to heighten the case that the English were indeed seeking confrontations. If English armies were not seeking battle then why would Charles need specifically to order his commanders not to engage in them? It is true that the king was doubtlessly seeking to preserve his realm and its capacity to fight; but was it simply the case that he was trying to curb

¹⁶⁸ Rogers, C.J. ‘The Offensive/Defensive in Medieval Strategy’ *From Crécy to Mohács: Warfare in the Late Middle Ages (1346-1526)*, (Vienna, 1996), 158-71.

¹⁶⁹ Showalter, ‘Caste’, online.

¹⁷⁰ Rogers, *Cruel*, 8.

¹⁷¹ *Westminster*, 353.

¹⁷² For example: *Ibid.*, 341, 375.

the natural tendencies of the French nobility who might attempt to remove the stain that earlier English battlefield victories from their honour? Or was it, instead, the case that French commanders, like Du Guesclin, were themselves adherents of the idea that battle was the natural development and purpose of military activity? Did Charles, being well aware of this, realise that were his forces to engage the English once again and lose then Edward III might very well realise his ambition of becoming King of France? If this were the case then Charles' orders must have cut severely against the psychological grain of his men and 'it must be considered one of [his] better claims to fame that he was able to survive it'.¹⁷³

Battle was certainly a risk and it is true that on occasion strategic objectives could be achieved through other means. Yet the English circumstances in the fourteenth century would suggest that battle was being sought. We have already seen that, whilst the French did not possess as large an advantage in finance as has previously been supposed, they nonetheless did still have an edge. The best way for the English to resolve the conflict quickly therefore, short of following a policy of peace, was to seek a decisive battlefield encounter. Despite the risk that this involved, the successes that English forces had enjoyed over their French counterparts in the preceding phase of the conflict must have made them confident of further victories. If this, as Rogers argued, was the case before 1360, then it is likely to have been even more so after 1369, when the financial state of the crown became increasingly parlous. True enough, the 'barbicans of the realm' strategy could be used as evidence that the English were seeking to dominate their opponents by acquiring a ring of fortresses around France; but these were expensive to maintain and would be a permanent burden on English taxpayers unless the French could be cowed into submission. Moreover, the barbicans' *offensive* role in the conflict has not been emphasized enough. Though they did have a defensive purpose – as their name suggests – they were, as the English themselves stated, 'good ports and entries through which to harass [their] adversaries'.¹⁷⁴ Though 'harassing' would certainly have served to weaken the French there would have been little point in the long-term of adopting such a strategy. All that would be achieved, as Palmer noted, was that

¹⁷³ Palmer, *Christendom*, 6.

¹⁷⁴ Martin, G. 'Parliament of 1378' *P.R.O.M.E.*; Palmer, *Christendom*, 7-8, made this point in the 1970s but it seems to have been largely ignored.

damage would have been done to the French kingdom and her economy, damage she was able to sustain. When the English returned home the French could continue their offensive on English-held territory. In other words the only way to resolve this situation was to bring the French to battle: economic considerations and the lack of any prospect of conflict resolution through raiding demanded it.¹⁷⁵

The argument that medieval commanders – and thus English captains in the Hundred Years War – unquestionably followed the teachings of Vegetius in avoiding battle must also be questioned. The number of surviving manuscripts of *De Re Militari* would certainly suggest that the Roman theorist did have some influence over military thinking. After all, his treatise, not only covered battle but also many facets of martial organization.¹⁷⁶ Nevertheless, many scholars have questioned the extent of this influence.¹⁷⁷ Prestwich, for example, has noted, ‘it would be hard to argue that so popular a work had no practical implications, but at the same time it is hard to imagine that many experienced campaigners kept a copy in the medieval equivalent of their back pocket for easy consultation’.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, the argument that medieval commanders slavishly followed the work of the ancients with regard to military affairs creates the assumption that medieval commanders possessed no advanced, military-strategic thinking of their own.¹⁷⁹ ‘There were, of course, certain exceptions to be noted, but they were cited [by scholars] only to prove that occasionally a flash lit up the general gloom’.¹⁸⁰ Such a view is quite frankly a gross misrepresentation of medieval generalship. Many medieval commanders were consummate strategists in their own right and, happily, in recent years they have begun to be rehabilitated, at least in the eyes of military encyclopaedists.¹⁸¹ ‘Articles have been devoted to such

¹⁷⁵ Palmer, *Christendom*, 5.

¹⁷⁶ See for example: Allmand, C. ‘The *De Re Militari* of Vegetius in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance’ *Writing War: Medieval Literary Responses to Warfare* (ed.) Saunders, C. et al (Cambridge, 2004), 15-28.

¹⁷⁷ Ayton, *Crécy*, 12; Contamine, *War*, 211; Morillo, S. *Warfare under the Anglo-Norman Kings 1066-1135* (Woodbridge, 1994), 118.

¹⁷⁸ Prestwich, *Armies and Warfare*, 186-87.

¹⁷⁹ See, for example, the demeaning view of medieval military leadership in: Liddell Hart, B.D. *Strategy*, 2nd edn. (New York, 1991); Howard, M. *War in European History* (Oxford, 1976).

¹⁸⁰ Beeler, J. ‘Towards a Re-Evaluation of Medieval English Generalship’ *J.B.S.* 3:1 (1963), 1

¹⁸¹ Cowley R., Parker, G. (eds.) *The Reader’s Companion to Military History* (Boston, 1996); Holmes, R. (ed.) *The Oxford Companion to Military History* (Oxford, 2001); Messenger, C. (ed.) *Reader’s Guide to Military History* (2001). Cf. Prestwich, *English Experience*, 159, who, whilst agreeing with the general idea that medieval generalship has been wrongly denigrated, argued that: ‘Military command was not a quality that was admired as much in the medieval period as in other ages. Success in generalship did not necessarily bring fame and fortune ... triumphs after the classical fashion were

notable medieval generals as William the Conqueror, Genghis Khan, Edward I, Edward III, Joan of Arc, Henry V, Richard the Lionheart, Saladin, Tamerlane, Sir John Hawkwood' and others.¹⁸² Few modern observers would doubt, for example, that Edward III and the Black Prince were highly competent battlefield tacticians, with a sound grasp of logistics and strategy, and this can certainly be extended to the noblemen and lesser captains who directed the English war effort throughout the fourteenth century.¹⁸³ The argument that battles were avoided because both sides wanted the tactical defensive is more convincing under some circumstances: when both sides had the freedom to choose when and where to engage. Often, however, one side at least was not given the luxury of choice because they were under pressure to fight from their opponents either logistically on the campaign or because exogenous economic and political circumstances dictated they must. The rebels of Ghent in 1382, for example, had little option but to sally forth from the town and attack the forces of the Count of Flanders outside Bruges in an attempt to break the count's blockade, and won a famous victory at Beverhoustsveld on 3 May.¹⁸⁴ To argue that battles were avoided unless the tactical defensive could be obtained therefore fails to take into account the unique circumstances of each encounter. Even some generals who have traditionally been seen to be 'battle avoiders' have had this notion challenged. Henry II, for example, a king often stated by scholars as avoiding armed confrontations, has been seen by a recent biographer as doing exactly the opposite.¹⁸⁵

The final, most convincing, argument that English commanders were actively seeking battle in the second half of the fourteenth century, thus continuing the strategy

not accorded to victorious generals. ... Individual valour was considered more worthy of praise than successful generalship'.

¹⁸² DeVries, K. 'John the Fearless' Way of War' *Reputation and Representation in Fifteenth Century Europe* (ed.) Biggs, D.L., Michalove, S.D., Compton Reeves, A. (Netherlands, 2004), 39

¹⁸³ Ayton, for example, argued that 'a descent upon the Normandy coast at La Hougue, was indeed planned well in advance of embarkation; and that it was a first step towards achieving the principal aim of the expedition, namely, to bring Philip VI to battle at a time and a place that were to Edward's advantage. [Furthermore] there are grounds for believing that Edward had been seeking a decisive battle with Philip VI since the beginning of the war, ... confident in the tactical superiority of his army, but practical exploitation of that advantage depended upon the French accepting battle and taking the offensive'. Ayton, *Crécy*, 36; Rogers, C.J. 'England's Greatest General' *Military History Quarterly* 14:4 (2002), 34-45; Green, D. *Edward the Black Prince: Power in Medieval Europe* (2007), 8, 41, 45. For lesser captains as competent commanders see, for example: Rogers, C.J. 'Sir Thomas Dagworth in Brittany, 1346-7: Restellou and La Roche-Derrien' *M.M.H.* (2005), 127-54; Idem, 'Dialectics', 265-84. See also: Beeler, 'Re-Evaluation of Medieval English Generalship', 1-10;

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¹⁸⁵ Hosler, J.D. *Henry II: A Medieval Soldier at War, 1147-1189* (Leiden, The Netherlands, 2007) 146-47.

employed prior to Brétigny, comes from the testimony of contemporaries in the form of chronicles. On a number of occasions, chroniclers of the period agree that English armies were actively seeking an engagement. Four chroniclers have been chosen to illustrate the point: Thomas Walsingham, Henry Knighton, Jean Froissart, and the anonymous author(s) of the *Westminster Chronicle*. Few were as explicit in their description of a battle seeking policy than Thomas Walsingham. His *Chronica Maiora* is littered with accounts of English battle seeking. In 1378, for example, an English fleet defeated by the Spanish had been seeking a confrontation: ‘Both fleets engaged in combat, and, led on by a desire for booty, fought a battle without further delay’.¹⁸⁶ Similarly on land in 1382 he recounts that a joint Anglo-Portuguese army led by the King of Portugal were determined to meet Henry Trastámara’s army:

‘Our army stayed in Portuguese lands for a year, making several raids upon Spain and capturing some fortifications. The Spanish then decided to take to the field of battle against the king of Portugal and the English army. The Portuguese king with our troops went out to meet the enemy just as keenly, determined to fight if fortune allowed and expecting to achieve victory’.¹⁸⁷

Other examples can be cited. In 1385 a venomous dispute arose between Gaunt and the king on their arrival, very short of supplies, in Edinburgh in pursuit of Scottish forces retreating in the face of the massive English army.¹⁸⁸ The king wished to return home due to the situation whereas Gaunt, perhaps mindful of the effect that such a decision would have on the morale of the English army, argued for a more aggressive, battle seeking, course of action which might win the king both prestige and the supplies he craved, with Walsingham putting words into his mouth:

“We all know that our enemies have fled for refuge across the Firth of Forth, so my advice is that we should cross the Firth of Forth ourselves, especially now that the crossing is easy for us, and destroy their lands with fore and sword, so that the enemy are forced wither into battle or shameful flight”.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁶ Walsingham, 64.

¹⁸⁷ Ultimately the sides did not come to blows, the Catalians and Portuguese negotiating behind English backs and agreeing to an accord. Walsingham, 195; Saul, *Richard II*, 98-99; Russell, *English Intervention*, 314-337.

¹⁸⁸ See chapter IV, iii, 279-300 for discussion of this campaign.

¹⁸⁹ Walsingham, 229. Both Knighton, 335-7, and the *Westminster Chronicle*, 129-131, agree that this was the case, though the latter describes the king as accusing Gaunt’s proposed course of action as being akin ‘not from the ardour of loyalty but from the warped notions of rank treason’, 131.

As the Scots ravaged Northumberland in 1388 Henry ‘Hotspur’ Percy,

‘took it badly that the Scots were ravaging unchecked in this fashion, and especially because he had been challenged by them to a battle, he promised them in replay that he assuredly would join battle with them in three days, even if his forces were altogether inferior to their hordes’.¹⁹⁰

In 1383 the Bishop of Norwich knew he had to achieve successes quickly on his ‘crusade’ not least because of an approaching French army and the fact that support for the expedition at home had been lukewarm at best among the political classes.¹⁹¹ To this end he clearly endeavoured to engage his enemies in battle for as soon as the enemy was spotted, while the bishop was dining in Dunkirk he ‘without delay... pushed aside the tables, took up his arms and went out of the town, intending to fight there and then’.¹⁹² He also wished, when it became known that Charles VI had arrived at Amiens with a great army, ‘to invade Picardy and try the fortunes of war in one day’s battle against the French king’.¹⁹³ Indeed he implored Richard II to come to his aid.

‘Now was the time for the king to make haste and come across the Channel, if he wished ever to join battle with the French king, or to send those who would dare to do this. For unless the French king had been bold enough to sail to England, he could not have come nearer, and so it was not great labour for the English to hurry to his aid, seeing that they would be in no time at all in the land of France before either fighting a war with the French king or putting him to flight’.¹⁹⁴

The fact that Richard did not might suggest that he was an un-bellicose king, who feared the vagaries of battle, as has been maintained from Richard’s own time to the present.¹⁹⁵ Yet according to Walsingham the king did initially try and seize the

¹⁹⁰ Walsingham, 264.

¹⁹¹ Saul, *Richard II*, 102-7

¹⁹² Walsingham, 201.

¹⁹³ Walsingham, 206.

¹⁹⁴ Walsingham, 209.

¹⁹⁵ For example: Steel, A.B. *Richard II* (Cambridge, 1941), 41, Saul, *Richard II*, 206-208, argues that this was down to a ‘genuine abhorrence of the shedding of Christian blood’, especially a the time when eastern Europe was being overrun by the Turks. Cf. Palmer, J.J.N. ‘English Foreign Policy, 1388-99’ *The Reign of Richard II. Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (ed.) Boulay, F.R.H. du Boulay, Barron, C. (1971), 76-77, for Richard not being wholly an unwarlike king as often stated. See also articles by

opportunity, as when the message from the bishop arrived, ‘he jumped up in a furious haste, knocking over the tables and leaping on his horse, as though he would slay the king of France that very night’.¹⁹⁶ Though he subsequently decided not to launch a campaign for which he earned Walsingham’s disdain, instead electing to send John of Gaunt to rescue the situation, this course was entirely understandable. The country was in acute financial distress at this time, a fact which had necessitated military activity in the form of a crusade paid for by indulgences in the first place. Notwithstanding this, it took time to assemble an army, especially one large and prestigious enough to take on a French royal army, and cooler heads than the that of the king in his initial flurry of activity must have realised that the bishop’s cause stood little chance of recovery.¹⁹⁷ They were certainly proved right as Norwich’s forces capitulated soon after Richard had issued orders for the impressment of ships.¹⁹⁸

In any case just because the English government was seeking battle with the French and her allies in this period does not mean that they were willing to offer battle no matter the odds. Though the bishop desired to engage the French king outside Amiens in 1383 he was discouraged from doing so by some of the army’s leading figures.

‘After the lifting of the siege [of the town of Ypres] the bishop was informed by scouts that the king of France [Charles VI] had arrived at the city of Amiens with his army. He [the bishop] spoke to his knights ... and said that he wanted to invade Picardy and to try the fortunes of war in one day’s battle against the French king. Although he put forward many arguments that should have been able to arouse them to set out, he achieved nothing. Indeed he received wounding insults from them, for they declared that he was a hot-headed man who had no idea of the strength of the French forces which could field a hundred men against each one of their own. It would not be safe, they continued, nor sensible to put God to the test in battle where there would be no hope of success but a certainty of destruction, unless it had happened that they suddenly got into such a tight corner that there was no way out except by fighting. When he heard this, the bishop said goodbye to these officers, and entered into Picardy with just a few of his men So when the bishop approached a part of

James Gillespie, in particular: Gillespie, J. ‘Richard: King of Battles’? *The Age of Richard II*, (ed.) Gillespie, J. (Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1997), 139-64, in which he attempts to rehabilitate the king’s martial reputation as a battle seeker, particularly in Scotland in 1385 and during his Irish campaign in 1399.

¹⁹⁶ Walsingham, 209.

¹⁹⁷ This was certainly how the monk of Westminster reported events: *Westminster*, 49.

¹⁹⁸ Sumpton, *Divided*, 506-7.

the French army, he displayed himself and his men in open field with banners unfurled. But when nobody dared to give him battle, as the whole of the French army had not yet assembled, the bishop turned round his standards and marched with all haste'.¹⁹⁹

Whilst this advice might at first appear to represent a reticence to fight in pitched battles amongst members of the military community, two of whom with collectively at least four decades of martial experience between them,²⁰⁰ it is far more likely that the advice was made because these men did not want to throw away their own lives, and those of their men, needlessly when the odds were stacked heavily against them.

Even when he does not explicitly state that the English were seeking an engagement it can be inferred from Walsingham's words that this was their intent. In 1380 a force under Thomas of Woodstock rode through the French countryside plundering as they went with Walsingham deriding the French for their cowardice and failure to meet the English in the field, with characteristic exaggeration.

'Not one person from that famous kingdom [of France] had taken upon himself to put a stop to their daring. The French themselves had been so completely terror-stricken that although they lived in a kingdom so huge that one man from the English army could always have been opposed by a thousand Frenchmen, they quickly chose, like women, to look for hiding places in which they could skulk rather than meet the squadrons of the English as an army'.²⁰¹

Many of the instances of battle seeking in Walsingham's account refer to forces that English localities raised on the fly, especially in the later 1370s when the French began harrying the English coastline once more. In 1377, for example, he recounts how French raiders in Rottingdean, near Lewes, Sussex, were met in battle by John Cherlewe, the prior of Lewes, with a small band of presumably local men. The result

¹⁹⁹ Walsingham, 206-7

²⁰⁰ Sir Thomas Trivet (or Trevet) had been in arms from his teens in the mid-1360s whilst Sir William Elmham. Sumption, J. 'Trevet, Sir Thomas (c.1350-1388)' *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford, 2004); online edn., Jan 2008 [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27745>]. Sir William Elmham appears frequently in the 1370s and 80s (e.g. E101/31/11 no.2 m.1 in 1371) but his first appearance appears to be a letter of protection for going 'beyond the seas' for an unspecified reason in 1364 (*C.P.R.* 1364-67, 30), though whether this for military service is uncertain.

²⁰¹ Walsingham, 107.

was a disaster for the English as the prior, two knights, and an esquire were captured whilst another esquire, French by birth but long in English service,

‘fought with such courage and bravery in this battle that... in the end his entrails were hanging down to his feet, and. A terrible tale to tell, in his charges against the enemy he at first dragged his entrails after him for a considerable distance until finally he left them behind altogether’.²⁰²

Encounters such as these were likely to result in a battle as local people wanted to oust invaders quickly and doubtlessly hoped to defeat, and gain revenge, on those who may have recently plundered their homes. In 1395, for example, the men of Norfolk gathered together a fleet, ‘to meet...in battle’, Danish pirates who had been launching incursions onto the English east coast.²⁰³

Walsingham also showed that the English in general sought battle not only for political reasons. It could equally be, for common soldiers at least, for profit-seeking reasons: as in 1378, when an English fleet waiting for Gaunt to depart on campaign, undertook naval raiding ‘led on by a desire for booty [and] fought a battle without further delay’, or when a band of over-confident Northumbrians raided into Scotland and were cut down mercilessly. Other ‘battles’ fought for profit were merely when local forces seized opportunities as and when they presented themselves, such as in 1385, and again in 1386, when the Calais garrison seized French ships attempting to bypass the fortress on their way back to Sluys from Flanders. Plunder from war was a huge motivation. For the common soldier battle seeking could also be equally about mere survival. In a much dramatised incident in 1379 Walsingham recounts how Englishmen resident in the garrison of Cherbourg, starving due to lack of supplies, struck out from the fortress, prepared to fight local French forces for them: ‘For it is better and more honourable to die bravely than to perish shamefully through hunger and lack of food’.²⁰⁴

²⁰² Walsingham, 46.

