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The life, career and political significance of Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury 1473-1541.

Pierce, Hazel

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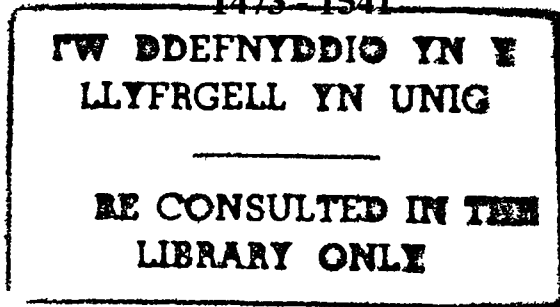
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**THE LIFE, CAREER AND
POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF
MARGARET POLE,
COUNTESS OF SALISBURY**

1473-1541



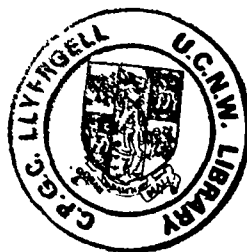
A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF WALES
BY

HAZEL PIERCE

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

96.

SCHOOL OF HISTORY AND WELSH HISTORY,
UNIVERSITY OF WALES,
BANGOR



SUMMARY

This thesis conducts a biographical study of Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury. Born in 1473, she was the daughter of George, Duke of Clarence, and niece of both Edward IV and Richard III. In 1541, at the age of 67, she was executed on the command of Henry VIII. Margaret's ancestry is detailed and her experiences under Edward IV and Richard III are noted. A study of her marriage is made which reveals the dynastic fears of Henry VII, while an understanding of the lineage and career of Margaret's husband, Sir Richard Pole, illustrates the importance that Henry VII attached to his half blood relatives. Margaret's restoration to the Earldom of Salisbury in 1512 is examined and the lands to which she was restored are specified. The change in lifestyle enjoyed by Margaret and her children is considered and the marriages of her three sons and daughter, evaluated. Margaret's rare status as a peeress in her own right is explored. Her position as head of her family, as an independent member of the aristocracy, as 'good lord' and employer is analysed, the members of her affinity detailed and the role of her eldest son, Lord Montague, explained. The fall of the Pole family is investigated, which reveals that Henry VIII's action against them was not as unreasonable as some historians have maintained. The family's activities and the evidence against them is examined, while the relationship between Henry VIII and the Pole family is discussed. The significance of the international situation and extent and location of Margaret's lands is also highlighted. The thesis ends with an account of the countess's execution, and a brief note concerning the fate of those family members who survived the executions of 1538 and 1541.

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>A.P.C.</i>	Dasent, J., (ed.), <i>Acts of the Privy Council of England, 1550-1552</i> III
B.L.	British Library
<i>C.A.D.</i>	<i>Catalogue of Ancient Deeds</i>
<i>Cal. Inq. P.M.</i>	<i>Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem</i>
<i>C.C.R.</i>	<i>Calendar of the Close Rolls</i>
<i>C.F.R.</i>	<i>Calendar of the Fine Rolls</i>
<i>C.P.R.</i>	<i>Calendar of the Patent Rolls</i>
<i>C.S.P. Spain</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Spanish</i>
<i>C.S.P. Venetian</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Venetian</i>
<i>D.K.R.</i>	<i>Deputy Keeper's Report</i>
<i>D.N.B.</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>E.H.R.</i>	<i>English Historical Review</i>
<i>Excerpta Historica</i>	Bentley, S., (ed.), <i>Excerpta Historica or, Illustrations of English History</i>
<i>Hall's Chronicle</i>	Ellis, H., (ed.), <i>Hall's Chronicle</i>
<i>H.M.C.</i>	Historical Manuscripts Commission
<i>L&P</i>	Brewer, J.S., Gairdner, J., and Brodie, R.H., (eds.), <i>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII</i>
<i>Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii</i>	Hearn, T., (ed.), <i>Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii de Rebus Britannicis Collectanea</i>
<i>L.L.</i>	Byrne, M.S.C., (ed.), <i>The Lisle Letters</i>
<i>P&P</i>	<i>Past and Present</i>
<i>P.R.O.</i>	Public Record Office
<i>Rot. Parl.,</i>	<i>Rotuli Parliamentorum</i>
<i>S.A.C.</i>	<i>Sussex Archaeological Collections</i>
<i>State Papers Henry VIII</i>	<i>Calendar of State Papers Domestic Series</i>
<i>The King's Mother</i>	Jones, M.K., and Underwood, M.G., <i>The King's Mother</i>
<i>Topographica</i>	Nichols, J.G., (ed.), <i>Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica</i>
<i>T.R.H.S.</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
<i>W.A.M</i>	Westminster Abbey Muniments
<i>W.H.R.</i>	<i>Welsh History Review</i>

INTRODUCTION

The most popular image of Margaret Pole's father is head first in a barrel of malmsey wine, the supposed manner of his execution; and of his daughter running around the scaffold daring the executioner to take her head off as best he could. This tale is told with gory amusement by the Beefeater guides at the Tower of London to entertain the thousands of tourists who, each year stand around Margaret's resting place in the chapel of St Peter ad Vincula. By many scholars however, Margaret is remembered as a defenceless and innocent old woman sacrificed on the altar of Henry VIII's thirst for revenge and dynastic fears. As historians have continually overlooked Margaret, it is not surprising that these images are in the first case wrong, and in the second, misleading and criminally one dimensional, for Margaret Pole was much more than the martyr she reluctantly became.

Born in the reign of her uncle Edward IV, the daughter of the king's senior brother, George, Duke of Clarence, her life promised to be a wealthy and favoured one. Her expectations however, were adversely affected by the accession of the Lancastrian representative, Henry Tudor, and the fall of the House of York in 1485. Married at the age of fourteen to a knight of Welsh descent, Sir Richard Pole, the match was certainly less than she could have once anticipated and following his death, she suffered considerable financial difficulties. In contrast, the accession of Henry VIII in 1509 brought with it her restoration to the Earldom of Salisbury three years later and eventual appointment as governess to the king's only legitimate heir, Princess Mary. Nevertheless, in 1533, eight years after her second appointment as Mary's governess, she was dismissed by Henry VIII into whose disfavour she had fallen, and five years later herself, her eldest son Lord Montague and her youngest son Geoffrey were arrested. Geoffrey's revelations ensured the execution of Montague in the same year, and in 1541 Margaret's own execution followed.

Margaret's life illustrates perfectly the inexorable turn of Fortune's Wheel, a concept to the forefront of the medieval mind. The vicissitudes of her life were extreme. She was born in August 1473 at the height of the squabbles between her father George, Duke of Clarence and her uncle Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Nonetheless, her lifestyle promised to be a luxurious and privileged one. Her father lived lavishly and magnificently, as his position required, and enjoyed an income which allowed him to do so. Moreover Margaret's birthright was dramatic, for she entered the world as a

member of a ruling dynasty which had only taken possession of the crown by force twelve years earlier, and had subsequently lost and then regained it a mere two years before her birth. As the eldest child of the king's senior brother, Margaret was an important member of the royal family and her marriage would necessarily be significant, not only in strengthening and consolidating her father's position, but also that of the House of York. When it occurred however, it was to man possessing no more than a knighthood, and enjoying a landed income of only £170 a year.

The collapse of the House of York, engendered by the usurpation of Margaret's uncle, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and the accession of Henry Tudor were to have monumental long term effects upon Margaret, and her brother Edward, Earl of Warwick. Her position, and that of her brother under Richard III and Henry VII, will be examined not only to reconstruct her life, but to serve as a reflection of the dynastic fears of the two kings. Her marriage and that of Princess Cecily, which were both arranged by Henry VII, must certainly be seen as a manifestation of that fear. Margaret's husband, Sir Richard Pole, a man who has received passing mention only in studies concerning the administration of Wales and the palatinate of Chester,¹ played a far more crucial role in Henry VII's regime than has been recognised. Consequently, his ancestry and career will be considered in order to understand the nature of Margaret's marriage and Henry VII's attitude towards her. Moreover, a study of Sir Richard's career will bring to our attention the importance Henry VII attributed to certain members of his half blood family, and will help dispel the misconception that he failed to welcome them into the regime as Ralph Griffiths and Roger Thomas claim. The thesis will hopefully add to our appreciation of Henry VII's government, and allay the fallacy that; 'Few kings have had so few relations at their accession as Henry VII.'² Margaret's widowhood, one of the most difficult periods in her life, preceded the next upward revolution of Fortune's Wheel as she was propelled to prosperity and a very rare position of independent authority.

The king who, towards the end of his reign ordered her execution, at the beginning of his reign bestowed upon her great favour. In fact Margaret's position under Henry VIII was extremely unusual. Her restoration to the Earldom of Salisbury made her one of the wealthiest, and thus potentially most powerful members of the peerage.

¹ Beverley Smith, J., 'Crown and Community in the Principality of North Wales in the Reign of Henry Tudor', *Welsh History Review*, III, (ii) 1966, 145-171; Worthington, P., 'Royal Government in the Counties Palatine of Lancashire and Chester 1450-1509' (Unpublished Ph D thesis, University of Wales (Swansea), 1991)

² Griffiths, R.A., and Thomas, R.S., *The Making of the Tudor Dynasty* (Gloucester, 1985) p. 179.

one of the wealthiest, and thus potentially most powerful members of the peerage. Moreover, she was the first, and apart from Anne Boleyn, the only woman in sixteenth century England to hold a peerage title in her own right. The thesis will consequently analyse the countess's position within the aristocracy; how and if she used the potential authority the restoration gave her, and the extent to which she was limited by the restrictions of her gender. Contemporary ideas concerning women considered them to be morally and intellectually inferior to men. However, as the head of her family Margaret was required to negotiate with her male, theoretically superior, counterparts, for instance regarding the four marriages of her children and of her granddaughter Catherine. Margaret's peer group were thus unable to employ such concepts of female inferiority in their dealings with her and were forced, under these circumstances, to accept her as an equal. Margaret also headed her own affinity, the members of which will be looked at in detail not only to evaluate her success and skill, but to throw light upon the importance of, and esteem or otherwise, in which a female headed affinity was regarded in the sixteenth century. In some areas however, Margaret was undoubtedly at a disadvantage, and it was here that her eldest son's role became important. Lord Montague's career will therefore be investigated, as certain aspects of it were directly related to his position as the countess's heir. He played a far more prominent role in the maintenance of the family's position, than was perhaps common for a son and heir at that time. Consequently, Margaret's status as an independent member of the aristocracy in a society advocating female obedience to male authority, will be explored in order to understand not only how she coped with her situation, but how she was regarded by those men; peers, clients and employees, who came into contact with her.

In addition to her unusual position as Countess of Salisbury, Margaret was appointed to the highest office available to a woman at that time: governess to the king's heir Princess Mary. Margaret's relationship with, and influence upon Mary is significant when one considers that she had under her care the girl who would one day become England's first reigning queen. For eight years between 1525-1533, Margaret strove to support and help Mary through some of the most traumatic years of her life, during which the annulment of her parents' marriage became an issue, and Mary grew increasingly estranged from her once beloved father. Margaret's stand on behalf of Mary was to finally sour her relationship with Henry VIII. In fact after Mary's household was disbanded in 1533, Margaret effectively withdrew from court altogether, only making a very brief return in 1536 following the fall of Anne Boleyn. Indeed, the destruction of the Pole family, far from being unexpected, had been brewing for some time. Although many historians accept this, in relation to the effect

of Reginald's activities upon his family, it will be shown that even without the cardinal's provocations, the king was sufficiently disenchanted with the rest of the Pole family by 1538.

The thesis will conduct a thorough investigation of the fall of the family: the so called 'Exeter Conspiracy'. This at least has gained more than a passing reference from several historians, yet the only three to look at it in any detail are the Misses M.H. and R. Dodds and Christoph Höllger,³ with whose conclusions I am unable to concur. Some of the greatest criticism Henry VIII has incurred has been as a result of his treatment of the Poles and the Courtenays in 1538. Their fall has been used to demonstrate Henry's tyranny, irrational dynastic fears and unscrupulous desire for revenge against Margaret's son Reginald Pole. However, this thesis will seek to demonstrate that the course of action Henry took in 1538 was the only course of action he could reasonably have been expected to take under the circumstances. A great deal of the evidence gathered against the suspects has fortunately survived. An examination of this evidence, combined with the behaviour of not only Reginald, but Margaret and Geoffrey, and the uneasy relationship between Henry VIII and Lord Montague, reveals that Henry's action was certainly comprehensible. Moreover, a knowledge of the extent and distribution of the countess's lands is crucial towards an understanding of the family's fall. Only with regard to Margaret's execution can Henry be justifiably criticised. At 67 years old and bereft of her lands, she was indeed no threat to him. Yet so far from his favour and affection had she fallen and so great was his hatred of Reginald, that no clemency was forthcoming. The woman he had once regarded as a parent, and to whose care he had entrusted his only legitimate child, went to the block on his command in 1541. Fortune's Wheel had fallen for the last time.

Although very few of Margaret's personal letters survive, her character has proved strong enough to emerge to us through her relationships with family, friends and employees. Unfortunately, neither her will nor that of her husband are extant. Nevertheless, some of her papers which were confiscated at her arrest have survived, and include an inventory of her household at Warblington and a complete set of ministers accounts for her lands, including servants' wages. It has therefore been

³ Dodds, M.H., and R., *The Pilgrimage of Grace 1536-1537 and the Exeter Conspiracy 1538* (2 vols., London, 1971); Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539; Diplomatic and Polemical Responses to the Break with Rome.' (Unpublished D.Phil thesis, University of Oxford, 1989). I am grateful to Dr Höllger's supervisor, the late Dr Jennifer Loach, for drawing my attention to this thesis.

possible to reconstruct the countess's lifestyle to some extent. The survival of earlier ministers accounts has also made it feasible to investigate the administration of Margaret's lands, and thus evaluate her success as a 'good lord,' employer and landlord. In addition there is a substantial amount of material at the Public Record Office, the British Library and a small but useful amount in several local record offices in counties where she held properties.

The thesis will reveal Margaret Pole as more than just a beatified martyr. Born during the latter stages of the Wars of the Roses into a family from which she inherited respectable dynastic credentials, by the sixteenth century she was the relic of a fallen dynasty. However, she was to enjoy the greatest rewards during the heady reign of Henry VIII when she attained a position that provided more independence than was possibly predicted for her as the Duke of Clarence's daughter. This woman, brought up with conventional medieval beliefs, suddenly found herself operating in a man's world. Certainly, to a lesser extent she faced similar problems to those faced by her charge when she ascended the throne as Mary I. Although Henry VIII's court allowed women to compete with men for favours on an almost equal footing, as the rise of Anne Boleyn illustrates, Margaret's success was, not surprisingly, the result of more sedate means. Feminine wiles were not employed to procure the advancement of this 39 year old widow: her rise was achieved largely as a result of her kinship to Henry VIII and her close friendship to Henry's queen, Catherine of Aragon. Sadly that friendship would contribute to her downfall in 1538.

CHAPTER ONE

THE DUKE OF CLARENCE'S DAUGHTER; 1473-1485

This chapter will examine the tortuous descent of the Warwick inheritance, and the struggle which ensued over the possession of it between Margaret's father, George Duke of Clarence and her uncle, Richard Duke of Gloucester. It will also clarify the claims of others to the estates, such as those of Henry VIII and Sir William Fitzwilliam, Earl of Southampton, which become significant after Margaret's restoration. An understanding of the various components of the inheritance will clarify for us the element to which Margaret was restored in 1512; the Salisbury lands. This chapter will also put Margaret Plantagenet's birth into context, by looking at the events which were taking place at the time of her birth in 1473. Her father's position in his brother's regime and his lifestyle will also be considered in order to understand Margaret's status and the prospects to which she could look forward. Despite scant evidence regarding her childhood, this chapter will examine her life up until the accession of Henry VII in 1485.

1473 was a difficult year for the twenty four year old Duke of Clarence as relations with both his brothers were particularly strained. Rumours abounded that he was involved in yet more treasonable intrigues against one of those brothers, King Edward IV, while the tension between himself and his younger brother, Richard Duke of Gloucester, was engendered by their struggle to control the Warwick inheritance. On 11 July 1469, having obtained the necessary papal dispensation, Clarence had married his twenty two year old second cousin Isabell Neville at Calais Castle, in direct opposition to the wishes of his brother the king. Isabell was the eldest daughter of Richard, Earl of Warwick and Salisbury, and one of the co-heiresses to his vast estates. To Clarence she was a most suitable spouse; a young woman of adequate social standing who would eventually place under his control an inheritance that could buttress his political power at court. He may have wanted much more, possibly the crown itself as the Lincolnshire rebellion of 1470 suggests. Subsequent events - the brief readeption of Henry VI, possibly not envisaged by Clarence, and the re-accession of Edward helped by Clarence's desertion of Warwick -

are well known and it is not our concern to go into them here. Of relevance to this study are the repercussions of Clarence's determination to marry his mother's god-daughter.

Before looking at the dispute between the two dukes, it is important to understand the components of the Warwick inheritance, and the position of the Countess of Warwick.¹ The Warwick estates comprised four elements,² two descending through Richard Neville, father of Isabell and Anne and two descending through their mother Anne, an heiress in her own right. We will examine briefly these elements and, in consequence, those ancestors from whom Margaret Plantagenet could claim descent; turning firstly to Anne, Countess of Warwick and Margaret's maternal grandmother. Anne was the daughter of Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick, and Isabel La Despencer. The Earldom of Warwick can be traced back to the conquest when Henry De Beaumont was created earl in 1088. In 1268 it passed into the Beauchamp family who held it in unbroken succession until 1446. The Beauchamp Earls of Warwick played a significant role in government and history, and one of Margaret's ancestors achieved immortality as 'The Black Dog of Arden', so named by the infamous Piers Gaveston in the reign of Edward II. 'The Black Dog's' grandson Thomas, fell foul of Richard II and admitting his treason in 1397, all his lands and honours were forfeit. However on the accession of Henry IV, he was restored. His son Richard served the crown well, and on 1 June 1428 became tutor and governor to the young King Henry VI, bearing him to his coronation at Westminster Abbey in 1429. He died as Lieutenant General and Governor of France and Normandy in 1439, and it was in respect of his services to the crown that his son Henry was created Duke of Warwick with remission to his heirs male, in 1444. This Henry, Duke of Warwick was the brother of the whole blood to Anne, Margaret's grandmother. Anne's father Richard had married firstly, Elizabeth daughter of Thomas, fifth Lord Berkeley,³ and by this marriage he had three daughters. Elizabeth died in 1422 and in 1423 Richard married Isabel La Despencer. By this marriage he had one son Henry, the future duke, and one daughter, Anne. Henry died in 1446 and his only child, Anne followed him to the grave in 1449. His sister's claims to the Beauchamp estates superseded those of her half sisters due to the

¹ For the following discussion I have relied heavily upon the useful article by Professor Michael Hicks; 'Descent, Partition and Extinction: The Warwick Inheritance' in *Richard III and his Rivals: Magnates and their Motives in the Wars of the Roses*. (London, 1991) pp. 323-35. I have also found the following volumes of *The Complete Peerage* useful; IV, IX, XI, XII (ii).

² See Appendix 1.

³ See Appendix 1.

fact that she was Henry's sister of the whole blood,⁴ and he had already taken seisin of the lands.⁵ At first her claims could not be made good, but this was remedied by force in 1454 when Anne inherited, in her own right, the estates of the Beauchamp Earldom of Warwick. In March 1449/50, her husband was created Earl of Warwick and she Countess of Warwick with remission to the heirs of her body.

The Despencer element of Anne's inheritance came from her mother Isabel.⁶ Less illustrious than the Beauchamps, but no less notorious, the barony of Despencer is believed to have come into being in 1295, when it is thought Hugh Le Despencer became Lord Le Despencer. Owing to the favour enjoyed by himself and his son at the court of Edward II, he was created Earl of Winchester in 1322. The names of Piers Gaveston and the Despenchers are synonymous with the scandal and unhappy events of Edward II's reign, and in 1326 both Despenchers, father and son were executed, the son swinging from a gallows fifty feet high. In 1397 Thomas Le Despencer was created Earl of Gloucester, a reward for his assistance to Richard II in his successful coup against the Duke of Gloucester and the Earls of Arundel and Warwick. In the same year he obtained a reversal of the sentence of disinheritance and exile placed upon his ancestors towards the end of Edward II's reign. Between 1378-84, he made a prestigious match with Constance, daughter of Edmond Langley, Duke of York, the fourth son of Edward III, but at the accession of Henry IV in 1399, he lost the title of earl and was eventually beheaded at Bristol. Declared a traitor in the parliament of 1400/1, his lands and any hereditary baronies were forfeit. The attainder of this barony was reversed in 1461, but the right to it, and the Barony of Burghersh, brought to the Despenchers by the marriage of Sir Edward Le Despencer before August 1354, to Elizabeth, daughter and heir of Sir Bartholomew De Burghersh, remained in abeyance until 1604. Thomas Le Despencer's daughter Isabel, outlived her brother Richard who died in 1414. She married firstly Richard Beauchamp Earl of Worcester, by whom she had a daughter, Elizabeth, and through her a grandson, George Neville.⁷ Her second husband was Richard, Earl of Warwick and her daughter by

⁴ Hicks, M., Op.cit., p. 324.

⁵ Hicks, M., 'The Beauchamp Trust, 1439-87' in *Richard III and his Rivals: Magnates and their Motives in the Wars of the Roses*, p. 340.

⁶ See Appendix 3.

⁷ See Appendix 1 and 2. This George was the grandfather of Jane Neville, who married Henry Pole, Lord Montague.

this marriage was Anne, who had to share the Despencer inheritance with her half nephew, George Neville. This arrangement was not to the liking of Anne's covetous husband Richard Neville, and he obtained custody of George's share of the lands during the young boy's minority. He gained possession by force and, ignoring commands to desist, maintained control over them even after George reached his majority.⁸ Clearly, although Anne was indeed an heiress in her own right, her claims to her inheritance were not straight forward, and in the case of the Despencer lands, George Neville had been illegally dispossessed on her account.

The descent of Richard Neville, Margaret's grandfather, is well known. He was the grandson of Ralph Neville, sixth Lord of Raby, first Earl of Westmoreland by his second wife Joan Beaufort,⁹ daughter of John of Gaunt and Catherine Swynford. This marriage produced fourteen children, all but three surviving infancy.¹⁰ The youngest daughter Cecily would marry Richard, Duke of York and give birth to the future Edward IV. The eldest son was Richard, and his son would marry Anne, Margaret's maternal grandmother. Naturally the Earldom of Westmoreland descended to the children of the first marriage, but the earl ensured that provision was made for the eldest son of his second marriage. He conveyed out of the Neville Barony the lordships of Raby (co., Durham), Sheriff Hutton and Middleham to Richard.¹¹ The earl had acted within the law, but Richard gained at the expense of the second Earl of Westmoreland. A struggle ensued with Westmoreland resorting to force, and the situation was only assuaged when Richard surrendered the Durham lands in return for the recognition of his title. These lands, it must be remembered, were heritable only in the male line. Richard Neville's eldest son, also called Richard (the kingmaker) enjoyed the lands, but his marriage to Anne produced only two daughters. Therefore the heir to the Neville patrimony was 'the kingmaker's' younger brother John Neville, followed by his son George, the future Duke of Bedford. Hence it is clear that this element of the Warwick inheritance could not be passed to Isabell and Anne Neville.

⁸ Hicks, M., 'Descent, Partition and Extinction: The Warwick Inheritance,' p. 324.

⁹ See Appendix 2.

¹⁰ Kendal, P.M., *Warwick the Kingmaker* (London, 1972) p. 19.

¹¹ Hicks, M., *Op.cit.*, p. 324.

The fourth and final element of this inheritance is that known as the Salisbury lands, which were inherited from Alice, mother of Richard Neville (the kingmaker).¹² William de Montague, Lord Montague, was created Earl of Salisbury in 1336/7. In 1397, the earldom passed to John de Montague nephew of the second earl who, in 1382, supposedly killed his son and heir in a tilting match. John was the son of the second earl's younger brother and his wife Margaret, who brought with her the barony of Monthermer. Although attainted for treason in 1400/1, in 1409 his son Thomas was restored to all the lands his father had held in fee tail. In the following October he was summoned to parliament as Earl of Salisbury, and in 1421 he was restored in blood. Finally in 1461, the 1400/1 attainder was reversed. He died at the siege of Orleans in 1428 leaving one daughter Alice, and a young widow, his second wife Alice Chaucer on whom he had settled eight manors in jointure. As the endowments granted with the Earldom of Salisbury in 1336/7 were in tail male, Sir Richard Montague, Thomas' uncle inherited these. However, it was Alice's husband, Richard Neville, who obtained the title of Earl of Salisbury. This was an unusual step, and that his contemporaries were aware of this is revealed by the discussion of the situation in council in May 1429, before Richard was finally accepted as earl in right of his wife. On the death of Alice in 1462, her son 'the kingmaker' became Earl of Salisbury, and it was to this title that Margaret would be restored as Countess of Salisbury.

When Thomas Earl of Salisbury died in 1428, he held the Salisbury lands in tail male, the Montague and Monthermer lands in tail general and the lands of his first wife, Eleanor Holland, by courtesy of England.¹³ These Holland estates Richard and Alice entered immediately, although parts of it were tied up in dower for some years. The fee simple estates of Thomas were exempt from dower, as they were held to his use. In 1461, the reversal of John, fourth Earl of Salisbury's attainder should have affected only lands in fee simple, as the lands in tail had already been restored in 1409. Nevertheless, by this reversal and the exploitation of the sudden enhancement of their political value to the new king, Edward IV, Alice obtained tail male lands which had legally escheated. Her gain was at the expense of the St Cross hospital to which, as endowment, the lands had been intended by Cardinal Beaufort in 1446.¹⁴

¹² See Appendix 4.

¹³ Hicks, M., 'The Neville Earldom of Salisbury, 1429-71' in *Richard III and his Rivals: Magnates and their Motives in the Wars of the Roses*, p. 356.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 359.

It is quite clear that the Earl of Warwick's land based power was built upon unsure foundations. As Michael Hicks correctly states:

The Neville lands were conveyed from the legitimate heirs; the whole Despencer inheritance was seized, although the countess of Warwick was entitled to only half; the Beauchamp inheritance was disputed with her three half sisters; and both in 1442 and 1461 fraud enlarged the Salisbury estates.¹⁵

From this patchwork had been created one of the greatest estates in medieval England, but in order to prevent its seams from splitting, the maintenance of Warwick's political power was essential. Any fall from grace and those dispossessed heirs would not hesitate to exploit his misfortune to regain their rights. With the rise of the Woodvyls and his gradual distancing from the king, Warwick's reaction was prompted by more than the disgruntled resentment of a discarded mentor. With no son to inherit his estates, Warwick recognised the necessity of providing husbands for his daughters, who would be powerful enough to protect their estates. With the Woodvyls depleting the marriage market of just such young men, Warwick cast his eye upon the only two magnates he felt met his requirements; the Dukes of Clarence and Gloucester. In 1469 he obtained his wish where Clarence was concerned, but the marriage took place while both Warwick and Clarence were estranged from the king. He did not live to see the marriage of his second daughter Anne to Richard Duke of Gloucester who, unlike Clarence, he had been unable to entice into his treasonable schemes. It is to the two dukes and the struggle that ensued between them over the Warwick inheritance, that we must now turn.

In 1471 the Earl of Warwick was killed at the battle of Barnet in opposition to Edward IV, and thus guilty of treason. His lands therefore should have been forfeit to the crown, but this would have disinherited his daughter Isabell, Clarence's wife, and as Clarence had been instrumental in re-establishing him on the throne, Edward wished to reward not alienate him. So, although Warwick was posthumously indicted for his treason, Clarence was granted all the lands to which his wife had hereditary claims, certainly giving her an unfair share over her younger sister and co-heiress, Anne. The grant also included the lands of Anne, Countess of Warwick, mother of the two girls. She was never indicted or

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 361.

even accused of treason, and her estates and jointure should not have been affected by her husband's treason. A widow's jointure, unlike her dower, was allocated during her husband's lifetime and if, as in this case, before his treason, then exempt from forfeiture. The lands of Warwick's younger brother John, Marquis Montague,¹⁶ also killed at Barnet fighting against Edward, were forfeit to the crown. His son George, unlike Warwick's daughter Isabell, was not allowed to inherit his father's lands revealing the unfairness of the situation. These lands, the Neville patrimony: the lands granted in tail male that the daughters could not inherit, were granted to the Duke of Gloucester. Consequently, both the dukes' claims to these lands depended solely upon a royal grant. Only by the use of a royal grant could hereditary claims, such as those of the Countess of Warwick be set aside. It was precisely because these hereditary claims had been set aside, that Clarence was understandably infuriated by Gloucester's next move.

Gloucester wished to obtain a share of the tail general estates that belonged to the Warwick inheritance, those lands heritable in the female line that Clarence now possessed. He resented the lavishness of rewards heaped upon a brother who had been disloyal while he, Gloucester, had always remained firmly faithful to Edward, even sharing his exile. Consequently, in 1471 he supposedly abducted Isabell's sister Anne from Clarence's custody. His object was to marry her and gain possession of her share of the tail general estates. Anne most probably approved, as Gloucester was the only man powerful enough to secure her inheritance for her. As Clarence had possession of the lands by royal grant, any hereditary claim should have been invalid and he was naturally angered by Gloucester's demands, especially as he believed, and probably quite rightly, that the king supported Gloucester in this. In February 1472, Sir John Paston wrote; 'The Kynge entretyth my Lorde off Clarence ffor my Lorde of Glowcester.'¹⁷ In the same letter of 1472, we learn that Clarence was prepared to accept the marriage between Gloucester and Anne, but not the division of the tail general estates. However, following a conference of the same year, he agreed to the principal of partition and surrendered some of the estates. As compensation, his title in others was strengthened and he was created Earl of Warwick and Salisbury. Also included in this plan of partition were the tail male estates enjoyed by Gloucester. Soon after this conference of 18 March, Gloucester's marriage to Anne doubtless took place, and so eager for the marriage was he, that he went

¹⁶ See Appendix 1.

¹⁷ Gairdner, J., (ed.), *The Paston Letters*, V (Gloucester, 1983) 135, no. 798.

ahead without waiting for the necessary papal dispensation.

In honour of the agreement, Gloucester began the surrender of lands to Clarence, but Clarence did not reciprocate. He prevaricated, realising that if the dispensation was refused, he may not have to surrender anything to Gloucester. Naturally, his behaviour severely soured relations between them by 1473. To encourage Clarence's co-operation, in June of that year Edward released the old Countess of Warwick into Gloucester's custody. There were rumours that she was to be restored, and might then relinquish her rights to Gloucester, thus depriving Clarence. This did not however bring Clarence to heel, instead he became more belligerent, Sir John Paston anxiously reporting on 6 November 1473 that, 'the Duke off Clarence makyth hym bygge in that he kan, schewyng as he wolde but dele with the Duke of Glowcester.'¹⁸ By December of 1473, Edward IV's patience was exhausted. He refused Clarence a proviso of exemption to the act of resumption of that month, thus depriving him of all his lands. Clarence's only options were rebellion or submission, he sensibly decided upon the latter course, and an agreement was eventually drawn up in 1474. Two acts of parliament, one in 1474, and one in 1475, finally brought the matter to conclusion: 'The intention was to enable the Earl of Warwick's daughters to inherit by barring the rights of others.'¹⁹ The dukes were to 'have, possede, enherit and enjoy' the lands of the Countess of Warwick, 'in like maner and fourme, as yf the seid Countes were nowe naturally dede.'²⁰ The countess was also specifically barred and excluded from any dower or jointure in her late husband's possessions. The lands were to be held by the dukes, their wives and, significantly, the heirs of their wives. The tail male lands were to be enjoyed by the dukes and, in this case, their heirs, only while a male heir of John, Marquis Montague still lived. In the absence of a male heir to the marquis, then the dukes would enjoy the lands for life only. The properties that Clarence received under these terms, were the lordship and manor of Clavering in Essex, and the substantial residence Le Herber, with all its appurtenances in London.²¹ The dukes now took possession by hereditary right, and not by mere royal

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 195, no. 841.

¹⁹ Hicks, M., 'Descent, Partition and Extinction: The Warwick Inheritance,' p. 330.

²⁰ 14 Edward IV, cap 20, *Rot. Parl.*, VI, 100.

²¹ Ibid., cap 17, p. 125. These properties were among those that were restored to Margaret. Her possession of them must be due to Henry VIII's generosity for she had no legal right to them following the death of Marquis Montague's heir in 1483.

grant as had previously been the case, and entered the tail male lands to which their wives had had no legal right.

As if these problems of 1473 were not bad enough for George Plantagenet, in May John Earl of Oxford, brother-in-law of Warwick and one of those who had been present at Clarence's wedding, invaded England. Initially repulsed, he landed at Cornwall on 30 September where he took St Michaels Mount, a fortress there. Although he had enjoyed the support of Louis XI of France, his invasion had never been a serious threat to Edward and he was soon captured. There is no real evidence to suggest that Clarence was involved in this, but some in England and on the continent, with hindsight, were quite prepared to believe that he was more than capable of such treachery.²² By helping Oxford, he was linked indirectly to the King of France. The rumours would hardly encourage Edward's confidence in his younger sibling, nor prompt Clarence to believe that he had, or would ever enjoy the same trust from Edward that his brother Gloucester did.

We must wonder whether, in the midst of such a tumultuous and inauspicious year for Clarence, he found the time or inclination to stop, and celebrate the birth of his second child on 14 August.²³ Born at Farley Castle near Bath,²⁴ the duke's daughter was named Margaret after his sister, the Duchess of Burgundy.²⁵ Despite the upheavals in the duke's life, and providing of course that she survived to adulthood unlike her elder brother, Margaret's future looked promising. She was born, as her father had been, into an 'atmosphere of great wealth, lavish expenditure, important connections and exalted ambitions.'²⁶ Clarence was one of the wealthiest magnates in the country, even after the 1474 agreement, and for him ostentation was the order of the day. Even as a young

²² The gossiping Papal envoy, Pietro Aliprando stated in November 1472, that before Edward IV could leave on his French campaign he would have to, 'decide about the regents and lieutenants to govern, so that he may not be overthrown by his brother, the duke of Clarence.' Lander, J.R., *Crown and Nobility 1450-1509* (London, 1976) p. 245. On 6 November 1473, referring to the quarrel between Clarence and Gloucester, Sir John Paston remarked, 'som men thynke that undre thys ther sholde be som other thyng entenyd, and som treason conspyred.' Gairdner, J., (ed.), *The Paston Letters*, V, 195, no. 841.

²³ Dugdale, W., *Monasticon Anglicanum*, II (London, 1846) 64.

²⁴ Ross, C., (intro.), *The Rous Roll* by John Rous (Gloucester, 1980) no. 61.

²⁵ Weightman, C., *Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy 1446-1503* (Gloucester, 1989) p. 127.

²⁶ Hicks, M., *False, Fleeting, Perjur'd Clarence* (Bangor, 1992) p. 4.

teenager in the care of his brother the king, no expense had been spared in providing him with everything he wanted; furs of every kind, fabrics from Venice and Genoa and silk from Damascus to name but a few.²⁷ As an adult, his household was luxurious and his sense of importance is revealed by the completion of his own household ordinance drawn up in December 1468. This Ordinance indicates the huge scale of his household. Clarence maintained a staff of 188 persons and kept 93 horses in his riding household,²⁸ while many other magnates had closed their stables relying on hired transport.²⁹ His wife, the Duchess Isabell was no less well provided for. In her household 125 servants awaited her command, while sixteen groomes attended the 43 horses in her stable.³⁰ Clarence's piety is well known, and significantly the first ordinance concerns the observance of Holy Days,³¹ while a later one prohibits gambling, except during the twelve days of Christmas!³² The duke's meal times were strictly laid down. In the Summer his 'furst dynner' was to begin at 10.00 am and his 'furst souper' at 5.00 pm, while in the winter his 'furst dynner' was to commence at 9.00 am and his 'furst souper' at 4.00 pm. Present during the meals were:

the kervers, ameners, cup-bearers, and sewers, and all other officers assigned to serve the seid Duke, the chambre, and the halle; to the intent, that the seid Duke be welle and honorablye served.³³

Anyone failing in his duty was to lose a day's wages and his dinner and supper! It is clear that materially Margaret would want for nothing: wealth and status were hers. She was the niece of the King of England and daughter of the Duke of Clarence, who, in 1473, stood third in line to the throne; she could not have chosen a more exalted circle into which to be born.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 11.

²⁸ *Collection of Ordinances and Regulations for the Government of the Royal Household*, printed for the Society of Antiquaries by John Nichols. (London, 1790) p. 99.

²⁹ Ibid., p.166.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 100-101.

³¹ Ibid., p. 89.

³² Ibid., p. 91.

³³ Ibid., p. 89.

In a pecuniary sense, Margaret's prospects were extremely encouraging. Until 1475 she was the duke's only heir, but in that year, on 25 February at Warwick Castle, her brother Edward was born. The obvious importance of this is made clear by the insertion in the Tewkesbury Chronicle. In Margaret's case it merely mentions the date on which she was born, but regarding Edward, it goes on to discuss and give details of his christening. His godparents were Edward IV, Elizabeth, Duchess of Suffolk, Clarence's sister, Edward Storey, Bishop of Carlisle and at his concurrent confirmation, Lord John Strensham, Abbot of Tewkesbury. At his christening he was also created Earl of Warwick by his godfather, the king.³⁴ The title, previously held by his father Clarence, must have been relinquished in his son's favour.³⁵

Although Edward now superseded her in relation to their hereditary expectations, Margaret's position was still favourable. She had her status, and on 13 March 1475, less than a month after his son's birth, Clarence made changes to those estates he held in his own right. These changes concerned four manors formerly of the Butler family, and two manors formerly of the Courtenay family that had been granted to Clarence on 18 July 1474. They had been granted to the duke and his issue male, but on 13 March 1475 'For dyvers considerations movyng his Highnes, by th'advice of the Lords Spirituelx and Temporelx, and the commens, in this present Parlement assembled,'³⁶ the terms of the grant were altered. Clarence was now to hold the lands, 'to hym, and to his heires and his assignes for ever, of the King and of his Heires, by Knyghtes service'³⁷ Thus the lands were now heritable in the female line. Michael Hicks believes the duke's action was dictated by the fear that neither of his children might reach maturity.³⁸ Equally, it is not

³⁴ Dugdale, W., *Monasticon Anglicanum*, p. 64.

³⁵ There has been some debate about Edward's right to the title following his father's attainder, but as Edward had been granted the earldom in his own right it would naturally not fall under the terms of Clarence's attainder. Note the difference with the Earldom of Salisbury; this was a title enjoyed by Clarence until his death and was therefore subject to his attainder. Following its forfeiture, it was regranted to the son of the Duke of Gloucester. It is true that the existence of the Countess of Warwick could have been a possible bar to Edward's right to hold the earldom but, as has been discussed, she was regarded as legally dead.

³⁶ 14 Edward IV, cap 20, *Rot. Parl.*, VI, 126.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

³⁸ Hicks, M., *False Fleeting Perjur'd Clarence*, pp. 115-16.

unreasonable to view these changes as evidence of the duke's care for his daughter, for on 1 May 1475, Clarence, 'who is going to cross the sea with the king on his voyage and service,'³⁹ obtained a licence to enfeoff Roger Tocotes, Thomas Hawkyns, John Barneby, Robert Sheffeld and Thomas Lygon, of the above mentioned manors. We do not know the exact terms of this enfeoffment, but as Clarence was going on campaign to France and there was a possibility that he might not return, the manors may very well have been temporarily enfeoffed to the use of his young daughter. In fact, at the time of Edward IV's French campaign this practice was common and even supported by the king. Clarence's enfeoffment was to take effect, 'without fine or fee according to the form of an act in the parliament of Westminster, 6 October 12 Edward IV.'⁴⁰ A later statute of 1475 stated that if the feoffer died on active service leaving under age heirs, the feoffees would hold the lands for the benefit of the heirs until their majority.⁴¹ It is possible that Clarence enfeoffed the lands under the same terms as Sir John Colville in 1360; if he should return he would repossess them, but if he died they were to be enfeoffed to his heirs.⁴² In Clarence's case this may have meant both his children, or Margaret alone, but that Margaret was included seems clear from the fact that Clarence altered the terms of the original grant. The enfeoffment was temporary, as the relevant lands were among those forfeited to the crown following Clarence's attainder, but if we accept this interpretation of Clarence's actions, his concern for his two year old daughter's welfare is clear.

Although not considered as important as sons, daughters in the Middle Ages had their own respective roles to play. In general only two options were available to them; marriage or the convent. In Margaret's case, marriage was obviously the preferable choice. The object of her union would be to enhance her father's position and influence by increasing his affinity through a strategic and important alliance. Her status and dowry would ensure that there would be no shortage of suitors. Although no extant evidence indicates that Clarence indulged in any matrimonial negotiations regarding his children, he would undoubtedly have considered options. Consequently it will be useful at this juncture to examine the marriages made, or negotiated for, the sisters and daughters of

³⁹ *C.P.R.*, 1467-77, p. 517.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 518.

⁴¹ Bean, J.M.W., *The Decline of English Feudalism 1215-1540* (Manchester, 1968) p. 146.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 144.

Edward IV in order to gain an understanding of the kind of marriage predicted for Margaret.

Regarding Edward's sisters,⁴³ in 1445 his elder sister Anne was betrothed to Henry Holland heir to the Duke of Exeter, a direct descendant of Edward III,⁴⁴ and one of her father's wards.⁴⁵ Her second marriage to Sir Thomas St Leger was not as distinguished as it was the result of a love match. In 1455 the Duke of York obtained the wardship of the Duke of Suffolk's heir, John de la Pole, and it was to this peer that Elizabeth was married. Margaret, the youngest of the three sisters, made a most spectacular match when she married Charles Duke of Burgundy in 1468. With the exception of Margaret, the sisters had been married as the daughters of a duke, not as the sisters of a king.

Despite the fact that all Edward's daughters were married subsequent to his death and as a result of arrangements made by others, Edward had been negotiating marriages for them from an early age. In 1470 Elizabeth his eldest daughter, had been betrothed at the age of four to George, the son of John Neville, Marquis Montague. In the same year, George was elevated to the peerage as Duke of Bedford. In the 1475 Treaty of Picquigny however, a more illustrious match was secured for her when it was decided that she would marry the Dauphin of France. Mary, Edward's second daughter who had been first reserve to her sister Elizabeth regarding the French marriage, finally obtained a spouse of her own when she was promised to King Frederick I of Denmark in 1481. For Cecily, the son of King James III of Scotland was chosen and she was formally betrothed to him in 1473, while it was agreed in 1480 that Anne was to be married to Philip, only son and heir of Maximilian Archduke of Austria and Mary of Burgundy.

These marriages and betrothals provide an idea of the type of marriage destined for the Lady Margaret Plantagenet. A high ranking peer of England was a possibility, or perhaps a match outside the realm, as those negotiated for Edward IV's daughters. Margaret's

⁴³ See Appendix 2.

⁴⁴ Henry Holland was the grandson of Elizabeth, sister of Henry IV. Thus he was a great grandson of John of Gaunt. In addition his great grandmother Joan of Kent, was the granddaughter of Edward I by his second marriage to Margaret of France.

⁴⁵ Weightman, C., *Margaret of York*, p. 11.

marriage would certainly be an honourable one for in 1484 it was agreed that Anne de la Pole, the king's niece, should marry the young man originally intended as a husband for the Princess Cecily; the future King James IV of Scotland.⁴⁶ What was not anticipated was that Margaret would marry, not a peer of England or the continent, but a Buckinghamshire knight of Welsh extraction, loyal to the Lancastrian rather than Yorkist cause, with a landed income of approximately £170 a year.⁴⁷ Comparing this to Clarence's wealth, which at the time of Margaret's birth was estimated at an immense £6,000 a year⁴⁸, puts the enormous change in Margaret's lifestyle very much into perspective. Her father's death and the accession of Henry Tudor were to have an enormous effect on Margaret Plantagenet's life.

In 1478 Margaret's father was privately executed in the Tower of London. Rumour suggests he had been drowned in a butt of malmsey wine. The importance of Clarence's execution has been discussed by Michael Hicks. If Clarence had been living in 1483 things might have been very different as he, and not Richard, would have been the senior uncle. His existence, suggests Hicks, would have hampered Richard's ability to usurp the throne, while Clarence's own usurpation would have been extremely difficult due to his unpopularity and lack of support among the magnates. Consequently, there might have been no Richard III if Clarence had continued to live, and; 'Without a Richard III to unite opposition behind the otherwise obscure Henry Tudor, there would have been no Tudor sovereigns.'⁴⁹ It is always a risk to speculate about what might have been, but if we accept the validity of Hicks' hindsight, then it is clear that Clarence's death was to have severe long-term repercussions for Margaret and her brother.

The events leading up to the duke's execution are well known, and it is not necessary to go into them here. What is relevant to this study is the position in which his children were left. They were orphans, as their mother Isabell had died in 1476 due to the after-effects of childbirth, her infant son following her to the grave shortly afterwards. All the lands that Clarence had held in his own right were now forfeit to the crown due to his

⁴⁶ Grant, A., 'Foreign Affairs under Richard III' in Gillingham, J., (ed.), *Richard III A Medieval Kingship* (London, 1993) p. 123.

⁴⁷ P.R.O. E.36/ 247, f. 35.

⁴⁸ Hicks, M., *Op.cit.*, p. 164.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 182-3.

attainder for treason, and the only lands that the children could inherit were those of their mother, and it seems that only Edward had a right to these. As far as existing evidence suggests, Margaret had no lands set aside for her maintenance. However, Edward IV was not remiss in assuming responsibility for the orphans. In his nephew's case, the king was also his godfather; 'When children were orphaned of both parents, it was incumbent on their godparents to acknowledge their special responsibility towards them.'⁵⁰ Such extra incentive would not be necessary in the young Earl of Warwick's case, his position as heir to vast and valuable estates would ensure he received the maximum attention. Nevertheless, the three year old Edward found himself in a rather difficult position, as his main rival for these lands was the powerful Duke of Gloucester.

The arrangements of 1474 had pleased neither duke, and each looked with covetous eyes upon the others gains. With Clarence's death Gloucester seized the opportunity to remedy the situation to his advantage. He had always objected to Clarence receiving Essendine and Shillingthorpe in Rutland, and following the duke's fall took them by force, ignoring the commands of the royal exchequer. He held on to them until he became king when, naturally, they were alienated to him.⁵¹ The dangerous pattern of Gloucester's thoughts is evident in his attempts to safeguard the tail male properties he held under the terms of the 1475 act of parliament discussed above. In the parliament of 1478, probably at Gloucester's prompting,⁵² the young Duke of Bedford was degraded from the peerage. This would prevent future vociferous protests from Bedford, concerning his disinheritance, taking place in the public forum of parliament. Also, in 1480 Gloucester obtained the custody and marriage of the degraded earl, whose marriage and production of a son was imperative if Gloucester was to retain the Neville tail male lands. The drift of Gloucester's mind is clear, and if Edward had been old enough to understand, he would have had good reason to fear for his own lands. However, in the same year that Gloucester was granted the wardship and marriage of George Neville, Edward's own wardship was also assigned. On 16 September 1480, the custody and marriage of Edward was granted to Thomas Grey, Marquis of Dorset, son of Elizabeth Woodvyll by her first husband. In the event of Edward's death, Dorset was to take possession of the custody and marriage of his sister Margaret as replacement. For this grant, Dorset paid the

⁵⁰ Shahr, S., *Childhood in the Middle Ages* (trans., Galai, C.) (London, 1992) p. 118.

⁵¹ Hicks, M., 'Descent, Partition and Extinction: The Warwick Inheritance,' p. 331.

⁵² Ibid.

substantial sum of £2,000,⁵³ but the right to marry Edward was a privilege worth paying for. In 1474 Dorset had married Cecily Bonville, heiress to extensive estates in Somerset and Devon.⁵⁴ In order to consolidate his land based power, it was desirable that any future daughters of his marriage should join with the Earl of Warwick, whose estates were centred upon the south and midlands. Consequently, it was in Dorset's interest to ensure that Edward's lands remained intact and secure from the ambitions of the Duke of Gloucester. The grant of 1480 therefore gave Edward the protection of the powerful Woodvyll clan, a suitable match for the king's younger brother. In addition to the custody and marriage of Edward, Dorset was also granted the custody of some of the young earl's lands in order to sustain him during his minority.⁵⁵ Significantly, these lands lay in the counties of Hampshire, Dorset, Somerset, Wiltshire, Gloucester and Worcester.⁵⁶ In February 1482, Dorset also gained lands in Devon and Cornwall as a result of Clarence's attainder.⁵⁷ Clearly, through his custody of Edward and part of his estates, Dorset was able to fortify his position in the south, centred around the Devon and Somerset estates acquired through his marriage.

The exact whereabouts of Clarence's children are difficult to ascertain at this time. Edward was under the care of the Marquis of Dorset, but where we cannot be sure. Nevertheless, the king continued his generosity to Edward and, in preparation for the visit of his sister Margaret, Duchess of Burgundy, the king made a series of gifts to his nephew. In June 1480 he presented him with four pairs of double soled shoes and a pair of single soled shoes made of Spanish leather, and in July four more pairs of shoes and a pair of boots.⁵⁸ It is not known where Margaret was placed during her uncle's reign, but her wardship never left royal hands.⁵⁹ Consequently, the king took financial

⁵³ *C.P.R.*, 1461-7, p. 212.

⁵⁴ Ross, C., *Edward IV* (London, 1974, reprinted, 1991) p. 336.

⁵⁵ *C.P.R.*, 1476-85, p. 212.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

⁵⁸ B.L. Harl. MS. 4780, ff. 45, 46.

⁵⁹ As reserve to her brother in the grant of his wardship and marriage to Dorset, Edward IV was unable to grant her wardship elsewhere.

responsibility for her. On 11 January 1482, Edward sent an order to the exchequer to pay 40 marks:

for such clothing and other necessaries as belongen unto our dear and well beloved niece Margaret daughter unto our brother late Duke of Clarence as for contentation of wages unto such persons as we have commanded to attend upon her.⁶⁰

Again on 16 November 1482, Edward paid fifty marks 'unto our cousin Margaret the daughter of our brother George late duke of Clarence' for her 'arrayment as for the wages of her servants.'⁶¹ The most obvious assumption is that Margaret was sent to be raised and educated with her cousins, the young princesses. There is evidence however, which undermines this view. In 1483, when Elizabeth Woodvyll and her children fled to sanctuary, Margaret does not appear to have been with them. Richard III specifically addressed Elizabeth, Cecily, Anne, Katherine and Bridget when he pleaded with them to leave Westminster Abbey.⁶² Alternatively, Margaret might have been placed with one of her paternal aunts or one of her godmothers, whose identities we unfortunately do not know. Certainly, wherever she was she was suitably attended upon, and enjoyed an education appropriate to a member of the royal family. Following their father's death in 1478, evidence has shown that Margaret and her brother were well provided for, and in 1483 their care again fell into the hands of an uncle: Richard, Duke of Gloucester. Two important aspects need to be investigated regarding the children's position under Richard III: Firstly their dynastic significance requires examination and secondly, the fate of Edward's inheritance necessitates attention, once his principal rival for these lands had become king.

It is not essential to plot the course of Richard's usurpation, but it is necessary to look at these events in relation to the whereabouts of Clarence's children. On 8 May 1483, Richard was already calling himself Protector, and in the middle of the same month began to order the confiscation of Woodvyll lands; in fact the confiscation of Earl Rivers' lands was effected by 28 May.⁶³ These confiscations naturally included those lands of the

⁶⁰ P.R.O. E.404/77/2, pencil no. 47.

⁶¹ P.R.O. E.404/77/3, pencil no. 66.

⁶² Gairdner, J., *Richard III* (Cambridge, 1898) p. 165.

⁶³ Horrox, R., *Richard III: A Study in Service* (Cambridge, 1989) p. 99.

Marquis of Dorset, on which Edward, Earl of Warwick must have been residing. As Richard's appointees moved in to take control, we must assume that they took possession of Edward's person and conveyed him to London at Richard's command. That Edward came to London we can be sure, for he attended Richard's coronation.⁶⁴ We also have Mancini's evidence:

At about this time Gloucester gave orders that the son of the duke of Clarence, his other brother, then a boy of ten years old, should come to the city: and commanded that the lad should be kept in confinement in the household of his wife, the child's maternal aunt. For he feared that if the entire progeny of King Edward [IV] became extinct, yet this child, who was also of royal blood, would still embarrass him.⁶⁵

It is clear that Edward's dynastic importance was widely recognised as Mancini immediately construed Edward's summons to the city as a result of Richard's decision to usurp the throne. Unfortunately we do not know the exact date of Edward's arrival. According to Mancini, Richard gave the order around 16 June when the Duke of York emerged from sanctuary. We know that Richard's wife had already reached London by this time from one of the Stonor Letters. On 9 June Simon Stallworth wrote to Sir William Stonor, informing him that 'The Kyng is at the towre. My lady of Glocestre come to London on thursday last.'⁶⁶ Most historians believe that Richard's decision to usurp must have been reached when he hustled Hastings out to his execution. If this took place on 13 June, then events could run thus: Richard decides to take the throne by 13 June, he now needs to secure the persons of any other claimants, most notably Richard, Duke of York and Edward, Earl of Warwick. Therefore on 16 June he persuades Elizabeth Woodvyll to relinquish her son, and at the same time, according to Mancini, commands that Edward be placed safely in the household of his wife. However, Richard's demand that Edward be brought to the city does not necessarily indicate a decision to usurp. We do not know the exact date of the order, Mancini vaguely ascribes

⁶⁴ B.L. Add. MS. 6113, f. 19.

⁶⁵ Armstrong, C.A.J., (trans.), *The Usurpation of Richard the Third* by Dominic Mancini (Gloucester, 1989) p. 89.

⁶⁶ Kingsford, C.L., (ed.), *The Stonor Letters and Papers 1290-1483* (II) XXX (Camden Third Series, London, 1919) 159.

it to about the time that the Duke of York came out of sanctuary,⁶⁷ but it might have been issued as early as 9 June by which time Anne, Duchess of Gloucester had arrived in London. Richard's appointees had been moving into Woodvyll estates from the middle of May and Edward could easily have been brought to London by early June. Richard's desire to secure Edward was understandable whether or not he had decided to usurp. Dorset was no longer in a position to maintain him, while Edward's estates were an added incentive. Again, Margaret's whereabouts are unknown, but it is more than likely that she too was placed with her aunt. As a royal ward of dynastic significance, she was too important to be left outside Richard's control at this time.

Richard's coronation took place on Sunday 6 July at which Edward, described as the Earl of Warwick, attended.⁶⁸ Although Margaret's name does not appear, when Richard and his queen left London on 21 July, they were attended by a large train including Edward, Earl of Warwick and a 'number of noble and well-connected ladies' who were 'to attend the Queen.'⁶⁹ Unfortunately the ladies, unlike the Lords, are not named, but it is possible that ten year old Margaret was among this group of female attendants. Perhaps Richard was employing that familiar tactic used by the Yorkist family during moments of crisis within the dynasty. For instance, when the Duke of Clarence was imprisoned in the Tower of London, his family came together in force for the wedding of the Duke of York to Anne Mowbray thus advertising family unity at a time of disunity. By including in his entourage his little nephew the Earl of Warwick, his niece Margaret and other members of his family, Richard was attempting to do the same.⁷⁰ According to John Rous, Richard separated from his queen at Windsor and progressed on to Gloucester.⁷¹ Anne made her own way up to Warwick castle where she was joined by Richard on Friday 8 August.⁷² The king and queen kept magnificent court there for a week, Edward, Earl of Warwick

⁶⁷ Armstrong, C.A.J., Op.cit.

⁶⁸ B.L. Add. MS. 6113, f. 19; Sutton, A.F., and Hammond, P.W., (eds.), *The Coronation of Richard III: the Extant Documents* (Gloucester, 1983) p. 271.

⁶⁹ Ross, C., *Richard III* (London, 1990) p. 148; Hearne, T., *Joannis Rossi Antiquarii Warwicensis Historia Regnum Angliae* (Oxford, 1716) p. 217.

⁷⁰ John de la Pole Earl of Lincoln was also present. Ibid.

⁷¹ Hanham, A., 'John Rous's Account of the Reign of Richard III' in *Richard III and his Early Historians 1483-1535* (Oxford, 1975) p. 122.

⁷² Edwards, R., *The Itinerary of King Richard III 1483-1485* (The Richard III Society, London, 1983) p 5.

still present,⁷³ before resuming their progress. On Sunday 31 August they arrived at York,⁷⁴ and on 8 September Richard's son was invested as Prince of Wales at York Minster where, at the same time, Edward was knighted.⁷⁵ On his departure from York on 20 September, Richard was accompanied by his wife while his son and nephew remained in the North. Edward took up residence in the secure confines of Sheriff Hutton castle under the watchful eye of his cousin, John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln. The Council of the North was nominally associated with Richard's son, in order to bolster the authority and status of his councillors there. However, in March/April 1484, Prince Edward died, thus depriving the king of an heir and titular head of the Northern Council. The actual headship was granted to Richard's nephew the Earl of Lincoln, while it seems that the Earl of Warwick became nominally associated with it:

Richard may also have taken the opportunity to overhaul the titular membership of the council to produce a social spectrum more appropriate to a royal (as distinct from a private) council. His young nephew the earl of Warwick is known to have been nominally associated with the council after its re-establishment, but in the absence of any other record of membership the extent of the changes can only be a matter of speculation.⁷⁶

Certainly, on 13 May 1485, in a letter from the Mayor of York to the Council of the North at Sheriff Hutton, Warwick's name pre-ceded that of the Earl of Lincoln.⁷⁷

On 24 July, 1484, a set of regulations were to take effect regarding the household set up in the North to house the Earl of Warwick, the Earl of Lincoln and those 'persons as shallbe in the northe as the kinges household.'⁷⁸ It is unclear whether these refer to the

⁷³ Hanham, A., Op.cit.

⁷⁴ Edwards, R., Op.cit., p. 6.

⁷⁵ Ross, C., (ed.), *The Rous Roll*, no. 60.

⁷⁶ Horrox, R., *Richard III A Study in Service*, p. 215.

⁷⁷ 'It was determyned that a letter shuld be consaled to be direct to the lords of Warwick, Lincoln and other of the Counsaill at Sheriff Hoton frome the Maire and his brether'. Raine, A., (ed.), *York Civic Records*, (I) XCVIII (Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1938) 116.

⁷⁸ Horrox, R., and Hammond, P.W., (eds.), *British Library Harleian Manuscript 433*, III (The Richard III Society, London, 1982) 114, f. 269.

household at Sheriff Hutton, or the new household set up at Sandal,⁷⁹ but Polydore Vergil specifically stated that it was at Sheriff Hutton that both Edward and Elizabeth of York were kept,⁸⁰ while, as we have seen above, letters were still going to the Council of the North at Sheriff Hutton in May 1485. Several instructions refer to the provision of the children:

Item My lord of Lincoln and my lord Morley to be at oon brekefast. the Children togeder at oon brekefast. suche as be present of the Counsaile at oon brekefast.'

Item that noo lyveres of brede wyne nor ale be had but such as be mesurable and convenyent and that noo potte of lyverey excede mesure of a potelle. but oonly to my lord and the Children etc.

Item that noo boyes be in household but suche as be admytted by the Counsaile etc.⁸¹

The first two items reveal that there was more than one child in the household, the third item suggests the presence of a female child. We know that Elizabeth of York did join Edward at Sheriff Hutton, but at Christmas 1484 she danced at Richard's court in Westminster Hall, and probably did not arrive at Sheriff Hutton until 1485. Therefore she could not have been the female they were trying to seclude from male company in July 1484. Also, at eighteen years of age she could hardly be described as a child! Consequently, these items could indicate the presence of Margaret. It is true that the 'Children' may refer to other noble boys brought in to share Edward's education as was common practice or, as suggested by P.W. Hammond, the two illegitimate children of Richard III; John of Gloucester and Katherine Plantagenet.⁸² These explanations are indeed likely, but considering Margaret's dynastic importance and the presence of her brother, it is sensible to assume that she too was present at Sheriff Hutton. Moreover, on Elizabeth of York's return from Sheriff Hutton to London following Bosworth, she,

⁷⁹ Ibid., I, xxviii.

⁸⁰ Hay, D., (ed., and trans.), *The Anglica Historia of Polydore Vergil A.D. 1485-1537*, LXXIV (Camden Society, Third Series, London, 1950) 3.

⁸¹ Horrox, R., and Hammond, P.W., (eds.), *Op.cit*, III, 114, f. 269.

⁸² Hammond, P.W., 'The Illegitimate Children of Richard III' in Petre, J., (ed.), *Richard III Crown and People* (The Richard III Society, London, 1985) p. 18.

'attended by noble ladies, was brought to her mother in London.'⁸³ She then entered the Coldharbour residence of Margaret Beaufort.⁸⁴ It is feasible that Margaret, having been at Sheriff Hutton with Elizabeth, accompanied her to London and was among those noble ladies attending upon her. On reaching London, both she and the future queen entered Margaret Beaufort's household, to which the Earl of Warwick was also conducted. If we accept that Margaret was present at Sheriff Hutton, we must ask why Richard placed her there, indeed, did he feel it necessary to maintain as diligent a watch over her as he did over her younger brother?

In order to justify his usurpation of the throne, Richard strove to demonstrate the illegitimacy of Edward IV's children. He declared, after attacking Edward's despotic rule, that his marriage to Elizabeth Woodvyll had serious flaws. It had, he insisted, been carried out without the knowledge or assent of the peerage; his bride and her mother had used witchcraft to secure it; it was conducted in secret and when Edward was already contracted to marry Lady Eleanor Butler. The validity of Richard's claims have been discussed by historians at length, and there is no need to launch into a detailed investigation here. However, despite what many contemporaries may have felt in their hearts about Richard's assertions, the fact that he ascended the throne, an anointed monarch, meant that during his reign the illegitimisation of Edward's children stood and was, in theory, accepted. Obviously, this act of bastardisation greatly enhanced Edward and Margaret's positions in relation to the throne. As the son of Richard's elder brother, Edward was now heir to the throne while Margaret, if not quite second in line due to her sex, would be able to transmit a very strong claim to any male child she might bear. Richard was not slow to realise the dynastic threat posed by Clarence's children, and that their claim, as well as that of Edward IV's children, would have to be explained away. He did this by announcing that Clarence's children were 'barred by his attainder for high treason from any claim to the crown.'⁸⁵ Many historians agree that this was a weak barrier to Edward's rights. To begin with, Clarence's attainder specifically stated:

⁸³ Hay, D., *Op.cit.*, p. 3.

⁸⁴ Jones, M.K., and Underwood, M.G., *The King's Mother* (Cambridge, 1992) p. 67.

⁸⁵ Levine, M., *Tudor Dynastic Problems 1460-1571* (London, 1973) p. 137.

that the same Duke, by the said auctorite, forfett from hym and his heyres for ever, the Honoure, Estate, Dignite and name of Duke.⁸⁶

No mention was made of barring his children's right to the throne. Not only this, as Motimer Levine has noted:

What precedents there were indicated that the common-law rule against inheritance by persons of attainted blood did not apply to the royal succession: Henry VI's restoration despite his attainder under Edward IV and Edward's restoration notwithstanding his attainder during Henry's readeption.⁸⁷

Of course, both these monarchs were claiming that their predecessor's reign was unlawful, and so all acts, such as attainders would be void anyway, nevertheless attainders could easily be reversed. Furthermore, when Henry Tudor assumed the title of king, the judges stated that 'the King was responsible and discharged of any attainder by the fact that he took on himself the reign and was King.'⁸⁸ They continued: 'he that was King was himself able to invest himself, and there was no need of any act for the reversal of his attainder.'⁸⁹ It is clear that if Edward could have raised enough support for his claim, no attainder would have stopped him from ascending the throne. If he were then to die childless, if not Margaret herself, then any son she might bear would be in a very strong position. Well aware of the dynastic threat posed by Clarence's children and the potential embarrassment and danger if they fell into the wrong hands, it is easy to understand why Richard would ensure that both of them were kept securely at Sheriff Hutton Castle. Although no chronicler felt Margaret was significant enough to mention at this time, her importance was not lost upon her uncle.

Another indication of Richard's awareness of that threat can be construed from his reaction after his son's death. There has been considerable discussion about Richard's possible designation of an heir once his only legitimate child had died. According to

⁸⁶ 17 Edward IV *Rot. Parl.*, VI, 194.

⁸⁷ Levine, M., *Op.cit.*, p. 30.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 138.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

John Rous:

Not long after the death of the prince, to which I have referred, the young Earl of Warwick, Edward, eldest son of George Duke of Clarence, was proclaimed heir apparent in the royal court, and in ceremonies at table and chamber he was served first after the king and queen.⁹⁰

Rosemary Horrox notes however, that Rous is the only source for this claim and while Richard may have toyed with the idea, Edward was never formally recognised as heir. In truth, Richard could not have afforded to acknowledge Edward as heir. If he accepted that Edward could ascend the throne despite his father's attainder, then there was no reason why Edward should not already be king.⁹¹ His tacit approval was therefore given to the safer heir designate, the Earl of Lincoln who, as the son of Richard's sister, had an obviously weaker claim than Richard. Lincoln's position is suggested by his appointment as Lieutenant of Ireland and head of the Council of the North.

Not only did Richard sweep aside the dynastic rights of Clarence's children, he also turned his attention to Edward's landed inheritance. In many respects, Richard's accession to the throne might have lessened his desire for the Warwick inheritance, as by his accession his son's prospects were so enhanced. By becoming king, he acquired the custody of Edward's half of the inheritance but did not alter the partition to his benefit. He did however, ignore the stipulation of the 1474 act of Parliament, which prevented the dukes making grants out of the inheritance to the detriment of each other. In 1484 he allowed his queen to give lands extended at £329 to Queen's College Cambridge,⁹² he granted a Despencer manor to Lord Grey of Codnor and licensed the College of Heralds to purchase Le Herber in London.⁹³ In fact, according to Michael Hicks, had 'Richard reigned for much longer his nephew, the young Earl of Warwick, would have had little to inherit.'⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Hanham, A., 'John Rous's Account of the Reign of Richard III,' p. 123.

⁹¹ Horrox, R., *Richard III A Study in Service*, p. 299.

⁹² Hicks, M., 'Descent, Partition and Extinction: The Warwick Inheritance,' p. 332.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

Despite this gloomy prediction however, the position of Margaret and Edward was not hopeless. They were members of the royal family and the king, their uncle, had not acted violently against them, or the daughters of Edward IV. Following the outrage at the despatch of Lord Hastings and the unsavoury gossip over the fate of the princes, Richard could not afford another move in that direction. Edward was still the Earl of Warwick, heir to large estates and may have remained so, for we cannot be certain that Richard would ever have proven Michael Hicks right. In fact, it was not to be under the thrall of the 'wretched, bloody, and usurping boar,'⁹⁵ that the most significant changes in the childrens' lives were to occur, but during the reign of the one who promised 'fair prosperous days!'⁹⁶ Those days, while indeed prosperous for some, were to prove fatal for Edward, Earl of Warwick.

⁹⁵ Honigmann, E.A.J., (ed.), *King Richard the Third* by William Shakespeare (Middlesex, 1968) V. ii. 7. p. 183.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, V. v. 34. p. 200.

CHAPTER TWO

THE ACCESSION OF HENRY VII and LADY MARGARET'S MARRIAGE

On 22 August 1485 Henry VII was king of England because he had defeated and killed Richard III the day before: (sic) he was king when he died on 21 April 1509 because during those twenty-four years he had suppressed every rival, if necessary with sword or axe: but such a tenure does not amount to a legal or constitutional title.¹

It is accepted that Henry VII's claim to the throne was tenuous, and his dynastic credentials, along with those of other possible claimants have been discussed at length by historians. Nevertheless, they require some reiteration here as one of the strongest of those claims belonged to Edward, Earl of Warwick. During this period there was no fixed law of succession to the crown, only custom offered a guideline and that guideline reveals that Henry's position was not unassailable. Even allowing for the dubious legality of Henry IV's addition to the patent of legitimisation by Richard II which debarred the Beauforts from the succession,² there were others better qualified to represent the house of Lancaster, for instance John II of Portugal³ and Edward, Earl of Warwick and his sister Margaret. Not only was Edward undoubtedly the strongest male claimant of the House of York,⁴ and the only direct male descendant of Edward

¹ Pickthorne, K., *Early Tudor Government: Henry VII* (Cambridge, 1934) p. 2.

² In 1397 Richard II legitimised the Beauforts, born out of wedlock to John of Gaunt and his mistress Catherine Swynford, in a patent which was then ratified by parliament. In 1407 Henry IV confirmed the patent, but added a clause barring the Beauforts from the succession to the crown. This clause was not ratified by Parliament, and so might not prevail against the legal superiority of Richard II's parliamentary ratified patent. See Levine, M., *Tudor Dynastic Problems*, p. 16.

³ John II King of Portugal 1481-1495. He was the great grandson of John I of Portugal and Philippa, daughter of John of Gaunt and his first wife, Blanche of Lancaster. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁴ Of Edward IV's siblings, only three had surviving children at this time. His elder sister Anne, had one daughter by her second marriage to Sir Thomas St Leger. This daughter married George Manners, Lord Roos and their son Thomas was created Earl of Rutland on 18 June 1525. Katherine, a younger sister had married John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk. Their eldest son was John, Earl of Lincoln. Clearly Edward, Earl of Warwick's claim was superior to John, Earl of Lincoln's, as Edward's came through the male line as opposed to John's which came via his mother, a sister of the king.

III via Edmund of Langley, Duke of York, there was a possibility that Henry VI during his brief readeption, had passed an act of Parliament vesting the succession in Clarence and his heirs should Henry VI and his son Edward fail to produce male issue. J.R. Lander has argued that such an act was never passed and casts doubt upon the veracity of Clarence's attainder.⁵ Nonetheless, the accusation stands for all to see in the duke's attainder, and it is what Henry VII believed that concerns us. The attainder claimed that Clarence possessed an exemplification under the great seal of Henry VI, of appointments made between himself and Queen Margaret. Among these was one vesting the succession in Clarence and his heirs, not merely heirs male.⁶ Theoretically, this would make Margaret herself a Lancastrian claimant and, after her brother, the lawful successor of Henry VI. Whether this stipulation existed or not, it would provide useful propaganda against Henry VII and could only serve to enhance the Earl of Warwick's position in relation to the throne. Although the lack of a fixed law of succession had enabled Henry Tudor, with force of arms, to maintain that he was king, it also underlined the insecurity of his position. If he could do it, so could any one else with a drop of royal blood in their veins. The confusion of the situation is further demonstrated by Henry's denigration of Richard III as a usurper, while accepting Edward IV as a lawful king, a man who in Lancastrian eyes must be just as much a usurper as Richard III.

Not only did Henry Tudor fall short of the dynastic requirements, he was also, 'an unknown quantity, a foreign-backed adventurer whose principal advantage lay in the disaffection which Richard had so liberally created.'⁷ With little or no administrative training and inexperienced in the art of kingship, Henry could not afford to be too confident nor take for granted his success at Bosworth, nor did he. The supernatural mystique and, in consequence, the authority of the crown had been damaged by the number of times it had changed hands by coup d'état in the last hundred years. 'Henry was always acutely aware of this fact, and his awareness gave him that preoccupation with domestic security which is the most noticeable feature of his policies.'⁸ It is necessary to look at how Clarence's children fitted into these policies, not only to

⁵ Lander, J.R., 'The treason and death of the duke of Clarence' in idem, *Crown and Nobility 1450-1509*, pp. 242-66.

⁶ Levine, M., *Op.cit.*, p. 134.

⁷ Loades, D.M., *Politics and the Nation 1450-1660* (London, 1988) p 94.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

reconstruct their lives, but to understand how they were regarded by their Lancastrian monarch. Their fate under Henry VII will reveal the level of their importance and the dynastic threat which Henry considered they represented.

Henry VII was well aware, not only of the Earl of Warwick's dynastic significance, but also that of the female representatives of the House of York. He recognised that just as his mother had transmitted her claim to him, so could the daughters of Edward IV and the Duke of Clarence to their future sons. As a result, their marriages had to be decided upon with the utmost care, while in the case of Elizabeth of York, Henry, 'could not have dared to allow her to have any husband but himself, for she would otherwise have made a respectable figurehead for any future sedition.'⁹ Naturally, immediately after Bosworth Henry moved to secure the persons of the little group at Sheriff Hutton. Before he left Leicester sent Robert Willoughby to take possession of Edward, for he was, Polydore Vergil tells us, 'fearful lest, if the boy should escape and given any alteration in circumstances, he might stir up civil discord.'¹⁰ It is important to remember that not only was Edward the son of the Duke of Clarence, he was also the son of Isabell Neville, and hence might enjoy the extra advantage of Northern loyalty to the house of Neville. Certainly, his dynastic profile was high:

In the increasingly uncertain political climate of 1485, many supporters of the Ricardian regime must have given thought to the succession, and like Northumberland looked to Clarence's son, the earl of Warwick.¹¹

On 1 March 1486, Mosen Diego de Valera wrote to Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, reporting events surrounding Henry VII's accession. He claimed that a Lord Tamorlant, possibly identifiable as Henry Percy fourth Earl of Northumberland, was imprisoned because he had intended Edward, Earl of Warwick to be king and planned to marry him to one of his daughters.¹² Northumberland may have viewed Richard's replacement with Edward as an opportunity to gain the northern hegemony monopolised by the king.¹³ We cannot be certain of this story, but we can be sure that

⁹ Storey, R.L., *The Reign of Henry VII* (London, 1968) p. 61.

¹⁰ Hay, D., *The Anglica Historia of Polydore Vergil*, p. 3.

¹¹ Bennett, M., *Lambert Simnel and the Battle of Stoke* (Gloucester, 1987) p. 30.

¹² Goodman, A., and Mackay, A., 'A Castilian report on English affairs, 1486' *E[nglish] H[istorical] R[evue]*, LXXXVIII (1973) 93, 95.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

Northumberland did not exert himself to assist Henry at Bosworth and it would not be too unrealistic to accept that such an idea had crossed his ambitious mind. In October 1485, John Morton arrived at the Calais garrison to be met with the news that Henry had died of the plague. Significantly, Edward of Warwick was top of their list as 'most likely to succeed'!¹⁴ Back in England in 1486, two minor risings had broken out in March and April. The second of these, organised by Humphrey Stafford a member of Richard III's household, was partially prompted by rumours of Edward's escape to the Channel Islands. At Birmingham the cry; 'A Warwick, A Warwick' was raised by Stafford's supporters.¹⁵ It is probable that at this point, public image or not, Henry decided it would be safer for the new dynasty if Edward resided in the Tower. It must have been patently obvious to him, that it was not going to be easy to erase the young earl from public memory, either at home or abroad.

Henry's attempts to eradicate the slur of bastardy on his future wife are a further indication of his dynastic sensitivity. On the day of Bosworth he ordered the arrest of Robert Stillington, Bishop of Bath and Wells, the supposed originator of the pre-contract story that claimed Edward IV's children were illegitimate due to his pre-contract to Lady Eleanor Butler.¹⁶ If it was believed that Elizabeth of York was illegitimate, it would weaken the position of their future issue, and again put viable propaganda into the hands of the disaffected.¹⁷ Accordingly, Henry had the act confirming Richard's title repealed without its rehearsal as was usual. In addition, he ordered that it and all other copies were to be destroyed so that everything stated in the act 'may be forever out of remembrance, and also forgot.'¹⁸

¹⁴ Davies, C.S.L., 'Bishop John Morton, the Holy See, and the Accession of Henry VII' *E. H. R.*, CII, (1987) 27.

¹⁵ Loades, D.M., *Op.cit.*, p. 97.

¹⁶ Mortimer Levine claims that, as Lady Eleanor died in 1468, the illegitimacy of any children born to Edward and Elizabeth Woodville after that date would not be impugned. Levine, M., 'Richard III-Usurper or Lawful King?' *Speculum*, XXXIV (1959) 391. Mary O'Regan however disagrees, pointing out that the marriage, invalidated by the pre-contract, could only be made valid by a repetition of marriage vows after Lady Eleanor's death. As far as is known, no evidence exists to suggest that this was ever done. O'Regan, M., 'The Pre-contract and its effect on the Succession in 1483' in Petre, J., (ed.), *Richard III Crown and People* (The Richard III Society, Gloucester, 1985) p. 53.

¹⁷ Indeed, the Imperial ambassador Chapuys made much of this fact on more than one occasion in the 1530s. *L&P*, VI, no. 1528, VIII, no. 750; *C.S.P.*, Spain, V (i) no. 109; see below pp. 277-78.

¹⁸ Levine, M., *Op.cit.*, p. 398.

Immediately after Bosworth Edward, Earl of Warwick was brought to London as was Elizabeth of York. Both Elizabeth and Edward were placed in the household of Margaret Beaufort, Henry VII's mother, and Elizabeth remained there until her marriage in January 1486. Edward was not yet consigned to the Tower, perhaps because Henry felt it would not be prudent to start the reign with the imprisonment of a child, remembering what had happened to Richard III. It is not surprising that he chose the most reliable custodian for them, 'Margaret was equally aware of the political danger, and in the first year of the reign acted as a jailor on behalf of her son.'¹⁹ Elizabeth and Edward were not the only ones to be entertained by Margaret Beaufort. Also present were Elizabeth's sisters, the Earl of Westmoreland and the Duke of Buckingham, another child with a plausible claim to the throne.²⁰ A warrant of 24 February 1486 ordered payment of £200 to the king's mother because she:

had the keeping and guiding of the ladies daughters of king Edward the III th, and also of the young lords the duke of Buckingham the earls of Warwick and of Westmoreland to her great charges.²¹

It seems inconceivable that Margaret should be omitted from such a gathering, and an oversight on the clerk's part might explain her omission. Five of the young ladies were Edward IV's daughters, and perhaps he mistakenly believed that Margaret was too. However, at the time this was issued Elizabeth was already married and had her own household. Margaret at twelve and a half years old, was of an age to serve the queen, and may by this point have left Margaret Beaufort's household to do just that. If Margaret was at Sheriff Hutton, she would have had plenty of time to make her elder cousin's acquaintance and if this is the case, her absence by 24 February may explain her careless lack of mention in the warrant. It seems highly unlikely, given the climate of the time and the joint whereabouts of all the other Yorkist representatives, that Margaret alone should have been placed elsewhere. The households of the queen or Margaret Beaufort were the only viable options that offered security and honour.²²

¹⁹ *The King's Mother*, p. 67.

²⁰ See Appendix 2.

²¹ P.R.O. E.404/79, nos. 45 or 337.

²² None of the household accounts of Henry VII and Queen Elizabeth, nor those of Margaret Beaufort in Westminster Abbey Muniments, contain any reference to Margaret.

Our first glimpse of Margaret after Henry VII's accession, is in September 1486 for the christening of Henry's first born son, Prince Arthur. Margaret was a member of the royal family, a cousin of the queen and not surprisingly the recognition of her status is obvious. Thirteen year old Margaret headed the list of ladies attending, as 'my lady Margaret of Clarence.'²³ The christening 'provided an unique opportunity for a display of unity and optimism'²⁴ following the failure of Stafford's rising.²⁵ As this was in part prompted by rumours of the escape of Margaret's brother, it would make her prominent attendance all the more necessary if the display of unity was to be successful. There is no doubt that the christening was to be 'a great celebration of the union between the Houses of Lancaster and York.'²⁶ Consequently, other prominent Yorkists also attended. Lady Cecily, the queen's sister, bore the young prince assisted by her cousin John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln and her half brother the Marquis of Dorset.²⁷ Godmother to the prince was Edward IV's widow, Elizabeth Woodvyll, the last Yorkist queen.²⁸ The most noticeable absentee of course, was Margaret's eleven year old brother due to the commencement of his thirteen year imprisonment in the Tower.

It is important to note at this point, that from her listing in the christening Margaret was unmarried. In November of the following year, 1487, she attended the coronation of Elizabeth of York. On a specially erected stage between the pulpit and the high altar of Westminster Abbey, Henry VII and his mother viewed the ceremony. Attending upon the king's mother were many ladies and gentlewomen, the only one deserving of any mention was 'my Lady Margaret Pole Daughter to the Duc of Claraunce.'²⁹ Therefore, from this document it appears that sometime between September 1486 and November 1487, Margaret had married Sir Richard Pole. It has

²³ B.L. Add. MS. 6113, f. 77b; Hearn, T., (ed.), *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii de Rebus Britannicis Collectanea*, IV (London, 1770) 206. The other ladies were Lady Gray of Ruthin, Lady Strange the elder, Lady La Warre, Mistress Fenys, Lady Vaux, Lady Darcy, Lady Mistress (probably of Arthur's nursery), Lady Bray, Lady Dame (sic) Katherine Grey, Lady Dame Eleanor Hant, Lady Wodell and other unnamed gentlewomen.

²⁴ Bennet, M., *Lambert Simnel*, p. 40.

²⁵ See above p. 37.

²⁶ Weightman, C., *Margaret of York*, p. 156.

²⁷ Hearn, T., *Op.cit.*, p. 205.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 225; B.L. Egerton MS. 985, f.19.

generally been accepted that Margaret married around 1491. *The Complete Peerage* states, that she 'probably' married in 1491, but no later than 1494,³⁰ while Michael Jones and Malcolm Underwood who discuss her marriage as part of their study of Margaret Beaufort, give 1494 as the date.³¹ If a claim for an earlier marriage is going to be based on one document, then that document needs close examination.³² Unfortunately it is not contemporary, but a later copy written around the latter part of the sixteenth century. The writer could have inserted Margaret's then name, the surname by which he knew her, rather than the surname she had in 1487. Consequently the document alone cannot be conclusive. However, the collection in Leland's collectanea, from the Cottonian manuscript, Julius B XII containing the coronation, continues in similar vein with a series of accounts of court festivals and celebrations. At the feast of Easter and St George of 1488, Margaret is specifically described as 'the Lady Margaret of Clarens, Wife of Sir Ric. Poole.'³³ However at the feast of Whitsun 1488, she is merely addressed as 'the Lady Margaret of Clarence.'³⁴ Nevertheless, this does not disprove her marriage to Sir Richard. It is clear from the previous insertion, that even after her marriage her descent from the Duke of Clarence was widely known and referred to. She would always be the Lady Margaret of Clarence no matter whom she married, and this may be the reason why the contemporary writer included her at the feast of Whitsun in this form. Although these documents cannot prove conclusively that she was married earlier, if we look at the events of 1487 and take into account other relevant facts, a strong case does emerge for her marriage taking place in late 1487.

Henry VII's fears concerning Edward, Earl of Warwick are clear. In 1486 he ordered his confinement in the Tower, and in November of the same year he moved against his estates. Perhaps it is significant that the name Lambert Simnel was already being whispered by the end of November³⁵ when Henry issued the warrant, on 30 November, regarding Edward's lands. It provided for 500 marks annually to:

³⁰ *Complete Peerage*, XI, 399-400.

³¹ *The King's Mother*, p. 82.

³² For a discussion of this document see Hammond, P.W., 'The Coronation of Elizabeth of York' *The Ricardian*, VI, (lxxxiii) (December, 1983) 270-72.

³³ Hearn, T., *Op.cit.*, p. 241.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

³⁵ Lander, J.R., *Government and Community: England 1450-1509* (London, 1988) p. 339.

our full dear cousin Anne Countess of Warwick.....towards her sustentacon and finding of the issues, rents, revenues,.... of all castles, honours, lordships, manors, lands and tenements called Warwick lands and Spencer lands.³⁶

As early as this, Henry had begun making grants to the countess out of the lands which had been appropriated from her. Naturally such a grant was to the detriment of her grandson, and in 1490 more extreme action was taken to hobble his opponent when the countess, in return for her restoration, made the king her heir thus disinheriting Edward. He did however, remain heir to the Montague estates until his attainder and execution in 1499.

In 1487, Henry's concern about the threat Edward posed was proved to be valid. A young boy, according to the government, had been trained by a priest to impersonate Edward and although the attempt was ridiculed later, at the time Henry was not laughing. The problem was that Henry could not be sure who was involved, and was shocked at the defection of John, Earl of Lincoln, 'nephew of the Yorkist kings, experienced in government, and respected for the soundness of his judgement,'³⁷ he immediately enhanced the credibility of the cause, while Margaret's namesake and aunt, the dowager Duchess of Burgundy, was actively supportive sending troops to assist. In fact Simnel's troops were already greater than those with which Henry had triumphed at Bosworth.³⁸ This is not the place to go into a lengthy discussion of the Lambert Simnel affair which has already been competently covered by many historians, what is relevant to this study is Henry's reaction to the rebellion and the extent to which it influenced his actions regarding Margaret and her Yorkist cousins.

Although the rebels were defeated at the battle of Stoke and attracted little support in England, 'the fact that a battle had to be fought within two years of Bosworth must have given Henry VII much food for anxious thought.'³⁹ It understandably unnerved the dynastically sensitive Henry, especially as it was clear that the rebels must have had contacts within the government. It not only highlighted the threat posed by the son of the Duke of Clarence, but how these children of the blood royal could be used against him, even when he had control of that child. Edward had been sent to the

³⁶ P.R.O. E.404/79 nos. 26 or 182.

³⁷ Bennet, M., *Lambert Simnel*, p. 57.

³⁸ Loades, D.M., *Politics and the Nation*, p. 99.

³⁹ Chrimes, S.B., *Henry VII* (London, 1972) p. 77.

safety of the Tower, but it would not be so easy to do the same with his sister and cousins without alienating public opinion. Nevertheless, Henry could not risk their abduction which might lead to a marriage detrimental to his interests, or allow them and their future issue to become figureheads around which another rebellion might form. Henry was well aware that the Lambert Simnel conspiracy had been severely weakened by the fact that they were not able to display the real Warwick, thus illustrating yet again, the importance of maintaining control over the children of Clarence and Edward IV. Henry's future issue would be under threat if Margaret or any one of her cousins were married to powerful men prepared to use their wives' claims against the king and his children. He could not risk their union with anyone whose loyalty was suspect. Their husbands therefore, had to be chosen with extreme care and quickly.

One positive result of the Lambert Simnel affair was that it had allowed Henry to assess the worth of many of his nobles and gentlemen. One of those assessed favourably was Richard Pole. Richard had been in the king's favour from the beginning of his reign. On 20 September 1485 he was included on a commission of the peace for Buckinghamshire, his home county,⁴⁰ and on 22 October 1485, in time for the coronation, he was appointed an esquire of the body for life, not merely during pleasure, and received 50 marks a year for his duties.⁴¹ Such an office, entailing close contact with the king indicates the trust reposed in Richard. On 26 February 1486 he was appointed, again for life, sheriff of Merioneth and constable of the Castle of Harlech,⁴² one of the four principal royal castles in North Wales. Henry's faith in Richard was not to be misplaced and on 16 June he was one of those 'Galants of the King's Howse'⁴³ who accompanied Henry to Stoke to face the army of Lambert Simnel. Stationed in the cavalry unit protecting the left flank of the vanguard,⁴⁴ Richard was under the command of Sir John Savage who was occupying the same position he had held at Bosworth. Richard's placement meant that he would be in the thick of the battle. Following the devastating assault of the royal archers, the rebels had no choice but to initiate an offensive and charge. Smashing into the royal

⁴⁰ *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, p. 482.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 78.

⁴³ *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii*, IV, p. 210.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 210. He is described as Sir Richard Pole, although he was not knighted until after the battle. The author, writing after the battle, is obviously attributing to him his then correct title.

vanguard under the command of the seasoned Earl of Oxford, 'the battle appeared to hang in the balance.'⁴⁵ In addition, the king feared that there might be defections from the royal host, suspecting that some of them might have made prior agreements with the Earl of Lincoln. However, although initially 'crumbling,' the vanguard managed to absorb the blow and began to press in around the rebels pushing them back. The archers moved in again, while Richard Pole and his comrades in the cavalry units picked off the stragglers. As they attempted to re-group on the high ground, Oxford launched the vanguard into a full scale assault on the rebel army, which was decimated after an hour of fierce fighting. As far as we know, this was Richard Pole's first battle and it was to be a baptism of fire. 4,000 rebel bodies lay strewn over the battle area while hundreds of the king's army lay dead. Nevertheless, Richard kept his nerve and discharged his duties bravely and, most importantly, loyally. Consequently he was among the 52 young men knighted after the battle, being one of only twelve who paid their whole fee of 20s for knighthood promptly.⁴⁶ Richard had proved himself in battle, fighting valiantly against the forces representing the Earl of Warwick, and it was to be to this recently knighted esquire that the hand of the earl's fourteen year old sister was given.

Henry's desire to be fair, and not appear vindictive which might provoke further resistance after Stoke, meant that there were few confiscations, and therefore less with which to reward those who had supported him.⁴⁷ Nevertheless, he did wish to reward them, so one could view the bestowal of Margaret's hand upon Richard partly in this light; a knighthood and the hand of a member of the royal family as a suitable reward for a loyal follower. However, although the accepted view is that it was a disparaging marriage for Margaret and a spectacular one for Richard, if we look at it more closely we can see that, in respect of Richard, this is debatable. Although Margaret was indeed the daughter of a duke, that duke was an attainted and executed one, while her brother was a prisoner in the Tower. It is true that if her brother were to die, she would then be entitled to inherit those lands not restored to her grandmother, the Countess of Warwick. Margaret and Richard's land based power would, in that instance, be substantial, another illustration of the king's trust in Richard.⁴⁸ However,

⁴⁵ Bennet, M., *Lambert Simnel*, p. 98 and for the battle pp. 95-101.

⁴⁶ For the full list see *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii*, IV, 214-15. For those who paid the whole fee see B.L. Cotton. MS. Julius B. XII, f. 29; for the amount paid, B.L. Add. MS. 38,133, f. 127b.

⁴⁷ Bennet, M., *Lambert Simnel*, p. 108-109.

⁴⁸ Margaret was never to inherit these lands in Henry VII's lifetime. By 'framing' Edward for treason in 1499, Henry was able to attain him and confiscate his estates. However, in 1487 it would have been

when the marriage took place Margaret had no lands of her own at all. Among the few confiscations after Stoke were those lands of John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln.⁴⁹ In the Book of Wards for the years 1503-1506, it appears that Richard Pole may have held the manors of Fifield and Long Wittenham in Oxford jointly worth about £120 a year, which had once belonged to the Earl of Lincoln.⁵⁰ Although there is no direct evidence relating to her dowry, and no surviving grant bestowing these lands upon Richard, it is not unreasonable to assume that these lands were given as Margaret's dowry. They had become conveniently available after Stoke, just at the time of Margaret's marriage to a man Henry trusted and wished to reward. The same Book of Wards makes clear that Richard's own lands were worth only £50 annually, hardly sufficient for the spouse of the queen's cousin. Moreover, it would allow Henry to be generous without having to dip into his own pocket, surely a strong incentive!

It is highly unlikely that Margaret's marriage took place before Richard's elevation, for it is hard to believe that Henry would have married his wife's cousin to a man who was untitled. His anger at Princess Cecily's marriage to a mere esquire, Thomas Kyme of Friskney in 1502 encourages this assumption. If indeed he had, then it would be easy to understand the tradition of Margaret's disparaging marriage. Nevertheless, as previously discussed,⁵¹ even with Richard knighted the marriage was still less than Margaret could have once expected due to her altered circumstances. In fact Perkin Warbeck used the marriage to attack Henry, declaring in July 1497 that the king had:

married upon compulsion certain of our sisters and also the sister of our foresaid cousin the Earl of Warwick, and divers other ladies of the blood Royal unto certain of his kinsmen and friends of simple and low degree.⁵²

difficult to 'frame' a twelve year old boy for treason. Therefore, if Edward had died it would have been hard for Henry to deny Margaret her rights, so the possibility of Margaret and Richard succeeding to these lands cannot be dismissed.

⁴⁹ Only the earl's own lands were confiscated, not the de la Pole patrimony.

⁵⁰ P.R.O. E.36/247, f. 35.

⁵¹ See above pp. 20-2

⁵² B.L. Egerton MS. 2219; Yarnold, C., *A Collection for Buck's History of Richard III*, ff. 137-137b; Pollard, A.F., *The Reign of Henry VII from Contemporary Sources*, I (London, 1913) 152.

Indeed, Shakespeare felt it necessary to attribute Margaret's marriage, and Edward's imprisonment, to Richard III, who he has declare:

The son of Clarence have I pent up close,
His daughter meanly have I matched in marriage.⁵³

Having established that Margaret's marriage took place after Stoke, it is necessary to be more precise. From near contemporary evidence, we know that Richard and Margaret were married in the presence of the king and queen and 'some officers of armes.'⁵⁴ It was to be early November before Henry returned to London where Parliament was to meet on 9 November, obviously a perfect opportunity to give the marriage maximum publicity, with most nobles in London for parliament. Moreover, the queen's coronation was scheduled for 25 November, an event at which Margaret and her new husband could be, and were, displayed. It would be an auspicious way to end such a disturbing and divisive year. The marriage of Margaret Plantagenet and Richard Pole would provide another useful and much needed demonstration of the union of the Houses of York and Lancaster. One might ask how this marriage could represent the union of York and Lancaster and why Henry VII chose Sir Richard from all the other more affluent loyal knights, to be Margaret's husband? The answer lies in Richard's lineage.⁵⁵ One of Henry VII's few blood relatives and having no claim to the throne in his own right, he was of especial value to the king. However, before investigating Richard's ancestry, it is necessary to compare Margaret's marriage with those of Edward IV's daughters in order to put it properly into context. As a result our case for the marriage taking place in November 1487 will be strengthened.

⁵³ Honigmann, E.A.J., *King Richard the Third by William Shakespeare*, IV. iii. 37,38.

⁵⁴ B.L. Add. MS. 38,133, f.132b; Nichols, J.G., (ed.), *Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica* (London, 1834) p. 21. This document lists several marriages that took place in the royal presence. Unfortunately they do not seem to be in chronological order. For instance, the marriage of Charles Somerset to Elizabeth Herbert which took place on 2 June 1492, precedes that of the Earl of Kent to Catherine Herbert which had been accomplished by 1 October 1490. *Complete Peerage*, VII, XII (ii) (London, 1929, 1959) 167, 850. In addition the marriage of the Duke of Buckingham to Alianor Percy in 1489/90 follows that of Sir William Courtenay to Katherine Plantagenet which occurred in 1495. For Buckingham's marriage see *Complete Peerage*, II (London, 1912) 391; Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham, 1478-1521* (California, 1986) p. 41. Therefore this document is of no assistance in determining the date of Margaret's marriage.

⁵⁵ See Appendix 5. Although Richard's descent was not from the Beaufort line and so not technically 'of the House of Lancaster' he was strongly affiliated and identifiable with it due to his support of, and blood relationship with, Henry VII. Therefore the symbolism of unity between York and Lancaster would be clearly seen in Margaret Plantagenet's marriage to Richard Pole.

Examining these marriages, it becomes clear that at the beginning of the reign, marrying his relatives into the House of York was a policy Henry employed and, of course engaged in himself. At his accession the female representatives of the House of York, excluding Elizabeth, consisted of Margaret and the four daughters of Edward IV; Cecily, Anne, Katherine and Bridget.⁵⁶ Five year old Bridget had been destined for the convent and conveniently remained a nun until her death in 1513, Anne and Katherine at ten and six years old were too young for marriage. Margaret was just twelve while the sixteen year old Cecily, heiress-apparent of the House of York, after the queen herself⁵⁷ was of an age for immediate marriage. It is surprising therefore that Henry did not arrange a union for her as soon as her first marriage had been dissolved in 1486.⁵⁸ She did not marry, according to tradition, until late 1487 after the battle of Stoke. Contemporary evidence certainly suggests she was married to Viscount Welles by Christmas 1487. For this celebration, she was cried by the Heralds; 'Largesse de noble Princesse la Seur, de la Reyne nostre Sovereigne Dame, et Countesse de Wellys.'⁵⁹ At the same time, 'my Lorde Wells gave for him and my Lady his wiff xx s.'⁶⁰ Her husband, the thirty nine year old John Welles, was the only baron created a viscount during Henry's reign,⁶¹ and this creation had taken place by September 1487.⁶² John Welles, like Richard Pole, was one of Henry VII's relatives of the half blood with a record of family loyalty to the house of Lancaster. As half brother to Margaret Beaufort, he was the king's half uncle,⁶³ he was also a man Henry could trust. In 1483 he had been involved in the rising against Richard III and

⁵⁶ There was also Anne, daughter of Edward IV's eldest sister Anne and Sir Thomas St Leger. Born in 1476, she married George Manners Lord Roos in 1490. Her half sister Anne, daughter of Anne Plantagenet's first marriage to Henry Holland Duke of Exeter had died before 6 June 1474. *Complete Peerage*, V(London, 1926) 215, n. b; XI (London, 1899) 108.

⁵⁷ *The King's Mother*, p. 126.

⁵⁸ Richard III, equally aware of the dynastic threat offered by Edward IV's daughters, had married Cecily to Ralph Scrope of Upsall, brother of Thomas lord Scrope, an ally and member of his household. Horrox, R., *Richard III A Study in Service*, p. 295.

⁵⁹ *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii*, IV, 235.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 235. In B.L. Egerton. MS. 985, Plut. 541. E, f. 27b, he gives 26s 8d.

⁶¹ Pugh, T.B., 'Henry VII and the English Nobility' in Bernard, G.W., (ed.), *The Tudor Nobility* (Manchester, 1992) p. 79.

⁶² *C.C.R.*, 1485-1500, no. 255. On 1 September 1487, Welles was summoned to Parliament as Viscount Welles.

⁶³ See Appendix 5.

following its failure, had joined Henry Tudor in exile. Like Richard, Welles was elevated after the battle of Stoke and married one of the female members of the House of York, in the presence of the king and queen,⁶⁴ soon after that. It is possible that the Pole and Welles' marriages took place at the same time, failing that probably only days separated them. Wells's marriage would provide, as Richard's had, another example of unity between York and Lancaster. Therefore, these marriages must be viewed in the aftermath of the battle of Stoke. Rather than purely a reward to a faithful follower, Margaret's marriage, and Cecily's, should be understood more as a means for Henry to safely dispose of two dynastically dangerous young women. Although she was preceded by Edward IV's daughters in relation to the succession, Margaret was certainly not unimportant. Indeed, no slur of bastardy had ever been cast upon her lineage, her legitimacy was assured, whereas the illegitimacy of Edward's children had been proclaimed and accepted to the extent that Richard, Duke of Gloucester was able to ascend the throne. In the right hands, such propaganda might be used to maintain that after her brother, if not Margaret herself, then any son she might bear was the legitimate heir to the throne. It might be significant that in the November parliament, an act was passed making the abduction of heiresses and those women `beyng heires apparaunts unto their auncesters'⁶⁵ a felony. Of course, just that September the daughter of John Beaufitz, a wealthy heiress, had been abducted. Much to the king's fury, the abduction was orchestrated by a member of his own household, and this case must bear some responsibility for the act. However, such an act could only help to preserve the security of the Yorkist heiresses. Although Margaret and Cecily had been safely married, Henry still had Anne, Katherine and Bridget to consider.

Edward's two other daughters were not married until 1495, and it may again be significant that their marriages were contemporary with the shock of Sir William Stanley's arrest. Again another pretender was on the scene, this time it was the plausible Perkin Warbeck claiming to be Richard, Duke of York. Unable to parade the duke, as he had the Earl of Warwick, Henry could not irrefutably prove the young man's imposture. Although Warbeck had appeared as early as 1491, and Henry had discovered his true origins by 1493,⁶⁶ nothing quite prepared him for the horror of finding conspiracy so close to home in the person of his lord chamberlain. Also

⁶⁴ B.L. Add. MS. 38,133, f. 132b; Nichols, J.G., *Collectanea Topographica*, p. 21.

⁶⁵ 3 Hen VII, cap 2. *Statutes of the Realm*, II (1816) 512.

⁶⁶ Loades, D.M., *Politics and the Nation*, p. 108.

among the conspirators was Lord Fitzwalter, the Lord Steward. 'Henry had been betrayed by both head officers of his household'⁶⁷ and this appalling discovery led to the establishment of the Privy Chamber, a sanctuary to which Henry could safely retreat.⁶⁸ 'Each new conspiracy against the king was followed by punitive action in parliament,'⁶⁹ and to further secure his dynasty, Henry safely disposed of the Yorkist heiresses. On 4 February 1495 Anne was married,⁷⁰ and on 16 February the heads of Sir William Stanley and his nephew Sir Humphrey Savage fell before the executioner's axe on Tower Hill. By October of the same year the last of Edward's daughters had taken her marriage vows. Their husbands were not blood relatives of the king, but by 1495 the queen had borne three children,⁷¹ Margaret had one son certainly and possibly two,⁷² while Cecily had given birth to two daughters.⁷³ This lessened the possible threat offered by the offspring of Anne and Katherine, thus Henry could afford to let them marry outside his family circle. Anne, at twenty quite old for a first marriage, took Thomas Howard as her husband. Thomas' father had initially been a supporter of Richard III and from Henry's accession had been slowly working his way back to favour.⁷⁴ Supposedly refusing the offer of escape during the Lambert Simnel affair, he was released from the Tower in January 1489. The same month his attainder was reversed but accompanied with extensive reservations, and he was restored only to the title of Earl of Surrey, not that of Duke of Norfolk enjoyed by his father under Richard III. In April of the same year he was sent north in the aftermath of the Earl of Northumberland's assassination and by 1491 was under-warden to Prince Arthur of the eastern and western marches, successfully putting down a second rising near Pontefract. In 1492 he was allowed to inherit all the Howard estates and that part of the Mowbray inheritance to which he was entitled:

⁶⁷ Starkey, D., 'Intimacy and Innovation: the rise of the Privy Chamber, 1485-1547' in idem, et al., *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War* (New York, 1987) p. 76.

⁶⁸ Ibid.,

⁶⁹ Lander, J.R., 'Attainder and Forfeiture, 1453 to 1509' in idem, *Crown and Nobility 1450-1509*, p. 154.

⁷⁰ Chrimes, S.B., *Henry VII*, p. 36.

⁷¹ Arthur born 1486, Margaret born 1489 and Henry born 1491.

⁷² Henry was born in 1492 and by 1495 Arthur may also have been born.

⁷³ When Welles drew up his first will in 1492, his two daughters, Elizabeth and Anne, were living. By 8 February 1499 when he drew up his second will, they had both died. *The King's Mother*, pp. 133-4.

⁷⁴ Lander, J.R., *Op.cit.*, pp. 146-7.

Henry recognized loyal service and according to his own cautious lights he rewarded it. Surrey had shown both loyalty and efficiency. He had been tested and he was restored by stages.⁷⁵

Surrey was a man Henry wished to reward and whose continued loyalty he needed to ensure. Anne's hand would be part of that insurance. The marriage of his son to the queen's sister would bestow honour upon the Howards, drawing them into the royal family orbit and advertising the earl's high place in the king's favour. The choice of husband for Katherine is easy to understand. Sir William Courtenay was the son of Sir Edward Courtenay who, unlike Surrey, had been a staunch supporter of Henry Tudor during Richard III's reign. Sharing his exile and accompanying him to Bosworth, Edward Courtenay was raised to the Earldom of Devon in 1485 and restored to lands formerly lost to his family. The marriage would therefore provide a reliable husband for Katherine while allowing Henry to reward a long devoted supporter. Ironically, with this one marriage Henry might have miscalculated, for in 1503 Sir William was charged with treason due to his alleged complicity with Edmund de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk.

From this evidence it appears that these marriages have a common pattern, and the claims of Michael Jones and Malcolm Underwood, in the light of these facts seem somewhat naive. As few historians have discussed Margaret's marriage, Jones and Underwood's theories, voiced in their study on Margaret Beaufort, warrant mentioning. They maintain, obviously with hindsight, that the best course of action would have been to leave Margaret unmarried, but they fail to mention that if this is so, then it would also have been safer to leave Edward IV's daughters unmarried. They believe that Margaret Beaufort's overriding desire to promote her half-blood family, the St. John's, lay behind Margaret's marriage to Sir Richard Pole. She procured it, they claim, in order to benefit her half nephew Richard Pole, although it was against the king's wishes and interests. According to them, it was without doubt her most serious political misjudgement.⁷⁶ However, the evidence discussed above supports the view that Margaret married Richard because Henry VII decided that she should. A loyal member of his family, there is no reason to imagine that Richard would be an unwelcome choice to Henry while, as previously noted,⁷⁷ it is debatable whether the

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ *The King's Mother*, p. 82.

⁷⁷ See above p. 43.

marriage was as 'extraordinarily advantageous' for him as Jones and Underwood seem to believe.⁷⁸ It is obviously necessary to examine Richard Pole's lineage in order to gain an understanding of his relationship to Henry VII.

Born between 1458-1459,⁷⁹ Richard was the eldest child of Geoffrey Pole, often wrongly assumed by historians to be a knight, and Edith St John of Bletsoe.⁸⁰ Geoffrey was reputedly of Welsh descent, a fact corroborated by his grandson Reginald. Greeting William Vaughan in 1537, Reginald apparently 'rejoiced to see a Welshman, as his grandfather came out of Wales.'⁸¹ It has been claimed that Geoffrey was the son of a David Vaux and Margaret Griffith, and that the Poles' descent stretched right back to the Princes of Powis.⁸² Certainly, following the Edwardian conquest, the sons of Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn, Lord of Powis and a descendant of the Princes of Southern Powis, called themselves de la Pole.⁸³ Although it is difficult to be sure of such illustrious ancestry, we can safely accept that Geoffrey was a Welshman. Most of his offices were concentrated in South Wales, revealing that Geoffrey's knowledge of the area was being utilised. A staunch supporter of Henry VI, he rose to prominence under the Lancastrian regime. We cannot be sure if Geoffrey had received any legal training, his parents probably lacking the affluence to send him to one of the Inns of Court. Nevertheless, he was an able administrator and by March 1440 he was one of four attorneys acting for Ralph Barton, executor of the will of Joan Barton widow of Henry Barton, a prominent citizen and alderman of

⁷⁸ *The King's Mother*, p. 82.

⁷⁹ In Geoffrey Pole's will of 12 October 1478 it is clear that none of his children were yet twenty one years of age, nevertheless in his testament he named his son Richard as one of his executors. Richard must therefore have been of a mature age. Moreover by 25 March 1480, Richard had entered his manor of Medmenham, which had been put in the hands of feoffees until he reached the age of 21. On that date he was issuing receipts for rent of the water in Medmenham to the Prior of Hurley. P.R.O. Prob. 11/6 (35 Wattys); Plaisted, A.H., *The Manor and Parish Records of Medmenham Buckinghamshire* (London, 1925) p. 70; W.A.M., no. 2331.

⁸⁰ See Appendix 5. It is wise to note that two Richard Poles existed at this time, and the considerable overlap in their careers has added to the confusion. For instance, both men occasionally served on commissions of the peace together, while the *Dictionary of National Biography* states that our Richard held the controllership of the port of Bristol, when it was in fact held by his name sake. *D.N.B.*, XLVI (London, 1896) 28. Fortunately, our Richard was knighted in 1487, while the other remained an esquire making identification easier.

⁸¹ *L & P*, XII, no. 107.

⁸² Plaisted, A.H., *Op.cit.*, p. 69.

⁸³ Walker, D., *Medieval Wales* (Cambridge, 1990) p. 162.

London.⁸⁴ Geoffrey's connections with the mercantile families of London were to prove advantageous and long-lasting. Two months later he was granted for life the office of Marshal of the Sessions of Carmarthen and Cardigan in South Wales to hold himself or by deputies.⁸⁵ His duties are hard to define, but possibly entailed responsibility for the prisoners in custody and their presentation to the justiciar in court.⁸⁶ Proving his worth, he was to remain in this office for eleven years. He was also granted for life the reversion of the offices of constable of Haverfordwest Castle and steward of the town and lordship there two years later, again to hold himself or by deputies.⁸⁷ Geoffrey Pole, an esquire of the body since 8 February 1440,⁸⁸ illustrates even this early on in his career Henry VI's use and patronage of his household men. By the use of deputies, household men could be appointed to offices farther afield where no residence qualification existed. Thus Wales saw an influx of these men into offices some, unlike Geoffrey, having no prior connection with Wales. Life grants increased dramatically and between 1436 and 1461, out of 32 offices granted in South Wales, seventeen took place between 1437 and 1440⁸⁹ while nearly three quarters of appointments to constablerships of castles went to men connected with the royal household.⁹⁰ As Ralph Griffiths points out:

Membership of Henry VI's enlarged household afforded sure access to his patronage. Household servants and court friends were foremost among its recipients.⁹¹

⁸⁴ *C.C.R.*, 1435-41, p. 361. Henry Barton had been mayor and escheator of London. He had held the office of the keeping of the clock in Westminster Palace with 6d a day in fees, and had been a purveyor of furs and pelts. *C.P.R.*, 1429-36, pp. 78, 184, 287.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 1436-41, p. 401.

⁸⁶ Griffiths, R.A., *The Principality of Wales in the Later Middle Ages: the structure and personnel of government. I South Wales, 1277-1536* (Cardiff, 1972) p. 34.

⁸⁷ *C.P.R.*, 1441-6, p. 67.

⁸⁸ Thomas, R.S., 'Geoffrey Pole: A Lancastrian Servant in Wales' *National Library of Wales Journal*, XVII (1971-2) 278.

⁸⁹ Griffiths, R.A., *The Reign of King Henry VI; the exercise of royal authority 1422-1461* (London, 1981) p. 344.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 337.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 329.

It has been suggested by R.S. Thomas, that Geoffrey was helped into royal service by Sir Roland Lenthal, whose death was to provide Geoffrey with the offices in Haverfordwest.⁹² Lenthal was high in favour at court, from 1420 until 1437 he was chamberlain to Catherine of Valois⁹³ and also a knight of the body to Henry VI,⁹⁴ receiving generous annuities in 1441 and 1442.⁹⁵ He was obviously well placed to exercise patronage on Geoffrey's behalf. Geoffrey was certainly connected to the Lenthal family, possibly as early as the 1430s, for by 1437 it is clear that he had lands in Pebidiog, Pembrokeshire, very close to Lenthal's lordships in Roch and Pill, sub-lordships of Haverfordwest.⁹⁶ It has also been suggested that Geoffrey was among the Welsh contingent that followed Owen Tudor into England.⁹⁷ If this is true, and he knew Owen Tudor personally, the connection with Lenthal may have been forged through him as husband to Catherine of Valois. In November 1444, Geoffrey acted as one of the feoffees to Roland's son Edmund,⁹⁸ regranting some of the lands on 28 June 1452.⁹⁹ It was from Edmund Lenthal on 1 April 1445, that Geoffrey acquired one third of the manor of Medmenham in Buckinghamshire.¹⁰⁰

Geoffrey's career continued apace receiving on 2 January 1443, jointly with Thomas West, the offices of constable and parker of Leeds Castle Kent, after the death of Sir John Steward.¹⁰¹ Thomas West had also served Henry V well, and in 1445 Henry VI granted him the office of clerk of the market of the household in reversion, as a reward for his good service to Henry V.¹⁰² Probably older than Geoffrey, the two men may have been friends and often worked together. In July 1448, they were among a

⁹² Thomas, R.S., *Op.cit.*, p. 278.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ *C.P.R.*, 1436-41, p. 513.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 513; *C.P.R.*, 1441-6, pp.103, 432.

⁹⁶ Thomas, R.S., *Op.cit.*, p. 277.

⁹⁷ Plaisted, A.H., *Op.cit.*, p. 69.

⁹⁸ *C.P.R.*, 1441-6, pp. 350-51.

⁹⁹ *C.C.R.*, 1447-54, p. 312.

¹⁰⁰ Plaisted, A.H., *Op.cit.*, p. 47.

¹⁰¹ *C.P.R.*, 1441-6, p. 137.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 373.

commission of seven investigating the theft of a Portuguese vessel,¹⁰³ while in January 1445 they benefited, with John Alcock, from the will of William Sydrake a London armourer.¹⁰⁴ Perhaps their friendship with Sydrake and possible knowledge of arms had a bearing on the 1453 grant to Thomas West and John Roger, of keeper of the armoury within the Tower of London.¹⁰⁵ Geoffrey's other acquaintances appear to have been Henry Griffith, Thomas FitzHenry, a Herefordshire lawyer and chamberlain of South Wales 1460-1,¹⁰⁶ for whom Geoffrey went surety in 1450, and the prior of Leeds, Kent, for whom he went surety in 1451.¹⁰⁷ In the same year Geoffrey received his last royal grant when he was appointed sergeant of the king's tents and pavilions.¹⁰⁸ It paid 12d a day in wages 'with all other usual profits', and in 1459 he received £7 6s 8d a year for the hire of a house in which to store the king's tents and for the relevant livery.¹⁰⁹ 1451 was also the year in which Geoffrey entered his offices in Haverfordwest after Roland Lenthal's death.

Geoffrey had not only been successful in attracting the king's attention. In 1456 he sat down at the King's Head in Cheapside, London, as one of the councillors of Jasper Tudor, half brother of Henry VI.¹¹⁰ Chosen for his 'technical training in administration, both of the estates and the household,'¹¹¹ he would have had plenty of opportunity to attract Jasper's attention. He was a member of his half brother's household, had offices in South Wales and possibly knew Jasper's father personally. In May 1453, with his associate Thomas FitzHenry, Geoffrey handed over the lordship of Caldicot in Monmouthshire and two manors in Carmarthen to Jasper on the king's instruction.¹¹² Perhaps it was at this point that Jasper became impressed by Geoffrey's

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 1446-52, p. 188.

¹⁰⁴ *C.C.R.*, 1441-7, p. 280.

¹⁰⁵ *C.P.R.*, 1452-61, p. 67.

¹⁰⁶ For FitzHenry as Chamberlain of South Wales see Thomas, R.S., 'The Political Career, Estates and Connection of Jasper Tudor Earl of Pembroke and Duke of Bedford (d.1495)' (Unpublished Ph.D thesis University of Wales (Swansea), 1971) p. 194.

¹⁰⁷ *C.F.R.*, 1445-52, pp. 162, 241.

¹⁰⁸ *C.P.R.*, 1446-52, p. 497.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 1452-61, p. 499; *C.C.R.*, 1454-61, p. 320.

¹¹⁰ Thomas, R.S., *Op.cit.*, p. 51.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹¹² Thomas, R.S., 'Geoffrey Pole: A Lancastrian Servant' p. 280.

talents, evidence seems to suggest that he had entered the earl's service by 1454.¹¹³ This event was to prove significant in more ways than one, for it is most likely that Jasper played a significant role in the arrangement of Geoffrey's marriage.

Geoffrey's first wife and Richard Pole's mother, was Edith St John, and it was from her that Richard inherited his blood link to Henry VII.¹¹⁴ She was the eldest of the five children of Margaret Beauchamp and Sir Oliver St John. Sir Oliver's parents¹¹⁵ had enjoyed the favour of Richard II and Henry V. Isabella, Sir Oliver's mother, had married firstly a John Paule, one of Richard II's knights,¹¹⁶ and on 13 August 1395 received a generous annuity from the king.¹¹⁷ Her second husband, Sir John St John of Northampton, was also one of Richard II's knights and he and Isabella were granted 100 marks yearly out of the issues of the customs in Kingston-upon-Hull.¹¹⁸ This grant was confirmed by Henry V.¹¹⁹ John had been one of Henry V's knights when he was Prince of Wales, receiving an annuity of £40 in 1407.¹²⁰ By 15 January 1425, he had died and in that year his son Oliver took seisen of his lands in Northampton and Somerset.¹²¹

Oliver's wife was Margaret Beauchamp, daughter of John Beauchamp and Edith Stourton¹²² after whom Richard Pole's mother was named. Margaret Beauchamp's grandfather had been chamberlain to Edward III, and her brother John was an esquire

¹¹³ In that year it appears from one of the Paston letters that Geoffrey was well informed about the liaison between the Tudor brothers and the Duke of York. Potentially dangerous for them, only their close associates could have been aware of it. Geoffrey, as one of Jasper's councillors, would have been well placed to know. Gairdner, J., *The Paston Letters*, II, 298, no. 235, cited in Thomas, R.S., *Op.cit.*, p. 280.

¹¹⁴ See Appendix 5.

¹¹⁵ See Appendix 6.

¹¹⁶ *C.C.R.*, 1413-19, p. 138.

¹¹⁷ *C.P.R.*, 1422-9, p. 19.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ *C.C.R.*, 1413-19, p. 142.

¹²⁰ *C.P.R.*, 1422-29, p. 94.

¹²¹ *C.F.R.*, 1422-30, pp. 83, 102.

¹²² See Appendix 6.

to Henry V.¹²³ John died young and unmarried, thus his sister and heiress Margaret inherited the family estates. We cannot be sure when Margaret married Sir Oliver, but marriage into this 'well-to-do' gentry¹²⁴ family did not prevent Sir Oliver from falling into debt for £48 16s 2d to two London drapers and a London skinner in 1436.¹²⁵ However, by April 1438 Sir Oliver had died¹²⁶ and Margaret was left a widow with five children to care for. She was also free to look for a second husband, and she found him in the person of John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset. She had only one child by this marriage, Margaret Beaufort, the future mother of Henry VII. Thus Margaret Beaufort and Edith St John were half sisters and their sons, Henry and Richard, first cousins of the half blood. Margaret Beauchamp went on to make a third marriage to Lionel, Lord Welles, who lost his life at Towton in 1461 fighting for the Lancastrian cause.¹²⁷ From this union John was born, Margaret Beaufort's half brother and the man who would marry Princess Cecily in 1487.

According to Jones and Underwood, the five St John children provided Margaret Beaufort 'with companionship and familial identity in the early stages of her life,'¹²⁸ they became her 'adopted family.'¹²⁹ Occasionally at Bletsoe in Bedford, but more frequently at Maxey Castle in Northampton, Margaret Beaufort spent her childhood in the company of her St John siblings where they enjoyed a settled family life. In 1445 Edith and her sister Elizabeth attended the baptism of a member of the neighbouring Fairfax family at Stamford, while Edith and Thomas Yerman, steward of the Maxey household, witnessed the christening of a Fairfax daughter in St Peter's Church, Maxey. These ties forged in childhood were not easily broken, thus the St John family were to enjoy the patronage of Margaret Beaufort in later life. The son of her half brother John St John became her chamberlain after 1504 and an executor of her will.¹³⁰ From the 1470s she supported the children of her half sister Mary, who had

¹²³ *C.P.R.*, 1422-9, p. 12.

¹²⁴ *The King's Mother*, p. 28.

¹²⁵ *C.P.R.*, 1429-36, p. 487.

¹²⁶ *C.F.R.*, 1437-45, p. 2.

¹²⁷ Lord Welles' son by his first marriage, Richard, and Richard's son Robert, were executed in 1470 due to their implication in the Lincolnshire rising.

¹²⁸ *The King's Mother*, p. 31.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*,

married Sir Richard Frogenhall, and strove to protect those half blood relatives caught on the wrong side at Bosworth.¹³¹ It is easy to understand, therefore, why Jones and Underwood believed she was responsible for Richard Pole's marriage. She probably took a keen interest in the upbringing and welfare of Edith's children if her treatment of her other St John nieces and nephews is anything to go by.

After her first marriage to John de la Pole was dissolved in 1453, Margaret Beaufort married Edmund Tudor, Jasper Tudor's brother. It was with Jasper that the pregnant young widow, all of thirteen years old, took refuge in 1456. On 28 January 1457, she gave birth to her son Henry at Jasper's castle in Pembroke. Consequently, Jasper was well acquainted with his young sister-in-law, and aware of her family connections. Hence, it is tempting to suppose that Jasper might have been involved in arranging a marriage that would unite his reliable councillor, and trusted royal servant, to a member of his sister-in-law's family, thus introducing a loyal supporter of the House of Lancaster into the Lancastrian family orbit. Alternatively, Geoffrey might already have known Edith, as his lands and part of the St John lands lay in adjacent counties, and perhaps sought Jasper's help to secure a match which, even without the benefit of hindsight, was prestigious for him. Edith had had a duke, then a peer as step-fathers, her sister Elizabeth had married William Lord Zouche by 1450,¹³² while Margaret Beaufort's marriage to Sir Henry Stafford in 1458 gave Edith the son of a duke as brother-in-law.

We cannot be sure exactly when Geoffrey and Edith were married, but they were definitely married by 1458/1459 between which years their eldest son Richard was born, and on 12 September 1461, as man and wife, they gave a lease of the fishery and weir in Medmenham to the Prior and Convent of Hurley.¹³³ They made their home at Wittington, South Buckinghamshire,¹³⁴ where Geoffrey would have spent more time following his withdrawal from royal service after 1461. The Yorkist regime offered no place to a man of such strong Lancastrian loyalties and affiliations. Although never actively disloyal to Edward IV, Geoffrey remained stubbornly aloof from the regime that had toppled his master from the throne. Edward IV was more than happy to keep it that way, especially as one of Geoffrey's associates had deliberately

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 34.

¹³² Thomas, R.S., p. 280.

¹³³ Plaisted, A.H., *The Manor and Parish Records of Medmenham*, pp. 370-2.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 66.

destroyed the court and petty sessions records of Cardigan in order to embarrass the new Government.¹³⁵ Edward:

determined to replace the existing administrative hierarchy in the principality with men on whose loyalty he could count, and members of the Herbert, Devereux, Vaughan and Dwnn families were consequently singled out for royal favour.¹³⁶

Accordingly, William Herbert replaced Geoffrey at Haverfordwest¹³⁷ while Ralph St Leger immediately took over at Leeds castle, Kent.¹³⁸

Although Geoffrey lacked even a knighthood and the marriage might therefore be considered somewhat lowly for the well connected Edith, he was not lacking in affluence, and this affluence does not seem to have been too adversely affected by his loss of offices after 1461. Having made his home in Buckingham, Geoffrey maintained a low profile during the upheavals of the mid-fifteenth century and began to build up his estates there. He was determined to avoid the fate of his Lancastrian neighbour, Sir Robert Whittingham, whose downfall was a potent warning.¹³⁹ In 1459, Geoffrey had leased property from John Brecknock, treasurer of the royal household, but by 1459 Brecknock was in debt to Geoffrey for £275. An agreement regarding repayment and the manor of Ellesborough was drawn up, superseded by a second on 6 march 1460. Geoffrey was to pay a further £60 on Brecknock's behalf to one of the London alderman to whom Brecknock was in debt. A 20 mark debt outstanding to Geoffrey since 1454 was to be cancelled and a further 5 marks would be paid on Brecknock's behalf. Brecknock had a year to make repayment, if he failed Geoffrey was to keep the manor of Ellesborough for good, paying twenty years purchase price, less the amount owed to him by Brecknock. Geoffrey was never repaid, and so retained the manor. What is interesting to note, is the substantial

¹³⁵ Thomas FitzHenry, see above p.53.

¹³⁶ Thomas, R.S., 'The Political Career ... of Jasper Tudor' pp. 194-5.

¹³⁷ *C.P.R.*, 1461-7, p. 119.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

¹³⁹ Part of Sir Robert Whittingham's lands lay in Buckinghamshire. He lost them all at the accession of Edward IV and lost his life at Tewkesbury. Henry VII was to allow Margaret, Sir Robert's daughter, and her husband John Verney to inherit the lands. Bruce, J., (ed.), *Letters and Papers of the Verney Family to 1639*, LVI (Camden Society, old series, London, 1853) 19.

reserves of capital that Geoffrey had at his disposal. He had been able to lend Brecknock £351 13s 4d in all,¹⁴⁰

In 1445, Geoffrey had acquired his first third of Medmenham manor from Edmund Lenthal.¹⁴¹ In 1468 he purchased the second third from John, Duke of Norfolk and the final third was secured from George Neville, subject to a rent fee of 10 marks a year, in 1476.¹⁴² Geoffrey now owned outright a manor which was valued at £33 7s 9d per annum in 1539,¹⁴³ and the manor of Ellesborough which sold for £623 18s 5 1/2 d in 1544.¹⁴⁴ If sold for the standard twenty years purchase price, Ellesborough manor was probably worth approximately £32-£33 a year, a valuation that would not have greatly changed since Geoffrey Pole's day. At some point after 1430-1, Geoffrey also acquired the manor of Stoke Mandeville in Buckinghamshire from Robert Brudenell, as he bequeathed this manor to his son, Henry.¹⁴⁵ Hence Geoffrey provided a modest, but comfortable and secure lifestyle for his wife and three children; Richard, Henry and Eleanor.

By 1477 Edith had died, for in this year it appears that Geoffrey was preparing for his second marriage to Bona Danvers. The Danvers, a talented brood, married into many of the families who were to feature in the lives of Margaret and her in-laws, the Verneys.¹⁴⁶ Among the letters of the Stoner family is one which seems to suggest that negotiations for Geoffrey's second marriage were underway by 1477.¹⁴⁷ If indeed it was Geoffrey's marriage that was being discussed, then it was short lived for he died on 4 January 1479 at Wittington,¹⁴⁸ a writ of diem clausit extremum being issued on

¹⁴⁰ Thomas, R.S., 'Geoffrey Pole: A Lancastrian Servant,' pp. 282-3.

¹⁴¹ See above p. 52.

¹⁴² Plaisted, A.H., *Op.cit.*, pp. 53, 45-52.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁴⁴ *L&P*, XIX, no. 166, (37), pp. 74-5.

¹⁴⁵ *The Victoria County History* of Buckinghamshire is unclear as to Stoke Mandeville's descent after Robert Brudenell's tenure, merely noting that it was not among the lands of his son John at his death in 1533. Page, W., (ed.), *V[ictoria] C[ounty] H[istory]*, Buckinghamshire, II (London, 1969) 361.

¹⁴⁶ See Appendix 7.

¹⁴⁷ Kingsford, C.L., *The Stonor Letters and Papers 1290-1483*, II, 25, no. 183.

¹⁴⁸ Plaisted, A.H., *Op.cit.*, p. 70.

11 January 1479.¹⁴⁹ Nevertheless, in his testament drawn up on 12 October 1478, Geoffrey took care to make sure that Bona was provided for. She was bequeathed the manor house that Geoffrey had ordered built near the Abbey of Medmenham for her life.¹⁵⁰ She also received a silver gilt cup used during Geoffrey's illness, some livestock together with the right of pasture for them in Medmenham and eight cartloads of firewood a year.¹⁵¹ Eleanor, Geoffrey's daughter, was to receive 200 marks in money or silver vessels for her marriage portion provided that she was governed by her father's executors and other friends. To secure this amount, a moiety of the Hall lands in Wittington, Medmenham were set aside for her.¹⁵² In his will which disposed of his lands, Geoffrey bequeathed the manors of Medmenham, 'Hallonds' and Withmere¹⁵³ to Richard and Ellesborough and Stoke Mandeville to Henry, who died without issue after his father's decease.¹⁵⁴ Thus Richard inherited all his father's manors.

Like his father, Richard maintained a low profile and remained distant from the Yorkist regime, never holding any office until the accession of the first Tudor. Although apparently not at Bosworth, he worked assiduously for his half cousin once he succeeded to the throne. Six years after his death, Geoffrey Pole's son began his career in royal service as almost a mirror image of his father's. Beginning as a royal esquire, Welsh offices were soon to follow, with yet another Tudor directing the choice of wife for one of the Pole family.

¹⁴⁹ P.R.O. C.60/287, m. 19.

¹⁵⁰ Timber framed with brick and plaster filling on brick foundations, it had a central hall, with the kitchens probably in the north wing. Originally, it was built in the shape of a H with the hall in the central block. Plaisted, A.H., *Op.cit.*, pp. 324-5; *V.C.H.*, Buckinghamshire, III (London, 1969) 85-6.

¹⁵¹ Plaisted, A.H., *Op.cit.*, p. 71.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 70, 73.

¹⁵³ Apparently, Withmere and Mullonde, probably Hallonde, are place names which have been found in Medmenham. *V.C.H.*, Buckinghamshire, III, 86. Hence they were probably part of the manor of Medmenham.

¹⁵⁴ P.R.O. Prob. 11/6 (35 Wattys)

CHAPTER THREE

MARRIED LIFE, THE CAREER of SIR RICHARD POLE and WIDOWHOOD; 1487-1509.

Margaret began her married life at Bockmer, a house restored by her father-in-law and situated in her husband's manor of Medmenham.¹ However, Sir Richard's duties, especially from 1491, ensured that he had little time to relax upon his estates in the company of his young wife. In fact, it was in this year on 4 March, that Sir Richard appointed Thomas Holland as his bailiff of Ellesborough, 'with power to sell the woods within the lordship, commanding all tenants and inhabitants there to obey the said Holland,'² although Richard did not take possession of the manor until 16 April 1493.³ In the first few years of Henry VII's reign Margaret also had duties to fulfil. As a member of the royal family, she was expected to attend various court ceremonials where, despite Henry's later parsimonious reputation, etiquette and splendour were mandatory: 'His court was magnificent in both ceremony and decor. His clothing was rich and expensive, as was that of the attendant nobles.'⁴ As previously noted, Margaret's first public appearance as Lady Margaret Pole was at the coronation of her cousin in 1487, where both herself and her husband had prominent roles to play. Richard was one of twelve knights of the body who took turns in bearing the canopy over the queen as she made her way in procession from the Tower to Westminster.⁵ In addition to attending upon Margaret Beaufort in Westminster Abbey and, most probably, at the coronation feast, Margaret joined the queen and approximately thirty three other ladies in the Parliament chamber the following day. Sitting at the side table, she followed the Duchesses of Suffolk and Norfolk and the Countesses of Oxford, Wiltshire, Rivers and Nottingham in order of precedence, but

¹ Plaisted, A.H., *The Manor and Parish Records of Medmenham*, pp. 72, 97-8.

² *C[atalogue] of A[ncient] D[eeds]*, III, C. 3515.

³ *Ibid.*, I, B. 1494. In 1493 Sir Henry Colet, alderman of London, Robert Brudenell, Thomas Bradbury and William Grey transferred the manor to Richard Pole and Ralph Asshton. As these men were not the feoffees appointed by Geoffrey Pole, it is possible that Richard had mortgaged Ellesborough for a loan, and having discharged that loan, Ellesborough was returned to him.

⁴ Storey, R.L., *The Reign of Henry VII*, p. 64.

⁵ B.L. Egerton MS. 985, f.16; *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii*, pp. 221-2.

preceded all the other ladies.⁶ At the feast of St George 1488, Margaret waited upon the queen and the king's mother⁷ as she was to do again during the Christmas festivities of 1488, which were held at Sheen.⁸ At both these celebrations of 1488, Margaret was placed third in the lists of those attending, preceded only by Anne, the queen's sister and the Countess Rivers for the Feast of St George, and Anne and Elizabeth of Buckingham,⁹ for the Christmas celebrations. In contrast, her husband was twelfth in the list of those accompanying the king at Christmas.¹⁰ Although the peers were understandably placed before him, he also followed Sir John Savage and Sir David Owen, the king's illegitimate half uncle.¹¹ Margaret however, always headed the list of ladies, preceded only by peeresses and the queen's sisters, clearly illustrating that her high status continued to be recognised.

Margaret's attendance at these Christmas celebrations of 1488 is the last definite reference we have to her at court. It is possible that she might have fallen out of favour, but an item in one of the household books of Henry VII renders this unlikely. In Samuel Bentley's *'Excerpta Historica'*, we find an entry apparently referring to Margaret for the year 1494; 'To my Lady Pole in coronis, £20.'¹² In the original, the actual date is 30 September, 9 Henry VII,¹³ which would therefore make it 30 September 1493. Bentley claims that Margaret is being referred to here, but another possibility is that it could have been Eleanor Pole, Richard's sister, who enjoyed great favour at court. We know that Eleanor was married by 1496, when her dower in the Hall lands of Wittington was realised and she and her new husband sold their half of the moiety.¹⁴ However, there is no evidence that Eleanor married before 1496, hence in 1493 her surname could still have been Pole, but as the daughter of an esquire her correct title would have been 'mistress' not 'Lady,' therefore it seems most likely that

⁶ B.L. Egerton MS. 985, f. 22; *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii*, IV, . 228-9.

⁷ *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii*, IV, 241.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 245.

⁹ Possibly Elizabeth Stafford, the Duke of Buckingham's sister.

¹⁰ *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii*, IV, 245-6.

¹¹ The illegitimate son of Owen Tudor, born around 1459 in Pembrokeshire, see, Thomas, R.S., 'The Political Career ... of Jasper Tudor,' p. 20.

¹² Bentley, S., (ed.), *Excerpta Historica or Illustrations of English History*, (London, 1831) p. 99.

¹³ B.L. Add. MS.7099, f. 20.

¹⁴ P.R.O. C.P.25/1/22/127, no. 15; Plaisted, A.H., *Op.cit.*, p. 73.

Bentley was right, and 'Lady Pole' was indeed Margaret. £20 in crowns was a substantial sum of money and such a gift would hardly have been made to someone in royal disfavour. Exactly why Margaret received it at that time, we cannot be sure, but it was probably related to Richard's appointment as lord chamberlain to Prince Arthur in that year.¹⁵ Alternatively, Margaret's absence from court might have been the result of pregnancy. By Christmas 1488 she had been married for just over a year and may easily have been with child. The Poles' eldest surviving son Henry, was born in 1492, probably June,¹⁶ but this does not mean that he was their first child. In the previous five years Margaret might have borne other children who died in infancy, or she might have suffered from miscarriages.¹⁷ In a letter to Reginald in 1536, in which she upbraided him for his behaviour, Margaret wrote; 'Trust me Reginald, there went never the death of thy father or of any child so nigh my heart.'¹⁸ Of course, she could have been referring to her son Arthur who had died by 1536, but 'any child' would seem to suggest more than one child. Nevertheless, this explanation is again unsatisfactory. Margaret was still bearing children in 1500 and after, during which time she most likely served as one of Catherine of Aragon's ladies at Ludlow. Clearly, pregnancy did not deter her from carrying out court duties at this time, so why might she have preferred to serve the Spanish princess and not her own cousin the queen? The answer perhaps lies in her relationship with her husband. Waiting upon the queen at court would mean protracted separations from Richard who was occupied with his duties in Wales and on the Marches. Service with Catherine however, meant that Margaret could be close to her husband, Prince Arthur's lord chamberlain. The above letter to Reginald, in which she mentions Richard's death,¹⁹ is the only extant reference made by Margaret to her husband, but from the little we know it appears that the Poles' marriage was a happy one. Margaret bore five children over a period of thirteen years, which in itself suggests compatibility. After Henry, their eldest son, Margaret bore a second son Arthur, whose date of birth is unfortunately unknown, as

¹⁵ See below p 73.

¹⁶ In June 1513 Henry Pole came of age and took livery of his father's lands. P.R.O. C.66/620, m. 19; C.82/393; *L&P*, I (ii) no. 2137, (5).

¹⁷ Lodovico Beccatelli, Reginald Poles' secretary, claimed that Margaret bore Sir Richard six children; four sons and two daughters. As Beccatelli must have gained this information from Reginald, it should not be too readily dismissed. A second daughter could very well have been born to the Poles, and then died in her tender years. However, Beccatelli does go on to mistakenly state that both the daughters married into the principal families of the kingdom. Pye, B., (trans.), *The Life of Cardinal Reginald Pole by Lodovico Beccatelli* (London, 1766) p. 13.

¹⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/105, f.66; *L&P*, XI, no. 93.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

is the date of Ursula's birth, the Poles' daughter, presumably named after Margaret's aunt.²⁰ Reginald was born in May 1500²¹ and their youngest son and namesake of his paternal grandfather Geoffrey, entered the world no later than 1505. Reginald's birth and the tradition surrounding it, provides a further small insight into the relationship between Margaret and her husband.

Benjamin Pye, in his translation of Beccatelli's biography of Reginald Pole, informs us that according to Camden, Reginald was born at Stourton Castle in Staffordshire.²² R.M. Grazebrook in his short work on Stourton Castle and the royal forest of Kinver, also maintains that Reginald was born there.²³ Indeed, it does seem probable that this tradition is based on fact. In the Book of Wards 1503-06, there is a page on which the lands of Richard, now deceased, are listed and valued. Following the valuations of his manors in Oxford and Buckinghamshire, comes a valuation regarding 'Stourton et Kinfare'.²⁴ No county is mentioned, but there can be no doubt that this is the manor of Kinver in Staffordshire. Unfortunately the entry is incomplete; the holder of the lands is not mentioned, and the amount they are worth is omitted.²⁵ By 29 October 1495, the abbot and convent of St Mary, Tewkesbury had granted the manors of Stourton and Kinver to feoffees to the use of 'the king, his heirs and assigns'.²⁶ On 28 March 1499, Henry appointed William Smyth as surveyor and receiver general of the lordships and manors of 'Sturton and Kynfar, co. Stafford'.²⁷ However, they may have been in the king's hands long before this, for in 1486 Henry granted £9 'of the keeping of the manors of Kynfare and Storton, and of the forest of Kynfare'²⁸ to his mother-in-law, Elizabeth Woodvyll. On 28 December 1504, Henry granted them to one of his

²⁰ The youngest sister of George Duke of Clarence.

²¹ Pye, B., *Op.cit.*, p. 131.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 13, n. 1.

²³ Grazebrook, R.M., *A Short History of Stourton Castle and the Royal Forest of Kinver* (London, 1919) p. 29.

²⁴ P.R.O. E.36/247, f. 35.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 'Item of the issues of the houses there parcels of land lately of the annual value by estimation }

²⁶ *C.P.R.*, 1494-1509, p. 54.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

kin, Charles Somerset, under a forty year lease for £20 a year.²⁹ Significantly, on the very same day that he received the manors of Kinver and Stourton, Somerset was also appointed steward of the manors and lordships of Montgomery, Ceri and Cedewain and constable of Montgomery Castle, offices previously held by Richard.³⁰ Although there is uncertainty concerning the exact date of Richard Pole's death, we know that he died probably in October 1504.³¹ It therefore seems obvious that Somerset's appointments in Montgomery, Ceri and Cedewain were to replace the deceased Richard Pole. It might be the case that his entry into Kinver and Stourton was also made possible due to Richard's death. Although no name is mentioned in the Book of Wards, the fact that the entry regarding Kinver and Stourton follows directly the two entries concerning Richard's other manors, and these entries are the only ones on the page, surely must suggest that Kinver and Stourton were in some way connected to Richard. He may have had a lease for life only or, alternatively, been appointed its keeper. Leland, writing in the sixteenth century, stated that Stourton belonged to the king, but that, 'Pole lay at it by licens.'³² That Richard might have wanted the use of Stourton Castle makes perfect sense. In the county of Staffordshire, it was excellently placed to offer a convenient base while he carried out his duties on the Marches.³³ The headquarters of the Prince of Wales' council at Ludlow castle could not have been more than a days ride away from Sourton Castle, while the Prince's residence at Bewdley was even closer. Moreover, the castle offered comfortable and honourable accommodation for himself and his wife.³⁴ Hence, it is quite likely that Margaret's absences from court were the result of her desire to remain in the vicinity of her husband; at Bockmer in Buckinghamshire while he attended to his estates and periodically at Stourton Castle, where she bore Reginald in 1500, while he carried out his official duties in Wales.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 389.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 397.

³¹ See below p. 89.

³² Smith, L.T., (ed.), *Leland's Itinerary in England and Wales in or about the years 1535-43*, V (London, 1910) 20.

³³ Although it was not within easy reach of North Wales, Richard's duties there would probably not necessitate protracted stays in the area.

³⁴ Originally built as a royal hunting lodge on the bank of the River Stour about half a mile north east of the village of Kinver, it had, by Richard Pole's time, become a fortified manor house and from the thirteenth century had been known as the Castle of Stourton. Colvin, H.M., (ed.), *The History of the King's Works*, II, The Middle Ages (London, 1963) 978.

That Margaret might have wished to remain close to her husband is not an unreasonable assumption. She had suffered a rather unstable childhood. She had lost both parents, her father violently, and her brother had been incarcerated in the Tower by the man who had overthrown and killed her uncle, Richard III. To Margaret, Richard Pole may have represented security and safety. Between fourteen and fifteen years older than his wife, at the time of their marriage in 1487 he was between 28 and 29 years of age and Margaret was fourteen years old.³⁵ He was also a relative of the new king, high in his favour and on whose expertise and reliability Henry VII depended. From Margaret's point of view, Richard may very well have provided the safe haven that she, as well as Henry VII, was looking for. Never, as far as we know, indulging in scandalous or reckless behaviour, the quiet nature of this reliable Buckinghamshire knight might be one reason why little trace of his character remains to History. Although he did not escape the notorious recognizances of Henry VII, he never fell foul of his king, and life with this patient, hardworking 'dependable wheel horse of Tudor administration'³⁶ was probably one of peaceful stability.³⁷

Although not a substantial landowner, Sir Richard and his wife enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle, with the revenues from his lands enhanced by his wages as a royal official. After his death, Medmenham and Ellesborough were valued jointly at £50 a year.³⁸ Unfortunately, we have very little information regarding the manors of Long Wittenham and Fifield in Oxfordshire. Again, they may have been leased for life only, but the advowson does seem to have been heritable. On 18 December 1505 the king presented John Longman to the parish church of Fifield due to Henry Pole's minority, however no further extant evidence links them to Henry Pole after that date.³⁹ They were valued jointly at £120 per year after Richard's death,⁴⁰ thus

³⁵ Clearly, Sir John Oglander was mistaken when he claimed that Henry VII married the 'brave-spirited' Margaret to Richard, a very old man, 'hopinge she showld have no children by him.' Long, W.H., (ed.), *The Oglander Memoirs: Extracts from the MSS. of Sir J. Oglander, K.T., of Nunwell, Isle of Wight, Deputy Governor of Portsmouth and Deputy-Lieutenant of the Isle of Wight, 1595-1648* (London, 1888) pp. 100-01.