²⁰³ Walsingham, 294.

²⁰⁴ References from this paragraph: Walsingham, 64, 68, 84, 232-33, 241, 84.

The anonymous author, or more likely authors,²⁰⁵ of the *Westminster Chronicle*, and the Leicester chronicler Henry Knighton, while not as explicit in the statement of English intent for battle-seeking in the period nevertheless mention that it occurred. The *Westminster* author certainly agreed with Walsingham that the pugnacious Bishop of Norwich was itching for an engagement with the French in 1383. On hearing the news of the approach of the king of France, he stated the bishop proposed, ‘to steal upon the French king’s van one night and to deliver a devastating attack on it before he [Charles VI] approached any closer’, although interestingly the author disapproved of this as,

‘The rights of the king of England had in France ... might easily be extinguished ... if the bishop, in ostensible consequence of having taken the Cross, were to subdue France by military action, ... as he would seem to have made the conquests in the Church’s cause rather than the king’s’.²⁰⁶

Similarly the earl of Arundel was seen to have sought out an engagement in 1387, by both the *Westminster* chronicler and Knighton, after the earl had the good fortune of capturing a number of French and ‘Spanish’ boats scouting the English navy in harbour, who revealed ‘information as to how and when the French and Flemish fleet would be making the voyage to its chosen destination’.²⁰⁷ With this information,

‘Arundel put to sea in good heart with his forces. On the following day there came up the French and Flemish fleet laden with wine from La Rochelle; our men at once swooped upon it in a hate-inspired onslaught, and a grim battle began. The struggle between our forces and the enemy to decide which way victory should go was a long one, but in the end, by the favour of God, it was our men who prevailed’.²⁰⁸

The earl repeated this desire for an engagement the following year when he challenged the defenders of La Rochelle – the duc de Bar, the Sire de Pons, and Louis

²⁰⁵ *Westminster*, xxii-xlii.

²⁰⁶ *Westminster*, 45.

²⁰⁷ *Westminster*, 183. This is a reference to the fleet that had gathered for the invasion of England in 1386 and which, after this had been aborted, was wintering at La Rochelle and which was in the process of making its way to Sluys, laden with wine. For Knighton’s brief mention of the expedition in which he describes the earl as ‘rapidly putting to sea to meet them’, 389.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 183.

Sancerre, marshal of France – ‘to do battle as soon as might be if their courage inspired them to it’. Upon receiving a favourable answer the earl ‘disembarked under their noses with his troops and in expectation of action conferred further knighthoods’.²⁰⁹ In the same year, this time on the Anglo-Scottish border, the monk of Westminster relates that both sides were ready for a fight, both intending to draw the other onto them and hit them with a pincer movement in the rear.²¹⁰ On hearing of the subsequent English defeat at Otterburn, Richard II was ‘aflame with anger and with the desire to be revenged on the Scots... to march north and destroy them [presumably in battle] to a man’.²¹¹

Knighton was not as explicit about the combatants’ desires at Otterburn though his statement that Henry ‘Hotspur’ Percy, the English commander at the battle, came out ‘to meet’ the Scottish forces, suggests he intended to engage them.²¹² He explicitly states that Edward III was seeking an engagement during the Reims campaign in 1360, as the king arrayed his army before Paris ‘expecting to do battle with those in the city... as they had previously promised’. When no one would ride out and meet them in the field the king was ‘greatly angered’ and, ‘ordered a large part of the suburbs to be fired, to provoke them’.²¹³ Whilst he was often not as explicit as Walsingham in displaying an English desire for battle seeking we can infer from his words that the desire existed. In 1386, for example, fearful of the French invasion force across the Channel at Sluys, he recounts how the English, ‘brought together a multitude of fighting men: dukes, earls, barons, knights, esquires, and archers’, presumably to engage the French should they have landed.²¹⁴

Far more explicit about English battle seeking, indeed battle seeking in warfare of the day in general, was the most famous chronicler of his day, the much read Hainaulter, Jean Froissart.²¹⁵ In the vivid description of the lead up to the battle of

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 353.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 347-9.

²¹¹ Ibid., 351.

²¹² Knighton, 507.

²¹³ Ibid., 177.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 351

²¹⁵ Although he was quick to point out that Charles V ordered the French forces not to engage: Ibid., Translation of Book II (41 v) 2-161, a policy clearly unpopular with his nobility: Book II, (43 r) 2-165.

Aljubarrota in 1385 he describes how the English were battle seekers, stressing the advantage of the strategic offensive, and possibly the tactical offensive as well.

‘When the English contingent there present heard that the army was to march out towards Santarém where the king of Castile and his men were, they rejoiced. ... The king and his entire army faced Santarém and all said with great resolve that they would not return to Lisbon before they had encountered their enemies, and that *it would be preferable to invade and take the battle to them rather than for their opponents to come down on them. Differences had been observed between those who sought out combat and those who waited for it, and it had been established that four out of the five of those who sought it gained ground. In almost all of the victories which the English had had in France over the French, the English had come in search of battle, because an army is naturally stronger and better motivated when attacking rather than defending.*²¹⁶

He also makes several other references to the English, and other nations, seeking battle.²¹⁷ In one interesting example, Edmund of Langley, the earl of Cambridge, severely chastised king Fernando of Portugal for failing to attack the Castilian forces during his frustrating stay in Iberia in 1381-82.²¹⁸

As some of the examples given above testify, it was not only the English whom chroniclers argued were keen for battle. The Scots, for example, before they agreed to accept the peace that had been agreed between English and French diplomats at Leulingham, were found by French envoys to be, ‘properly armed with gleaming weapons, and prepared as it were for the onset of battle’.²¹⁹ On the whole, of course, the Scots tended to avoid battle because the odds were overwhelmingly in the English favour. Their general *modus operandi* was raiding and only rarely, such as during the rule of the Appellants, did the Scots sense English weakness and offer battle, as seems to have occurred in 1388.

‘The Scots... invaded England to inflict once more upon a country already... sorely stricken further and greater injury. At length [they] withdrew and pitched their tents a little

²¹⁶ Croenen, G. Translation of Book III (236r) 3-36, ‘Jean Froissart, Chronicles’ *The Online Froissart*, (ed.) Ainsworth, P., Croenen, G., version 1.2 (May, 2011) <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/onlinefroissart> Froissart re-emphasized this point later in his work when he related a supposed conversation between the Chancellor of Portugal, Lourenço Fogaça, and the duke of Lancaster. Ibid., Translation of Book III, fo. 270r. – 270v.

²¹⁷ Ibid., Translation of Book III fo. (202 r) 3-2; (213 v) 3-11; 3-11; (225 r) 3-23; (234 r) 3-33. Book II: Translation of Book II (59 r) 2-194.

²¹⁸ Ibid., Translation of Book III (202 r) 3-2.

²¹⁹ Walsingham, 239.

way off [Newcastle-upon-Tyne]. Their plan, I may say was that their main strength should fall back and deliver an assault from behind to cut off our rear'.²²⁰

Knighton highlighted how the French too, despite Charles V's Fabian strategy, were willing to offer battle if the circumstances were heavily in their favour, as Charles VI found them against English 'crusaders' at Bourbourg in 1383.²²¹ Even further afield Walsingham recounts that Leopold III of Austria eagerly went to battle against rebellious commons on his land when he refused to allow pilgrims travel through their lands.²²² It also seems that crusading armies were more eager than 'regular' forces to engage the enemy as it was the very reason that they had joined the crusade in the first place; to fight the enemies of God. The *Westminster Chronicle* suggests that both the crusaders fighting the pagan Lithuanians, and those accompanying the duke of Bourbon to modern day Tunisia, sought engagements and this desire, especially to gain the greatest honour by attacking first, seems to have been the reason for the disaster at Nicopolis in 1396 when the French knights charged the Turkish position unsupported and were obliterated.²²³

It is puzzling, given this battle-seeking testimony that many historians continue to hold the contrary view, that there was a general battle avoidance policy amongst the English in this period and within medieval warfare in general.²²⁴ Perhaps the problem lays in the inherent distrust of chronicler's accounts of warfare. Each author, after all, had their own particular pre-occupations and, very much like attempts to engage with medieval perception of what constituted a battle, any attempt to tackle chroniclers' views on strategy is an interpretive minefield. Problems with the content of chroniclers' work, and taking the information given at face value, have been well

²²⁰ *Westminster*, 347. Incidentally this was also the English plan according to the chronicler, 347-9.

²²¹ Knighton, 327-29.

²²² Walsingham, 269.

²²³ *Westminster*, 447-51; Housley, *The Later Crusades*, 77; Setton, K.M. *The Papacy and the Levant, Volume I: The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Philadelphia, 1976), chapter 14, 327-370, particularly 351-53 for an assessment of the documentary evidence; Ayton, 'From Muhi to Mohács', 228-233; Nicolle, D. *Nicopolis, 1396* (Oxford, 1999); Atiya, A. 'The Crusade of Nicopolis' *The Crusade in the Later Middle Ages*, 2nd edn. (New York, 1965), 435-462. For the Hungarian side: Veszprémy, L. 'Some Remarks on Recent Hungarian Historiography on the Crusade of Nicopolis' *The Crusades and the Military Orders: Expanding the Frontiers of Medieval Latin Christianity* (eds.) Hunyadi, Z., Laszlovszky, J. (Budapest, 2001), 223-230.

²²⁴ Rogers, *Cruel*, 233-34, provides examples of scholars who believe Edward III was not seeking battle in 1346 and further states his case for a battle seeking strategy in the first phase of the conflict: 'Dialectics', 275-8.

attested.²²⁵ Peter Ainsworth, for example, recently noted that: ‘Froissart seeks to be impartial and objective, but his notion of objectivity bears little resemblance to our own’.²²⁶ The biggest problem with chroniclers’ accounts in relation to military matters, barring a very few exceptions like Sir Thomas Gray, author of *Scalacronica*, is that chroniclers were not military men. This is clearly a problem because often most of what we know of a battle or campaign comes from later accounts.²²⁷ Even information on war in the chronicles deriving from eyewitness testimony is difficult to interpret. ‘An eyewitness knew what was happening to him and to those around him, but he knew little else’.²²⁸ It is also certain that most chroniclers will have had little knowledge of wider martial strategy. Even if the conscientious medieval scholar used source materials such as campaign newsletters as information for the campaign – such as were available after Crécy²²⁹ – we must also wonder whether these documents represent the actual ‘facts’ of the expedition or, as is more likely, a version designed for public consumption, where the idea of the commander venturing forth to engage his enemies for a glorious battlefield encounter is emphasized to paint the encounter in a glowing light.

Yet just because chroniclers’ testimony is problematic does not mean that it cannot be relevant to our argument for English battle-seeking. Eyewitnesses, whilst evidently being unable to provide a wider picture of a campaign were nevertheless important sources for the chronicler. Froissart, for example, travelled extensively and spoke to a variety of different people, many of whom had been involved in military action and related their memories to the Hainaulter. Whilst it is true that some of them will certainly have embellished their accounts and highlighted their own exploits they would surely have been less liberal with the truth when it came to the objectives of a campaign and its course. After all, these were matters of fact that a well travelled, even celebrated, man like Froissart would have picked up upon if one account of a

²²⁵ See, for example: Given-Wilson, C. *Chronicles, The Writing of History in Medieval England* (2004), throughout but especially 1-20; Elton, G.R. *England 1200-1640* (1969), 11-30; Breisach, E. *Historiography, Ancient, Medieval and Modern*, 3rd edn. (Chicago, 2007), 125-131.

²²⁶ Ainsworth, P. ‘Jean Froissart: Chronicler, Poet, and Writer’ *The Online Froissart* (ed.) Ainsworth, P., Croenen, G. version 1.2 (May, 2011), <http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/onlinefroissart/apparatus.jsp?type=intros&intro=f.intros.PFA-Froissart&node=255#bottomref-3>

²²⁷ Villalon, ‘Battle-Seeking, Battle-Avoiding, Or Just Battle-Willing?’, 151.

²²⁸ Housley, *The Later Crusades*, 77.

²²⁹ Ayton, *Crécy*, 50-2.

campaign, and the motivations behind it, was markedly different to others. Most chroniclers, of course, did not travel as extensively as Froissart, if at all, and they did not have the ear of many notables within society as he did. Nevertheless chroniclers who did make use of eyewitness accounts, like Walsingham, will certainly have found this testimony useful for the construction of their narrative, especially if the witnesses were practicing, or retired, soldiers.²³⁰ These men after all had been there, in the thick of the action, and would likely have known the overall objectives of an expedition in which they took part, even if they were not privy to its operational activities at command level. Furthermore it is likely, given the evidence cited in previous chapters, that these current or ex-soldiers were experienced military men, in some cases with careers in arms stretching over decades. Such individuals will hardly have been unaware of what English armies were trying to achieve on campaign after in some cases a lifetime in the saddle.

Even if there is little evidence that a chronicler was drawing from eyewitness accounts this does not mean that testimony of battle seeking is any less valid. Henry Knighton, for example, made extensive use of various texts which are embedded in his narrative, including several accounts of campaigns seemingly drawn from newsletters such as for Despenser's crusade in 1383.²³¹ Despite the problems inherent in such sources, as mentioned above, it is equally as likely to be the case that information on the course of campaigns and their objectives was included because, quite simply, it was the truth of the matter. There would probably be more references to the effect of battle seeking had it not been, to contemporaries, a matter of stating the obvious.

Accepting that the English were seeking battle after the resumption of the French war allows us to make more sense of the conduct of war on the continent in these years. After the initial shock at the rapidity of French successes after 1369, the English government sought to secure its territory in France by acquiring a series of 'barbicans of the realm', which had the aim of safeguarding English held territory in France and acting as bases from which offensive operations could be launched. The aspiration of this offensive activity, whilst having the benefit of weakening the French

²³⁰ Walsingham, 15-18.

²³¹ Knighton, 326-8. For a list of the documents from which Knighton drew see: *Ibid.*, xxxii-xl.

psychologically and economically, was to bring them to, and defeat them, in battle. The aim was to have another Crécy or Poitiers, a victory complete enough to at most cause the collapse of the French government and allow the English to successfully claim the French crown, and at least, to win a settlement as favourable as that agreed at Brétigny and bring the conflict to a swift conclusion. It is true that some scholars have questioned the significance of these earlier battlefield victories because they did not achieve the ultimate English goal of ending the war.²³² Yet this view is clouded by the benefit of hindsight; just because this aspiration was not realised does not mean that it was not the intention of fighting battles in the first place. Furthermore it is hard to deny the great stock which contemporaries put on their influence and the fact that without these devastating psychological blows the French monarchy would not have been weakened enough to negotiate terms in 1360. What possible reason would the English have had for altering this remarkably successful strategy when the war resumed in 1369?

English martial commitments abroad were not, of course, limited to France. As we have seen in Ireland, for example, English, or at least Anglo-Irish forces were involved in a number of battles against the Irish lordship's enemies.²³³ How does this policy of battle-seeking relate to other theatres of war in which the English were involved? It is difficult, of course, to generalise about English foreign policy and martial strategy over half a century and in multiple areas of action. Nevertheless it is the contention of this work that English policy remained, on the whole, one of attempting to bring their enemies into the field and defeat them in battle. In those areas directly related to the French war – the Low Countries, Iberia,²³⁴ and Brittany²³⁵

²³² Bachrach, 'Siege Reconnaissance' online, wrote that: 'The battles of Crécy, Poitiers, and Agincourt, which highlight most chapters on medieval military history, were of no consequence to France's ultimate victory in the Hundred Years War. Such generalisations can be sustained for almost any medieval war'.

²³³ Above 282-284.

²³⁴ Bullón-Fernández, M. *England and Iberia in the Middle Ages, 12th-15th Century* (ed.) Bullón-Fernández, M. (Basingstoke, 2007); Goodman, A. 'Before the Armada: Iberia and England in the Middle Ages' *England and Europe 1066-1453* (ed.); Saul, N. (1994), 108-20; Goodman, A. 'England and Iberia in the Middle Ages' *England and Her Neighbours*, 73-84; Harvey, J.H. 'Political and Cultural Exchanges between England and the Iberian Peninsula in the Middle Ages' *Literature, Culture and Society in the Middle Ages* (ed.) Lopez, M.M. (Barcelona, 1989); Palmer, *Christendom*, 28-42. Sumption, *Divided*, 606-18. The most important work remains: Russell, *English Intervention* (1955).

²³⁵ Palmer, *Christendom*, 18-20, 62-64, 67-72, 96-105, 126-134; Sumption, *Divided*, 26-7, 119-21, 130-31, 175, 180-3, 216, 228-9, 230-8, 305-6, 315, 325-7, 396-99, for the often complex relationship between England and Brittany in this period.

– English strategy remained the same as it had before Brétigny: bring their enemies to battle and draw French resources away from English territories in France to over stretch the Valois’ martial resources.

Ireland and Scotland were slightly different cases. Scotland had long been a thorn in the English side and even when the two sides were officially at peace small scale border raiding continued unabated, the border region constituting one of the most highly militarised zones in medieval Europe.²³⁶ English policy north of the border in the decades after Brétigny seems to have been to engage the Scots in pitched battle when necessary, but above all to maintain the martial status quo that had been established in the preceding half century as English attention became more focussed on the French.²³⁷ Unlike in other English theatres of war, in Scotland the English government was not trying to resolve a military situation decisively in their favour; they had *already done so* with their battlefield victories in the preceding half century, particularly after Neville’s Cross.²³⁸ It is true that this and other English victories had not granted Edward III or his successor suzerainty over Scotland. They had, however, effectively knocked the Scots out of the war for a generation. Once the decision had been made to focus on continental ambitions, the war aim north of the border became attempting to neutralise the Scots as a serious military threat. This had been achieved; bringing the Scots back into the war by being overly bellicose towards them would have been detrimental to English continental ambitions, creating the possibility of rekindling the ‘Auld Alliance’ and creating encirclement from the Scots on one side and the French on the other.²³⁹ When the Scots again became a serious threat to English interests in the 1380s the English aim went back to nullifying them by battle.

²³⁶ Sadler, J. *Border Fury: England and Scotland at War, 1296-1568* (2005), 11-22; Berend, N. ‘Preface’, *Medieval Frontiers: Concepts and Practices*, (ed.) Abfulia, D., Berend, N., (Aldershot, 2002), x-xv. The number of castles on the English side of the border reflects this fact. Before the outbreak of the Anglo-Scottish war in 1272 there were 27 castles on the border; by 1350 this had risen to 77 and by 1422 there were 169, an increase of 525 per cent. Rickard, *Castle Community*, 4. On border warfare see: Neville, C.J. *Violence, Custom and Law: The Anglo Scottish Border Lands in the Later Middle Ages*, (Edinburgh, 1998); Paterson, R.C. *My Wound is Deep: A History of the Later Anglo-Scots Wars 1380-1560* (Edinburgh, 1997), 4-11.

²³⁷ Indeed the Scottish poet Andrew Wyntoun admitted that had the English king directed his full attention to Scotland then it is unlikely she would have been able to maintain her independence. Nicholson, *Scotland*, 147; Wyntoun A. *Orygenale Cronykil*, v. ii, (ed.) Laing, D. (1872-79), 435.

²³⁸ Nicholson, *Scotland*, 145-50, for the campaign and its aftermath

²³⁹ Bonner, E. ‘Scotland’s “Auld Alliance” with France, 1295-1560’ *History* 84:273 (2002), 5-30; Sumption, *Divided*, 8.

The army Richard II raised in 1385 was intended for just such a purpose as was attested, for example, by Knighton who wrote that:

‘The king ... accompanied, preceded, and followed by the flower of English knighthood: earls, barons, knights, esquires, and their attendants, their expense unstinted by age or means, [were] all moved by a single desire to join battle’.²⁴⁰

The fact the campaign proved to be ‘another expensive fiasco, crashing to ruin against a Scottish policy of non-resistance’ should not blind us to its original intent.²⁴¹ Doubtless too the English would have engaged the Scots more frequently had the need and the opportunity presented itself. The only major engagement between the two nations in these years was at Otterburn in 1388, and this was more a reaction to local circumstances rather than as an attempt to gain serious political advantage over the Scots. As it was in the four decades after Brétigny the English and Scots were only officially at war for about five years; the English had largely succeeded in keeping the Scots out of the wider Anglo-French struggle. This in itself was a considerable diplomatic triumph; creating ‘a relatively new element in the European strategic balance’.²⁴²

In Ireland the Anglo-Irish lordship had been slipping into trouble since the end of the thirteenth century due to a number of factors, including an absentee English monarch and English landlords who had never visited the lordship and done little for its defence, resurgence amongst the Gaelic Irish, and socio-economic upheavals due to plague and famine.²⁴³ This was to the extent that the lordship went from turning a

²⁴⁰ Knighton, 335-7

²⁴¹ Paterson, *Wound*, 10; Knighton, 336-8; *Westminster*, 126-30.

²⁴² Sumption, *Divided*, 11.

²⁴³ R.R. Davies argues that the ‘lordship’ should be referred to as a colony; ‘Lordship or Colony?’ *The English in Medieval Ireland* (ed.) Lydon, J.F. (Dublin, 1984), 142-160. For reasons for lack of complete conquest: Frame, R. ‘Power and Society in the Lordship of Ireland 1272-1377’ *P.P* 76 (Aug. 1977), 5-8; Simms, K. ‘The Norman Invasion and the Gaelic Recovery’ *Oxford Illustrated History of Ireland* (ed.) Foster, R.F. (Oxford, 1989), 53-102. For the background history of the lordship up to the mid-fourteenth century see: Frame, R. ‘Overlordship and Reaction, c.1200–c.1450’ *Uniting the Kingdom? The Making of British History* (ed.) Grant A., Stringer, K. (1995), 76-98; Barry, T. ‘The Last Frontier: Defence and Settlement in Late Medieval Ireland’ *Colony and Frontier in Medieval Ireland: Essays Presented to J. F. Lydon* (ed.) Barry, T., Frame, R., Simms, K. (1995), 217-228; Lydon, J. F. *The Lordship of Ireland in the Middle Ages* (Dublin, 1972), 190-240; idem, ‘The Impact of the Bruce Invasion, 1315-27’ *A New History of Ireland, II. Medieval Ireland 1169-1354* (ed.) Cosgrove, A. (Oxford, 1987); Saul, *Richard II*, 271.; Frame, R. ‘The justiciarship of Ralph Ufford: Warfare and Politics in Fourteenth-Century Ireland’, *Studia Hibernica*, 13 (1973); Frame, R. ‘The Defence of the English Lordship, 1250-1450’ *A Military History of Ireland* (ed.) Bartlett, T., Jeffrey, K.

profit for the English government in the thirteenth century, to being a net drain on the English Exchequer by Richard II's reign.²⁴⁴ Attempts were made by the English government to reverse this slide, particularly in the 1360s and again in the 1390s,²⁴⁵ with W.M. Ormrod arguing that first Edward III, and then Richard II, saw Ireland as part of their imperial ambitions for the English monarchy, no less than the reconstitution of the old Angevin Empire.²⁴⁶ Despite such lofty goals a combination of the facts that Ireland had been largely outside the orbit of the wider struggle between England and France, and increasingly tight financial constraints on the English government, meant that the lordship was relegated in English priorities.

It was nigh on impossible for the English government to achieve victory in Ireland through a campaign strategy tailored towards a decisive battle; and this helps to show why Ireland was such an intractable problem for the English government. Unlike elsewhere, the native Gaelic-Irish were not a unified political entity which could be defeated and conquered in a decisive engagement. They were a disunited collection of petty kingdoms, lordships, and regional jurisdictions, as evidenced by the submissions Richard II received in 1394-95. Gaelic-Irish chieftains like Art MacMurrough could make grandiose claims to be 'King of Leinster', but even if this were true he could only claim to rule a small portion of those outside the reaches of the English Crown. The political fragmentation and disunity of the Gaelic-Irish thus prevented their long-term submission; any battlefield victories or defeats for the

(Cambridge, 1996), 76-98; Otway-Ruthven, A.J. 'Ireland in the 1350s: Sir Thomas de Rokeby and his Successors', *J.R.S.A.I.* 97 (1967), 45-59; Frame, R. 'English Officials and Irish Chiefs in the Fourteenth Century' *E.H.R.* 90 (1975), 748-77. Otway-Ruthven, J. *Medieval Ireland*, 339-76; Curtis, E.A. *A History of Medieval Ireland*, (2002) 95-96, 115-6, 122-3, 127-37. There have been recent attempts to challenge this view: Frame, R. *English Lordship in Ireland, 1318-1361* (Oxford, 1982); Idem, *Ireland and Britain 1170-1450* (1998), 171-220; Davies, 'Lordship or Colony', 146. Analysis of both views: Crooks, P. 'Factions, Feuds and Noble Power in the Lordship of Ireland, c.1356-1496' *I.H.R.* 35:140 (2007), 425-454. For military service in Ireland prior to 1360: Frame, R. 'Military Service in the Lordship of Ireland, 1290-1360: Institutions and Society on the Anglo-Gaelic Frontier' *Medieval Frontier Societies* (ed.) Bartlett, R., MacKay, A. (Oxford, 1989), 101-26, esp. 114-122. See also: Otway-Ruthven, J. 'Knight Service in Ireland' *J.R.S.A.I.* 4:89 (1959), 1-15; Idem, 'Royal Service in Ireland' *J.R.S.A.I.* 98 (1968), 37-46.

²⁴⁴ Richardson, H.G., Sayles, G.O. 'Irish Revenue, 1278-1384' *P.R.I.A.* 62 (1962), 87-100.

²⁴⁵ Lydon, J.F. 'Richard II's Expeditions to Ireland' *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 93 (1963), 135-49; Johnston, D.B. 'Unpublished Letters from Richard II in Ireland' *P.R.I.A.* 37 (1927), 276-303; Ibid., 'Richard II and the Submissions of Gaelic Ireland' *I.H.S.* 12 (1980), 1-20.

²⁴⁶ Ormrod, W.M. 'Edward III and his Family' *J.B.S.* 26 (1987), 398-442. He also touched upon the subject in a recent article in *BBC History magazine*: 'King Edward III: The Family Man', 21-6. Recently re-emphasized in: Green, D. 'Lordship and Principality: Colonial Policy in Ireland and Aquitaine in the 1360s' *J.B.S.* 47 (2008), 4.

English or Anglo-Irish only granted the victor regional supremacy.²⁴⁷ In any case the Gaelic Irish, whilst undoubtedly brave in the field, were not imbued with the same chivalric martial culture as elsewhere in medieval Western Europe. The primary *modus operandi* of Irish warfare was raiding into enemy territory to capture loot and moveable goods.²⁴⁸ Froissart observed that,

“It is hard to find a way of making war of the Irish effectively for, unless they choose, there is no one to fight and no towns to be found”.²⁴⁹

The idea of offering battle to the enemy was an alien concept particularly as they by and large did not possess the same calibre of military equipment as their English adversaries. As Gerald of Wales pointed out in the twelfth century,

“In France war is carried on in a champagne country, here [Ireland] it is rough and mountainous; there you have open plains, here you find dense woods. In France it is counted an honour to wear armour, here it is found to be cumbersome ... In fighting against naked and unarmed men, whose only hope of success lies in the impetuosity of their first attack, men in light armour can pursue the fugitives, an agile race, with more activity, and cut them down in narrow passes and amongst crags and mountains”.²⁵⁰

In short, the Irish situation – a combination of the political fragmentation of the enemy, their preference for guerrilla warfare, and the terrain – made a favourable resolution of the lordship’s problems through battle nigh on impossible. What was needed was an extensive input of men and money from England. A combination of limited English resources, and the low priority of Ireland in English priorities during this period, meant that this was highly unlikely. Despite the constant protestations and gloomy predictions of defeat filtering over the Irish Sea, the lordship continued to struggle on. English martial policy in Ireland, therefore, whilst it may have involved battle-seeking to a degree to remove immediate local threats, was to stabilize the lordship by using military might to force the Gaelic Irish into submission, as Richard II attempted in the 1390s. How successful this policy would have been had it been allowed to develop is a matter of conjecture.

²⁴⁷ Johnston, ‘Submissions of Gaelic Ireland’, 1-20

²⁴⁸ Simms, K. ‘Warfare in the Medieval Gaelic Lordships’ *Irish Sword* 12 (1975-76), 98.

²⁴⁹ Froissart, *Chronicles*, trans, Brereton, G. (Hamondsworth, 1968), 410.

²⁵⁰ *Giraldus Cambrensis*, 231.

Furthermore adherence to the belief in English battle seeking does not contradict the clear policy of attempting to make peace that was adopted with increasing intensity during the 1380s by the English government. No doubt the architect of this policy from his appointment as Chancellor in 1383, Michael de la Pole, would have wanted to pursue a more aggressive foreign policy towards France. He must have known that following a peace policy would be unpopular given the martial tastes of men who had been fighting for over four decades. Yet having taken stock of the financial situation, and realizing Parliament was not prepared to dig deeper into its pockets, he followed the only course open to him: rapprochement with France.²⁵¹ Doubtless too there would have been those who favoured a continuance of an aggressive, battle seeking war policy because they had not experienced the windfalls during the second half of the century that their forebears had been lucky enough to enjoy. We can never be sure of the extent of such feelings but men like Sir John Blount of London, 'impoverished by service in the wars in France and elsewhere' would surely have hoped another Poitiers was just round the corner.²⁵²

Did the personalities of England's kings have any influence on the policy of their armies in seeking battle, as Charles V's did on strategy in France? Edward III, though an old man by 1369 cannot have wanted to change the strategy that had proven so successful in his youth. Richard II is more enigmatic. It could certainly be argued that he was less interested in the persecution of the French war than his predecessor had been. He never fought in France and was roundly denigrated as an unwarlike king.²⁵³ Despite Gillespie's arguments, it is a hard conclusion to escape, although one wonders what Richard might have achieved had he possessed the funds to finance extensive martial operations on the continent.²⁵⁴ Yet it seems certain that, at least in Scotland in 1385, and possibly in Ireland too in 1399, he was seeking a battlefield encounter.²⁵⁵ In short, though Richard may have been more inclined towards peace than Edward III, he pursued peace not because he did not want to

²⁵¹ Palmer, *Christendom*, 44-86; Idem, 'The Impeachment of Michael de la Pole in 1386' *B.I.H.R.* 42 (1969), 96-101. Sumption, *Divided*, 511-14.

²⁵² *C.P.R. 1381-85*, 18.

²⁵³ Saul, *Richard II*, 207-8.

²⁵⁴ Gillespie, J.L. 'Richard II: King of Battles'? *The Age of Richard II* (ed.) Gillespie, J.L. (Gloucestershire, 1997), 139-64.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 160-164.

pursue an aggressive, battle-seeking foreign policy towards his enemies, but because the financial state of the realm dictated that he must seek an accord, if only to provide him with more funds to lavish on his favourites.

The fact that the conflict in this period increased in its geographic scope also lends weight to the idea of a battle-seeking strategy.²⁵⁶ Recent research on the American Civil War has shown that armies devastated an increasingly wider area to damage their enemy's economy in an attempt to bring them to battle. Sticking to areas in which conflict had been fought previously was pointless; there was nothing more to raid and once an area had been destroyed there was little point in ravaging it again.²⁵⁷ The same can be said of English tactics in this phase of the Hundred Years War. Furthermore as English armies lived off the land as much as they did on their own supplies it was necessary to increase the area of devastation because of the need for sustenance and profit. In the same vein, it is unlikely that the French would be drawn into battle by raiding areas that had already been heavily devastated. Widening the areas of operation was thus essential to the strategy.

Once it is accepted that the English were seeking a decisive encounter it is easy to challenge the idea that this period saw English 'military decline'. Adhering to a view of decline fundamentally misunderstands what the English were trying to achieve. The English 'failure' in the period, for want of a better word, was not because English armies were bumbling around the continent aimlessly lacking direction, or because the military community had lapsed into ennui, but because the French armies of Charles V and then Charles VI consistently refused to fight them, no matter the provocation offered. It is certainly true that English and French forces did engage one another and that there were far more battlefield encounters in this period than has often been realized. Unfortunately for the English crown, however, these encounters were more often than not when the French possessed an advantage that even their cautious Fabian strategy could not prevent them from capitalizing on. On the rare occasion that the French did offer the English battle, such as when Charles VI offered battle against the English crusaders in 1383, the odds were so overwhelmingly

²⁵⁶ Palmer, *Christendom*, 1.

²⁵⁷ Clossman, C.E. 'Landscapes of Peace: Environments of War'; Brady, L.M. 'Devouring the Land: Sherman's 1864-65 Campaigns' *War and the Environment: Military Destruction in the Modern Age* (ed.) Clossman, C.E. (Texas, 2009), 1-9 and 49-67.

in the French favour that the English chose not to fight; though the English were battle seekers this was not to the detriment of martial common sense.²⁵⁸ On other occasions, battlefield encounters were too small in scale to have a destabilizing impact upon the French monarchy. There was nothing akin to a Crécy or Poitiers, which might have brought the French to the negotiating table. Significantly, the French did not fully engage any of the major English expeditionary armies in France. This inability to fight was hardly the fault of the English. It was instead an adaptation of French tactics which resulted in martial stalemate, a stalemate which would only serve to prolong the war to the benefit of neither side. If one wishes to be hyper-critical of the English it could be argued that they failed to successfully adapt to the French Fabian strategy. Success in war often involves adaptation to unfavourable circumstances as the English had done in the Scottish wars. On this occasion the English had no fresh tricks up their sleeve but without a major injection of funds it is hard to see what else they could have achieved. It was not until the reign of Henry V, when English strategy changed to one of conquest, that the stalemate was broken.

The English were not successful in achieving their goals in every region in which they fought. The strategy of battle seeking was determined as much by the politico-military situations in which they found themselves committed. In the Low Countries, particularly Flanders for example, the English were unable to pursue such a strategy effectively because it remained largely outside the Anglo-French conflict in this period, due firstly to a consistent policy of neutrality by the count of Flanders, Louis de Mâle, (despite the marriage of his daughter to a French prince, the duke of Burgundy), and secondly because when Burgundy became count he strove not to interfere with the prosperity of the region, namely her trading links across the Channel, by being bellicose towards.²⁵⁹ When opportunities did arise, such as with the bishop of Norwich's 'crusade' in 1383, the English resorted to seeking an engagement once more, at least the bishop fully expected Richard II to do so given the

²⁵⁸ Knighton, 327-29.

²⁵⁹ Harding, V. 'Cross-Channel Trade and Cultural Contacts: London and the Low Countries in the Later Fourteenth Century' *England and the Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages* (ed.) Barron, C., Saul, N. (Stroud, 1995), 153-168; Palmer, 'Flemish Succession', 339-364; Ibid., *Christendom*, 20, 67-141; Barron, C. 'Introduction: England and the Low Countries 1327-1477' *England and the Low Countries in the Late Middle Ages* (ed.) Barron, C.M., Saul, N. (Stroud, 1995), 1-28.

opportunity.²⁶⁰ In overall English policy in this period there were diplomatic and military reversals just as there had been prior to Brétigny, but there were also successes which have not been given the credit they deserve because of the prevailing hypothesis of decline that has permeated historical writing on this period.

²⁶⁰ See above 294; Housley, N. 'The Bishop of Norwich's Crusade, May 1383' *History Today* 33:5 (1983) 15-20.

VI. CONCLUSION: THE ENGLISH WAY OF WAR, 1360-1399

In the last days of October 1396, Richard II and Charles VI agreed a twenty-eight year truce, cemented by the marriage of Richard to Charles's nine-year-old daughter.¹

'He [Richard] declared that he received her on the conditions made between them, the object being that through this marriage both kings might be able to live in peace and tranquillity and arrive at the good end and conclusion of a perpetual peace made between their kingdoms, and that no more Christian blood should be spilt.'²

The agreement, which encompassed England's other principal enemies, did not resolve any of the outstanding issues between the belligerents, but it brought to an end the most intensely contested phase of the Hundred Years War to date. It is certainly true that, territorially, the English appear to have had the worst of the fighting. At the end of the conflict the English crown controlled far less French territory than had been the case after the Treaty of Brétigny-Calais in 1360; the situation in the Anglo-Irish lordship had not been improved; the Scots remained a latent threat; a French Prince dominated the Low Countries; and the much sought after security south of the Pyrenees had not materialised. Yet despite these setbacks, this paper has argued that these forty years was far from a military decline for the English.

Several grounds have been advanced to support this argument, many of which are related to the strength that was inherent within the English military community. English armies experienced wholesale 'revolutionary' change during the first half of the fourteenth century, which saw the gradual disappearance of arrayed troops from field armies, the appearance of wholly mounted mixed-retinues of men-at-arms and mounted-archers, the widespread adoption of pay and *regard* for all men-at-arms, the disappearance of recompense payments for horses lost on campaign from the 1370s,

¹ For the negotiations: Palmer, *Christendom*, 142-179; Idem, 'The Anglo-French Peace Negotiations, 1390-96' *T.R.H.S.* 5:5 (1966), 81-94; Idem, 'English Foreign Policy, 1388-99' *E.H.R.* 83 (1968), *The Reign of Richard II. Essays in Honour of May McKisack* (ed.) Boulay, F.R.H. du Boulay, Barron, C. (1971), 75-107; Idem, 'The Background to Richard II's Marriage to Isabel of France (1396)' *B.I.H.R.* 44 (1971), 1-17; Idem, 'Articles for a Final Peace between England and France, 16 June 1393' *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 39 (1966), 180-5; Phillpotts, C.J. 'John of Gaunt and English Policy towards France 1389-1395' *J.M.H.* 16 (1990), 363-86.