³⁶ Mattingly, G., *Catherine of Aragon* (London, 1944) p. 45.

³⁷ Dom Bede Camm believes that Margaret's chantry in Christchurch Priory, which contains two receptacles, was intended as the final resting place for herself and her son Reginald. Camm, B., *Forgotten Shrines* (London, 1910) p. 86. However, no contemporary evidence supports this view, and it is more likely that she intended her husband's body to be transferred from Medmenham Parish Church to the chantry on her death. I am grateful to Mrs Margaret Harris for drawing my attention to this work.

³⁸ P.R.O. E.36/247, f. 35.

³⁹ Richard Pole's Inquisition Post Mortem lists only Medmenham and Ellesborough while only one of Henry Pole's Inquisitions Post Mortem survives regarding the manor of Stapull in Somerset. This manor Henry acquired from the Earl of Northumberland. See below p. 165.

Richard's landed revenues were theoretically £170 a year. This revenue was augmented by the salary he received from several offices in Wales. By 1490, he was constable of Montgomery Castle, Harlech Castle and Conwy Castle, captain of the town of Conwy and chamberlain of North Wales which, including his fee of 50 marks as an esquire for the body, brought him approximately £110-£120 a year.⁴¹ By 1499 he had acquired the constableness of Beaumaris Castle and Caernarfon Castle, was captain of the town of Caernarfon and chamberlain of Chester, approximately a further £50-£60, although he had had to relinquish the chamberlainship of North Wales.⁴² It is not known what fee Richard received as Prince Arthur's lord chamberlain or as a member of the Council of the Marches. Moreover, by 1495 he had also been appointed chief justice of North Wales.⁴³ Again, we have no record of his salary, but the annual fee of the chief justice of Chester was as much as £100.⁴⁴ Therefore between 1490-99, Richard's basic income must have been somewhere around £300-£400 a year. This is not an inconsiderable sum, nevertheless life at court was expensive and, like most courtiers, Richard Pole was constrained to live somewhat beyond his means. Thus, he apparently mortgaged his manor of Ellesborough to raise money, and sold off, not only a large amount of land within Medmenham,⁴⁵ but also the manor of Stoke Mandeville, possibly back to the Brudenell family.⁴⁶

⁴⁰ P.R.O. E.36/247, f. 35.

⁴¹ £10 4s as constable of Harlech, £40 as constable of Conwy, £12 3s 4d as captain of Conwy and £20 as chamberlain of North Wales. P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen.VII/1592. Unfortunately there is no account of his fee as constable of Montgomery Castle, but it was probably worth about £10-£20 a year. *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, p. 299.

⁴² £20 as constable of Caernarfon Castle and captain of the town, and £20 as chamberlain of Chester. P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen.VII/1595; Worthington, P., 'Royal Government in the Counties Palatine of Lancashire and Chester' p. 60. Unfortunately, we have no record of Richard's fee as constable of Beaumaris Castle, but again it was probably around £10-£20.

⁴³ Beverley Smith, J., 'Crown and Community,' p. 161.

⁴⁴ Worthington, P., *Op.cit.*, p. 60.

⁴⁵ See below p. 71.

⁴⁶ Apart from the bequest in his father's will, no further evidence links Richard or his son with Stoke Mandeville. It was not included in Richard's Inquisition Post.Mortem which lists only Medmenham and Ellesborough, and according to the *V.C.H.*, the manor was back within the Brudenell family by the seventeenth century. *V.C.H.*, Buckinghamshire, II, 361.

To gain an understanding of Richard's life and career, it is necessary to look at those individuals associated with him in order to recreate the circles within which he moved, and thus appreciate the support networks he could enjoy. Renting 60 acres of arable land, six acres of wood and 24s rent in Ellesborough by fealty and 6d a year was the lawyer Sir John Mordaunt.⁴⁷ One time speaker of the House of Commons⁴⁸ and by 24 June 1504 chancellor of the duchy and county palatine of Lancaster, Mordaunt was a man whose connection to Richard was forged by their professional duties. He was named to no fewer than 43 commissions of the peace with Richard, although they presumably did not sit on all of them, and was a member of the council of the Prince of Wales. Richard had also been involved in the conveyance of lands from Richard Beauchamp, Lord de Beauchamp, to feoffees including Mordaunt, who were to hold them as security due to a debt owed by Beauchamp to the king. The feoffees were to ensure that the king received the issues.⁴⁹ Richard's friends and colleagues naturally included those with whom he worked:

Not only did they belong to an identifiable occupational group, but those who worked together cultivated mutual interests beyond the office: they were often friends, sometimes neighbours and business partners who recognized the expertise of each other just as they valued their own.⁵⁰

Some of these friendships were strong enough to survive Richard's death and feature in his widow's life.

Charles Somerset, who stepped into Richard's shoes in Stafford and Merioneth, was the illegitimate son of Henry, Duke of Somerset and his mistress Joan Hill.⁵¹ Thus, Charles Somerset was Henry VII's third cousin. Although he was more distantly related to the king than Richard Pole, his connection did come through the more illustrious Beaufort line. While not actual blood relatives, both Richard and Somerset were related to the Tudor monarch and loyal supporters of the Lancastrian regime which gave them more than enough in common. Also Margaret and Somerset were

⁴⁷ *Cal[endar] Inq[uisitions] P[ost] M[ortem]*, Henry VII, 1505-09, 459, no. 875.

⁴⁸ Chrimes, S.B., *Henry VII*, p. 145.

⁴⁹ *Cal Inq. P. M.*, 1497-1505, II, 551, no. 861.

⁵⁰ Griffiths, R.A., 'Public and Private Bureaucracies in England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century,' *T[ransactions of the]R[oyal] H[istorical] S[ociety]*, XXX (Sixth series, 1980) 125-26.

⁵¹ *The King's Mother*, p. 72; see Appendix 2.

both descended from John of Gaunt. In October 1500, Charles Somerset and Richard Pole were bound for 500 marks, together with Lord Grey of Wilton and Sir Richard Delabere, to pay the revenues of the lordships of Pencelli, Cantref Selyf and Alexanderston in Brecon, parcel of the duchy of Lancaster, every year at Candlemas.⁵² The bond was still in force in October 1503.⁵³

Edmund, Lord Grey of Wilton, was the son of John Lord Grey and Anne, daughter of Edmund Earl of Kent. Among his manors he held Wilton in Herefordshire and Kempley in Gloucestershire, not far from Brecon, and four manors in Buckinghamshire. He also held Ruthin, in the old county of Denbighshire, North Wales.⁵⁴ Thus he had plenty of opportunity to make Richard's acquaintance. Sir Richard Delabere was the head of a prominent Herefordshire family. An associate of Richard's colleague Sir Thomas Englefield, Sir Richard Delabere was a staunch supporter of Henry VII.⁵⁵ It is no surprise that he became acquainted with Richard, and in addition to the bond, between 1492 and 1503, both men were named to eight commissions of the peace together. It was the wardship of Sir Richard Delabere's granddaughter Elizabeth, that was granted to Margaret Pole in 1520.

On 8 March 1503, Richard Pole, Charles Somerset, Sir David Owen and Sir William Meryng⁵⁶ entered into a recognizance for 2000 marks. The terms were that Charles Somerset was to observe an indenture concerning the castle and lordship of Cardiff in Glamorgan and the lordship of Morgannok in South Wales.⁵⁷ Obviously Richard, David Owen and William Meryng had voluntarily entered into what J.R. Lander describes as a 'composite' recognizance to vouch for their colleague.⁵⁸ Richard's friendship with Somerset was to prove worthwhile, for it was Somerset who stepped forward to help his widow by taking out a £40 loan with her from the king in order to

⁵² B.L. Add. MS. 21 480, f. 34.

⁵³ B.L. Add. MS. 59899, f. 107b.

⁵⁴ *Complete Peerage*, VI (London, 1926) 171, 180-81.

⁵⁵ Hutchinson, J., *Herefordshire Biographies* (1890) p. 36.

⁵⁶ Sir William Meryng operated primarily in Nottingham and Derby from where he retired as sheriff in 1508. *C.P.R.*, 1494-1509, p. 563.

⁵⁷ *C.C.R.*, 1500-09, p. 78, no. 211, pp. 90-1, no. 247.

⁵⁸ Lander, J.R., 'Bonds, coercion and fear: Henry VII and the Peerage' in idem, *Crown and Nobility*, p 283.

pay for Richard's funeral.⁵⁹ Although Richard's will does not survive, it seems likely that Somerset was named as one of his executors or as an overseer of the will, with the request to be good lord to his wife and children and was therefore acting in that capacity.

Richard, although never reduced to giving a recognizance for his good behaviour, was bound by one regarding his appointment as constable of Harlech Castle. This type of recognizance was common and does not indicate any serious lack of trust, 'royal officials, and especially the constables of the king's castles, were bound, often under elaborate conditions, to be of good conduct during their period of office.'⁶⁰ Nevertheless, the consequences of default could be extremely serious, therefore those:

who entered into such onerous commitments on behalf of their relatives, friends or business associates presumably did so of their own volition, having appraised the measure of financial risk that was probably involved, and there is no evidence to suggest that they were acting in response to royal influence or pressure put upon them.⁶¹

Those who felt sufficiently confident about Richard Pole were John Grey, Lord of Powis, Sir Richard ap Thomas, John Talley clerk, Sir William Sandys and Sir Hugh Vaughan, who bound themselves in a recognizance for Richard in 1504.⁶² John Grey of Powis, Richard ap Thomas and Richard Pole were bound for £100, John Talley for 100 marks, and William Sandys and Hugh Vaughan jointly for another 100 marks. The terms by which Richard was constrained were specific. Firstly, he was to remain true in his allegiance as constable and was to pay all the debts of any prisoner imprisoned for debt whom he permitted to escape. Furthermore, he was to pay £100 for allowing the escape of anyone imprisoned for murder, rape or felony, or £10 if their escape was due to his negligence. However, if anyone who had first been found guilty escaped, either due to Richard's connivance or negligence, he was to pay £100, and he had one year in which to pay these fines.

John Grey, Lord of Powis, held the lordship of Powis as the result of marriage. In the early fifteenth century Sir John Grey had married the daughter and heiress of Sir

⁵⁹ B.L. Add. MS. 59899, f. 168; *Excerpta Historica*, p. 132.

⁶⁰ Pugh, T.B., 'Henry VII and the English Nobility' p 59.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *C.C.R.*, 1500-09, p. 133.

Edward Charleton, Lord Powis. John's grandfather, Richard Grey had held the position of steward of Ceri, Cedewain and Montgomery in 1461, offices to which Richard was appointed in 1490. Included among his lordships were Welshpool in Montgomery, Pontesbury and Charleton in Shropshire.⁶³ The proximity of Grey's lands with Richard's areas of duty, probably helped to facilitate an affiliation between them. Moreover, in 1495 Richard was among a commission instructed to enquire into the lands held by John Lord Grey of Powis in Shropshire and the marches of Wales.⁶⁴ They were also to discover who was his heir and it was this heir, also called John, who stood surety for Richard in 1504.

John Talley, who resigned from the church of Llanbedr in the diocese of St Davids in 1500,⁶⁵ was another man with Welsh connections. A bachelor in laws, he was presented to the parish church of Pembridge, in the diocese of Hereford less than a month after entering this recognizance.⁶⁶ Sir Hugh Vaughan had probably made Richard's acquaintance through service at court, where Richard was one of the knights for the body and Vaughan one of the gentlemen ushers of the king's chamber.⁶⁷ By 20 November 1505, Vaughan had progressed to the position of knight for the body, and was bound in a recognizance with two other knights, to keep safely the castle of Mountorgill in Jersey.⁶⁸ Although little is known about Sir Richard ap Thomas, it appears that he was a minor royal official. In 1506, he was appointed to a commission to enquire into various concealments in the marches of Wales, Caernarfon and Merioneth.⁶⁹ The last gentleman prepared to place himself in financial danger for Richard, was a distant kinsman of his. Sir William Sandys' mother Margaret Cheyney, was first cousin of the half blood to Edith St John, Richard's mother.⁷⁰ A knight of the body by 1497, he was also appointed constable of Christchurch Castle for life in 1499,⁷¹ an office he undoubtedly continued to hold after Margaret's

⁶³ *Complete Peerage*, VI, 140-1.

⁶⁴ *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, p. 27.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 1494-1509, p. 214.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 349.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 1485-94, p. 316.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 1494-1509, p. 231.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 489.

⁷⁰ See Appendix 6.

⁷¹ In 1523 he was created Baron Sandys. *Complete Peerage*, XII, 441-2.

restoration. In addition, Sandys' wife Margery, was the niece of Richard's colleague, Reginald Bray. Dying without issue, Bray bequeathed several manors to her.⁷²

Reginald Bray, one of the most trusted and influential men in Henry VII's government, naturally brushed shoulders with Richard Pole. Although both were members of the king's council,⁷³ Richard's attendance was much less regular than Bray's. However, they were named to 23 commissions of the peace together, eighteen of those in Buckinghamshire. Bray first sat for Buckinghamshire on 20 May 1493,⁷⁴ and two years later he purchased a substantial amount of land there from Richard for the considerable sum of £452 16s 8d.⁷⁵ This land, the Hall lands which had been subsequently annexed to Medmenham and were not of the original lordship, may originally have formed part of Margaret's jointure.⁷⁶ Bray also purchased Eleanor Pole's portion of the Hall lands, set aside for her dowry.⁷⁷ On 14 January 1500 Richard Pole was appointed chamberlain of Chester to replace Bray who, having resigned was appointed Richard's deputy.⁷⁸ Three months later Richard's son Reginald was born. As no one in the family of either parent seems to have born this name, it is not unreasonable to assume that Bray was the man after whom Reginald was named and probably stood as one of his godfathers. Further cordiality is suggested at the Order of the Garter's mass for the dead in 1504 where, following Bray's death, Richard and Sir Richard Guildford offered his banner and helmet.⁷⁹ Bray's friendship would certainly have proved useful to the widowed Margaret had he outlived her husband.

⁷² *C.P.R.*, 1494-1509, p. 370, 371.

⁷³ Bayne, C.G., (ed.), *Select Cases in the Council of Henry VII* completed by Dunham, W.H., jnr., (The Selden Society, London 1958) p. xix.

⁷⁴ *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, p. 481.

⁷⁵ *C.C.R.*, 1485-1500, p. 273; Plaisted, A.H., *Manor and Parish Records of Medmenham*, pp. 373-6 in which the entire conveyance is printed.

⁷⁶ The foot of fine quitclaims the manor from 'Richard and Margaret and the heirs of Margaret' while Richard, Margaret and 'the heirs of Margaret' warrant the premises to Bray's feoffees. P.R.O. C.P.5/1/22/127, no. 14; Plaisted, A.H., *Op.cit.*, p. 73.

⁷⁷ See above p. 59.

⁷⁸ *37th Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records (D.K.R.)* ii, App. 2 (London, 1876) pp. 144, 593.

⁷⁹ Anstis, J., (ed.), *The Register of the Most Noble Order of the Garter*, I (London, 1724) 246-7.

Sir Thomas Englefield of Englefield in Berkshire is somebody else who extended his friendship with Richard to his widow. Sir Thomas, a member of Prince Arthur's council, was knighted at the prince's wedding.⁸⁰ Speaker of the House of Commons in 1497 and 1510,⁸¹ he had been vice-justice of Chester from 1491⁸² and was finally appointed justice on 20 August 1504 during Richard's chamberlainship.⁸³ In addition Englefield's wife, Margery, was the half sister of Bona Pole, Richard's step-mother. Englefield probably remained in contact with his late friend's widow, for it was to his administrative skills that Margaret looked following her restoration. On 18 June 1513, she appointed him steward for life, 'of all her castles, lordships, manors, and other lands and tenements & c. in England,' with a fee of 40 marks a year out of her manor of Ringwood.⁸⁴ Obviously she had great confidence in her late husband's associate, while Englefield's friendship with this far from affluent widow was suddenly and unexpectedly to pay substantial dividends. Unfortunately, his share in Margaret's good fortune was short lived, for he died a year later in 1514.⁸⁵

In 1488 Richard stood surety, with one other knight, for Henry, Lord Clifford who, in 1493, married Anne St John, Richard's cousin.⁸⁶ The identity of this other knight, is none other than Sir Robert Clifford of Hertfordshire, a knight for the king's body whose role in the fall of Sir William Stanley is well known. Not surprisingly, Richard had worked with Stanley on several occasions. In 1491 Richard, William Griffith and John Suttell were sent with Stanley into Merioneth, Caernarfon and Anglesey to seek financial support for the king's proposed invasion of France,⁸⁷ while the 1493 commission of oyer and terminer to which Richard was named along with the commissions of gaol delivery on which he served in that year, also included Stanley.⁸⁸ In addition Richard was appointed to ten commissions of the peace to which Stanley

⁸⁰ Clive, R.H., *Documents connected with The History of Ludlow and the Lord Marchers* (London, 1841) p. xlvi.

⁸¹ Worthington, P., 'Royal Government in the Counties Palatine of Lancashire and Chester,' p. 17.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 347.

⁸³ *D.K.R.*, 37, App. 2, p. 144.

⁸⁴ *C.A.D.*, III, D. 1081.

⁸⁵ Clive, R.H., *Op.cit.*, p. 214.

⁸⁶ *The King's Mother*, p. 163.

⁸⁷ *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, p. 354.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 434, 441.

was also appointed. We do not know whether the two men enjoyed a friendship, but Richard's career undoubtedly benefited from Stanley's fall, as Henry began to turn more and more to those men he felt he could trust.

Although, as noted, Margaret may have withdrawn from court and official duties after 1488, her husband most definitely did not. Although there is no extant record of the appointment, by 20 March 1493 Richard Pole had become Prince Arthur's lord chamberlain.⁸⁹ Although Arthur had had an establishment of his own long before this, which was certainly becoming formalised by 1490,⁹⁰ no extant evidence suggests that Richard was appointed before 1493. Nevertheless, Richard had been involved in Arthur's affairs earlier than this. On 27 February 1490, Henry VII granted his son £113 6s 8d a year out of the issues of the lordship, castle and town of Builth and £56 13s 4d from the issues of the lordship, castle and town of Montgomery.⁹¹ Less than a month later, on 11 March, Richard was appointed steward and receiver of the lordships of Montgomery, Ceri and Cedewain, and constable of Montgomery Castle for life.⁹² The lordships of Ceri and Cedewain were also included in a substantial grant of lands to Arthur in 1493.

1493 does seem to be a significant year, for it was then on 20 March, that Arthur was granted the power to appoint the king's justices of oyer and terminer for the counties of Shropshire, Hereford, Gloucester, Worcester and the marches of Wales adjoining those counties.⁹³ Richard Pole, described for the first time as chamberlain to Arthur Prince of Wales, was named to that commission of oyer and terminer on the same day,⁹⁴ as he was to a commission of gaol delivery regarding the gaols of the castles of

⁸⁹ *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, pp. 434, 441. Paul Worthington, in his Ph.D thesis on the counties palatine of Lancashire and Chester, erroneously states, as some earlier writers have, that Richard was also gentleman of the bedchamber to the prince. Worthington, P., *Op.cit.*, p. 62. However, the document Worthington cites makes clear that Richard was lord chamberlain only. P.R.O. E.163/9/20. He was never appointed chief gentleman of the bedchamber.

⁹⁰ By May 1487 a yeoman of the robes had been appointed and by January 1488, Arthur enjoyed the services of six yeomen of the chamber and five grooms of the chamber. In addition, by January 1490 a marshal of the household had also been appointed. P.R.O. E.101/412/20, nos. 18, 16; *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, p. 312.

⁹¹ *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, p. 453.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 299.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 438-9.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 441.

Worcester, Gloucester, Hereford and Shrewsbury⁹⁵ and to fourteen commissions of the peace in the same year. Arthur was also appointed the king's justice in the marches of Wales, empowered to enquire by jury into usurped privileges and escaped thieves and felons.⁹⁶ Although the Prince's council had been operational before 1493,⁹⁷ Arthur's separate household at Ludlow had not. It was not until 1493 that this household was set up for the young prince, where he was sent with, 'Counsellors and Commissioners, here to remayne settled (for allthoughe kinge E. the 4 sent hether Counsellors yett they were not resident).'⁹⁸ In addition, Ludlow Castle:

was refitted for the Prince's reception, and another residence was also provided by the erection of a palace, amidst picturesque surroundings, on the western banks of the Severn, at Tickenhill, near Bewdley, in Worcestershire.⁹⁹

Moreover in 1493, not quite two months after his seventh birthday, Arthur was granted a substantial amount of lordships, manors and castles in Wales and the marches, including the whole of the Earldom of March, making him the greatest lord in the region.¹⁰⁰ The seventh birthday was, of course, important for it was held to be the second stage of childhood; 'Seven was considered by most authors a suitable age for commencing schooling or vocational training.'¹⁰¹ Although Arthur had enjoyed the services of a male tutor from the age of four or five,¹⁰² in his seventh year it would be appropriate for him to preside over his own household at Ludlow where all the formal household officials, including naturally a lord chamberlain, would be required.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 434.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 439.

⁹⁷ In 1489, Master John Arundel, the prince's chancellor and other of the prince's commissioners travelled from Chester to North Wales to levy a subsidy and provide for the governance of the area. In 1490, certain men of Merioneth were fined before the justice and the prince's council. On 22 November 1490, arrears from the issues of the earldom of Chester were conveyed to John Bishop of Ely, described as the lord prince's president and Master John Arundel again referred to as the prince's chancellor. Beverley Smith, J., 'Crown and Community,' pp. 160-1.

⁹⁸ Thomas, D. Lleufer, 'Further Notes on the Court of the Marches. With Original Documents,' *Y Cymmrodor*, XIII (1900) 145.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 99.

¹⁰⁰ *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, p. 453; Williams, P., *The Council in the Marches of Wales* (Cardiff, 1958) p. 10.

¹⁰¹ Shahar, S., *Childhood in the Middle Ages*, p. 24.

¹⁰² Orme, N., *From Childhood to Chivalry*, p. 18.

Here Arthur would begin to learn the art of kingship, while his personal participation in the affairs of the March would increase as he grew older.

There has been a great deal of discussion over when the prince's council was set up and when Arthur actually went to Ludlow himself. Caroline Skeel claims that Arthur went to the marches soon after his marriage in 1501,¹⁰³ however, the evidence above implies that this is not so. Moreover, David Powel in his 1584 edition of a *'History of Wales'*¹⁰⁴ states that, 'about the seventeenth year of king Henries reigne, Prince Arthur went againe to Wales;¹⁰⁵ 'again' being the crucial word. In addition, the accounts of the bailiffs of Shrewsbury suggest that Arthur and his council were at Ludlow and made frequent trips to Shrewsbury from there long before 1501. For the year beginning Michaelmas 1494, there is an entry for 'Expenses of the Bailiffs, and others, riding to Ludlowe by command of the Lord Prince, 21s 2d.'¹⁰⁶ Also in that year Arthur, accompanied by several members of his council, including Richard Pole and other notables such as Sir Rhys ap Thomas, graced Shrewsbury with their presence where a play, most probably a miracle play, was performed for them. They must have had quite a merry time for copious amounts of wine were consumed including 'A flagon given to master Pole, 16d.'¹⁰⁷

In addition to this prestigious appointment and his membership of the Council of the Marches, Richard was also involved in the administration and security of North Wales. 'The most important persons in Wales during Henry's reign were those attached to him by ties of kinship or friendship;¹⁰⁸ proclaimed Caroline Skeel. She then goes on to name these important persons; Jasper Tudor of course, Rhys ap Thomas, Morgan of Kidwelly, Matthew Cradock, the Herberts and the Stanleys.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰³ Skeel, C.A.J., 'Wales under Henry VII' in Seton-Watson, R.W., (ed.), *Tudor Studies presented to A.F. Pollard*. (London, 1924) p. 9

¹⁰⁴ Originally written by Humphrey Lloyd (or Llwyd), who died in 1568, it was based on *Brut y Tywysogion*, incorrectly attributed to Caradoc of Llancarvan. In 1584 David Powel published it with large additions and dedicated it to Sir Philip Sidney.

¹⁰⁵ Lewis, D., 'The Court of the President and Council of Wales and the Marches from 1478-1575' *Y Cymmrodor*, XII (1897) 21.

¹⁰⁶ Owen, H., and Blakeway, J.B., *A History of Shrewsbury*, I (London, 1825) 261.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 262-3. Richard was very fond of wine, happily receiving five casks in 1500/01, as the perquisite of the prince's lord chamberlain! P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen.VII/1494.

¹⁰⁸ Skeel, C.A.J., *Op.cit.*, p. 4.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-7.

Her error lies not in what she says, but in what she does not say, for Sir Richard Pole should certainly have been included if one is talking about the most important men in Wales. Although Richard began his career in royal service on a commission of the peace for Buckinghamshire in September 1485 and as an esquire for the body a month later, his first office, granted less than a year after Henry ascended the throne, was in Wales.¹¹⁰ On 26 February 1486 Richard was appointed constable of Harlech Castle and sheriff of Merioneth for life.¹¹¹ The appointment is important as an immediate indication of Henry's trust in Richard, for Merioneth was a known trouble spot, 'In the north of Wales that termagant among Welsh shires, Merioneth, had become ungoverned and ungovernable in the 1450s.'¹¹² Despite this, Caroline Skeel felt that Henry had no cause for concern regarding Wales, 'The Tudor dynasty was popular in Wales and had no serious opposition to fear from either marcher lords or Welsh gentry.'¹¹³ Ralph Griffiths however, takes a different view:

The problems which faced the first Tudor king in Wales were the same as those which had confronted the last of the Plantagenets.....in Wales conditions had not fundamentally changed: Brecon castle was attacked and ransacked by rebels in 1486, and twelve years later there was insurrection in Merioneth.¹¹⁴

The 1498 insurrection appears to have been provoked by attempts to increase revenue from the county. It required 65 soldiers under the command of the deputy chamberlain of North Wales to quell the rising while at some point earlier, Harlech Castle was taken.¹¹⁵ Again, as early as 1490, 'certain men of Meirionnydd were fined before the justice and the prince's council on account of their disobedience in not answering to writs directed to them.'¹¹⁶ Obviously Wales was not as docile as Skeel felt, and Henry would naturally look to those he felt he could rely upon while grudgingly having to accept the Stanley hegemony. Of course one might argue that

¹¹⁰ For Richard's offices, see Appendix 8.

¹¹¹ *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, p. 78.

¹¹² Griffiths, R.A., *King and Country: England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1991) p 67.

¹¹³ Skeel, C.A.J., *Op.cit.*, p. 7.

¹¹⁴ Griffiths, R.A., *King and Country*, pp. 76-7.

¹¹⁵ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen.VII/1592.

¹¹⁶ Beverley Smith, J., *Op.cit.*, p. 160.

Richard was not doing too well in his capacity as constable of Harlech Castle and sheriff of Merioneth, but as noted, the area was a notorious trouble spot while the disturbances were quickly and efficiently contained. In fact Henry VII was completely satisfied with Richard's performance, stating that Harlech Castle was back in royal hands, 'through Richard in fact and not by law of the kingdom of England;' adding that:

Richard Pole sustained costs beyond the duties which he had as custodian in the work of reducing and taking into his hands and possession the aforesaid King's castle.¹¹⁷

In April 1488 'the true and beloved knight Richard Pole' was appointed constable of Conway Castle and captain of the town,¹¹⁸ and two years later he became more firmly entrenched in Welsh administration. In 1490, important changes were initiated regarding the administration of North Wales, and Richard Pole featured prominently in those changes. William Griffith, a member of an important Gwynedd family which had enjoyed ascendancy in the administration of Gwynedd during the fifteenth century,¹¹⁹ was appointed chamberlain of North Wales by Richard III. This appointment was confirmed by Henry VII in the first year of his reign.¹²⁰ However, by 1490 Henry felt secure enough to remove Griffith, and his removal, 'marked the beginning of intensified administration in the Principality under the control of men higher in the king's confidence.'¹²¹ Significantly, the man replacing Griffith was Richard Pole who, considering his 'faithfulness and circumspection,' was appointed chamberlain of North Wales for life on 6 March 1490.¹²² Five days later he was also created steward and receiver of the lordships of Montgomery, Ceri and Cedewain and constable of Montgomery Castle for life.¹²³ The chamberlain of North Wales was the most important financial officer in the principality, and Richard must have discharged

¹¹⁷ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VII/1592.

¹¹⁸ Ibid. He was also instructed, as at Harlech, to maintain 24 soldiers to safeguard the town and castle.

¹¹⁹ Beverley Smith, J., 'Crown and Community' p. 159.

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 160.

¹²¹ Thomas, H., *A History of Wales, 1485-1660* (Cardiff, 1972) p. 25.

¹²² P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VII/1552.

¹²³ *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, p. 299.

his duties competently for more offices were to come his way with the fall of Sir William Stanley.

The unnerving effect of Stanley's treason on Henry has already been noted¹²⁴ and he thus turned to those upon whose loyalty he felt more able to depend and who were more stringently under his control; he turned to:

councillors who held positions about the King only by the King's concurrence and whose authority was the delegated authority of the Crown and not derived from land or title.¹²⁵

Thus on 31 March 1495, Richard Pole replaced Sir William Stanley in the responsible position of justice of North Wales, relinquishing at the same time, the chamberlainship of North Wales which was subsequently granted to Samson Norton.¹²⁶ On 21 April in the same year, Richard was also appointed constable of Caernarfon Castle and captain of the Town, again offices once held by Stanley.¹²⁷ Although no record of the appointment survives, it was probably at this time that he became constable of Beaumaris Castle, for he was certainly holding this post by October 1499.¹²⁸ It was not until 1500 however, that he became 'the most important financial officer in the county palatine of Chester,'¹²⁹ when he was appointed chamberlain of Chester. The office naturally brought with it considerable duties, as had the chamberlainship of North Wales. In addition to accounting to the king or the prince for the revenues and expenditure of Chester and Flintshire, the great seal of Chester was also entrusted to his care. With this he produced and sealed writs at the Chester exchequer where he was also responsible for holding sessions, and where individuals would enter into recognizances.¹³⁰ As Paul Worthington correctly observes; 'Richard was a capable administrator and trusted counsellor of Prince

¹²⁴ See above p. 47-48.

¹²⁵ Condon, M.M., 'Ruling Elites in the Reign of Henry VII' in Ross, C., (ed.), *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Late Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1979) p. 115.

¹²⁶ Beverley Smith, J., *Op.cit.*, p. 161, n. 75.

¹²⁷ Chrimes, S.B., *Henry VII*, p. 55.

¹²⁸ Gwynedd Archives Service, Caernarfon, Tanybwllch Collection, Z.D.V/1, In a receipt issued by Richard, he is described as constable of 'Caernarvon, Conwey, Beaumares and Hardelagh.'

¹²⁹ Worthington, P., 'Royal Government in the Counties Palatine of Lancashire and Chester' p. 59.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

Arthur, which implies that his appointment was no mere sinecure.¹³¹ Richard's appointment in addition to Reginald Bray's and Robert Frost's before him, demonstrated a change of policy in the administration of the Palatinate:

Henry VII assumed more direct control of Cheshire through trusted and capable administrators, rather than using the chamberlainship merely as an instrument of patronage.¹³²

Hence, at one time or another, Richard held several of the most important offices in the principality of North Wales. In addition to judicial and financial duties, he was also involved in the defence of the area through his position as constable of several castles there. The necessity of maintaining these strategically placed castles should not be underestimated. Wales was an area open to invasion and this certainly could not have slipped Henry VII's mind as he himself had launched his own invasion from Milford Haven in South Wales, while Beaumaris was the port where the Duke of York had chosen to land in 1450, on his way from Ireland to London. Certainly, Beaumaris was one of the ports of access into North Wales for shipping from Ireland.¹³³ With the threat of Perkin Warbeck's invasion hanging over the king's head, and bearing in mind the support Ireland was in the habit of giving to Yorkist pretenders, the importance of holding these castles securely must have been dramatically enhanced. That they were entrusted to Richard again reveals the level of trust the king placed in his half cousin.

Although Richard's offices were concentrated in North Wales and the marches, he also operated elsewhere, for instance on commissions of the peace, especially in times of national emergency; 'The summer of 1493 was marked by a scare of invasion like that before Stoke.'¹³⁴ Consequently, while Perkin Warbeck was enjoying the hospitality of Maximilian, 'the King of England took stock of the security of the realm. In the summer of 1493 the commissions of the peace were purged, and the proportion of councillors increased.'¹³⁵ Accordingly, it was in this year that Richard's appointments

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 62.

¹³² Ibid., p. 64.

¹³³ Griffiths, R.A., 'Richard, Duke of York and the Royal Household in Wales, 1449-50' *W.H.R.*, VIII (1976) 22.

¹³⁴ Arthurson, I., *The Perkin Warbeck Conspiracy 1491-1499* (Gloucestershire, 1994) p. 63.

¹³⁵ Loades, D.M., *Politics and the Nation*, p. 108.

to the commissions of the peace increased dramatically. He sat on fourteen in that year, when the most he had ever sat in one year before that was three in 1491. The commissions took him outside of Wales to Yorkshire, Gloucestershire and Lincolnshire, although the chances that Richard personally sat on all of these commissions are slim. Nevertheless, the security measures of 1493 in which Richard was involved, gave Henry the crucial information he needed concerning Warbeck and his supporters, resulting in a sequence of treason trials in February and March 1495.¹³⁶ The security measures did not end there. A commission, 'staffed by the king's most trusted officers and the Chief Justices of the realm,'¹³⁷ was set up in early summer to investigate and try suspects in 26 counties,¹³⁸ and on 15 February Richard Pole was named to a commission of oyer and terminer for the counties of Bedford, Buckingham, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Norfolk and Suffolk¹³⁹ and to eight commissions of the peace. Henry's swift precautions had been successful, and the measures of 1495, in which Richard had been involved, completed. 'what was probably the most massive and effective security operation ever to have been mounted against sedition within the realm.'¹⁴⁰

Of course, the royal demands upon Richard were not solely concerned with judicial and administrative services, but military duties too as one would expect. Accordingly, on 21 February 1489:

our trusty and wellbeloved knight for our body Sir Richard Pole is amongs other appointed to be one of the captains of our armee into Bretaine for which cause we have given unto him by way of Reward the sum of fyfty Marks sterling.¹⁴¹

Although the Breton mission was abortive, in 1492 Richard was given the chance to test his martial skills once again, five years after Stoke. In April he entered into an indenture with the king to serve overseas with a retinue, the numbers and make up of

¹³⁶ Ibid., p. 108.

¹³⁷ Arthurson, I., *The Perkin Warbeck Conspiracy*, p. 65.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 109.

¹³⁹ *C.P.R.*, 1494-1509, pp. 30-1.

¹⁴⁰ Loades, D.M., *Op.cit.*, p. 109.

¹⁴¹ P.R.O. E.404/80, pencil no. 160.

which was specified by the king.¹⁴² Unfortunately, at the point in the document where these specifications occur, a later hand seems to have inserted incorrect information. However, it is clear that the retinue was to contain men of arms, demi lances and archers mounted and on foot. His retinue probably numbered between 300-500 men if we use the numbers required of Sir Rhys ap Thomas and Reginald Bray as a guideline. Sir Rhys' retinue amounted to 590 persons, 74 more than he was contracted to bring,¹⁴³ while Bray's indenture specified 344 men.¹⁴⁴ The campaign was finally launched from Sandwich on 2 October 1492.¹⁴⁵ On 18 October Henry's 26,000 troops¹⁴⁶ left Calais under his command to lay siege to Boulogne, but by 3 November the Treaty of Etaples was concluded. From Richard's point of view the campaign, unlike Stoke, had been less than strenuous. With the cash settlement Henry gained, he was able to pay off his disbanded troops but nevertheless he still feared criticism from those hoping for honour and plunder and from the bellicose tax payers at home. It was for this reason that Richard and the rest of the king's captains drew up a statement to explain the discontinuation of the campaign.¹⁴⁷

On 30 July 1495 Richard received substantial sums of money to cover the costs of the wages, victualling and conveyance of 200 men and 100 horses over the sea.¹⁴⁸ He was one of eleven captains sent with an emergency army from Chester to augment the defences of the Irish Pale. This was suffering attack from the combined forces of the Earl of Desmond and Perkin Warbeck. On 3 August the relief force marched behind the Lord Deputy of Ireland, Sir Edward Poynings, and Desmond and Warbeck were forced to withdraw.¹⁴⁹ At the same time Richard was also granted £33 6s 8d in

¹⁴² P.R.O. E.101/72/4, 1109.

¹⁴³ Griffiths, R.A., *Sir Rhys ap Thomas and his Family* (Cardiff, 1993) p. 47.

¹⁴⁴ P.R.O. E.101/72/3, 1075.

¹⁴⁵ Storey, R.L., *The reign of Henry VII*, pp. 80-1.

¹⁴⁶ Lockyer, R., *Henry VII* (New York, 1983) p. 71.

¹⁴⁷ Storey, R.L., *Op.cit.*, p. 80.

¹⁴⁸ To Sir Richard Pole for 200 jacquetts, price of every pece 1s 6d.-£15.

For the wages of 100 horsemen for fourteen days, every of them 9d. by day, £52 10s.

For their conduit for 3 days, every of them 9d. by day, £11 5s.

For the wages of 100 fotemen for fourteen days, every of them 6d. by day, £35.

For their conduit for four days, every of them 6d. by day, £10.

For shipping, vitailing, and setting over the sea the foresaid 200 men with an 100 horses, £13 6s 8d.

Excerpta Historica, p. 104.

¹⁴⁹ Arthurson, I., *The Perkin Warbeck Conspiracy*, pp. 113-15.

reward by the hands of Sir Samson Norton.¹⁵⁰ One year later, Richard was involved in containing the Scottish threat. On 23 April 1496 he was sent with several others, including two members of his family; John Viscount Welles and Oliver St John, 'to muster and array the men of Lincoln (Kesteven) in view of the warlike preparations of the king of Scots, which threaten the town of Berwick.'¹⁵¹ This farcical invasion did not take place until September, but despite Warbeck's trouncing failure, Henry had to wait another year before he could get his relieved hands upon the pretender. Initially housed at court, Warbeck's foolish attempt at escape on 9 June 1498, led to his imprisonment in the Tower on 18 June. Here he apparently languished in a room below that of Margaret's 23 year old brother, Edward, Earl of Warwick.

1499 was a year that, while bestowing great honour upon Richard Pole, also brought personal tragedy to his wife. In April Richard was elected to the Order of the Garter, and significantly, 'of nearly forty new Knights of the Garter in Henry's reign more than half were men who had served him in government.'¹⁵² Sponsored by Prince Arthur, eight peers and three knights,¹⁵³ he successfully triumphed over such illustrious competitors as Sir Rhys ap Thomas and Sir David Owen.¹⁵⁴ Richard took his duties as a Knight of the Garter very seriously, obviously proud of his position and of the honour associated with it. Although the accounts of the sixteenth and seventeenth years are missing, Richard assiduously attended every chapter until his death. In 1500 we catch a charming glimpse of Richard attending upon his young master, gently assisting him throughout the solemn, convoluted ceremonies. The prince:

having with him his Chamberlain Sir Richard Poole a most deserving Knight of the same Order, he omitted nothing at the Mass, the first or second vespers, which solemn usage required to be done. In walking, in Incensing in making Procession, in offering, as well he, as his Knight Companion performed and did all Things exceeding properly.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁰ B.L. Add. MS. 7099, f. 27.

¹⁵¹ *C.P.R.*, 1494-1509, p. 67.

¹⁵² Lockyer, R., *Henry VII*, p. 23.

¹⁵³ The Duke of Buckingham, the Earls of Derby, Suffolk, Northumberland and Shrewsbury, Lords Denham, Brooke, Daubeney and Sir Charles Somerset, Sir Edward Poynings and Sir Gilbert Talbot.

¹⁵⁴ Anstis, J., *The Register of the Garter*, pp. 237-9.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

On 19 May, one month after his appointment to the Garter, Richard held the hands of Prince Arthur and the Spanish ambassador, Dr Rodrigo De Puebla, in his, when he officiated at the proxy wedding of Arthur to Catherine of Aragon in Bewdley chapel.¹⁵⁶ Ironically, this wedding at which Richard performed such an honourable role, has been taken as the death warrant for his brother-in-law, the Earl of Warwick.

Edward, Earl of Warwick had been in the Tower since 1486 not enjoying, by all accounts, an honourable confinement. It is appropriate at this juncture, to try and clear up a long held misconception regarding the young earl. Many historians, especially those writing towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of this century, have casually accepted as truth, Edward's mental retardation. Agnes Strickland described him as an 'imbecile' and 'very stupid, not knowing the difference between the commonest objects,'¹⁵⁷ while Garrett Mattingly chooses 'half-daft' for his appraisal of Warwick.¹⁵⁸ James Gairdner goes further, maintaining that this 'mental incapacity' was the reason why Edward was set aside as heir to the throne after the death of Richard III's son.¹⁵⁹ Later scholars have sensibly been more circumspect, Michael Bennett attributing merely 'a suspicion of simple-mindedness'¹⁶⁰ to him, while James Williamson feels his long incarceration was to blame for his weakened wits.¹⁶¹ In reality, no contemporary evidence indicated that Edward was anything but normal and this suggestion of mental incapacity is based entirely on a statement made by Edward Hall in his chronicle of 1548. According to him, Edward was kept in the Tower from his tender age; 'out of al company of men, and sight of beastes, in so much that he coulde not descerne a Goose from a Capon.'¹⁶² It is obvious that this statement alone is not sufficient to claim mental retardation. If there had been any question of mental incapacity, then Margaret, who of all people should have been

¹⁵⁶ 'After the power had been read, the Prince of Wales took, with his right hand, the right hand of Doctor De Puebla; and Richard Peel, (sic) Lord Chamberlain of the Prince, and Knight of the Garter, held the hands of both in his hands. In this position the Prince declared that he accepted De Puebla in the name and as the proxy of the Princess Katherine, and the Princess Katherine as his lawful and undoubted wife.' The ceremony was then repeated with De Puebla declaring for the Princess. Pollard, A.F., *The Reign of Henry VII from Contemporary Sources*, I (London, 1913) 206-8.

¹⁵⁷ Strickland, A., *The Lives of the Queens of England*, II (London, 1870) 70, 77.

¹⁵⁸ Mattingly, G., *Catherine of Aragon*, p. 29.

¹⁵⁹ Gairdner, J., *History of the Life and Reign of Richard the Third* (Cambridge, 1898) p. 207.

¹⁶⁰ Bennet, M., *Lambert Simnel*, p. 33.

¹⁶¹ Williamson, J.A., *The Tudor Age* (New York, 1982) p. 59.

¹⁶² Ellis, H., (ed.), *Hall's Chronicle* (London, 1809) p. 490.

aware of such a condition, would have mentioned it in her petition for restoration in order to strengthen her case. Her success depended on Henry VIII accepting that Edward did not know what he was doing when he became embroiled in Warbeck's attempt to escape from the Tower in 1499, and therefore not guilty of treason. Margaret however, did not say any such thing, her justification for Edward's behaviour rested upon his unworldliness. Due to his long incarceration, she stated, he had:

none experience nor knowledge of the wordly policies nor of the laws of this realm, so that if any offence were by him done concerning such matters specified in the said act of attainder it was rather by innocence than of any malicious purpose.¹⁶³

Moreover, an imbecile Yorkist claimant would have been far more desirable from Henry Tudor's point of view, than a perfectly sane one, but Henry did not mention such a condition either. Indeed, when Edward was led through London to St Paul's as a means of proving Simnel's imposture, he:

fell to prayer and took part in worship, and then spoke with many important people and especially with those of whom the king was suspicious.¹⁶⁴

Surely if the twelve year old Edward had been subnormal, someone amongst those 'important people' would have noticed and remarked upon it, but no intimation was made. Edward's 'deficiency' lay only in his lack of worldliness as his sister maintained. He was unsophisticated and uneducated and it was for this reason that he could not tell a goose from a capon, if we accept Hall's word that he could not. This fact must cast even darker shadows upon Henry, for it indicates that the boy was never properly educated and that his mental welfare and development was ignored. Although it is easy to understand why Henry could never have risked releasing Edward, his actions regarding the earl are as reprehensible as those attributed to Richard III concerning the princes. While seemingly accepting Edward's rights to his

¹⁶³ 5 Henry VIII, cap. 12 in Luders, A., et al. Statutes of the Realm, III, (London, 1817)100.

¹⁶⁴ Hay, D., *Polydore Vergil*, p. 19.

remaining lands,¹⁶⁵ Henry could never have intended him to enjoy them, despite the suggestion that Edward's rehabilitation fleetingly crossed his mind in 1488.¹⁶⁶

This is not the place to launch into a detailed account of Warbeck and Warwick's escape attempt of 1499, suffice to say that Edward's innocence is generally accepted. Although Ian Arthurson does not accept, unequivocally, that the whole plot was an invention of Henry VII's to secure the executions of Edward and Warbeck, he nevertheless admits that Edward 'was an innocent bystander.'¹⁶⁷ Moreover, Polydore Vergil felt strongly enough to lodge a guarded protest:

Why indeed the unhappy boy should have been committed to prison not for any fault of his own but only because of his family's offences, why he was retained so long in prison, and what, lastly, the worthy youth could have done in prison which could merit his death all these things could obviously not be comprehended by many.

A little further on however, Vergil makes a less veiled statement; 'Earl Edward had to perish in this fashion in order that there should be no surviving male heir to his family.'¹⁶⁸ According to Edward Hall, Henry was also under pressure from Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain to neutralise, once and for all, the earl's threat before they would conclude the marriage between their daughter and Henry's son. Ferdinand, Hall believed, feared that:

as longe as any erle of Warwicke lyved, that England should never be censed or purged of Cyvyle warre and prevy sedicion, so mucche was the neme of Warwyke in other regions had in feare and gealously.¹⁶⁹

Arthurson doubts this, claiming that the timing of Edward's execution was coincidental to the marriage, the plot being genuine.¹⁷⁰ It is true that the proxy

¹⁶⁵ Many grants involving Edward's lands were made during this period which specifically state that they were made due to Edward's minority.

¹⁶⁶ Apparently in May of that year, Henry VII allowed Edward to witness a document in Warwickshire. Arthurson, I., *The Perkin Warbeck Conspiracy*, p. 6.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 207-10.

¹⁶⁸ Hay, D., *Polydore Vergil*, p. 119.

¹⁶⁹ Ellis, H., *Hall's Chronicle*, p. 491.

¹⁷⁰ Arthurson, I., *The Perkin Warbeck Conspiracy*, p. 207.

marriage took place six months before Edward's arrest, but no one can doubt the excitement of the Spanish ambassador following the executions, nor his eagerness to reassure his masters:

there being divers heirs of the kingdom and of such a quality that the matter could be disputed between the two sides. Now it has pleased God that all should be thoroughly and duly purged and cleansed, so that not a doubtful drop of royal blood remains in this kingdom, except the true blood of the king and queen, and above all, that of the lord prince Arthur. And since of this fact and of the executions which was done on Perkin Warbeck and on the son of the duke of Clarence, I have written to your highnesses by various ways.¹⁷¹

De Ayala, writing in the spring of 1499, declared that Henry VII had aged twenty years in a fortnight.¹⁷² The reason for this is uncertain, but if it was due to the king's wrestling bout with his conscience, by November of the same year politics had won. On the 28 of that month at about three o'clock in the afternoon, Edward, Earl of Warwick was beheaded at the Tower. The following day his head and body were conveyed up the Thames to Bisham Abbey for internment with his ancestors,¹⁷³ the king covering the costs of the burial and transportation which amounted to £12 18s 2d.¹⁷⁴ It is significant that the king paid for Edward's burial, and that he was not interred at the Tower, as was the custom for traitors executed there. Unfortunately, Margaret's whereabouts at this time are unknown. Whether she attended her brother's internment or not must remain an unanswered question, while no evidence exists recording her reaction to his execution. Although she had not seen Edward for thirteen years,¹⁷⁵ and their time together at Sheriff Hutton might have been the most they ever spent together, she must have been distressed by his treatment. Her anxiety might also have been enhanced by her condition, for she was three months pregnant with her son Reginald when her brother went to the block. Edward's execution may also have concerned her in other ways as she anxiously contemplated what the king might have in store for her and her children. Consequently, any outrage she felt

¹⁷¹ Gairdner, J., (ed.), *Letters Illustrative of the Reigns of Richard III and Henry VII*, I (London, 1861) 113-14.

¹⁷² Williamson, J., *The Tudor Age*, p. 59.

¹⁷³ Thomas, A.H., and Thornley, I.D., (eds.), *The Great Chronicle of London* (London, 1938) pp. 291-2.

¹⁷⁴ *Excerpta Historica*, p. 123 cited in Arthurson, I., *Op.cit.*, p. 215.

¹⁷⁵ The possibility that she visited him during his incarceration is unlikely.

remained sensibly concealed. Richard of course, remained completely unscathed by his brother-in-law's fate, except materialistically. The earl's attainder for treason meant that any hope Margaret and her husband had of inheriting his remaining lands was now lost.

On 2 October 1501 after a stormy crossing, Catherine of Aragon finally arrived in England. The long awaited marriage took place on 14 November amid lavish celebrations and elaborate pageantry. To commemorate the event, Richard apparently erected the carved screen at Aberconwy Church in North Wales.¹⁷⁶ His familiarity and connection with the area, as constable of Conwy Castle and captain of the Town for the previous thirteen years, makes this quite likely. In December Richard set off to Wales once more, *in the company of the prince and his new bride. It is probable that Margaret was amongst this gathering, for her presence at the marriage celebrations would certainly have been called for. It has been assumed that Margaret's friendship with Catherine was forged at Ludlow where she attended upon the new princess. John E. Paul is adamant that Margaret was there¹⁷⁷ and after Arthur's death, 'gave all possible consolation to the bereaved young Princess.'¹⁷⁸ Although no direct evidence exists to place Margaret in Catherine's household at this time, Catherine was attended by both Spanish and English ladies. For the funeral of Prince Arthur, 30 yards of material was allocated 'for the ladies of Spain attending upon the princess' and 33 yards for 'the Lady Darcy and other attending upon the princess.'¹⁷⁹ This Lady Darcy is probably the same lady appointed to run Arthur's nursery in 1486. Presumably she headed a contingent of English ladies who attended Catherine, including, in all likelihood, Margaret Pole. Her noble lineage and position as wife to the lord chamberlain, would make Margaret a most worthy attendant for the young princess. Moreover she was a mature woman, nearly 28 years old, and a mother of four children including a daughter; her eminent suitability is obvious. Furthermore, Margaret's immediate prominence following the accession of Henry VIII, can also be taken as evidence of a friendship begun much earlier between herself and Catherine.¹⁸⁰ Unfortunately, this sunny idyll at Ludlow came sharply to an end. Five months after*

¹⁷⁶ Crossley, F.H., and Ridgway, M.H., 'Screens, Lofts, and Stalls Situated in Wales and Monmouthshire' *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, CX-CXI (1961-2) 64.

¹⁷⁷ Paul, J.E., *Catherine of Aragon and her Friends* (London, 1966) p. 13.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁷⁹ P.R.O. L.C.2/1. Funerals and Mournings. f. 10.

¹⁸⁰ See below p. 94.

his wedding Prince Arthur died. Richard, probably reeling from the shock himself, had the unpleasant task of informing the king and council at Greenwich of the tragedy.¹⁸¹ Catherine was too ill to attend the internment of her husband¹⁸² but Richard, as his position demanded, was present throughout. He was granted 29 yards of cloth for himself, 'in the stead of one baron,' and six of his suite.¹⁸³ This extra honour was probably due to his high office in the deceased's household. After lying in state for three weeks, Arthur's body was removed to the parish church, with Richard in procession behind the Earls of Surrey, Shrewsbury and Kent, the Lord Grey of Ruthin, Baron Dudley and Lord Powis.¹⁸⁴ The journey to Bewdley was not so sedate, the weather was terrible and the roads so bad that oxen had to be used to draw the chariot. At the internment in Worcester, Richard with his friend John Grey, Lord Powis, solemnly received the prince's sword, and with another of his associates, Edmund Lord Grey of Wilton, his helmet.¹⁸⁵ The broken staffs of office including Richard's, followed the young prince into his grave, which is situated on the south side of the high altar in Worcester Cathedral.

Although Richard was now no longer the heir apparent's lord chamberlain, his other duties still awaited to be discharged, while the prince's council continued to function. Prince Henry was eventually appointed in his brother's stead, and Richard received his re-appointment as chamberlain of Chester from him, 'in consideration of the venerable and faithful service which the said Richard Pole, knight, did to the body of the said lord king.'¹⁸⁶ Richard's ceremonial duties also continued, with yet another funeral in 1503. Queen Elizabeth died in February, and Richard dutifully attended her internment receiving the customary grant of black cloth.¹⁸⁷ Surprisingly, Margaret's name does not appear in any of the lists for her cousin's funeral.¹⁸⁸ Six months later, Richard took part in a more pleasant ceremony when he accompanied Princess

¹⁸¹ *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii*, V, 373.

¹⁸² Mattingly, G., *Catherine of Aragon*, p. 47.

¹⁸³ P.R.O. L.C.2/1., f. 10.

¹⁸⁴ *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii*, V, 375.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 379-80.

¹⁸⁶ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen. VII/1494.

¹⁸⁷ P.R.O. L.C.2/1., f. 59b.

¹⁸⁸ She may have been heavily pregnant at this time with Geoffrey.

Margaret to Scotland for her wedding to King James IV. He attended the ceremony on 8 August proudly arrayed in his Garter Collar.¹⁸⁹

In 1504 Richard would probably have been between 45 and 46 years of age, certainly middle aged by contemporary standards. Continuing his assiduous service to Henry VII, in April he was re-appointed for the third time to the chamberlainship of Chester,¹⁹⁰ but by the end of the year he had died. His Inquisition Post Mortem, *virtute officii*, drawn up on 29 January 1505, states that he died '20 December last',¹⁹¹ thus 20 December 1504. However, on 20 October 1504, Margaret and Charles Somerset apparently borrowed £40 for Richard's burial,¹⁹² while on 17 November Richard was replaced as one of the guarantors for Lord Mountjoy, keeper of Hammes Castle.¹⁹³ The evidence would suggest that the date mentioned in the Inquisition Post Mortem is inaccurate and that in fact, Richard died towards the end of October when Margaret and Somerset obtained the loan for his burial. On 8 December Margaret received £52 6s 8d. from the king himself, for her 'finding and rayment'¹⁹⁴ and on 28 December, her husband was replaced by Charles Somerset as steward of the lordships of Montgomery, Ceri and Cedewain and constable of Montgomery Castle, offices granted to Richard for life.¹⁹⁵ On 20 February 1505 the king wrote from Greenwich:

whereas it hath pleased Almighty god to call unto his infinite Mercy the late Earl of Derby and Sir Richard Pole Knight Companions of the most noble Order of the Garter: We advertise you thereof to thentente that you shall cause such suffrage and orisons to be done and said for the eternal weal of their Souls, as by thauceant Statutes and Ordinances of the said noble Order ye be bound in that behalf.¹⁹⁶

¹⁸⁹ *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii*, IV, 291-2, 299.

¹⁹⁰ *D.K.R.*, 37, App. 2, p. 144, 593.

¹⁹¹ *Cal.Inq.P.M.*, 1505-1509, no. 876.

¹⁹² B.L. Add. MS. 59899, f. 168. 'Lord Herbert and Dame Margaret Pole have borrowed by bill of their hands for the burial of Sir Richard Pole which is to be repaid of the first money that shall be received of the profits of his lands.' The loan is again recorded on 15 November 1504. *Ibid.*, f. 69b. Samuel Bentley in his *Exterpa Historica*, also records the loan for 15 November 1504, but in the original used by him, it is placed under the year 1503, definitely a mistake. B.L. Add. MS. 7099, f. 80.

¹⁹³ *C.C.R.*, 1500-09, no. 428.

¹⁹⁴ B.L. Add. MS. 7099, f. 80. This is again inaccurately placed under the year 1503.

¹⁹⁵ *C.P.R.*, 1494-1509, p. 397.

¹⁹⁶ Anstis, J., *The Register of the Garter*, p. 249.

At the Garter mass for the dead, the Earl of Essex and Sir Richard Guildford offered Richard's banner, the Earl of Devon and Sir Edward Poynings his sword and Sir Richard Guildford and Sir Edward Poynings his helmet.¹⁹⁷

This period, must have been one of the most traumatic in Margaret's life. Apart from the personal loss, her financial future was not auspicious. She had immediately been reduced into taking out a loan to bury her husband, and for a sizeable amount. It is clear that Richard was to have every honour appropriate to his position, and his funeral would have been quite an elaborate affair.¹⁹⁸ At first sight it might appear ungracious of Henry to expect his loyal kinsman's widow to repay the loan, but Henry had already helped Margaret with the generous gift of £52 6s 8d while Margaret's loan of £40 was to be repaid 'of the first money that shall be received of the profits of his (Richard's) lands.'¹⁹⁹ As the king was in possession of these, due to Henry Pole's minority, it seems that Margaret would be repaying him with his own money. Therefore Henry was not as ungenerous as at first appears. Nevertheless, he obviously felt he had done enough for Richard's family. Despite being the king's ward and kinsman, Richard's son Henry, never seems to have appeared at court. He never received any gifts, or monetary payments, and does not appear in any lists for the king's household. It was the lands that concerned the king, and Richard Pole's young son remained under the care of his mother. Margaret's jointure in her husband's modest manors would not have provided a great deal of revenue, while his salary as a royal servant was now lost. Richard Morisyne, not the most reliable of sources admittedly, claimed in 1539 that Margaret had been reduced to living with the Nuns of Syon.²⁰⁰ Indeed, John Evans the bailiff of Medmenham and Ellesborough, incurred personal costs in purchasing certain necessities for Margaret from 10 January 1505 to September 1516. After her restoration he petitioned for recompense which amounted to the sum of £20 11s 1d.²⁰¹ In fact Margaret's straightened circumstances might have been one of the reasons behind Reginald's ecclesiastical career, and does appear to

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 249-50.

¹⁹⁸ See B.L. Cotton. MS. Julius B. XII, The Ordering of a Funeral for a Noble Person in Henry VII's Time, f. 7b.

¹⁹⁹B.L. Add. MS. 59899, f. 168.

²⁰⁰ Morisyne, R., *An Invective Ayenste the great and detestable vice, treason, wherein the secreete practises, and traterous workynges of theym, that suffrid of late are disclosed* (London, 1539, reprinted New York, 1972) Unfortunately there are no folio numbers in this text.

²⁰¹ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen. VIII/219.

have been a source of some resentment on Reginald's part. Writing to his mother in 1536, he reminded her:

you had given me utterly unto God. And though you had done so with all your children, yet in me you had so given all right from you and possession utterly of me that you never took any care to provide for my living nor otherwise, as you did for other, but committed all to God, to whom you had given me.²⁰²

One person who was in a position to help Margaret was her sister-in-law, Eleanor Verney. By 1496 Eleanor, Richard's sister, had married into a neighbouring Buckinghamshire family; the Verneys. Her husband Ralph, the second son of Sir Ralph Verney, one time sheriff and then mayor of London, was employed early on in Henry VII's reign, being appointed keeper of the park of Beckley, Oxford in 1486.²⁰³ In 1488, Cecily, Duchess of York appointed him keeper of the parks of Berkhamstead and King's Langley and steward of the lordships there.²⁰⁴ In 1496, Eleanor and her husband were among those who accompanied the recently tamed Earl of Kildare back to Ireland with his new wife Elizabeth St John, Eleanor's cousin.²⁰⁵ Eleanor was already one of the queen's ladies, for on 14 February 1497, a warrant was issued in connection with the Irish journey:

For as much as we reward such costs and charges as our right dear and wellbeloved Alianor Verney one of the gentlewomen attending upon our dearest, beloved wife the Queen hath of late had and sustained in the accompanying of our right dear cousin the countess of Kildare into our land of Ireland have given unto her the sum of ten pounds.²⁰⁶

Eleanor remained high in the queen's favour enjoying a close relationship with her. In the queen's privy purse expenses of 1502, Lady Verney's name appears constantly,

²⁰² *L&P*, XI, no. 92.

²⁰³ *C.P.R.*, 1485-94, p. 35.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 189.

²⁰⁵ Ralph Verney wrote a long letter from Ireland on 31 October to Reginald Bray describing the journey and ongoing events in Ireland. P.R.O. S.C.1/58 and Conway, A., *Henry VII's Relations with Scotland and Ireland 1485-1498* (Cambridge, 1932) pp. 94-8.

²⁰⁶ P.R.O. E.404/82, no. 15.

usually receiving reimbursement for money paid out by her on behalf of the queen.²⁰⁷ For her duties she received £20 a year,²⁰⁸ the same as her brother had earned as chamberlain of Chester!

Eleanor's husband also enjoyed a successful career at court. Initially a member of the queen's household,²⁰⁹ he subsequently became chamberlain to the Princess Margaret.²¹⁰ Having discharged his duties satisfactorily, he was appointed chamberlain to Henry VII's youngest daughter, the Princess Mary after her elder sister's marriage to the King of Scotland.²¹¹ The Verneys' connection with Mary was to continue into the reign of Henry VIII, an especial mark of favour accorded them in 1517 when their daughter-in-law Dorothy, bore Mary's eldest daughter Frances to the font for her christening.²¹² Throughout Henry VIII's reign, the Verneys occasionally received New Years Gifts and were granted annuities and presents usually for their services to Henry VIII's parents and sisters. Accordingly, in 1514 Ralph received an annuity of £50 for life²¹³ while Eleanor was granted £20 for life by November 1515.²¹⁴

Eleanor also earned the favour of Margaret Beaufort, receiving a £20 bequest in her will.²¹⁵ Perhaps it was Eleanor's closeness to Margaret Beaufort and Princess Mary, and Margaret's to Catherine, that created a distance between them, for no evidence

²⁰⁷ Nicolas, N.H., *The Privy Purse Expenses of Elizabeth of York* (London, 1830) pp. 8, 30, 36, 39, 43, 55, 57, 84, 91.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

²⁰⁹ At the queen's funeral he was listed under her household servants, as one of her carvers. P.R.O. L.C.2/1., f. 61.

²¹⁰ Bruce, J., (ed.), *Letters and Papers of the Verney Family*, p. 33. Present at the princess' proxy marriage in January 1503, he was described simply as Sir Ralph Verney. *Joannis Lelandi Antiquarii*, IV, 260. Consequently, it is most likely that after the queen's death, he moved to the household of the princess.

²¹¹ Sir Ralph's appointment unfortunately does not survive. John Bruce surmises that he was probably appointed immediately. Bruce, J., *Letters and Papers of the Verney Family*, p. 34. He was certainly in office by 26 August 1507, for on that day Richard Dynes was paid for 'riding with a letter to Sir Rauf Verney Chamberlain to my Lady Mary.' P.R.O. E.36/214.

²¹² *L&P*, II (ii) no. 3489.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, I (ii) no. 3324 (39).

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 1110.

²¹⁵ Cooper, C.H., *Memoir of Margaret Countess of Richmond and Derby* (Cambridge, 1874) p. 133.

exists to suggest that Eleanor ever tried to help her sister-in-law. We cannot know for sure, but regarding Catherine, Garrett Mattingly wrote:

At the English court no one dared show her a friendly smile. The little Princess Mary and Princess Mary's suite held her responsible for the delay in the betrothal to Charles of Ghent and went out of their way to show their dislike of her.

Moreover, he maintained that the king's mother, 'had never approved of her as a bride for the Prince of Wales and treated her with open hostility.'²¹⁶ If this was the case, then those prepared to act as her advocates and be her friends, would suffer the same icy coldness. It does seem strange that Margaret was not closer to Margaret Beaufort. After Richard's death, she would have been a most suitable attendant for the old lady, who was also her relative by blood and marriage. Margaret's service at court would have brought in a useful income and allowed her to make the valuable contacts necessary for arranging the marriages of her children. Henry was already twelve years old when Richard died, with Arthur probably not much younger. However, after Richard's death Margaret fails to appear in any records. She received no gifts, did not attend Margaret Beaufort or either of the princesses, and unlike her sister-in-law, was excluded from Margaret Beaufort's will. It is possible that Margaret and Eleanor simply never warmed to each other, while Margaret and the king's mother might have been too alike to have enjoyed a compatible friendship. It might also be argued that Margaret preferred to remain away from court, but this does not accord with her eagerness to attend when given the chance in 1509. If Margaret's marginalisation was a result of her friendship with Catherine, then in 1509 she was to receive just reward for her determined loyalty when her young friend became Queen of England.

On 1 July 1509, the new king paid £26 13s 4d to a Lady Williams for the board of 'Dame Margaret Pole' who stayed there after her arrival in London for Henry VIII's coronation.²¹⁷ Obviously this is another indication that Margaret had not previously been at court and was a recent arrival having no rooms set aside for her. From the virtual obscurity of the past five years, she suddenly emerged as one of Catherine's principal attendants, placed second or third in the list of ladies attending Catherine at the coronation under the heading of the queens chamber.²¹⁸ Moreover, though only a

²¹⁶ Mattingly, G., *Catherine of Aragon*, pp. 99-100.

²¹⁷ *L&P*, I (i) p. 1442.

²¹⁸ Preceded by Elizabeth and Anne Stafford in the *L&P* entry, I (i) no. 81, p. 41. The original places only Lady Anne Stafford before her. P.R.O. L.C.9., f. 134.

knight's widow she received the maximum allowance of material usually accorded to a countess, superseding the baronesses and significantly, her sister-in-law!²¹⁹ This is an especial mark of favour and the queen need not have gone this far. The fact that she did is certainly indicative of a depth of affection which could not have been formed in the short period between Henry VII's death and Henry VIII's coronation. It must be remembered that the interval at Ludlow was the only time Catherine had had to form any friendships with English ladies, after that her opportunities were much reduced. That Margaret's friendship continued to be extended to her throughout her adversity, points to that streak of loyalty which was to surface again in the 1530s. Margaret could not have known that Catherine would be queen, in fact the odds were strongly against it for some time. Consequently Catherine knew that Margaret's friendship was genuine, not opportunistic. Henry VIII's infatuation with his new bride and eagerness to please her meant that it would not be difficult for Catherine to use her new found influence on Margaret's behalf, while Henry would not be averse to helping Margaret, his own kinswoman. This new found favour continued, and on 31 July 'our right dere and wellbiloved the Lady Margaret Pole' was granted a £100 annuity during pleasure.²²⁰ Nor did the new king shirk his responsibility with regard to his young ward. The seventeen year old Henry Pole was immediately transported from the tranquillity of Buckinghamshire into the centre of this exciting, bustling new court where he was presented with splendid new clothes by the king himself. Henry was immediately employed as one of the king's servants, and began to receive items of clothing on a regular basis. On 11 November 1509 Henry, described as the 'King's servant,' received a gown of French tawny²²¹ and on 10 November 1510 a gown of tawny velvet.²²² On 22 May 1511, he enjoyed a change of colour, receiving a gown of black velvet²²³ while on 26 November he was granted a gown of black damask.²²⁴ Shortly afterwards the king presented him with 40s, a generous reward for bringing his mother's New Year's Gift; 'The exchange of New Year gifts with the sovereign

²¹⁹ Margaret and the countesses received twelve yards, the baronesses ten yards, knights wives' including Lady Verney ten yards, and the rest seven yards. P.R.O. L.C.9. f. 134.

²²⁰ P.R.O. C.82/338, 400, bundle 1; *L&P*, I (i) no. 158 (19).

²²¹ *L&P*, I (i) no. 234.

²²² *Ibid.*, no. 609.

²²³ *Ibid.*, no. 774.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 957.

was a sure sign of being persona grata.²²⁵ There is no doubt that Margaret Pole was now indeed persona grata. For her a new era had begun and it was to be triumphantly heralded by the greatest reward of all: the Earldom of Salisbury.

²²⁵ Loades, D.M., *The Tudor Court* (Bangor, 1992) p. 85.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ACCESSION OF HENRY VIII and LADY MARGARET'S RESTORATION; 1509-1519

Oh! my dear Erasmus, if you could only see how wild with joy everyone here is, how they are congratulating themselves on having such a prince, Avarice slinks away far from the people; generosity scatters wealth with lavish hand.¹

Although somewhat hyperbolic, we should not be too surprised if Margaret and her children eagerly concurred with Lord Mountjoy's enthusiastic outburst at the accession of Henry VIII. For them, the first decade of the second Tudor was to be a distinct and welcome contrast to the last decade of the first Tudor. Following their attendance at Henry's coronation in 1509, both Margaret and her eldest son and heir Henry occupied honourable positions at his court. Margaret became a member of the queen's household, and by 1512 Henry had been appointed one of the king's sewers.² In the same year Margaret's third son, the twelve year old Reginald, also experienced the king's bounty. Assisted financially by Henry VIII,³ he left the Carthusian Monastery at Sheen for Magdalen College, Oxford. In April 1513, he received a pension which the prior of St. Frideswide 'is bound to give to a clerk of the King's nomination until he be promoted to a competent benefice by the said prior.'⁴ Although for the first three years of Henry's reign Margaret and her children enjoyed an enhanced lifestyle due to the king's generosity, the rewards, while a definite improvement on the treatment they had received from Henry VII, were modest. It was not until 1512 that Margaret really began to reap the benefits of her second cousin's accession to the throne when she was restored to the Earldom of Salisbury.

¹ William Lord Mountjoy to Erasmus in 1509. Emerton, E., *Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam* (London, 1899) p. 181.

² On 14 May 1512, Henry received black velvet for a gown as one of the king's sewers. *L&P*, I (i) no 1192.

³ In March 1511, Reginald received £12 for 'his exhibition at school.' *Ibid.*, I (ii) p. 1455.

⁴ *Ibid.*, I (ii) no. 2055 (35)

According to Helen Miller, from 1509 the writing was on the wall regarding Margaret's restoration and those of Sir William Courtenay, Thomas Grey and John Tuchet. The delay she claims, was due to the necessary arrangements concerning the restored lands.⁵ Certainly Miller's explanation seems feasible respecting Margaret's restoration as a substantial amount of land was involved which, by 1509, had been in the hands of the crown for over thirty years, first in wardship then in full ownership. Moreover, on his accession Henry had granted to his consort one of the Salisbury manors, for which he later had to make recompense.⁶ It must be considered whether Henry would have made such a grant if he had, as early as 1509, intended to restore Margaret. He might, of course, have been unclear as to exactly what the earldom comprised. Certainly in 1511 he appointed Sir Robert Southwell and Bartholomew Westby, baron of the exchequer, to survey the possessions of Edward, Earl of Warwick, possibly in preparation for the restoration.⁷

The amount Margaret paid to enter the earldom was 5000 marks towards the king's wars, 'for his high and great goodness showed unto her, as restoring her to the inheritance of her said brother.'⁸ In May 1513, Wolsey acknowledged receipt of £1000 as the first instalment,⁹ leaving £2333 6s 8d outstanding. On 1 May 1513 both Margaret and her eldest son Henry, were bound in a recognizance to pay this debt for 'the redeeming of Salisbury lands.'¹⁰ According to Margaret, she was restored on 4 February 1512, in the first parliament of Henry VIII's reign.¹¹ The act of restoration allowed her to take the issues of the lands after March 1513, and not before¹² and was enrolled on the patent roll in October 1513.¹³ Margaret herself claimed, that by

⁵ Miller, H., *Henry VIII and the English Nobility* (Oxford, 1989) pp. 7-9.

⁶ Brettes in West Ham granted to Catherine in June 1509. *L&P*, I (i) no. 94, (35). On 18 August 1519, he granted her the manor of Chilton Foliat in Berkshire in recompense. *Ibid.*, III (i) no. 429.

⁷ *L&P*, I (i) no. 709.

⁸ *L&P*, I (ii) no. 1924.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ P.R.O. E.36/215, f. 676; *L&P*, I (ii) p. 1486.

¹¹ P.R.O. E.314/79, no. 305. This date emerged during Margaret's explanation of her right to the manor of Canford.

¹² 5 Hen, VIII, cap. 12, *Statutes of the Realm*, III, 101.

¹³ *L&P*, I (ii) no. 2422 (11).

'dyvers progacons' she did not actually enter the manors until 20 January 1515.¹⁴ This is probably a mistake, as parliament did not meet until February in 1515. In 1514 however, the Parliamentary session did run from January to March.¹⁵ Moreover, the Parliament roll for the fifth year of Henry VIII includes Margaret's petition for restitution, the second prorogation beginning on 20 January, the date mentioned by Margaret.¹⁶ Hence, she most likely formally entered her manors in January 1514. In May 1513, Sir Robert Southwell and Bartholomew Westby were again appointed to survey and approve the Earl of Warwick's lands.¹⁷ Clearly, Margaret must have obtained the initial £1000 in loan, borrowed on the strength of her restoration, for she would not have been able to raise such an amount from her widow's jointure.

As to the petition itself,¹⁸ it was a very carefully worded document; it had to be for it sought to exonerate Margaret's brother of treason, the crime for which he was executed, while at the same time avoiding the condemnation of Henry VII for judicial murder. After stressing her descent from Alice Montague, Countess of Salisbury, Margaret turned to the act of attainder passed against her brother in the parliament of 1503. Referring to Henry VII only in the most respectful of terms, she detailed the effects of the attainder on her brother's property before proceeding to disclose why the attainder should be repealed. Tactfully dating his strict incarceration from 1483, she went on to explain that Edward, due to his confinement, had:

none experience nor knowledge of the worldly policies nor of the laws of this Realm, so that if any offence were by him done concerning such matters specified in the said act of attainder it was rather by Innocence than of any malicious purpose.

Margaret then reminded Henry that she was his, 'poor kinswoman and hath no living but by help of your highness,' and appealed to Henry's 'benign goodness, abundant grace, pity and charity' to completely revoke the attainder as though it had never been passed, and to allow her to be restored to 'the estate, name, degree, style and title of

¹⁴ P.R.O. E.314/18.

¹⁵ Loach, J., *Parliament under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1991) p. x.

¹⁶ *L&P*, I (ii) no. 2590.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, I (i) no. 709.

¹⁸ 5 Hen VIII, cap. 12, Statutes of the Realm, III, pp. 100-102.

Countess of Salisbury' and her heirs as Earls of Salisbury.¹⁹ The act then went on to specify the lands to which Margaret and her heirs were to be restored. She was to possess all the lands that Edward held at the time of his said treason, and to inherit them as if the attainder had never been passed.²⁰ By making clear that they were the lands held at the time of his treason, the lands of Anne, Countess of Warwick were excluded from the restoration. These lands had of course, been restored to the countess in 1490, on condition that she made Henry VII her heir and a proviso in this act specifically stated that the restoration was not to extend to any lands that were part of her inheritance.²¹ The Act then stipulated that Margaret was to take the issues only from after 25 March 1513, and made clear that the restoration was to Margaret and her heirs, not heirs male.²² Two saving clauses ended the Act: one protected Henry VIII's rights as the heir of Margaret Beaufort, and the other protected any right he might have to the Salisbury lands other than by Edward's forfeiture.²³ These two clauses would prove significant during the dispute between Margaret and the king over their title to several manors.

It must necessarily be considered why Henry VIII decided to restore the Pole family. Helen Miller believes that Margaret's restoration was not unusual but fitted into a pattern followed by Henry at that time, which was to 'restore to favour all those who had fallen foul of his father.'²⁴ Certainly, several restorations did take place²⁵ including that of the Courtenay family, a family which enjoyed a similar kinship relationship to Henry VIII as the Pole family did.²⁶ First Sir William in 1511, then his son Henry in 1512 were restored as Earls of Devon²⁷ while Katherine, Henry's mother,

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 100-01.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 101.

²¹ Ibid., p. 102.

²² Ibid., p. 101.

²³ Ibid., p. 102.

²⁴ Miller, H., *Henry VIII and the English Nobility*, p. 7.

²⁵ Thomas Grey, Marquis of Dorset was issued letters patent of general pardon on 26 August 1509. In November 1512 the attainder against James Tuchet, Lord Audley was repealed enabling his son John to succeed to the barony. Ibid., pp. 8-9

²⁶ See Appendix 2.

²⁷ Miller, H., *Op.cit.*, p. 8.

was granted an annuity of 200 marks on the same day as Margaret Pole received her £100 annuity in 1509.²⁸ Another incentive for Henry was that, 'every grant served one basic purpose: to project the image of a munificent prince, glorified in the distribution of honours.'²⁹ The restoration of Margaret Pole, an impecunious widow with five children to support, would certainly reflect the image of a merciful, benevolent king. In addition, Henry would be contrasted favourably with his father, as contemporary opinion did not generally approve of the Earl of Warwick's execution. Just as he enhanced his popularity by the cancellation of his father's hated recognizances, Henry would play the merciful prince to his father's hardhearted king by the restoration of Warwick's sister. In fact, according to Reginald Henry VII himself, racked with-guilt on his death bed and 'repenting of the acts of injustice committed by him during his reign,' instructed his son to restore Margaret. This Henry VIII did, apparently on condition that Margaret forgave Henry VII 'the injuries received from him.'³⁰ In addition the restorations would also serve to 'reassure the aristocracy of the king's good lordship, and to indicate a more generous style of government.'³¹ According to David Starkey, a good relationship with his nobility was what Henry was striving to achieve in the early years of his reign. This 'honeymoon with the nobility' was due, maintains Starkey, to Henry's desire for war which obviously necessitated the support of his nobles, 'they alone could provide the troops for war - as well as being themselves the natural choice as admirals and generals.'³²

The Poles and the Courtenay's were not Henry's only relatives to enjoy such favours. Around the same time as Margaret's restoration, her kinsman and friend Charles Somerset, now Lord Herbert, was raised to the Earldom of Worcester. This was not a restoration but a reward of war, for Somerset had been captain of the rear-ward in the French campaign of 1513. Nevertheless, Somerset's blood relationship to Henry probably helped to facilitate his rise to fortune in much the same way as Margaret's. Somerset, like Margaret, enjoyed a successful career at Henry's court. Appointed lord chamberlain in 1508, he was re-appointed to this office by Henry VIII.³³ Moreover

²⁸ *L&P*, I (i) no. 158 (20).

²⁹ Miller, H., *Op.cit.*, p. 12.

³⁰ Reginald to the Protector of England, 1549. *C.S.P. Venetian*, 1534-54, pp. 246-7.

³¹ Loades, D.M., *The Tudor Court*, p. 138.

³² Starkey, D., 'Rivals in Power: The Tudors and the Nobility' in idem, (ed.), *Rivals in Power* (London, 1990) p. 10.

³³ Loades, D.M., *The Tudor Court*, p. 47.

Henry built up Somerset's power in Wales and the Marches, finally making him sheriff of Glamorgan for life, an appointment he had long coveted during Henry VII's reign.³⁴ Henry Parker had been brought up in the household of Margaret Beaufort, and had enjoyed her particular favour despite the fact that his father had been a staunch follower of Richard III.³⁵ He contracted a fortuitous marriage with Alice St John which brought him within the royal family circle,³⁶ and in 1518 he was summoned to parliament as Lord Morley in right of his mother.³⁷ Five years later Arthur Plantagenet, the illegitimate son of Edward IV, was created Viscount Lisle while in 1525 Thomas Manners became Earl of Rutland. According to M.L. Bush, the important offices that Lisle received, such as keeper of the Cinque Ports and Lord Deputy of Calais, 'in view of his twittery, incompetent and impotent nature, must have come to him because he was a royal relative.'³⁸ *The career and consistent royal employment of Thomas Manners, Edward IV's great nephew*³⁹ illustrates the trust and favour he enjoyed from Henry VIII right up until his death in 1543.⁴⁰ His creation as Earl of Rutland was certainly a reflection of his royal lineage, for the title had been extinct since 1460 when its last holder Edmund Plantagenet, Edward IV's younger brother, was killed. Moreover, to further emphasise his descent Henry allowed Rutland to quarter two fleurs de lis gold and two lions passant guardant gold, with his arms.⁴¹ Clearly, as M.L. Bush notes, Henry VIII 'was not against elevating those of the blood royal.'⁴²

In addition to these motives, Margaret secured her restoration simply because Henry VIII liked her. According to Reginald, Henry had looked upon her as a parent,⁴³ and although Reginald is not an unbiased source, the king was very magnanimous towards

³⁴ Miller, H., *Op.Cit.*, pp. 195-6.

³⁵ *The King's Mother*, p. 114.

³⁶ See Appendix 5.

³⁷ Miller, H., *Op.cit.*, p. 11.

³⁸ Bush, M.L., 'The Tudors and the Royal Race' *History*, LV (1970) 40.

³⁹ See Appendix 2.

⁴⁰ *Complete Peerage*, XI, 253-5.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

⁴² Bush, M.L., *Op.cit.*, p. 43.

⁴³ Reginald to the Cardinal Archbishop of Burgos, 1 August, 1541. *C.S.P., Venetian*, 1534-54, no. 272.

her. When we compare the 6,500 marks John Tucket Lord Audely was constrained to pay for the restoration of lands worth £545 17s 17d⁴⁴ to Margaret's 5000 marks for lands worth over £2000, it becomes clear just how generously she was treated. She was high in Henry's favour and that of his wife, whose role in Margaret's good fortune should also not be overlooked. A deep and loyal friendship existed between the two women, and it is inconceivable that Catherine would have refrained from promoting her friend's suit. The influence she continued to wield over Henry at this time would certainly have served to assist Margaret's petition. According to Garret Mattingly, Catherine was Henry's first love,⁴⁵ while his reliance upon her, and complete trust in her opinion, put her in a powerful position: 'For the first three or four years of their marriage she was, in effect, his most trusted counsellor.'⁴⁶ Indeed, David Loades feels that Catherine played a crucial role in Margaret's rise to favour, maintaining that she:

quietly repaired some of the relationships with major aristocratic families which Henry VII had either accidentally or deliberately allowed to decay. Her friendship with Margaret Pole is a good example, but by no means the only one.⁴⁷

It has also been suggested that Catherine exerted herself on Margaret's behalf due to the responsibility she felt for the execution of Margaret's brother. Lord Bacon wrote that during the struggles over the annulment of her marriage, Catherine reflected that, 'it was a judgement of God for that her former marriage was made in blood,'⁴⁸ while Beccatelli claimed that she felt:

remorse on the recollection of it, in so much that she had been heard to say, 'she should not die in peace unless she could be the instrument of restoring to the Plantagenet family some future hopes of succeeding to the crown,' intimating by these words her desire of giving her daughter in marriage to one of lady Margaret's sons.⁴⁹

⁴⁴ Miller, H., *Henry VIII and the English Nobility*, pp. 209-10.

⁴⁵ Mattingly, G., *Catherine of Aragon*, p. 113.

⁴⁶ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life* (Oxford, 1989) p. 14.

⁴⁷ Loades, D.M., *The Politics of Marriage* (Gloucester, 1994) p. 19.

⁴⁸ Lockyer, R., (ed.), *The History of the Reign of King Henry the Seventh by Francis Bacon* (London, 1971) p. 197.

⁴⁹ Pye, B., *The Life of Cardinal Reginald Pole*, p.10.

Although such sentiments regarding a marriage between Mary and Reginald can be corroborated by Chapuys as early as 1533⁵⁰ and 1534⁵¹ it is impossible to know whether such ideas were ever seriously considered by the queen. The rumour of her guilt seems to have originated from Reginald who, declaring that Ferdinand was the indirect cause of Warwick's execution, wrote that Divine justice manifested itself in Prince Arthur's death, and that to:

these causes that good Princess said that she attributed in great part the annoyances and distresses endured by her, confessing that she was therefore very much bound to recompense and requite us for the detriment we had received on her account.⁵²

Whether Catherine ever did express such sentiments, she would certainly have been aware of Warwick's fate, especially being such a close friend of his sister. If she was not quite overcome with guilt then at the least she would feel a natural compassion and regret over such a tragedy, which would act as a further incentive to try and facilitate some kind of reparation for her friend. In addition, to ensure success Margaret took out extra insurance by putting the king's rising star, Thomas Wolsey, on her payroll. On 11 June 1513 Margaret granted, 'for good counsel and aid rendered and to be rendered her, to Thomas Wolcy, clerk, king's almoner, of 100 marks annuity for life.'⁵³ The restoration ostensibly granted Margaret the Montague lands of her great grandmother Alice to hold in fee simple, and her title Countess of Salisbury. From being a member of the knightly class as Sir Richard's widow, Margaret was immediately propelled into the illustrious ranks of the peerage. Certainly, the enhanced lifestyle that it provided cannot be overstated. It did not just enable her to enjoy a more comfortable lifestyle, it actually made her one of the wealthiest, and therefore potentially most powerful, peers in Tudor England.

The Countess of Salisbury's lands fell within seventeen English counties. In addition she held manors in Wales, Calais and the Isle of Wight.⁵⁴ Her manors lay

⁵⁰ 'the Queen would like to bestow the Princess on him in marriage rather than any other; and the Princess would not refuse.' *L&P*, VI, no. 1164.

⁵¹ 'the Queen knew no-one in the world whom she would like better to marry the Princess.' *Ibid.*, VII, no. 1368.

⁵² Reginald to the Protector of England 1549. *C.S.P.*, Venetian. 1534-54, pp. 257-8, no. 575.

⁵³ *C.A.D.*, A. 13349.

⁵⁴ See Appendix 9.

predominantly in the South and the Midlands, with the greatest concentration in the counties of Hampshire, Somerset, Devon and Buckinghamshire. However, her lands also extended up into Lincolnshire and Yorkshire. She held 44 manors that came to her through her restoration, in addition to four manors in Kent and properties in Lincoln whose origins I have been unable to trace.⁵⁵ She held four manors in Wales, two again whose origins are obscure,⁵⁶ a number of properties in Calais, again as a result of her restoration,⁵⁷ and in 1534 purchased Aston Chevery in Buckinghamshire and Chalton in Hampshire. Therefore at the time of her arrest Margaret held 56 manors in England and Wales, in addition to the large mansion and tenements in London known as Le Herber, and her widow's jointure in Ellesborough and Medmenham. Of these 56 manors, six were valued at over £100 a year between September 1538-September 1539. The wealthiest manor appears to have been Stokenham in Devon at £155 a year, followed by Cottingham in Yorkshire with annual issues of £127, and Christchurch in Hampshire worth £124 a year. The other three manors; Clavering in Essex, Ware in Hertford and Yealmpton in Devon were valued at £113, £105 and £103 a year respectively.⁵⁸

It is very difficult to evaluate the financial worth of sixteenth century nobles. Their nominal wealth and actual wealth were often two different things. G.W. Bernard in his study of the Earls of Shrewsbury has attempted this rather arduous task, listing the incomes of several nobles which he considers to be substantial.⁵⁹ In order of wealth, the Earl of Northumberland in 1523, heads the list with £3,900 a year. Following him comes the Duke of Norfolk with £2,800 a year between 1525-26, and the first Earl of Rutland with £2,600 a year at his death in 1543. In 1527, ten 'noblemen of the degree of baron and above' were assessed for the subsidy intended for the French campaign

⁵⁵ Chesylhurst, Crayford, Stone and Sutton at Hone in Kent, four coppices in the Lordship of Bourne in Lincoln.

⁵⁶ In Monmouth she held Llanfair (Llanfair Discoed) near Caerwent and land at Llangyfiw near Usk, seven miles away. The smaller manor of Welsh Bicknor was near Symonds Yat. Gray, M., 'The Dispersal of Crown Property in Monmouthshire 1500-1603' (Unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of Wales (Cardiff), 1984) pp. 132-3. Courtesy of Gwent Record Office. In 1538 she was receiving rents from them of £16, 60s and £7 7s 8d respectively. S.C.6/Hen.VIII/6875.

⁵⁷ She held as a result of her restoration 'V tenements sometyme a mansion and a great court V tenements and two sellars' in St. Nicholas's parish, Calais. P.R.O. E.315/371, f.73. I am extremely grateful to Mr David I. Grummitt for providing me with this information from his forthcoming London University Ph.D thesis: 'The Economic and Social History of Calais and the Pale under English Rule between 1485 and 1558.'

⁵⁸ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen.VIII/6875.

⁵⁹ Bernard, G.W., *The Power of the Early Tudor Nobility* (Sussex, 1985) p. 173.

and originally granted in 1523.⁶⁰ Again Northumberland headed the list, assessed at £2,920, while at the bottom was Thomas, Lord Roos with just £100. Out of a total of ten nobles, Margaret comes a respectable fifth, assessed on lands worth £1,220. She actually precedes Thomas Howard, still Earl of Surrey, and the Duke of Suffolk with lands valued here at £1000 each. Elsewhere, Mary Lady Hastings and Hungerford, wife of Sir Richard Sacheverell was valued at £1,333, Sir William Compton at £1,100, William Lord Mountjoy at £1000 and Margaret's cousin, Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle, at £900. Obviously there is a discrepancy between Norfolk's £1000 assessment here, and the £2,800 mentioned by Bernard. The £2,800 was most likely his gross income, while nobles would not be too forthcoming about their actual incomes when being assessed for a subsidy. The same type of discrepancy can also be seen in the valuation of Margaret's lands. In addition to the 1523-24 assessment, between 1515-16, various lands that had been assigned by the king were also valued, and here Margaret's lands were estimated at £1,599.⁶¹ However, in 1538 the minister's accounts for Margaret's estates reveal that she actually enjoyed a gross income of £2,311.⁶² Clearly the Countess of Salisbury featured prominently in the financial pecking order, and was probably the fifth or sixth wealthiest noble in early sixteenth century England.

Margaret's rise in status and affluence was nothing short of spectacular. Although she was the Duke of Clarence's daughter, his early death had deprived her of the opportunity to enjoy the lavish lifestyle that he would have provided. Between the ages of four and twelve she had been dependant for her care on her two uncles, Edward IV and Richard III, and until her marriage in 1487, on the cautious generosity of Henry VII. For the next seventeen years she enjoyed a secure but not lavish lifestyle as the wife of Sir Richard Pole, but from his death in 1504, her financial situation was difficult to say the least. Hence the restoration brought Margaret her first real taste of wealth and power. Ironically, although reached by a convoluted and trying route, Margaret probably enjoyed more prosperity and influence than had originally been predicted for her as Clarence's daughter. Certainly she had more independence than could have been expected, for the lands had been granted to her alone, which gave her complete control over them. She was not in the position of a

⁶⁰ *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 2972.

⁶¹ *L&P*, II, (i) no. 1363.

⁶² P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen.VIII/6875.

dowager, she was the head of her family and enjoyed her title, Countess of Salisbury, in her own right.

Naturally her increased wealth and elevated status combined with the friendship she enjoyed with the king and queen, helped to promote her court career further. In 1516 Margaret was accorded a great distinction when she was chosen as one of the godmothers to Henry and Catherine's daughter, the Princess Mary. Mary was born on Monday 18 February and her christening took place two days later at Greenwich. Conducted with elaborate ritual and pageantry, it was well attended by the aristocracy. However, the prevalence of the king's blood kin is noticeable. Henry's first cousin Henry Courtenay, the Earl of Devon, carried the basin supported by Lord Herbert, Charles Somerset's son. Thomas Grey the Marquis of Dorset, son of Henry's half uncle, carried the salt and his wife, Lady Dorset the *chrism*. Charles Somerset, Earl of Worcester was present in his capacity as lord chamberlain while Henry's great half uncle, Sir David Owen, was among those who bore the canopy over the princess. Lady Katherine Courtenay, the king's aunt was one of the godmothers at the font,⁶³ while Margaret was godmother at the concurrent confirmation. Although, 'godparenthood from confirmation was less socially important than that from baptism,'⁶⁴ it was nevertheless a great honour and a reflection of the esteem in which Margaret was held by the king and queen. This early association with the princess was to mark the beginning of a long and affectionate relationship, as Margaret would remain staunchly devoted to Mary until the very end of her life. With hindsight the association had mixed blessings, at least where Margaret was concerned.

Margaret remained in the queen's household throughout this period and in 1519, although probably enjoyed much earlier, was entitled to the privilege of *bouche* of court.⁶⁵ Her continuing place in the king and queen's affection is also illustrated in the New Years gifts of 1519. Margaret was among several nobles and their wives who received monetary rewards from the king. Out of fourteen ladies, except for Mary the king's sister, and his aunt Katherine Courtenay, Margaret was presented with the largest payment; 40s, the same amount as the Dukes of Buckingham and Norfolk each

⁶³ The other godmother was the Duchess of Norfolk, while Wolsey stood as godfather. *L&P*, II,(i) no. 1573.

⁶⁴ Lynch, J.H., *The Medieval Church* (New York, 1992) p. 280.

⁶⁵ *L&P*, III, (i) no. 491.

received.⁶⁶ Perhaps, again with some satisfaction, Margaret noted that her sister-in-law Lady Verney, received only 20s! The following year, however, Margaret was given a greater honour when she was appointed governess to the king's only legitimate heir, the Princess Mary.

'Only a person of the highest rank and dignity was suitable to have the custody of a child who might one day be queen of both England and France,'⁶⁷ and Margaret's appointment was a clear indication of the trust and regard that both Henry and his queen had for her. Indeed, according to Reginald, so desirous was Catherine for Margaret to accept the appointment, that:

she did not content herself with ordering her to take up the burden as the king had written to her and commanded her, but her majesty wanted to leave all the commands aside and go to my mother's house together with the king and implore her to take up the burden willingly.⁶⁸

Certainly this reflected glory worked both ways, as David Loades observes, Margaret's appointment:

probably indicated Henry's recognition of the fact that Catherine was unlikely to bear more children, and that Mary was consequently his heir in more than a formal and temporary sense.⁶⁹

It is not possible to be sure exactly when Margaret's appointment took place, but she was certainly in office by 1 May 1520,⁷⁰ having succeeded Elizabeth Denton and

⁶⁶ Out of a total of 42 nobles, ladies and members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, only Mary, Queen of the French, her husband the Duke of Suffolk, Katherine Courtenay and Cardinal Wolsey received more than Margaret. Mary and Suffolk were granted £4 each, Katherine Courtenay and Wolsey 66s 8d each and Margaret 40s. The others who received the same amount as Margaret were the Dukes of Buckingham and Norfolk, the Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord Mountheagle, Lord Darcy and the Bishops of Winchester, Lincoln, Durham, Salisbury, Chester and Exeter. The other 26 individuals were given amounts varying from 26s 8d, 20s, 10s down to 6s 8d. P.R.O. E.36/216, f. 58.

⁶⁷ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 29.

⁶⁸ Reginald to Granvelle, 11 April 1539. *Papiers d'Etat et Audience* 128, ff. 241-5 cited in Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539,' p. 225.

⁶⁹ Loades, D.M., *Op.Cit.*, p. 29.

⁷⁰ P.R.O. C.82/490; *L&P*, III (i) no. 805. In this grant of Elizabeth Delabere's wardship, Margaret is described as Mary's governess.

Margaret Brian to the post.⁷¹ The responsibility of caring for the heir of England and ensuring her well being should not be under-estimated. That this responsibility was given to Margaret not only reveals the feelings of Henry and Catherine towards her, but also serves to enhance our knowledge of her character and capabilities.

The Countess of Salisbury would certainly appear to be an excellent choice. At 47 years old having had five children of her own, including a daughter, Margaret had age and experience on her side. Moreover, Margaret was Mary's godmother, and the duties of a godparent were taken seriously in this period:

The infant's godparents undertook to teach him the basic tenets of the Christian faith when the time came....Failure to fulfil this role was considered a sin ⁷²

Margaret would obviously be well placed to fulfil this role as her goddaughter's governess. In 1525, when the nine year old Mary was sent to Ludlow, Margaret was appraised of the duties the king expected of her. She was to ensure that Mary received an: 'honourable education and training in virtuous demeanour; that is to say, to serve God, from whom all grace and goodness proceedeth.' She was to make sure that Mary enjoyed 'moderate exercise' and breaths of sweet fresh air in places which Margaret considered appropriate, and was to 'pass her time, most seasons, at her virginals or other musical instruments,' while not neglecting her Latin and French. These last studies were to be undertaken moderately, Henry did not wish his daughter to become overtired. One more art she was to master, and that was dancing. Henry also laid down stipulations about her diet, which was not only to be well and cleanly prepared, but served with 'joyous, and merry communication.' Her garments were to be clean and her chamber spotless:

so that everything about her be pure, sweet, clean, and wholesome, as to so great a princess doth apertain: all corruption, evil airs, and things noisome and unpleasant, to be eschewed.⁷³

⁷¹ Loades, D.M., *Op.Cit.*, pp. 28-9.

⁷² Shahr, S., *Childhood in the Middle Ages*, p. 117.

⁷³ B.L. Cotton. MS. Vitellius C, f. 24 cited in Strickland, A., *Lives of the Queens of England*, III (London, 1854) 312-13.

These instructions reveal firstly, a doting and watchful parent, and secondly, that the duties of Mary's governess would be somewhat demanding. The princess was not the easiest of charges, for instance she was rather picky regarding her diet, as the special arrangements made in 1535 by her sister's household demonstrate.⁷⁴ She also suffered, in her later years, from chronic menstrual problems and the associated bouts of 'hysteria' and mood swings often associated with this type of problem.⁷⁵ Clearly Margaret would have needed compassion and patience in full measure, which Mary's affection for her suggests she possessed.

For females, even ones who might one day rule a kingdom, the most important thing as far as the sixteenth century was concerned, was moral purity. According to Vives, who was commissioned by Catherine to write a handbook as a guide for Mary's education, a woman, 'hath no charge to see to, but her honesty and chastity. Wherefore when she is informed of that, she is sufficiently appointed.'⁷⁶ Naturally, Henry's daughter had to be unquestionably virtuous, any lewd scandal would have damaged her value on the marriage market, not to mention the slur it would have cast upon her father's honour. Therefore, only someone of the most impeccable character could be entrusted with the moral welfare of the young princess. Margaret had been a widow for sixteen years, and naturally had had the opportunity for dalliance, but if she had ever been involved in a sexual scandal, she would no longer have been a suitable candidate. Not surprisingly it must be concluded that she was a sober, upright and pious woman, indeed, what else could one expect from the friend of Catherine of Aragon? A detailed knowledge of court etiquette was also a requirement of the princess's governess. Mary was treated with extreme deference from birth,⁷⁷ thus she would need to know how to contend with this and what to expect. This type of experience Margaret amply possessed, and we might imagine her fulfilling similar duties to those her husband fulfilled when he was chamberlain to Prince Arthur. Henry VIII was also interested in his daughter's musical ability, and here again

⁷⁴ 'where the lady Mary, the King's daughter, after she was restored to her health of her late infirmity, being in her own house, was much desirous to have meat immediately after she was ready in the morning, or else she should be in danger eftsoons to return to her said infirmity; therefore order was taken by my lady of Salisbury and the lord Huse, by the advice of physicians, that every day, not being fasted, she should be at dinner between 9 and 10 of the clock in the morning, and to eschew the superfluous breakfasts.' *L&P*, VIII, no. 440.

⁷⁵ For instance see Loades, *D.M., Mary Tudor: A Life*, pp 61, 81.

⁷⁶ Watson, F., (ed.), *Vives and the Renaissance Education of Women* (London, 1912) p. 34.

⁷⁷ Loades, *D.M., Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 28.

Margaret would be able to encourage Mary as her possession of three pairs of virginals at Warblington suggests a certain competency in that instrument.⁷⁸

Unfortunately, nothing definite is known about Margaret's education, but both Henry and Catherine were conscientious, budding scholars and intended Mary's education to be of an equally high standard. Although not fulfilling the duties of a tutor, it is nevertheless unlikely that an ignorant and illiterate woman would have been appointed the princess's governess. In fact Henry and Catherine were very interested in the 'new learning' and were keen to encourage and promote humanist scholars. Their contribution to the advancement of humanist learning prompted Erasmus to enthuse:

Where could one find a wife more keen to equal her admirable spouse?
What private home, what religious house indeed or university
anywhere better supplied with men outstanding for their integrity of
life and eminent learning than your court?⁷⁹

In all probability, Henry and his queen wished to ensure that someone like minded was appointed to oversee the upbringing of their daughter. As a member of the 'old aristocracy' it might be expected that Margaret would feel the same as the Duke of Norfolk, 'England was merry England, before all this New Learning came in,'⁸⁰ but in fact Margaret, like Henry and Catherine, was a supporter of the 'new learning' and a patroness of humanist scholars.

Gentian Hervet of Orleans had studied with Erasmus and was a pupil of Thomas Lupset for two years at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. In 1526, as a 'layman in the Countess of Salisbury's household' he was commanded by her to translate Erasmus' *De Immensa Misericordia Dei*⁸¹ into English. He was also appointed tutor to Margaret's grandson Arthur, and commissioned by Arthur's father Geoffrey, to translate Xenophon's *Treatise of the Household* from Greek to English. Indeed, his association with the Pole family was to last for nine years.⁸² Margaret's association with humanist scholars is not surprising when we consider the circles in which her son

⁷⁸ In the great chamber, the waiting chamber and the great parlour. See Appendix 11, ff. 74, 77.

⁷⁹ Dowling, M., *Humanism in the Age of Henry VIII*, (London, 1986) p. 19.

⁸⁰ Routh, E.M.G., *Sir Thomas More and His Friends*, (London, 1934) p. 126.

⁸¹ 'Concerning the infinite pity of God.'

⁸² Dowling, M., *Humanism in the Age of Henry VIII*, p. 146.

Reginald moved. A humanist scholar himself, his tutors at Oxford included the renowned humanist Thomas Linacre and the classical scholar William Latimer. Among his friends he could also count Thomas More with whom he was 'on terms of familiarity and friendship.'⁸³ More's scholarly daughter Margaret was also acquainted with Reginald, describing him 'as noble as he is learned in all branches of letters,'⁸⁴ while Reginald asked his mother to prepare a medicine for More, who in return wrote to thank him for his kindness.⁸⁵ No doubt Reginald provided a channel of introduction between his humanist friends and his mother.

Clearly Margaret appears to have been a most appropriate choice and Mary's achievements and happiness reflects this. On 13 June 1520 we hear that Mary was, 'right merry, and in prosperous health and state, daily exercising herself in virtuous pastimes,'⁸⁶ while on 28 June 1520, she greeted the French:

gentlemen with most goodly countenance, proper communication, and pleasant pastime in playing at the virginals, that they greatly marvelled and rejoiced the same, her young and tender age considered.⁸⁷

It must however be remembered, that Margaret's association with the princess was not constant. Although she was to play an important and significant role in Mary's life, this did not really begin until 1525, as her initial appointment as governess was of limited duration. Appointed by May 1520, she had lost the office by 24 July 1521, just over a year later.⁸⁸ John E. Paul wrongly assumes that Margaret was back in office by 1522 from an entry in one of the household accounts of Princess Mary.⁸⁹ Calendered under the year 1522, these accounts contain the following entry; 'to a boatman taking the Princess from Greenwich to Richmond, 23 Feb., by order of the countess of Sarum.'⁹⁰ However, the period actually covered by the accounts is 1

⁸³ Schenk, W., *Reginald Pole Cardinal of England* (London, 1950) p. 5.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ *L&P*, III (i) no. 873.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 896.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 1437.

⁸⁹ Paul, J.E., *Catherine of Aragon and Her Friends*, p. 54.

⁹⁰ *L&P*, III (ii) no. 2585.

October 1520-30 September 1521. Hence this entry refers to 23 February 1521, not 1522 as Paul wrongly supposed. In fact Margaret did not regain her office as Mary's governess until 1525, four years after her removal. This time she would remain in office for eight years until her behaviour provoked Henry to such a degree that she was eventually dismissed. In 1521 however, her removal was not the result of her actions, but more closely associated with the sensational fall of the Duke of Buckingham and her sons' close relationship with him. Unfortunately, it was not the last time that Margaret would suffer for the actions of her sons.

The standard of living Margaret enjoyed after her restoration was naturally shared by her children, whose prospects were inevitably enhanced. In 1513 her eldest son Henry entered his twenty first year, and the two Buckinghamshire manors inherited from his father; Medmenham and Ellesborough.⁹¹ The administration of these two modest manors would allow Henry to cut his teeth and help prepare him for the extensive estates he would one day administer as Earl of Salisbury. The young Henry seems to have been a responsible land owner, immediately initiating various repairs within his manors. For instance he spent 36s on a copyhold called Barnetts and £7 on the manor of Bockmer in Medmenham. In fact it was at Bockmer, the manor house restored by his grandfather in the fifteenth century,⁹² that Henry made his seat. Here he indulged in all the pastimes expected of a young nobleman. The keeping of his hawks cost him the considerable sum of £6 8s 2d over two years, while his horses at Bisham and Medmenham consumed 34 loads of hay over three and a half years at a cost of 119s 1d. Henry also involved himself in that other prerequisite of the aristocracy, litigation. John More of the king's exchequer was paid 66s for 'certain business of my Lord Montague' while the sum of 20s was incurred through several suits brought against Henry by the abbot of Medmenham. In addition 16s 2d was paid in costs to one Gardiner, against the tenants of Ellesborough for certain felons goods.⁹³

1513 was to prove a significant year for Henry. Not only did he reach his majority and take over the administration of his manors, he also took part in his first military campaign. Henry was more fortunate than his father, whose first military experience was concerned with trying to keep the crown on Henry VII's head at the battle of Stoke. Henry's initiation was to be a glamorous war of conquest, conducted with all

⁹¹ P.R.O. C.82/393; C66/620, m. 19; *L&P*, I (ii) no. 2137.

⁹² Plaisted, A.H., *The Manor and Parish Records of Medmenham*, pp. 97-8.

⁹³ For the above see P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen.VIII/219.

the pomp and pageantry Henry VIII's court could muster. On 30 June 1513 Henry VIII, having been invested with the kingdom of France by Pope Julius II, set off to claim his prize. Although the campaign resulted in no more than English possession of Tournai, at least Henry Pole had the honour of being included in the army that won victories which were 'at least the first which English arms had won from the French for some seventy-five years.'⁹⁴ Henry was appointed a captain of the middle-ward,⁹⁵ which was under the king's direct command. The fore-ward was under the command of George Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, and the rear-ward under Charles Somerset, future Earl of Worcester. There were many opportunities for display, Maximilian's arrival at Henry's camp was the excuse for feasting with the nobles adorned in their most magnificent clothes,⁹⁶ while Henry's entry into Tournai was accompanied by a procession in which the nobles were again arrayed in splendid outfits. However, the campaign was not all dressing up and feasting. Apart from military combat, Henry Pole's responsibilities were not insignificant. Discipline was strict and:

There was a clear understanding that the senior officers and captains were under an obligation to guarantee the good behaviour of the men under their charge as far as was humanly possible.⁹⁷

On 25 September, the day Henry VIII entered Tournai, he attended Mass in the Cathedral there. Following this, he 'knighted 49 men who had distinguished themselves in the campaign.'⁹⁸ Henry Pole must have discharged his duties successfully, for he was among these forty nine men,⁹⁹ and like his father, knighted following his first military campaign. The whole event must have been quite an overwhelming experience for Henry Pole and an exciting initiation into the art of warfare for any young man. Between 35,000-40,000 men marched under the King of England's banner, no expense was spared on artillery, armour or display, while the young nobles had the opportunity of sitting in the presence of the Holy Roman Emperor himself.

⁹⁴ Scarisbrick, J.J., *Henry VIII* (London, 1988) p. 38.

⁹⁵ *L&P*, I (ii) no. 2480 (27).

⁹⁶ Cruickshank, C., *Henry VIII and the Invasion of France* (Gloucester, 1990) p. 82.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 135.

⁹⁹ *L&P*, I (ii) no. 2301.

Although Henry was knighted in 1513, at some point after his mother's restoration he enjoyed the superior title of Lord Montague. There has been some discussion over whether this was a courtesy title or whether Henry had actually been created a baron by word of mouth, but as Henry was not summoned to sit in the House of Lords until December 1529, and his mother continued, from time to time, to be referred to as Lady Montague,¹⁰⁰ we must deduce that it was probably a courtesy title.¹⁰¹ It was not unusual for the sons of earls to be known by baronial titles, and be summoned to the House of Lords by that title, as Henry was in 1529.¹⁰² Henry's entitlement to the barony of Montague was as the descendant of Simon de Montague, created Lord Montague in 1299,¹⁰³ the grandfather of Thomas Montague, first Earl of Salisbury.¹⁰⁴ In April 1514 Henry entered a recognizance for payment of his livery, but was not referred to as Lord Montague.¹⁰⁵ The first surviving reference which describes Henry as Lord Montague is in 1514, possibly October.¹⁰⁶ In this document Henry's brother Arthur is noted as the brother of Lord Montague.¹⁰⁷ This is the first record of Arthur's arrival at court, upon which he was to make quite an impression. Of Margaret's four sons, it was Arthur who was very much the courtier. His career suggests that he was attractive, dashing and charming. Although his elder brother was always treated with respect by the king and included in all the events that his status dictated he should be, his relationship with Henry VIII was conventional and formal. However, his engaging younger brother earned the king's special affection, the type of affection that privileged favourites like Nicholas Carew and Francis Bryan experienced.

¹⁰⁰ For instance, on 8 February 1530, she was described as 'Countess of Salisbury and Lady of Montague' in her appointment of Oliver Frankelyn as her receiver general. P.R.O. E.312/8.

¹⁰¹ Miller, H., *Henry VIII and the English Nobility*, p. 9.

¹⁰² In addition to Henry Pole, three other sons of earls were summoned to the Lords during the reign of Henry VIII: Lord Rochford, son of the Earl of Wiltshire in 1532/33, Lord Maltravers son of the Earl of Arundel in 1533/34 and Lord Talbot son of the Earl of Shrewsbury in 1533/34. *Complete Peerage*, I, Appendix G, 490.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

¹⁰⁴ Thomas, Earl of Salisbury's great nephew, Thomas was restored as Earl of Salisbury and Lord Montague in 1421 following his father's attainder. His only child was Alice, Countess of Salisbury and Baroness Montague in her own right, mother of 'the kingmaker,' Henry Pole's great grandfather. See Appendix 1.

¹⁰⁵ *L&P*, II (ii) p. 1486.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 3357.

¹⁰⁷ I shall in future refer to Henry Pole as Lord Montague.

Arthur's entrance onto the court stage appears to have occurred in 1514 when he was included among those who accompanied Mary Tudor, the king's younger sister, to France for her marriage to King Louis XII. His inclusion may have been one of those rare instances of patronage exercised on behalf of the Pole family by the Verneys. Arthur's uncle Sir Ralph Verney was Mary's chamberlain and would be responsible for appointments to her household. His influence may very well have been needed to obtain Arthur a place, 'these were coveted appointments, for the French court was thought to be the height of elegance and sophistication.'¹⁰⁸ Obviously Arthur's command of French must have been competent enough to obtain such a post, and his mother probably felt that a spell at the French court would polish his skills as a courtier. Also among the group was Anne Boleyn, whose French sophistication mastered over a period of eight years, certainly helped her to make an impact upon the English court when she returned in 1521. Unfortunately for some members of Mary's household, they were dismissed by Louis the day after his wedding which took place on 9 October. Louis resented Mary's reliance upon Lady Guildford and foresaw possible interference from that quarter. He had experienced similar problems with his previous queen's household of Breton attendants which had undermined his control¹⁰⁹ and he would not allow the same mistake to be made twice. Therefore Mary's closest attendants were removed. The king did allow her to retain some English attendants however, but they were ones who offered no challenge to Louis' authority over his new queen. Mary complained that her husband had dismissed all her women and maidens, 'except such as never had experience nor knowledge how to advertise or give me counsel in time of need'¹¹⁰ Among those whom Louis allowed to remain was Arthur Pole.¹¹¹ The fact that Mary was not happy with these arrangements should not be taken as a poor reflection upon Arthur. What Mary needed was the intimate feminine advice of her female confidants. As a young, and as yet inexperienced courtier, Arthur could not be expected to advise Mary adequately, certainly not in such matters, and might not have even met her before. Consequently, he was just the type of attendant Louis was content with. Moreover, Arthur was a relative of the King of England, and an engaging and no doubt decorative looking young man. Unfortunately, the valuable experience that Margaret hoped her son would gain in France ended prematurely. Louis died on 31 December 1514, not yet three months

¹⁰⁸ Richardson, W.C., *The White Queen* (London, 1970) p. 88.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 108.

¹¹¹ *L&P*, I (ii) no. 3357.

after his marriage. It is impossible to be sure when Mary's attendants began to return home, especially as events were complicated by her marriage to Charles Brandon, but presumably all were back in England by 2 May when the two penitent newlyweds landed at Dover. Although Arthur could not have spent longer than seven months at the French court, the experience he did gain combined with his own natural talents were enough to assure him a successful career at Henry's court in the early part of the reign.

By 1516 Arthur was a squire of the body with an annuity of £33 6s 8d for life,¹¹² while his debut on the jousting field also took place in the same year. Arthur's age is not known, except that he was born between 1493-99, but his debut in 1516 was probably due less to his reaching the required age than to the time he had had to train. Before 1513, there was no way Margaret could have financed her sons' involvement in such an expensive sport. 'Jousting was an exclusively aristocratic sport,'¹¹³ and one of the reasons for this was that it was so costly.¹¹⁴ In addition to status and adequate finances, participants 'also needed to be physically fit and to command a modicum of the necessary skills in arms and horsemanship.'¹¹⁵ Jousting was a dangerous, demanding sport:

the power and weight involved as two riders approached each other at a combined speed of about 50 mph with that force directed at each other through the extended length of their lances must have been very impressive.¹¹⁶

Unfortunately no portraits survive of any of Margaret's children apart from Reginald,¹¹⁷ but Arthur's success at the jousts would indicate that he was a well built,

¹¹² Ibid., II (ii) no. 2736, p. 874.

¹¹³ Loades, D.M., *The Tudor Court*, p. 100.

¹¹⁴ Although Henry VIII often provided the necessary armour and outfits for certain courtiers; 'An individual participating in a Tudor or Jacobean tournament required a suitable horse, (preferably several), armour, weapons, colourful, original and sumptuous clothing for himself, his horses, and retainers, and perhaps a pageant wagon complete, if necessary, with actors and musicians.' Young, A., *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments* (London, 1987) p. 123.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 69.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p. 67.

¹¹⁷ Apparently a portrait of Lord Montague, by an unknown hand, was owned by a Mr Reginald Cholmondeley in 1866. *D.N.B.*, XLVI (London, 1896) 26.

strapping young man. As for his elder brother Lord Montague, he is only known to have jousted once in February 1521, when the king supplied him and others with bards and bases.¹¹⁸ The reason for this is unclear. Perhaps he lacked the physical power or the necessary attributes, although he possessed enough military skills in 1513 to earn a knighthood. Alternatively, jousting simply may not have been to his taste. Montague appears to have been quite a sensible and mature young man and perhaps thought such a boisterous sport was best left to his younger brother. Certainly, it was more important for Arthur, lacking the inheritance to which Montague looked forward, to shine at such activities, 'both military and political careers could be based on such success,'¹¹⁹ as the career of Charles Brandon clearly demonstrates.

Jousting should not be dismissed merely as a frivolous sport. Those chosen to take part had an important responsibility:

the honour of England, no less than that of the king, required creditable performances when ambassadors were to be entertained or dynastic marriages celebrated.¹²⁰

Unfortunately the first joust in which Arthur took part was a disappointment to the king, due to the inexperience of his opponents.¹²¹ Luckily, Arthur was not among them but among nineteen knights waiters attending upon the king's team.¹²² The following year however he was considered competent enough to participate fully. On 7 July 1517 he was led onto the field as a member of the king's own team to joust before the Flemish ambassadors.¹²³ As a member of Henry's team Arthur was supplied with a base and trapper¹²⁴ which he was permitted to keep. His opponents

¹¹⁸ *L&P*, III (ii) p. 1557. Bard is a term for horse armour while a base refers to the long skirt, waist to knee, worn by knights. Young, A., *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments*, p. 193.

¹¹⁹ Loades, D.M., *The Tudor Court*, p. 103.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

¹²¹ For a full discussion of this joust see Gunn, S.J., *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk* (Oxford, 1988) p. 67.

¹²² *L&P*, II (ii) pp. 1507-08.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 1510.

¹²⁴ A trapper was a covering for a horse made of cloth, mail or plates. Young, A., *Tudor and Jacobean Tournaments*, p. 195.

were led by the experienced Brandon, and the tournament was a huge success, 'a piece of martial theatre calculated to impress an international audience and evidently succeeding.'¹²⁵ Arthur could not have made his debut at a better tournament. Three years later his jousting skills had improved so much that he was awarded a prize at the Field of the Cloth of Gold.¹²⁶

His mother's restoration had clearly given Arthur a new and exciting lifestyle. His elder brother however, eschewing such activities, is glimpsed carrying out more sedate duties. While Arthur jousted in 1517, Lord Montague stood patiently in the chapel at Greenwich while the king read out the confirmation of the 1516 treaty, between England, Maximilian and Charles V.¹²⁷ At the Field of the Cloth of Gold, both Montague and Arthur were among the retinue who attended the king and queen during their first meeting with Francis I and Queen Claude,¹²⁸ but again, while Arthur won a prize at the joust, his brother abstained. However Montague did enjoy the further honour of attending the king at his meeting with Charles V at Gravelines after the Field of the Cloth of Gold.¹²⁹ In 1518 both brothers were involved in the reception of the French embassy, an event which clearly illustrates the extent of royal favour enjoyed by Arthur Pole.

David Starkey has charted in great detail the emergence of the office of Gentleman of the Privy Chamber.¹³⁰ It would be inappropriate to do the same here, suffice to note that when the French Embassy arrived in England in September 1518 it became necessary to pair the French Gentlehommes de Chambre with their English equivalent. Thus the office of Gentleman of the Privy Chamber was created and bestowed upon those who had been occupying, informally, such a position prior to this. Arthur Pole was among the six young men so honoured.¹³¹ There could be no clearer indication of

¹²⁵ Starkey, D., 'The Tiltyard: the Jousts of July 1517' in idem, (ed.), *Henry VIII A European Court in England* (London, 1991) p. 40.

¹²⁶ *L&P*, III (i) p. 313, no. 869.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, II (ii) p. 1094, no. 3437.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, III (i) p. 240, no. 704 (2), pp. 243, 244, no. 3.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 906, p. 326.

¹³⁰ Starkey, D.R., 'The development of the Privy Chamber, 1485-1547' (Unpublished Cambridge Ph.D thesis, 1973) pp. 97-106.

¹³¹ *L&P*, II (ii) no. 4409. The other gentleman appointed were; Sir Edward Neville, Nicholas Carewe, Francis Bryan, Henry Norris and William Coffin.

the king's preference for the Countess of Salisbury's second son. Those invited into the inner sanctum of the Privy Chamber, were invited by the king himself; they were his friends, his intimates and those with whom he wished to spend time. These young men were therefore in a potentially powerful position, 'they enjoyed a unique intimacy with the King' and were, according to Sebastian Guistiniani, 'the very soul of the King.'¹³² Arthur's age and daring nature certainly corresponded with the type of youthful companion the king was favouring at the time.¹³³ In addition to entertaining and amusing the king, the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber were expected to carry out various other duties, such as conveying sensitive messages, or acting in an ambassadorial capacity. Evidently Arthur carried out such tasks for on 12 September 1518 he was given the considerable sum of £66 13s 4d 'to be by hym employd aboute certain of the king's busignes.'¹³⁴ Clearly membership of such an elite and privileged group boded well for Arthur's career at court.

While Lord Montague entered London in procession as one of the Young Gentlemen of Honour in September 1518,¹³⁵ his brother followed him in procession as one of the king's Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber. The arrival of the French embassy must have been one of the high points of Arthur's career, and on 3 October he took part in a lavish entertainment for the ambassadors hosted by Wolsey. Twelve gentlemen each paired with a lady and attended by twelve knights entered in disguise. Dressed in green satin covered with cloth of gold, they danced in front of the ambassadors before revealing their identities. Naturally the king had led the group accompanied by his sister Mary, while the last to enter had been Arthur Pole with his partner Margaret Bruges.¹³⁶

Undoubtedly, for the first ten years of Henry VIII's reign, the careers of both Henry and Arthur Pole flourished. Of Margaret's remaining three children, Reginald had taken his B.A. at Oxford in 1515 and in 1518 the king presented him as Dean to the collegiate church of Wimborne Minster. A little later two prebends in Salisbury

¹³² Starkey, D.R., *Op.cit.*, p. 95.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 87-90.

¹³⁴ P.R.O. E.36/216, f. 17; *L&P*, II (ii) p. 1479.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 4409.

¹³⁶ Brown, R., (trans.), *Four Years at the Court of Henry VIII by Sebastian Guistinian, 12 January 1515-26 July 1519*, II (London, 1854) note, pp. 227-8. Margaret Bruges was possibly the daughter of Sir John or Sir Giles Bruges.

Cathedral were bestowed upon him. Finally in 1521 he left England for the University of Padua having been presented with £100 from the king for his first year of study and probably to be received annually.¹³⁷ Margaret's youngest son Geoffrey might have been a little too young to make any great impression at court as yet and this might have been the reason for his sister's equally low profile. No evidence indicates that Ursula ever served in the queen's household, or in the household of Henry's sister Mary as we would expect. Nevertheless, on 22 November 1513 Henry VIII commanded that several gowns and kirtles with various costly materials for edging and lining 'be delyvred unto our dear and wellbeloved cousin Ursula Poulle.'¹³⁸ Although the gowns were either black or tawny, as were her brother Lord Montague's, this apparently does not denote any kind of court 'uniform.'¹³⁹ The grant cannot therefore be taken as conclusive proof of Ursula's service at court. Nevertheless, the sumptuousness of the gowns and kirtles, combined with the style of her address, does reveal the king's generosity and her status as a member of the royal family. Ursula's greatest claim to fame however, was her spectacular marriage. Not surprisingly, Margaret's elevated status not only improved her children's lifestyle, but greatly improved their prospects on the marriage market. Certainly the countess must have breathed a sigh of relief that no marriage had been arranged for her eldest son prior to 1512!

As Margaret's heir and the future Earl of Salisbury, Lord Montague was a valuable commodity on the marriage market no doubt ensuring an array of eager prospective fathers-in-law. The young lady who became Lady Montague and the future Countess of Salisbury, was Jane Neville. The daughter of George Neville, Lord Bergavenny, Jane was a distant kinswoman of Montague's, both being descended from the Beauchamp Earls of Worcester and Joan Beaufort.¹⁴⁰ It is not surprising to discover, considering the numerous squabbles amongst the Neville clan, that a clash had taken place between Richard Neville, the covetous 'kingmaker' and Jane's great grandfather, Sir Edward Neville. The Lordship of Abergavenny had been entailed in the male line

¹³⁷ Schenk, W., *Reginald Pole Cardinal of England*, p. 7.

¹³⁸ 'First a gown of fine tawney velvet containing fourteen yards. Item seven yards of cloth of gold for edging and lining of the same gown. Item a gown of fine black velvet containing fourteen yards. Item seven yards of crimson satin for edging and lining of the same gown. Item four ells of black sarcenet. Item a roll of fine bokeram. Item a kirtle of black satten containing seven yards with lining and edging to the same. Item a kirtle of russet damask containing seven yards with lining and edging to the same.' B.L. Add. MS. 18826, f. 38.

¹³⁹ I am grateful to Dr David Starkey for advising me regarding this question.

¹⁴⁰ See Appendix 2.

and had passed to Henry Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. On his death however, Richard Neville took possession of it in right of his wife Anne, who was the earl's sister. Edward Neville contested this, as his wife had an equal if not better claim, and received letters patent granting him license to enter the lordship. Richard Neville however ignored the letters patent and refused to relinquish possession.¹⁴¹ Having passed briefly to Margaret Pole's brother Edward, then to Jasper Tudor, the lordship escheated to the crown and was granted to Henry, Duke of York, the future Henry VIII. However, in 1512 Henry VIII granted the lordship of Abergavenny to George Neville, Jane's father, thus tacitly accepting Sir Edward Neville's rights over those of Margaret's grandfather Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick.

The date of Montague's marriage is unfortunately not recorded. The surviving documents which concern the negotiations for the marriage are not dated. It is certain that they were man and wife by March 1519 when the Duke of Buckingham presented Lady Montague with £6 6s 8d,¹⁴² but they were no doubt married earlier than this. In 1532 their eldest daughter Catherine married Francis Lord Hastings, the future Earl of Huntingdon. In 1556/57, Reginald wrote to his niece Catherine concerning the marriage of her daughter also named Catherine. Reginald was concerned at Catherine's youth, reminding his niece:

as I feared in your marriage at the beginning when a convenient time deferred and much by my procurence did serve you the better and made you and your friends have more comfort thereof.¹⁴³

Obviously Reginald had persuaded his family that Catherine should reach a more marriageable age before her nuptials took place. Depending on her own development, remembering that Princess Mary was not considered marriageable until the age of fourteen or fifteen,¹⁴⁴ fourteen would probably be the youngest age at which marriage could be safely considered, even though twelve was the minimum age of cohabitation.¹⁴⁵ Margaret Tudor married at fourteen as did Margaret Pole herself.

¹⁴¹ For a discussion of this see Storey, R.L., *The End of the House of Lancaster* (London, 1966) Appendix 6, p. 237.

¹⁴² *L&P*, III (i)p. 499, no. 1285. Although her name is spelled as Mongowe, further in the document her husband's name is spelled, very similarly, as Montagow.

¹⁴³ Bickley, F., (ed.), *H.M.C.*, Reports 78, Hastings (ii) (1930) pp. 5-6.

¹⁴⁴ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, pp. 45-6.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

Hence, if Catherine married at fourteen in 1532 she must have been born in 1518, which would date her parents' marriage to no later than about 1517.

At the time of her marriage to Lord Montague, Jane Neville was quite a catch. As her father had no son Jane was his co-heiress.¹⁴⁶ Lord Bergavenny's lands were considerable and assessed in 1527 at £500, while his retinue to France in 1513, was one of the largest, hardly much smaller than that of the Duke of Buckingham.¹⁴⁷ In the agreement for their marriage, Bergavenny requested an immediate jointure worth £200 a year, to which Margaret agreed, providing Bergavenny made a reciprocal estate upon his daughter and Lord Montague. Moreover, if Bergavenny failed to have issue male, he wished to be paid 1000 marks by the countess, but also agreed to pay 1000 marks should he have issue male, a sum Margaret surprisingly tried to raise to £2000.¹⁴⁸ In addition Bergavenny wished it to be made clear that Montague would inherit all Margaret's estates, allowing the countess freedom to dispose of issues amounting to £666 13s 4d only.¹⁴⁹ In another article Bergavenny went further, requesting that Margaret place her whole estate in the hands of feoffees leaving £1000 a year to her use for life, and Bergavenny would reciprocate with his estate, saving those lands in tail male, and others to the value of £300 for his wife. Of course, should he have issue male, then such an agreement would not apply. It is impossible to be sure what exactly was agreed to, as these documents are only drafts of articles made during the negotiations. However, the arrangements for the actual wedding celebrations were more straight forward. Margaret was to pay for her son's apparell, while Bergavenny would cover the cost of his daughter's. The cost of meat and drink on the day of the marriage, and of the licence, were to be equally born by the countess and Bergavenny.¹⁵⁰ The countess was clearly a tough negotiator, as was Bergavenny despite the attractions of this marriage. The Earl of Salisbury with lands which would be worth over £2000 a year was certainly an advantageous match for a baron's daughter. However, Margaret was equally keen for the marriage. In 1517 Bergavenny

¹⁴⁶ It is not clear how many sisters Jane had, but that she had sisters is shown by the articles of marriage negotiated between Margaret and Lord Bergavenny where Jane is described as 'one of the daughters and heirs' of Lord .Bergavenny. P.R.O. E.314/79, no. 300.

¹⁴⁷ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 139.

¹⁴⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/140, f. 64; E.314/79, nos. 300, 303.

¹⁴⁹ P.R.O. E.314/79, no. 300.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

was at least 48 years old¹⁵¹ and it was quite likely that he might not father any more children. Consequently Jane would remain a considerable heiress. Lord Bergavenny's lands made him one of the leading noblemen in Kent,¹⁵² and in addition to his possessions in Kent,¹⁵³ he held manors in the old county of Monmouth, Wales and in Berkshire, Essex, Hampshire, Norfolk, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Suffolk, Surrey, Sussex, Warwickshire, Wiltshire and Worcestershire.¹⁵⁴ It was the possession of these estates which had, 'clearly helped Bergavenny to mobilise a retinue comparable with those of the higher nobility.'¹⁵⁵

At some point between 1519 and 1522 Arthur Pole's marriage took place.¹⁵⁶ Jane Pickering, nee Lewkenor, was a young widow and mother probably aged 16 or 17 in 1519.¹⁵⁷ Arthur and his family must have been particularly pleased with this marriage as Jane was the daughter of Sir Roger Lewkenor of Trotton, Sussex by his first wife Eleanor Tuchet. In 1519 Jane was his only child, her mother having died sometime after 1503, and as his second wife Sir Roger had married Constance Hussey. Constance was born in 1458,¹⁵⁸ therefore by 1519 she was 61 years old having born her husband no children. Sir Roger himself was 50 years old,¹⁵⁹ elderly by sixteenth

¹⁵¹ *Complete Peerage*, I, 31. He was sixteen years and more at his mother's death in 1485.

¹⁵² Miller, H., *Henry VIII and the English Nobility*, p. 139.

¹⁵³ Six manors and 200 acres of land, 60 acres of meadow, 200 acres of pasture, 100 acres of wood, 60 acres of moor and 40 shillings rent with the appurtenances in 'Drymhole' and Yaldyng. P.R.O. E.314/79.

¹⁵⁴ For instance, in 1513 Lord Bergavenny held the Lordship of Abergavenny in Monmouth with the castle and manor of Ewyas Harold and the moiety of Ewyas Lacy in Herefordshire, one manor in Berkshire, a manor and advowson in Essex, one manor in Hampshire, nine manors in Norfolk, two manors in Shropshire, one manor in Staffordshire, four manors in Suffolk with six messuages and 60 acres of land with appurtenances in Bury St Edmunds, four manors in Surrey with half of the moiety of Dorking and half of the tolls of Guildford and Southwark, ten manors in Sussex with the moiety of the manor, castle and town of Lewes, the moiety of three further manors and half the forest of Worth and the chase of Cleres in Sussex, one manor in Warwickshire, one manor in Wiltshire and two manors in Worcestershire. Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Miller, H., *Op.cit.*, p. 139.

¹⁵⁶ In 1519 Jane's first husband died. Cobby, E., *The Lewkenors of Sussex* (Cranleigh, Surrey, 1991) p 15. On 24 October 1522, Arthur made reference to his father-in-law in a letter. *L&P*, III, (ii) no. 2636.

¹⁵⁷ In her father's Inquisition Post Mortem of 1543, Jane was described as 'aged 40 and more.' Attree, F.W.T., (trans.), *Sussex Inquisitions Post Mortem 1485-1649*, XIV (Sussex Record Society, (1912) 142.

¹⁵⁸ Cobby, E., *Op.cit.*, p. 14. She was twelve years old in 1470.

¹⁵⁹ Cobby, E., *Op.cit.*, p. 14.

century standards, hence it was most likely that Jane would remain her father's only child,¹⁶⁰ and thus a considerable heiress. The Lewkenors were an old and prominent Sussex family, and among his manors Sir Roger held Bodiam in Sussex along with its impressive moated castle dating back to the fourteenth century. In addition he also held lands in Northampton, Middlesex, Oxford, Leicester, Huntingdon and Bedford.¹⁶¹ Sir Roger's lands were worth almost as much as Lord Bergavenny's, and as Jane was his only daughter she might have stood to inherit much more than her sister-in-law, Jane Neville; 'An income of £480 placed Sir Roger Lewkenor of Trotton in the same league as the lesser baronage.¹⁶² In fact Sir Roger's income superseded even that of Sir David Owen of Cowdray,¹⁶³ Henry VII's illegitimate half uncle who, due to his birth, was still honoured at the Tudor court. Obviously, for a second son this was an extremely lucrative match, considering the problems younger sons faced:

Heirs were the most desirable objects on the marriage market, younger sons quite the opposite. The financial difficulties younger sons faced often led them to choose widows, who received jointures from their previous husbands.¹⁶⁴

These widows would often be a lot older than their new young husbands.

Obviously the prospects of Margaret's youngest son, Geoffrey, were even worse than Arthur's. Nevertheless he too contracted marriage to an heiress. By July 1525¹⁶⁵ Geoffrey had married Constance Pakenham, one of the two daughters of Sir Edmund Pakenham of Sussex.¹⁶⁶ Sir Edmund died in 1528 and his inheritance was divided

¹⁶⁰ Jane had one daughter, Anne, by her first marriage, but if she were to have a son by Arthur, then his claim would naturally supersede that of Anne's.

¹⁶¹ Bugden, W., 'The Divorce of Sir William Barentyne, 1540' in *Sussex Notes and Queries*, IX (1942-43) 168.

¹⁶² Cornwall, J., 'Sussex Wealth and Society in the Reign of Henry VIII' *[Sussex] Archaeological Collections*, CXIV (1976) 11.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁶⁴ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 53.

¹⁶⁵ When Constance Pole appeared on the household list of Princess Mary. B.L. Harl. MS. 6807, f. 3, and see below p. 139. The *V.C.H.*, claims that the marriage had taken place by 1528. Saltzman, L.F., (ed.), *V.C.H.*, Sussex, IV (London, 1973) 116.

¹⁶⁶ The *D.N.B.*, claims that Constance was the elder daughter. *D.N.B.*, XLVI, 23. Certainly, in her father's will her one bequest precedes that of her sister Katherine. Katherine and her husband, Edmund Mervyn, are however, the main beneficiaries of the will, although this probably has more to do with

between his two daughters, Constance and Katherine. As a result, Geoffrey enjoyed the possession of manors in Sussex and the Isle of Wight, where his mother held the manor of Swainstone, the largest manor on the island.¹⁶⁷ These marriages illustrate Margaret's attempts to augment her lands in the south, concentrating especially upon Sussex. This ambition is not surprising, for Margaret held manors in all the southern counties except for Sussex and Surrey, resulting in a hiatus among her holdings along the southern coast. These marriages were intended to remedy that while generally reinforcing Margaret's power and influence in the south. Over and above this, Lord Bergavenny's Welsh lands in Monmouth, should Jane inherit them, would complement perfectly the three manors held by Margaret in the same county.¹⁶⁸ Lord Montague might indeed achieve, through marriage, what his great grandfather 'the kingmaker' had failed to do by force.¹⁶⁹

While her sons had been found the most suitable of brides, Margaret's daughter Ursula was no less well served in the provision of a husband. Of all the marriages of Margaret's children, Ursula's is the most outstanding. Consequently, it is also the one for which most evidence survives, and the only one that can be definitely dated. On 20 October 1518¹⁷⁰ Ursula was married to Henry Stafford, only son and heir of Edward Stafford third Duke of Buckingham. The Duke of Buckingham was the greatest peer in the realm, an honour his son might one day enjoy. Ursula, as Duchess of Buckingham, would consequently be one of the highest ranking ladies in England. Moreover her husband stood to inherit 124 manors, twelve castles, nine hundreds, eleven boroughs, nine forests, 24 parks, the advowson of 58 churches and 65 other properties!¹⁷¹ Margaret could not have obtained, it might be argued, a better match for her daughter. Henry Stafford's ancestry was equally impressive. Again a kinsman of the Poles, he was descended from Thomas of Woodstock, Edward III's youngest

Packenham's affection for Mervyn and disenchantment with Geoffrey, than Katherine's age. It seems probable therefore, that Constance was the elder sister. P.R.O. Prob.11/22 (36 Porch); see below p. 151

¹⁶⁷ As a result of his marriage he held Lordington, which also included the manor of Whiteway, in Sussex, the moiety of Gatcombe manor, Isle of Wight, and the moiety of Westover or Calbourne manor, part of the manor of Gatcombe. Saltzman, L.F., *Op.cit.*, p. 116; Page, W., (ed.), *V.C.H., Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*, V (London, 1912) 249, 219.

¹⁶⁸ See Appendix 9.

¹⁶⁹ See above p. 120-21.

¹⁷⁰ Loyd, L.C., and Stenton, D.M., (eds.), *Sir Christopher Hattons Book of Seals presented to F.M. Stenton* (Oxford, 1950) pp. 15-16, no. 21.

¹⁷¹ Harris, B., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 104.

son.¹⁷² His father, a man of great pride and arrogance who considered that 'women of the Stafford family were no game for Comptons or Tudors,' did not regard the marriage of his son to a knight's daughter disparaging, nor should he. Richard Pole was Henry VII's cousin, while Margaret's lineage was as impeccable as the duke's. Even abroad the Poles were recognised as members of Henry VIII's family. On 16 February 1515, Sir Robert Wingfield wrote to Henry VIII from Innsbruck:

if my lady of Devonshire your aunt have [a daughter] of age that is to marry, or my lady of Saly[sbery] think verily the said duke would be more [ready to] be joined with your blood than with any other.¹⁷³

Nevertheless, Ursula was not Buckingham's first choice. Initially he had approached the Earl of Shrewsbury, first in 1509 and again in 1516. However on both occasions Shrewsbury had declined due to the exorbitant terms he considered Buckingham was demanding. Buckingham's approach in 1516 is evident from a letter written by Sir Richard Sacheverell to Shrewsbury. Apparently Wolsey, having initially suggested Ursula as a suitable bride; 'My Lady Salisbury has a good young lady to her daughter,'¹⁷⁴ proceeded to promote Shrewsbury's daughter when Buckingham refused the match with Ursula.¹⁷⁵ Two years later however, Wolsey finally earned the 100 mark annuity Margaret was paying him when Buckingham accepted Ursula as his son's bride. Although an annuitant of Margaret, Wolsey would not have suggested a marriage of which the king disapproved. Hence Henry VIII's support of the match suggests that he was not overly concerned about the succession at this time. The marriage of Henry Stafford and Ursula Pole united two very respectable claims to the throne, a fact that neither Henry nor Wolsey could have overlooked.

By 1518 Buckingham was ready to negotiate the terms for his son's marriage. Having paid large amounts of money for his own daughters' marriages, 'the Duke sought to recoup his losses by negotiating the best possible contract for his son and heir.'¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² See Appendix 2.

¹⁷³ B.L. Cotton. MS. Vitellius B. XVIII. 75; *L&P*, II (i) no. 167. The 'duke' refers to the Duke of Milan.

¹⁷⁴ *L&P*, II (i) no. 1893.

¹⁷⁵ The reason for Buckingham's refusal is not clear due to mutilation of the letter. The sentence 'she must leve the more barly monny yerres' provides the only clue. 'Barly' might mean frugally, perhaps he was suggesting that Margaret would not be able to pay the dowry he required.

¹⁷⁶ Rawcliffe, C., *The Staffords, Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham 1394-1521* (Cambridge, 1978) p. 136.

Margaret's desire for the marriage is understood by her acceptance of all Buckingham's demands. The Duke 'had every reason to congratulate himself on driving a hard bargain.'¹⁷⁷ In 1512, Buckingham had paid Thomas Howard, son of the Earl of Surrey, 2000 marks as dowry for his daughter Elizabeth, and in 1519 another 2000 marks on the marriage of his daughter Mary to Lord Bergavenny.¹⁷⁸ However Buckingham required 3000 marks from Margaret, with a further 1000 marks if she should get back certain lands from the king.¹⁷⁹ Although marriage with the son of a duke was more advantageous than with the son of an earl, as Thomas Howard was in 1512, 4000 marks was nevertheless a very considerable sum for a dowry. Not surprisingly Buckingham had to accept that such a sum could not be paid all at once and agreed to regular instalments over the next six years.¹⁸⁰ However, Buckingham was obliged to settle lands worth £500 upon Ursula after his death, and should her husband pre-decease her, then she was to enter the lands immediately in the duke's lifetime.¹⁸¹ Both Carol Rawcliffe and Barbara Harris have mistakenly claimed that Margaret settled lands worth 700 marks upon the couple.¹⁸² The mistake appears to have originated from Sir William Dugdale to whom Harris refers.¹⁸³ In truth, Margaret enfeoffed to use lands worth 700 marks only to ensure the payment of Ursula's dowry.¹⁸⁴ As with Lord Montague's marriage, Margaret was to cover the expense of her daughter's wedding apparell, however this time all other costs would be borne by Buckingham alone.¹⁸⁵ Upon her marriage, Margaret's maintenance of her

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ *H.M.C.*, Reports 7, 1879, (reprinted 1979) p. 584. 'Certain lands' refer to several lands whose ownership were under dispute between Margaret and the king. See below pp. 198-203.