² Walsingham, 297.

and the near universal adoption of contracts of indenture to recruit men for the king's armies. All of these changes, barring perhaps the last, were designed to meet the increasing demands of war; and though they occurred over an extended period of time, and at different rates, they had a profound effect on the social composition of the military community. The greatest principal change was that, despite the decline in the number of knights in society, the social origin of the 'average' combatant in the military community was actually higher than it had been previously. This was because the unskilled levies of the past, drawn from the mass of the peasantry, were replaced by an increasingly affluent yeomanry serving as mounted-archers, whilst an increasingly armigerous and militarised gentry became predominant in number amongst the men-at-arms. It was these two amorphous 'groups' within society, along with the traditional nobility and aristocracy, which formed the military community in the second half of the fourteenth century.

The increasing demands of the crown for manpower also meant that retinue captains had to look beyond their traditional recruitment networks, extending their recruitment-reach far more than their fathers and grandfathers had done. The manpower pool from which they drew these recruits was a growing body of freelancers within society; men who had profited from the opportunities presented by plague outbreaks from the middle of the century onwards. These individuals, who we must assume were newly wealthy owing to the fact they likely had to provide their own military equipment, had been given a taste of wealth and the attendant rise in social elevation. They saw the potential profits that could be gained from military service as the best way to maintain, and hopefully enhance, this new found affluence. Whilst initially this will have made the bonds between retinue captains and their men weaker, this in no way contributed to a decline in English martial fortunes. Only once, in 1370, was this to blame for a martial catastrophe. If anything, the fact that the English fought more campaigns in these years than before, and were in the field for longer periods of time, shows how strong English armies were in this period.

Though it has often been argued in the past that the second half of the fourteenth century, particularly after 1369, marked the beginning of a martial malaise for the English, this was certainly not the fault of the military community. Recent research into the community, to which the three army studies in this work have added, has

shown that the community was filled with experienced campaigners with careers that in many cases stretched over decades.³ A generation of English fighting men did not hang up their swords in 1360 to be replaced a decade later by a new generation of martially inept, inexperienced soldiers. Of course there were personnel changes, most noticeably in the upper-echelons of the nobility; but the will to fight, and the level of experience within the community as a whole, has been overly denigrated. Detailed prosopography with the martial records, aided incalculably by the depositions before the *Court of Chivalry*, have shown that there was a conveyor belt of martial talent and experience that was constantly replenished, with new men taking up the reins as old veterans retired throughout the period. Martial careers, moreover, were multi-faceted. Though some men may have exclusively performed one type of martial service – be it in garrisons, field-armies, or at sea – these studies have shown that many, perhaps the vast majority, performed the whole spectrum of military activity, in various theatres of war, during their careers in arms.

The reason this was possible was that the community itself had become increasingly militarised and professional. Though they were a long way from the full-time, meticulously trained, soldiers of the modern era, the men who staffed English armies in the second half of the fourteenth century were undoubtedly more ‘professional’ than their predecessors from the earlier Middle Ages. They could not afford to be anything less. The demands of war, both in terms of time required for campaigning, and the cost of martial equipment and mount which, barring a few instances, had to be provided by the individual, were increasing dramatically. To invest a substantial amount of money in providing one’s own military apparel, which represented several months’ wages, meant that for men to gain a return on their investment they had to devote the majority of their time to a life in the saddle. There were certainly ample opportunities to fight in the period. Even if men were not fighting in the king’s wars there was still the potential for restless soldiers to find employment for their talents in the *routier* companies, which ravaged the French countryside or who fought in Italy and elsewhere. The lull in official hostilities for the more morally conscious individuals also allowed the opportunity to fight on crusade, if not in large numbers in the Holy Land, then certainly against the Moors in southern

³ For example: Ayton, ‘Dynamics’, 51

Iberia or in the Baltic with the Teutonic Knights. Indeed it was this sort of mercenary activity which only appears fleetingly in the government's martial records, as it was not financed by the English Exchequer. Thus our knowledge of men's careers-in-arms is undoubtedly less than the totality of their military experience. In short, what should surprise us is not that the men of the English military community were well-practiced in the art of war, but that this experience has so often been underestimated or downright dismissed by scholars.

Indeed this study has also questioned whether this period saw an English martial decline at all. Given that the military community was just as robust post Brétigny as it had been before (arguably more so given the increasingly difficult political and financial circumstances and the geographic escalation of the war post 1360), the idea that 'decline' occurred is hard to justify. Indeed it has been one of the central tenets of this paper that the period 1360 to 1399 did not mark an English martial decline at all. The English were not, as has always been argued, on the back foot, dancing to their enemies tune. They were, in fact, pursuing an aggressive, battle-seeking foreign policy in many of the regions in which they fought, in a desire to end the conflicts decisively in their favour. In other regions – like Scotland and Ireland – the aim was to maintain the status-quo or reverse a sliding situation by applying military pressure to their enemies. These were the strategies that had been employed in the first half of the century to great success; there would have been no reason to expect that they would not work again. It is certainly true that, barring Nájera, there were no large-scale battlefield encounters between England and her enemies in these forty years, but this does not mean that the English were not actively seeking such encounters. Indeed, there were more battles involving English soldiers in this period than has often been realised. It has also been vehemently argued that battle, not just in English strategy but in medieval warfare in general, was of central importance, despite the largely prevailing hypothesis of battle-avoidance still advocated by a number of scholars.

A further indication of the importance of battle, that the English were actively on the offensive in this period, and that these forty years were far from a martial decline for the English, comes from the fact that her enemies actively sought to avoid fighting pitched battles against English forces in the field. Was it simply a case of the

English military reputation in the first half of the fourteenth century lingering into the second? The answer is clearly no. English battlefield tactics were copied by her enemies all over medieval Europe, and English soldiers were highly prized as mercenaries as far afield as in Hungary and amongst the Teutonic knights.⁴ Clearly, therefore, contemporaries continued to have a higher opinion of the ability of English arms than many modern scholars; and England's enemies would not have actively been avoiding battlefield confrontations had the English not been seeking them.

Can a distinction, and separation, be made between the performance of the military community and a general decline in the English war effort? In other words could there still be a general English martial decline in these years – in terms of performance in the field - whilst the members of the military community remained strong and robust? Chroniclers like Walsingham and poets and social commentators like John Gower, were certainly critical of the English conduct of war in the second half of the fourteenth century. They blamed what they perceived to be martial failure on the 'effeminacy' of Richard II's court and the general avarice amongst Englishmen who fought in the king's wars, particular the knightly class of the gentry and the nobility whose role it was to lead the war effort.⁵ Though, as we have seen, there is some merit to these criticisms, particularly the idea that the vast majority of those fighting in this period were becoming increasingly if not solely motivated by the pursuit of profit, the wider criticism of the community and the war effort must be taken with a pinch of salt. There is a long established tradition in western historiography, from the early middle ages in the writings of Bede and Gildas for example, to criticise ones own times and hark back to some imagined 'golden age' in the past. English commentators of the fourteenth century were no exception. The problem was, of course, that the visible signs of victory were no longer filtering back to England as they had done prior to Brétigny, and a lack of battlefield successes in major engagements prevented Englishmen from basking in the glory of these victories as commentators had earlier in the century. We must, therefore, be careful of reading too much into the belly-aching of English commentators of this period. In any case, as has been highlighted throughout this work, and particularly in chapter V, English achievements in the second half of the fourteenth century were more significant, and

⁴ Hungary: Ayton, *Knights and Warhorses*, 21; Teutonic Knights: Jones, *Agincourt* (2005), 8.

⁵ Saul, *Honour and Fame*, 128-134.

those of their enemies not as profound, as they have often been given credit. In any case the separation between the military community and the English war effort in these years is a false one. It was the military community who fought in the various theatres of war during the period, and some of their number, men like John of Gaunt and members of the aristocracy, helped direct that effort. In other words the war effort and the fortunes of the military community were too entwined for them to be separated and, as we have, the military community was remarkably robust in this period with a large number of men of martial talent and experience.

If there was a failure at all for the English in this period it was the fact that the country's financial muscle, with the escalating geographic spread of the conflict and the attendant cost this brought, was insufficient to sustain the war effort. Something had to give. Ireland was probably the area that suffered the most in this regard due to inadequate financing after an initial surge in funding during the early 1360s, but it has also been argued that the English military community itself suffered. Recently, Jonathan Sumption pointed to the fact that the rates of pay the French government was offering to its soldiers after 1369 were about twice the rates being offered to English combatants, owing to the English government being perennially short of funds. Though the army in Picardy in 1369, Knolles' army the following year, and the small force under the earl of Pembroke in Gascony in 1372, were also paid above the customary levels, the English government could not afford to continue this, Pembroke's force being the last to receive these extra benefits.⁶ This he saw as having a detrimental effect on the English war effort: 'although it is impossible to prove, it seems likely that regular pay at adequate rates contributed much to the reputation and success of French arms in the latter part of the fourteenth century'. The situation was evidently far more complex than this considering that, as Sumption himself concedes, rates of *regard* for English men-at-arms were increased after c.1370, so that it stood at nearly four times the amount of the *état*, a similar recruitment bonus paid to French captains.⁷ It is, however, undeniable that finance remained the English Achilles heel in this period. It thwarted many of the government's attempts to adequately deal with the French threat and caused a severe domestic split in the mid-1380s when Michael de la Pole, and then Richard II, followed a policy of peace towards the French due to

⁶ Sumption, *Divided*, 739-40.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 741.

lack of finances. Yet the English fiscal malaise should not be overstated. The English had faced similar, arguably worse, financial problems in the early 1340s when Edward III had borrowed extensively from Italian bankers. Moreover, the financial health of England's enemies, particularly the French, has been overly praised, with many of the fiscal reforms enacted under Charles V reneged by the king himself on his deathbed, plunging the French into financial chaos.

The difference between financial problems in the 1340s and the 1380s, and indeed between the war efforts prior to and post Brétigny, however, was perception. The years 1360 to 1399 were sandwiched between two periods of remarkable success for English arms. The chroniclers eulogised the successes of both Edward III and Henry V for their remarkable battlefield triumphs because both kings provided the visual trappings of success, put great political pressure on their enemies, and allowed Englishmen to bask in the glory of their triumphs. It would have been hard for any country, especially one as constantly crippled by inadequate finance as England was in the decades after 1360, to maintain such levels of success, especially when their enemies would not face them in large-scale battlefield encounters. One wonders how successful both contemporaries and modern scholars would view Edward and Henry as warrior kings had their primary enemy – the French – been as reticent in giving battle as they were in the second half of the fourteenth century. One of the greatest English problems in these years was that when her enemies began avoiding battlefield confrontations, the English had no new tactical tricks up their sleeve. Without the visual signs of success – booty and ransoms filtering back to England – parliament became less and less inclined to put its hand in its pocket.

But this does not mean these were years of defeat. The men who fought in France in the English armies of the 1370s, 80s, and 90s, may not have had a Crécy, Poitiers, or Agincourt to hang their helmets on, but they had their own unique achievements. In many of the other regions in which the English were heavily committed, whilst not achieving overall ascendancy, they were able to largely nullify their enemies or maintain the status-quo. It was against the French, however, in which they achieved the most notable success, despite the loss of territory and without recourse – though not for want of trying – to a major battlefield victory. They faced the most effective and unified French war effort since the conflict had begun in 1337,

which was finally realising its financial and military potential, under the most potent French king, Charles V, since the beginning of the war, with arguably the best commander of his generation at his disposal, Du Guesclin, and fought them to a standstill. So fearful was Charles V of the prowess of the English at war that he consistently ordered his armies not to engage them in pitched battle, allowing English armies to traverse the French countryside with impunity. There could be no more glowing indictment of the achievements of English arms in the second half of the fourteenth century.

APPENDIX I

Provisional Table of Lay Retinues in Richard II's 1385 Scottish Expedition¹

<i>Name</i>	<i>Order of Battle</i>	<i>Issue Roll</i>	<i>Indenture</i>	<i>Summons</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>BN²</i>	<i>K</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>Total M@A</i>	<i>Archers</i>	<i>Total³</i>	<i>Position in Army</i>
Gaunt, of John ⁴	Y	Y	Y	Y	DK. of Lancaster, KG. of Castile and Leon	(14)	(136)	(850)	1001	2000	3001	VAN
Langley, of Edmund ⁵	Y	Y	Y	Y	EL. Cambridge	-	-	(200)	201	400	601	RW, MN
FitzAlan Richard	Y	Y	Y	Y	EL. Arundel	6	24	69	100	150	250	MN
Beauchamp Thomas	Y	Y	Y	Y	EL. Warwick	-	(10)	(110)	121	160	281	LW, MN
Courtenay Edward	Y	Y	Y	Y	EL. Devon	-	-	(100)	101	120	221	RG
Mowbray Thomas ⁶	Y	Y	Y	Y	EL. Nottingham	5	19	75	100	150	250	VAN
Stafford Hugh	Y	Y	Y	Y	EL. Stafford	1	18	100	120	180	300	LW, MN
Montacute William	Y	Y	Y	Y	EL. Salisbury	1	8	50	60	90	150	MN
Pole Michael de la ⁷	Y	Y	Y	Y	BN.	4	6	51	61	80	141	LW, MN
Segrave Hugh	Y	Y	Y	-	BN, Treasurer	2	5	62	69	126	195	MN
Holand John ⁸	-	Y	Y	Y	K	-	(19)	(82)	101	160	261	MN (RII)?
Skirlawe Walter	Y	Y	Y	-	Clergy ⁹	-	-	30	30	30	61	MN
Crombwell Ralph	-	Y	Y	Y	BN	1	7	22	30	40	70	MN (RII)?

¹ Order of Battle: BL Cotton, Nero D, vi. f. 91b. 92a. Printed in: Armitage-Smith, S. *John of Gaunt*, 437-39. Le Neve's indenture list: BL Stowe MS. 440 fos. 22-23; 'Feudal' Summons: *Foedera*, vii, 473-75; Issue roll: E 403/508. KEY: B – Banneret; DK. – Duke; E – Esquire; EL – Earl; K – Knight; KEQ – King's esquire; KG. – King; LW – Left-wing; M@A – Men-at-arms; MN – Mainguard; RG – Rearguard; RW – Right-Wing; SA – Sergeant-at-arms; VAN – Vanguard; Y – Yes. The order men are listed relates to their position on the *Issue roll* with any additions appearing at the end, as are the figures provided for their contingents. Numbers in brackets denote an estimate from the pay given on the *Issue roll* made by N.B. Lewis.

² For the purposes of this table if the earls have been included amongst the bannerets

³ Captains included in total no. of men-at-arms

⁴ Two of five entries relating to Gaunt. See: Lewis 'English Feudal Levy' appendix II, ft. 3 p. 21.

⁵ Two entries relate to Cambridge. The first gives his contingent and their wages whilst the second deals with the earl's wages. Created Duke of York on the campaign

⁶ Marshal of England

⁷ Chancellor.

⁸ The king's half-brother

⁹ Clergy, keeper of the Privy Seal. Future Bishop of Durham.

Drayton William	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	14	15	20	35	MN (RII)?
Roche John	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	19	20	20	40	MN (RII)?
Burleigh John	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	4	6	MN (RII)?
Blount Thomas	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	2	4	MN (RII)?
Clanvowe John	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	6	7	12	19	MN (RII)?
Peytevyne Thomas	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	2	4	MN (RII)?
Devereux John	Y	Y	Y	-	BN	1	5	40	46	70	116	MN
FitzWarin Ivo ¹⁰	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	6	7	6	13	MN (RII)?
Murreux Thomas	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	6	7	9	16	MN (RII)?
Brocas Bernard	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	4	5	12	17	MN (RII)?
Gournay Matthew	Y	Y	Y	-	BN	1	4	15	20	20	40	MN
Burzebo Henry ¹¹	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	(30)	31	-	31	MN (RII)?
Seys Degory	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	(3)	4	6	10	MN (RII)?
Multon John	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	2	3	6	9	MN (RII)?
Lee Walter	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	(6)	7	8	15	MN (RII)?
Darundel John	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	4	6	MN (RII)?
Sarnesfeld Nicholas	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	(3)	4	10	14	MN (RII)?
Lestrangle Roger	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	2	4	MN (RII)?
Gray Reginald	-	Y	Y	Y	K	-	1	2	3	3	6	MN (RII)?
Traylegh John	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	2	3	3	6	MN (RII)?
West Thomas	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	3	10	13	13	26	MN (RII)?
St. Amand Almeric	Y	Y	Y	-	K	-	(4)	(13)	(17)	(24)	(31)	RG
Burley Simon	Y	Y	Y	-	BN	1	2	20	23	40	63	MN
Greve Richard	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	19	20	30	50	MN (RII)?
Salesbury John	-	Y	Y	-	E/KEQ	-	-	1	1	6	7	MN (RII)?
Thorp William	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	6	7	9	16	MN (RII)?
Leycestre Walter	-	Y	-	-	E?/SA	-	-	3	3	3	6	MN (RII)?
Hughlot William	-	Y	-	-	E?	-	-	1	1	3	4	MN (RII)?
Sayville Thomas	-	Y	-	-	E?/SA	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Metford Richard ¹²	-	Y	Y	-	E? King's Confessor?	-	-	1	1	5	6	MN (RII)?
Lincoln John	-	Y	-	-	E?	-	-	1	1	-	1	MN (RII)?

¹⁰ Called 'John' on Neve's indenture list.

¹¹ Knight of Bohemia, called 'John' on Le Neve's list

¹² The King's secretary. This man and the man below (John Lincoln) shared command of 5 archers.

Wylughby John, Lord	Y	Y	-	Y	BN	(1)	12	27	40	50	90	RW, MN
Woodstock Thomas ¹³	Y	Y	-	Y	EL. Buckingham	(50)	(91)	(260)	(401)	800	1201	VAN
Welles, Lord John	-	Y	-	Y	BN	(1)	2	27	30	40	70	MN (RII)?
Neville William	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	4	5	6	11	MN (RII)?
Hole William	-	Y	-	-	K	-	1	3	4	6	10	MN (RII)?
Arderne Henry	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	2	3	8	11	MN (RII)?
Ferrers Henry, Lord of Groby	Y	Y	Y	Y	BN	1	2	(27)	(30)	40	(70)	MN
Stafford Ralph ¹⁴	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	2	6	8	12	20	MN (RII)?
Radyngton Baldwin	-	Y	Y	-	E	-	-	3	3	4	7	MN (RII)?
Mounteney Robert	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	2	4	MN (RII)?
Roos John, Lord of Helmsley	Y	Y	Y	Y	BN	1	(6)	(14)	21	30	(51)	MN
Veer Aubrey	Y	Y	Y	-	BN	1	3	17	21	30	51	MN
Zouche William Lord la	Y	Y	Y	Y	BN	1	(1)	(29)	(31)	(30)	(61)	RG
Berkeley Thomas, Lord	Y	Y	Y	Y	BN	1	2	21	24	30	54	RG
Chippenham Walter	-	Y	-	-	E	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Trivet Thomas	Y	Y	Y	-	BN	1	1	18	20	20	40	MN
Savage Arnold	-	Y	Y	-	E?	-	-	1	1	1	2	MN (RII)?
Talbot Gilbert	-	Y	Y	Y	K	-	2	4	6	12	18	MN (RII)?
Mortimer Thomas ¹⁵	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	4	5	8	13	MN (RII)?
Grey Robert ¹⁶	-	Y	Y	-	BN	1	-	2	3	6	9	MN (RII)?
Orewell John	-	Y	-	-	E?/SA	-	-	1	1	4	5	MN (RII)?
Durant Thomas	-	Y	-	-	E?	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Veer Robert	Y	Y	Y	Y	EL. Oxford	-	(2)	(118)	(121)	(200)	(321)	MN
Tamworth William	-	Y	Y	-	E	-	-	1	1	1	2	MN (RII)?
Hask Henry ¹⁷	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	3	7	10	-	10	MN (RII)?
Holgreve David	-	Y	Y	-	E	-	-	(10)	(10)	10	(20)	MN (RII)?
Clifford Thomas ¹⁸	-	Y	Y	-	K?	-	(2)	22	24	30	(54)	MN (RII)?
Neville John, Lord ¹⁹	Y	Y	-	Y	BN	1	(7)	(75)	(83)	(150)	(233)	RG

¹³ Constable

¹⁴ Son and heir of the Earl of Stafford.

¹⁵ Mentioned twice on Le Neve's list.

¹⁶ Of Rotherfield

¹⁷ Knight of Bohemia

¹⁸ Son and heir of Lord Clifford

Montacute John ²⁰	Y	Y	Y	Y	BN	2	3	26	31	30	61	MN
Wasteneys William	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	2	4	MN (RII)?
Malore Anketinus	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	5	6	10	16	MN (RII)?
Holand John ²¹	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	(2)	3	5	8	MN (RII)?
Clifford Roger, Lord	Y	Y	Y	Y	BN	1	7	52	60	80	140	RG
Moris Thomas	-	Y	Y	-	E/KEQ	-	-	1	1	1	2	MN (RII)?
Gernoun Thomas	-	Y	Y	-	E	-	-	1	1	1	2	MN (RII)?
Clynton John	-	Y	Y	Y	BN	1	-	22	23	40	63	MN (RII)?
Braybroke Gerard	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	4	5	8	13	MN (RII)?
Skelton Nicholas	-	Y	-	-	E?/SA	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Beaumont John, Lord	Y	Y	Y	Y	BN/KEQ	1	3	26	30	40	70	MN
Barre Thomas	-	Y	Y	-	K/KEQ	-	1	2	3	6	9	MN (RII)?
Deueroze Walter	-	Y	Y	-	E/KEQ	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Bere Kynard	-	Y	Y	-	E/KEQ	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Mauwardyn Richard	-	Y	Y	-	E/KEQ	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Croft John	-	Y	Y	-	E/KEQ	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Wyggemore Roger	-	Y	Y	-	E/KEQ	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Rous Walter	-	Y	Y	-	E/KEQ	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Yeddewyn Thomas	-	Y	Y	-	E/KEQ	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Huse John	-	Y	Y	-	E/KEQ	-	-	1	1	1	2	MN (RII)?
Ilky Robert	-	Y	Y	-	E/KEQ	-	-	1	1	1	2	MN (RII)?
Ratford Henry ²²	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	(1)	2	2	4	MN (RII)?
Gomeniz William ²³	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	3	4	-	4	MN (RII)?
Hastynges John	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	4	6	MN (RII)?
Walsh John	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	2	3	4	7	MN (RII)?
Hale Stephen	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	3	5	MN (RII)?
Parent John	-	Y	-	-	E?	-	-	(1)	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Hay John	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	2	4	MN (RII)?
Berland William	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	2	4	MN (RII)?
Coneway Henry	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	11	12	20	32	MN (RII)?

¹⁹ Of Raby

²⁰ Steward of the Household

²¹ King's cousin

²² 'Almeric' on Le Neve's list

²³ Son of the Lord Gomeniz.

Daungeons William	-	Y	-	-	E	-	-	1	1	-	1	MN (RII)?
Waldegrave Richard	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	2	7	9	18	27	MN (RII)?
Haryngton Robert, Lord	Y	Y	Y	Y	BN	1	3	26	30	40	70	MN
Morewell John	-	Y	-	-	E?/SA	-	-	(1)	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Montague John ²⁴	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	2	3	3	6	MN (RII)?
Dewe Edward	-	Y	-	-	E?/SA	-	-	(1)	1	-	1	MN (RII)?
Bereford Baldwin	-	Y	-	-	K	-	2	2	4	8	12	MN (RII)?
Annesley John	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	2	4	MN (RII)?
Pounteyn David	-	Y	-	-	E	-	-	(1)	1	-	1	MN (RII)?
Rhys ap Howell, William	-	Y	-	-	E	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Brereton William	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	2	3	60	63	MN (RII)?
Prayers William	-	Y	-	-	E	-	-	(2)	2	56	58	MN (RII)?
Hoton William	-	Y	-	-	E	-	-	1	1	20	21	MN (RII)?
Legh Robert	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	92	94	MN (RII)?
Wynyngton Richard	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	-	1	58	59	MN (RII)?
Venables Richard	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	1	2	58	60	MN (RII)?
Tettesworth Edward ²⁵	-	Y	-	-	E?/SA	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Blakemore William	-	Y	-	-	E?/SA	-	-	1	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Merle Alexander	-	Y	Y	-	E	-	-	1	1	3	4	MN (RII)?
Vernoun Nicholas	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	2	3	8	11	MN (RII)?
Dutton Laurence	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	2	3	8	11	MN (RII)?
Holford John	-	Y	-	-	E?	-	-	(1)	1	60	61	MN (RII)?
Darber Nicholas	-	Y	-	-	E/SA	-	-	1	1	1	2	MN (RII)?
Grene Thomas	-	Y	-	-	K	-	1	5	6	9	15	MN (RII)?
Elmham William	-	Y	Y	-	K	-	1	(13)	14	31	45	MN (RII)?
Slegh John ²⁶	-	Y	-	-	E?	-	-	3	3	10	13	MN (RII)?
Mawardyn Richard ²⁷	-	Y	Y	-	E	-	-	5	5	-	5	MN (RII)?
Percy Thomas	Y	Y	-	-	BN	1	13	66	80	40	120	RG
Talbot Richard ²⁸	-	Y	Y	Y	BN	1	-	11	12	16	28	MN (RII)?

²⁴ Son of John Montague

²⁵ Shared command of 4 archers with William Blakmore

²⁶ King's butler

²⁷ Richard Mawardyn; William Burleye; Roger Crophull; Walter Rous; John Croft. All included in the same entry and paid 40s each.

²⁸ Of Blackmere

Gate Roger	-	Y	-	-	E?/SA	-	-	(1)	1	2	3	MN (RII)?
Felbrig George	-	Y	-	-	K	-	1	1	2	4	6	MN (RII)?
Percy Henry ²⁹	Y	Y	-	-	BN	1	5	54	60	60	120	RG
Bardolf Robert	-	Y	-	-	K	-	1	1	2	6	8	MN (RII)?
St. Katarina John ³⁰	-	Y	-	-	K	-	1	-	1	1	2	MN (RII)?
Percy Henry	Y	Y	Y	Y	EL. Northumberland	3	36	360	400	800	1200	RG
Gomeniz John ³¹	-	Y	-	-	K	-	1	(8)	(9)	(12)	(21)	MN (RII)?
Masscy Richard ³²	-	Y	-	-	E?	-	-	(18)	18	300	318	MN (RII)?
Horvell Yuan ³³	-	Y	-	-	E?	-	-	(4)	(4)	80	84	MN (RII)?
Holland Thomas	-	-	-	Y	E. of Kent	1	-	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Audley Jacob ³⁴	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Bardolf William ³⁵	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Cherleton John ³⁶	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Poynnynges Richard	-	-	-	Y	BN?	1	-	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Brian Guy	-	-	-	Y	K	-	1	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Warre John	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Scrope Henry	-	-	-	Y	K	-	1	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Grey John ³⁷	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Grey Henry ³⁸	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Fallelle John	-	-	-	Y	K	-	1	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Burnell Hugo, Lord Burnell	-	-	-	Y	BN	1	-	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Buttourt John	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Scales Roger, Lord of Scales	-	-	-	Y	BN	1	-	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?

²⁹ Son of the earl of Northumberland

³⁰ Knight of Spain

³¹ Son of the Lord of Gomeniz

³² Richard Mascy; Yuan ap Yuan; Rees ap Tudor all in the same entry with 15 vintenars and Welsh archers from Caernarvon, Anglesey and Merioneth

³³ Yuan ap Horwell; David Kellow; William Meredith; Benedict ap William all in the same entry with archers from Flint.

³⁴ Of Helegh

³⁵ Of Wernmegey. There is a Sir Robert Bardolf who is mentioned on the Issue Roll.

³⁶ Of Powys.

³⁷ Of Codenore

³⁸ Of Wilton

Greystoke Ralph, Baron Greystoke	-	-	-	Y	BN?	1	-	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Botriaux William	Y	-	-	Y	K	-	1	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Wylughby Robert ³⁹	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Camoys Thomas	-	-	-	Y	K	-	1	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Clyfton John	-	-	-	Y	K	-	1	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Cobham John ⁴⁰	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Dacre William	-	-	-	Y	BN?	1	-	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Lestrangle John ⁴¹	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Neville Thomas ⁴²	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Seymore Richard ⁴³	Y	-	-	Y	Lord	-	-	-	100	200	300	MN (RII)?
Basset Ralph	-	-	-	Y	?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Darcy Phillip	-	-	-	Y	BN?	1	-	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Morley Thomas	-	-	-	Y	K?	-	1	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Bourchier John	-	-	-	Y	BN?	1	-	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
FitzWalter Walter	-	-	-	Y	BN	1	-	-	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Lovell John ⁴⁴	Y	-	-	Y	E?	-	-	1	-	-	1	MN (RII)?
Lisle William		-	Y	-	K	-	1	-	-	-	1	?
Middelton John		-	Y	-	Master, E?	-	-	1	-	-	1	?
Lestraunge Richard		-	Y	-	K	-	1	-	-	-	1	?
Bereford John		-	Y	-	K	-	1	-	-	-	1	?
TOTALS						117	544	3643 ⁴⁵	4304	7968 ⁴⁶	12,272	

³⁹ There is also a John de Willoughby

⁴⁰ Of Kent

⁴¹ Of Knollyng. There is also a Roger Lestrangle.

⁴² Of 'Halumshire'

⁴³ Joint commander of retinue with John Lovell and William Bottreaux.

⁴⁴ Of Tychemerth.

⁴⁵ Including an additional 100 esquires and yeomen of the king's household

⁴⁶ Including an additional 40 archers of the crown

APPENDIX II

Length of Service for Stafford's Retinue in Ireland, August 1361-September 1362

	Type/ County	1361					1362								
		Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.
	Group A														
Group B: Mounted- Archers ⁴⁷	Staffs.														
	Worcs.														
	Shrops.														
	Derbs.														
	Notts.														
Group C: Foot- Archers ⁴⁸	Worcs.														
	Derbs.														
	Staffs.														
	Gloucs.														
	Wales														
Group D: Craftsmn ⁴⁹	Stone Hwrs														
	Carpenters														

⁴⁷ Staffordshire: 20 August-18 November 1361; 19 November 1361-17 February 1362; 18 February-19 May 1362. Worcestershire: 22 August-20 November 1361; 21 November 1361-19 February 1362; 20 February-21 March 1362; 22 March-30 June 1362. Shropshire: 22 August-20 November 1361.

⁴⁸ Worcestershire: 22 May-30 June 1362. Derbyshire: 12-27 August 1362. Staffordshire and Gloucestershire 1-27 August 1362. Wales: 1 August-30 September 1362.

⁴⁹ 4-31 October 1361 (stone-cutters); 23 September 1361-22 June 1362 (carpenters).

APPENDIX III

Periods of Absence from Stafford's Retinue In Ireland 1361-62⁵⁰

Type	August – End October 1361			November 1361 – End January 1362			February-Early May 1362			May-September 1362		
	Name/Rank	Absence		Name	Absence		Name	Absence		Name	Absence	
		Days	Dates		Days	Dates		Days	Dates		Days	Dates
Earl's (Personal)	<i><u>Knights</u></i>			<i><u>Esquires</u></i>			<i><u>Knights</u></i>			<i><u>Knights</u></i>		
	Sir William Connynsby	48	16/09-03/11	Robert St. Chellit	23	10/01-02/02	Sir Hugo de Stafford	22	12/04-04/05	Sir John de Brauncastre*	36	21/05-27/06
	Sir William Mortym	63	01/09-03/11	Thomas del Ryners	60	04/12-02/02	Thomas Lord Roos	36	29/03-04/05	Sir John Paintorn*	~	~
	Sir Thomas Charnelles	60	04/09-03/11	Thomas Peytowe	60	04/12-02/02	Sir John Sully	22	12/04-04/05	Sir Robert de Stafford	53	04/05-25/06
				William Torvyl	60	04/12-02/02	Sir John de Bromwych*	32 ⁵¹	n/a	Sir Robert de Ashton*	30	28/05-27/05
	<i><u>Esquires</u></i>						Sir John Talbot*	~	n/a	Sir John de Kingston*	~	~
	Owen de Pulesdon	31	03/10-03/11									
	Thomas Cronbergh	28	05/10-02/11				<i><u>Esquires</u></i>			<i><u>Esquires</u></i>		
	Henry Chorowynde	26	08/10-03/11				Thomas de Hamondesham	22	12/04-04/05	Humphrey de Stafford	7	20/06-27/06
							Robert Savage	22	12/04-04/05	John Burnell*	7	20/06-27/06
							John May	22	12/04-04/05	John Toynton*	~	~
							John de Hundsore	7	27/04-04/05	Richard del Lee	7	20/06-27/06
							John Steyne	10	24/04-04/05	John Cheorewode*	23	04/06-27/06
							John Fenyex*	36	29/03-04/05	Owen de Wylaston*	~	~
							Thomas de Midilton*	~	~	Roger Pulesdon*	~	~
							William de Duffeld*	~	~	Lewis de Melan	15	12/06-27/06
							Henry de Lacy*	~	~	Ralph Cheyne*	29	29/05-27/06
							Simon Lucy*	~	~	Thomas de Weston*	~	~
							Roger Botiller*	~	~	Roger Langrich	7	20/06-27/06
							Rideker de Coloigne*	~	~	Thomas Bransore	44	14/05-27/06
							William Hamsterley*	~	~	John de Hereford	7	20/06-27/06
							Robert Bilkemore	47	18/05-04/05	William de Wickford	7	20/06-27/06
							Thomas Fort	22	12/04-04/05	Thomas de Sutton	7	20/06-27/06
										John Power	6	01/06-07/06
							<i><u>Mounted-archers</u></i>			<i><u>Mounted-archer</u></i>		
							John de Hympton	8	26/04-04/05	Howell ap Gynon	36	22/05-27/06
							Richard Hammond	8	26/04-04/05	John ap Conwenne*	7	20/06-27/06
							Richard Tunbrugge	8	26/04-04/05			
							John Cotes*	36	29/03-04/05	Madok ap Dg*	~	~
							John Plummer*	~	~	Jemi ap Dg*	~	~
							John Leonard*	~	~	Howell ap Howell*	~	~
							Hugo Perker*	~	~	Roger ap Adam*	~	~

⁵⁰ An asterisk '*' denotes that the men were grouped together in brackets on the roll. '~' denotes the same as the man above with whom he was bracketed. Date format is day then month i.e. 04/05 is 4 May.

⁵¹ Not a true *vacaciones*, service began on 6 March 1362.

							Robert Walker* William Maggeson* John de Loke* Thomas Ferris* John Gilbard* Galfrid de Lynton* Thomas de Walker* Hugo Gardyner* Thomas de Wrageby* Reginald de Norfolk* Galfrid de Colron* William Medesante* Adam Thunehall* John Lyon* William Stone Thomas de Peel* Thomas ap Davy*	~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 4 8 ~	~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 08/04-04/05 26/04-04/05 ~	Thomas ap Howell Henry de Bradelay Henry Coke William de la Mare Henry de London* Richard de Verney* Roger de Torynton* Thomas Sharp William Thornebury	1 29 41 36 36 ~ ~ 36 7	26/07-27/07 29/05-27/06 17/05-27/06 22/05-27/06 22/05-27/06 ~ ~ 22/05-27/06 20/06-27/06
Staffs. Mounted-archers ⁵²	Ralph Forchale* Adam Byger* Robert Broun* John Rewe-de-Kille* Thomas Molot*	21 ~ ~ ~ ~	10/10-31/10 ~ ~ ~ ~	Ralph Forchale* Adam Byger* Robert Broun* John Rewe-de-Kille* Thomas Molot* William de Eton* John atte Wall* John Languys* John Walker* Richard Pherdily* John Grene* Thomas Pherdily* John Renie* Thomas Coke* John Smyth*	19 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 10 ~ ~ ~ ~ 12 ~ 7 ~ ~ ~	01/11-19/11 ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ 09/11-19/11 ~ ~ ~ 19/01-31/01 ~ 24/01-31/01 ~ ~ ~	Richard Pherdily* John Grene* Richard Assh Thomas Pherdily* John Renie* Thomas Coke* John Smyth* 					

⁵² The appearance of the same names in two different periods of time does not denote two separate periods of service but rather one long period which spanned multiple dates of this period.

				William Taille* Richard Taille*	~ ~	~ ~	William Prykex* Henry Cornyser*	~ ~	~ ~			
				Walter atte Broke* Robert atte Broke* Henry Northwood* John del Hale*	8 ~ ~ ~	13/11-21/11 ~ ~ ~						
				Henry de Horsford* John de Adelyngton* Peter Webbe*	6 ~ ~	15/11-21/11 ~ ~						
				William Saundres* Robert Holundley* William Burwald* Roger Cheyne* John Holmeley*	13 ~ ~ ~ ~	08/11-21/11 ~ ~ ~ ~						
Shrops. Mounted-archers	Martin de Clifton	37	24/09-31/10	Martin de Clifton	21	01/11-21/11						
Foot- Archers Gloucs.										John Payfort	11	16/08-27/08
Totals	Knights: 3 Esquires: 3 Mounted-archers: 6 12			Esquires: 4 Mounted-archers: 36 40			Knights: 5 Esquires: 15 Mounted-archers: 38 58			Knights: 5 Esquires: 16 Mounted-archers: 15 Foot-Archers: 1 37		

APPENDIX IV

'Archers of the Crown', 'King's Archers' and 'Yeomen of the Crown', 1358-99

The table below lists all known archers of the crown, king's archers, and yeomen of the Crown listed in the *Patent* and *Close Rolls* for 1358-99. The latter group should be considered as being archers as the terminology was adopted by Richard II to circumvent Appellant legislation from the parliament of 1390 that stipulated he was only to have 24 archers of the Crown.¹ The county of origin is based upon the fact that many of the individuals were paid their wages out of the issues of the said county. The date given is the date in which they are mentioned in the rolls though many individuals had service stretching over a number of decades.