¹⁸⁰ Margaret was to have completed the payments by Christmas 1524. Ibid.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Rawcliffe, C., *Op.cit.*, p. 136; Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 55.

¹⁸³ Dugdale states that 'it appears' Margaret settled several manors, listed, on the couple and their heirs. Dugdale, W., *The Baronage of England*, I (London, 1675) 170.

¹⁸⁴The manors in question were Somerton, Chedzoy, Donyatt, Yarlinton and Shipton Montague in Somerset and Stokenham, Yealmpton, Pyworthy, Wonford and Clyst St. Mary in Devon. *H.M.C.*, Reports 78, Hastings, I (1928) 308; Loyd, L.C., and Stenton, D.M., *Op.cit.*, pp. 15-16. These manors were still in Margaret's possession in 1538.

¹⁸⁵ *H.M.C.*, Reports 7, p. 584.

daughter ceased and Ursula entered the duke's household where she enjoyed a luxurious and cosseted lifestyle in the company of her scholarly young husband.¹⁸⁶

By 1518 the fortunes of the Pole family were at their zenith. Margaret, as Countess of Salisbury, was not only one of the wealthiest peers in England but also enjoyed a close and warm friendship with Queen Catherine. Her eldest son had discharged himself honourably in battle and occupied a respectable position as Lord Montague at the king's court. Despite being a younger son, Arthur's attributes had earned him the king's favour and a coveted and privileged place as one of the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber. Even though Margaret had had to pay dearly for her childrens' marriages, she had achieved her aims. Each son, even the younger two, had married young heiresses, while their sister was the future Duchess of Buckingham. In addition her scholarly son Reginald, looked forward to a successful career in the Church encouraged by the king himself. Margaret had certainly made the most of her restoration and had worked hard to consolidate her good fortune for the benefit of herself and her family. However, 'fortune' is the crucial word. If Margaret had been a superstitious woman, or of a pessimistic nature, this would have been the very point at which she would have started to worry. Fortune's Wheel was a very prevalent concept in this period, representing the element of chance in human affairs, 'that not even the best laid human plans are proof against unexpected disaster.'¹⁸⁷ As the wheel revolves those who reach the top must inevitably fall, and with hindsight it was indeed at the very moment of Margaret's greatest success that the wheel began the inexorable revolution downwards:

But Fortune with her smiling countenance strange
Of all our purpose may make a sudden change.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ An inventory of Henry and Ursula's apparel and wardrobe taken in 1521 after Buckingham's arrest, reveals the splendour of their lifestyle. Garments of velvet, satin and damask are interspersed with those of cloth of gold and cloth of silver, not to mention other items such as elaborate horse harnesses, tapestries and carpets. Sneyde, C.A., (trans.), *A Relation or Rather a True Account of the Island of England*, XXXVII (Camden Society, old series, London, 1847) 125-131.

¹⁸⁷ Horrox, R., Introduction in idem (ed.), *Fifteenth Century Attitudes* (Cambridge, 1994) p. 6.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 8, from one of the Paston Letters.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE COUNTESS OF SALISBURY: A FEMALE MAGNATE

'I am become the most perfect Empress of my own Will'¹

Margaret Pole can be described, without any exaggeration, as a rare phenomenon. She was the first woman to be advanced to a peerage title in the sixteenth century, and it was to be eighteen more years before she had to share her pre-eminence. In 1532 Anne Boleyn was sensationally created Marquis of Pembroke,² entailed in the male line, in circumstances which could not have been more different from Margaret's. These two adversaries would remain the only women to hold peerage titles in their own right throughout the whole of the sixteenth century. Margaret's position is difficult to define when one considers the received opinions regarding the position and role of women. Since they were considered physically, socially and intellectually inferior to men, and because 'in a human family good order was the product of the rule of the wisest, women should naturally be subject to men.'³ Any alteration in what was perceived as a divinely ordained structure could provoke an extreme reaction as the accession of Mary I illustrates; 'to take away the empire from a man, and to give it to a woman, seemeth to be an evident token of thine anger toward us Englishmen.'⁴

Clearly, Margaret's position was an anomaly. Firstly, she was restored to the Earldom of Salisbury and held it in her own right by descent, not by reason of marriage. As the head of her family she would not be constrained to take a back seat on the majority of her son, thus her position differed immediately from that of a dowager countess.

¹ Francis Boyle, *Viscount Shannon Discourses and Essays* (1696) p. 107 cited in Carlton, C., 'The Widow's Tale: Male Myths and Female Reality in 16th and 17th Century England' *Albion*, X (ii) (1978) 126.

² Although also known as Marchioness, the bestowal of the title of Marquis of Pembroke was to denote that Anne Boleyn held this newly created peerage title in her own right. Ives, E., *Anne Boleyn* (Oxford, 1988) p 198, n. 51.

³ Rigby, S.H., *English Society in the Later Middle Ages; Class, Status and Gender* (London, 1995) p 247.

⁴ Thomas Becon's *An Humble Supplication unto God*, published in 1554, cited in Levine, M., 'The Place of Women in Tudor Government' in Guth, D.J., and McKenna, J.W., (eds.), *Tudor Rule and Revolution: Essays for G.R. Elton from his American Friends* (Cambridge, 1982) p. 111.

Secondly, restoration to the earldom involved the rule and administration of extensive estates. Consequently, as a high ranking member of the aristocracy Margaret had certain responsibilities to fulfil. G.W. Bernard is explicit in the requirements of nobility:

Noblemen were to serve in wars forgetting their own ease;... Noblemen were to be counsellors of their Princes;...Noblemen were to attend Kings at court and act as ambassadors;...Noblemen were to rule their counties.⁵

These duties which Margaret, as an independent member of the nobility, was expected to fulfil, were in direct contradiction to what was advocated for women, 'In the camp, at the council board, on the bench, in the jury box there is no place for them.'⁶ This incongruity needs to be explained, and historians now accept that there was a definite breach between what was advised for women and what in practice occurred. Although women were not permitted to hold any public office, this restriction did not apply to any offices that were inherited as part of a fief. As Pollock and Maitland explain; although women had no public functions, regarding private law they enjoyed equality to men. Thus, 'the woman can hold land, even by military tenure, can own chattels, make a will, make a contract, can sue and be sued.'⁷ Those women who did inherit fiefs, consequently wielded considerable authority over men, for instance when they presided over their manor courts, ensured the king received the required military service and maintained good order among the tenants on their estates:

The special status of these women, who inherited fiefs involving powers of government, was an obvious exception which does not match the description of the position of women in the estates literature, nor the generalized statements of the jurists.⁸

Margaret Pole was just such a woman.

⁵ Bernard, G.W., *The Power of the Early Tudor Nobility*, p. 197.

⁶ Milsom, S.F.C., (ed.), *The History of English Law*, by Pollock, F., and Maitland, I (Cambridge, 1968) 485.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 482.

⁸ Shahar, S., *The Fourth Estate: A History of Women in the Middle Ages* (Galai, C., trans.), (London, 1991) pp. 12-13.

Although Margaret was the first woman in the sixteenth century to hold a peerage title, it must be remembered that she was not the first ever to do so. From the time of the conquest to the end of the fifteenth century, over twenty women inherited English peerage titles as daughters or sisters of the previous holder. For instance in the fourteenth century Alice de Lacy held two peerage titles succeeding to the Earldom of Salisbury on her mother's death and the Earldom of Lincoln on her father's death.⁹ Margaret's own maternal great grandmother Alice Montague, inherited the Earldom of Salisbury from her father while Margaret's maternal grandmother Anne succeeded to the Earldom of Warwick following the death of her niece.¹⁰ Perhaps the most unusual case is that of Margaret de Brotherton, daughter of Thomas de Brotherton, Earl of Norfolk and Marshal of England. Following the death of her niece Joan, she was her father's only heir and thus recognised as Countess of Norfolk. She even claimed, as heir to her father, the right to perform the office of marshal by deputy at Richard II's coronation. Although she was not successful, in 1397 she was accorded a very special privilege when Richard II created her Duchess of Norfolk in her own right for life; 'He wanted to honour her and enhance her status, just as was the case with the men who received the title of duke at the same time.'¹¹

Margaret de Brotherton was a widow, but many of the other women who inherited peerage titles were married. This naturally affected their ability to wield the powers inherited with their title. As a wife, the peeress laboured under the authority of her husband, the administration of her property and the income from it, were controlled by her spouse. Although technically the owner, the married peeress could not alienate nor bequeath any part of her estates without the permission of her husband. He, however, could do exactly as he wished with his wife's property, except permanently alienate it without her permission. The powers inherited with the lands would be exercised by her husband, and the peeress would remain in subjection to him. Regarding her independence, Margaret Pole enjoyed the benefit of being a widow. Had Sir Richard Pole been living, he would have been known as Earl of Salisbury in right of his wife, and the maintenance of Margaret's estates would have been his responsibility. As a widow however, Margaret was in a very different position to that of a married woman. The widow:

⁹ *Complete Peerage*, VII, 687.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, XI, 395; XII, 385.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, IX, 600; Ward, J.C., *English Noblewomen in the Later Middle Ages* (London, 1992) p. 168.

as a *femme sole* was regarded as an independent figure, able to plead in the courts and act as head of her household and estates. She was responsible for making her own decisions as regards her lands, her family and her own relationships.¹²

Therefore a widow, with an extensive jointure, sometimes combined with an inheritance of her own, could find herself in a position of great wealth and influence. Margaret, although holding the earldom herself, was not the first woman to occupy such a position of authority. There are plenty of examples of widows throughout the middle ages who, despite holding their title in right of their late husband, enjoyed as much power and affluence as Margaret. Of course the prominence of such women depended upon their individual characters. Some preferred the quiet and more conventional life, choosing to remarry or appointing deputies to run their estates. Many however, did not. Margaret was only one in a long line of strong and formidable women who held positions which cut right across the conventions of their day.

In the fifteenth century Joan Lady Abergavenny, widow of William Beauchamp, administered an estate worth about £2,000 a year.¹³ She asserted her authority and defended her rights with aggressive vigour. Her actions apparently resulted in the hanging, without trial, of a Welshman who dared to complain of her trespasses in Monmouth.¹⁴ Elizabeth de Burgh, the youngest daughter of Gilbert de Clare, lived as a widow for forty years until her death, and administered an estate worth approximately £3,000 in the late 1320s.¹⁵ She was a diligent administrator, keen to exact the maximum income from her extensive lands,¹⁶ while her affinity out numbered that of Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon.¹⁷ In addition she insisted on playing, not a nominal, but an active role in the defence of the realm.¹⁸ Alice de la

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 34.

¹³ Archer, R.E., 'Rich Old Ladies: The Problem of Late Medieval Dowagers' in Pollard, A.J., (ed.), *Property and Politics: Essays in Later Medieval English History* (Gloucester, 1984) p. 23

¹⁴ Archer, R.E., "'How Ladies ... who live on their manors ought to manage their households and estates": women as landholders and administrators in the later middle ages' in Goldberg, P.J.P., (ed.), *Woman is a Worthy Wight: Women in English Society c. 1200-1500* (Gloucester, 1992) pp. 161-2.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-4.

¹⁶ Ward, J.C., *Op.cit.*, pp. 117-20.

¹⁷ Edward Courtenay was however, one of the poorest earls at that time. *Ibid.*, pp. 134-5.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 166.

Pole, widow of the notorious William de la Pole Duke of Suffolk, was another woman of intelligence and strength of character. Just before his murder her husband wrote to their son, advising him to; 'love, to worshepe youre lady and moder, and also that ye obey alwey hyr commaundements, and to beleve hyr councelles and advises in alle youre werks.'¹⁹ William de la Pole was not the only man to have faith in the abilities of a woman. Sir John Paston's trust in the help he believed the influential Elizabeth Talbot, Duchess of Norfolk could give him, is clear; 'Sir John never ceased to ask his brother's help in importuning the duchess nor, ... in believing that ultimately she would be his salvation.'²⁰ In addition some women found themselves holding offices which were particularly male. In 1431 Joan Lady Abergavenny was one woman amongst 156 commissioners appointed to raise a royal loan in Warwickshire,²¹ while in 1236, Ela, Countess of Salisbury found herself sheriff of Wiltshire, and chose to exercise the office herself.²² Even Ranulf Glanville's wife, Bertha, held the shrievalty of Yorkshire.²³ These are just a selection of examples of women who enjoyed the kind of resources and prerogatives that Margaret Pole was to do. It must be considered whether Margaret's holding of a title in her own right, gave her any more rights than a dowager and whether she herself wielded the powers she theoretically possessed? Moreover, did she suffer from the restrictions of her gender in contradiction to her position as an independent member of the nobility? In addition, it must be asked whether she attempted to operate as a male member of the aristocracy or whether she accepted the conventions of her sex. This chapter will attempt to answer some of these questions and in doing so, will hope to reveal the very essence of Margaret as a woman and as a peeress.

According to J.A. Froude, Margaret, 'was contented to forget her greatness for the sake of the Princess Mary to whom she and her family were deeply attached.'²⁴ While it is true that Margaret was attached to Mary and would never have used her position against her, she certainly never forgot her greatness. She never forgot that she was the daughter of a duke and niece to two Kings of England, and although one of those was

¹⁹ Archer, R.E., *Op.cit.*, pp. 153-4.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

²¹ Ward, J.C., *Op.cit.*, p. 269.

²² Hogrefe, P., *Tudor Women: Commoners and Queens* (Ames, Iowa, 1975) p. 32.

²³ Shahar, S., *The Fourth Estate*, p. 149.

²⁴ Cited in Clifford, G.C., *Iadis by a Descendant* (Venice, 1888) p. 89.

shrouded in ignominy, the other was the respected grandfather of the present king. Margaret lived and conducted herself as befitted her birth and standing, and, like other nobles, accepted the importance of appearance and display. Hence she recognised the necessity of maintaining a luxurious household. To live magnificently demonstrated a noble's wealth and thus, his power. It justified his position in the social hierarchy, and encouraged respect from his inferiors. In a hierarchical society, with no standing army, conspicuous consumption served to overawe those under a noble's authority by revealing the massive resources he could bring to bear should they attempt to flout that authority. To ignore such requirements was not only a slur upon a noble's dignity, it was also dangerous; 'Magnates who did not live in an extravagant and public style sacrificed their dignity and lost the respect of their social inferiors';²⁵ and to do this 'was to invite social and political downfall.'²⁶ One method of advertising wealth and power was by the maintenance of an impressive household, thus the households of the nobility became the stages upon which their status and affluence were exhibited. Margaret naturally subscribed to such concepts and Jennifer Ward correctly notes the importance of the household to the female as well as the male:

The household constituted the centre of the Lady's activities. It enabled her to run her affairs, exercise hospitality, go on journeys, and maintain her reputation in the neighbourhood through displays of power and magnificence.²⁷

Surviving evidence indicates that Margaret maintained four households which served as her main residences: Clavering in Essex, Bisham in Berkshire, Le Herber in London and last but certainly not least, her seat at Warblington in Hampshire. Unfortunately, little is known about Margaret's household at Clavering except that it was as a castle, covered an 'extensive area' and possessed a moat.²⁸ It was obviously a residence commensurate to her rank and between 1523 and 1524 she initiated a number of repairs and renovations at considerable expense, paying particular attention to the chapel. She paid twenty shillings for 500 paving tiles and five shillings for laying them in the chapel and mending the chapel wall. In addition she paid 40

²⁵ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 77.

²⁶ Mertes, K., *The English Noble Household 1250-1600* (London, 1988) p. 103.

²⁷ Ward, J.C., *English Noblewomen*, p. 50.

²⁸ Wright, T., *The History and Topography of the County of Essex* (London, 1831) p. 195.

shillings to have St Edward and St John painted within it. A chamber was also freshly painted at a cost of 13s 4d `for my lady's counsell to ly in when they come thither.'²⁹

Clavering was well placed, lying approximately 35 miles from London, as was Margaret's next residence, Bisham. Conveniently on the banks of the Thames, it was only three miles from Lord Montague's seat at Bockmer in Medmenham, further up the river. Unfortunately the evidence is slight regarding the extent of her presence at Bisham, but she probably took up residence soon after her restoration. The earliest known reference to her occupancy is in September 1517 and again in April 1518,³⁰ indeed she appears to have been in residence for most of 1518.³¹ Following this only three more references place her at Bisham, in August 1519,³² February 1534³³ and March 1534/5.³⁴ Although mostly demolished in the sixteenth century, we know a little more about it than we do about Clavering. Originally belonging to the Knights Templars, the building had been used as a residence by the Earls of Salisbury following the suppression of the order.³⁵ Margaret, by her occupation of the house was thus continuing the tradition of her ancestors. Her family's links to Bisham began in the fourteenth century, when her forebear, William, first Montague Earl of Salisbury, founded a Monastery of Austin Canons in 1337. Bisham was also the resting place of many of Margaret's ancestors and present family, including her grandfather Richard Neville, her brother Edward and her son Arthur in the late 1520s. According to Sir Thomas Hoby, whose brother Sir Philip Hoby was granted the manor in 1553, the house adjoined the Monastery founded by William Montague and was of considerable size. Built partly of stone and partly of timber with a tiled roof, it possessed a great chamber over which was situated another great chamber and an

²⁹ P.R.O. S.P.1/30, no. 122.

³⁰ P.R.O. E.101/490/12, f. 1. On both these occasions, Margaret issued payments; £10 and then £33 6s 7d, towards her repairs at Warblington. Unfortunately, this extensive document contains no folio numbers. For easy reference therefore, the folio numbers are necessarily my own.

³¹ *Ibid.*, f. 203.

³² P.R.O. S.P.1/18, f.275; *L&P*, III (i) no. 411. On which date a letter was sent by Edward Labourne to Margaret at Bisham.

³³ *L&P*, VII no. 176.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, VIII, no. 352. Margaret's letter to Lord Lisle sent from Bisham, is dated as 6 March 1535. However Muriel St Clare Byrne argues convincingly for the year being 1534. Byrne, M.S.C., *The Lisle Letters*, II (London, 1981) 63, no. 136.

³⁵ Page, W., and Ditchfield, P.H., (eds.), *V.C.H., Berkshire*, III (reprinted London, 1972) 139-40.

inner chamber. Six other chambers and more lodgings were also provided for, while a cloister led into two gardens, one 60 foot by 78 foot and the other 84 foot by 133 foot.³⁶ Margaret's coat of arms impaled with that of her husband's was still visible in 1902, in the window of the then council chamber.³⁷ Obviously a very pleasant residence, it must also have been an impressive one. Following her attainder it was initially reserved for Henry VIII's own use. In November 1543 the king himself was in residence and the following month, the Privy Council met there.³⁸

Only the most wealthy nobles possessed residences in London and Margaret's, known as Le Herber, was a building of great size and grandeur. No longer standing, it was variously described as a 'great tenement'³⁹ a 'great old house'⁴⁰ and a vast house or palace.⁴¹ Not far from Baynard's Castle, it was probably similar in size for in 1458 the Earl of Salisbury, with five hundred men, was housed at Le Herber while Baynard's Castle accommodated only four hundred men under the command of Richard, Duke of York.⁴² Less than a mile from the Tower of London and close to the banks of the Thames, Le Herber was situated just off the present Upper Thames Street. In Dowgate Ward, Bush Lane ran adjacent to it, so we must assume that its site is on the present Dowgate Hill from and along which Bush Lane, also known as Carter Lane in the sixteenth century, can still be seen. Le Herber comprised not just the great house but several tenements and dwellings lying close by which were rented out by Margaret. Among these was a large building called the Chekker, described diversely as an inn or hospice, a Fullers shop in Bush Lane, stables in Carter Lane, a timber house rented to William Mabson, a carpenter employed by Margaret and a tenement rented to William Okeley, Margaret's receiver for her London properties.⁴³

³⁶ Powell, E., (ed.), *The Travels and Life of Sir Thomas Hoby, Kt., of Bisham Abbey, Written by Himself. 1547-1564*, IV (The Camden Miscellany, third series, London, 1902) xviii.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. xii. For the Countess of Salisbury's arms see Appendix 12.

³⁸ On 30 November the king issued two grants from Bisham, and on 1 December, three grants. *L&P*, XVIII (ii) no. 529, (4, 29, 3, 11, 31). On 1 December the Privy Council wrote to Sir Geoffrey Douglas from Bisham. *Ibid.*, no. 450.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, XVI, no. 947, (31); XVII, no. 881(18)

⁴⁰ Wheatley, H.B., (intro.), *Stowe's Survey of London* (London 1956) p. 207.

⁴¹ Pennant, T., *Some Account of London* (London, 1790) p. 309.

⁴² Wheatley, H.D., *Op.cit.*, pp. 80-1.

⁴³ P.R.O. S.C.12/11/34, nos., 3, 4.

Altogether, the rents from these tenements amounted to £10 9s 4d a year from March 1520 to March 1521.⁴⁴

Margaret's concern to maintain her residences is again evident from the repairs carried out at Le Herber in January and February 1521. Among these, the vine was trimmed, the street paved before her foregate complete with new guttering beneath and sixteen loads of dung removed from her stables in Carter Lane! Weather boarding was bought for the back of the great chamber while a dawber and his labourer spent three days working on two sides of the same chamber. Even the kitchen enjoyed attention, with new shelves erected at a cost of 5d! As in the case of Clavering, Margaret's devoutness is again revealed. On the 3 July 1520, preceding the more necessary repairs, Margaret paid 13s 4d for a new tabernacle 'wherein of our lady was enclosed the which was painted in the Erbor.' The old tabernacle she presented to the man who had originally made it with 3s 4d in money, 'of her piety.'⁴⁵ Altogether the work carried out on Le Herber cost £4 2s 5d.

The residence which lay closest to Margaret's heart however, and which illustrates most clearly her tastes and preferences, is the residence she herself commissioned, Warblington Castle in Hampshire.⁴⁶ On the borders of Hampshire and Sussex, Warblington occupied a pleasant aspect on the coast, barely a mile from the sea, looking out to Thorney Island.⁴⁷ According to Maurice Howard, in the early Tudor period, despite the fact that many royal castles had been abandoned to concentrate on the building of more comfortable palaces:

the status conscious aristocracy, *maintained their castles and emphasised the trappings of fortification as the means of expressing self-confidence and continuity with the past. The semblance of defence mattered more than the reality.*⁴⁸

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 4.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 2.

⁴⁶ Although a residence of some kind may have pre-dated Margaret, her extensive renovations between 1517 and 1518 may be said to have virtually rebuilt any existing structure. Indeed, in the building accounts of 1517-18 the castle is described as 'the newe byldyng upon the manor of Warblyngton.' P.R.O. E.101/490/12, f.202.

⁴⁷ I am very grateful to Mrs Diana Bishop for allowing me to view the remains of Warblington Castle. I should also like to thank Mr and Mrs Ronald Sparks for kindly arranging the visit.

⁴⁸ Howard, M., 'Power and the Early Tudor Courtier's House' *History Today*, XXXVII (v) (1987) 46.

Indeed, the Duke of Buckingham received a licence to crenelate his magnificent castle at Thornbury in 1510. Other features of this castle included a portcullis with towers, and openings for crossbows and guns on the ground floor of the outer court.⁴⁹ In 1530 Sir William Paulet received a licence to fortify Basing, while Sir William Fitzwilliam received the same licence to fortify Cowdray in 1534.⁵⁰ The Howard Dukes of Norfolk at Framlingham and Edward Stanley, following his elevation to the title Lord Mouteagle, launched into extensive building works to domesticate their respective medieval castles. While the façade boasted apparent impregnability, behind the scenes comfort was paramount. Maurice Howard has shown that those involved in building and refurbishment of this nature were, 'the nobility or those well on their way to achieving noble status.....it is as if the castle and its preservation acted as a demonstration of links with the past.'⁵¹ Not surprisingly Margaret can be counted among this group.

The castle at Warblington was built of brick, the fashionable building material at that time,⁵² while the dressings around the doors, windows and angles of the building were faced with the high quality stone from Caen, France and the Isle of Wight.⁵³ Basic stone seems to have come from Hambledon Quarry,⁵⁴ while blue stone and slate were also used.⁵⁵ Laid out on simple lines, Warblington Castle formed a quadrangle covering an area 200 foot long by 200 foot wide. Warblington's gate house was flanked by two crenellated turrets, roofed with lead. The one surviving turret clearly reveals, as does Thornbury, arrow slits and gun holes.⁵⁶ Buildings extended around

⁴⁹ Barbara Harris has shown that the defensive features at Thornbury may have been adequate for a small scale emergency should the duke's disenchanted Welsh tenants have risen against him. So in this case, while not a fortress proper, the cosmetic fortifications at Thornbury also had limited defensive capabilities. Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 85.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

⁵¹ Howard, M., *The Tudor Country House: Architecture and Politics 1490-1550* (London, 1987) p 55.

⁵² Howard, M., 'Power and the Early Tudor Courtiers House,' p. 46.

⁵³ As Warblington lay on the coast the cost of transporting this stone would not be too great. For instance Margaret paid 12d a ton for the transportation of Caen stone from Southampton to Warblington, and 8d a ton from Portsmouth. In addition, the cost of a boat load was 2s. P.R.O. E.101/490/12, f. 53. Margaret also used this stone in the construction of her chantry in Christchurch Priory.

⁵⁴ At a cost of 12d a day transportation. *Ibid.*, ff. 48, 60.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, ff. 49, 206.

⁵⁶ See Appendix 13. Warblington Castle was dismantled during the Civil War.

the inside of the court, 'With a fare gallery and Diveres Chambers of great romthe.'⁵⁷
In addition, it boasted:

a very great and spacious halle parlor and great Chamber And all
othere housses of offices What soever Necessary for such a house With
a very fare Chapell Within the said house.⁵⁸

The inventory taken at Warblington following Margaret's arrest in 1538 goes further, revealing the extensive and complex suite of rooms at the castle. In addition to the great hall, there was a waiting chamber, a dining chamber, a great parlour and a lower parlour with a chapel chamber and chapel closet adjoining the chapel. Margaret's servants occupied a total of nineteen chambers while Margaret's own apartments comprised two rooms. Several other chambers were empty and unallocated, presumably available for guests.⁵⁹ Before the gatehouse, was 'a fare grene court' stretching to two acres and, adjoining the castle, 'a very spacious garden With plasant Walkes,' again extending to two acres. Close by was a grove of trees amounting to two acres and '2 orchards and 2 little meadows plates contayning 3 acres.'⁶⁰ In addition, there was, 'a fare fishe ponde neare the said place.....And 2 Barnes ... with stables and other out houses.'⁶¹ These stables had been newly erected in 1517.⁶² Indeed, the cost of the building work that was carried out between 21 November 1517-8 November 1518 amounted to the substantial sum of £469 2s 3d.⁶³ The castle was also surrounded on every side by a substantial moat, the remains of which are still visible today. The presence of this moat demonstrates that Margaret was sparing no expense on her new residence. Many moats had disappeared due to the cost of maintaining them, while furnishing new ones was also proving expensive.⁶⁴ Between 1517 and 1518 Wolsey paid £523 for only a partial moat at Hampton Court. To put it

⁵⁷ This information originates from a survey carried out upon Warblington in 1632 by William Luffe, General Surveyor to Richard Cotton Esq., Lord of the manor. PCRO/906A, courtesy of Portsmouth Record Office.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ See Appendix 11.

⁶⁰ PCRO/906A..

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² P.R.O. E.101/490/12, ff. 72, 201.

⁶³ Ibid., f. 202.

⁶⁴ Howard, M., *The Early Tudor Country House*, pp. 44, 47.

into context, Maurice Howard has shown that the cost of this moat was more than one third of the total cost of rebuilding Little Saxham Hall in the previous decade.⁶⁵ However, Howard reveals that the presence of water was becoming increasingly appreciated for practical as well as cosmetic reasons, quoting among others the contemporary, Dr Andrew Boorde who recommended for houses 'a poole or two for fysshe.'⁶⁶ Margaret however, did not construct her moat for this purpose, as she already had a 'fair fish pond.' The presence of the moat might have been partly for ostentation and again, partly for defence. Lying on the edge of the southern coast, Warblington was in an area vulnerable to possible foreign invasion while, as in Buckingham's case, it might have been considered wise to guard against possible disenchanting tenants. Therefore, as at Thornbury, a wish for grandeur and a modicum of protection probably prompted the fortifications at Warblington. It was obviously a very impressive residence, and one that was once again, fit enough for a king. In the summer of 1526 Henry VIII stayed at Warblington while racing around the home counties in an attempt to avoid the plague.⁶⁷ However, Henry and Catherine were no doubt entertained at Warblington by Margaret before this. Among her possessions in 1538 were a number of items decorated with the Tudor rose, the portcullis and the pomegranate, probably relics of such occasions.⁶⁸ According to Geoffrey Pole's evidence in 1538, Lord Montague had considered it a slight when the king failed to visit his mother while in Sussex in that year, suggesting that he had once been in the habit of doing so.⁶⁹

The only evidence for the composition of Margaret's household is the inventory taken in 1538. At that time Margaret maintained a household of 73, ten of whom were the servants of her gentlemen servants. According to Stephen Gunn, the Earl of Oxford kept a household of over 100 in wages but perhaps 300 in all,⁷⁰ In addition, Barbara Harris has shown that the members of the Duke of Buckingham's household amounted to 125 and that of the fifth Earl of Northumberland's to 166.⁷¹ However,

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁶⁶ Boorde, A., *Compendyous Regyment or Dyetary of Health*, cited in Howard, M., *The Tudor Country House*, p. 47.

⁶⁷ *L&P*, IV (i) no. 2343, IV (ii) no. 2407.

⁶⁸ See Appendix 11, ff. 72b, 79b, 80, 80b, 82.

⁶⁹ *L&P*, XIII (ii) nos. 804, 955.

⁷⁰ Gunn, S.J., *Early Tudor Government 1485-1558* (London, 1995) p. 46.

⁷¹ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 77.

Paul Jones estimated that in general, noble houses numbered between 75 and 140,⁷² while Christopher Dyer puts the number between 40 to 166 members for dukes and earls.⁷³ Certainly in 1524 only 51 servants served in the Duke of Suffolk's household.⁷⁴ Consequently, by these standards Margaret's household could be described as modest in size, although this might not always have been the case. By 1538 Margaret no longer enjoyed the king's favour and her close friend was no longer the queen, but before the upheavals of Catherine's repudiation when the opposite had been the case, Margaret's influence would have been worth having. Her household would have been something of a magnet to the local gentry; to those seeking royal favour and to those ambitious to make a career in noble or royal service. In this case Margaret's staff may well have been larger to cope with all these visitors. Nevertheless, her household of 1538 was still an elaborate one, testified to by the presence of a clerk of the kitchen, a marshal of the hall and an almoner.⁷⁵ Certainly her household was adequately staffed; three chaplains, six gentlemen waiters, six yeomen of the chamber and an usher of the hall as well as the marshal were maintained. Eleven ladies attended the countess while life with this middle aged widow was not to be dull, for a fool was kept to entertain the household and guests.⁷⁶

According to Christopher Dyer the aristocratic diet consisted mostly of meat, fish, ale, wine, spices and bread⁷⁷ and Margaret's food consumption corresponds with this. At Warblington in 1538, Margaret's supplies included 1000 lb of wheat, five different wines, oxen, mutton, ling, and cygnets.⁷⁸ The presence of malt and hops suggests that ale was brewed. Indeed, Warblington possessed a brewhouse,⁷⁹ while Margaret kept two stills in her own apartments. Although mustard was the only spice, the presence of a ginger box and pot and fork for green ginger suggest that this spice was also

⁷² Jones, P.V.B., *The Household of a Tudor Nobleman* (reprinted New York 1970) cited in Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 77.

⁷³ Dyer, C., *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages; social change in England c. 1200-1520* (Cambridge, 1989) p. 50.

⁷⁴ ,Gunn, S.J., *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk*, p. 63.

⁷⁵ Mertes, K., *The English Noble Household*, pp. 34, 39, 50.

⁷⁶ See Appendix 11, ff. 83, 83b, 84.

⁷⁷ Dyer, C., *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 63.

⁷⁸ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

⁷⁹ P.R.O. E.101/490/12, f. 8.

used.⁸⁰ For 86 days from September to December, 1538, household expenses, including servant wages, amounted to £237 12s 6d. However £72 3s 4d of this was given in reward to servants by order of the king. Under normal circumstances, expenses would probably have been in the region of £150-£170 which, at a rough estimation, might have amounted to between £700- £900 a year.⁸¹

Not surprisingly the Countess of Salisbury's residence was luxuriously furnished.⁸² There were hangings of verdure and arras, some telling stories, such as the discovery of Newfoundland, and in the lower parlour, Ulysses' journey. Margaret's furnishings reveal her pride in her status and lineage. No female modesty prevented her arms from being emblazoned on the windows of her properties and on various items within her household; celures and testers, sumpter cloths, cushions, and the hanging over the chimney in the dining chamber all bore the Countess of Salisbury's arms.⁸³ The memory of Sir Richard Pole is brought to mind from time to time by the various items he presumably bequeathed to his widow. Still in Margaret's possession was a sealer and tester of taffeta embroidered with garters, a cushion displaying the Pole coat of arms, one bowl of silver and three bowls with a cover of silver all decorated with the osprey's foot, part of the Pole family emblem.⁸⁴ In addition, six trenchers of silver were described as bearing the griffin's head. However, this might have been a mistaken description of a dragon, which suggests that they could have been used to entertain Henry VII, who adopted the dragon emblem of Cadwalader, displaying it at Bosworth.⁸⁵ Similarly to her other residences, Margaret made sure her chapel was well attired; the two altar cloths of blue and yellow silk damask had a matching vestment, and also vestments of tawny velvet and bawdkin, while 'ij great Imaiges of the Trinitie and our Lady' looked down from the walls.⁸⁶

A visitor to a hall would be impressed by the gentlemen, who could put on a show of ceremony, treat the lord and his guests with appropriate

⁸⁰ See Appendix 11, ff. 79b, 80, 81b.

⁸¹ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

⁸² See Appendix 11.

⁸³ Ibid., ff. 72, 73b, 74, 76.

⁸⁴ Ibid., ff. 72, 81, 82.

⁸⁵ Ibid., f. 80b.

⁸⁶ Ibid., ff. 76b, 77.

etiquette and practise such formalities as carving meat in the approved fashion.⁸⁷

In this case it would be the lady and her guests who were served with appropriate etiquette, and an assay cup found among Margaret's possessions indicates that this indeed would have been elaborate.⁸⁸ No visitor to Warblington could fail to be impressed by its imposing façade and sumptuous furnishings.

Margaret also intended her resting place to be equally impressive, and in Christchurch Priory, a little further up the coast, she commissioned a magnificent chantry. Again high quality Caen stone was used in the construction, which is English gothic in design with Italian ornamental carving. The fan vault of the roof reveals three bosses, two boasting the countess's coat of arms, and the middle showing her kneeling before the Trinity,⁸⁹ but these were unfortunately defaced by the royal commissioners in December 1539.⁹⁰ During repairs in 1834, two receptacles for coffins were found below the floor and it is possible that Margaret intended her husband to be transferred here at her death.⁹¹ Clearly, Margaret's lifestyle does not appear to have differed greatly from that of her male counterparts. She lived lavishly, built on a grand scale, recognised the importance of conspicuous consumption and maintained a standard of living accordingly. To discover exactly how the Countess of Salisbury operated however, it is necessary to look beyond such outward show in order to ascertain whether it was indeed she who oversaw the administration of her lands, forged the necessary links with other important families and wielded authority over her family.

Barbara Harris has shown that with the importance of the great household and patronage, combined with increasing concentration upon the court, opportunities became available for women to play a part in Tudor politics.⁹² As wives, mothers and widows functioning within their households, they could dispense patronage and, at

⁸⁷ Dyer, C., *Standards of Living in the Later Middle Ages*, p. 53.

⁸⁸ See Appendix 11, f. 82.

⁸⁹ Page, W., (ed.), *V.C.H., Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*, V (London, 1912) p. 103.

⁹⁰ *L&P*, XIV (ii) no. 627.

⁹¹ Bell, C.D., *Notices of the Historic Persons buried in the Chapel of St Peter ad Vincula in the Tower of London* (London, 1877) p. 122.

⁹² Harris, B.J., 'Women and Politics in Early Tudor England' *The Historical Journal*, XXXIII (1990) 260.

court, compete along with the men for influence and favours, 'Imagination and enterprise, not gender, brought success in this opulent new world.'⁹³ Thus women, 'participated with enthusiasm, persistence, and success in all the activities connected to forming, maintaining, and exploiting patronage networks.'⁹⁴ Some of these activities were particularly female, such as the education of young ladies within the household. This naturally resulted in connections with the young ladies' grateful families. Other methods however, were employed by both males and females without distinction. For instance, petitioning for ones friends and dependants and the giving and receiving of gifts and tokens. Not surprisingly the Countess of Salisbury participated in all these activities. With lands and offices at her disposal, influence with the royal family and, after 1525, an important court office, it is not surprising that her favour and assistance would be solicited, or that she utilised her position to strengthen her family's relationship with other noble and gentry families. By advancing her associates, she advertised her power and authority and encouraged others to look to herself and her family as prospective patrons.

Few court offices were available for well born ladies, hence Margaret was in a very enviable position. Her appointment was one of the most responsible and honourable of placements, that of governess to the king's daughter. Consequently, Margaret had the potential to influence appointments to Princess Mary's household. Among the ladies who appear on the princess's household list of July 1525, are a Katherine Poole, Constance Poole and a Mrs Dannet.⁹⁵ Placed third on the list after Margaret herself and Lady Katherine Grey, there is some confusion regarding Katherine Poole due to similarity of names. According to David Loades, this lady was the Katherine Pole who had been Mary's nurse in 1520. She was married to Leonard Pole, a gentleman usher of the king's chamber.⁹⁶ However, on 18 August 1525 another list of these ladies was drawn up together with their individual allowance of black velvet. Katherine Poole is missing altogether, and in her place, third on the list, is a Mistress Katherine Mountecue.⁹⁷ Therefore it is likely that the Katherine Pole of 1525 and

⁹³ Anderson, B.S., and Zinsser, J.P., *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*, II (London, 1990) 8.

⁹⁴ Harris, B.J., *Op.cit.*, p. 260.

⁹⁵ B.L. Harl. MS. 6807, f. 3.

⁹⁶ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, pp. 40, 29.

⁹⁷ P.R.O. E.101/419/16, f.117.

Katherine Mountecue are the same lady, the Countess of Salisbury's granddaughter.⁹⁸ Although her date of birth is unclear, Catherine was probably born between 1516-1518.⁹⁹ Therefore in 1525 she would either be the same age or between one and two years younger than the princess. Certainly a companion of Mary's own age would be a welcome addition to the household, especially one of such impeccable background and upbringing as the governess's own grandchild.¹⁰⁰

In addition to her granddaughter, Margaret also obtained a position for her daughter-in-law Constance Pole, and for Mrs Dannet. Mrs Dannet was Mary Dannet¹⁰¹ widow of Gerard Dannet. The Dannets had been associates of the Pole family from at least 1514, when Gerard stood surety for Henry Pole in a recognizance for the livery of Sir Richard Pole's lands.¹⁰² In addition, in 1519 Dannet was among those enfeoffed with lands by the countess, to ensure payment of Ursula's dowry.¹⁰³ Connected to Charles Brandon¹⁰⁴ Dannet was also an esquire of the body,¹⁰⁵ and like Lord Montague, profited from the accession of Henry VIII. Unfortunately by 1520 Gerard had died,¹⁰⁶ but the favour his widow enjoyed from the Countess of Salisbury, helped to soften the blow somewhat. As well as obtaining a post for her in the princess's household, Margaret also granted Mary an annuity of £20. Their friendship was one of long duration, for Mary was still receiving this annuity in 1538.¹⁰⁷

⁹⁸ Lord Montague's eldest child.

⁹⁹ See above pp. 121-22.

¹⁰⁰ The black velvet allocated to each lady was determined by the lady's size, not importance. For instance, Mistress Dannet received twelve yards while Lady Katherine Grey received only ten. Margaret, a woman of above average height, also required twelve yards. The least amount granted was nine yards to only two of the ladies, Katherine Mountecue and Elizabeth Poole. P.R.O., E.101/419/16, f. 117. This suggests a smallness of height and girth, probably indicative of their youth. The identity of Elizabeth Poole has not been established. One of Geoffrey Pole's daughters was called Elizabeth, but would probably not have been old enough to serve the princess in 1525.

¹⁰¹ *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 2739.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, II (ii), p. 1486.

¹⁰³ Loyd, L.C., and Stenton, D.M., (eds.), *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals*, pp. 15-16.

¹⁰⁴ *L&P*, II (ii) no. 2055, (26); Gunn, S.J., *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk*, p. 19.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, I (i) no. 449, (5)

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, III (ii) no. 854 (9)

¹⁰⁷ P.R.O. S.P.1/142, f. 194.

There is further evidence of overlap between Margaret's servants and the princess's. Thomas Hackluyt was steward of all Margaret's Welsh lands receiving 26s 8d as his fee.¹⁰⁸ Clerk of the King's council, in 1527 he was appointed clerk of the princess's council in Wales.¹⁰⁹ Without knowing the date of his entry into Margaret's service, it is difficult to be sure whether her influence facilitated his appointment to the princess's council or whether he was appointed by Margaret following her acquaintance with him in Mary's household. We can be a little clearer however concerning Sir Thomas Denys. Replacing Sir Giles Greville as Princess Mary's controller in 1526¹¹⁰ he had been Margaret's steward of Pyworthy in Devon before this, possibly in 1523.¹¹¹ Therefore his acquaintance with Margaret probably worked to his advantage regarding this appointment. William Cholmeley's position as cofferer of the princess's household by 1530¹¹² might also be connected to Margaret. Although the king had already recognised his ability and granted him the office of surveyor and approver of all crown lands in the marches of Wales in 1526,¹¹³ Cholmeley and his wife were friends and annuitants of the countess.¹¹⁴ However, as in the case of Hackluyt, we cannot be sure if Margaret's association with them began before Cholmeley's appointment as cofferer. It seems that Margaret might also have tried to tempt Edward Wotton into taking up the mantle of physician to the princess. He was certainly Margaret's physician, receiving a 40s annuity from her in that capacity in 1538, but again it is uncertain when his service with her began. Nevertheless, her involvement regarding his appointment to Mary's household appears likely from a letter of 1526. In this John Voysey Bishop of Exeter and President of the Council of the Marches, tells Wolsey that Wotton's father has informed him and, 'my Lady Governor that his son does not think he has had enough experience in physic to be the Princess's physician.'¹¹⁵ The fact that he felt it necessary to inform

¹⁰⁸ He was receiving this in 1538. *L&P*, XIV (I) no. 181 (ii). Folio 193 in the original of this document: P.R.O. S.P.1/142, has further deteriorated since the compilation of *Letters and Papers*, therefore for this page I have used the *Letters and Papers* version.

¹⁰⁹ *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 3087; V p. 314.

¹¹⁰ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 41.

¹¹¹ In a letter written to his 'cosyen Gyfford,' in which he states that he is the steward of Margaret's lordship of Pyworthy, he signs as plain Thomas Denys. P.R.O. S.P.1/140, f. 66; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 1016. However, when he took over as the princess's controller in 1526, Denys had been knighted. In *Letters and Papers* a date of 1523 is estimated for this letter.

¹¹² *L&P*, V, pp. 318, 319.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, IV (ii) no. 3213 (29)

¹¹⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/142, f.194. They received 66s 8d between them.

¹¹⁵ *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 2395.

Margaret as well as Voysey, suggests that she may have recommended him in the first place. Hence, it is clear that Margaret used her position in Princess Mary's household to obtain posts for five, or possibly seven, of her relations and associates.

Margaret also used her local influence to benefit family and friends, and in 1529 nominated her son Geoffrey to the parliament of that year as M.P., for Wilton, a borough in her possession.¹¹⁶ It has been suggested by Sarah Quail, that Geoffrey Lee, M.P., for Portsmouth in 1529, also owed his seat to the countess. Although Mrs Quail mistakenly claims that he was related by marriage to Margaret,¹¹⁷ he was in fact a member of her affinity. Farmer of the Wyke in Middlesex, he was in receipt of a 100s annuity from her granted for himself and his wife Agnes.¹¹⁸ Involved on Margaret's behalf when she purchased Chalton from the Earl of Shrewsbury, he also acted as one of Reginald's agents during his visit to Paris in 1529.¹¹⁹ Margaret was not averse to dispensing patronage in order to court favour for herself either. In 1529/30 she granted the Duke of Richmond the right to present to the Parsonage of Dimby, Aldbrough, worth £10 a year.¹²⁰ Richmond was her main rival for the manor of Canford, yet by 1529 Margaret was attempting to persuade the ten year old duke of the righteousness of her suit regarding Canford, and several other manors repossessed by the king.

Although her children were all married by 1525, her involvement in her family's marital negotiations did not come to an end, and she was primarily responsible for the marriage agreement of her granddaughter Catherine to Francis, Lord Hastings in 1531. The articles of marriage were concluded between herself and Lord Montague, Catherine's father, on the one part and George, Earl of Huntingdon, Francis's father, on the other. In them, Margaret agreed to pay for Catherine's wedding day apparel, while herself and Huntingdon were to stand equal costs for the meat and drink to be

¹¹⁶ Bindoff, S.T., (ed.), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons 1509-1558*, III (London, 1982) 116.

¹¹⁷ Quail, S., *Spirit of Portsmouth* (Portsmouth, 1989). I am grateful to Diana M. Gregg of the Portsmouth City Record Office for kindly providing me with this information.

¹¹⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/142, f. 194; *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 181.

¹¹⁹ Collier, J.P., (ed.), *The Trevelyan Papers prior to A.D. 1558*, LXVII (3 vols., Camden Society, old series, London, 1857) 159.

¹²⁰ P.R.O. E.36/155, f.45.

consumed over three days of feasting.¹²¹ In addition, Huntingdon agreed to settle lands worth 200 marks upon them immediately after the wedding, and the reversion of several other manors together with a jointure worth 650 marks. Altogether, the annual worth of these manors amounted to the considerable sum of £900.¹²² However, her family's nuptials were not the only ones to concern her. As senior lady of the princess's household, Margaret was the most obvious person to approach upon matters of delicacy, and as such, found herself playing the role of marriage broker to Mary's servants. In 1525 she was approached by Sir Giles Greville, controller of Mary's household, concerning his interest in the daughter of Lady Anne Rede. Lady Rede was the niece of William Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury¹²³ and a member of the princess's suite.¹²⁴ It is a comment upon Margaret's maternal nature that her main concern in these negotiations appears to have been primarily for Lady Rede's daughter. Having informed the young lady of Greville's interest, Margaret wrote to Lady Rede that she could 'perceive nothing in hyr whereby any effect should be had or taken in that matter' and went on to urge Lady Rede 'to be a good and natural mother unto her.' Apparently Margaret supported another match, and counselled Lady Rede to look to this rather than to the match with Greville. She concluded with the hope that 'it may be accomplished to both your comforts.'¹²⁵ It appears that the young lady was not too impressed with the idea of marriage to Greville, and her possible preference for another match was supported by Margaret. Unfortunately, Margaret's urgings were not enough to persuade Lady Rede for it was to Greville that her daughter was eventually married.¹²⁶

Margaret did not forget the princess's servants even after the household was disbanded in December 1533. In March 1534 she wrote to her cousin, Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle, on behalf of Richard Baker. Baker and his wife Alice had been in the princess's service from 1519 and 1516 respectively,¹²⁷ and by 1533 Baker had risen to

¹²¹ B.L. Harl. MS. 3881, f. 31.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ *L&P*, IV (ii) nos 2577, 2854.

¹²⁴ In *Letters and Papers* this incident has been incorrectly dated to 1527. Greville had been replaced as Mary's controller by 1526 when Sir Thomas Denys assumed the post. Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 44.

¹²⁵ B.L. Cotton. MS. Vespasian. F. XIII, f. 167.

¹²⁶ *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 3029; V, no. 198.

¹²⁷ Loades, D.M., *Op.cit.*, p. 40.

the position of gentleman usher. Alice Baker had left Mary's employ at some point after 1525 and entered Margaret's service. However, from approximately 1532 she had served in Sir Brian Tuke's household apparently in the capacity of governess to his daughters.¹²⁸ It was Tuke who first approached Lisle on Baker's behalf in January 1534, writing that; 'both my said Lady Mary, the King's daughter, and also the Lord Hussey, late chamberlain there, sent to me desiring me to be good unto the said Mr Baker.'¹²⁹ By March Margaret's help had been enlisted. Although by now Lisle had agreed to find a place for Baker, to ensure that he would do his utmost, Margaret wrote; 'that where my friend Richard Baker is by your favour appointed to the king's service in Calais, it may please you to be good lord unto him,' and, employing her friendly relationship with Lisle and their bonds of kinship, she continued; 'and the rather for my sake, in all such things as ye may do him favour therein.'¹³⁰ As Lisle's cousin and a high ranking member of the aristocracy, Margaret's intervention encouraged Tuke to write once more to Lisle, with the urgent hope that he could get Baker settled soon, as he had granted Baker 8d a day until that time. Thus with the half joking request that, 'as ye be already good lord to me, so to be good lord to my poor purse,' he explained that; 'the recommendation of him unto me from my said lady, hath moved me to be bolder upon your lordship than I have deserved.'¹³¹ Even Lord Hussey felt it would be advantageous to mention Margaret's name in his letter of support for Baker, requesting Lisle to be good lord to him, 'the better for his old mistress' sake, your kinswoman.'¹³² Obviously these men felt Margaret's influence was significant enough to move Lisle and that her recommendation of Baker justified their approach to him. Edward Labourne, local priest and schoolmaster of Wimbourne, also had faith in Margaret's authority. In the summer of 1519 problems arose at Wimbourne concerning 'a malicious parson' called Rikman. Although Reginald Pole was the dean, at the time he was ill therefore in his absence it was to his mother that Labourne wrote for help. Aware of her greatly superior status, he approached her in the most obsequious and almost cowed terms. Addressing her throughout the letter as 'your honor,' he begged her to ensure; 'that a diligent and An upright examenacion shulde be had in tyme, les it growe to wursse in short space.'¹³³

¹²⁸ *L.L.*, II, 77, no. 145.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 28, no. 113.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 63, no. 136.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 77, no. 145.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 153, no. 190.

¹³³ P.R.O. S.P.1/18, f. 275; *L&P*, III (i) no. 411.

Two years later it was Margaret's turn to be solicited by the Lisles. Although the year was 1536, Mary's reconciliation with Henry VIII and Margaret's brief return to court, had again put her in a position of potential influence. In this year Honour, Viscountess Lisle, was attempting to place her daughter Anne in Queen Jane's household. Consequently Margaret was immediately approached as was Thomas Heneage. Margaret's steward of Caister in Lincoln, Heneage was also a gentleman of the Privy Chamber and, the Lisles hoped, a replacement for their friend Henry Norris who had been executed in May. In June 1536 John Husee, the Lisles' London agent, informed Lady Lisle that Margaret would:

do her best to obtain your ladyship's suit for Mrs Anne; but she saith that it will ask time and leisure, and her ladyship doubts nothing but that Mrs Anne is too young, and Mr Heneage putteth the same doubt.¹³⁴

In fact Margaret and Heneage were the very first people Honour had approached; 'truly, madame, there spake no more in it but my Lady Sarum and Mr Heneage.'¹³⁵ This reveals, not only the friendship between Margaret and the Lisles, but also the confidence that Honour had in Margaret's potential influence. Unfortunately however, Margaret's return to court was short lived, and as the suit was unsuccessful, Husee subsequently approached other ladies to assist. Nevertheless, it was not until the following year that Anne finally obtained a place after the intervention of Lady Rutland and Lady Sussex.¹³⁶

The education of young ladies in the households of noble women, 'indicates another way in which upper-class women participated in creating and sustaining their family's patronage networks.'¹³⁷ Margaret's household, while obviously functioning in this way, also provided a suitable place for her various grandchildren. Among her eleven ladies in 1538, were five of her granddaughters; Lady Margaret Stafford, Ursula's daughter, Winifred, Lord Montague's youngest daughter and Katherine, one of Geoffrey's daughters. Also present were Mary and Margaret Pole, the daughters of

¹³⁴ *L.L.*, IV, 107, no. 863.

¹³⁵ John Husee to Lady Lisle. *Ibid.*, p. 109, no. 850 (ii).

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

¹³⁷ Harris, B.J., 'Women and Politics in Early Tudor England,' p. 262.

Margaret's late son, Arthur.¹³⁸ In addition to these and Margaret's adult serving ladies, three other names also appear who may have been placed in her household for educational purposes; Dorothy Erneley, Elizabeth Cheyney and Alice Denstill. Unfortunately tracing these ladies has proved difficult. Dorothy Erneley could possibly have been the daughter of Sir John Erneley, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas who died in 1521.¹³⁹ A man who had lands in Surrey and Sussex, he had been an associate of Lord Lisle's¹⁴⁰ which makes the presence of a daughter in Margaret's household more likely. Equally, Dorothy might have been the daughter of William Erneley, an established Sussex gentleman who was a fellow Justice of the Peace and colleague of Sir Geoffrey Pole's.¹⁴¹ Alice Denstill was most likely the daughter of John Densell of Cornwall who died in 1536, and who did leave underage children.¹⁴² He was in the service of Lord Lisle, retained for his legal counsel along with Edmond Mervyn, Geoffrey Pole's brother-in-law. Admitted to Lincoln's inn in 1504, he probably represented Lisle in the Court of Common Pleas.¹⁴³ Elizabeth Cheyney may very well have been the daughter of Sir Thomas Cheyney, who became treasurer of Henry VIII's household and lord warden of the Cinque Ports.¹⁴⁴ In 1535, a marriage was arranged between Thomas's son and heir John and Margaret Neville, daughter of Lord Bergavenny.¹⁴⁵ Thus Elizabeth Cheyney's introduction to Margaret's household would have been made possible through her brother's marriage to Lord Montague's sister-in-law. Although by 1538 Margaret's influence at court had waned, her former position as governess to a princess would still make her household an attractive proposition to the daughters of the local gentry. Under her tutelage the young ladies would have received *all the necessary instruction regarding the required social skills*. In addition to her three pairs of virginals at Warblington, Margaret kept a 'little coffer with silk for to set the young a work,'¹⁴⁶ and, before his departure, may also have

¹³⁸ See Appendix 11, f. 83.

¹³⁹ *L.L.*, II, 217.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ In 1538, they were among those named to a commission of sewers for Sussex. *L&P*, XIII (i) no. 1519 (17)

¹⁴² An Inquisition Post Mortem P.R.O. Court of Wards, no. 100/2 survives for him, 27 Henry VIII.

¹⁴³ *L.L.*, I, 488.

¹⁴⁴ Ives, E.W., *The Common Lawyers of Pre-Reformation England* (Cambridge, 1983) p. 372.

¹⁴⁵ Margaret was the daughter of Bergavenny's second marriage.

¹⁴⁶ See Appendix 11, f. 79.

employed the services of her domestic chaplain, John Helyar, as tutor to her young charges.¹⁴⁷

The exchange of gifts was another way of strengthening kinship networks for it gave 'donors and recipients a specific claim on each other's resources and assistance.'¹⁴⁸ Again this was an area in which women could play an active role. Honour Lisle was particularly busy in this field as the *Lisle Letters* reveal. Unfortunately, evidence that Margaret employed such means as these is slight. On 9 July 1525 she sent the Marquis of Exeter three female falcons¹⁴⁹ while in June 1536 she herself received the more intimate gift of a token from Honour Lisle, in order to encourage her assistance in obtaining a position for Honour's daughter with the queen. However, Margaret had to apologise to Honour for not having a token with which to reciprocate at that time.¹⁵⁰ Margaret did, however, present New Years gifts to the king and even kept pots and dishes of 'little worth' to give as New Years gifts to the members of her household.¹⁵¹ Evidence of Margaret's generosity to religious institutions is equally scant. She presented a tap weighing 3 lb to St Mary Bothaw, a church close to Le Herber, and employed its priest at her London residence.¹⁵² In addition, she founded a hospital near Warblington,¹⁵³ and was a patron of Christchurch Priory, Hampshire where she commissioned her impressive tomb chapel. However, any more evidence of this nature is lacking as is evidence of marked socialising within her peer group. Although it is most likely that she did play a more active role than this evidence indicates, it was possibly not as pronounced a role as we might have expected.

From 1525 until 1533 Margaret held the position of governess to Princess Mary, and although there were short periods of leave, the majority of her time was spent with Mary. The princess's household did entertain, and was entertained by, local notables which gave Margaret the opportunity for wider socialising. Nevertheless, her attendance on the princess meant that she was often absent from her own households

¹⁴⁷ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 818 (2)

¹⁴⁸ Harris, B.J., 'Women and Politics in Early Tudor England,' p. 265.

¹⁴⁹ P.R.O. E.36/225, f.42; *L&P*, IV (i) no. 1792, p. 795.

¹⁵⁰ *L.L.*, IV 107, no. 863.

¹⁵¹ See Appendix 11, f. 81b.

¹⁵² P.R.O. S.C.12/11/34, no. 6.

¹⁵³ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 817.

and the court. For instance, when Lord Montague visited Mary in 1533, he was accompanied by Richard Lister, Margaret's steward, who no doubt took the opportunity of discussing estate business with her at the same time.¹⁵⁴ Clearly, the countess did not have a great deal of time for the type of socialising necessary to maintain her family's links with other aristocratic and local gentry families. Indeed, in 1528 a letter written by a member of her council concerning the dispute over Canford and her debt to the king, stated in her defence that:

her charge of attendaunce apou the prynces grace and so far frome the Kyngs grace as they be so that she canne nott sue unto his grace after suche facyon in her one persone as showld be her helpe and remedy in that behalfe.¹⁵⁵

However, good relations with other noble families and reciprocal favours were necessary to make a family effective patrons and maintain their influence and political strength. The problem of Margaret's distance from court was compounded by her gender. The Countess of Salisbury's counterparts; titled heads of families, were all men. Margaret's relationship with any one of them would therefore be one of decorum, distance and formality. She could not indulge in such back slapping activities as gambling and carousing into the night. Yet it was these very activities which often created deeper and thus, more effective friendships. By socialising and making merry together, stronger bonds of comradeship were more likely to be formed. As a woman, Margaret was clearly at a disadvantage and it is here that the importance and significance of her sons becomes clear. Evidence would suggest that the maintenance of relations with other noble families was facilitated in the most part by Margaret's sons, but most especially by her eldest son Henry, Lord Montague. A loyal friend, an affable companion and a man of intelligence, he was described by Martin de Cornoça in 1534 as, 'a very virtuous, prudent and magnanimous gentleman, very much loved and respected by all classes.'¹⁵⁶ Consequently, it is not surprising that he was successful in this sphere. Moreover, as Margaret's son and heir any connections between himself and other nobles would benefit him upon his succession to the earldom, as it would them. Margaret was already a middle aged woman when she was restored, and her death was always an imminent possibility. It is therefore necessary

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, VI, no. 1540.

¹⁵⁵ P.R.O. S.P.1/50, f.4; *L&P*, IV, no. 654.

¹⁵⁶ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1534-35, p. 235, no. 80.

to examine the family's relationships with those to whom they were connected by marriage, by blood and by friendship.

'Marriage and kinship formed the basis of the patron/client relations at the centre of early Tudor politics.'¹⁵⁷ To obtain the marriage was one thing, but to ensure that the maximum benefits resulted from it depended on an ensuing good relationship between the spouses and their families. Obviously Margaret's most important in-laws were the Staffords, with whom it was most desirable to facilitate good relations. Fortunately, the association between the Duke of Buckingham and the Pole family was extremely warm. Barbara Harris has claimed that the friendship between the Poles and Buckingham was furthered by the fact that the head of the family was a woman, and therefore not the duke's rival at court.¹⁵⁸ There might indeed be some truth in this as Margaret would not be as politically active as her male counterpart. Although she enjoyed the king's favour, she would never sit on the council and wield influence in that way. Ursula and her husband remained in the duke's household after their marriage where her brothers could visit her frequently. She fulfilled her most important duty by providing a son and heir within two years of marriage and Buckingham was fond of her. Addressing her as daughter, in 1519 he gave 'to my daughters Ursula and Mary £3 6s 8d.'¹⁵⁹ In addition he granted to Lord Montague's wife, who had presumably been visiting with her husband, £6 13s 4d 'at her departing.'¹⁶⁰ In fact so intimate was the friendship between Buckingham and Margaret's two eldest sons, that the Venetian ambassador, Antonio Surian, mistakenly thought they were the duke's nephews.¹⁶¹ In 1519 Buckingham granted 'to my cousin Arthur Pole, 20s,'¹⁶² and in March of that year he gambled and lost £15 to his son-in-law, Lord Bergavenny and Lord Montague. He lost a further £40 when he gambled with his brother the Earl of Wiltshire and Lord Montague while in June he lost the phenomenal sum of £65 2s 9d dicing with Lord Montague yet again.¹⁶³ Either

¹⁵⁷ Harris, B.J., 'Women and Politics in Early Tudor England,' p. 260.

¹⁵⁸ *Idem*, *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 61.

¹⁵⁹ *L&P*, III (i) no. 1285, p. 499.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁶¹ On 1 May 1521 he informed the Signory that two of Buckingham's nephews, the brothers of Reginald Pole, had been arrested with the duke. *C.S.P.*, Venetian, 1520-26, no. 204.

¹⁶² *L&P*, III (i) p. 498, no. 1285.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 499.

Montague was an extremely skilled player or Buckingham was very drunk! After the duke's fall, the Pole family endeavoured to maintain the friendship with Ursula's husband, Lord Stafford. Margaret took one of their daughters into her household, and paid 22s 6d 3 farthings towards her board during her stay in London during 1538,¹⁶⁴ while Lord Montague and his brother Geoffrey continued to visit their brother-in-law.¹⁶⁵

Cordial relations also existed between Lord Montague and his father-in-law, Lord Bergavenny. According to Barbara Harris, this was not the case between Bergavenny and his father-in-law, Buckingham,¹⁶⁶ and she has charted their reported quarrels up to 1519.¹⁶⁷ It is a mark of Montague's affability and diplomacy that he was able to maintain good relations with both, he may even have attempted to facilitate better relations between them. When the duke fell, it is not surprising that Margaret, Montague and Arthur all fell under a cloud due to the obvious closeness between the two families. However it may be significant that Lord Bergavenny was also arrested for his connection to the duke indicating that by 1521, Bergavenny was not considered the duke's enemy by contemporaries. Whether or not Bergavenny's relationship with the duke improved after 1519, his friendship with Lord Montague lasted until Bergavenny's death in 1535, despite an age gap of twenty years and the birth of Bergavenny's son Henry which, naturally, disinherited Montague's wife. According to Jerome Ragland, one of Lord Montague's most trusted gentleman servants, Montague often lamented Bergavenny's death and described him as 'a nobyll man and assuryd a ffreend as any was lyvyng.'¹⁶⁸ In addition, he lent Bergavenny considerable sums of money amounting to £1000 and 600 marks at his death,¹⁶⁹ and in 1532 Montague and others, including his son-in-law Lord Hastings, brother-in-law Lord Stafford and third cousin the Marquis of Exeter, were enfeoffed to the use of Bergavenny and his heirs

¹⁶⁴P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

¹⁶⁵ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 13; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 829, (2); no. 796. In 1538, according to John Collins, Lord Montague's chaplain, both Montague and Geoffrey rode to Lord Stafford's while Constance Pole stated that her husband and Montague visited Stafford in Sussex. Indeed at one such visit, Geoffrey claimed that Stafford warned him that Montague would be his undoing due to his various indiscreet comments. P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 220; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (7).

¹⁶⁶ By 1519, Lord Bergavenny had married the Duke of Buckingham's daughter, Mary.

¹⁶⁷ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, pp. 60-1.

¹⁶⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 33b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 702.

¹⁶⁹ P.R.O. Prob. 11/25 (35 Hogen)

the ultimate goal of fulfilling Bergavenny's will.¹⁷⁰ Montague was also named one of the executors of Bergavenny's will, which made the sons of Montague and his wife Jane heirs to the use of manors in several counties in default of the issue to Bergavenny and his two brothers, Thomas and Edward.¹⁷¹ Unfortunately, little evidence survives concerning the relationship between Montague and his wife Jane. However, if we can believe Geoffrey Pole, the death of Jane affected her husband badly. After her decease Montague apparently lost interest in the state of the realm and the religious changes which before had concerned him.¹⁷² Although this 'indifference' might have been feigned due to Montague's lack of faith in his brother's discretion, it seems likely, especially considering the friendship between Montague and Bergavenny, that their relationship was a warm one.

The marriage of Montague's eldest daughter Catherine to Francis, Lord Hastings, son of the Earl of Huntingdon was of equal importance. Francis was heir to the Earldom of Huntingdon and extensive lands which stretched from Cornwall and Devon to Leicestershire. His mother was Anne, sister of the Duke of Buckingham. Again, although evidence is slight, it seems relations between the two families were amicable. According to Geoffrey Pole's friend George Croftes, chancellor of Chichester Cathedral, Geoffrey told him that in the summer of 1538, 'he hadd byn att the lord of Huntingdon's with his brother and byn a fortnight and made merry there.'¹⁷³ Of course, Huntingdon's seat at Stoke Poges in Buckinghamshire, was only between twelve and fifteen miles away from Montague's seat at Medmenham and Margaret's residence at Bisham. In fact Montague and Huntingdon were on relaxed enough terms to complain to each other about the apparent submission of Parliament to the king's will in the 1530s.¹⁷⁴ Moreover both Margaret and Lord Montague were greatly concerned for Lord Hastings' welfare. In 1534 Lord Montague, who was then at court, received the news that his son-in-law had fallen ill. It was the eve of St George, and immediately after he had discharged his ceremonial duty of bearing the sword before the king; 'he rode straight unbeware to anybody into Leicestershire to my said Lord of

¹⁷⁰ *L&P*, V, no. 909, (36)

¹⁷¹ The counties were Essex, Gloucester, Hampshire, Kent, London, Norfolk, Stafford, Suffolk, Surrey, Sussex, Warwick and Worcester. P.R.O. Prob. 11/25 (35 Hogen)

¹⁷² P.R.O. S.P.1/136, f. 16; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 695 (2)

¹⁷³ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 211; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 803.

¹⁷⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 218b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (6)

Hastings, where he remaineth yet, though the said young lord be past danger.¹⁷⁵ Of course, there might have been a mercenary element here, as Francis' death would have deprived Catherine of her position as Countess of Huntingdon and the Poles from a connection with a wealthy and important family. Nevertheless, two years later it was Margaret who rushed to the young lord's bed side after he fell sick with a fever. Fevers were often contagious but this did not prevent Margaret from risking her own health by staying with Francis while her household remained at Warblington.¹⁷⁶

Relations with the two remaining families to whom the Poles were connected by marriage, the Packenhams and the Lewkenors, were unfortunately not quite as successful. From Sir Edmund Packenham's will, it becomes clear that Geoffrey was not his favourite son-in-law. He was accorded only one mention when his wife Constance received; 'the tenne pounds which I paide to hir husbonde Geffrey Poole for his interest that I had by him in the ferme of Gatcombe.'¹⁷⁷ Sir Edmund referred to Geoffrey, in the off hand way, as his daughter's husband, whereas he referred to his other son-in-law, Edmond Mervyn as 'my sonne'. In addition, Mervyn received a number of bequests, including being designated heir, with his wife, to the jointure of Packenham's widow. Despite having attended an Inn of Court¹⁷⁸ Geoffrey was not appointed an executor of the will either, this fell to Packenham's cousin Henry White and Edmond Mervyn. Perhaps, as Bindoff astutely notes, Geoffrey had begun to show the signs of extravagance that led him into serious debt in the 1530s.¹⁷⁹ However, relations between Geoffrey and his wife do appear to have been affectionate. She pleaded for his release from the Fleet prison in September 1540¹⁸⁰ and in December 1552 during his exile, he sent a letter to her 'whom he pined to see after 4 years.'¹⁸¹ Despite the danger her husband's flight abroad had put her in and the anxiety his behaviour over the years must have caused her, in her will Constance stipulated that;

¹⁷⁵ *L.L.*, II, 138, no. 174.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, III, 489, no. 769.

¹⁷⁷ P.R.O. Prob. 11/22 (36 Porch)

¹⁷⁸ Geoffrey's presence at an Inn of Court is testified to by his mother in 1538. P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 245b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 818 (15)

¹⁷⁹ Bindoff, S.T., (ed.), *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, III, 116.

¹⁸⁰ *L&P*, XVI, no. 74.

¹⁸¹ Bindoff, S.T., *Op.cit.*, p. 117.

`my bodye to be buryed in the Church of Stoughton nere unto my deere and welbeloved husbnde Syr Jeffrey Poole knighte deceased.'¹⁸²

Geoffrey was however, loyal to his in-laws. He found himself involved in a case brought before the Court of Requests, along with his mother-in-law Katherine Packenham and Edmond Mervyn. They were jointly accused of forcibly expelling a William Downer from certain lands in Bosham in December 1529. According to Katherine however, William's mother Johan had legally surrendered the lands to a William Hakkett and his wife, who had then surrendered them to Sir Edmund Packenham, after whose death, Katherine took possession of them. Downer's case rested on his claim that his deceased mother was under sixteen years of age at the time of her surrender, and thus not legally able to do so. Several witnesses were examined in 1532 to testify to her age, while Katherine and her sons-in-law deliberately prolonged the proceedings by delaying their attendance at court, until the king ordered that they should suffer a £100 fine unless they appeared. Although the outcome is not known, it seems that the dispute was still going on in 1539.¹⁸³

In 1541, it was Geoffrey who required the loyalty and help of his in-laws. Suffering great mental anguish following the execution of his brother and imprisonment of his mother, Geoffrey induced his chaplain Robert Sandwich to accuse John Mychel, parson of Racton, of traitorous words, possibly out of revenge. Having also assaulted Mychel, Geoffrey, repenting of it, approached his brother-in-law Mervyn to reconcile them. However, Mervyn was first and foremost a loyal royal servant and successful lawyer, and following an enquiry from the Privy Council, Mervyn revealed that he had discovered that Mychel had only been accused out of malice.¹⁸⁴ Despite this, relations between the Mervyns and Poles continued to be cordial, Constance designating her nephew, `my welbeloved cosen Henrye Marvyn Esquyer,' one of the executors of her will `for his better advyse in performinge my wyll.'¹⁸⁵

It was no doubt Mervyn's professionalism, combined with his marital connection, that brought him to the attention of the Countess of Salisbury. He was admitted to the Middle Temple in 1506 and was reader there in 1523 and 1530. Made serjeant-at-law

¹⁸² P.R.O. Prob. 11/52 (28 Lyon)

¹⁸³ P.R.O. Req.2/2/182.

¹⁸⁴ *L&P*, XVI nos. 721, 727, 747.

¹⁸⁵ P.R.O. Prob. 11/52 (28 Lyon)

in 1531 and king's sergeant in 1539¹⁸⁶ he served on numerous royal commissions, and his career continued into the reign of Queen Mary. Also in the service of Lord Lisle, he and John Densell were the two most important of Lisle's 'counsel learned.'¹⁸⁷ In 1532, he was involved on the countess's behalf, when she purchased Chalton from the Earl of Shrewsbury, ¹⁸⁸ and in 1538 was in receipt of a 40s annuity from her.¹⁸⁹

Relations with the Lewkenor family were much less successful. As a second son, Arthur Pole's acquisitiveness appears to have caused a dispute with his father-in-law Sir Roger Lewkenor, a dispute which eventually involved Christopher More, the Earl of Arundel, Sir Thomas More, Viscount Lisle and the king himself. In a letter written by Arthur, most probably to Christopher More, in which he required him to deliver two letters from the king to the Earl of Arundel and Sir Roger, it seems that Arthur wished to obtain his father-in-law's lands to farm. In return, he proposed to pay Sir Roger 300 marks a year, allowing him to retain the manor of Trotton,¹⁹⁰ claiming that this was more than they were worth.¹⁹¹ However, according to Julian Cornwall's calculations, they were worth £480 a year¹⁹² while Lewkenor's daughter Jane claimed their annual worth was 500 marks. In addition Arthur promised to; 'fynd hym good surty that he shall be firly payd, and also I shall dyscharge hym of all chargs that he shall be put unto in servyce of the kyng.'¹⁹³ Sir Roger was not moved by such promises, and he was supported by the Earl of Arundel, who made his feelings known in no uncertain terms. As a result Arthur went straight to the king whose favour he obtained for his suit, the king being 'gretly discontent' with Arundel. At this juncture Sir Thomas More became involved, required by the king 'to devyse a sharp letter' to the earl. However More, always the diplomat, advised Arthur to send first 'a lovyng letter' followed by a sharper one should the first fail. Arthur was consequently more optimistic of Arundel's support; 'seyng the kyng's wryth so favorable for me unto

¹⁸⁶ Hutchinson, J., *A Catalogue of Notable Middle Templars* (London, 1902) p. 161.

¹⁸⁷ *L.L.*, I, 488.

¹⁸⁸ P.R.O. C.P.25/2/ bundle 37/245, f.66.

¹⁸⁹ P.R.O. S.P.1/142, f. 194.

¹⁹⁰ This document is very difficult to read. The original appears to read Ciatton or Cratton, which is probably Trotton, Sir Roger Lewkenor's seat.

¹⁹¹ P.R.O. S.P.1/26, f. 123; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 2636.

¹⁹² Cornwall, J., 'Sussex Wealth and Society,' p. 11.

¹⁹³ P.R.O. S.P.1/26, f. 123.

hym, and also with the good exortacyon wych I dowt [not] but you wyll geve.¹⁹⁴ Apparently the king felt that Sir Roger could not discharge competently the military requirements of his lands, and Arthur, exuding unconvincing self sacrifice, explained to Christopher More that he did not desire the lands:

so much for my profit.....but only for to do the kyngs graces servyce
whych thyng the kyngs grace thynkyth my father-in-law as far onmet
consydering both hys age and also the smale expeyence that he has had
in the wars.¹⁹⁵

He apologised to More for getting him involved once again in such a difficult situation, adding; 'I know very well that it shall be a gret troble unto you to medell with such a man.'¹⁹⁶ According to Edward Cobby, Sir Roger Lewkenor, 'would seem to have been a kindly, sincere and unpretentious man.'¹⁹⁷ Although we can understand why these sentiments were not shared by Arthur, it appears that Christopher More, who was an annuitant of Sir Roger, was not too impressed with him either. Apparently in the course of the dispute it was reported to Arthur that Viscount Lisle did not support him. Lisle was under the unhappy impression that Margaret had informed her son of this, and wrote to Christopher More who reassured him that 'it was a mere mistake, and did not grow by my lady.' He continued, that if Lewkenor, 'would not be good to his own child, and that shall become of her, it were pity he lived.'¹⁹⁸ Although More admitted that he must do the best for Lewkenor as his annuitant, though he is treated like all the others, he believed that Arthur's possession of the lands would stem their decay. He concluded by advising Lisle not to allow his friendship with the Pole family to be adversely affected by 'one unkindness and default' and offered to be a mediator between Lisle and Margaret. Clearly the altercation was taking on unpleasant proportions, threatening as it did, the good relations between Lisle and the Poles. We cannot be definite about the outcome of this struggle, but Arthur was assessed for the 1524 subsidy at only £63¹⁹⁹ which suggests that his father-in-law had remained implacable despite the intervention of the king himself. Christopher More

¹⁹⁴ Ibid; *L&P*, III (ii) no. 2636.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Cobby, E.A., *Lewknor: the Lewknors of Sussex*, p. 17.

¹⁹⁸ *L&P*, VI, no. 589.

¹⁹⁹ P.R.O. E.179/69/2; *L&P*, IV, (ii) no. 2972.

however, did gain from all this. Possibly as a reward for his mediation between Lisle and the Pole family and in recognition of his ability, More became an annuitant of Margaret, being granted the substantial sum of £10 a year for life.²⁰⁰ He also became one of Lord Lisle's attorneys²⁰¹ and was described in 1532 as a 'gentleman which my Lord (Lisle) knoweth well.'²⁰² A prominent Surrey gentleman, he was in the office of the Treasurer's Remembrancer by 1526,²⁰³ was clerk of the exchequer by 1530²⁰⁴ and sheriff for Surrey and Sussex in 1532.²⁰⁵ Not surprisingly he was knighted before the end of Henry VIII's reign.

The situation between Sir Roger Lewkenor and the Pole family appears to have temporarily improved by 1526. In that year, on 10 April, Lord Montague presented his brother Reginald, to the rectory of Harting. Lord Montague had been granted the right to present by Sir Roger and his wife Constance,²⁰⁶ but it may be significant that it was Lord Montague who received this favour rather than Arthur, Sir Roger's own son-in-law. Nevertheless, problems with the Lewkenor family were not at an end. If we accept the account of his widow Jane, events after Arthur Pole's death reveal the Countess of Salisbury and Lord Montague acting in unison with ruthless determination to secure the position of Arthur's children. As things stood at Arthur's death in the late 1520s, his son Henry was heir to the bulk of his grandfather's lands. Obviously, the less children Jane had by other marriages the better, especially for Henry's two sisters should he predecease his mother. The only other possible claimant on the estate was Anne Pickering, Jane's daughter by her first marriage. To ensure that matters stayed that way, Margaret and her son kept the news of Arthur's death secret for a month while they formulated a plan of action. Lord Montague finally broke the news of her husband's death to Jane on a Friday. On the Saturday Arthur was buried at Bisham Priory and on the Sunday, two days after she received the news, Jane took a vow of perpetual chastity and the mantle and the ring. According to Jane some ten years later, Lord Montague, with the support of his mother, pressurised her

²⁰⁰ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

²⁰¹ *L.L.*, I, 172, no. 1.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 330, no. xxxi.

²⁰³ *L&P*, IV (i) no. 1939.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, IV (iii) no. 6803 (24)

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, V, no. 1598 (10)

²⁰⁶ B.L. Add. MS. 39404, A. no. 3, p. 25.

into taking a vow of chastity when she was 'in exceeding great heaviness and sorrow and almost besides herself.'²⁰⁷ She went on to explain that both Lord Montague and his mother wished to prevent her from having future issue in order to ensure that Arthur's children inherited Sir Roger's lands.²⁰⁸ She maintained that Montague 'did earnestly instigate, persuade and procure' her to take the mantle and ring with the excuse that, 'she should take it for a time to avoid suitors and other dangers.'²⁰⁹ This unpleasant situation came to light because Jane disregarded her vow and went on to marry Sir William Barentyne. Significantly this marriage took place in 1539 after Lord Montague had been executed and Margaret had been arrested. Jane acted the moment she felt secure from her in-laws objections and interference. It is a comment upon the influence and personalities of both Margaret and Montague, that they were able and prepared to wield such stern authority over Jane, forcing her to remain a widow obviously against her will. Nor was she as safe as she thought after the family's fall, for an objection to her marriage was immediately raised which brought the situation before the Consistory Court of London where sentence was pronounced on 15 December 1540. It declared Jane's marriage to Barentyne invalid and their son Drew, illegitimate.²¹⁰ The Barentynes retaliated stating in their defence the fact that Jane had been pressurised into taking the vow. Following the intervention of the king,²¹¹ matters were finally settled by an act of parliament in 1543/44. Not surprisingly it decided against the Pole family, declaring that the Barentyne heirs should be considered legitimate.²¹² It cannot be determined who originally raised this objection to the Barentyne marriage. It might have been Geoffrey Pole, who was released from custody in January 1539 or Henry, Arthur's son. It is not known how much contact with the outside world Margaret was initially allowed, for it would not be beyond her to issue instructions concerning her family even from the Tower.

²⁰⁷ P.R.O. S.P.1/175, f.81; *L&P*, XVIII (i) no. 67 (5, 6)

²⁰⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/175, f. 82.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*.

²¹⁰ Ward, F., 'The Divorce of Sir William Barentyne' *S.A.C.*, LXVIII (1927) 279.

²¹¹ Cobby, E.A., *Lewknor: the Lewknors of Sussex*, p. 16.

²¹² It stated, that as Jane had been married to two husbands and had had issue by both of them, she could not take such vows. Also the vows had been taken before the bishop of a foreign diocese, St Asaph, without authorisation of the bishop of the diocese and had been 'forced upon her by Henry Pole, then Lord Montague,.....when she was in extreme grief for the death of her husband Sir Arthur and one of her children.' *L&P*, XVIII no. 67 (5)

Arthur's difficult relations with his father-in-law were compounded, as we have seen, by the support Lewkenor enjoyed from the Earl of Arundel. Arthur however, was not the only one of Margaret's sons to find himself on the wrong side of the earl. In a petition drawn up by his brother-in-law Edmund Mervyn in 1531, Geoffrey Pole claimed that upon his enclosure of Lysley Wood which he legally held, several ill disposed persons, all armed, came to the wood at 11 o'clock at night and pulled down and destroyed the hedge. This, Geoffrey claimed, was done at the instigation of the Earl of Arundel, whose tenants the malefactors were.²¹³ Those accused, while admitting that Geoffrey was indeed legally seised of the wood, which lay within the larger wood held by Arundel, claimed that they enjoyed the right to graze the wood according to the custom of the manor. Therefore Geoffrey had no right to enclose it, which also deprived the tenants of the Duke of Norfolk. Geoffrey's petition, they declared, was merely formed to hurt them and slander the earl.²¹⁴ Whether or not Geoffrey was right to enclose the wood, there does appear to have been some animosity between Arundel and the two Pole brothers. Quite possibly Arundel resented the Poles' emergence upon the Sussex scene, which stood to threaten his pre-eminence. He was certainly keen to prevent Arthur taking possession of his father-in-law's lands, which would have enhanced his power and influence in Sussex.

As the illegitimate son of Edward IV, Arthur Plantagenet, Viscount Lisle was Margaret Pole's first cousin, and despite the misunderstanding during the Lewkenor dispute, the families remained on very good terms. However, while relations with Margaret were undoubtedly amicable, it was with her son Lord Montague that a more relaxed familiarity was enjoyed. Such a relationship was most advantageous to the Pole family. Muriel St Clare Byrne has shown that Lisle's appointments as Vice-Admiral, gentleman of the Privy Chamber and councillor, warden and keeper of the king's forest and park of Clarendon, constable of Porchester Castle and keeper of the forest of Bere, 'consolidated his position as the most important nobleman in Hampshire, with influence at Court and patronage to dispense locally.'²¹⁵ Letters were exchanged regularly between Lord Montague and the Lisles after Arthur's appointment as Lord Deputy of Calais in 1533. So familiar was Montague with them, that he felt able to warn Honour, whom he described as 'my friend' of her husband's extravagance without offending them, advising her 'for the love of God, look upon it

²¹³ P.R.O. Stac. 2/19/306.

²¹⁴ P.R.O. Stac. 2/19/377.

²¹⁵ *L.L.*, I, 179, 195.

in the beginning, now.²¹⁶ In 1534 Honour sent Montague the personal gift of a token²¹⁷ while Montague at various times assured Lisle that 'of no kinsman he hath he shall be more assured of to do him pleasure,²¹⁸ pledging himself as 'yours assured my life during,²¹⁹ and most commonly signing himself, 'your loving cousin Henry Montague.' The letters were sometimes no more than an exchange of news and pleasantries, for instance when Montague thanked Honour for the three barrels of herring she sent for himself and Lord Bergavenny, and then informed her of the contents of a galley recently arrived.²²⁰ In this letter, as in others, Montague passed on the Lisles' recommendations to his mother and vice versa. Because of their greater familiarity with Montague, they found it easier to approach him rather than his mother. In 1537 Honour, who was trying to place her daughter at court again, wrote to Montague to speak to his mother about it. Montague replied that though he would do all he could, 'But and it please you to write a letter to my lady my mother yourself it will sooner take effect.'²²¹ Previously in 1534 it was Montague they again solicited in the hope that he could persuade his brother Reginald to grant the next avoidance of the vicarage of Braunton to a relative of their associate, Hugh Yeo.²²² The friendship worked to the mutual advantage of both families and Montague indeed had cause to be grateful to Lisle. The Lord Deputy granted his cousin a walk in the Forest of Bere²²³ and apparently the use of his house at Soberton, for which Montague offered profuse thanks.²²⁴ As a further mark of trust between them, Montague was nominated as one of Lisle's proxies in the House of Lords in 1536, and in 1535 when Montague fell seriously ill the Lisles received bulletins on his condition from three different people.²²⁵ In John Husee's opinion, a man who knew the Lisles extremely well, Lord

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 492, no. 19.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, II, 138, no. 174a.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 492, no. 19.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, III, 489, no. 769.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, II, 44-5, no. 126.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, IV, 140, no. 876.

²²² *Ibid.*, II, 131, no. 172.

²²³ *Ibid.*, IV, 378, no. 1001; 247-8.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, III, 489, no. 769.

²²⁵ John Husee, Leonard Smyth and Diggory Grenville. *Ibid.*, II, 519, 520, 522, 527, 532, nos. 412, 413, 415, 419, 421; IV, 32, no. 836.

Montague was someone 'your lordship loved well.'²²⁶ Although they enjoyed a pleasant and relaxed relationship, and evidence would certainly indicate that Montague was genuinely fond of his mother's elderly cousin, we can be excused for wondering how deep these feelings of friendship actually ran in Honour Lisle's case. There is something exceedingly unpleasant about Honour Lisle busying herself in an attempt to buy her 'lovyng cosyn's' carpets a few months after his execution and being told; 'there was none sold but that which my lord of Sussex had. All the best was kept for the King, so that there will be no help for carpets that way.'²²⁷

There is no question over the genuinely affectionate friendship that existed between Montague and his slightly younger third cousin Henry Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter.²²⁸ Most of the evidence concerning their social contact originates from the witnesses questioned in 1538. Although it might be argued that some of these frightened examinees might have been saying what they thought their interrogators wanted to hear, the evidence is extensive and provided by several different witnesses, including Montague himself, so that contact between them is hard to dispute. John Collins, Montague's chaplain, heard his master praise the Marquis of Exeter, describing him as a man of very good mind and courage. In Collins' opinion, Exeter would have been an 'assuryd frynd' to Montague.²²⁹ Constance Bontayn, one of the Marchioness of Exeter's ladies, witnessed great familiarity between Montague and Exeter, believing Montague considered him an 'assured friend.'²³⁰ Letters certainly passed between Montague and the Exeters regularly, especially in 1535 and 36 when the Marquis was ill and Montague was concerned about his condition.²³¹ In fact so well did Montague know his cousin, that he was able to remark that Exeter 'hath been the most passyonate and impacient man in his sykness that ever he knew.'²³² Reginald writing to Exeter's son in 1553, is specific about the friendship between the two. He speaks of the 'affection and love' which Exeter always exhibited towards Montague and himself, explaining that they had been 'so linked by God in sincere affection

²²⁶ Ibid., III, 387, no. 705.

²²⁷ Ibid., V, 513, no. 1436.

²²⁸ Exeter was between four and six years younger than Montague.

²²⁹ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 14b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. item 827 (1).

²³⁰ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 802.

²³¹ Ibid., no. 779.

²³² P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 34; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 702.

throughout their lives, He would not at the last hour allow them to be separated, both dying together for the same cause.²³³ The most convincing piece of evidence revealing with clarity Exeter's loyalty to Montague, is provided by Montague himself who stated that the Marchioness had written to inform him that Exeter had offered, in council, to be 'bownde bodie for bodie for hym,²³⁴ and at a time when it was becoming increasingly dangerous to associate so closely with the Pole family. In 1535 Montague was among those enfeoffed with several manors to the use of Exeter and his wife,²³⁵ while it also appears that Montague along with Robert Chidley and Anthony Harvy, were the means by which the reversion of the manor of Northam, Devon was purchased by Exeter.²³⁶

Montague associated with other members of the nobility and gentry, among whom he acted as adviser, colleague and friend. In July 1532 he was granted the manor of Stapul in Somerset from the Earl of Northumberland. This grant was made on the condition that Montague surrendered a £40 annuity issuing out of the manor and lordship of Petworth, Sussex, previously granted to him by Northumberland.²³⁷ R.W. Hoyle has explained this transaction, and others like it, as a result of Northumberland's extensive borrowing.²³⁸ Montague had presumably lent Northumberland a sum of money which was being repaid, initially by the £40 annuity, and then by the grant of the manor of Stapull. Montague still held this manor at his death.²³⁹ He was also on familiar terms with Elizabeth Darell, daughter of Sir Edward Darell and mistress of Sir Thomas Wyatt. He gave her advice regarding certain lands and attempted to negotiate the repayment of £100 owed to her by Sir Anthony Hungerford.²⁴⁰ He also advised the apparently estranged wife of Humphrey Tyrell,²⁴¹ and was named in the Marchioness of Dorset's will as one of her feoffees.²⁴²

²³³ *C.S.P.*, Venetian, 1534-54, no. 806.

²³⁴ *P.R.O.* S.P.1/138, f. 222; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 772.

²³⁵ *L&P*, VIII, no. 802.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, XIX, no. 1068 (37)

²³⁷ *C. A. D.*, XI, A. 3223.

²³⁸ Hoyle, R.W., 'Henry Percy, sixth earl of Northumberland, and the fall of the House of Percy, 1527-1537' in Bernard, G.W., (ed.), *The Tudor Nobility*, pp. 184-6.

²³⁹ *P.R.O.* E.150/928.

²⁴⁰ *P.R.O.* S.P.1/138, f. 222b; f. 34b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) nos. 702, 772.

²⁴¹ *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 68. Probably the Essex gentleman who was a gentleman usher of the king in 1526. *Ibid.*, IV, (i) no. 1939, p. 868.

Geoffrey Pole also had a circle of associates, but tended to gravitate more towards ecclesiastical personages such as George Croftes, Chancellor of Chichester Cathedral. He was also on friendly terms with John Stokesley, Bishop of London, who granted him the keeping of a park and lent him money.²⁴³ Another gentleman to whom Geoffrey was close was William Friend, school master of Chichester prebendal school. Geoffrey knew him well enough to approach him for a loan in jovial terms; 'Mr Frynd I hartily comend me unto you and pray you be so fryindly unto me at this tyme as to lend me the sum of five pounds sterlyng to the fest of Mychelmas....'²⁴⁴ In 1537 he wrote in support of Friend to Lord Lisle, who had apparently heard some adverse reports about him. Geoffrey assured Lisle that Friend, 'is an honest man, and willing to do him service.'²⁴⁵

It was not only in the social sphere that Lord Montague played an important role. Certain privileges and requirements associated with Margaret's position were predominately male. For instance the Countess of Salisbury's male counterpart would be summoned to sit in the House of Lords, but as a woman, Margaret was denied such a place. Therefore, as peeresses were able to transmit their right to sit in the Lords to their husbands and sons,²⁴⁶ Margaret's eldest son was summoned in her stead.²⁴⁷ This was not the only time Montague stood in for his mother. As a female landowner, Margaret could only partially fulfil the military requirements of her estates. She could supply the men, but she obviously could not lead them into battle. Consequently, Montague stepped in to discharge this duty. In 1523 Thomas Denys, Margaret's steward of Pyworthy, wrote to his cousin James Gifford concerning 'my Lady of Salisburys tenantts of Pyworthy.' Ten of these tenants had been appointed; 'to serve the kyngs grace in his warres under the ledyng of my lord Mountague your master.'²⁴⁸

²⁴² Nicolas, N.H., *Testamenta Vetusta* (London, 1826) 633.

²⁴³ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 212; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 803.

²⁴⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/57, f.101; *L&P*, IV (iii) no. 6384.

²⁴⁵ *L&P*, XII (i) no. 1113.

²⁴⁶ Shahar, S., *The Fourth Estate*, p. 12.

²⁴⁷ Had Margaret been a man, Montague could still have been summoned to the Lords, at the king's discretion, as Lord Montague but it would have been with his father, rather than instead of, his mother. For instance Lord Rochford in 1532/33 and Lords Maltravers and Talbot in 1533/34 were summoned to the Lords where they sat with their respective fathers. *Journals of the House of Lords*, I, 1509-1577, (London, 1846) 58-9.

²⁴⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/140, f. 66; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 1016.

Again in October 1536, it was to 'our right trusty and wellbeloved the Lord Mountague' that the king sent a summons to:

put all your friends, servants and such other as been under your rule in such a readiness as in case need shall require you may within a days warning, both advance with all your force to such place as shall be limited unto you.²⁴⁹

The number of men Montague was expected to bring was 200.²⁵⁰

Montague also represented his mother on commissions of the peace. Although it had been argued by lawyers early in the reign of Henry VII that women could be appointed justices of the peace,²⁵¹ this appears never to have happened in the sixteenth century. As a prominent landowner in the southern counties, had Margaret been male there would have been no question about her inclusion. As it was, Montague was again required to stand in her place. Montague's own lands lay in Buckinghamshire and, from 1532, Somerset when he acquired Stapul. However, between 1528 and 1537 he was appointed to commissions of the peace for Dorset, Hampshire, Wiltshire, Somerset and Sussex. All but Sussex²⁵² were counties in which his mother held lands. R.H. Fritze has described Geoffrey Pole's appointment to the commission of the peace for Hampshire in 1531 as a prestigious coup for the family whose influence previously, he claimed, had been 'minimal or non-existent.'²⁵³ However, he failed to mention the earlier appointment of Lord Montague in 1529.²⁵⁴ Fritze also explained the importance of being a J.P., and that one's position on a commission, reflected one's local status; 'In theory the order of the commission of the peace was therefore an accurate assessment of relative standings in the local community.'²⁵⁵ Significantly, on

²⁴⁹ P.R.O. S.P.1/106, f. 273-4; *L&P*, XI, no. 556.

²⁵⁰ *L&P*, XI, no. 580.

²⁵¹ Hogrefe, P., *Tudor Women: Commoners and Queens*, p. 33.

²⁵² Where lands might have been settled upon himself and his wife by Lord Bergavenny as part of the marriage agreement.

²⁵³ Fritze, R.H., 'Faith and Faction: religious changes, national politics, and the development of local factionalism in Hampshire, 1485-1570' (Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Cambridge, 1981) pp. 93-4.

²⁵⁴ *L&P*, IV (iii) no. 5243 (26)

²⁵⁵ Fritze, R.H., *Op.cit.*, p. 4.

all these commissions Montague, as the representative of the Countess of Salisbury, occupied a respectable position. In the commission for Dorset in 1528, he was placed third, after Wolsey and the Duke of Norfolk.²⁵⁶ The lowest he ever came was in the commission for Hampshire in 1531, where he was the eleventh named, behind four ecclesiastics, two dukes, one earl, Viscount Lisle, Sir Thomas More and Sir Edward Haward. His brother Geoffrey also sat on this commission, nineteenth down.²⁵⁷

In certain instances, it was often easier and considered more appropriate, to approach Montague rather than his elderly mother. In 1531, following the king's decision to grant Canford, a manor initially held by Margaret, to his illegitimate son Henry Fitzroy, he instructed Cromwell to contact Lord Montague, rather than Margaret, 'for the clearing of certain lands given to the Duke of Richmond.'²⁵⁸ Once again, when Geoffrey Pole had fallen into serious debt in the 1530s, it was with Montague that concerned friends and servants felt more comfortable about raising the matter. George Croftes confided in John Collins, requesting him to 'cause the lord Montacute his master to se[e the said Sir] Geoffrey Pole's debts paid.'²⁵⁹ Apparently successful, Montague was able to assure Collins that he had 'provided a stay for that matter well enough, for the said Sir Geoffrey was discharged of many of the said debts.'²⁶⁰ Since she had reached her late fifties and sixties by this point, it might have been concern not to worry Margaret that led to such approaches to Montague. However, Montague knew his mother better than to underestimate her, and the 'stay' which he mentioned was probably provided by the sale of the 'Wyke' in Middlesex in February 1538.²⁶¹ One of the countess's properties and obviously requiring her consent, the solution was no doubt formed with her participation. Sometimes, Margaret affected the 'little woman' role herself, accepting the restrictions imposed by convention. Thus she wrote to Reginald in 1536 that:

being a woman his highness hath showed such mercy and pity which
never lay in my power by no service that I could do to deserve, But

²⁵⁶ *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 5083 (12)

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, V, no. 166 (15)

²⁵⁸ B.L. Cotton. MS. Titus. B.I., f.486.

²⁵⁹ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 829 (1)

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 955.

²⁶¹ P.R.O. E.40/1362; *L&P*, XIII (i) no. 294.

trusting that my children should by their service do some part of my bounden duty for me.²⁶²

Fortunately, as has been shown, with Montague her hopes were not dashed. It was not for nothing that Lodovico Beccatelli, Reginald's secretary and close friend, felt able to describe Lord Montague as 'the chief stay of his family.'²⁶³ Some widows with large estates to run did choose to re-marry in order to gain the support and care of a husband. Margaret's enviable position precluded this need for a spouse. She was a strong, intelligent woman, who enjoyed the advice and assistance of a mature and capable son. She had the best of both worlds; all the support she needed with the freedom and authority to make the final decisions.

Fortunately, relations between Margaret and her son were good. They liked and trusted each other, more importantly, they respected each other. She addressed him as 'son Montague'²⁶⁴ and granted him the very generous annuity of 500 marks.²⁶⁵ Montague wrote to Reginald in 1536, that his book had so upset him that he could not have grieved more had he 'lost mother, wife and children' significantly his mother comes first. Montague had rooms set aside for him at Le Herber,²⁶⁶ as he would have had at all his mother's residences, while the evidence of 1538 often reveals him at Warblington visiting Margaret and taking supper with her.²⁶⁷ He appears never to have harboured any resentment regarding his mother's pre-eminence, and this might have been because he was able to play such an active and important role as Lord Montague. In fact, so prominent was he, that Le Herber was sometimes described as his,²⁶⁸ while it was he and not his mother, who was feted by the ports of Dover and Southampton in 1526 when he was presented with gifts of wine.²⁶⁹

²⁶² P.R.O. S.P.1/105, f. 66; *L&P*, XI, no. 93.

²⁶³ Pye, B., *The Life of Cardinal Reginald Pole*, p. 157.

²⁶⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 131 (lower f. number); *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 855 (2)

²⁶⁵ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

²⁶⁶ P.R.O. S.C.12/11/34, no. 6.

²⁶⁷ For instance P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 30; *L&P*, XIII (ii) nos. 829, 779.

²⁶⁸ *L&P*, XI, no. 719; XII (i) no. 182.

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, IV (iii) App. 89; *L.L.*, I, 163, 182.

Lord Montague also enjoyed a limited role regarding the estates of the earldom. In addition to acting in an advisory capacity, he was bound, with his mother, in the recognizance of May 1513 to pay the £2,333 6s 8d 'for the redeeming of Salisbury's lands.'²⁷⁰ As the act of Parliament restored Margaret alone, Montague's involvement in the recognizance was probably to guarantee, in the event of his mother's death, that this initial payment would still be made. In 1538 Margaret sold the Wyke, of which she was undoubtedly the owner:

the said Lady Margaret is very true owner of the premises and every parcel thereof with thappurtenances and hath full power and authority to make full and clear assurance of the premises unto the said William Bower.²⁷¹

Nevertheless, the agreement of sale was between Margaret and Henry Lord Montague on the one part and Bower on the other. This might be a result of the articles of marriage agreed between Margaret and Lord Bergavenny concerning the marriage of Lord Montague and Jane Neville. Although these articles may not have been the ones that were ratified, they attempted to constrain what Margaret could dispose of out of the earldom. Therefore, if they were the final agreements her heir's permission might very well have been needed before any lands could be permanently alienated. Clearly, Montague was important to his mother, representing her in areas which her gender denied to her. However, in situations from which her sex did not exclude her, Margaret was very active and certainly no shrinking violet. It was not her shy reticence or nervousness that prompted the Earl of Southampton to describe her as 'rather a strong custauant man than a woman.'²⁷² She certainly did not shrink from initiating litigation and came before the Star Chamber on more than one occasion.

In 1527, trouble flared in Yealmpton, Devon over certain lands held by Thomas Copleston and his sons Francis and John. According to Thomas, he suffered persecution from Margaret's under steward of Yealmpton, John Legg, who continually brought him before the manor court on false accusations, resulting to date in an amercement of 20 marks. He also tried to deprive Copleston of certain of his lands. With all the suits at common law and in the Star Chamber that Margaret had been induced to bring by the 'fals, subtyll, bosy, troubelous' Legge, Copleston was

²⁷⁰ P.R.O. E.36/215, f. 676.

²⁷¹ P.R.O. E.40/1362; *L&P*, XIII (i) no. 294.

²⁷² B.L. Cotton. MS. App. L., f. 79; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 855.

concerned that the fines might impoverish him.²⁷³ Copleston's sons also claimed that they were being forced out of their lands, this time by Edmund Mervyn, Geoffrey Pole's brother-in-law and one of Margaret's legal advisers. According to them, he took advantage of the previous tenants death to claim that the land passed by deed, and not copy, and persuaded the countess to grant part of the property to him. Since then, they declared, he had trespassed on their land and driven off their cattle, for which they had been unable to obtain justice, despite continual suit to Margaret and Mervyn himself.²⁷⁴

Margaret's version is not surprisingly somewhat different. According to her, Thomas and Francis Copleston with several more of their family and friends and twenty other 'ryotous' persons, entered a court held by Henry Fortescue, the deputy of Margaret's steward there, John Cobley, at Yealmpton in March 1527, and assaulted him while menacing Margaret's tenants so that they would not give evidence against them. In addition, they went on to ambush Fortescue on his way home from the court. Again in December 1527 accompanied by armed followers, they broke into and illegally took possession of a corn mill.²⁷⁵ Thomas of course denied this, claiming that the accusations were brought, this time at the instigation of Nicholas Upton and Edmond Byllon, Margaret's servants, and two of her tenants, in an attempt to dispossess him of his lands. Again he claimed that his cattle had been taken, at which he sued to the Marquis of Exeter's court at Plympton, in which manor the lands from which the cattle had been taken lay.²⁷⁶ His servant John Crabbe, endorsed this claiming that Copleston and Fortescue had merely argued in court at Fortescue's provocation, for he had called Copleston a knave, but that no violence took place. They did not later ambush Fortescue, while the mill belonged legally to Copleston, who had been dispossessed while absent in London. They did not, he maintained, break into the mill, but knocked on the door, and entered peacefully.²⁷⁷

The on going altercation led to Margaret herself becoming actively involved, and she personally interrogated several of the witnesses. Nine men, between the ages of twenty and fifty six, sat before the countess's implacable gaze which led one of them,

²⁷³ P.R.O. C.1/761/28.

²⁷⁴ P.R.O. C.1/401/11.

²⁷⁵ P.R.O. Stac. 2/18/167; Stac. 2/29/112.

²⁷⁶ P.R.O. Stac. 2/29/171.

²⁷⁷ P.R.O. Stac. 2/22/377.

John Crabbe, into changing his testimony. In his answers to Margaret he admitted that he did not hear the words that passed between Fortescue and Copleston in court, or whether Copleston ambushed Fortescue later. He did however, continue to claim that they entered the mill peacefully, and that the big hole in the door had been done long before.²⁷⁸ The three men in the mill at the time however, claimed that Copleston and his co-horts came at sunrise and broke down the door with a bar, throwing them out bodily in their night clothes! Unfortunately, the outcome of this dispute is not known, but this was not the only instance of Margaret's involvement in a case of this nature. In an undated draft of a complaint against certain persons who Margaret claimed had riotously entered one of her woods in Oxfordshire, she threatened, in couched terms, that she would have to resort to the same methods unless she received justice from the king. Possibly on the advice of her council, this dangerous course of persuasion was hastily crossed out. Nevertheless, she did send armed servants to the wood to try and prevent any more unlawful entries.²⁷⁹

As a substantial landowner, Margaret naturally enjoyed all the attendant feudal privileges and employed feodaries to ensure that these rights were enforced.²⁸⁰ If one William Cobden is to be believed, Margaret pursued these privileges with zealously. In October 1531 he accused Margaret of taking certain lands on the Isle of Wight into her hands as an escheat, when in fact, Cobden was the son and heir of the previous holder.²⁸¹ One of the most lucrative of feudal privileges was the right to wardship. For instance in 1537/38, Margaret sold the wardship of a William Bokett's heir for £20.²⁸² Understandably, the aristocracy petitioned the king for the wardships of heirs and heiresses, either as marriage partners for their own children, or with the intention of selling the wardship or right to marry to someone else. In the meantime, they would enjoy the profits of the heir's lands. Margaret was no exception and on 1 May 1520 the king granted 'to our beloved kinswoman Margaret Countess of Salisbury' the wardship and marriage of the seven year old heiress Elizabeth Delabere.²⁸³ The Delaberes were a well established Herefordshire family whose main

²⁷⁸ P.R.O. Stac. 2/22/377.

²⁷⁹ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, no. 249.

²⁸⁰ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/ 6875.

²⁸¹ *C.A.D.*, V, A. 12129.

²⁸² S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

²⁸³ P.R.O. C.82/490, no. 58. In his will Sir Richard Delabere specified that should his eldest son Thomas die without heirs, then the Delabere lands should pass to his second son Sevacar and his heirs.

seat was at Kinnersley Castle. Sir Richard Pole had enjoyed an acquaintance with Elizabeth's grandfather, Sir Richard Delabere. In addition, the Delaberes were also connected to the Duke of Buckingham, who was apparently saved from the clutches of Richard III by Sir Richard Delabere and his wife Elizabeth.²⁸⁴ The Delabere family lands lay in Hereford and Gloucestershire and control of them would increase the Countess of Salisbury's influence in Wales, where she held lands in Monmouth and Glamorgan. Moreover, through her husband and the Duke of Buckingham, Margaret would have been familiar with this prominent family, and aware of Elizabeth's value on the marriage market. However, the total income from Elizabeth's lands would not have been immediately available to Margaret. In addition to two widow's jointures Sir Thomas Delabere, Elizabeth's uncle, had created estates for life for his two brothers, William and George, and set lands aside in Gloucester to pay off his debts, while Elizabeth's father had created an enfeoffment to use for the fulfilling of his will.²⁸⁵ Moreover, Margaret had to honour a bequest of 40 marks to Robert Vaughan for his marriage to Sebell, Sir Richard Delabere's daughter.²⁸⁶ It is an important comment upon the way that Margaret operated, that it was a member of her affinity who managed to purchase the young girl in marriage. In 1529 Elizabeth Delabere married Michael Lister, son and heir of Richard Lister. Richard Lister had been appointed Margaret's steward in 1513,²⁸⁷ and continued to serve her until her arrest in 1538. In addition to his business relationship with the countess, he was also a neighbour, friend and colleague of Margaret's cousin Viscount Lisle. Clearly he was well placed to successfully solicit the marriage of Elizabeth Delabere.

In addition to the marriages of her children which, it was hoped, would gain the Poles a foothold in Sussex, Margaret also purchased several manors. Two of these, Chalton

Elizabeth was Sevacar's only surviving child and thus heiress to the Delabere lands. P.R.O. Prob.11/18, (2 Holder)

²⁸⁴ Following the Duke of Buckingham's fall from grace, he entrusted his son Edward, to the care of Sir Richard Delabere. Following the duke's execution a price was put upon his son's head, but after moving him about from place to place, and at one point sitting 'with him for four hours in the park at Kinnersley, until pursuit was over' Lady Elizabeth Dalabere concealed him by sending him to Hereford dressed as a girl. Hutchinson, J., *Herefordshire Biographies*, p. 36, fn.; Robinson, C.J., *A History of the Castles of Herefordshire* (1869) p. 90.

²⁸⁵ Will of Sir Richard Delabere, P.R.O. Prob. 11/18, (2 Holder); of Sir Thomas Delabere, P.R.O. .Prob. 11/19, (26 Aylofte); *L&P*, IV, no. 5624 (10) For instance, for the period from the Autumn of 1519-February 1520, Margaret received £65 7s 11d to her use. P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/1503.

²⁸⁶ P.R.O. S.P.1/59; *L&P*, IV (iii) Appendix 2.

²⁸⁷ Hertford C.O. Records, no. 6454. Courtesy of Dr Kathryn Thompson, Hertfordshire County Record Office.

in Hampshire and Aston Chevery in Buckinghamshire, purchased in 1532,²⁸⁸ were intended to augment her existing presence in these counties. Her purchase of 240 acres of land, 20 messuages and 23s 4d rent in Marden Borne and Chamberleyns Marshe, Sussex in 1533 and 1534 was part of her ongoing attempt to increase her influence in that county.²⁸⁹ Indeed, surviving evidence would suggest that the Countess of Salisbury was an active and enthusiastic landlord. For instance she oversaw the repairs at Clavering signing and verifying all the receipts.²⁹⁰ In her manor of Easton, Northamptonshire, she took draconian measures to ensure her copyhold tenants, and her tenants at will, paid their 20s entrance fee promptly. If they did not discharge the debt within three months, they would lose their tenancies.²⁹¹ Nevertheless, she did propose to let part of certain waste land, extending to 100 acres, to her tenants at will, to help maintain their holdings.²⁹² Despite Margaret's efforts, she naturally suffered arrears on certain of her manors, but, apparently amounting in 1538 to £202 9d they were not very high.²⁹³ Indeed, for nineteen manors whose incomes we can compare in 1518 and 1538, twelve saw an increase in their annual incomes, while the incomes of seven decreased. The overall result, was that Margaret was receiving £82 26s 2d more from these nineteen manors in 1538.²⁹⁴ Margaret's personal debts however, were considerably more. By 1538, her loans, outstanding annuities and debts to various merchants and tradesmen amounted to the not insubstantial sum of £759 3s 1d.²⁹⁵ However, it was not unusual for members of the aristocracy to have debts. Income from their lands fluctuated, while life at court was expensive. Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk had suffered indebtedness, as had the

²⁸⁸ P.R.O. C.P.25/2/37/245, f. 66; L&P, V, no. 909 (21)

²⁸⁹ P.R.O. C.P.25/2/43/299, f. 27.

²⁹⁰ P.R.O. S.P.1/30, ff. 118-22.

²⁹¹ P.R.O. E.36/155, f. 34.

²⁹² *Ibid.*

²⁹³ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

²⁹⁴ This has been calculated using the ministers accounts P.R.O., S.C.6/Hen VIII/6874; 6875. The manors are; Aston Clinton, Bucks., Lantyan, Cornwall, Clyst St Mary, Coleridge Hundred, Pyworthy, Stokenham, Wonford, Yealmpton, Devon, Newton Montague, Dorset, Christchurch, Ringwood, Hants., Easton, Northants., Chedzoy with Canteloes, Donyatt, Dunpole, Shipton Montague, Somerton, Yarlinton, Soms., Earlstoke, Wilts.

²⁹⁵ *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 181 (iv)

Earl of Northumberland, and the Duke of Buckingham to astronomical proportions.²⁹⁶ Although Margaret's withdrawal from court after 1533 meant expenses of that nature were lessened, so were her opportunities for patronage. Moreover, her son Lord Montague still attended the court regularly and, notwithstanding the annuity from his mother and income from his three manors, might have needed occasional financial assistance. Indeed, in 1524 Montague was exempted from paying towards the subsidy of that year, as his income was assessed at less than £50 a year.²⁹⁷ In addition, Geoffrey fell into serious debt towards the end of the 1530s, to whose financial aid Margaret had to come. The successful management of a large estate depended largely upon the ability and reliability of those estate officials. Consequently it is necessary to look at those who occupied positions of authority and responsibility on the Countess of Salisbury's lands. It is hoped that this will allow us to assess Margaret's success as an employer and landlord, while at the same time revealing the quality of administration that was at her disposal.

Kate Mertes has explained the benefits of the yeoman and peasant class as household officers,²⁹⁸ an explanation that can easily be applied to estate officials. Service to a magnate could provide them with a prosperous career, therefore they would be devoted to their employer's interests as a means to their own success. Moreover, they lacked the responsibilities and demands that might distract an employee of more gentle birth. Consequently, it is not surprising to discover that it was two able members of this class that Margaret appointed, in succession, to the office of receiver-general; 'The receiver-general or his equivalent was in supreme control of financial resources.'²⁹⁹ John Skewes was the countess's first receiver-general,³⁰⁰ and her first surveyor,³⁰¹ however he left her service due to his increasing commitments elsewhere. There was no animosity for he remained a member of the countess's council until her arrest, receiving a 100s annuity.³⁰² He was replaced between 1527-8 by Oliver

²⁹⁶ Gunn, S.J., *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk*, pp. 137-9; Hoyle, R.W., 'Henry Percy, sixth earl of Northumberland, and the fall of the House of Percy,' pp. 193-4; Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, pp. 101-03.

²⁹⁷ P.R.O. E.179/69/26; *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 2972.

²⁹⁸ Mertes, K., *The English Noble Household*, pp. 60-1.

²⁹⁹ Ward, J.C., *English Noblewomen*, p. 113.

³⁰⁰ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6874.

³⁰¹ P.R.O. C.1/401/11.

³⁰² P.R.O. S.C. 6/Hen VIII/6875

Frankelyn. Unfortunately little is known about Frankelyn prior to his involvement with Margaret except that in 1511 he was clerk to Edward Chambre, auditor of the exchequer.³⁰³ It is a testament to Margaret's astute judgement, that she was able to recognise the ability and worth of this clerk. Frankelyn made an almost life long career out of service to the countess and was devoted to his mistress. He entered her service immediately after her restoration, for on 6 July 1514 he was receiving monies owed to her from the manor of Ware.³⁰⁴ By 1519 he was one of her revenue collectors for the counties of Somerset, Dorset, Hampshire and Wiltshire,³⁰⁵ and by 1523 had been appointed bailiff of Clavering³⁰⁶ and thus he was involved in arranging all the extensive repairs that Margaret initiated there between 1523 and 1524. Three or four years later he had sufficiently proved his ability to be appointed receiver-general,³⁰⁷ an appointment that was formalised on 8 February 1530, when Margaret declared that she had 'yielded to my beloved servant Oliver Frankelyn,' the office of receiver-general and feodary of all her manors, lands and tenements for life.³⁰⁸ Appointments still flowed Frankelyn's way and in November 1528 he was appointed bailiff of Ware, Hertfordshire and keeper of the park there, and woodward of the manor of Cottingham, Yorkshire,³⁰⁹ while in 1533 he received the keepership of Donyatt Park, Somerset in reversion to Philip Acton.³¹⁰ Not only did he occupy the most important office on Margaret's estates, he was also her most important household officer, having been appointed comptroller.³¹¹ Moreover his wife Johanne joined the household, where she was accorded an honourable position as one of the countess's ladies.³¹² In addition to the fees Frankelyn received from his various offices,³¹³ he

³⁰³ *L&P*, I (i) no. 707.

³⁰⁴ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/1593.

³⁰⁵ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6874, ff. 3, 3b, 4.

³⁰⁶ P.R.O. S.P.1/30, ff. 118-22, *L&P*, IV, no. 100.

³⁰⁷ In a receipt issued by William Wintringham in the nineteenth year of Henry VIII's reign, Frankelyn is described as 'receyvoor Generall of my lady of Salysburyes lands.' P.R.O S.P.1/46, f. 12; *L&P*, IV, no. 3730.

³⁰⁸ P.R.O. E.312/8.

³⁰⁹ *L&P*, XVII, no. 1251 (15)

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 71 (12)

³¹¹ See Appendix 11, f. 83.

³¹² *Ibid.*

was also granted a £13 6s 8d annuity for himself and his wife.³¹⁴ Described as a gentleman in Margaret's inventory, he was allocated two servants to serve him. His relationship with Margaret was close enough for him to feel able to warn her about her own son, Geoffrey, and his evidence in 1538 did not incriminate her, in fact it appears that he tried to protect her.³¹⁵ The king had been impressed by Cromwell's loyalty to the fallen Wolsey, and perhaps he was similarly impressed by Frankelyn, as well as recognising his ability. After Margaret's fall, her receiver-general entered royal service and remained bailiff of Clavering and receiver-general of the Salisbury lands.³¹⁶ By 1545/46 he had been appointed one of the receivers of the Court of General Surveyors.³¹⁷ Although Margaret had appreciated Frankelyn, and rewarded him with offices and an annuity, she apparently made no grants of land to him. This however was rectified by the king, who granted him, ironically, two of his mistresses old manors. In March 1540 he received a 21 year lease of the manor of Clavering where he was bailiff,³¹⁸ and in 1546 was granted in fee Clyst St Mary, Devon.³¹⁹ He died without issue in 1546 holding, in addition, two other manors in Devon: Sutton Lucye and Colwell, his two nephews being his designated heirs.³²⁰

Originally from Wakefield in Yorkshire, Margaret's chief Steward, Richard Lister, settled in Hampshire where he gradually acquired property. Made reader of the Middle Temple in 1515,³²¹ he was originally in the employ of Lord Darcy from 1507-1523.³²² Appointed solicitor-general in 1522, four years later he was appointed

³¹³ He received £10 a year as receiver-general and £4 as feodary, 13s 8d a year for his custody of the wood at Cottingham, £6 20s as bailiff of Ware, £4 13s 4d as bailiff of Clavering and £6 13s 4d a year as keeper of Donyatt Park. In addition, by 1538 he was also receiving 74s 2d, £4 13s 4d and 53s 4d for offices on the manors of Yarlinton, Stokenham and the hundred of Christchurch, respectively. P.R.O. E.312/8; P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875; *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 181 (ii)

³¹⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/132, f. 194.

³¹⁵ See below p. 266.

³¹⁶ *L&P*, XVII, no. 880; P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6867.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, XX (ii) App. 13, p. 554.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, XV, no. 436 (36)

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, XX (ii) no. 266.

³²⁰ P.R.O. Prob. 11/34 (26 Bucke); Ward 7/6/34.

³²¹ Lyster Denny, H.L., *Memorials of an Ancient House: A History of the Family of Lister or Lyster* (Edinburgh, 1913) p. 258.

³²² Ives, E.W., *The Common Lawyers of Pre-Reformation England*, p. 98.

attorney general and made a serjeant-at-law. In the year of his son's marriage to Elizabeth Delabere he became Chief Baron of the Exchequer.³²³ His earliest known association with Margaret began in 1513 when she appointed him her chief steward, replacing Thomas Englefield who had died.³²⁴ Involved in the negotiations for Lord Montague's marriage and appointed receiver for Earlstoke in Wiltshire and Aston Clinton in Buckinghamshire by 1519,³²⁵ his connection with Margaret lasted until her arrest in 1538. Trusted enough to be among those enfeoffed with Aston Chevery to the use of the countess and her heirs,³²⁶ he was also involved on her behalf when she bought Chalton in Hampshire from the Earl of Shrewsbury for £1000 in 1532.³²⁷ It is not known whether Margaret's influence contributed towards the appointments Lister received in the 1520s, but his ability maintained a successful career long after her fall.³²⁸

John Babham, like Oliver Frankelyn, also occupied two of the most important household and estate offices. By 1538 he was the steward of Margaret's household³²⁹ and surveyor of all her lordships and manors.³³⁰ As with Frankelyn little is known about Babham. He may have been the John Babham who entered Oxford University in 1513³³¹ and considering Margaret's penchant for employing Oxford students, this seems quite likely. Already a gentleman when he entered her service, he was locally prominent in Buckinghamshire where he sat on commissions of the peace, and held the stewardships of several monasteries in the county.³³² We cannot be sure exactly when Babham entered Margaret's employ, but he was acting on her behalf when she bought Chalton off the Earl of Shrewsbury in 1532.³³³ Babham enjoyed a warm

³²³ Lyster Denny, H.L., *Memorials of an Ancient House*, p. 258.

³²⁴ Hertford County Office Records. No. 6454.

³²⁵ P.R.O S.C.6/Hen VIII/6874, f. 4b.

³²⁶ *L&P*, V, no. 909 (21)

³²⁷ P.R.O. C.P.25/2/ bundle 37/245, f.66.

³²⁸ In 1546 he was made chief justice of the King's Bench and Master of the Wards. Lyster Denny, H.L., *Memorials of an Ancient House*, p. 258.

³²⁹ See Appendix 11, f. 83.

³³⁰ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

³³¹ Boase, C.W., (ed.), *Register of the University of Oxford*, I (1449-63, 1505-71) (Oxford, 1885) 90.

³³² *L&P*, XVI, no. 779 (8)

³³³ P.R.O., C.P.25/2, bundle 37/245.

relationship with his mistress and her family. He named two daughters after the countess and her daughter Ursula, while Margaret's granddaughter Catherine presented a gift of a gold brooch to his wife Dorothy.³³⁴ In addition he enjoyed a generous annuity of £20 from his mistress.³³⁵

Babham's appointment as surveyor, was presumably to replace Nicholas Harding, who was still acting in that capacity in 1533.³³⁶ Harding was another locally prominent gentleman, this time in Bedfordshire where he sat on a number of commissions.³³⁷ A hardworking royal servant, he was a justice of assize for the Midland circuit in 1509 and 1510³³⁸ and by 1546/47 had been appointed escheator for Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire.³³⁹ He may have left the countess's service due to the demands of his royal duties. Alternatively, as an ambitious royal beurocrat, he may have begun to disapprove of Margaret's behaviour by 1533. When she was angrily dismissed as Mary's governess, Harding might have felt it was safer to leave her employ. He was in receipt of no annuity in 1538 and did not remain a member of her council as John Skewys had. John Turner was also a hard working royal servant who, unlike Harding, was happy to remain in Margaret's employ. Already auditor of the Salisbury lands before 1513,³⁴⁰ Margaret repeated the appointment after her restoration. Turner was still in her employ in 1538 receiving a fee of £10 a year.³⁴¹

One of the most important members of a nobleman's administration was his solicitor, and to this post Margaret appointed John Sawster of Steeple Morden, Cambridgeshire. Solicitor of causes-in-law, he was receiving 40s a year in 1538.³⁴² In addition he was also paid 6s 8d for divers writs and other processes made in law on Margaret's behalf

³³⁴ P.R.O. Prob. 11/32 (8 Populwell)

³³⁵ P.R.O. S.P.1/142, f. 194; *L&P*, XIV, no. 181 (iii)

³³⁶ P.R.O., E.36/155.

³³⁷ He sat on commissions of the peace, of gaol delivery and was appointed as a subsidy collector for Bedfordshire.

³³⁸ *L&P*, I (i) nos. 132 (48), 381 (39)

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, XX, no. 773 (1) p. 425.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, I (i) no. 257 (50)

³⁴¹ P.R.O. S.C.6/6875.

³⁴² *Ibid.*

in that year.³⁴³ Admitted to the Middle Temple in 1519 at the age of 22³⁴⁴ he sat on various commissions for Hertfordshire and Huntingdonshire³⁴⁵ and between 1535 and 1539 was steward of the monastery of Ramsey.³⁴⁶ This position entailed responsibility for all the courts, manors and possessions of the monastery.³⁴⁷ Significantly, Margaret was in receipt of £50 a year from Ramsey as its fee farm, and it is therefore possible that she might have recommended her solicitor to Ramsey. Alternatively, she might have become familiar with Sawster's abilities as the monastery's steward which prompted her to appoint him her solicitor. As with Thomas Hackluyt, it is difficult to know. Similarly to others in Margaret's service, his career was not tainted by his past association with the countess, and by 1541 he was one of the attorneys of the Court of Wards and Liveries.³⁴⁸

Obviously men like Babham and Frankelyn and other prominent officers would have been members of the countess's council, but the two men who were retained specifically for that purpose, were Lewis Fortescue and John Skewys. Lewis Fortescue who hailed from Devon, was retained of the counsel of the countess for 20s a year.³⁴⁹ As another Middle Templar, he was admitted in 1519 and by 1536 was autumnal reader.³⁵⁰ On commissions of the peace for Devon five months before Margaret's arrest, he was appointed, along with three other professional lawyers, to the council of the west in 1539.³⁵¹ One of the feodaries of crown lands in Devon and Cornwall,³⁵² in 1542 he was appointed fourth baron of the exchequer.³⁵³ He might

³⁴³ Ibid.

³⁴⁴ *Register of Admissions to the Honourable Society of the Middle Temple, 15th Century-1944*, I (London, 1944) 11.

³⁴⁵ He sat on commissions of the peace, of gaol delivery, of oyer and terminer and of sewers.

³⁴⁶ *Select Cases in the Court of Requests 1497-1569*, XII (Selden Society, London, 1898) Ixiii.

³⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 87.

³⁴⁸ *L&P*, XVI, no. 580 (34)

³⁴⁹ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

³⁵⁰ *Register of Admissions, Middle Temple*, p. 10.

³⁵¹ Youngs, J.A., 'The Council of the West' *T.R.H.S.*, X (Fifth series, 1959) p. 53.

³⁵² *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 1309 (10)

³⁵³ Ibid., XVII, no. 714 (7)

also have been connected to the Lisles for Muriel St Claire Byrne has suggested that Honour Lisle's great aunt, Margaret Hill, may have been his mother-in-law.³⁵⁴

John Skewys, Margaret's first receiver-general and surveyor, attended Oxford University before he entered Lincolns Inn 1487-88.³⁵⁵ A prominent landowner in Cornwall he sat on various commissions for that county and for Middlesex. He was most probably the John Skewys who served as high sheriff of Cornwall in 1521.³⁵⁶ One of the auditors of the Duchy of Cornwall along with John Turner,³⁵⁷ he also served the Marquis of Exeter, into whose family he had married,³⁵⁸ and who referred to him as 'my cosyn Skewes.'³⁵⁹ Described as having a 'happy genie, accompanied with industry, prudence and dexterity,'³⁶⁰ Margaret was understandably keen to maintain his services and granted him 100s a year to be retained of her council.³⁶¹

The countess's affinity clearly betrayed the influences of others. Margaret was a sensible woman, and in 1513 she had granted Thomas Wolsey an annuity of 100 marks,³⁶² and therefore expected to him to advise her. Consequently certain members of her staff probably came to her on Wolsey's recommendation. John Skewys was such a man. A member of the Cardinal's household he was one of his most trusted councillors, serving him up until his fall,³⁶³ thus he served both Wolsey and Margaret simultaneously. Nor was he the only man who might have been endorsed by Wolsey. Of Margaret's eleven known stewards, excluding her chief Steward, Richard Lister, three of them were connected to Wolsey. Sir Thomas Heneage, steward of Caister, Lincoln,³⁶⁴ had been one of Wolsey's gentleman ushers.³⁶⁵ After he joined the king's

³⁵⁴ *L.L.*, I, 328.

³⁵⁵ *Records of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn*, I: Admissions 1420-1799 (London, 1896) 24.

³⁵⁶ *D.N.B.*, LII (London, 1897) 359.

³⁵⁷ *L&P*, III (ii) no. 391.

³⁵⁸ Skewys had married Exeter's aunt by 1509, when he was appointed executor of the will of Edward Courtenay, Earl of Devon. P.R.O. Prob. 11/16 (15 Bennett)

³⁵⁹ *D.N.B.*, LII, 359.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

³⁶¹ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

³⁶² *C.A.D.*, V, A. 13349.

³⁶³ *D.N.B.*, LII, 359.

³⁶⁴ *L&P*, XIV, (i) no. 181 (ii)

Privy Chamber in 1528, he corresponded regularly with the Cardinal.³⁶⁶ Sir Thomas Denys, steward of Pyworthy, had also been a member of Wolsey's household, serving as lord chamberlain in 1527 during Wolsey's visit to France,³⁶⁷ while Christopher Conyers, son of Lord Conyers and steward of Catterick, Aldbrough and Hangwest Frenbles in Yorkshire,³⁶⁸ might have been educated in the Cardinal's household. In October 1516 Lord Dacre wrote to Wolsey that, despite the request of himself and Christopher's father for Christopher to enter Wolsey's household at All Hallows:

I heartily beseech your grace to respite his said coming unto the Feast of Easter to the intent, in the mean season, he may be in Lincolns Inn, and learn whereby at his entry to your service he may be more able to please and serve your grace.³⁶⁹

Margaret's eight remaining stewards were Sir Thomas Boleyn, Sir John Carew, John Cobley, Sir William Compton, John Corbet, Thomas Hackluyt, Edward Montague and Sir Ralph Verney. John Carew and William Compton are in a class of their own, as their appointments were made by the king prior to Margaret's restoration. In March 1512, they were jointly appointed stewards of all Margaret's manors in Dorset and Somerset in survivorship,³⁷⁰ appointments Margaret was obliged to honour. Although Carew's appointment may not have been unwelcome, Margaret's relationship with Compton was not easy. A rejected suitor, he was responsible for the uncertainty of Margaret's title to several manors coming to light. Nevertheless, to all appearances, they managed to maintain a satisfactory relationship with no reported problems.

Thomas Boleyn, Earl of Wiltshire needs no introduction. Father of Anne Boleyn, he was steward of Bushey, Hertfordshire.³⁷¹ Thomas Hackluyt, steward in Wales has already been mentioned, while John Cobley esquire of Brightley, was Margaret's

³⁶⁵ *D.N.B.*, XXV, (London, 1891) 407.

³⁶⁶ Gwyn, P., *The King's Cardinal* (London, 1990) pp. 585, 615.

³⁶⁷ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 41.

³⁶⁸ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

³⁶⁹ *L&P*, II, (i) no. 2481.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, I, (i) no. 1123 (26)

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, XIV (i) no. 181 (ii)

steward for her manors in Devon.³⁷² His daughter had made an excellent match when she married Roger Gifford, afterwards Sir Roger Gifford of Brightley.³⁷³ A neighbour of the Lisles he was entitled to deer from their Park at Umberleigh.³⁷⁴ However he was also involved in a dispute with Honour Lisle and her Basset relatives when he diverted the waters of the river Tawe near Umberleigh Weir.³⁷⁵ Nevertheless, Margaret was completely satisfied with Cobley who was, along with Sir Thomas Heneage, the highest paid of her stewards.³⁷⁶ It is likely that Roger Gifford, Cobley's son-in-law, was related to James Gifford, cousin of Thomas Denys, Margaret's steward of Pyworthy. John Corbet was Steward of Brixton, Isle of Wight, from at least 1517.³⁷⁷ Corbet was the Duke of Buckingham's receiver and forester of Caus, and wore his livery. He was also a member of one of the most important and influential families in Shropshire,³⁷⁸ and may have helped towards facilitating Margaret's attainment of Elizabeth Delabere's wardship. By 1522, Sir Ralph Verney, most likely Margaret's nephew-in-law,³⁷⁹ had been appointed her steward of Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.³⁸⁰ This was probably another of those rare instances of patronage between the two families. Finally in 1536 Margaret appointed 'my beloved in Christ Edward Montague serjeant-at-law,' steward of Easton near Stamford in Northamptonshire for life, with a fee of 20s a year.³⁸¹ Possibly a distant relation of the countess³⁸² Montague had served Margaret before this when he was involved in

³⁷² P.R.O. Stac. 2/18/167; L&P, XIV, (i) no. 181 (ii)

³⁷³ *L.L.*, IV, 56.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 327.

³⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, V, Appendix 3, pp 346-7.

³⁷⁶ *L&P*, XIV, (i) no. 181 (ii). John Cobley and Thomas Heneage received 66s 8d, Thomas Boleyn 40s, Thomas Hackluyt 26s 8d and Christopher Conyers 20s.

³⁷⁷ P.R.O. E.101/490/12, f. 3.

³⁷⁸ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 224.

³⁷⁹ Nephew of Sir Ralph Verney, Eleanor Pole's husband, he was among those enfeoffed of certain manors by the countess in 1519, to ensure payment of Ursula's dowry. Loyd, L.C., and Stenton, D.M., (eds.), *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals*, pp. 15-16.

³⁸⁰ Chibnall, A.C., (ed.), 'The Certificate for Musters for Buckinghamshire in 1522' XVII (*Buckinghamshire Record Society*, 1973) 66.

³⁸¹ B.L. Lansdowne MS, 203; *L&P*, XI, no. 1219; XIV, (i) no. 181 (ii)

³⁸² Montague's family claimed descent from the Earls of Salisbury. *D.N.B.*, XXXVIII (London, 1894) 224

her purchase of Chalton in 1532.³⁸³ Following attendance at Cambridge university he entered the Middle Temple where he was autumn reader in 1524 and 1531. An intelligent man, he made a successful career out of royal service. Knighted in 1537, he became chief justice of the Kings Bench in 1538/39 and in 1545 was transferred to the position of Chief Justice of the Common Pleas.³⁸⁴

According to Jennifer Ward, it became common in the later middle ages for stewards to be members of the gentry or nobility, whose duties often included membership of their lord, or lady's, council.³⁸⁵ Barbara Harris, investigating the Duke of Buckingham's administration has shown that, as he viewed his lands as a source of political power as well as a source of income, he tended to appoint dukes and earls as his stewards, who would naturally appoint deputies:

his goal in filling these stewardships was to strengthen his personal and political ties within the peerage rather than to maximise his income or improve the management of his estates.³⁸⁶

Margaret's appointment of Thomas Boleyn is the only one that can safely be compared to the appointments made by the Duke of Buckingham. His appointment as steward was probably made to patronise him and earn his favour, it is not likely that he performed the duties himself. Nevertheless, he was a talented financial administrator.³⁸⁷ Unfortunately we do not know when the appointment took place, but it was probably during his daughter's ascendancy and possibly after Margaret's dismissal from Mary's household. Although he held a fee farm of Margaret in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire³⁸⁸ and remained her steward after his daughter's fall,³⁸⁹ it seems unlikely that the father of Anne Boleyn ever sat on the Countess of Salisbury's council. The rest of the appointments however, excluding those of Sir John Carew and Sir William Compton over which Margaret had had no say, appear to

³⁸³ P.R.O. C.P.25/2, bundle 37/245.

³⁸⁴ *D.N.B.*, XXXVIII, 224.

³⁸⁵ Ward, J.C., *English Noblewomen*, p. 111.

³⁸⁶ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 105.

³⁸⁷ Block, J.S., *Factional Politics and the English Reformation 1520-1540* (Suffolk, 1993) p. 10.

³⁸⁸ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

³⁸⁹ *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 181 (ii)

have combined local prominence with a genuine administrative ability. It was important that the men who carried out these duties had influence locally in order to strengthen the countess's links with the area and ensure that her wishes were carried out. It is feasible that the remaining seven stewards were at least part time members of her council, able to advise her accurately regarding their respective areas of operation. Christopher Conyers, a member of a prominent Yorkshire family, had attended Lincolns Inn,³⁹⁰ Thomas Denys of Devon had had legal training³⁹¹ while John Cobley was a well established Devonshire figure and neighbour of the countess. Thomas Hackluyt, possibly a Herefordshire gentleman³⁹² had training enough to begin his career as clerk of the kings council,³⁹³ while John Corbet, in addition to local prominence, possessed administrative expertise which had gained him employment with the Duke of Buckingham. Sir Ralph Verney was related to the countess and a member of a well established Buckinghamshire family, whose members had served the crown before. In addition he enjoyed the favour of Henry VIII as did Sir Thomas Heneage, a Lincolnshire gentleman whose local popularity, however, was damaged somewhat in 1536, when he was attacked by an angry mob while trying to suppress the Cistercian abbey near Louth in Lincolnshire.³⁹⁴ Edward Montague was a substantial Northamptonshire landowner who succeeded to the family estates when his elder brother died without issue.³⁹⁵ A proficient lawyer, and already an adviser of the countess by 1532, his standing was such that when he obtained the degree of serjeant-at-law, a celebration followed lasting five days at which the king and queen were guests.³⁹⁶

Also enjoying Margaret's favour and employment were those who had once served the Duke of Buckingham. Most probably these individuals came to Margaret's attention through her contact with the duke and may have become attached to her following his

³⁹⁰ *Records of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn*, p. 37.

³⁹¹ Gwyn, P., *King's Cardinal*, p. 199.

³⁹² An Inquisition Post Mortem exists for a Thomas Hackluyt of Herefordshire for 1516/17. Although it cannot be our Thomas Hackluyt, it could very well be a relative. Chancery series, 2/30/121, Exchequer series, 2/418/3, reference in *Index of Inquisitions preserved in the Public Record Office, Lists and Indexes*, XXIII (New York, 1963) 110.

³⁹³ *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 3087.

³⁹⁴ *D.N.B.*, XXV, 407.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

fall. John Carter, Margaret's reeve of Earlstoke, Wiltshire after 1520,³⁹⁷ was more than likely the same John Carter who was the duke's attorney at the exchequer between 1498 and 1509. In receipt of a 66s 8d annuity, he was farmer of Buckingham's property of Agmondesham, Buckinghamshire by 1521.³⁹⁸ John Corbet and his wife Anne, and William Cholmeley and his wife, who have already been mentioned, were all annuitants of the countess.³⁹⁹ Annuities were obviously granted as a mark of favour, but nevertheless, in most cases annuities were granted to individuals who were useful, and where some kind of reciprocal favour was expected. John Corbet, an influential member of Shropshire society, has already been discussed, while William Cholmeley had been the Duke of Buckingham's cofferer from 1503-21 and his clerk of the wardrobe from 1506 as well as an annuitant. Of yeoman stock, he rose in the duke's service due to his personal merit.⁴⁰⁰ Both himself and his wife forged close links with Margaret. The wife of a yeoman who rose to the gentleman class, Johan Cholmeley attained a great honour by joining Margaret's household as one of her ladies-in-waiting.⁴⁰¹ However, the Cholmeleys reciprocated the countess's favour by lending her considerable sums of money which, by 1538 had amounted to £66 13s 4d.⁴⁰² Margaret's annuitants also included more illustrious personages. In addition to Thomas Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell and Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk were on the countess's payroll. Receiving £20 a year,⁴⁰³ Cromwell's services were apparently not valued quite as much as Wolsey's who had been granted 100 marks a year! However, Charles Brandon received the ultimate annuity, when he was granted the extremely generous sum of £40 in 1514, an amount he was still receiving in 1538.⁴⁰⁴ However, his close friendship with the king meant his support was worth having.

³⁹⁷ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

³⁹⁸ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 219.

³⁹⁹ In 1538 William Cholmeley and his wife Johanne were receiving an annuity of 66s 8d and John and Anne Corbet an annuity of £6 13s 4d. P.R.O. S.P.1/142, f.194.

⁴⁰⁰ Rawcliffe, C., *The Staffords, Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham*, p. 89.

⁴⁰¹ See Appendix 11, f. 83.

⁴⁰² *L&P*, XIV, (i) no. 181 (iv) The Countess had apparently discharged this debt by 1538.

⁴⁰³ P.R.O. S.P.1/142, f. 194.

⁴⁰⁴ B.L. Cart. Harl. MS. 43, F. 9; Harl. Ch. 43, F. 8; P.R.O. S.P.1/142, f. 194.

Reginald's attendance at Oxford university helped to create the links between Margaret and that college. For instance the President of Corpus Christi College was another of those who lent her money,⁴⁰⁵ John Helyar whom Margaret appointed as her domestic chaplain in 1532 and rector of Warblington in 1533,⁴⁰⁶ matriculated at Corpus Christi College in 1522 and also enjoyed the patronage of Wolsey,⁴⁰⁷ while Thomas Starkey, who had also studied at Oxford and was Reginald's chaplain by 1530, stayed at Margaret's London residence after his return to England in 1534. Genuinely fond of Margaret and her sons, he wrote to Cromwell in their defence following the arrival of Reginald's 'De Unitate' in 1536, explaining that Lord Montague, 'hys most dere brother, who by hys acte ys depyvyd of a grete comfourt of hys lyfe,'⁴⁰⁸ and in his will bequeathed £4 to 'the veray honnerable and my singulier good lorde, my lorde Montague...to bie hym a hagg.'⁴⁰⁹ Gentian Hervet, a young scholar from Orleans who was patronised by Margaret and her son Geoffrey, had also studied at Corpus as the pupil of Thomas Lupset,⁴¹⁰ whose close friendship with Reginald is well known:

Pole's regard for Lupset was known to be so great that later it was very probably Lupset who was chosen by Henry for the task of persuading Pole to lend the King his support in the matter of the divorce.⁴¹¹

It appears that Margaret also enjoyed a friendship with Thomas's mother Alice, obviously acquainted through their sons. By 1538 Alice had lent Margaret the considerable sum of £100.⁴¹² A further example of relations forged through Reginald's connections concerns Edward Wotton who was receiving an annuity of 40s from Margaret as a doctor of 'phisike' in 1538.⁴¹³ Educated at Magdalen College

⁴⁰⁵ By 1538 she owed him £33 6s 8d. *L&P*, XIV, (i) no. 181 (iv)

⁴⁰⁶ *L&P*, V, no. 985; and Simmonds, N., *Warblington Church* (Havant, 1979) p. 9.

⁴⁰⁷ *D.N.B.*, XXV, 381.

⁴⁰⁸ B.L. Cotton. MS. Cleopatra E. VI, f. 384; *L&P*, XI, no. 157.

⁴⁰⁹ Zeeveld, W.G., *Foundations of Tudor Policy* (London, 1969) p. 228.