Name	Date	County of Origin	Role ²	Reference
Alayn John	1385	Wiltshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1392-96, 298
Archer John	1385	Essex	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1392-96, 166
Apeden Roger	1378	Lancashire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1377-81, 101
Bacwell John	1385	Nottinghamshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Baryngton John de	1399	-	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 462
Bechedon Thomas de	1385	Chester	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Blakehall Nicholas	1390, 1392	Oxford	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1389-92, 304; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1392-96, 7
Bower Matthew	1396	-	YE	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 204, 414
Bradewell John	1385	Wiltshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 38
Brakelond John de ³	1368	Devon	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1367-70, 113
Butter James	1385	Warwickshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Byrom John	1398	Chester	YE ⁴	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 412
Cathero Richard	1385	Wiltshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 38
Childe John	1370	-	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1367-70, 341
Chirbury John	1361	Wales? (Radenore) ⁵	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1361-64, 9
Cole Robert	1391, 1393, 1394	Staffordshire ⁶	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1391-96, 15, 212, 476
Cook Stephen	1361	Dorset	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1358-61, 542

¹ Gillespie, G.L. 'Richard II's Archers of the Crown' *J.B.S.* 18:2 (1979), 19-20.

² AOC: Archer of the Crown. KARC: King's Archer. YE: Yeoman of the livery of the Crown. ALC: Archer of the livery of the Crown. There were also 'king's yeomen', but these are not included as they do not seem to have been archers.

³ Deceased by 1368.

⁴ Received 'the livery of the Crown'. *C.P.R.* 1396-99, 412

⁵ Based upon: 'Grant to John de Chirbury, one of the king's archers, of the keeping of the castle and forest of Radenore in Wales during the nonage of the heir of Roger de [Mortimer], earl of March, who held in chief, taking for the keeping 4d. a day and other accustomed fees'. *C.P.R.* 1361-64, 9.

⁶ Grant, for life, to Robert Cole, archer of the Crown, of the office of ranger of the king's hays of Teddesley, Allerwas, Ganley, Chestelyn, Benteley, Hopewas and Oggeley, co. Stafford, as held by Warin de Coton.

Name	Date	County of Origin	Role ²	Reference
Cornu John	1386, 1392	Essex	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 185, 211; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1392-96, 10
Coton Warin	1385	Staffordshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 44
Crishull William de ^{*7}	1385	-	AOC*	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1381-86, 582
Denby Alexander	1385	Northamptonshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 38
Deth John	1385	Berkshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Dolyng Henry	1385, EIII and RII	Hampshire (Southampton)	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 51
Dygon Henry	1385	Hampshire (Southampton)	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Edward Peter	1385	Berkshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1392-96, 174
Edwardson John	1397	Chester	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 268
Erton Nicholas de	1387	London	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Eyton Robert	1385, EIII and RII	Nottinghamshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 38
Forster/Foster Thomas	1385, 1391, EIII & RII. Deceased c.1397	Westmorland (Drybek)	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 66; 1389-92; 379; 1396-99, 184; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1389-92, 252
Greyndore Ralph ⁸	1381	Gloucestershire	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1381-85, 33
Grysley William de	1385	Nottinghamshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Hall John	1397	Chester/Warwickshire	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 204
Harow Richard	Deceased by 1393	-	ALC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1391-96, 214
Harpecote Thomas ⁹	1385, 1387, 1388, 1396, 1399	Berkshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19, 362, 456; 1396-99; 31, 658
Hay John	1382, 1385	Oxfordshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1381-85, 96; 1385-89, 40
Helegh Richard de	1397	-	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1391-96, 357
Hernynton Thomas	1385	Sussex	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Holgrave Thomas	1398	-	YE ¹⁰	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 343
Holgrave William	1395	-	YE	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1391-96, 573
Horewod John de	1370, 1379	-	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1367-70, 413; 1377-81, 372
Horneby William	1397	-	YE	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 112
Hoton Adam	1385	Wiltshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Hunte William	1385	Sussex	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Huntynghdon William de	1358, 1361, 1363	Huntingdonshire	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1358-61, 132, 542; 1361-64, 407
Joce John	1385	Staffordshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Kenne John	1361	Hampshire (Southampton)	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1361-64, 3
Knayton John	1397	-	YE	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 184
Knghyngley John	1385 (EIII and RII)	Wiltshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 39
Knottynghlee William	1391	-	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1389-92, 402

⁷ Grant, for life, to William de Crishull, of, the 5 marks yearly at the Exchequer which were granted by letters patent, now surrendered, dated 20March, 4 Richard II, to John Torleton, archer of the crown; but he is not to receive any payment of this annuity for Easter last. *CPR* 1381-86; 582.

⁸ He was to be a rider for the king in the Forest of Dean.

⁹ Described and 'archer of the livery of the crown'.

¹⁰ Received 'livery of the Crown'. *CPR* 1391-96, 194.

Name	Date	County of Origin	Role ²	Reference
Kyng Richard	1389	West Sussex (Boxgrove)	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1389-92, 5
Legg Thomas	1385	London	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Litefote Richard	1399	-	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 459, 462
Litlour William de	1399	-	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 448, 462
Lyntoft John	1385	Kent	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Lyons Richard	1361	Hampshire (Southampton)	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1358-61, 542
Man Thomas	1385 (EIII and RII), 1390	Oxfordshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 74; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1389-92, 134
Matlok John	1396, 1397	Oxfordshire	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 45; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1396-99, 33
Merschton Richard	1389, 1397	Staffordshire	AOC/YE	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1389-92, 89; 1396-99, 64; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1389-92, 34
Millynton Richard de ¹¹	1397	Gloucestershire	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 361
Monketon John de	1390	Yorkshire (York)	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1389-92, 227
Morton Thomas de	1362, 1373, 1378	Hampshire (Southampton)	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1361-64, 249; 1370-74, 256; 1377-81, 155
Murcroft Henry	1392	-	YE ¹²	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1391-96, 133
Norton Thomas de	1374	Gloucestershire	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1374-77, 9
Parker Thomas	1398	Chester?	YE ¹³	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1391-96, 133
Penkhirst Adam de	1370, 1378	Surrey	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1367-70, 413; 1370-74, 17; 1377-81; 104, 188
Plomer Thomas	1385	Hampshire (Southampton)	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Pupplyngton Richard	1384 (one of the senior)	Dorset	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1381-85, 457
Queldryk John	1385	Yorkshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Radenham Nicholas	1385	Wiltshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Reuel/Renel John	1390	-	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1389-92, 358
Rouland Thomas	1398	-	YE	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 418
Rounde John	1385	Buckinghamshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Saule Nicholas	1390	-	YE	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1388-92, 300
Scoleshall John	1385	Chester	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Smyth Hugh	1397	-	YE ¹⁴	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1391-96, 194
Snawe William	1388, 1391	Yorkshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 538; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1389-92, 463
Swetenham Matthew	1385	London	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Sydrac Richard	1392	-	YE	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1391-96, 96
Talbot William	1398	Chester?	YE ¹⁵	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1391-96, 133
Torleton John	1381, 1385	-	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1377-81, 612; 1381-85; 582
Usshier Richard	1391	-	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1389-92, 370, 394
Vausour John	1389	Yorkshire (York)	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1389-92, 90, 117

¹¹ Described and 'archer of the livery of the crown'.

¹² States that he is a 'yeoman of the crown' but that he is to be 'one of the twenty-four' who were archers Richard II was allowed by the Appellants: *CPR* 1391-96, 133.

¹³ Received 'the livery of the crown'. *CPR* 1391-96, 133.

¹⁴ Received 'the livery of the crown'. *CPR* 1391-96, 194.

¹⁵ Received 'the livery of the crown'. *CPR* 1391-96, 133.

Name	Date	County of Origin	Role ²	Reference
Venables Robert	1360, 1385	Northamptonshire	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1358-61, 434; 1385-89, 38
Vyse John atte	1370, 1378	-	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1367-70, 436; 1370-74, 23; 1377-81, 149
Watye John	1385	Yorkshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19
Welford John	1395	Northamptonshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1391-96, 644; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1392-96, 454
Westende William	1393	South Wales	ALC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1391-96, 644
Wiche Richard	1399	-	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 462
Wodecroft Thomas	1387, 1388	Northamptonshire	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 359, 405
Worth Robert	1399	-	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 462
Wycherle Thomas	1378 (and EIII)	Northamptonshire	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1377-81, 188
Wymbysch John le fitz	1385	London	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 19; <i>C.C.R.</i> 1389-92, 43
Wynbussh Walter	1385	Berkshire	AOC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1385-89, 38
Wynyngton John de	1397	-	YE ¹⁶	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 242
Wyse Roger	1397	-	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1396-99, 242, 254
Wytherle Thomas	1377	Northamptonshire	KARC	<i>C.P.R.</i> 1374-77, 445

¹⁶ Received 'the livery of the crown'. *CPR* 1391-96, 196.

APPENDIX V

Military Service of the Captains , c.1350-1400, serving with Robert Knolles in France (1370, E101/30/25 m. 1-2)

Below is a list of the men who acted as captains in Sir Robert Knolles' expedition of 1370 and their military, and in some cases civilian, careers where details are known. The information listed is by no means exhaustive and focuses almost exclusively on their careers in the second half of the fourteenth century, Information concerning the fifteenth century is included on occasion but this should not be taken as indicative of all service, nor should its absence in other entries be seen as indicative of no military or domestic service post 1400. It has been necessary to limit the information included for the more well known captains to information of military significance. For captains about whom less is known it has been necessary to include as much information as can be found, both military and none, so that these lesser men's careers emerge more sharply into focus. The captains about whom a large amount of information can be found appear in *italics* and only military and the most relevant biographical details appear. It is also important to note that there are often problems with multiple individuals with the same name (such as Matthew Redmane senior, who gave evidence before the *Court of Chivalry* in the mid-1380s, and his son who fought with Knolles in 1370) and though each individual has been carefully researched some errors may remain.

Name	Geographic Origin ¹	Biography/Additional Information
AVENELE John, Sir ²	Cambs. ³	<u>1343</u> : complained that several named individuals broke into his close at Little Holwell and carried away his goods to the value of 40 <i>l</i> . ⁴ ; <u>1345</u> : ordered to assess the men of the locality and ensure they are adequately equipped militarily; <u>1345</u> : appointment with Ralph Spigurnell to arrest various named felons and imprison them in Cambridge castle; <u>1346-47</u> : fought with the Black Prince at Crécy reward for which he was granted 'for his life and those of his heirs for ever' free warren in his demesne lands of Kellyng and Salthous co. Norfolk and other privileges ⁵ ; <u>1350</u> : went on pilgrimage to Santiago, Spain; <u>1355</u> : orders issued to detain him for fraudulent activity relating to a ship of Genoa during his time as captain and king's lieutenant in Brittany; <u>1355</u> : sheltered Adam de Hykedon in Holwell, Bedfordshire, who had robbed and murdered Adam de Comberhale at Eastwick in the same county, Aveneale imprisoned in Somerton castle (Lincs.) and then Bedford gaol for the said offence; <u>1355</u> : while still incarcerated, ordered to answer the case for divorce lodged against him by, presumably, his spouse Margery de Roos, 'as often as he be summoned'; <u>1356</u> : pardoned at the instigation of Henry Grosmont, duke of Lancaster, and the earls of Northampton and March for sheltering Adam de Hykdon and of any subsequent outlawry; <u>1359</u> : involved in robbery and assault at Canterbury; <u>1363</u> : with several named others is reported to have imprisoned and carried away goods, at Histon co. Cambridgeshire, of Roger Walter of Cantebury; <u>1369</u> : protection and attorney for 1 year for overseas service in France serving in the retinue of William de Montague, earl of Salisbury; <u>1370</u> : served as a captain in the expedition of Sir Robert Knolles, leading 15 men-at-arms (including himself) and 15 archers; <u>1372</u> : protracted legal wranglings relating to the manor of Dunton Chauberleyn, co. Bedford, by Sir John's family members including presumably a second wife, Katherine, deceased by this point, and two of her daughters who would thus seem to be daughters of Sir John, Mary, and Joan; <u>1377-78</u> : constable of Cambridge castle, 26 November 1377 to 24 November 1378; <u>1378</u> : served on a commission of oyer and terminer with William de Skipewith, Roger de Kirketon, Roger de Fulthorp, John Holt, John Harewedon and John de

¹ This may be the same as area of principal landholdings but it is not necessarily the case.

² Or 'Avenell'. It is possible that all the entries here stated before c.1360 refer to another John Avenel who we learn from the Patent Rolls was deceased at this time (*C.C.P.R.* 1358-61, 353. Perhaps this John Avenel was an elder relative of the Sir John who fought with Knolles in 1370.

³ Identification is based on a protection for a John Avenel in 1369, (C76/52 m. 9). It is also possible that if this is the same John Avenel who is stated as being 'late captain and king's lieutenant in Brittany' then in addition to his landholdings in Cambridgeshire there were also lands in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Norfolk, Kent, Bedfordshire, and Essex. *C.P.R.* 1354-58, 207-8). There is also evidence that in Cambridgeshire his chief demesne lands were Gamelgie, Toft, Mordon and Wynpole and that these and lands in Norfolk were held by Nicholas Kynbell and Julian his wife by October 1405 (*C.P.R.* 1405-1408, 81). Before this date, however, these lands and others were held by Robert Avenel, son and heir of Sir John, and his wife Julianna, daughter of Robert de Beleknappe. (*C.P.R.* 1391-96, 47-48).

⁴ Potentially this may be another Sir John Aveneale as Little Holwell is in Devon which is a long way away from the midland and south east-landholdings of the said Sir John, *C.P.R.* 1343-45, 77, 428, 497.

⁵ Green, D. S. 'The Household and Military Retinue of the Black Prince' (University of Nottingham Unpublished PhD Thesis, 1998), II, 245. *C.P.R.* 1345-48, 529, 545

		Lokton; <u>1386</u> : protection taken out for one year for service with John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster though revoked as 'he tarries in England'. Deceased by at least June 1383. ⁶
AYSTERBY John, Sir	Lincs. ⁷	<u>1367</u> : letter of attorney which applies in England for one year for service, perhaps military, beyond the seas; <u>1369</u> : took out a letter of attorney to serve under John of Gaunt in France for one year; <u>1370</u> : took out a protection for one year and an attorney for two years to serve in Knolles' expedition as a captain. ⁸
BAUNFELD Thomas, Sir	Berks. ⁹	<u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' expedition; <u>1371</u> : served with Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford, in his naval expedition of this year in his retinue; <u>1372</u> : was retained with Bohun again to serve in France although it is unlikely that he served; <u>1373</u> : mentioned as being 'of the king's retinue' and granted for life 50 <i>l.</i> yearly at the Exchequer; <u>1373-74</u> : two protections, one for year each, to serve in the Calais garrison. ¹⁰
BUSSY ¹¹ William, Sir	Lincs. ¹²	<u>1369</u> : protection and attorney for service in Gaunt's campaign in the duke's retinue; <u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' expedition for which he took out a protection; <u>1372</u> : ordered to repay monies collected from Lincolnshire which the king no longer requires; removed and replaced from a commission of oyer and terminer in co. Lincoln by the king for 'certain causes'; <u>1373</u> : mentioned as 'sheriff of Lincoln' and ordered to remove evildoers from the locality; <u>1374</u> : with two other commissioners is ordered to investigate the 'evildoers' who entered the church of Alesby and have barricaded themselves in preventing divine service; <u>1375-1376</u> : appointed, with others, to enquire into the blocking of the dyke at Fosdyke, Lincs. With grass and cattle so that no shipping can get through; <u>1377</u> : ordered to investigate local money laundering in Lincs. and waste on the Isle of Axiom, Lincs. caused by Ralph Basset of Drayton; with others in Lincs. and as part of a wider order all over England, to keep 'ever arrayed' men-at-arms

⁶ *C.P.R.* 1348-50, 572; *C.P.R.* 1354-58, 207-8, 293, 304, 346, 333; *C.P.R.* 1368-61, 220; *C.P.R.* 1361-64, 360-61; *C.P.R.* 1370-74, 216-17; *C.P.R.* 1377-81, 129, 252 (16 February and 3 June 1378) *C.P.R.* 1381-85, 2, *C.P.R.* 1385-89, 309. C76/52 m. 9 (26 June). Attorney C76/52 m. 4 (1 September) C76/53 m. 13, (protection) C76/70 m. 11 (1 April); revocation 22 April 1387. E101/30/25 m. 1-3. Rickard, *Castle Community*, 116.

⁷ Based upon his association with another captain, William Bussy of Lincolnshire and the fact that a John Aysterby gave evidence in the county during a proof of age inquisition in 1368-9. *CIPM* vol. xii, 368.

⁸ *C.P.R.* 1367-70, 42 (26 November). C76/52 m. 6 (10 July). C76/53 m. 10-11 (11 July). This indicates he went straight from service under Gaunt to service with Knolles.

⁹ *CIPM* vol. xiv, 90-91.

¹⁰ E101/31/15 m.1; E101/32/20 m. 1 Edward III had intended to lead a land expedition in 1372 but this was switched to a naval venture and when it did set out it was only a small force under John Lord Neville with roughly 300 men-at-arms and 300 archers in which it seems unlikely Baunfeld served. See Sherbourne, 'Indentured Retinues', 7-10. *C.P.R.* 1370-74, 264. C76/56 m. 6 (28 October 1373), C76/57 m. 7 (13 November 1374).

¹¹ This is probably William Bussy 'the younger' as a note in the *Patent Rolls* in October 1361 states that Bussy, presumably 'senior', is deceased. (*C.P.R.* 1361-64, 96). The Bussy family was notable for its military service in the fourteenth century. William's son Sir John Bussy became much more celebrated than his father. Given-Wilson, *Royal Household and the King's Affinity*, 284; Rickard, *Castle Community*, 92, 272, 275, 295; Gillespie, J. L. 'Bussy, Sir John (d. 1399)', *O.D.N.B.* online edn.