⁴¹⁰ Gee, J.A., *The Life and Works of Thomas Lupset* (Oxford, 1928) p. 171.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

⁴¹² *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 181 (iv)

⁴¹³ P.R.O. S.P.1/142, f.194.

school, Oxford, he was elected first reader in Greek at Corpus 1520-1.⁴¹⁴ Moreover, his son Henry was the godson of Alice Lupset while he was one of the executors of her will.⁴¹⁵

Some of the countess's household servants and annuitants also had close links to Lord Montague, couples like Gerard and Mary Danett who have already been mentioned, and Jerome and Anne Ragland. It is possible that Jerome had been brought up by Margaret. He was in receipt of a £10 annuity for himself and his wife⁴¹⁶ while Margaret also paid for his marriage.⁴¹⁷ In addition his wife Anne became one of the countess's waiting ladies.⁴¹⁸ According to Geoffrey Pole, Ragland, 'hath byn very famyliar with the lorde Mountacute and knownen very [much] of his mynde.'⁴¹⁹ Certainly, after Montague was arrested, Jerome was among three men who served him in the Tower and who were described as most of his counsel, 'especially the sayd Hierome who was as it was his Right hand.'⁴²⁰

That the head of this affinity was a woman, is perhaps reflected in the countess's employment of women in the administration of her estates. According to Shulamith Shahar:

Reality generally matched the law. It matched it with regard to all offices not held as fiefs.....Thus, women did not fill posts or perform functions on the manor.⁴²¹

However, Margaret's appointment of women to offices on her manors disproves this. She employed two female reeves, one female bailiff and a female receiver. The two reeves were Margaret Frye and Agnes Jacob. Margaret Frye took over as reeve of Wilton after the death of her husband who had been the previous reeve, and there is

⁴¹⁴ *D.N.B.*, LXIII (London, 1900) 48.

⁴¹⁵ Gee, J.A., *Op.cit.*, pp. 161, 22.

⁴¹⁶ P.R.O. S.P.1/142, f. 194.

⁴¹⁷ *L&P*, XIV, (i) no. 181 (iv)

⁴¹⁸ See Appendix 11, f. 83.

⁴¹⁹ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 219; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (6)

⁴²⁰ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 23, *L&P*, XIII, no. 828 (2)

⁴²¹ Shahar, S., *The Fourth Estate*, p. 11.

no evidence that she employed a deputy.⁴²² Agnes Jacob, the reeve of Swainston, Isle of Wight did employ a deputy, Robert Whaddon,⁴²³ but unlike Margaret Frye there is no suggestion that she was replacing her husband. In 1522 one of Margaret's bailiffs in Lincoln was a Lady Elizabeth Hanshert, who used the services of a William Astowgh as deputy.⁴²⁴ The identity of Elizabeth Hanshert is unclear, but her surname might have been Hanserd rather than Henshert, and she may have been connected to Anthony Hanserd who apparently was the receiver of Caister in Lincoln in 1522.⁴²⁵ In 1521, Margaret's receiver of various manors in the counties of Hampshire, Hertfordshire and Lincoln was 'my Lady Maister Lyster,' obviously Jane Lister wife of Margaret's chief steward, Richard Lister.⁴²⁶ Receiving the rents with her was Oliver Frankelyn and it is feasible that he was acting as her deputy. However, the document does not state that Frankelyn received the rents on her behalf, but that the rents were received 'by my lady Maister Lyster and Mr Oliver.'⁴²⁷ Consequently, it is quite possible that Jane Lister was more than just a nominal receiver.

Jennifer Ward posed the question whether:

noblewomen were able to build up a retinue in their own right and whether they could offer the sort of patronage which was attractive in the late medieval world.⁴²⁸

The fact that Margaret was able to attract to her service a number of competent and talented men and then maintain those services over a long period of time begs an affirmative response. Of her seven most important officers in 1538, Oliver Frankelyn, Richard Lister, John Skewys and John Turner had served her for twenty five years and Babham for at least six. Unfortunately we do not know when Lewis Fortescue and John Sawster joined her service, and of her known stewards, we lack evidence for four

⁴²² P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6874, f. 4b.

⁴²³ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6875.

⁴²⁴ P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/1833.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid.*, first receipt.

⁴²⁶ Jane was the daughter of Sir Ralph Shirley, one of the knights of the body to Henry VII. Lyster Denny, H.L., *Memorials of an Ancient House*, p. 260.

⁴²⁷ P.R.O. E.101/518/42.

⁴²⁸ Ward, J.C., *English Noblewomen*, p. 133.

of them. However, regarding five of them, Sir Thomas Denys and John Cobley served her for at least fifteen and eleven years respectively and Montague for at least six. Sir Ralph Verney had died, but John Corbet was still receiving an annuity in 1538, and was presumably still in office. Therefore, he had served her for no less than twenty one years. She also enjoyed longevity of service from some of her lesser officers. The earliest surviving complete set of ministers accounts for Margaret's lands begins in 1518. Using these and those ministers accounts of 1538 we can attempt to discover how long her estate officers remained in her employ.⁴²⁹ Thomas Geoffrey was the countess's reeve of Hunton, Hampshire for twenty years, while John Apployn served her in Somerton, Somerset for the same number of years. Andrew Hunte was succeeded as reeve of Clyst St Mary, Devon by a relative, Richard Hunte, thus the family's service with her also lasted twenty years. William Legge began his career as a servant of Margaret's, and was described as such in 1519.⁴³⁰ By 1538 he had risen to the positions of bailiff of Chalton, Hampshire with a fee of 60s, and yeoman of her chamber,⁴³¹ and in addition he enjoyed an annuity of 40s.⁴³² Thus he was in the countess's employ for at least nineteen years. It is not surprising that Sir Griffin Richard's association with the countess was also of long duration. Clerk of the queen's signet from 1509⁴³³ he was also Catherine of Aragon's receiver-general.⁴³⁴ As bailiff of Easton, Northamptonshire, a post to which he had been appointed by Henry VIII in 1509,⁴³⁵ his association with Margaret must have spanned twenty five years. John Mounson, bailiff of South Kelsey and receiver and bailiff of Caister, Lincoln served her in that capacity for sixteen years as did Sir Nicholas Tyrwhitt, the bailiff of Caister market. Lastly, William Wintringham, deputy to her receiver-general Oliver Frankelyn, and reeve and bailiff of Cottingham, Yorkshire, remained with her for eleven years.⁴³⁶

⁴²⁹ These minister's accounts are P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6874; 6875.

⁴³⁰ P.R.O. S.P.1/18, f. 275.

⁴³¹ *L&P*, XIV, (i) no. 181 (ii); see Appendix 11, f. 83b.

⁴³² P.R.O. S.P.1/142, f. 194.

⁴³³ *L&P*, I (i) no. 82, p. 41.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, IV (iii) no. 6121.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid.*, I (i) no. 218 (9)

⁴³⁶ P.R.O. S.P.1/46, f. 12; *L&P*, IX, no. 3730.

Although it is impossible to be sure of their length of service, John Buller, Nicholas Fawkener and William Perkyns serve as good examples of those who made a lucrative career in the countess's employ. John Buller occupied several offices, as reeve of Yarlington, and bailiff of Somerton hundred, Shipton Montague, Newton Montague and Swyre. In addition a Richard Buller, possibly his son, was one of Margaret's yeomen of the chamber.⁴³⁷ Nicholas Fawkener reflects to a lesser extent, the careers of Frankleyn and Babham. In 1538 he was bailiff of Warblington and keeper of Warblington Park.⁴³⁸ In addition he occupied a prestigious and responsible position in Margaret's household, as marshal of the hall.⁴³⁹ Finally William Perkyns, bailiff of Crookham, Berkshire and keeper of two parks at Crookham⁴⁴⁰ was also one of Margaret's gentlemen waiters.⁴⁴¹

Obviously, not all of Margaret's manors enjoyed the consistent service of one bailiff or reeve. Conducting a general sweep of manor staff using the ministers accounts for 24 Henry VII-1 Henry VIII, 10-11 Henry VIII and 29-30 Henry VIII,⁴⁴² eighteen properties had a change of staff between 1519 and 1538. Eleven had two consecutive reeves and seven had two consecutive bailiffs. Only ten can be traced back to the reign of Henry VII, and of these only one bailiff continued in Margaret's service, Thomas Marler bailiff of Coleridge Hundred, and one reeve, Andrew Hunte reeve of Clyst St Mary. Of course, over a nineteen year period only a single change of staff would seem to be an exceptional record. However, as we lack information for the intermediate period we cannot come to any definite conclusions regarding the staff on these manors.

On the whole, existing evidence strongly indicates that Margaret enjoyed a successful relationship with her servants and associates. As Jennifer Ward notes; 'The lady had to gain the respect of her councillors and officials and to appoint those who would serve her well,⁴⁴³ and it is clear that Margaret succeeded in this. The majority of

⁴³⁷ See Appendix 11, f. 83b.

⁴³⁸ *L&P*, XIV, (i) no. 181 (ii)

⁴³⁹ See Appendix 11, f. 83b.

⁴⁴⁰ *L&P*, XIV, (i) no. 181 (ii)

⁴⁴¹ See Appendix 11, f. 83b.

⁴⁴² P.R.O. S.C.6/HenVII-VIII/6928;7019; Hen VIII/6874;6875.

⁴⁴³ Ward, J.C., *English Noblewomen*, p. 111.

those holding important offices on the countess's estates had legal training or some administrative experience, while most of them were talented enough to also attract the attention of the king. Moreover, the fact that they were in the service of a woman, was never an issue; 'In such a hierarchical society as that of later medieval England servants normally obeyed the commands of their superiors, lord or lady.'⁴⁴⁴ Margaret combined noble ancestry with a natural dignity, something which understandably inspired respect. Her determination, sometimes to the point of ruthlessness, combined with considerable energy and intelligence, also encouraged obedience. She was obviously a woman who could command men, but who could do so with diplomatic authority. Moreover, she could attract and maintain their services as successfully as any 'good lord' could, by making service to her worth their while; 'A lady with powerful relations and contacts at court was in an excellent position to further the ambitions of her retinue.'⁴⁴⁵ Margaret possessed all these advantages, while her most powerful relation at court was the king himself. Even after she lost the king's favour, few of her servants left her employ. Frankelyn's devotion is a testament to her popularity, while John Evans, bailiff of Medmenham from the reign of Henry VII, bought necessaries for her out of his own pocket during her years of financial difficulties, and when there was no prospect of her restoration. Margaret lived with lavish outward show, maintaining large, imposing, luxurious households which encouraged the respect and deference she was shown. She wielded patronage and sought it, and where her gender became an obstruction, sensibly utilised the services of her sons. She was responsible for extensive lands and to ensure their efficient exploitation chose the members of her administration with care. Like Henry VII she rewarded ability rather than status, and was consequently well served. She took on the responsibilities of the Earldom of Salisbury with enthusiasm, and as countess, discharged them successfully within the boundaries imposed by her sex. It was an achievement her male counterpart would have found hard to surpass.

444 Archer, R.A., 'How ladies... who live on their manors ought to manage their households and estates,' p. 152.

445 Ward, J.C., *Op.cit.*, p. 135.

CHAPTER SIX

DIFFICULT YEARS; 1519-1538

The years 1519-1538 encompassed monumental changes in the constitution of England. Naturally the actions of the Pole family are significant, for it was inevitable that such a family would be drawn into the political machinations of these years. Margaret, a substantial landowner with a respectable claim to the throne and four politically active sons to whom she could transmit that claim, eventually found herself centre stage of a drama which resulted in her own execution and that of her eldest son. This chapter will attempt to chart the family's fortunes during this period, while their behaviour and attitudes will serve as a starting point from which to begin an analysis of their sensational fall in 1538.

The first brush with scandal came in 1519 as a result of the disenchantment and disgust felt by the king's council, and other sober members of the court, towards the boisterous young men of the Privy Chamber. Historians continue to disagree over the motives behind the so called 'purge' of May 1519. According to David Starkey,¹ Wolsey orchestrated their expulsion under the guise of household reform because he feared that the influence of the 'minions' with the king might undermine his pre-eminent position, a view John Guy accepts.² In order to consolidate his victory, he replaced them with 'men of his own choosing.' Greg Walker however argues convincingly for a different explanation, adhering to the account given by Edward Hall that the 'purge' was provoked by the Council as a result of the minions' increasingly obnoxious behaviour and over familiarity with the king following their return from a mission to Paris in 1518.³ He suggests that Wolsey might not even have been at the council meetings immediately preceding the expulsions due to illness,⁴ and goes on to show that the reforms, far from being a mere smoke screen were in part

¹ Starkey, D.R., *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, pp. 103-04.

² Guy, J., *Tudor England* (Oxford, 1990) pp. 96-7.

³ Walker, G., 'The "Expulsion of the Minions" of 1519 Reconsidered' *Historical Journal*, XXXII (1989) 1-16.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 11, 15.

carried out.⁵ What has left historians thoroughly confused however, are the identities of the individuals expelled and the composition of the Privy Chamber immediately before and after the expulsion. It is this very question that concerns us as explanations have remained consistently vague regarding the fate of Arthur Pole. According to David Starkey, the gentlemen expelled were Sir Edward Neville, Nicholas Carew, Francis Bryan and Francis Pointz, the latter having apparently replaced William Coffin shortly after September 1518.⁶ Greg Walker claims that Pointz, although expelled, was not a gentleman of the Privy Chamber and that William Coffin was among those removed.⁷ No evidence places Arthur among those purged in 1519, even though his experience of the French court would have made him an ideal candidate for the French mission of 1518. In fact Greg Walker believes that Arthur and Henry Norris held on to their posts.⁸ David Starkey also feels that Arthur escaped the 'purge' but only because he had already been removed shortly after Christmas 1518, and replaced by William Cary.⁹ His only evidence for this however is an entry in the King's Book of Payments for New Year 1519; 'To young Carre, on Twelfth Eve, playing money for the King, 1,000 cr., at 4s 2d.'¹⁰ Peter Gwyn places Cary in the jousts of 1517 and among those who were created gentlemen of the Privy Chamber as early as September 1518, referring incredibly to Starkey.¹¹ Although he is clearly wrong¹² the evidence cited by Starkey is certainly not enough to prove that Arthur was removed in 1518. However, the evidence is definitely ambiguous regarding his membership of the Privy Chamber after 1519. At the Field of the Cloth of Gold in the summer of 1520, Arthur attended as a member of the king's chamber. Along with Sir William Sidney, Sir Richard Tempest and Francis Pointz, he was described as a squire of the body, while William Cary was described as a squire for the body in the Privy Chamber.¹³ Obviously, Arthur was not serving in the Privy Chamber on this

⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

⁶ Starkey, D.R., 'The development of the Privy Chamber,' p. 112.

⁷ Walker, G., *Op.cit.*, p. 6.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Starkey, D.R., *Op.cit.*, p. 115.

¹⁰ *L&P*, III (ii) p. 1533.

¹¹ Gwyn, P., *The King's Cardinal*, p. 556.

¹² Those listed as gentlemen of the Privy Chamber in 1518 were: Sir Edward Neville, Arthur Poole, Nicholas Carewe, Francis Brian, Henry Norres and William Coffyn. *L&P*, II, (ii) no. 4409. In the Jousts of 1517 Cary does not appear in the list of those participating. Ibid., p. 1510.

¹³ Ibid., III (i) no. 704, p. 242.

occasion. Again on 29 September 1520, Arthur received an annuity of £33 6s 8d as a squire of the body, not a gentleman of the Privy Chamber.¹⁴ However, holding the position of squire of the body did not preclude membership of the Privy Chamber at the same time. For instance, Sir Richard Jerningham received an annuity in September 1520 and was described as being 'in place of one of the squires of the Body.'¹⁵ However, Jerningham was already a member of the Privy Chamber. In August 1520 he was appointed ambassador to France with instructions to describe himself as being of the king's 'Secret and Privy Chamber.'¹⁶ Moreover, Thomas Cheyney was also listed as a squire of the body in September 1520,¹⁷ yet he, according to Starkey, was appointed to the Privy Chamber before June 1520.¹⁸ Again Francis Bryan who was back at court and presumably the Privy Chamber as early as October 1519¹⁹ was described in 1521 and 1522 as a squire of the body.²⁰ Finally, Francis Pointz, a squire of the body with Arthur at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, was appointed one of the carvers who were to serve the King for Christmas 1521. These carvers were to attend the king 'in his Privy Chamber, dining chamber or elsewhere' at the discretion of the gentlemen ushers.²¹ Clearly, Pointz still enjoyed access to the Privy Chamber. It is impossible therefore, to be certain about Arthur's membership of the Privy Chamber after 1519. Although he temporarily fell into disgrace at the fall of the Duke of Buckingham, he continued to enjoy the king's favour, gaining his support in the dispute with his father-in-law, Sir Roger Lewkenor. It was not until 1526 that Arthur was definitely removed from the Privy Chamber during Wolsey's cost cutting exercise known as the Eltham Ordinances. Although again seeing a political motive behind these, Starkey does accept that there was a genuine need for reform,²² while Gwyn feels the necessity to prune the household to economise was the only reason.²³

¹⁴ Ibid., no. 999.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Starkey, D.R., *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, p. 84.

¹⁷ *L&P*, III (i) no. 999.

¹⁸ Starkey, D.R., 'The development of the Privy Chamber,' p. 128

¹⁹ Walker, G., *Op.cit.*, p. 16.

²⁰ *L&P*, III (ii) no. 1451 (10); no. 2145 (8)

²¹ Ibid., no. 1899.

²² Starkey, D.R., *The English Court from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, pp. 105-07.

²³ Gwyn, P., *Op.cit.*, pp. 561-3.

Arthur was removed to the outer chamber where he again served under the title of squire of the body along with Sir Thomas Tempest, Sir William Sidney and Francis Pointz.²⁴ This is no indication that Arthur had lost the king's favour, for Francis Bryan, Nicholas Carew and Sir William Compton, Henry's closest companions, were also removed. Arthur's position was still honourable for he was to lie 'upon the Kinges palet,' while each of the squires were to be attended by six servants.²⁵

In 1519 it was to be two more years before the first serious storm appeared on the horizon. In these years Margaret continued to enjoy New Years gifts from the king, bouche of court and in May 1520 the lucrative wardship of an heiress. By the latter date she had also been appointed governess to the Princess Mary, while the king's generosity had allowed her son Reginald to attend the university of Padua. In April 1519, Reginald wrote to Henry thanking him for his liberality, and informing him of the great respect with which he had been treated by the magistrates at Padua due to his relationship with Henry VIII.²⁶ Meanwhile Margaret's two eldest sons took part in all the major celebrations at court, and in 1521 the sober Lord Montague actually deigned to take part in that sport at which his younger brother excelled. On the 11 and 12 of February, Montague participated in the jousts and revels held at York Place.²⁷ Two months later however, the party atmosphere had changed; the Duke of Buckingham, kinsman and friend of the Poles was executed, Margaret was removed as Mary's governess, Arthur was expelled from court and Lord Montague was imprisoned in the Tower of London along with his father-in-law Lord Bergavenny.

Although historians tend to disagree over the seriousness of Buckingham's threat most modern scholars believe that the duke's fate was of his own making. His alleged indiscreet conversations which involved speculation on the succession and blustering rages during which he threatened to assassinate the king would be unacceptable from anyone, let alone someone in Buckingham's position, whose wealth and 'proximity to the throne made the slightest indiscretion dangerous.'²⁸ Indeed, J.J. Scarisbrick

²⁴ *L&P*, IV (i) no. 1939.

²⁵ Jerdan, W., *The Rutland Papers*, XXI (Camden Society, old series, London, 1842) 101.

²⁶ *L&P*, III (i) no. 198.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, (ii) p. 1557.

²⁸ Loades, D.M., *Politics and the Nation*, p. 126.

believes that the king 'had no alternative but to strike.'²⁹ Barbara Harris has charted Buckingham's blunders up until his arrest and feels that the king 'took reports that the duke threatened to alter the succession very seriously.'³⁰ His execution, she continues, was, 'one of the earliest manifestations of the dynastic concerns that were to play such a large role in the religious and political revolution of the 1530s.'³¹ Most importantly, whatever the truth about Buckingham's intentions, the king believed the evidence and was genuinely afraid. Therefore, all those associated with Buckingham were in a very precarious position. The Poles' friendship with the duke had thus proved to be a double edged sword.

The storm finally broke in April. On 8 April Buckingham was summoned to London, and by 16 April his servants were undergoing interrogations in the Tower. On 13 May Buckingham was tried and on 17 May he was executed, just over a month from his initial summons. Lord Montague and Bergavenny were lodged in the Tower sometime before 7 May, for on that date Sir William Fitzwilliam wrote to Wolsey from France, 'The French king and the Admiral tell me that the lords Bergavenny and Montague are taken.'³² They were probably arrested in April, around the same time as the duke. Arthur's activities at this time, can only be conjectured from two frustratingly mysterious pieces of evidence. The first of these are the well known notes, jotted in Latin by Richard Pace, on the back of a private letter sent to him on 29 March 1521. As he wrote that the king 'believes' Buckingham will be found guilty, they must have been written before Buckingham's execution on 17 May. The section of interest to us has proved a little difficult to translate coherently, but runs thus:

Arthur Pole has been expelled from court. The Lord Leonard Grey has confessed that Arthur asked him to write concerning the imprisonment of the duke; he refused. He sent however his request to the brothers Henton to place Pole in ... whom he did not find. Concerning the lady Salisbury the matter is under debate because of her nobility and goodness.³³

²⁹ Scarisbrick, J.J., *Henry VIII* (London, 1988) p. 122.

³⁰ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 209.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

³² *L&P*, III (i) no. 1268.

³³ *Ibid.*, no. 1204.

It is not possible to ascertain from this exactly when Arthur was expelled. It might have been during April, when Buckingham and Montague were arrested, alternatively it might have been much earlier on in the proceedings to prevent him, as a relative and friend of the duke, gleaning sensitive information. Again it is difficult to be sure whom Arthur was trying to persuade Grey to write to, but the most likely candidate is Reginald, who was studying at Padua university in Italy. The Henton brothers refer to the Carthusian Monastery at Henton, one of whose members, unintentionally, brought about the duke's fall, but what is meant is not clear. The second piece of evidence is equally inconclusive. Written in the third person, it reveals that Arthur was trying to conceal the identity of a visitor he received at Dowgate:

Mr Arthur Pole did send a letter to the keeper of my lady of Salisbury's place before Dowgate instantly desiring him not to show the name of the person which spake with the said Mr Pole on Monday last, but in any wise to say it was a bailiff of his which come to pay money unto him, and to send him word wheder any such inquere were made or not.³⁴

Unfortunately it is undated, but is dated in *Letters and Papers* to the period of Buckingham's arrest. If it was written at this time, as seems likely, it does not necessarily mean that Arthur was engaged in anything sinister. The visitor might have been a messenger taking that very request to Leonard Grey. Alternatively, it may conceivably have been an informer from the court appraising Arthur of the terrible situation. Afterall, his brother was a prisoner in the Tower facing possible execution, it would therefore be natural for Arthur to try and find out what was going on. It must be remembered that at the time, nobody knew the Poles would be restored to favour and the dangerous position they were in should not be underestimated. It appears that at one point, the king was definitely convinced of their guilt. While Wolsey was putting on a brave face and informing the French that, 'Bergavenny and Montague are loyal, and were only sent to the Tower for a small concealment proceeding from negligence,³⁵ the king warned the Venetian ambassador, that the state must not continue to make too much of Reginald 'lest he prove disloyal like the others.'³⁶ Moreover, Margaret was also removed from office,³⁷ 'nobility and goodness'

³⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/29, f. 296; *L&P*, III (ii) Appendix 24.

³⁵ *L&P*, III (i) no. 1293.

³⁶ *C.S.P.*, Venetian 1520-26, no. 204.

³⁷ State Papers Henry VIII, I (i) no. 14. On 24 July Pace wrote to Wolsey, that concerning Mary, the king desired Wolsey 'to study upon some lady that shalbe meate to yeve attendance upon her. And his

notwithstanding, certainly an undisputed indication of Henry's very real fears concerning the Pole family.

Although the Poles' dynastic credentials left them vulnerable to Henry's suspicions, the extent of their guilt really does appear to be their innocent friendship with the duke. There is no evidence that they harboured any treasonable intentions at that time; that they engaged in any dangerous conversations with the duke or felt disenchanted with the policies of the government. The evidence put forward at Buckingham's trial does not even mention them, apart from the assertion that the duke did:

grudge that the earl of Warwick [was put] to death, and say that God would punish it, by not suffering the King's issue to prosper, as appeared by the death of his son; and that his daughters prosper not, and that he had no issue male.³⁸

Margaret's innocence in this whole affair must be accepted. She would never have done or approved of any act that would have been prejudicial to the interests of Princess Mary. Her devotion to both Mary and her mother is beyond doubt. In addition Arthur Pole was enjoying a successful career at court and had no reason to make common cause with the duke. In fact, Arthur had been, and may still have been, one of those 'boys' to whom, Buckingham complained, 'the King gave his fees and offices,' rather than to noble men.³⁹ The member of the family who suffered the most serious punitive action was Lord Montague, but again, no extant evidence links him treasonably with the duke. As Margaret's eldest son, he was obviously the most dynastically threatening of the family. It might also have been feared that he felt disgruntled with his position, for although he was treated honourably and involved in all the important court ceremonials his career, like Buckingham's, lacked political depth. More importantly perhaps, Montague enjoyed a close friendship with Lord Bergavenny, his father-in-law. Bergavenny of course, was mentioned in the evidence against Buckingham. He was indicted for misprision of treason for not reporting

highness thinketh that the olde lady of Oxford should be most mete for that purpose.' In the event Sir Philip and Lady Calthrop were eventually appointed as Lord Chamberlain and Governess to the princess respectively, most probably due to the ill health of the Countess of Oxford. They did not however take up their appointments before October 1521. *Ibid.*, no. 43.

³⁸ The confession of the duke's chancellor. *L&P*, III (i) no. 1284 (3)

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Buckingham's alleged threat that, 'if the King should die, he meant to have the rule in England, whoever would say the contrary.'⁴⁰

The Pole family did eventually recover from this débâcle, due in part, Brewer feels, to the fact that; 'The nobility were humbled, more scared, than ever. That accomplished, there was no reason why mercy should not take the place of Judgement.'⁴¹ As a result, three days after Buckingham's execution, Wolsey urged the king to sign letters of condolence to both Buckingham's widow and son.⁴² Although Margaret did not regain her position as Mary's governess until 1525, she was receiving New Years gifts from the queen by 1522.⁴³ By 27 May 1522 Lord Montague was among those who were to attend the king at his meeting with Charles V at Canterbury.⁴⁴ Significantly however, Lord Bergavenny's name was struck out despite his pardon in March. By October of the same year Arthur Pole had regained the king's favour sufficiently to enlist his help against Sir Roger Lewkenor and the Earl of Arundel, and in the following year both brothers were involved in the ill fated campaign to France. Serving under the Duke of Suffolk,⁴⁵ Henry was appointed a captain,⁴⁶ and on 1 November Arthur Pole was knighted by the duke.⁴⁷

The consequences of Buckingham's fall were, nevertheless, long lasting and left an unpleasant taste in the mouths of the Poles. They could never again be confident of the king's trust and favour. Moreover the marriage between Ursula and Lord Stafford would not now produce the expected benefits. Margaret, still owing 2,500 marks of Ursula's dowry,⁴⁸ would have to discharge the debt in the knowledge that her daughter would never become the Duchess of Buckingham, nor would her husband inherit his father's vast estates. All that Lord Stafford received were 'fragments, the least

⁴⁰ Ibid., (i) p. 492, no. 1284.

⁴¹ Gairdner, J., (ed.), *The reign of Henry VIII* by J.S. Brewer (London, 1884) p. 398.

⁴² *L&P*, III (i) no. 1292.

⁴³ P.R.O. S.P.1/233, f. 222b; *L&P*, III, Addenda no. 367.

⁴⁴ *L&P*, III (ii) no. 2288 (2)

⁴⁵ Ibid., nos. 3281, 3288.

⁴⁶ Ibid., no. 3281; IV (i) nos. 214, 293.

⁴⁷ Ibid., III (ii) p. 1464, no. 3516.

⁴⁸ Ibid., (i) p. 501, no. 1285.

desirable portions, of the family estates' which were returned to him in 1522 and 1531.⁴⁹ Despite holding manors in Staffordshire, Shropshire, Cheshire, Essington in Yorkshire and Caus and Hay on the Welsh marches, which produced an income of nearly £500 a year,⁵⁰ Lord Stafford was constantly pleading poverty. In 1537 he was reduced to writing to Cromwell asking to be allowed to purchase some dissolved monastic property, lamenting, 'I have twelve children and my living 40L a year less than it has been.' After desperately offering Cromwell £40 to allow him to buy it, he bemoaned, 'if I have it not I must shortly leave this country.'⁵¹ Ursula's fecundity, an asset to the Duke of Buckingham's heir, had become a burden to Lord Stafford.

The union of Ursula and Lord Stafford was not the only one of her childrens' marriages to result in so much less than Margaret had expected. At some point after 1527 the wife of Lord Bergavenny, a man in his sixties, gave birth to a son and eventual heir, Henry.⁵² In addition two other sons were born and five daughters.⁵³ Therefore Jane, Lord Montague's wife, was no longer co-heiress to her father's estates. Even if all her brothers had died, the inheritance would now have to be shared with at least six other female co-heiresses, and this is putting the most favourable light upon it. As Jane was only a sister of the half blood to Bergavenny's three sons, she might not have been entitled to anything against the rights of their five sisters of the full blood. The only consolation was the sum of money Bergavenny had agreed to pay in the event that he did indeed have male issue.

Arthur Pole's marriage to the heiress of Sir Roger Lewkenor had also turned sour. His relations with his father-in-law appear to have been strained almost from the start. However, the biggest blow came when Arthur died, at some point after 1527 when he disappears from all records. In that year on 20 March, he was included on a list of those assessed for the subsidy of 1524 and was one of those who could not be distrained for payment.⁵⁴ The date of Arthur's death is uncertain, however, Frank Ward has put forward an apparently argument for it occurring in the mid 1530s.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Anderson, A.H., 'Henry, Lord Stafford (1501-63) and the Lordship of Caus' *W.H.R.*, VI (i) (1972) 1.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *L&P*, XII (i) no. 638.

⁵² *Complete Peerage*, I, 33.

⁵³ *D.N.B.*, XL (London, 1894) 257.

⁵⁴ P.R.O. E.179/69/16; *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 2972.

⁵⁵ Ward, F., 'The Divorce of Sir William Barentyne,' p. 281.

This is based upon the evidence provided by Arthur's widow in support of her marriage to Sir William Barentyne. According to her, she took her vow of chastity before the prior of Bisham, who was also the Bishop of St Asaph. Frank Ward has pointed out that William Barlow held both of these appointments but is mistaken over Barlow's period as Bishop of St Asaph. He states that Barlow was bishop from January 1535 until April 1536. However this is impossible as the previous incumbent, Henry Standish, did not die until July 1535. William Barlow was not in fact elected Bishop of St Asaph until 16 January 1536. He was confirmed in February, but translated to St David's before his consecration, on 10 April. This therefore would place Arthur's death somewhere between the middle of December 1535⁵⁶ and the beginning of March 1536. However, although it is incredible that no comment at all survives concerning his death, it is particularly so at this moment. This was the period when Arthur Viscount Lisle was Deputy of Calais and while letters were exchanged at regular intervals between himself and Lord Montague. The Lisles were kept well informed regarding the health of Montague and his mother and therefore it is hard to believe that no mention would have been made of Arthur's death in these letters. In addition, the identities of the Priors of Bisham who preceded Barlow are not known. Henry Standish was Bishop of St Asaph from 1518 until his death in 1535, but unfortunately it is not known if he was ever Prior of Bisham. Moreover, William Barlow had little cause to help the Pole family, which, by inducing Arthur's widow to take a vow of chastity, he would be doing. Margaret had been the most prominent of several individuals who had tried to prevent Barlow's appointment.⁵⁷ It is possible that Arthur may have died from the sweating sickness, an epidemic of which had broken out in 1526 and again by 1528. Moreover, in 1527/28, Margaret made a will,⁵⁸ something the death of one of her sons would have necessitated.

Whatever the circumstances of this once charming and popular young man's death, it certainly left his children in a vulnerable position, and despite the efforts of Margaret and Lord Montague to safeguard their inheritance, Arthur's widow went on to marry Sir William Barentyne, by whom she had a son Drew. If this was not bad enough, Jane Lewkenor's father had married, as his third wife, Elizabeth Messant by whom he

⁵⁶ Because she took the vow a month after his death.

⁵⁷ P.R.O. S.P.1/92, f. 74; *L&P*, VIII no. 596.

⁵⁸ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 1070. According to Fitzwilliam who saw Margaret's wills in 1538 and stated; 'I looked only at the dates, the first dated anno 20 and the new anno 30 in September last.'

had three daughters born between 1536 and 1544.⁵⁹ As a result of the wranglings over Sir Roger's estates following his death, Henry VIII became involved, finally settling them with an act of Parliament in 1543/44. This firstly determined the jointure of Sir Roger's widow which, after her death along with the rest of his inheritance, was to go to Sir Roger's daughters and their heirs with 'a considerable award to Drew Barentyne and his heirs.'⁶⁰ Henry, Arthur's son, was not mentioned because by this time he had also died. Consequently, Margaret's two granddaughters would have received a lot less than she had envisaged. The marriage of Margaret's youngest son, although not a dramatic failure, had not proved an unmitigated success either. Sir Edmund Packenham was evidently not too impressed with his Plantagenet son-in-law, manifested in Geoffrey's deliberate exclusion from Sir Edmund's will. Clearly these marriages, that were initially full of such promise, did not produce anywhere near the expected dividends.

Barbara Harris has claimed that the fall of the Duke of Buckingham served as a warning to the rest of the nobility:

The duke's absolute helplessness in the face of Henry's wrath made the folly of incurring the king's displeasure abundantly clear: family connections, wealth, and affinity were of no use to him at the critical juncture of his life.⁶¹

Despite this example and the Poles' implication in Buckingham's treason, Margaret was still not prepared to be intimidated by the king. Hardly had she entered her estates, than she became involved in a dispute with Henry VIII over lands that she claimed were part of the Earldom of Salisbury, but which the king alleged belonged to the Dukedom of Somerset. At some point after Sir William Compton's death in 1528, one of Margaret's council wrote to a member of the court pleading her case and asking him to move the king on her behalf. Cast as an innocent victim of revenge, Margaret's councillor explained that the late Sir William Compton:

whos sole god pardon for that he obtenyd nott his purpose of her in maryage accordyng to hys sute and desyer surmysed unto the kyngs grace that the seyd manors of Canford and other lordships beforseyd of

⁵⁹ Cobby, E., *The Lewknors of Sussex*, pp. 14-15.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁶¹ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 209.

the seyde yerly value of 500 marks were parcell of the Dukedome of Somerset and nott parcel of the Erldome of Salysburye.⁶²

Margaret, he continued, had of her own free will agreed to pay the king 5000 marks, part of which was still outstanding, on the understanding that her restoration would include the lands that were now in dispute. Her councillor felt sure that if 'his grace were informed thereof accordyng to her ryght and tyle but his grace wold suffer her to enyoe them.'⁶³ In that instance, he had overheard her say that she would be contented to pay the remainder of the 5000 marks 'within convenient time of the payment thereof as his grace can think or desire.'⁶⁴ The time within which she had originally agreed to complete the payment had expired in 1523.⁶⁵

The manors in question appear to have been: Canford in Dorset, Ware in Hertfordshire, the Wyke in Middlesex, Deeping in Lincoln, Charlton and Henstridge in Somerset and Alderbury, Crombridge, Trowbridge and Winterbourne in Wiltshire.⁶⁶ Compton's alleged approach to Margaret must have been made before his marriage to Werburga on 10 May 1512,⁶⁷ and by the time Margaret's restoration was decided. Obviously a woman in Margaret's position would have had a high value on the marriage market, and there is no reason to doubt that Compton did indeed advance a proposal of marriage. In fact it would be inconceivable to consider that she was not approached by anyone else. However, no suitor could have been more unwelcome to Margaret. Compton, the son of 'a small country farmer of no particular standing',⁶⁸ had, on several occasions, played the role of 'ponce' to the king,⁶⁹ and in the 1520s he was to begin an adulterous relationship with Lady Anne Hastings, the future mother-

⁶² P.R.O. S.P.1/50, f.4; *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 4654.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *L&P*, III (ii) no. 3694.

⁶⁶ Based upon the various proofs of inheritance advanced by both Margaret and the king. P.R.O. E.36/155, ff. 3, 17-26; E.314/79, no. 305; S.P. 1/7, f. 12; S.P.1/138, f. 206, 208, and for documents in Cromwell's possession, *L&P*, VI, no. 299.

⁶⁷ *L&P*, I (i) no. 1221 (23)

⁶⁸ Bernard, G.W., 'The Rise of Sir William Compton, early Tudor Courtier' *E.H.R.*, XCVI (1981) 754.

⁶⁹ In relation to the Duke of Buckingham's sisters and the wife of Robert Amadas, master of the jewel house. *Ibid.*, p. 757.

in-law of Margaret's granddaughter, Catherine.⁷⁰ Margaret's aversion was no doubt encouraged by her son Lord Montague, who would not have welcomed Compton's intrusive assumption of authority over the family estates. Margaret's refusal of Compton might believably have been delivered in tactless terms, but whether her rejected suitor walked away bent on revenge as a result is open to question.

Of the ten manors in dispute, Compton had been granted custody of the Wyke in tail on 13 February 1513,⁷¹ and held offices on four of the others. On 11 April 1510 he was appointed bailiff of Ware for life,⁷² and on 6 March 1512, steward of Canford in survivorship with Sir John Carew.⁷³ Moreover the grant of 1512 also appointed them stewards of Somerton, Chedzoy and Donyatt, manors to which Margaret was restored without dispute, and all the other lands in Somerset and Dorset called 'Salisbury lands,' which included Henstridge and Charlton. Clearly Compton was in a position to know about the descent of these lands, he possibly had access to the deeds, and certainly to local knowledge. That what he supposedly told Henry VIII concerning the descent of some of these manors was correct, must cast some doubt upon Margaret's accusation. Significantly, she was careful not to attribute such a vengeful motive to him until safely after his death. Certainly he might have discovered evidences suggesting her title was suspect quite innocently and naturally felt duty bound to inform the king. Nevertheless, although there is no evidence of trouble between them, Compton might have been prompted to look into Margaret's title as a result of animosity and hurt pride.

Margaret initially took possession of all these manors and began to enjoy the profits, as she herself stated.⁷⁴ She actually retained possession of the manor of Ware and of the Wyke.⁷⁵ However, the rest of the manors had been repossessed by October 1518,

⁷⁰ Although this comes from a citation issued against Compton on the day of his death by Wolsey, and therefore might be a biased source, the fact that he made generous bequests to Lady Hastings in his will and ordered prayers to be said for her in one of two chantries he founded, is indicative of a close relationship between them. Compton, W.B., *History of the Comptons of Compton Wynnyates* (London, 1930) p. 15.

⁷¹ *L&P*, I (i) no. 1662 (58)

⁷² *Ibid.*, no. 447 (18)

⁷³ *Ibid.*, no. 1123 (26)

⁷⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/50, f. 4; *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 4654.

⁷⁵ She was holding Ware in 1518 and 1538. P.R.O S.C.6/Hen VIII/6874, 6875. In February 1538 she sold the Wyke to William Bower, P.R.O. E.40/136/2, *L&P*, XIII (i) no. 294.

when Margaret promised, in the indentures of marriage between Ursula and Lord Stafford, to pay Buckingham a further 1000 marks if she `get back certain lands from the King.⁷⁶ Winterbourne was held by Catherine of Aragon between 1524-1531, and granted with Amesbury to Edward Seymour in 1536.⁷⁷ Henstridge and Charlton were described from 1516 as crown lands⁷⁸ while little evidence exists to enlighten us to the fate of Alderbury. In 1519 Henry VIII appointed Robert Bingham bailiff of Canford⁷⁹ and in 1525 granted it, along with Deeping, to his illegitimate son Henry Fitzroy upon his elevation to the Dukedom of Richmond.⁸⁰ Margaret probably held these manors for about a year to a year and a half before the king repossessed them. The length of time was a result of the time it had taken Compton to discover problems with Margaret's title, and the king's investigation. As a result of the doubt cast by Compton upon the lands in Somerset and Hertfordshire where he held offices, the king probably launched a general enquiry into the rest of the countess's lands, discovering problems with estates elsewhere, such as those in Lincoln and Wiltshire. At that point, she would have been told to vacate the lands pending a full investigation.

Both Margaret and the king advanced elaborate proofs of ownership to the manors going back in some cases to Edward I. The only clear cut case was that concerning Deeping, to which Henry had a clear right by inheritance.⁸¹ For the rest of the manors, Henry's right hinged upon the words in the statute of Margaret's restoration which stated that Margaret was only to be restored to those lands held by her brother Edward, Earl of Warwick, at the time of his attainder. Consequently, although the manor of Ware had been inherited by Margaret's ancestor Thomas, Earl of Salisbury,

⁷⁶ *H.M.C.*, 7th Report, p. 584. This is the covenant made at the time of the marriage referred to in a further indenture of February 1519. Loyd, C.L., and Stenton, D.M., *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals*, p. 15.

⁷⁷ 'List of Original Ministers Accounts preserved in the Public Record Office,' (ii), *Lists and Indexes*, XXXIV (Dublin, 1910) 165; *L&P*, X, no. 1256 (5)

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 318.

⁷⁹ *L&P*, II (i) no. 347 (6)

⁸⁰ The statute did not go through parliament until 1530-1, 22 Hen VIII, c. 17, in which Deeping and Canford were included. As Richmond definitely received Deeping in 1525, it is safe to assume that he was granted Canford at the same time. He had certainly taken possession by 21 July 1528 when there was a slight dispute between himself and his father over the appointment of Compton's replacement as steward. *Lists and Indexes*, XXXIV, 82; *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 4536.

⁸¹ P.R.O. S.P.1/7, f. 12. Margaret Beaufort's grandmother had inherited it as one of the co-heiresses of Thomas, Earl of Kent.

it had been granted to Margaret Beaufort in 1487, and she retained possession until her death in 1509.⁸² Technically therefore, Henry's claim was the better, nevertheless on this occasion he allowed Margaret to keep the manor. Perhaps he hoped it would be an incentive for her to relinquish the other manors. Indeed, possibly in a further attempt to placate the countess, he granted her the fourth part of the lordship of Cottingham in 1516/17 worth £133 a year, and Aldbrough, Catterick and Hang West Frendles, parcel of the lordship of Richmond, Yorkshire in 1522/23 worth £62 a year.⁸³ Unfortunately for both of them, Margaret was not to be bought off by these grants.

Margaret claimed the Wyke as the descendant of Richard and Alice Neville, Earl and Countess of Salisbury, who had been granted the manor in fee simple by a John Wolston and Richard Philyp.⁸⁴ No claim was advanced for Trowbridge, which was parcel of the Duchy of Lancaster, while the descent of Alderbury and Crombridge is uncertain. To the remaining five manors,⁸⁵ if one is to be technical, neither Henry or Margaret had any legal right. Their claims resulted from the illegal actions of their respective ancestors.⁸⁶ These lands had legally escheated in 1429, after which they had been purchased by Cardinal Beaufort in order to endow the hospital of St Cross, Winchester. Due to delays, the endowment did not take place before Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury took possession of them in right of his wife in 1461. However in 1492 Cardinal Beaufort's heir, Margaret Beaufort, presented a bill to parliament which explained clearly how these manors had been illegally possessed, and that Edward, Earl of Warwick was not therefore entitled to them. So far her bill was correct. The legal heir should have been St Cross Hospital for which they were purchased, but again their rights were ignored in order, this time for Margaret Beaufort to take possession of the manors. She held them until 1506 when she relinquished them to Henry VII for a life interest in Canford.⁸⁷

⁸² *The King's Mother*, p. 102.

⁸³ P.R.O. S.P.1/102, f. 129; Lists and Indexes, XXXIV, p. 185, 190.

⁸⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 206.

⁸⁵ Amesbury, Canford, Charlton, Henstridge and Winterbourne.

⁸⁶ For this see above p. 13; Hicks, M., 'The Neville Earldom of Salisbury,' pp. 358-61.

⁸⁷ *The King's Mother*, p. 103.

Ignoring the illegality of both claims, the king's is certainly the stronger. Margaret's, at least regarding Canford, is ill researched and blatantly wrong, claiming that Henry VII's only interest in Canford prior to her brother Edward's attainder was due to Edward's minority and Henry's position as guardian, ⁸⁸ and that Henry VII only had possession as a result of Edward's attainder. It ignores the fact that first Henry VII and then his mother held the manor in their own right before the earl's attainder, therefore proving their interest pre-dated Edward's forfeiture. Nevertheless, despite her weak case, Margaret refused to give up. When the king finally granted Canford to his natural son in 1525, a clear indication that as far as he was concerned the matter was at an end, Margaret proceeded to involve the young duke himself, laying her rights to Canford before him.⁸⁹ Initially, the king probably expected this reaction, therefore it did not affect her appointment as Mary's governess in 1520, or in 1525 either, by which time the dispute had been going on for approximately eight years. However, at this point Henry expected the matter to rest. In that year he granted two of the disputed manors to the Duke of Richmond and one to the queen, but even this did not deter Margaret. She took advantage of Compton's death to inject fresh impetus into her suit, her councillor writing in 1528 that the 'matter as yet depends and is before the juges undetermynded,' continuing defiantly, 'albeyt it is thought and advertised cleerly by her counsell that she hath as good ryght therunto as she hath to any other londs of the seyde Erldome.'⁹⁰ It appears that she even gained, or bought, the support of John Incent, Master of St Cross Hospital, Winchester, whose claim to several of the manors was stronger than both Margaret's and the king's. Apparently, Incent had possession of various charters and writings appertaining to Canford which he consistently refused to relinquish to the Duke of Richmond.⁹¹ In a case brought against him in Chancery by Richmond, Incent dishonestly stated that the manors had been forfeited due to John, Earl of Salisbury's attainder, when they had in truth, legally escheated. After reminding the court that Alice, Countess of Salisbury had entered the lands and reiterated Margaret's descent from her, he declared that he possessed certain charters and evidences appertaining to the lands and was ready to do with them what the court decided. He ended by requesting that Margaret may be called into court to interplead with the Duke of Richmond.⁹² As Richmond was involved, this case must

⁸⁸ P.R.O. E.36/155, f.17

⁸⁹ P.R.O. E.314/79, no. 305.

⁹⁰ P.R.O. S.P.1/50, f.4; *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 4654.

⁹¹ P.R.O. E.504/2.

⁹² P.R.O. E.111/131.

have taken place after 1525, possibly 1528, for a letter written in that year may be related to it. On 7 October, Thomas Magnus, Archdeacon of the East Riding and a member of Richmond's council, wrote to Wolsey that he could not, 'be at London this term, as lady Salisbury expects; but my lord's receiver and auditor in the South are instructed to search for evidences touching Canford.'⁹³ Understandably, by 1531 Margaret's machinations had exhausted the king's patience. In September of that year among his instructions to Cromwell was 'a communication to be had with my Lord Montague for the clearing of certain lands given to the Duke of Richmond.'⁹⁴ Perhaps he was hoping that Montague would be able to talk some sense into his obstinate mother. However, if the documents in Cromwell's custody in 1533 are dated in that year, then Montague did not succeed. Among them are 'Articles devised for making sure of the manor of Canford.'⁹⁵

Margaret was not the only one forced to relinquish lands to the king. In 1532, John, Lord Lumley had to give up five manors in Westmoreland to the Duke of Richmond, receiving an annuity of £50 in return. Again in 1532, Henry, Lord Scrope of Bolton was informed that king wished to have Pisho in Hertfordshire, owned by Scrope's family since 1393. Despite being unwilling to sell, and then, following his death his son's request that he should be recompensed by lands of equal value, the manor was duly sold to the king for £1000. John Bouchier in 1532 was forced to give up his lease of Petty Calais, his London residence, to the king despite having spent considerable sums of money on repairs and drainage.⁹⁶ Although both these men initially wrote in defence of their rights, both avowed total submission to the king's will, Berners declaring; 'the kynges grace may do as yt shall plese hym ffor all that I have ys and shall be at hys commandment.'⁹⁷ Moreover, Berners had capitulated within a year, and Scrope within two. In 1533, the king also forced an exchange of lands upon his boon companion and brother-in-law, the Duke of Suffolk.⁹⁸ The exchange was detrimental to Suffolk, who strove to attain certain concessions, such as the reversion of some de la Pole estates and confirmation of recent leases he had made

⁹³ *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 4828. 'My lord' refers to the Duke of Richmond.

⁹⁴ B.L. Cotton. MS. Titus. B.I., f.486; *L&P*, V, no. 394.

⁹⁵ *L&P*, VI, no. 299, (ix, F)

⁹⁶ For this see Miller, H., *Henry VIII and the English Nobility*, pp. 219-20.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

⁹⁸ For this see Gunn, S.J., *Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk*, pp. 135-6.

on the manors he was to lose. Although the duke 'fought hard to defend the settlement,' he also offered complete submission to Henry's will. However, Henry was not pleased with Suffolk's behaviour, seeing it as a sign of 'som ingratitude and unkyndenes.' He warned him that it would be unwise for him to cause him 'to conceyve any jalousie or mistrust in him.'⁹⁹ Richard Rich was instructed to remind Suffolk that he had 'attained this degree only by the king's advancement' and trusted that the duke will part with the lands 'without looking for other recompense than the King's liberality,' which, Rich was ominously ordered to explain, 'will be more beneficial to him than ten times as much land as the reversions amount unto.'¹⁰⁰ Unfortunately it was a message Margaret had not been astute enough to heed. How much more disenchanted the king must have been with her, who had continued to argue her case against him for over fifteen years.

Margaret's actions were extremely unwise, although to an extent, understandable. These manors were valuable, worth 500 marks a year. Moreover, apart from Deeping, they all lay strategically in the Southern counties, an area where Margaret was attempting to increase her presence. In addition, her dogged determination in the face of Henry's growing disapproval, might have been a manifestation of the resentment she felt, but never openly expressed, over the fate of her brother and her own impecunious circumstances following the death of her husband. Naturally, when she found herself in a position to regain her family's lands, she was determined to obtain everything her brother had once held, no doubt convinced that she was justifiably entitled. Confident and self righteous in the knowledge that her brother's execution had been generally disapproved of, no attitude could have been better calculated to excite Henry's fury. Anything other than sycophantic gratitude and utter submission to his will was like to engender resentment and, more seriously, suspicion. Old enough to be his mother, up until 1533 Margaret had probably regarded her boisterous monarch as something of an overgrown adolescent. A woman of maturity and considerable social standing, Margaret expected respect and was not about to allow this particular pseudo adolescent to trifle with her. However, after the events of 1533, the cold realisation that she had completely underestimated Henry VIII must have become all too frighteningly clear. It was a mistake she was never to make again.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

¹⁰⁰ *L&P*, VIII, no. 1130.

From 1525 to 1533 Margaret held the position of governess to the Princess Mary. These years saw Henry VIII move inexorably towards the repudiation of Catherine of Aragon and marriage to Anne Boleyn. It was inevitable that Margaret, as Mary's governess and close friend of Catherine, would be drawn into the crucial events of this period. During her first two years on the marches however, the possibility of Catherine's repudiation was not an issue and those years must have been enjoyable ones both for Margaret and her charge. Mary's household was necessarily impressive for she represented the authority and magnificence of her royal father, and no item of order or protocol could be neglected.¹⁰¹ Moreover, several residences were made available for her on the marches. Apart from Ludlow Castle there was Thornbury, the former seat of the Duke of Buckingham, Tickenhill in Shropshire and Hartlebury in Worcestershire.¹⁰² Although based on the marches, Mary was not confined there, and actually travelled quite extensively. For example, early in 1526 she visited St Mary's Cathedral Priory Worcester, where she was hospitably entertained for five weeks.¹⁰³ In May Mary was at Greenwich¹⁰⁴ and at the beginning of August, back at the Priory, to which Margaret's sons had also recently paid a visit.¹⁰⁵ On 3 September Mary arrived at Langley in Oxford to meet her father, no doubt with Margaret in usual attendance, for Richard Sampson noted that the princess was 'well accompanied with a goodly number of persons of gravity.'¹⁰⁶ The king had arrived on 1 September¹⁰⁷ ironically having been at Warblington just over a month previously in an attempt to avoid the sweating sickness. Mary and her father then journeyed together to Ampthill and Grafton, via Bicester and Buckingham¹⁰⁸ before the princess began her journey back to the marches on 1 October.¹⁰⁹ In addition to visits, Mary corresponded with

¹⁰¹ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 44.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 45.

¹⁰³ Prior William More's journal records how expenses rose considerably during her stay, part of which was due to the preparations carried out on her apartment. Knowles, D., *The Religious Orders in England*, III: The Tudor Age. (Cambridge, 1959) 124.

¹⁰⁴ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁵ The journal records three payments for wine 'for my lady salesbury sons, one of them being my lord mowtigeowe.' Knowles, D., *Op.cit.*, p. 125.

¹⁰⁶ Loades, D.M., *Op.cit.*, p. 45.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 2407.

¹⁰⁹ Loades, D.M., *Op.cit.*, p. 45.

her parents. Catherine wrote regularly, and in a letter of 1525 in which she encouraged Mary in her studies, she ended with the request to 'recommend me to my lady of Salisbury.'¹¹⁰

1527 opened with serious discussions between England and France, concerning the marriage of the eleven year old princess. The prospective bridegrooms were Francis I's second son and Francis himself;¹¹¹ at 33 years of age, only three years younger than Mary's father and an inveterate lecher. It was for this purpose that Mary was summoned to court in April to meet the French envoys¹¹² and endure an inspection. Although concluding that marriage was out of the question for the next three years,¹¹³ Mary was formally contracted, no doubt to the relief of both Margaret and Catherine, to the duc d'Orleans on 18 August in the treaty of Amiens.¹¹⁴ Although the treaty was indeed ratified, in July of the same year rumours began to surface concerning the King of England's intention to repudiate his wife. The idyll was over; 'The security of Mary's early years had come to an end, and both her status and her function were matters of uncertainty and debate.'¹¹⁵

Margaret's main concern throughout this difficult period was to cocoon Mary as much as possible from the tension between her parents. With sons prominent at court, who were ostensibly advancing the divorce, Margaret was well aware of what was going on. The strain of trying to ensure that Mary remained as untouched as possible in the face of what she knew must have been considerable. In 1528 Mary's household was reduced and she was recalled from the marches. Margaret's position was unaffected, and the reduction merely revealed that the king was still undecided as to his daughter's future.¹¹⁶ Indeed she continued to spend Christmases at court; she was there in 1529 and 1530¹¹⁷ and continued to receive gifts from her father.¹¹⁸ In June 1530, Mary sent

¹¹⁰ *L&P*, IV (i) no. 1519.

¹¹¹ Knecht, R.J., *Francis I* (Cambridge, 1988) p. 213.

¹¹² Loades, D.M., *Op.cit.*, p. 45.

¹¹³ Because she was 'so thin, spare and small.' *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 46-7.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 60-1.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 60, 62.

the king a buck and in June the following year, he visited her at Richmond and made 'great cheer.'¹¹⁹ Margaret's standing with the king was also apparently unaffected as the exchange of New Years Gifts continued,¹²⁰ and by July 1531 the king's permission had been granted for the marriage of Margaret's granddaughter Catherine to Francis, Lord Hastings. However, by 1531 it had become impossible for Margaret to continue shielding her charge from the painful truth. At fifteen years old and with a sharp, intelligent mind, Mary could no longer be deceived by equivocating explanations. When Henry finally left Catherine in July 1531, Mary would have been all too aware of it and the particularly cruel timing, just over a month after their 22nd wedding anniversary. Nevertheless, despite such provocations, Mary remained sensibly silent as did her governess. Even after the news of her father's marriage to Anne Boleyn reached her, Mary 'was discreet enough not to make any protest.'¹²¹

Although publicly Mary remained calm, in the privacy of her own chamber her demeanour would have been quite the opposite. The injustice of her mother's treatment, and her own, no doubt provoked emotions ranging from anger and resentment to hurt and devastation. Moreover, this emotional crisis could not have come at a worse time, coinciding as it did with the onset of Mary's puberty. This combination no doubt inflamed Mary's propensity for fearful hysterics, tantrums and depression.¹²² Each fresh indignity suffered by her mother and each new triumph enjoyed by Anne Boleyn were now doubt marked by emotional outbursts from Mary, delivered in a voice which was; 'rough and loud, almost like a man's, so that when she

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 61.

¹²⁰ In 1528 Margaret received a cup weighing 31oz, exceeded in weight only by those given to the French Queen, the Marchioness of Exeter and Lady Fitzwater. P.R.O. E.101/420/4. In 1532 she received a gilt cup with a cover, the third heaviest out of 35 gifts to various ladies. P.R.O. E.101/420/15, f. 3, and in 1533 a gilt cup and cover weighing 29oz. P.R.O. S.P.2/N (1) f. 1.

¹²¹ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 72.

¹²² During her period in Elizabeth's household, she had on one occasion been dumped bodily into a litter as a result of her refusal to make the move with the rest of the household. On another occasion she had to be physically restrained from confronting the French ambassador. Ibid., p. 82. Again in 1551, after a histrionic display before a deputation of the Privy Council, she continued to shout her defiance at them out of a window, Dasent, J.R., (ed.), *A.P.C.*, 1550-52, III (London, 1891) 347-52, while in 1557 Giovanni Michiel, late the Venetian Ambassador to England, described her as 'sudden and passionate' and affirmed that she was often subject 'to a very deep melancholy, much greater than that to which she is constitutionally liable, from menstruous retention and suffocation of the matrix.' This affliction, he continued, had plagued her for many years 'so that the remedy of tears and weeping, to which from childhood she has been accustomed, and still often used by her, is not sufficient.' *C.S.P.*, Venetian, 1556-57, pp. 1055-56, no. 884.

speaks she is always heard a long way off.¹²³ Of course Mary was not the only one to lose her self control as the situation during this period was highly charged. Anne Boleyn, whose hot temper is well known, often ranted unguardedly at court, in one instance proclaiming that she would prefer to see Catherine hanged `than have to confess that she was her queen and mistress.¹²⁴ Even Catherine herself was affected, her dignified exterior being seriously ruffled when the king asked her to return her jewels in 1532. She snapped back that it `would be a sin to allow her jewels to adorn "the scandal of Christendom,"¹²⁵ thus forcing Henry to issue a command rather than a request for them.¹²⁶

As much as she loved her, coping with Mary must have been a considerable strain for Margaret. Moreover, witnessing Mary's distress must have been extremely upsetting for the countess, who by 1533, was sixty years old. Indeed, following her dismissal she appears to have suffered some form of collapse. Barely two months after her removal from Mary's household, her son Lord Montague wrote to Honour Lisle:

My lady my mother lies at Bisham, to whom I made your ladyship's recommendations. I assure you she is very weak, but it is to her great comfort to hear of my lord and your ladyship.¹²⁷

Up until 1533 however, no direct action had been taken against Mary and the king's mind was not finally made up until September when Elizabeth was born. The birth of another daughter meant that Mary's status had to be clarified once and for all.¹²⁸ Nevertheless, as early as the summer of 1533 moves were initiated which no doubt alerted Mary and her supporters to what might follow. Cromwell, on the king's orders, informed Mary's lord chamberlain, Lord Hussey, to place Mary's jewels in the custody of mistress Frances Elmer. Margaret was now put in the position where she was forced to make a choice. Her loyalty to Mary and concern for her welfare, meant that the stand she took was one contrary to her own interests.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 1054.

¹²⁴ Ives, E.W., *Anne Boleyn*, p. 167.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 198.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ *L.L.*, II, 45, no. 126.

¹²⁸ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 73.

Hussey's ability to carry out his orders was hindered at every turn by Margaret. Upon his request to the countess that an inventory of the jewels should be produced along with the jewels themselves; 'non could be had or founde for to charge hyr that had the custody of them and her executors.'¹²⁹ In fact, when the inventory was finally drawn up, it was drawn up by Margaret herself, who then made Hussey and the cofferers sign it. More than that, despite all Hussey's entreaties, she was not prepared to do:

in no wyse she wyll as yete deliyver to Mistress Frances the jewells for anything that I can say or doo onlesse that yt may please you to obteyne the kyngs letters unto hyr in that behalf.¹³⁰

Margaret frustratingly implacable, left Hussey with no alternative but to 'beseche' Cromwell to send him the king's letters. Shattered by his confrontation with the countess and the unsavoury nature of his task, he wrote impassionedly to Cromwell; 'wolde to god that the kyng and you dyd knowe and se what I have had to doo here of late.'¹³¹

Unfortunately for Hussey, hard on the heels of this letter came further instructions from Cromwell, this time instructing the hapless gentleman to send 'certen parcells of plate' which he believed were in Hussey's custody. Replying on 27 August, Hussey apologetically informed Cromwell that they were not in his custody, nor in the custody of the clerk of the princess' jewel house, but 'with my lady Governesse.' Naturally the plate was not produced, Margaret informing Hussey that it was in use 'at all suche seasons as the princesse is diseased' and could not possibly be spared unless 'suche like newe plate shulde be bought.' However, having made her point, Hussey was at least able to tell Cromwell that; 'she saith that if it so stande with the king's highness pleaur to have the same, she will at all tymes be redy upon hir discharge to make thereof delivery.'¹³² The difficulty Henry was experiencing in retrieving Mary's jewels and plate, was compounded by Catherine's utter refusal at the same time, to surrender her christening robe to Anne Boleyn, declaring that it had not pleased God that; 'she should be so ill advised as to grant any favour in a case so horrible and abominable.'¹³³

¹²⁹ P.R.O. S.P. 1/78, f. 160; *L&P*, VI, no. 1009.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² P.R.O. S.P.1/78, f. 194; *L&P*, VI, no. 1041.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, no. 918.

Following Elizabeth's birth on 7 September, Mary was informed that her household was to be reduced as she was no longer Princess of Wales.¹³⁴ However, the size and composition of the new household was not seriously affected, and a number of Mary's long standing associates remained, including Lord Hussey, Dr. Fetherstone and Margaret.¹³⁵ However, following a visit from a deputation headed by the Earl of Oxford, Mary made her position clear. She did not accept her illegitimacy nor consequently the loss of her title of princess. Moreover:

she struck exactly the same note of righteous incredulity which Catherine had so often used. Nothing could have been better calculated to infuriate Henry than this conclusive evidence that he now had to deal with another intransigent female conscience.¹³⁶

Henry's anger and loss of patience is revealed in his decision to dissolve completely Mary's household, and place her in Elizabeth's establishment. The importance of Mary's non-conformity should not be underestimated. Not only did it cast a very public slur upon the Boleyn marriage and its issue, while being a source of embarrassment to the king, it was also dangerous. Mary could become an important focus for disaffection as 'disloyalty to Henry did not seem like disloyalty when it was thought to be support for the rightful heir.'¹³⁷ Therefore Mary's willing acceptance of the new regime was necessary for Henry's security. Moreover, although Henry was angry with Mary, he still loved her. Consequently it was much easier for him to believe that others were behind her obstinacy. According to Chapuys, when Norfolk arrived in December 1533 to inform Mary that her household was dismissed, Margaret 'offered to follow and serve her at her own expense, with an honourable train.'¹³⁸ Chapuys attributed the refusal of Margaret's dramatic offer to sinister motives. With the countess by her side, Chapuys explained:

they would no longer be able to execute their bad designs, which are evidently either to cause her to die of grief or in some other way, or else to compel her to renounce her rights, marry some low fellow, or

¹³⁴ Although it must be remembered that she was never formally created Princess of Wales.

¹³⁵ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 73.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

¹³⁷ Ives, E.W., *Anne Boleyn*, p. 246.

¹³⁸ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1531-33, p. 882, no. 1161.

fall prey to lust, so that they may have a pretext and excuse for disinheriting her. ¹³⁹

In reality, Margaret's offers were no doubt rejected because without her by Mary's side, Henry believed his daughter might be induced to accept the new situation. Although Henry never explicitly blamed Margaret for encouraging Mary's disobedience, as he did Catherine,¹⁴⁰ he no doubt believed that the truculent and stubborn countess was one of those behind his daughter's intransigence. The resulting antipathy he felt towards her is evident in a discussion he had with Chapuys in February 1535. Upon Chapuys's request that Mary should once again be placed under Margaret's care 'whom she regarded as her second mother,' Henry exploded, declaring:

that the countess was a fool, of no experience, and that if his daughter had been under her care during this illness she would have died, for she would not have known what to do.¹⁴¹

Over a year later and Henry's anger had clearly not diminished.

Margaret's now considered unsuitability to continue as Mary's governess, was compounded by her implication in the unsavoury scandal of the Nun of Kent. This whole affair has been seen by some historians as a mere pretext to moves against the queen and her more prominent supporters. This no doubt originates from one of Chapuys's despatches:

Many think, and even believe, that those who now have the Nun in their power will make her accuse many people unjustly that they may thus have the occasion and the means of revenging themselves upon those who have supported the Queen.¹⁴²

According to A. Denton Cheney; 'Cromwell was exceedingly anxious to involve as many as possible of the adherents to Queen Catherine in a supposed conspiracy,'¹⁴³

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *L&P*, VIII, no. 263.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1531-33, p. 863, no. 1153.

¹⁴³ Denton Cheney, A., 'The Holy Maid of Kent,' *T.R.H.S.*, XVIII (New series, 1904) 112.

while Garret Mattingly believed that Cromwell was not interested so much in the Nun herself because he:

aimed at larger game than monks and friars. He aimed at the Marchioness of Exeter and the Countess of Salisbury, Catherine's two chief friends among the ladies of the higher nobility.¹⁴⁴

Indeed, J.J. Scarisbrick has suggested that it might very well have been the king himself who 'turned an assault on the nun into a purge of more illustrious opponents.'¹⁴⁵ Certainly many illustrious personages were implicated in the affair. John Fisher was accused of misprision of treason while Thomas More only escaped by a hairs breadth. Both of these, however, upon their own admission, had actually met the Nun and heard her revelations first hand. Margaret's implication came via Father Hugh Rich of the Observant Friars, who claimed to have repeated to Margaret the Nun's prophecies 'concerning the King and his reign.' He had apparently told the same prophecies to the queen, Princess Mary, the Marchioness of Exeter and Lord and Lady Hussey among others.¹⁴⁶

The Nun of Kent's prophecies concerned the consequences of Henry's marriage to Anne Boleyn:

that then within one month after such marriage he should no longer be king of this realm, and in the reputation of god should not be a king one day nor one hour.¹⁴⁷

The prophecies also included the promise that 'the Lady Mary, the King's daughter, should prosper and reign in this kingdom and have many friends to sustain and maintain her.'¹⁴⁸ These predictions were obviously explosive and the whole affair was taken very seriously by the government. Elizabeth Barton was held in the greatest esteem. The perceived accuracy of her prophecies combined with a devout and irreproachable life gave her a great deal of influence. Many genuinely believed that

¹⁴⁴ Mattingly, G., *Catherine of Aragon*, p. 299.

¹⁴⁵ Scarisbrick, J.J., *Henry VIII*, p. 322.

¹⁴⁶ *L&P*, VI, no. 1468.

¹⁴⁷ Neame, A., *The Holy Maid of Kent* (London, 1971) p. 174.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

her messages were sent from God himself, John Fisher reminding Cromwell that 'God never acts without first warning his prophets.'¹⁴⁹ Indeed, so influential was Barton, that she was informed by the papal nuncio of the king's suspended excommunication before the king himself had been told.¹⁵⁰ Her credibility undoubtedly made her a force to be reckoned with, indeed J.J. Scarisbrick believes that her influence could have allowed her; 'to stir the commons and fire serious unrest of the kind that England had seen at the time of the Peasant's Revolt of 1381 or Jack Cade's rebellion in 1450.'¹⁵¹

Neame has successfully highlighted the tense atmosphere that must have prevailed during the month of countdown to Henry's 'deposition' as predicted by the Nun. Naturally the promulgation of these predictions had to be stopped, and Henry's grave concern is reflected in the severe action that was taken against her. Included among the accusations was one that claimed she had 'fortified Princess Mary's obstinacy,' an obstinacy to which Henry believed, Margaret had contributed. Moreover Barton had done this by predicting that; 'no man should put her from her right that she was born unto' which had encouraged Mary's supporters 'to rebel or make war against the King's Grace upon trust of good success according to the said revelation.'¹⁵² Margaret's implication in such an affair obviously put her in an extremely dangerous position, especially following so soon after the incident over Mary's jewels and plate. Moreover her embroilment should not be taken unreservedly as the result of a government 'frame up.' Hugh Rich was the Guardian of the Observant house next door to Richmond Palace.¹⁵³ Richmond Palace of course, had been Mary's main residence since her return from the marches.¹⁵⁴ Moreover Rich was 'socially acceptable and influential in the highest circles.'¹⁵⁵ He had spoken to Thomas More about the Nun¹⁵⁶ and was in contact with Thomas Abell, Queen Catherine's

¹⁴⁹ John Fisher to Cromwell, 18 February 1534, cited in *ibid.*, p. 308.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

¹⁵¹ Scarisbrick, J.J., *Op.cit.*, p. 321.

¹⁵² The lord chancellor's introduction to the bill of attainder against Barton and her associates cited in Neame, A., *Op.cit.*, p. 304.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

¹⁵⁴ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 61.

¹⁵⁵ Neame, A., *Op.cit.*, p. 181.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

confessor.¹⁵⁷ More importantly he had visited the queen herself,¹⁵⁸ consequently it is most likely that Margaret had met him, and no doubt heard his tales of wonder regarding 'the holy maid.' Fortunately it seems certain that Margaret never met the Nun herself. No doubt Catherine, who steadfastly refused to allow Barton an audience, instructed Margaret that on no account was she to allow Mary to see her either. Margaret followed Catherine's cautious example and avoided personal contact with Barton. Nevertheless, she may have been questioned regarding possible contact with the Nun, for among Cromwell's remembrances of 1533, is one to 'send for my Lady of Salisbury and Lord Hussey.'¹⁵⁹ Once more Margaret's name had been mentioned in connection with a treasonous episode, and again one which contained a dynastic element.

After the traumatic events of 1533, and having done all she considered she could for Mary, Margaret sensibly decided to maintain a low profile. Careful not to annoy the king further, little is heard of her during the next three years, except for a brief episode in 1535, which brought her up against Thomas Cromwell. Characteristically unable to put sense before her conscience, she became involved in the opposition to William Barlow's appointment as Prior of Bisham. This is not surprising as he enthusiastically supported the divorce. As a result he had gained the patronage of Anne Boleyn and Thomas Cromwell, who desired his appointment as Prior of Bisham Abbey.¹⁶⁰ Margaret had in fact, been opposed to the previous prior whose resignation she had sought. However, upon learning that Barlow was to replace him, she did her utmost to ensure that he would not resign, despite his being 'very unmette to contynue.' Nicholas Carewe, who had become involved in the affair prior to Margaret's intervention, wrote miserably to Cromwell; 'I wold I hade spent a hundred pounds I had never spokyn in it. ffor somewhat it toucheth my pore honestie.'¹⁶¹ Nevertheless, despite her protest Barlow was eventually appointed to the Priory. The rest of Margaret's activities however, were conducted well outside the political sphere, the most she appears to have done was to write to her cousin Lord Lisle on behalf of

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 260.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ *L&P*, VI, no. 1382. Equally however, this could also be related to Margaret's refusal to surrender Mary's jewels and plate.