¹² Family of Hougham, Lincolnshire. *CIPM*, vol. xii, 291. He also held lands in Nottinghamshire, vol. xiv, 211.

		and archers to repel foreign invasion; <u>1378</u> : appointed as commissioner of oyer and terminer, possibly in Nottinghamshire; ordered to compel men of Stanford and Leicester who have possessions of 100s. to build a balinger as was agreed and the recent parliament. ¹³
CAUN ¹⁴ Thomas, Sir	Kent ¹⁵	<u>c.1360</u> : captain of Newburgh castle, Normandy ¹⁶ ; <u>1370</u> : served in Knolles' expedition.
DUMNER Edmund, Sir ¹⁷	Somerset. ¹⁸	<u>1370</u> : served in Knolles' expedition; deceased by 1373 at the latest. ¹⁹
<i>FITZ WALTER</i> Walter, Lord ²⁰	Essex	<u>1370</u> : served in Knolles' expedition as a captain with a protection and an attorney, both for one year, he was captured by the French after the battle of Vaas on the campaign for which he had to pay crippling ransom demands to secure his freedom. To do so he was forced to mortgage his Cumberland estates on ruinous terms to the king's mistress Alice Perrers; <u>1371</u> : took out an attorney for one year on 28 June and a letter of protection on 15 July, both for service in France; <u>1372</u> : took out an attorney for service in France for one year on 12 July; <u>1373</u> : took out a protection (Nov. 11) and an attorney (12 July) for service in France for one year; <u>1377</u> : performed naval service under Thomas of Woodstock, earl of Buckingham for which letters of protection and attorney were taken out; <u>1378</u> : naval service in John of Gaunt's expedition in the retinue of Thomas of Woodstock, earl of Buckingham; <u>1379</u> : letter of attorney for 1 years service in France; <u>1380</u> : potentially served in France as a letter of attorney was taken out for one year though as the documentation describes this individual as being Sir Walter fitz Walter junior the man's identity is difficult to determine; <u>1384</u> : commanded a military standing force in the Scottish West March <u>1386</u> : served under John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, in Spain; <u>1395</u> : served in Ireland with Richard II in the retinue of Thomas, duke of Gloucester; <u>1398-99</u> : took out a protection for one year to serve with Richard II in Ireland. ²¹

¹³ C76/52 mm. 10, 12 (both 11 June). C76/53 m. 10. C.P.R. 1370-74, 32, 213, 306. C.P.R. 1374-77, 151, 322, 393, 497. C.P.R. 1377-81, 37, 38, 203, 251-52.

¹⁴ According to Sumption, Caun was a freebooter who had terrorised the Île de France and Normandy in the 1350s, *Divided Houses*, 69.

¹⁵ Kent, E101/30/25 m. 3. He also seemingly had lands in Essex based upon a discussion of the manor of Canes or Cawnes in North Weald Bassett, Essex. *A History of the County of Essex: Volume 4: Ongar Hundred* (ed.) Powell, W.R. (1956), 286-290.

¹⁶ C.P.R. 1358-61, 396.

¹⁷ Very little evidence relating to this individual perhaps suggesting extensive time as a freebooter.

¹⁸ C.P.R. 1370-74, 11-12)

¹⁹ Protection for service, C76/53 m. 20 (5 July); *Somerset Archive and Record Office, HELYAR DOCUMENTS AND MUNIMENTS FROM COKER COURT. - DD\WHh/948* 1373.

²⁰ As a baron, Walter fitz Walter is easy to identify in the sources. Unfortunately this prevalence can also in some circumstances be a weakness as it is often difficult to ascertain which Walter fitz Walter to which the source refers. Under such circumstances instances where the source describes the individual as a baron or knight only are included.

²¹ C76/53 mm. 17, 51. C76/54 mm. 10, 13. C76/55 m. 29. C76/56 mm. 7, 13. C76/61 mm. 22, 26, C76/63 mm. 9, 20, C76/64 m. 3. C76/70 m. 12. C.P.R. 1367-70, 363, C.P.R. 1391-96, 537, C.P.R. 1396-99, 351. E101/39/38 m. 3. Sumption, *Divided Houses*, 90, 92, 274.

FYTON Richard, Sir	Worcs. ²²	<u>1369</u> : served in the French campaign; <u>1370</u> : served in Knolles' campaign; <u>1371</u> : protection for one year's service in the Calais garrison. ²³
GIFFARD Gilbert, Sir ²⁴	Glouc. ²⁵	<u>1366</u> : letter of attorney for beyond the seas; <u>1369</u> : served in French expedition; <u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' expedition; <u>1371-1372</u> : served under Sir Ralph Ferrariis while he was 'keeping the seas' and in naval operations with Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford; <u>1372</u> : served in France under Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford; <u>1373</u> : served in Gaunt's 1373 <i>chevauchée</i> and, as the result of being mentioned as 'now of the king's retinue' granted 50 <i>l.</i> a year at the Exchequer; <u>1380</u> : seems to have also been something of a businessman, being described as a knight and merchant of Gloucestershire, owing goods to the value of £160 to Thomas Hungerford, merchant of Wiltshire. ²⁶
GOURNEYE John, Sir ²⁷	Various ²⁸	<u>1343</u> : became owner of Harptree castle, Somerset, while underage; <u>1363</u> : protection for one year for service in the retinue of William de Windsor in Ireland; <u>1370</u> : protection and attorney for service on Knolles' campaign; <u>1371</u> : protection and attorney for service in France; <u>1372</u> : attorney and protection for one year's French service; <u>1373</u> : protection and attorney for service in France, presumably on John of Gaunt's <i>chevauchée</i> ; <u>1374</u> : letter of attorney and protection for one year for service in France; <u>1376</u> : protection for one year for service in the Calais garrison under Sir Hugh de Calvelay and also a letter of attorney; <u>1378</u> : protection and letter of attorney for one year's service in the Calais garrison under Sir Bernard Brocas. ²⁹
GRANDISON Thomas, Lord ³⁰	Kent ³¹	<u>1356</u> : fought at Poitiers; <u>1360</u> : joined Edward III on the Reims campaign; <u>1364</u> : letter of attorney for one year's service 'beyond the seas', probably France; <u>1367</u> : fought with the Black Prince at Nájera; <u>1369</u> : protection and attorney for the French campaign in the

²² *C.P.R.* 1367-70, 418; 1374-77, 225; 1381-85, 86, 246. Nash, T.R. *Collections for a History of Worcestershire* (1783).

²³ C76/52 m. 21. C76/53 m. 21. C76/54 m. 14.

²⁴ The Giffard's were a well known family. Gilbert was married to Elizabeth Daubeneye, sister and heir of Robert Daubeneye, both the children of Robert Daubeneye. *C.P.R.* 1361-64, 471; 1364-67, 305; 1370-74, 299.

²⁵ Based upon ownership of the manor of Kingsholm, co. Gloucester. *C.P.R.* 1364-67, 285; 1370-74, 106, 299. They also possessed a manor in Southampton, *ibid.*, 285.

²⁶ *C.P.R.* 1364-67, 303. *C.P.R.* 1367-70, 468; 472. *C.P.R.* 1370-74, 261. C76/52 m. 17. C76/53 m. 19, C76/55 m. 33, C76/56 mm. 18, 23; C241/166/42; E101/31/28, E101/31/15. E101/32/20.

²⁷ From a large and important noble family. Married Elizabeth, late wife of John Carreu. (*C.P.R.* 1370-74, 21). There is also a John Gurney who was active in Scotland in the 1380s and 90s at Berwick-upon-Tweed under Sir Thomas Talbot (1386) and the earl of Nottingham, Thomas Mowbray (1386, C71/66 m. 8; 1390, C71/69 m. 6) and again at Roxburgh under Sir Thomas Swinburne in 1386 (C71/66 m. 8). This is probably not be the same man, being described as a London mercer.

²⁸ Norfolk: *C.P.R.* 1340-43, 88; 1396-99, 370. Wiltshire: *C.P.R.* 1367-70, 447; *C.P.R.* 1374-77, 264. Essex: C71/69 m. 6. Ireland: *C.P.R.* 1364-67, 118, 321, 325.

²⁹ Rickard, *Castle Community*, 428; *C.P.R.* 1361-64, 428; C76/53 mm. 18, 23; C76/54 m. 10; C76/55 m. 11, 15; C76/56 mm. 6, 8; C76/57 m. 6, 8 C76/59 m. 18, 20. C76/62 m. 2, 5.

³⁰ A nephew of the aristocratic bishop of Exeter: Sumption and a knight of the Garter, *Divided Houses*, 68.

		retinue of Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford; <u>1370</u> : acted as a sub-contractor, and thus joint leader, on Knolles campaign with Bouchier, Buxhill, and Knolles himself. Defeated in battle of Pontvallain on the campaign and taken prisoner on 3 December. He died shortly after his release from captivity in the same year, probably due to insanitary prison conditions. ³²
KNOLLES Robert, Sir	Ches./Norflk ³³	For extensive biographical detail see: Jones, M. 'Knolles, Sir Robert (<i>d.</i> 1407)', <i>O.D.N.B.</i> (Oxford University Press, Sept 2004); online edn, May 2009 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/15758, accessed 20 Nov 2009]; Green, D. 'The Household and Military Retinue of the Black Prince', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Nottingham, 1998), <i>ii</i> , 91.
LISLE John, Sir	Hamps./Isle of Wight ³⁴	<u>1367</u> : appointed arrayer of men-at-arms et al in co. Southampton; <u>1370</u> : served as a captain on Knolles expedition with a protection and an attorney, during which time he may have been killed in action. ³⁵
LOUTHRE John, esq. ³⁶	Cumb.	<u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' expedition; <u>1371</u> : a John 'Louthre' took out a protection for naval service for three months under Ralph de Ferrers; similarly a John Louthre 'senior' either proposed to, or actually did serve in the proposed campaign of Edward III in <u>1372</u> in the retinue of Ralph lord Basset of Drayton. However, there was also a John 'Louthre', described as an esquire, who served in this expedition in the retinue of Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford; <u>1375</u> : John 'Louthre' served in Edmund earl of Cambridge's expedition to France in the retinue of Edward, lord Despenser; <u>1376</u> : possibly the same John de Louthre who, with other members of his family, was involved in an assault in Penrith co. Cumberland; <u>1377</u> : John 'Louthre' was present in the Pembroke garrison under Sir Degary Says; <u>1388</u> : John 'Louthes' served under Sir Gilbert Talbot in the earl of

³¹ *CIPM*, v.13, 131; v.14, 136-40, 299; v.17, 450.

³² *C.P.R. 1361-64*, 489. C76/51 mm. 21-22. C76/53 mm. 15-16; Sumption, *Divided Houses*, 68, 88-92.

³³ Originally from Cheshire but there is evidence he had substantial landholdings elsewhere such as Norfolk (*C.P.R. 1367-70*, 453; *1374-79*, 29; *1381-85*, 419; *1385-89*, 30). Kent (*C.P.R. 1377-81*, 519), Wiltshire and London: *O.D.N.B.* online edition.

³⁴ Or 'Insula' or 'Isle' or 'd'isle'. It is remarkably difficult to identify which John de Lisle there were three men from the same family who are the most likely candidates with their dates of death as 1370, 1408, and 1429 respectively. Hicks, M. 'Lisle family (*per. c.* 1277–1542)', *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford University Press, Sept 2004; online edn, Jan 2008), [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/54527, accessed 22 Nov 2009]. There is, however, evidence to suggest that it was the man who died in the year of the campaign who is the most likely candidate. Beside from the fact that dying in 1370 is suspiciously co-incidental Sumption (*Divided Houses*, 88-91) informs us that when the French caught up to Grandison and and Fitz-Walter's corps they both suffered substantial casualties. Though this is not proof in itself, and as a knight Lisle was more likely to be ransomed, his association with FitzWalter in documentation relating to the campaign (E10130/25 m. 3) would suggest that de Lisle was indeed among the fallen.

³⁵ *C.P.R. 1364-67*, 430. C76/53 m. 21-23.

³⁶ As an esquire it is difficult to ascertain much concrete information about this individual and his geographic origin, a difficulty compounded by the spelling of the name as either 'Louthre' or 'Lowther' which seems to denote two families of different geographic origins, one a border family, and other based in the south east (Rickard, *Castle Community*, 269 (Kent), 150, 158, 374. The weight of evidence would however suggest a northern origin.

		Arundel's naval expedition; <u>1395</u> : a John 'Louthur' described as an esquire was present in Sir Stephen le Scrope's Irish standing force though the passage of nearly 20 years makes this appearance uncertain. ³⁷
LUCY William, Sir ³⁸	Herefords. and Welsh Marches/ Cumb.	<u>1366</u> : protection for one year for service 'beyond the seas' for an un-stated reason, perhaps military; <u>1369</u> : Protection and attorney for service in the expedition to France of this year under Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford; <u>1370</u> : acted as a captain in Knolles' expedition? (see E101/30/25 m1 crossing out); <u>1371</u> : naval service under the earl of Hereford; <u>1372</u> : attorney for a year's service in France again under the earl of Hereford; <u>1373</u> : attorney for a year's French service; <u>1374</u> : grant, though illegally made, of 20l. out of the manor of Bekenhull, co. Oxford, to Lucy by the earl of Hereford before his death; acted as a commissioner of oyer and terminer with others in a case brought by Robert Knolles; <u>1378</u> : protection until Michaelmas (29 Sept., thus for 6 months as the protection was taken out in early March) for naval service under William de Montague, earl of Salisbury; <u>1386</u> : protection for one year to serve John of Gaunt in Spain; a William de Lucy also gave evidence in Plymouth in the court of chivalry, supporting Scrope, either at the start of the end of this expedition; <u>1389-1390</u> : a William Lucy who is not mentioned as being a knight so doubt remains as to whether this was the same individual who commanded in 1370, served in a force on the Scottish East March under the command of Thomas de Mowbray, earl of Nottingham. ³⁹
MALET John, Sir	Lincs. ⁴⁰	<u>1359</u> : an attorney for one year's service, possibly on the Reims campaign; <u>1366</u> : attorney taken out for one year; <u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' army; <u>1372</u> : served in the naval expedition of this year; <u>1374</u> : John 'Malwayn' served in the naval expedition of this year under Sir William de Neville, as did an un-named Malwayn in the French expedition of the following year; <u>1378</u> : a John 'Mallet' took out a protection for one year's naval service around Guernsey and Jersey under Sir Hugh de Calvelay; <u>1386</u> : a John Malet described simply as a man-at-arms served in the Calais garrison in this year under Sir Matthew de Gurney. ⁴¹
MERTON David, esq.	Unknown	Apart from an entry for a 'David Merton' in the <i>Close Rolls</i> on 3 October 1390 taking 40s. for his expenses going to the court of

³⁷ *C.P.R.* 1374-77, 326. *C76/54* m. 7; *E101/31/3* m. 1; 5 m. 3. *E101/31/39* m. 1. *E101/32/20* m. 2. *E101/34/29* m. 10i. *E101/41/5* m. 14. *E101/41/39* mm. 1ii, 2, 3ii, 4ii, 5.

³⁸ The most well-known Lucy family were from Cumberland and came to prominence from the 1320s onwards, *The Complete Peerage VIII*, 252-55. There was also another Lucy family, perhaps a minor branch of the northern family as suggested in a protection of 1373 (*C76/56* m. 34). The weight of evidence would suggest that the William Lucy of the 1370 expedition probably came from the northern border region. He also had territorial interests in Monmouthshire, south Wales, being made private constable for life of Grosmont and Skenfrith castles on 24 July 1387 and of the Whitecastle on 4 July 1384 (Rickard, *Castle Community*, 313, 317, 319). All three castles were in the same Monnow valley, controlling an important route between Hereford and Monmouth. The appointment may have been the result of Lucy's persistent military service with the earl of Hereford until the earl's death in 1373.

³⁹ *C.P.R.* 1364-67, 303. *C.P.R.* 1370-74, 373, 409, *C.P.R.* 1374-77, 408-9; *C76/52* mm. 13, 22, *C76/55* m. 35, *C76/56* m. 29. *C76/62* m. 19, *C76/70* m. 28.; *E101/31/15* m. 1, *E101/32/20* m. 1, *E101/41/17* m. 2.; *Court of Chivalry II*, (Scrope v. Grosvenor), dep. no. 54, pages, 261-262.

⁴⁰ *C.P.R.* 1358-61, 347, 464; *1370-74*, 365; *1381-85*, 50; *CIPM*, v.12, 408; v.15, 258.

⁴¹ *C.P.R.* 1358-61, 342, *C.P.R.* 1364-67, 297. *C76/55* mm. 21, 23, *C76/63* m. 11. *E101/33/14* m. 1, *E101/34/5* m. 2. *E101/42/14* m. 5.

		Rome there is no other record, military or otherwise that can be found for this individual other than his involvement on the 1370 campaign in which he led 19 men-at-arms and 20 archers. ⁴² This is either due to a transcription error, the fact that he was not a prominent military individual, and this was his first action, or else it was his first action and he died on the campaign.
MINSTERWORTH John, Sir	Glouc. ⁴³	<u>1367</u> : letter of attorney for one year's service 'beyond the seas', presumably France, in the service of Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford; <u>1369</u> : took out a protection for one year's service in France in the company of Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford; <u>1370-77</u> : acted as a captain in Knolles' expedition and was one of the chief causes of its breakdown. After the debacle he returned to England where, as one of the only prominent survivors either not dead, still serving in France, or languishing in a French prison, he attempted to exonerate himself from any blame at an enquiry ordered by Edward III. Though Knolles was initially blamed Edward III eventually relented and Minsterworth was arrested and charged before the Council of defaming Knolles. Thus scorned and with his ambitions thwarted he fled to France and began a new career under Charles V. He is next glimpsed in French plans to launch an invasion fleet in 1377. In March of that year he was captured a Gascon squire in Navarre while on his way to the Castilian court. He was brought to Bordeaux and sent on a ship back to England. On arrival at Bristol the king, learning that several of his supporters in Wales and adjacent areas wished to free him, ordered his immediate transportation to the custody of the Constable of the Tower. There he was tortured to extract information about the French invasion plans before being hung, drawn, and quartered as a punishment for his treason. ⁴⁴
MOREAUX Thomas, Sir ⁴⁵	Suffolk	<u>1354-55</u> : constable of Norwich castle from 10 November 1354 until 30 November 1355; mentioned as escheator in the county of Norfolk and Suffolk; <u>1366</u> : listed as being one of the knights bachelor (<i>bachelarii</i>) given robes by Edward III for Christmas; <u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' army, aged about 29 years old; <u>1371-1372</u> : served in concurrent years with Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford on naval expeditions; <u>1376</u> : pardon for the death of one of Moreaux's servants as it seems that the accused (not Moreaux) killed him in self-defence; <u>1377</u> : pardon granted to William de York at Moreaux's supplication; <u>1381</u> : listed as being a knight of Richard II; <u>1382</u> : protection for service 'overseas' for one year; <u>1383</u> : commissioner of oyer and terminer in Norfolk; <u>1386</u> : acted as a commissioner of oyer and terminer at Windsor castle; gave evidence at Plymouth before Gaunt's campaign in the Court of Chivalry in favour of Scrope; acted as a marshal of Gaunt's army in Portugal during which time he conducted a cavalcade

⁴² C.C.R. 1389-92, 572.

⁴³ 'An ambitious hothead from the Welsh march, was a man of very modest means but contracted for 200 men-at-arms and 300 archers, the largest company in the army after Knolles' own. His subsequent career suggests he may have been unbalanced'. Sumption, *Divided Houses*, 69.

⁴⁴ C.P.R. 1364-67, 347 C.P.R. 1374-77, 488-89; C76/52 m. 8. According to the *Patent Rolls* William Legleys, may have joined Minsterworth in his treasonous conduct: C.P.R. 1374-77, 491; Sumption, *Divided Houses*, 69, 87, 89, 91-93, 269, 277 and footnotes therein.

⁴⁵ Or 'Morieux', 'Moryeaux'. A Norfolk landowner very close to the duke of Lancaster. He had married Gaunt's illegitimate daughter Blanche and had fought in Portugal, France, Gascony, Brittany, and Scotland. Sumption, *Divided Houses*, 596, 617, 619.

		through Galicia; <u>1387</u> : died while on campaign either of wounds received or sickness brought on by the Iberian campaigning conditions; <u>1381-1387</u> : appointed constable of the Tower of London for life until his death. ⁴⁶
PLUMPTON Robert, Sir	Yorks. ⁴⁷	<u>1362</u> : claims the a Robert Plumpton amongst others broke on to the Queen's lands in Yorkshire and stole her property; <u>1368</u> : letter of attorney for service 'beyond the seas', probably to the Calais garrison; <u>1369</u> : served in the French campaign of this year under Sir Henry le Scrope; <u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' expedition; <u>1371</u> : evidence that Plumpton was something of a businessman as he received license to 'sell by gross or in parcels to any ministers of John, earl of Pembroke, and Edmund, earl of March, who wish to buy for the munition of the earls' castles in Wales 200 quarters of beans from his own growth; <u>1372</u> : naval service in the retinue of Sir Henry le Scrope once again; <u>1373</u> : a Robert 'Plympton' of unknown promised to serve under John duke of Brittany in but the protection was revoked on 26 October by the testimony of the duke because Robert 'has not gone ... and stays in England on his own business'; ordered to preserve, with others the waterways of Yorkshire and elsewhere in the north for the protection of salmon; <u>1383-85</u> : a Robert 'Plompton' served in the Scotland under Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, in the retinue of Sir Thomas Percy junior; <u>1386</u> : gave evidence in the Scrope v Grosvenor Court of Chivalry inquiry in favour of Scrope; <u>1414</u> : orders to arrest various persons in Yorkshire; <u>1419</u> : ordered with other named man of Yorkshire (and elsewhere in the country) to discuss the provision of a loan for the king to prevent the malice of his enemies and to protect the realm. ⁴⁸
REDMANE Matthew, esq. ⁴⁹	WestmInd. ⁵⁰	<u>1369</u> : letter of protection for one year's service in Ireland under Sir William Windsor; <u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' army; <u>1373</u> : now knighted in this year at the latest, he took out a letter of attorney and a protection for service with John, duke of Brittany, in France; <u>1374</u> : letter of attorney for service in Brittany; <u>1375</u> : letter of attorney for one year's Breton service; <u>1376</u> : commission of oyer and terminer held on complaint by Gilbert de Umfravill, earl of Angus, that Redmane and others entered his manor at Multon co. Lincs. and damaged and stole his property and intimidated his tenants; <u>1378</u> : protection until Michaelmas (1 Nov., protection taken out on 11 March) for service in the Calais garrison; <u>1379</u> : protection for one year's garrison service at Berwick-upon-Tweed; <u>1381-82</u> : served as captain of the Roxburgh garrison while at the same time (1381) acting as captain of the Carlisle

⁴⁶ Rickard, *Castle Community*, 299, 333; Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, 283, appendix v; *Court of Chivalry II*, (Scrope v. Grosvenor), dep. no. 23, pages, 183-187. *C.P.R.* 1354-58, 155, 319, *C.P.R.* 1374-77, 269, *C.P.R.* 1377-81, 66, *C.P.R.* 1381-85, 287, *C.P.R.* 1385-89, 167, *C.P.R.* 1413-16, 292.; C76/67 m. 11; E101/30/25 m. 2, E101/31/15 m. 1, E101/32/20 m. 1, E101/395/10.

⁴⁷ There was a William de Plumpton who was constable of York castle (Clifford's Tower) between 22 Oct. 1350 and 16 Oct. 1351 (Rickard, *Castle Community*, 505). There is also a William de Plumpton who was retained for life as a knight of Richard II in 1398 (Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, 285, appendix v).

⁴⁸ BL Cotton Roll. XIII. 8 m. 3; *Court of Chivalry II*, (Scrope v. Grosvenor) dep. no. 32., pages 310-312; *C.P.R.* 1361-64, 207, *C.P.R.* 1367-70, 38, 73; *C.P.R.* 1370-74, 49, 206, 314-315, *C.P.R.* 1416-22, 249-250; C76/52 m. 9, C76/55 m.20, 34, C76/56 m. 20; E101/31/34 m. 2.

⁴⁹ From a prominent north-western family. He cannot have been much older than 19 at the time of the campaign, (Sumption, *Divided Houses*, 69). A Richard Redmane was made a household knight of Richard II in 1388 (Given-Wilson, *Royal Household*, 285, appendix v).

⁵⁰ Of Levens, Westmorland. With his first wife Lucy he had a son, Sir Richard Redmane who would become Speaker of the House of Commons. Summerson, H. 'Redman, Sir Richard (d. 1426)', *O.D.N.B.* (Oxford University Press, 2004). [<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23259>, accessed 23 Nov 2009].

		garrison; <u>1383-1385</u> : he commanded a retinue in the force of the earl of Northumberland, Henry Percy, in the Scottish East March; <u>1384</u> : now described as a banneret he ventured into Scotland under the command of John of Gaunt in the retinue of the earl of Northumberland; <u>1387</u> : involved in the mediation of a legal dispute in Northumberland; <u>1388</u> : appointed as an arrayer in Northumberland with several named others, presumably the men who would fight at Otterburn; commanded the northern flanking section of Henry Percy (Hotspur's) army at Otterburn; <u>1389-90</u> : in Thomas de Mowbray earl of Nottingham's standing force in the East March of Scotland; <u>1392</u> : ordered to be a commissioner of array to resist invasion in case of war at the expiration of the present truce; <u>1396</u> : Sir Richard Redmane gains a pardon for Robert de Harbottill, a servant of Sir Matthew Redmane, for a murder he committed in 16 RII (1392). ⁵¹
RIBURGH William, esq.	Lincs? ⁵²	<u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' expedition; <u>1372</u> : protection for service in France under John de Neville; <u>1373</u> : protection for service in France, again with John de Neville. ⁵³
SEE Richard, esq.	Yorks. ⁵⁴	<u>1369</u> : involved in an assault and theft in co. York with named others; protection for service in France in the retinue of Nicholas de Tamworth; <u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' expedition; <u>1372</u> : protection for service in France under John de Neville; <u>1381</u> : protection for service in France under Sir Peter Veel; <u>1382</u> : protection for a years service in the garrison at Berwick-upon-Tweed in the service of Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland; pardon issued to Stephen Thomson for not appearing before See to render a horse valued 20 marks; <u>1383</u> : protection and attorney for service on the bishop of Norwich's 'crusade'; <u>1384</u> : pardon issued to John de Thorp-Arche for leaving the service of See at York before the agreed time; <u>1383-85</u> : unspecified service on the Scottish marches under Thomas Percy junior. ⁵⁵
SKELTON Nicholas, esq.	Yorks. ⁵⁶ / Cumb.	<u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' army; <u>1372</u> : took out a protection for service in France under John de Neville; <u>1384</u> : listed as being one of the king's sergeants-at-arms from this year onwards; <u>1385</u> : ordered to arrest all those who have entered the realm without letters of safe-conduct and investigate the export of any gold, silver and jewels; <u>1394</u> ; <u>1399</u> : seemingly joined Richard II on

⁵¹ C.P.R. 1367-70, 237, C.P.R. 1374-77, 317-18, C.P.R. 1385-89, 384, 475, C.P.R. 1391-96, 94, 698.; C71/58 m. 1. C76/56 m. 11, 20, C76/57 m. 3, 15, C76/61 m. 2; E101/39/11 m. 3, E101/40/5 m. 2, E101/41/17 m. 1, E101/531/29 m. 2, 6; BL Cotton Roll. XIII, 8. Sumption, *Divided Houses*, 658-59.

⁵² It is unclear as to the geographic origins of this individual as there seems to be little information relating to him perhaps due to his social status. The army list (E101/30/25 m. 3) associates him with Knolles, Minsterworth, and Redmane and as these men were from diverse regions it is no real help. There is however a reference to a William Riburgh in a grant made to him for by a William de Bodekysham for his and his wife Joan's devotion to the Order of the Provincial Chapter at Lincoln. 'Deeds: A.13101 - A.13200', *A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds: Volume 5* (1906). [[http://www.britishhistory.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=64454&strquery="William Riburgh"](http://www.britishhistory.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=64454&strquery=)] Date accessed: 21 December 2009].

⁵³ C76/55 m. 34, C76/56 m. 20.

⁵⁴ C76/52 m. 3; C76/67 m. 7.

⁵⁵ C.P.R. 1367-70, 261, C.P.R. 1381-85, 371, 475; C71/61 m. 2, C76/53 m. 3. C76/55 m. 34, C76/65 m. 16, C76/67 mm. 7, 17; BL Cotton Roll VIII, 8.

⁵⁶ C.P.R. 1399-1401, 374.

		both his Irish expeditions, taking out letters of attorney to do so; <u>1397</u> : ordered with named others to seize the goods of several Appellants; <u>1398</u> : ordered to arrest 'one or two ships, barges or ballingers' and take them to Orewell for the passage of the duke of Norfolk beyond the seas; <u>1400</u> : served with Henry IV in Scotland, leading a retinue of his own. ⁵⁷
SONDES Richard, esq.	Hamps. ⁵⁸	<u>1370</u> : acted as a captain in Knolles' campaign.
STRANGE ⁵⁹ Piers, esq.	Norfolk/Kent ⁶⁰	<u>1369</u> : protection for one years service in France under Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford ⁶¹ ; <u>1370</u> : captained a retinue in Knolles' expedition ⁶² ; <u>1371</u> : naval service under the earl of Hereford; <u>1372</u> : protection for one years service in France under the earl of Hereford; <u>1373</u> : served under Sir Walter Hewitt in France, probably in the duke of Lancaster's <i>chevauchée</i> ; <u>1377</u> : served in Knolles' retinue for naval service; <u>1378</u> : served again with Knolles in another naval campaign. ⁶³
SYMOND Thomas, Sir	Bucks. ⁶⁴	<u>1362</u> : a Thomas Symond was pardoned for murder committed in 'a hot conflict and not of malice'; <u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' expedition; <u>1372</u> : served in the naval expedition of 1372 under the earl of Hereford; <u>1378</u> : performed naval service with the duke of Lancaster; <u>1379</u> : protection to serve in France in the retinue of Sir John Devereux; <u>1380</u> : letter of attorney issued for French service; <u>1381</u> : protection for unspecified martial service 'overseas', doubtlessly the earl of Cambridge's expedition to Portugal. Symond was charged by Gaunt of bearing his Castilian standard which was to unfurl when the army entered Castile; <u>1383</u> : protection issued for French service with John of Gaunt for the period 17 September 1383 to 2 February 1384; <u>1385</u> : a Thomas Symond served in the Marck garrison in the Calais region under Sir John Cheyne although this is not clearly him as the

⁵⁷ C76/55 m. 34; C.P.R. 1381-85, 428, 585. C.P.R. 1391-96, 487; 1396-99, 244, 439, 541. E101/43/4 m. 14.

⁵⁸ C.P.R. 1377-81, 382; 1385-89, 258.

⁵⁹ Perhaps 'Lestrange', 'Lestraunge', 'Straunge'. One of the chief problems in the identification of this individual is that there are a number of different spellings of his surname and thus it is difficult to ascertain to which individual is being referred. His rank as an esquire does not help matters as it is unclear if this individual subsequently received a knighthood as there is, for example, a Sir Peter Lestrange who served under the earl of Hereford in France in 1371 and without more detailed information regarding the Piers Strange who served with Knolles in 1370 there is no way of telling whether this is the same man (E101/31/15 m. 1). There does however seem to have been a Sir Peter Lestrange who served in Knolles' retinues in 1377 and again in 1378 which would suggest that this may be the same Piers who served with Knolles in 1370. (C76/61 m. 27; C76/63 m. 18).

⁶⁰ He is mentioned as being of 'Franham Parva' which might translate as 'Little Franham/Farnham'. There is a 'Little Fransham' in Norfolk. (C76/53 m. 16). He also served as a commissioner of oyer and terminer in the county in 1375 (C.P.R. 1374-77, 147).

⁶¹ C76/52 m. 13.

⁶² Even this 'fact' is open to question. Though the army list clearly shows that Strange led a retinue of 10 men-at-arms and 10 archers (including himself – E101/30/25 mm. 1-2) a protection for the campaign dated 2 July lists a Peter Straunge as being in the retinue of Sir Thomas Caun (C76/53 m. 16). Did Strange initially take out a protection to serve with Caun and then decide to lead his own retinue instead? We will probably never know as the army list is not dated.

⁶³ E101/31/15 m. 1. C76/55 m. 35, C76/56 m. 26, C76/61 m. 27 C76/63 m. 18; E101/32/20 m. 1.

⁶⁴ C76/70 m. 35.

		man in question is not listed as being a knight; <u>1386</u> : protection and attorney for service with Gaunt in Spain; <u>1396</u> : acting as keeper of Aylesbury gaol. ⁶⁵
TRIVET Thomas, Sir	Somerset ⁶⁶	For full bibliographical detail see: Sumption, J. 'Trevet, Sir Thomas (c.1350–1388)', <i>O.D.N.B.</i> (Oxford University Press, Sept 2004); online edn, Jan 2008 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27745, accessed 2 Dec 2009]. He was the brother of John Trivet and the nephew of Sir Matthew Gournay: Green, D. S. 'The Household and Military Retinue of the Black Prince' (University of Nottingham Unpublished PhD Thesis, 1998), II, 183.
UGHTRED Peter, esq.	Yorks. ⁶⁷	<u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' army for which he took out both a protection and an attorney; <u>1379</u> : letter of attorney for service in France; <u>1392</u> : 'grant to Marmaduke de Norton of Etton of the custody, during the minority of John, son and heir of Peter Ughtred, which John held of the heir of Peter de Malo Lacu, knight, tenant in chief, of the lands and tenements late the said Peter Ughtred's from the date of his death, together with the marriage of the heir, for which he is to pay 20s. at the Exchequer'. ⁶⁸
UGHTRED Thomas, Sir ⁶⁹	Yorks./ Lincs.	<u>1364</u> : named, with others, of breaking into the property of the Black Prince in Cottingham, Yorkshire, carrying away goods and assaulting servants; <u>1369</u> : served under William, Lord Latimer, in France; <u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' expedition; <u>1373</u> : served in France, presumably on Gaunt's <i>chevauchée</i> , under Henry, Lord Percy; <u>1376</u> : appointed as a commissioner of oyer and terminer relating to matters in Yorkshire; <u>1377</u> : mentioned as being keeper of Lochmaben castle, probably for over a year; <u>1378</u> – <u>1379</u> : continued as keeper of Lochmaben from at least 28 July 1378 to 3 May 1379; <u>1380</u> : letter of attorney for one years' service in France; <u>1384</u> : protection for six months service in Scotland under Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland; he may also have served in the Berwick garrison at this time; <u>1399</u> : named as a commissioner of array in the East Riding of Yorkshire; <u>1401</u> : died. ⁷⁰
WAUTON John, esq. ⁷¹	Hunts. ⁷² /	<u>1370</u> : served as a captain in Knolles' French expedition; <u>1370</u> – <u>1371</u> : served under Sir Alan Buxhill in the St. Sauveur garrison in

⁶⁵ C76/64 m. 10, 22, C76/65 m. 4, C76/68 m. 21 C76/70 m. 17, 28, 35; *C.P.R. 1361–64*, 242, *C.P.R. 1370–74*, 178, *C.P.R. 1391–96*, 710. E101/32/20 m. 1; Sumption, *Divided Houses*, 431.

⁶⁶ He held lands in seven English counties at his death; Sumption, J. 'Trevet, Sir Thomas (c.1350–1388)', *O.D.N.B.* online edn, Jan 2008

⁶⁷ C76/63 m. 8.

⁶⁸ C76/53 mm. 10, 13. C76/63 m. 8. *C.P.R. 1391–96*, 21.

⁶⁹ This is the son of the much celebrated Sir Thomas Ughtred who fought under Edward III for nearly three decades in Scotland and France: Ayton, A. 'Ughtred, Thomas, first Lord Ughtred (1291/2–1365)', *O.D.N.B.* online edn, Jan 2008; *Ibid.*, 'Sir Thomas Ughtred and the Edwardian Military Revolution' Bothwell, J. S. (ed.), *The Age of Edward III* (Woodbridge, 2001), 107–32. As it is often difficult to differentiate between the father and son until the former's death in 1365 only details from 1366 onwards are included unless it is certain it is to the son who is referred.

⁷⁰ *C.P.R. 1364–67*, 73, *C.P.R. 1374–77*, 312, 441, 457, *C.P.R. 1399–1401*, 212; C71/56 m. 4, C71/57 m. 8, C71/58 m. 5, C71/63 m. 6, C71/64 m. 11, C76/52 mm. 9, 21, C76/56 mm. 12, 18, C76/64 m. 12; E101/40/5 m. 2; BL Cotton Roll XIII, 8.

⁷¹ Perhaps 'Warton' or even 'Walton' 'Watton' or 'Wardon'.

	Cambs.?	Normandy. ⁷³
<i>ZOUCHE, Lord of Harringworth</i> ⁷⁴	Northamp.	<u>1370</u> : is listed as having served on the expedition in the captain list (E101/30/25 mm. 1-2) with 140 men-at-arms (including himself) and 140 archers. However Sherborne argued that he did not serve though his men may have. ⁷⁵

⁷² *C.P.R.* 1364-67, 315; 1374-77, 315; 1381-85, 254, 600.

⁷³ E101/30/38 m. 2; E101/31/18 m. 1.

⁷⁴ For details of the family see: Acheson, E. 'Zouche family (*per.* c.1254–1415)', *O.D.N.B.* online edn.; Cockayne, G. E. *The Complete Peerage XII*: ii, 941-943. It is actually unclear as to which Lord Zouche this was. Sumption (*Divided Houses*, 69) seems to have assumed that it was William Lord Zouche II. This service, however, is not mentioned in his biography in the *Complete Peerage* and indeed was actually much occupied in 1370 with accompanying the earl of Suffolk to Cherbourg to accompany the King of Navarre to England (*Rolls of Parliament*, iii. 100-101). The protections and attorneys issued for the campaign would suggest that it was William Lord Zouche III (c.1342 – 1396; C76/53 mm. 14, 21). However a search of the Reading/Southampton database reveals that they have identified this captain as another 'La Souche', a Hugh la Zouche, who was probably a male relative of William. Under such circumstances no attempt has been made to construct a martial career.

⁷⁵ Sherborne, J. 'Indentured Retinues and English Expeditions to France, 1369-80' *War, Politics and Culture in Fourteenth Century England* (ed.) Tuck, A. (1994), 6-7.

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