¹⁶⁰ Block, J.S., *Factional Politics and the English Reformation 1520-1540*, pp. 41-2.

¹⁶¹ P.R.O. S.P.1/92, f. 74; *L&P*, VIII, no. 596.

Richard Baker, one time gentleman usher of Mary's household.¹⁶² The only other sour note was the sudden departure out of the realm of her personal chaplain John Helyar in 1534, of which the Bishop of Winchester ominously wrote to Cromwell, 'in such fashion and maner as I like not.'¹⁶³

1536 however, saw the fall of Anne Boleyn and her replacement by the more conservative Jane Seymour. Seymour, an admirer of Catherine of Aragon, encouraged a reconciliation between the king and his daughter. This eventually took place but only after Mary's complete acceptance of all that Henry had done regarding the break with Rome and his marriage to Anne Boleyn. She was left in no doubt as to the king's genuine commitment to the Royal Supremacy, and the conservatives' victory over the Boleyns was thus a hollow one. Nevertheless, these circumstances allowed for Margaret's tentative return to court. In June 1536 the Bishop of Faenza wrote that; 'On the return of her (Mary's) governess to Court it being supposed that the Princess was in her company, a crowd with 4,000 or 5,000 horses ran to meet her.'¹⁶⁴ Moreover, in the same month her influence was considered such that Honour Lisle wrote to her in the hope that she could forward the appointment of Honour's daughter to the new queen's household. One of the reasons behind this cautious return to court might have been the king's conviction that Margaret's son Reginald was about to announce his support for the Royal Supremacy. From 1532 Reginald had been studying in Italy avoiding the issue of Catherine's repudiation. However, in February 1535 the king ordered Thomas Starkey to write to Reginald requesting his opinion regarding the Boleyn marriage and the Pope's authority.¹⁶⁵ W. Schenk points out that Reginald's 'reassuring letters' convinced Starkey that his response would be favourable to the king.¹⁶⁶ Indeed on 28 October 1535, Reginald wrote to Cromwell begging him to:

assure his highness of my readiness to do him service at all times; for I count whatsoever is good in me next to God to proceed of his grace's

¹⁶² See above pp. 148-49.

¹⁶³ P.R.O. S.P.1/88, f. 174; *L&P*, VII, Appendix 32.

¹⁶⁴ *L&P*, X, no. 1212.

¹⁶⁵ Schenk, W., *Reginald Pole Cardinal of England*, p. 62.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

liberality in my education, which I esteem a greater benefit than all the promotions the King ever gave to any other.¹⁶⁷

Reginald's 'letter' duly arrived at the English court in June 1536, the very month of Margaret's return to court. It was also the crisis month during which Mary faced condemnation as a traitor before her final capitulation to Henry on 22 June. Both the timing and the content of the 'letter' could not have been worse. Fiercely opposed to the king, it was delivered in the strongest and most vehement of terms. Likening Henry to a wild beast and accusing him of being incestuous, Reginald also called him 'a robber, a murderer, and a greater enemy to Christianity than the Turk.'¹⁶⁸ Thomas Starkey's description of it is understandable; '[This is] the most frantic judgement that ever I read of any learned man in my life.'¹⁶⁹ The king's rage was no doubt inflamed by the fact that he had been led to expect quite the opposite. Naturally, the arrival of 'De Unitate' put Margaret and her sons in a very difficult position. Unfortunately for Margaret, the news of the letter's arrival and content was broken to her by the king himself. The interview would not have been pleasant, and Margaret immediately conferred with her eldest son, Lord Montague, who advised her to declare Reginald 'a traitor to their servan[ts], that they might so report him when they came in to their countries.' According to Margaret, this is what she did, declaring to them that she 'took her said son for a traitor and for no son, and that she would never take him otherwise.'¹⁷⁰ A further message from the king delivered by Lord Montague, prompted a letter to her errant son. No doubt intended to be seen by the king's Council, it rebuked Reginald for his behaviour. Seeing him in the king's 'high indignation' she wrote 'I am not able to bear it' and she urged him 'to take another way And serve our master as thy bounden duty is to do unless thou will be the confusion of thy mother.' She reminded Reginald of how much he owed the king, warning him that if he did not use his learning to serve him 'trust never in me.'¹⁷¹ Although the letter was sent to admonish Reginald, it describes Reginald's actions merely as 'folly' and clearly could have been delivered in much stronger terms. The letter is not dated, but was probably written around the same time as Lord Montague's letter to Reginald

¹⁶⁷ *L&P*, IX, no. 701.

¹⁶⁸ Schenk, W., *Op.cit.*, pp. 71-2.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 72.

¹⁷⁰ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 818 (19). Unfortunately, at this point the original document has faded and become particularly difficult to read. P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 202.

¹⁷¹ P.R.O. S.P.1/105, f. 66; *L&P*, XI, no. 93.

written on 13 September at Bisham. Apparently Lord Montague knew nothing about the content of Reginald's letter until he received a letter from his brother in July. After speaking to Cromwell, he was advised to approach the king himself who 'declared a great part of your book so to me at length.' With a similar theme to Margaret's, Montague's letter is longer and somewhat stronger. It appears that while the letter was being composed, Montague was informed of Reginald's intention to spend the winter with the Pope. This latest information seems to have elicited genuine exasperation; 'if you should take that way then farewell all my hope. Learning you may well have but doubtless no prudence nor pity.' He warns that should Reginald continue with that course of action, 'then farewell all boundes of nature not only of me but of mine, or else in stead of my blessing they shall have my curse.'¹⁷² Montague's irritation is understandable, for this was not the first time he had been placed in an awkward position with the king due to Reginald's actions. In 1530, Henry was prepared to offer the archbishopric of York to Reginald on condition that he made his opinion clear regarding Henry and Catherine's marriage.¹⁷³ Initially Reginald thought he had 'found a way to satisfy his Grace' and told both Lord Montague and Edward Fox. Relieved, they informed Henry forthwith who excitedly sent for Reginald. However, when Reginald came before the king:

my mind changed from what I had intended and ran upon nothing else but how I could find it in my best to confirm (him) in what, in my opinion, was dishonour.¹⁷⁴

The king was understandably incensed, again compounded by the fact that he had been led to expect the opposite by the unfortunate Lord Montague. Thus Montague, quite unfairly, had been made to look unreliable in the king's eyes due to Reginald's last minute change of mind.

After the arrival of Reginald's letter in June 1536, Margaret finally withdrew from court altogether. Her return might have been prompted by the expectation of serving Mary once more, but this was not to be the case. The composition of Mary's household was being discussed towards the end of June 1536 when she was asked for her suggestions for potential members. Significantly Mary did not include Margaret's name in her list. It is true that the new establishment was not as grand as that of 1525,

¹⁷² P.R.O. S.P.1/106, ff. 168-9; *L&P*, XI, no. 451.

¹⁷³ Schenk, W., *Op.cit.*, p. 25.

¹⁷⁴ *L&P*, XII (i) no. 444.

and lacked both a lady governess and a lord chamberlain. Moreover, at twenty years of age Mary did not require the services of a governess. Nevertheless, David Loades has shown that of the twenty four members, twenty one had been in Mary's service before thus revealing; 'that both Henry and Cromwell were willing to accept Mary's desire for the support of old friends.'¹⁷⁵ Consequently Margaret's exclusion is telling. The advice Mary was receiving from Cromwell at that time obviously did not include the suggestion to reinstate Margaret, and Mary probably realised that such a suggestion would be extremely provocative. Henry and Cromwell no doubt feared that Margaret would be too disruptive an influence upon Mary, especially as the king had probably convinced himself that the countess shared Reginald's views. In addition, Mary herself might not have wished to resume her friendship with Margaret, at least not to the level of closeness it once was. Her capitulation to Henry had been complete, after which she went on to enjoy a genuinely close relationship with Jane Seymour. This friendship was safe, and had the stamp of her father's happy approval. A resumption of her association with Margaret, Mary no doubt viewed as a potential source of trouble. There might also have been an element of shame. Mary believed she had betrayed her mother, and perhaps found the prospect of continually facing the woman so closely associated with Catherine's and her own initial stand against her father too difficult. Although respecting Mary's wishes, Margaret did attempt to maintain some contact with her former charge, sending her New Years gifts for 1537 and 1538,¹⁷⁶ but clearly there was nothing left for her at court. She no longer attended any of the major court ceremonies, such as Prince Edward's christening, and significantly after 1533 evidence suggests that no more New Years Gifts were exchanged with the king. From 1536 until her arrest in 1538, Margaret spent most of her time at Warblington, no longer travelling as widely as she once had.¹⁷⁷ Here, in addition to overseeing the administration of her estates, she busied herself with the upbringing and education of her five granddaughters, and a small number of young ladies from local gentry families. Although her two sons paid frequent visits to Warblington, the king made a point of staying away. Those halcyon days when the Countess of Salisbury lavishly entertained her king and queen, had come to an end.

¹⁷⁵ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, pp. 105-06.

¹⁷⁶ Madden, F., *The Privy Purse Expenses of Princess Mary* (London, 1831) pp. 9, 51. Two rewards to servants 'of my Lady of Salysbery' of 15s and 20s in January 1537 and January 1538 respectively.

¹⁷⁷ See Appendix 11, f. 77b. In 1538 her stables contained only four horses, while the fifth was with her 'cator.'

The behaviour of Margaret's sons throughout these years naturally cannot be ignored. Reginald's actions are so well known not to require detailed rehearsal here. Initially an active supporter of the divorce¹⁷⁸ by late 1530 he had changed his mind, having qualms about the king's intentions. Appraising Henry of this in 1530, he was finally granted permission to leave the country in 1532. According to Chapuys, this was because Reginald had informed the king that:

if he remained here he must attend Parliament, and if the divorce were discussed he must speak according to his conscience, On this, the King immediately gave him leave to go.¹⁷⁹

In fairness to Henry, despite the provocation, he did allow Reginald to keep his income and benefices. However after the arrival of Reginald's letter in 1536, the breach between Henry and his cousin was rendered irreparable, with Reginald's actions becoming openly treasonous in the following year.

Of the three main family members in England: Margaret, Henry and Geoffrey, Margaret was the first to reveal her disapproval to the king with her stand over Mary's jewels, but, it must be asked, what of her two sons? Lord Montague's behaviour throughout this period was, excluding his misplaced endorsement of Reginald in 1530, apparently beyond reproach. Geoffrey Pole's favour with the king fluctuated mostly as a result of his financial difficulties rather than of any unacceptable activities. However, up until 1532 Geoffrey fared as well as his brother, both ostensibly supporting the divorce in every way. Lord Montague was first appointed to a commission of the peace in December 1528 for Dorset,¹⁸⁰ and in January of the following year, for Hampshire, Somerset and Sussex, the latter county for whom his brother also sat at the same time.¹⁸¹ Subsequently both brothers continued to sit on commissions of the peace, Lord Montague more frequently than Geoffrey, until 1538. 1529 also marked Henry Pole's first summons to Parliament as Lord Montague.¹⁸² He

¹⁷⁸ Mayer, T.F., 'A Fate Worse than Death: Reginald Pole and the Parisian Theologians' *E.H.R.*, CII (1988) 884-5.

¹⁷⁹ *L&P*, V, no. 737.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, IV (ii) no. 5083 (12)

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, (iii) no. 5243 (26, 28)

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, no. 6044.

was the fourth lord to enter the chamber, following his friend Lord Delaware.¹⁸³ Geoffrey also attended this parliament as M.P. for Wilton, and was knighted during its course at York Place.¹⁸⁴ The emergence of the Pole brothers onto the political stage in this way must be seen as part of the king's attempt to muster support over the sensitive issue of Catherine's repudiation. It certainly appeared that he enjoyed that support from Lord Montague. In July 1530, Montague was among those 'Spiritual and Temporal Lords' who put their names to a petition addressed to Pope Clement VII; 'praying him to consent to the King's desires, and pointing out the evils which arise from delaying the divorce.'¹⁸⁵ Montague's name headed the list of signatures under the section for barons. In 1532 Montague was also one of those appointed to accompany the king and Anne Boleyn to Calais for their meeting with Francis I¹⁸⁶ while in the following year he enjoyed a position of honour at the coronation of Anne Boleyn, appointed carver to his new queen.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, his son-in-law, Francis, Lord Hastings was dubbed a knight of the Bath at the same coronation.¹⁸⁸ Summoned back to parliament in January 1534,¹⁸⁹ Montague subscribed his name to the controversial oath to the act of Succession.¹⁹⁰ In April of the following year he was appointed to a commission of oyer and terminer for Middlesex, regarding the trial of the Prior of the Charterhouse, and three months later for the trial of Sir Thomas More.¹⁹¹ Ironically the next trial in which he was involved, more welcome no doubt than that of Sir Thomas More, was the trial of Anne Boleyn on 15 May 1536.¹⁹² Montague continued to show the king scrupulous obedience, even to paying his

¹⁸³ Dugdale, W., *A Perfect Copy of the Nobility to the Great Councils and Parliaments of the Realm* (London, 1685) p. 496.

¹⁸⁴ Shaw, W.A., *The Knights of England* (London, 1906) p. 47. This states that Geoffrey was knighted after 3 November 1529. On the commission of the peace in January 1529, he was not knighted, but by 13 May 1530 in his letter to Mr Frynde Geoffrey had been knighted. *L&P*, IV (iii) no. 5243 (28); P.R.O. S.P.1/57, f. 101; *L&P*, IV (iii) no. 6384.

¹⁸⁵ *L&P*, IV (iii) no. 6513.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, V, Appendix 33. It was a costly excursion for Montague was instructed to bring twenty men with him.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, VI, no. 562.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 601.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, VII, no. 55; Dugdale, W., *Op.cit.*, p. 497.

¹⁹⁰ *L&P*, VII, no. 391.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, VIII, nos. 609, 974.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, X, no. 834.

subsidy on time, as did his mother,¹⁹³ and by October of the same year, was summoned with his brother to attend the king himself against the rebellion known as the Pilgrimage of Grace, Montague bringing 200 men and his brother 20.¹⁹⁴ In the following year Montague played a prominent role at the christening of Prince Edward supporting the Earl of Sussex¹⁹⁵ and at the funeral of Jane Seymour where he assisted the grieving Mary, the chief mourner.¹⁹⁶ With such a demonstration of loyalty, it is easy to understand Alan Neame's misconceived claim that Montague's sympathies lay very definitely with the king and Anne Boleyn.¹⁹⁷ Despite his mother's behaviour and Reginald's lapses, Montague's obedience went some way towards ensuring that the king's anger, at least where he was concerned, was assuaged somewhat. The New Years gifts he received in 1532 and 1533 were certainly honourable,¹⁹⁸ and in 1531 he gained the king's permission for a marriage between his eldest daughter Catherine and Francis Lord Hastings, son of the Earl of Huntingdon. The Hastings family had a respectable lineage, and a somewhat heroic one for Francis was the great grandson of William, Lord Hastings who was executed by Richard III in 1483. The family's main centre of influence was in Leicestershire and Yorkshire, but they also held manors in Buckingham, Wiltshire, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall through Francis' grandmother Mary, Lady Hungerford.¹⁹⁹ In 1532 his land revenues were worth just under £1000.²⁰⁰ Naturally, such a connection would help to consolidate the Pole family's influence in the south, a policy consistently followed with regard to their various marriages. Indeed Winifred, Montague's youngest daughter, went on to marry Lord Hastings's younger brother Thomas. Another benefit of this marriage, was the royal favour enjoyed by Hastings' father; 'Throughout his life he seems to have been a favourite of the king.'²⁰¹ Moreover, he was also an ally of Anne Boleyn's father the Earl of

¹⁹³ Ibid., XI, no. 139.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., no. 580 (2)

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., XII (ii) no. 911.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., no. 1060.

¹⁹⁷ Neame, A., *The Holy Maid of Kent*, p. 170.

¹⁹⁸ In 1532 a gilt salt with a cover, 20 oz. Lord Stafford's weighed only 17 oz and the Marchioness of Exeter's, 14oz, P.R.O. E.101/420/15, ff. 2, 3. In 1533, a gilt cruse glass 'one of highest fashion' 19oz. P.R.O. S.P.2/N (1), f. 1; *L&P*, VI, no. 32; *ibid.*, IV (ii) no. 3748.

¹⁹⁹ Cross, C., *The Puritan Earl* (London, 1966) pp. 5-6.

²⁰⁰ *D.N.B.*, XXV, 123.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

Wiltshire,²⁰² a man even Margaret was prepared to patronise. Obviously the connections Huntingdon had, meant his influence and support was worth having. However, as with the other marriages of the Pole family, this one was not without its problems. Following his son's marriage, Huntingdon's debts had risen to such an extent that he had sold and mortgaged part of Francis's inheritance contrary to the marriage agreement. This compounded his existing debts, as he found himself owing Margaret a considerable sum for breaking the covenants. By 1538 his debts amounted to the immense sum of £9466 4s 2d. Therefore on 18 March 1538 he enfeoffed his son Francis and Lord Montague with several manors until those mortgaged lands were redeemed and Huntingdon's debts discharged.²⁰³

While Montague maintained a consistent presence at court, carefully toeing whatever line the king drew, Geoffrey was not quite so circumspect. Lacking his elder brother's composure and quiet intelligence, Geoffrey was at times foolish and irresponsible. Clearly ambitious, he was unfortunately considered unsuitable for any serious government office, apart from that of Justice of the Peace and although charming, and well liked by those who knew him, that charm was not combined with the finesse necessary for a significant court appointment either. His lack of judgement is glaringly revealed when he forcibly entered Slendon Park with ten or twelve of his servants armed with bows and arrows in 1536 and dispossessed the tenants of Lord Maltravers, son of the Earl of Arundel with whom Geoffrey had clashed before. Despite a letter from the king commanding his immediate removal, he stubbornly insisted on staying one extra night which resulted in his indictment.²⁰⁴ Ironically, this obstinate streak brought him the nearest thing to a compliment he ever received. In 1535, James Hawkesworth informed Lord Lisle of the rough treatment Ralph Rigsby, keeper of the Forest of Bere, was receiving from Thomas Uvedale, constable of Winchester Castle. He therefore wished that Lisle had matched Uvedale:

either with Sir Gefferay Paulle or else with Master Browne, and either of them would have holden him short enow; for I can see no kindness in Master Thomas towards mere servants.²⁰⁵

²⁰² Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 56.

²⁰³ B.L. Harl. MS. 3881, f. 35b.

²⁰⁴ *L&P*, XI, no. 523.

²⁰⁵ *L.L.*, II, 404, no. 329.

Geoffrey's problems seem to have started in earnest around 1530. In that year his financial difficulties were such that he wrote to his friend Mr Frynde for a loan of £5 and at some point between 1530-2 a warrant was issued for him,²⁰⁶ possibly related to his indebtedness. The issue of the warrant of 1530-2 appears to have resulted in Geoffrey's first expulsion from court. Obviously worried about his position he wrote a desperate letter to Cromwell on 20 April 1533, begging for his help, 'to be a meane that I may be able to contynue my dewty that I owe farther to hys hyghnes.' Although he understood that due to all Cromwell's grave affairs and business, it was no wonder that he had forgotten him, he continues hopefully; 'I havynge trust of your goodnes to me ...do leve my servant to wayt on yow to remembre you somtyme off me.'²⁰⁷ The letter must have worked because he was appointed a server at the coronation of Anne Boleyn a month later.²⁰⁸ It is possible that Cromwell himself was lending Geoffrey money to keep the king at bay, for in July of the same year Geoffrey received £40 from Cromwell for no specific reason.²⁰⁹ In November 1534 Geoffrey had the honour of being appointed to the commission of sewers for Sussex²¹⁰ but by 1537 he was out of favour once again, possibly in relation to the Slendon Park affair as much as his continuing debts to the king. Indeed, in February 1537 he was warned by Thomas Starkey that 'Mr Gostwyke looks for you for the King's money'²¹¹ and on 14 August 1537, he signed an obligation to pay an outstanding debt of £8 18d to the king owed for various chattels, grain and utensils bought of the royal commissioners from the monastery of Durford at its dissolution. This debt was to be discharged by 1 May 1538.²¹² Writing to Sir Thomas Audeley, the lord chancellor on 5 April he thanked him for his goodness; 'the last time I was with you when my heart was full heavy; I take patience, trusting to have the king's favour again.' He went on to seek the chancellor's advice about approaching Cromwell to obtain permission to attend court the next time he was in London for:

²⁰⁶ *L&P*, VII, no. 923.

²⁰⁷ P.R.O. S.P.1/75, f. 171.

²⁰⁸ *L&P*, VI, no. 562.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 841(ii)

²¹⁰ *Ibid.*, VII, no. 1498.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, XII, no. 313. Gostwyke was the Treasurer of the First Fruit and Tenthms. Bindoff, S.T., *History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, III, 116.

²¹² 'Inventories of Goods of the Smaller Monasteries and Friaries in Sussex.' *SA.C.*, XLIV (1901) 70.

I have business this term for myself and if as desired by my Lord Privy Seal and the others before whom I was present, I should come to London and not, as wont, come to the court, men would marvel.

He ended by asking to be allowed to buy 'stuff from the local suppressed Abbeys for £30 payable in instalments. Not surprisingly he added; 'but if ye be hasty on me now I cannot do it.'²¹³ This time however, Geoffrey's pleadings did not work. Ignoring Cromwell's instructions to stay away from the court he suffered the humiliation of being refused entry. Sir Thomas Palmer reported to Lord Lisle that on the day of Prince Edward's christening; 'lord Montague's brother came to Court to do service, but the King would not suffer him to come in.'²¹⁴ It must also have been extremely embarrassing for Lord Montague who was officiating at the christening. Although Geoffrey was back on commissions of the peace by 1538, the king was understandably unimpressed with his general behaviour.

The situation in which the Pole family consequently found itself by 1538 was clearly not enviable. Margaret had lost the king's favour as early as 1533, and except for the brief hiatus in 1536, had effectively withdrawn from court at that time. Geoffrey had revealed himself not only to be extravagant, but foolishly obstinate which stretched the king's patience to the limit, meanwhile assassins prowled Europe in search of Reginald for whom Henry seethed with hatred. By 1538 only Lord Montague was able to represent the family at court and any reconciliation with the king must come through him. Unfortunately, Montague's loyalty and acquiescence to the king's will was a mere façade, and that façade while skilfully constructed, was understandably unable to withstand the *ill-considered behaviour of his two brothers*.

²¹³ *L&P*, XII (i) no. 829.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 921.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE FALL OF THE POLE FAMILY

'the Kyng never made man but he distrowyd hym agaye other with displeasure or with the sword'¹

On 14 August 1538, Margaret Pole reached her sixty fifth year; two weeks later her youngest son Geoffrey was arrested and taken to the Tower of London. It was to be nearly two months before Geoffrey's first official examination took place, on 26 October. Following this however, events moved swiftly with intensive activity throughout November during which numerous witnesses were examined, and their depositions taken. On Monday 4 November Lord Montague and the Marquis of Exeter joined Geoffrey at the Tower with Sir Edward Neville following on 5 November.² On November 12 Sir William Fitzwilliam, Earl of Southampton and Thomas Goodrich, Bishop of Ely arrived at Warblington to interrogate Margaret and two days later she was escorted to Southampton's residence, Cowdray, where she was kept in confinement.³ By the end of November multiple examinations had taken place, Geoffrey alone having endured seven separate interrogations, and by the beginning of December all was prepared for the trials. On 2 and 3 December Lord Montague and the Marquis of Exeter stood trial respectively, and the following day Sir Edward Neville, Sir Geoffrey Pole, George Croftes clerk, John Collins clerk and Hugh Holland yeoman, stood before the bar.⁴ Although Montague, Exeter and Neville pleaded not guilty, guilty verdicts were passed unanimously on all. On Monday 9 December amid wind and rain,⁵ Lord Montague, the Marquis of Exeter and Sir Edward Neville went to the block on Tower Hill, while Croftes, Collins and

¹ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f.37b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 702 (2) Words attributed to Lord Montague by Jerome Ragland.

² *L&P*, XIII (ii) nos. 752, 753, 884.

³ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, ff. 243-46b; B.L. Cotton. MS. Appendix L, f. 79; *L&P*, XIII (ii) nos. 818, 855.

⁴ Sir Edward Neville was the younger brother of Lord Bergavenny, see Appendix 2. George Croftes was chancellor of Chichester Cathedral, John Collins was chaplain to Lord Montague and Hugh Holland, yeoman, was a native of Warblington and servant of Geoffrey Pole.

⁵ Richard Morisyne claimed that God would not even give Exeter 'a fayre daye to dye in.' Morisyne, R., *An Invective ayenste the great and detestable vice, treason.*

Holland faced a less swift fate at Tyburn. All in all approximately twenty four witnesses and suspects were questioned resulting in the arrests of twelve people. Of these twelve, seven were executed, four received pardons, one in Mary's reign, and one disappeared mysteriously in the Tower.⁶ In just over three months two of the wealthiest and most prestigious families in England had been destroyed.

Not surprisingly the fall of the Pole and Courtenay families was something of a cause célèbre at the time, more so abroad than in England. Of course, in England it would have been most unwise to exhibit even the slightest signs of disapproval. Hugh Latimer wrote congratulating Cromwell for carrying out his threat to make Reginald 'eat his own heart,' enthusing, 'Blessed be God of England that worketh all, whose instrument you be!'⁷ On 22 December Sir Thomas Wriothesley described the news of the arrests as the best medicine he had had in ages, which certainly helped to lighten his 'swollen stomach'; 'How joyful tidings it must be to all Englishmen to know that such great traitors have been punished, and their attempts frustrated.'⁸ Even Honour Lisle, in London at the time on business, wrote to Lord Lisle of her progress and merry feasts with the king, but dared write nothing of the terrible events surrounding her husband's family. Chapuys was the first foreign ambassador to communicate the news. Reporting Geoffrey's arrest a mere two days later, he accurately attributed it to the fact that he had, 'corresponded with or received letters from him (Reginald) without showing them to the king, which is here considered a crime of lèse majesté.'⁹ Robert Warner writing to Lord Fitzwalter also ascribed their fall to the involvement of Reginald declaring, 'It is for Lord Montague's brother, who is with the Bishop of Rome and is an arrant traitor. They would have made foul work in England.'¹⁰ Reginald himself imputed their downfall to their devotion to the Church, thus casting them in the role of martyrs. To Francis I's letter of condolence, he replied that the 'calamities' of his family 'are connected with those of the Church, and of the

⁶ Those arrested were Henry Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter, his wife Gertrude and son Edward, Lord Montague and his son Henry, Sir Geoffrey Pole, Margaret, Countess of Salisbury, Sir Edward Neville, Thomas West, Lord Delaware, George Croftes, John Collins and Hugh Holland. Gertrude, Marchioness of Exeter, Lord Delaware and Geoffrey Pole were pardoned by Henry VIII, Edward Courtenay was pardoned by Queen Mary. Henry Pole, Lord Montague's son, disappeared from all records in 1542.

⁷ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 1036.

⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 1124.

⁹ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1538-42, p. 31, no. 7. Chapuys to Don Diego de Mendoza.

¹⁰ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 884.

(Catholic) religion.¹¹ After Margaret's execution, he supposedly told his secretary Lodovico Beccatelli, that she had died 'for her perseverance in the Catholic faith'¹² and wrote to the Cardinal Archbishop of Burgos pledging 'to style himself the son of a martyr.'¹³

Reactions abroad were generally unfavourable to the fall of these two families. On 9 January 1539, Chapuys reported Sir Nicholas Carewe's arrest to the emperor, writing cynically that:

the principal thing that had been required of him since his imprisonment was to testify something against the Marquis; for since the testimony of young Pole is not sufficient, these men,.... want to form the process after the execution.¹⁴

Gaspard de Coligny Castillon, the French ambassador in England wrote to Anne de Montmorency, constable of France on 5 November, that he believed the arrests were a fulfilment of Henry's promise to 'exterminate the house of Montague, which is the remains of the White rose and the house of Pole to which the Cardinal belongs', a promise Henry had informed Castillon of 'a long time ago.' Consequently, the French ambassador continued, 'It seems that he is seizing every occasion that he can think of to ruin and destroy them.'¹⁵ Charles de Marillac, Castillon's successor, sent regular bulletins throughout Parliament's deliberations on the fate of Margaret, Gertrude and the two children in the summer of 1539¹⁶ while the emperor's ambassador in Rome, the Marquis of Aguilar, wrote to his master on 20 July 1539, of his disappointment that Charles had not forbidden commerce with England, reporting in disgust that 'the King of England continues in his misdeeds and cruelties, and has now sentenced to death the mother of Cardinal Pole.'¹⁷ Obviously such adverse foreign reactions, at a time when England's relations with both France and the Empire were extremely tense,

¹¹ *C.S.P.*, Venetian, 1534-54, no. 199.

¹² Pye, B., *The Life of Cardinal Reginald Pole*, pp. 155-6.

¹³ *C.S.P.*, Venetian, 1534-54, no. 272.

¹⁴ *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 37.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, XIII (ii) no. 753.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, XIV (i) nos. 988, 989, 1091.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 1292.

constrained the government to put forward its side of the story, culminating in Richard Morisyne's 'Invective' of 1539. These explanations, which initially described actual evidence gleaned by the king's interrogators, and thus possessed a modicum of truth, soon descended into ridiculously unbelievable charges as the government failed to convince anyone of its innocence and the Poles' and Courtenays' guilt.¹⁸ *Hall's Chronicle* ventures no opinion as to the families' fall merely reporting the trials and executions,¹⁹ while Robert Fabyan accords the executions only one sentence in his *Concordance of History*.²⁰ Charles Wriothesley, Windsor Herald, ascribes their conviction to treason 'by the counsaill of Reynold Pole.....which pretended to have enhaused the Bishop of Romes usurped authority againe, lyke traytors to God and theyr prince.'²¹ The anonymous contemporary Spanish chronicler also has an explanation and blames Cromwell for the débâcle. According to him, Cromwell 'always tried to injure all the lords who were of the blood-royal because he thought they disliked him.'²²

The views of modern scholars are no less varied than those expressed by contemporaries. Although Margaret and her family have been generally overlooked by historians, their sensational fall has at least commanded attention. The first detailed account of the fall of the Poles and Courtenays was completed by the Misses

¹⁸ On 31 December 1538, Castillion wrote to Montmorency reporting Cromwell's claim that Reginald had written to his brothers and Exeter telling them to do nothing 'until he should come hither.' This refers to Geoffrey Pole's evidence, where he stated that Reginald instructed both himself and Montague to remain in England and 'hold up yea and nay the[re]' P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 215; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (2). Cromwell continued to explain that their intention was to drive out Henry VIII, for Exeter and the Pole brothers were very powerful. This must refer to the recurring accusation throughout the evidence that the three of them wished for a change. By 9 January however, the government claimed a letter had been found in a coffer belonging to the Marchioness of Exeter. It was clear from this, Cromwell declared, that Exeter planned to marry Mary to his son and usurp the kingdom. *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 37. On 5 February Wriothesley made it known in Brussels that Exeter had been a traitor for the last twenty years, planning to take Henry's place and kill all his children, while on 13 February Henry ordered Sir Thomas Wyatt to inform the Emperor that both Montague and Exeter had plotted to murder the whole royal family, including Mary, and 'usurp the whole rule, which Exeter had meditated these last ten years.' Moreover these facts had been disclosed by Geoffrey Pole and 'openly proved before their faces.' *Ibid.*, nos. 233, 280.

¹⁹ *Hall's Chronicle*, p. 287.

²⁰ Ellis, H., (ed.), *Robert Fabyan The Concordance of History. The New Chronicles of England and France* (London, 1811) p. 70.

²¹ Hamilton, W.D., (ed.), *A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors from AD 1485-1559* by Charles Wriothesley, Windsor Herald, (I) XX (Camden Society, new series, London, 1875) 91 -2.

²² Hume, M.A.S., (trans.), *Chronicle of King Henry VIII of England* (London, 1889) p. 131.

Dodds as part of their two volume work on the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1915.²³ According to them, once Reginald's letter 'De Unitate Ecclesiastica' arrived and Reginald accepted the Pope's invitation to Rome, the family's fate was sealed; 'the King would bide his time, but in the end he would strike.'²⁴ Their 'few careless words'²⁵ gave the king that opportunity. The Dodds's inference is that by 1536 they were already doomed, their innocence or guilt notwithstanding. The Dodds do admit however, that their ruin might have been hastened by the threat of invasion which hung over England in 1538.²⁶ This is a view shared by Helen Miller who, noting Exeter's power in Devon and Cornwall, interprets their fall as a precaution in the event of a Catholic invasion.²⁷

Thomas F. Mayer has sought to prove that Reginald's legation of 1537 had the potential to pose a real threat to Henry VIII's security,²⁸ and while G.W. Bernard disagrees with this,²⁹ he does accept that Henry's actions, in the serious international climate of 1538, were understandable.³⁰ Christoph Höllger has conducted an examination of the so called 'Exeter Conspiracy' as part of his study on Reginald Pole's legations of 1537 and 1539. He firmly believes that the family's fate was directly related to Reginald's activities on the continent. He links up every move against them with every act of opposition to Henry VIII perpetrated by Reginald in Europe; 'Henry tried to use the Poles as hostages to secure reasonable conduct by Reginald Pole, and he destroyed them as his policies did not work with the cardinal.'³¹ While admitting that the trials were technically legal, he believes that evidence was in some cases forged and 'on most occasions flimsy if not dubious.'³² Thus he reaches

²³ Dodds, M.H., and Dodds, R., *The Pilgrimage of Grace and The Exeter Conspiracy*, (2 vols.)

²⁴ *Ibid.*, I, 338.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, II, 278.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

²⁷ Miller, H., *Henry VIII and the English Nobility*, p. 68.

²⁸ Mayer, T.F., 'A Diet for Henry VIII: The Failure of Reginald Pole's 1537 Legation.' *Journal of British Studies*, XXVI (1987) 305.

²⁹ Bernard, G.W., *The Tudor Nobility*, p. 29.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

³¹ Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539.' p. 124.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 125.

the firm conclusion that 'the government had used English law as an instrument with which to commit judicial murder.'³³ While maintaining that the Poles suffered for Reginald's behaviour, the Marquis, he believes, went to the block solely due to his proximity to the throne. This dynastic element is another motive historians ascribe to Henry VIII. According to Joyce Youings, Exeter's execution 'was in accordance with a long-term policy of exterminating all possible Yorkist claimants to the Tudor throne'³⁴ Sir Arthur Salusbury MacNalty takes the view that the Poles and Courtenays were among many who met their fates due to Henry VIII's abnormality of mind, a condition apparently voiced by Lord Montague in 1537.³⁵ According to MacNalty, the severe pain of Henry's leg 'certainly helped to bring out the evil that a saner mental disposition would have controlled.'³⁶ G.R Elton however, considers the situation more from Henry VIII's point of view believing that he 'had a reality to react against.' He notes the substantial amount of evidence pointing to the fact that 'treason was contemplated if not plotted,' and while their incompetence earns them our pity, it 'does not disprove their intention to plot.' Elton is one of the few historians who is convinced that both families were 'not only disaffected but revolving ways of giving disaffection teeth.'³⁷ The only aspect that most scholars do agree upon, is that whether guilty or innocent of conspiracy, the Poles and Courtenays were never a serious threat to Henry's security. This chapter will examine the evidence and the sequence of events leading to the arrests and executions of 1538. It will then analyse the various motives involved against the international backdrop in an attempt to gain some understanding of an event Höllger describes as a 'dark episode of Henry's reign.'³⁸

The first arrest to take place was that of Hugh Holland, one of Geoffrey Pole's servants. According to the popular story, Holland was arrested and taken up to London with his hands tied behind his back and his legs beneath his horse's stomach. On the journey, Geoffrey Pole supposedly met him and, with his fondness for puns, asked half jokingly where he was 'bound' to go. Holland allegedly replied that he

³³ Ibid., p. 109.

³⁴ Youings, J.A., 'The Council of the West,' T. R. H. S., X, (5th series 1960) 45.

³⁵ Montague apparently considered that Henry VIII 'wolde be out of his wyttes one daye, for when he came to his chamber he wolde loke Angarly and after fall to fyghting.' Geoffrey Pole's seventh examination. P.R.O. S.P.1/133, f. 219b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (7)

³⁶ MacNalty, A.S., *Henry VIII A Difficult Patient* (London, 1952) p. 183.

³⁷ Elton, G.R., *Reform and Reformation: England 1509-1558* (London, 1977) pp. 280.

³⁸ Höllger, C., Op.cit., p. 122.

could not say himself, but told Geoffrey to 'kepe on his way, ffor he sholde not be long after.'³⁹ The Dodds accept the authenticity of this story,⁴⁰ as does Höllger who believes that it proves Holland intended to betray Geoffrey in order to save himself, but at least had the decency to warn his master first!⁴¹ The story originated from local gossip, and evidence would suggest that it was in fact not true. It appears that Holland was arrested at Bockmer, Lord Montague's seat, while both Montague and his brother were in residence. The scene cannot have been pleasant for Holland did not go quietly and a scuffle ensued. This shocking event prompted Lord Montague to inform Geoffrey that he, Montague, had burned many letters at Bockmer.⁴² Unfortunately we are not told the date of Holland's arrest, but from the evidence of three separate witnesses, we know that Geoffrey Pole despatched John Collins, Lord Montague's chaplain, from Bockmer to Lordington to burn certain letters he kept there.⁴³ Three witnesses testified that Collins was sent to Lordington to burn the letters; Constance Pole who was present, Jerome Ragland and Collins himself, while Morgan Wells knew that he had been sent to Lordington but not why. According to Constance, Collins came to burn the letters between Whitsun and Midsummer, while Ragland, Wells and Collins himself stated that he was sent at Corpus Christi time.⁴⁴ In fact Collins was more specific, affirming that he was sent 'about the feast of Corpus Christi' on a Friday. As Easter Sunday in 1538 fell on 21 April⁴⁵ Corpus Christi must have occurred on Thursday 20 June, therefore Collins was sent on Friday 21 June. It is not unreasonable to assume that Collins' urgent despatch was provoked by Holland's arrest and Lord Montague's subsequent comment to Geoffrey. The arrest of one of his

³⁹ P.R.O. S.P.1/136, f. 202b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 392 (2, iii)

⁴⁰ Dodds, M.H., and R., *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, II 304.

⁴¹ Höllger, C., *Op.cit.*, pp. 85-6.

⁴² Geoffrey Pole testified that Lord Montague showed him 'att the Ruffle when hugh holland was taken thatt he hadd burnyd many lettres att his howse callyd bukmar,' P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 216b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (4) The wording of this indicates that Montague told Geoffrey at the time of Holland's arrest.

⁴³ Apparently Geoffrey Pole gave Collins a ring by way of a token which he showed to Geoffrey's wife Constance. Upon seeing this, Constance took Collins to her husband's closet where he burned five or six letters. *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 796.

⁴⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 40; *L&P*, XIII (ii) nos. 702 (3), 796; S.P.1/139, f. 23, *L&P*, XIII, no. 828 (2); S.P.1/139, f. 30, *L&P*, XIII, no. 829 (2) Testimonies of Jerome Ragland, Constance Pole, Morgan Wells and John Collins respectively. Unfortunately, the original of John Collins's statement is now badly mutilated in this section.

⁴⁵ Eric Bergman-Terrell 'Astronomy Lab., 2. v.2.03.' (Distributed by Personal MicroCosms, Colorado, 1995) I should like to thank Mr. Robert J. Lewis for drawing my attention to this programme.

most trusted servants would have alerted Geoffrey to the necessity of removing any incriminating evidence. Hence we can place Holland's arrest at some point in the third week of June, possibly only a day or two before Collins' despatch.

It seems that Höllger, who felt unable to make any assumption regarding the timing of Holland's arrest,⁴⁶ did the gentleman a disservice. It was just over two months before the government had enough evidence to feel able to arrest Geoffrey Pole. Thus it appears that Holland was not all too willing to betray his master as Höllger claimed. Although Holland was undoubtedly a scoundrel, he had never shown any evidence of disloyalty towards the Pole family. Moreover, he was a hard man playing for high stakes and knew exactly what he was doing. He had successfully carried out a number of highly dangerous and sensitive errands for his master with finesse, he was not likely to crack at the first instance even before the king's officers. Obviously it is necessary to understand why Holland was arrested, and Gervase Tyndall may very well provide the answer.

A sometime school master⁴⁷ who had attended Cardinal's College, Oxford,⁴⁸ Tyndall arrived in Hampshire in the summer of 1538.⁴⁹ Apparently suffering from ill health he found it necessary to stay at a surgeon house near Warblington to recover. This surgeon house was maintained by Margaret and its surgeon, Richard Ayer, naturally enjoyed an association with the Pole family. It was from Ayer that Tyndall learned a great deal of what was going on in Margaret's household, and of contacts between the Pole family and Reginald. This information was duly passed on by Tyndall to Cromwell. Consequently Tyndall's arrival in Hampshire poses some important questions. It must be asked whether it was by chance that he picked up this information from an idle conversation with the gossiping Ayer, or whether a more sinister explanation can be proposed? Indeed had Tyndall been sent into Hampshire by Cromwell to surreptitiously investigate the activities of the Pole family?

Certainly Tyndall, a firm proponent of the New Learning, had direct contact with Cromwell and had apparently acted as an informer before. In 1535 he wrote to

⁴⁶ Höllger, C., *Op.cit.*, p. 86.

⁴⁷ In August 1535 Tyndall was school master of the free school of Grantham in Lincolnshire. *L&P*, IX, no. 179 (x)

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, XII, (ii) no. 817.

⁴⁹ Höllger mistakenly claims that Tyndall was in Margaret's service carrying out some kind of medical function. Höllger, C., *Op.cit.*, p. 111.

Cromwell that a doctor named Stanley had delivered a sermon against the royal supremacy at a church in Grantham. As a result, Tyndall remonstrated with him but the doctor retaliated by abusing Tyndall to the neighbourhood, and drove away all the boys from his school in case they should catch the 'infection.' 'I beg therefore,' Tyndall wrote:

that you will assist me, as I am entirely exhausted of money, as, at your command and that of my lord of Rutland, I was employed in the business of certain friars who were about to practise necromancy.⁵⁰

It appears that Cromwell answered his protégé's call for help, for by October 1537 a Mr Tyndall had been appointed schoolmaster of Eton, and was described as 'Cromwell's true scholar and beadman.'⁵¹ Tyndall also seems to have had a connection with Richard Morisyne, one of Cromwell's most loyal adherents and the future author of the 'Invective.' By his own evidence Tyndall claimed to have attended Oxford at the same time as Morisyne. Moreover he told Ayer that he could arrange an interview between Ayer and Cromwell if Ayer was prepared to talk, assuring him that, 'my lord wold geve hym gret thanks yn th[at] behalff, and do mor for hym than ever my lady w[old].'⁵² Clearly Tyndall was actively seeking information against the Pole family and from this evidence, it is not unreasonable to conclude that he was indeed a member of Cromwell's spy network. Although Höllger disproves the existence of spies in the Pole and Courtenay households,⁵³ it is inconceivable that such a family would not have been kept under some kind of surveillance.⁵⁴ Consequently, the reasons for Tyndall's despatch must necessarily be considered.

After Geoffrey Pole's arrest the neighbourhood buzzed with gossip about the family, with Ayer again at the centre of it. He supposedly told Laurence Taylor, a harper of Havant and one time servant of Geoffrey Pole's colleague John Gunter, that if

⁵⁰ *L&P*, IX, no. 740.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, XII (ii) no. 848.

⁵² *Ibid.*, XIII (ii) no. 817. As the original of Tyndall's evidence is mutilated, and the version in *Letters and Papers* is fully transcribed, I have used the latter.

⁵³ He rightly notes that if spies had been insinuated into the households, they would naturally have provided evidence, yet most of the evidence comes from Geoffrey Pole, friends and genuine servants of the two families. Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539,' p. 85.

⁵⁴ See below pp. 284.

Geoffrey had not been apprehended he would have sent a band of men over to Reginald in March the following year, and that Holland was suspected of carrying letters overseas.⁵⁵ It is possible that gossip of this nature was prevalent even before Geoffrey and Holland's arrests, and that scraps of it filtered through to Cromwell. Certainly Morgan Wells, a loyal servant of the Pole family, was aware that Ayer was prepared to inform on the family, declaring in his evidence that it was 'spoken at Bokmar that the said Ayer shuld open the sayd hollands going oversees.'⁵⁶ John Collins, Lord Montague's chaplain, corroborated this stating in his testimony that he:

hard att bockmar of hugh hollands being beyond the sees, And that the Rumour was thatt he shuld go over with lettres to Cardinall poole And thatt the discosing of his often going beyond the sees was made by one Ayer to Tyndall, And by Tyndall to the prist of havant.⁵⁷

Certainly Cromwell's importance in Hampshire was not inconsiderable. Ronald Fritze has revealed that even before 1531 Cromwell's influence had started growing and eventually challenged that of the absent Bishop of Winchester, Stephen Gardiner.⁵⁸ Indeed the town of Southampton looked to Cromwell as patron and began taking their problems to him. In turn he arbitrated their disputes, formed friendships with the inhabitants and took them into his service. Local men such as this, 'provided Cromwell with the sources of information and aid he needed to carry out his policies and maintain his presence in Hampshire.'⁵⁹ Even heads of religious houses began approaching Cromwell for favours,⁶⁰ while the January 1538 commission of the peace, clearly revealed Cromwellian influence.⁶¹ As Fritze has shown, although many people disliked the religious changes, they were still more than willing to inform on their conservative neighbours as they placed their loyalty to the king first.⁶² Consequently it is easy to understand how scraps of sensitive gossip about the Poles

⁵⁵ P.R.O. S.P.1/136, ff. 204b, 203; *L&P*, XIII (ii) nos. 393, 392 (2, iv)

⁵⁶ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 23; *L&P*, XIII, (ii) no. 828 (2)

⁵⁷ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 30; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 829 (2)

⁵⁸ Fritze, R.H., 'Faith and Faction,' pp. 98-9.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-05.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 141-42.

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 133-37.

and Hugh Holland might have found their way to the ears of the Lord Privy Seal. Furthermore, Hugh Holland was the type of character to attract gossip. Described in evidence as a 'knave' and crafty fellow,⁶³ Holland had been involved in serious piratical activities in 1533. Among his partners in crime at that time were Henry Bykley, with whom he was still associated in 1538,⁶⁴ and a John Snoddon who was staying with Geoffrey Pole at the time of the offence. According to the confession of Myghell Jamys, towards the end of February 1533 Holland, Bykley, Snoddon and approximately fourteen others took to the sea and, coming across a ship of St Jean de Luz anchored at Calshot Point, boarded it and imprisoned the crew. They then stole the cargo of herring and Cornish tin along with valuables belonging to the crew. Loading their swag into Holland and Bykley's boat, Holland and three others sailed off to sell the stolen goods while Bykley and his associates maintained possession of the ship, using it for subsequent piratical acts which resulted in the acquisition of yet another ship laden with gascon wine. Eventually, the crew of the first ship escaped and overcame their captors, resulting in the imprisonment of nine of the reprobates, but as James makes clear, Holland, Bykley and a William Sunday of Portsmouth, all escaped imprisonment perhaps due to their being men of some substance having 'freehold and land.' Moreover, Jamys maintained that one of those imprisoned, a William Bukley, was back at sea having 'a week ago' taken a French ship laden with wine and liming cloth. Looking for men to recruit along the coasts of Hampshire and Sussex, James believed that Bukley was being helped and supplied by Holland, Bykley and William Sunday, all conveniently living on the sea coast.⁶⁵

The above indicates that Cromwell was well placed to hear of any gossip concerning Holland's trips overseas, and the activities of the Pole family originating from the loose tongued Ayer. Ayer would thus be the most obvious candidate for a surreptitious visit from one of Cromwell's agents. If Tyndall was indeed on a fact finding mission in the summer of 1538, then that mission was a success. From Richard Ayer's statements and the general whispering of her household, the countess was portrayed as a 'godmother' figure heading a Mafia of priests. Apparently, nothing was done in the county, 'bout my Lady dyd knoe yt'⁶⁶ for the local priests informed

⁶³ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 817.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, in which Bykley too is described as a crafty fellow along with Holland.

⁶⁵ P.R.O. E.36/120, ff. 131-31b. The confession of Myghell Jamys made before John Cooke, Commisary of the Admiralty in the county of Southampton, 11 March, 1534.

⁶⁶ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 817, f.84b. According to what Richard Ayer told John Ansard.

her of what they had learned from the confessional. At Easter 1537, ten or twelve of Lord Montague's servants went to Chichester to be confessed 'with the which thyng [my] lady was not a lytyll dyscontent,'⁶⁷ presumably because by going to Chichester she would be unable to discover the content of their confessions. The priests were able to justify this dishonourable betrayal because they believed it was:

for the sole helthe off the partys yn that my Lady was off g[ood mind]
and wold se secret reformatyon and feyn as thowe sche dyd [know] be
sume other mens.⁶⁸

Despite this, there appears to have been no animosity towards Margaret as it was believed she was being misled by her priests, especially by her chaplains, Mr Newton and Mr Nicholson, 'for thes be the ryngleders [of] my ladys error all together.'⁶⁹

Richard Ayer however, seems to have had leanings towards the New Learning and was genuinely disgusted at what was going on in Margaret's household. He was furious that the curate of Warblington had betrayed even his confession to the countess, and was understandably not appeased even though the curate 'askte hym forgevunes afterward off hys knes.'⁷⁰ He also told Tyndall that the curate of Havant was 'skasly the kyngys [fr]end.'⁷¹ Apparently Tyndall's arrival caused quite a stir in the neighbourhood. Once his religious leanings were known, Margaret ordered Ayer to send him away from the surgeon house. On Tyndall's refusal to go, she instructed Ayer to send all the patients away. Again Ayer believed her priests were behind this and affirmed that he could tell the Lord Privy Seal a 'tale that wher worth t[ell]ynge.'⁷² Upon Tyndall's offer to set up an interview with Cromwell, Ayer revealed more sensitive information, this time concerning Hugh Holland. According to him, this 'knave' Holland:

⁶⁷ Ibid., f. 83. For which information Tyndall said he had good witness.

⁶⁸ Ibid., f. 84b. According to what Ayer told Ansard.

⁶⁹ Ibid., f.83. Gathered by Tyndall from the whispering of Margaret's household.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid., f. 83b.

begenythe nowe off late [to act] the marchant mane and the broker, for
he go[lyth over] the see and convays letters to Master Helyar ower
[parson] her off Warblyntune

moreover, Ayer continued, Holland:

playthe the knave off thother [hand] and convaythe letters to Master
Poole th Cardy[nall, and] all the secretes off the rem off Ynglond ys
k[nowyn to the] bychope off Rome as well as th[ough he] wer her.⁷³

Ayer also pointed Tyndall in the direction of a disgruntled ex member of Margaret's household who, he promised, 'wyll tell more then thys.'⁷⁴ This gentleman, possibly a Peter Wythends⁷⁵ had apparently been put out of Margaret's service due to his adherence to the New Learning. This Peter was anxious that Tyndall should convey all he told him to Cromwell, for on telling Master Cotton ⁷⁶ he had been told to leave the matter well alone for 'other men schold do yt welynowhe yff the mychgt parsa[ve them to] be trewe thus.'⁷⁷ According to Peter, Margaret's counsel had forbidden her tenants to have the New Testament in English or any of the new books sanctioned by the king. He also provided more information about the flight out of England of John Helyar, Margaret's personal chaplain. Helyar apparently told Peter that the Bishop of Rome had as many friends in England as he ever had and may also have claimed that he was supreme head over all the church of Christ.⁷⁸ When Peter replied that Helyar's

⁷³ Ibid., f. 84.

⁷⁴ Ibid., f. 85.

⁷⁵ We know from this document that the informer was called Peter. Unfortunately only the first two letters of his surname have survived, Wy. It is possible that his name was Peter Wythends. In 1538 Margaret's laundress is described as 'Wythends wife.' Obviously her husband was well known enough in the household for his full name not to be necessary. It might be stretching the evidence too far to make this assumption, but unfortunately it is the only information we have regarding this informer's identity.

⁷⁶ This was most probably Richard Cotton who sat as a J.P., for Hampshire 1538-55. He had connections with John Gunter, Geoffrey Pole's colleague and Sir Oliver Wallop, constable of Margaret's castle at Christchurch. Gunter was one of the overseers of his will and Wallop was given £200 to hold as a marriage portion for his daughter. Fritze, R.H., 'Faith and Faction,' p. 375. In 1551, Cotton was granted the manor of Warblington, and his son George succeeded to it in 1556. Page, W., (ed.), *V.C.H.*, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, III (London, 1908) 135.

⁷⁷ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 817, f. 85.

⁷⁸ Ibid., f. 85b. Due to mutilation of the document it is unclear whether he actually made this last claim.

remarks were treasonous, the vicar took fright and fled to Portsmouth where he lodged for six days with Holland's infamous piratical associate Henry Bykley, until he gained passage on a ship to France. On Cromwell's discovery of this, Helyar's goods were sequestered but, according to Peter, Geoffrey Pole and Sir William Paulet 'mayd suc[h] scheft that the matter was clokyd and hys good[es re]stauryd again.'⁷⁹ If, Peter promised, he could talk to Cromwell, he would show him the truth. He also advised Tyndall on how Cromwell might best extract information from Holland, Bykley and Thomas Standish, clerk of Margaret's kitchen. Being such 'crafty felows,' 'my lord schold never get nothy[ng of] them, except he had ther concell and went [more] wysly to worke.'⁸⁰

It appears that Margaret was not the only one to be concerned about Tyndall's appearance in the neighbourhood. Although the document is unfortunately mutilated, it seems that the local priests may have believed him to be an Observant Friar, and sent a friar from among them to try and discover the truth. When Tyndall realised what was afoot, he declared that he was 'no suche parsne and defyde them all which are frers.'⁸¹ At this, the locals' suspicions not being allayed, the curate of Havant, a Sir William 'Wantlatyn,' visited Tyndall and questioned him. Tyndall eventually lost his temper and warned the curate to remember Ayer's words that he was scarcely the king's friend. Immediately the local constable, 'yn a gret fewme' pledged that himself and twenty more would testify in support of the curate, and ranted that 'yt was mery yn thes contry [be]for suche fellowys came, which fyndythe suche fawtes with ower honestes prestes.'⁸² Unfortunately for them, Tyndall, with his high connections was not to be intimidated, and turned the interrogation back upon his examiners. He found it incredible that the constable did not want to question him further to ascertain the veracity of his information against the curate. He also asked him what he meant by Hampshire being merry before such fellows came to find fault with the local priests. The constable replied that he meant Hampshire was a quiet country before, but by now was alarmed enough to go straight to Sir Geoffrey Pole the following day. After telling Geoffrey all that Tyndall had said, Geoffrey, who was also the local Justice of the Peace, summoned Tyndall before him and assured him that he could speak all he knew for Geoffrey was the king's justice and friend. At this Tyndall told Geoffrey

⁷⁹ Ibid., f. 85b.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid., f. 84.

⁸² Ibid.

what he said he had heard, adding defiantly, that he might well say so 'for yt ys truth.'⁸³

Upon hearing such serious accusations and realising that Holland's trips were being so gossiped about, Geoffrey was extremely worried. As a result, he turned to Oliver Frankelyn, Margaret's receiver-general, for advice. Frankelyn admonished Geoffrey to take Holland and Ayer and go at once to Cromwell to explain. This Geoffrey did and reported to Frankelyn that, 'the lorde Pryvey Sealle was good lord to hym, And had dyspachyd the said Ayar and holland.'⁸⁴ However, the accusations explained by Geoffrey to Cromwell, only concerned letters to John Helyar.⁸⁵ From this it would appear that Tyndall had not revealed to Geoffrey, or the locals of Havant, the full extent of his knowledge. However, when Tyndall sent Cromwell his full report, probably shortly after Geoffrey's visit,⁸⁶ it naturally contained the allegations concerning Holland's conveyance of letters to Reginald, and the dissemination of England's secrets to the Bishop of Rome. Upon receiving this, Cromwell understandably decided to strike resulting in Holland's arrest in June. Although Margaret had been implicated over her aversion to the New Learning, her priests' activities and letters to Helyar, for which Geoffrey had also been implicated, Holland's supposed activities were far more serious, thus his arrest immediately followed. It might be asked why the gossip was so prevalent in 1538? Of course the longer the time, the greater are the chances of more individuals hearing rumours. It had taken little more than a year for the gossip about Holland's visit to Reginald to emerge, while the more times Holland went overseas the more his trips would be noticed. It was precisely because Frankelyn had noticed Holland's frequent journeys across the water, that he was prompted to remark, 'I pray god all be well ye rune soo often tymes over sees.'⁸⁷ Obviously Holland's testimony was crucial, determining as it did, the government's next move. It therefore requires close examination.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, f. 84b.

⁸⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, ff. 154-54b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 875.

⁸⁵ Frankelyn makes clear in his evidence that the priest of Havant and one Wyseodom told Geoffrey all that Tyndall had said, and this concerned Holland's conveyance of letters from Margaret and Geoffrey to John Helyar. His visit to Reginald is not mentioned, nor the sending of letters to the cardinal. *Ibid.*, f. 154.

⁸⁶ It is much more likely that Cromwell received Tyndall's evidence at this time than at the beginning of November as Höllger alleges, Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539,' p. 111.

⁸⁷ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 154; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 875.

Although Holland's interrogation was conducted on 3 November 1538, as with Geoffrey Pole's first examination on 26 October, it was merely the formal record of evidence which the government had already gained from him. Holland's evidence is very extensive, seven pages long and detailed. Indeed one of the most disturbing things about it, is Holland's apparently excellent memory. However, Holland's messages between Geoffrey and Reginald were verbal and thus committed to memory. From Holland's evidence, it is clear just how involved both he and Geoffrey Pole were in the flight of John Helyar. The Countess of Salisbury had appointed Helyar her personal chaplain on 1 May 1532.⁸⁸ Another of those men who had enjoyed Wolsey's patronage,⁸⁹ Helyar was also the vicar of East Meon and Rector of Warblington, a living to which he was presented by Margaret in 1533.⁹⁰ An admirer of Reginald, he wrote to him in July 1537 encouraging his stand against the religious changes in England and suggested that the Pope should call a three day Fast and General Communion to ask for God's mercy on England.⁹¹ Thomas Mayer has noted the potential Helyar possessed to become another hostile propagandist abroad. At a time when it was feared that Reginald might publish his 'De Unitate,' this was a possibility the English government did not relish.⁹² Naturally Helyar's departure was viewed with some seriousness, especially when Geoffrey's role in it came to light.

According to Holland, Helyar first asked him whether he would take him overseas at the beginning of the summer in 1534 or 1535. ⁹³ Holland agreed providing his master, Geoffrey would give him leave. Geoffrey himself then approached Holland, desiring and commanding him to take Helyar to Paris, where, he explained, Helyar was going to study. He promised Holland that Helyar 'shall honestly recompense you.'⁹⁴ Thus Holland hired a French ship and took Helyar over from Portsmouth at the end of the summer, which clearly corroborates the evidence given by the informer Peter. Having

⁸⁸ *L&P*, V, no. 985.

⁸⁹ *D.N.B.*, XXV, p. 381.

⁹⁰ Simmonds, N., *Warblington Church*, p. 9.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 13-14; Mayer, T.F., 'A Diet for Henry VIII,' p. 316. By 1540 Helyar had become Master of the English Hospice in Rome through Reginald's patronage. *Ibid.*, p. 316.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 198; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 797. In his evidence Holland said three or four years ago. The letter written by Stephen Gairdner to Cromwell informing him of Helyar's flight, was written on 26 July, but unfortunately no year is specified. P.R.O. S.P.1/88, f. 174; *L&P*, VII, Appendix 32.

⁹⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 198; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 797.

escorted Helyar and his servant Henry Pynning to Paris, Holland left them there and returned to England. Upon his return he informed Geoffrey of Helyar's safe arrival, at which Geoffrey thanked him and promised he should `not lacke as longe as I lyve'.⁹⁵ The government were particularly interested in any conversation Holland might have had with Helyar during the journey, and this Holland also remembered. Helyar told him he had left England because he feared that if he stayed he would be put to death because he believed the ordinances of England were `agenst godd's lawe'.⁹⁶ Explaining the secrecy of Helyar's flight, Holland diverged from the informer Peter's testimony and attempted to vindicate Margaret from the affair. It was due, Holland said, `partely because my lady of Salisbery wolde geve hym no lyevee'.⁹⁷ Geoffrey continued to correspond with Helyar, although Holland was not always the messenger. He counted at least three occasions on which letters passed between them, the last was about twelve months ago when Helyar had left Louvain to join Reginald.⁹⁸ Moreover, Holland also testified that when he was sent by Geoffrey to Helyar after the vicar's benefices had been sequestrated, he also brought back replies to Sir William Paulet, Dr Stuard, Chancellor to the Bishop of Winchester and Helyar's brother-in-law, John Fowell. In addition Sir William Paulet, in an attempt to help Helyar, sent Fowell to Louvain to obtain a certificate from the university proving Helyar's attendance in order that the sequestration might be released.⁹⁹ Certainly Holland's evidence was a source of embarrassment for Paulet which could not have come at a worse time.¹⁰⁰

Holland's next testimony was utterly damning for Sir Geoffrey Pole, alleging undeniable treason. Apparently, around Easter 1537 Geoffrey, hearing that Holland was going to Flanders to sell some wheat, asked him to visit Reginald, who was in the area on his first legation.¹⁰¹ He requested Holland to convey a long verbal message to Reginald. This message included Geoffrey's wish to be with Reginald and willingness

⁹⁵ Ibid., f. 198b.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid. ff. 199-99b. Helyar sent letters from Newhaven to Geoffrey by a Frenchman, Geoffrey sent Holland with letters to Helyar after his benefices were sequestrated and Holland brought replies for which Geoffrey gave him 40s. In 1537 Helyar's brother-in-law was sent to see him by Geoffrey.

⁹⁹ Ibid., f. 199b.

¹⁰⁰ See below p. 298.

¹⁰¹ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 199b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 797.

to join him if his brother would have him in addition to criticisms of England's religious policies:

shew hym the worlde in England waxeth all crokyd, godd's lawe is turnyd upsedowne. Abbes and churches overthrowen and he is taken for a traytor, And I thinke they wyll caste downe parisshe churches and all att the last.¹⁰²

He sent word to Reginald that a Mr Wilson and Powell were in the Tower and warned him that assassins were `sende from Englund daylye to dystroye hym'¹⁰³ no doubt encouraged by the price on his head. More specifically, he informed Reginald that Francis Bryan and Peter Meotes had been sent to France to kill him with a hand gun `or other[wise as] they shall see best.'¹⁰⁴ The day before Holland embarked, Geoffrey suggested that he should go to Reginald himself, but Holland refused as not even he was prepared to take that risk. After selling his wheat at Nieupoort, Holland caught up with Reginald at Awne abbey, as he had already left Cambrai on his way to Liège. Initially vetted by Reginald's right-hand man, Michael Throckmorton, who demanded to know who had sent him, Holland was finally summoned before Reginald after mass. After listening to his message, Reginald responded with smug sarcasm that despite all the king's efforts to turn the French King against him `yett I was receyvvd into Parys better then some men wolde.'¹⁰⁵ Already aware of Bryan and Meotes' mission he doubted that his death lay in their power or Cromwell's. After discussing the merits, or otherwise, of the Bishops of London and Durham, Reginald instructed Holland to convey several messages back to his family. He commended himself to his mother by the token :

that she and I loking appon a wall togethers redd this, Spes mea in deo est, and desire her blessing for me. I trust she wylbe gladd of myne also.

But, Reginald added, should she be `of the opinyon that other bee there, mother as she is myne, I wolde treade appon her with my feete.'¹⁰⁶ Lord Montague escaped such a

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid., f. 200.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., f. 200b

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., f. 201.

threat and was commended by the token 'In domino confido,' while Geoffrey was commended by being told to 'medle lytle and lett all things alone.'¹⁰⁷ This, Holland declared, was the extent of the messages he took to and received from Reginald. Unfortunately, Lord Montague was more seriously compromised by his supposed contact with Michael Throckmorton. Holland remembered that while he was there, Throckmorton 'desyryd hym to commende hym to the lord Montacute by the tokne that [they had] comunyd togethers att his laste beyng in Englonde' in a place which Holland could not remember; 'And bydd hym styrre nott, or bydd hym be contentyd unto his comyng into Englonde.'¹⁰⁸ However Holland asserted that, on Geoffrey's instruction, he told only Geoffrey of the messages, not Margaret or Lord Montague because Geoffrey feared that 'lord Montacute, was owte of his mynde and wolde shewe all to the lorde Prevey Seale by and by.'¹⁰⁹ Since Holland's visit to Reginald, Geoffrey continued to ask him to take him over sea, believing that if he could get to the Bishop of Liège, 'he showlde have money inough and he trustyd ons to kysse the pope's foote, And made many large promyses to this examinatt.'¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, Holland always refused to take him. Continuing the examination, Holland admitted telling Lord Montague that Geoffrey was 'very desyrous to goo oversea,' at which Montague instructed Holland to 'medle not with that in any case.'¹¹¹

Holland was examined on two more occasions, 11 November and at some point afterwards. This information the government might not have had prior to Geoffrey's arrest, but it concerned Helyar informing Geoffrey that he could write to him via a servant of the Imperial ambassador, and Holland asking Thomas Standish to inform Montague of Geoffrey's wish to go overseas. Holland also told Standish that he had visited Reginald, and that Geoffrey had told him that lord Montague 'wolde as fayne be over as he.'¹¹² Furthermore he confessed that Margaret's steward John Babham had visited him and asked 'have you spoken with that traitor my Lady's son?' Holland denied that he had but admitted speaking to Throckmorton at which Babham advised

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., f. 201b.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. The reasons for Geoffrey's fears are not clear, but this may be a reference to Montague's reaction to his wife's death.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., f. 202.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid., f. 202b -203; no. 797 (ii)

him to 'keep that secret; it may hap to cost you your life else.'¹¹³ This completed Holland's testimony. Although several people had been implicated, Geoffrey had been irretrievably compromised, and it is no surprise that his arrest followed. Some historians, no doubt with hindsight, have alleged that Geoffrey was chosen as a witness due to his weak character, the government believing that he could be easily intimidated and manipulated into telling all he knew and what they wanted to hear. Muriel St Clare Byrne described the 'emotionally unstable' Geoffrey as being selected by the government 'as somebody who could be made to talk,'¹¹⁴ while S.T. Bindoff believes that the 'government had picked on the weakest of its suspects.'¹¹⁵ However, it has been shown that this was not the case. Holland's evidence inescapably incriminated Geoffrey Pole, and Geoffrey more seriously than anybody else. Consequently it was Geoffrey who was arrested as a result, and it is difficult to imagine what other course of action the government could have taken.

Geoffrey's arrest proved something of a minor sensation locally serving as a trigger for more gossip as the tension mounted. On 2 September Sir Thomas Denys, steward of Margaret's manor of Pyworthy in Devon, and John Rowe, sergeant-at-law, sent the sayings of a Breton priest, Gulphinus Abevan, to Cromwell having examined him on the day of Geoffrey's arrest. Abevan's assertions were somewhat bizarre and at best confused, for instance he believed that Geoffrey had already 'lost his head.'¹¹⁶ More incredible was his claim that he had sailed over to England and landed at Rye with Reginald in September 1537, in order for Reginald to 'attempt secretly amongst his friends to obtain the King's favour.' While in England, Reginald met the Marquis of Exeter, and lodged firstly with Geoffrey then with his mother, but did not lodge 'in one place above one night.' If Reginald, who was still in England, could not obtain the king's favour, then, he told Abevan, he would leave before September 1538 from either Dartmouth or Plymouth. Due to his connection to the Countess of Salisbury, it was imperative for Denys to demonstrate scrupulous loyalty to the king. Therefore he took these ravings seriously and earnestly informed Cromwell that he had 'warned the

¹¹³ Ibid., no. 797 (3)

¹¹⁴ *L.L.*, V, 269.

¹¹⁵ Bindoff, S.T., *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, III, p. 117.

¹¹⁶ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 267 (2) Abevan's motive may have been revenge. He apparently entered Geoffrey Pole's service, and remained with him for seven months and three weeks. However, receiving 'nought for his labour' he left and tried unsuccessfully to become Lord Montague's chaplain. Montague, knowing Abevan to have been Reginald's chaplain, 'would not meddle with him.'

officers of the western ports to suffer no suspect person to pass under any disguise, either as monk, friar, beggar, hermit, pilgrim, or such like.¹¹⁷

September was also the month in which the gossip originating from Richard Ayer and Laurence Taylor came to light. As discussed, this concerned the comments relating to Holland's meeting with Geoffrey after his arrest, Geoffrey's intention to send a band over to Reginald in March 1539 and the suspicion that Holland was carrying letters oversea. In addition there was the added comment that if Margaret had been a young woman, the king and his council would have burnt her when they were last in Sussex.¹¹⁸ This gossip passed from Richard Ayer through five people¹¹⁹ and eventually reached the ears of the local Justice of the Peace, John Gunter. As a result Gunter imprisoned one of the gossips for saying that Geoffrey Pole, 'wolde have sent over the sea a band of men, to his broder Cardinall Poole if so bee, that he had not beene taken before with oder words.'¹²⁰ Here the matter might have ended had not the gossip's husband gone over Gunter's head and approached Sir William Fitzwilliam, Earl of Southampton for help. Naturally, with Geoffrey Pole's arrest only three weeks earlier, such an accusation was extremely relevant and important. As Fitzwilliam noted, the words seemed 'to emplie maner of high treson.'¹²¹ Thus he lost no time in tracking it down. He immediately sent for Gunter, the relevant depositions and Alice Patchet and her daughter Johane Silkden, two of the gossips, who repeated their accusations. Naturally Fitzwilliam expected Taylor, Patchet's source, to be in custody and was flabbergasted to hear that he was in fact attending a wedding in Wimborne! Gunter after examining him, had let him go. Fitzwilliam, knowing Taylor to have

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 1.

¹¹⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/136, f. 202-203; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 392 (2. i-iv)

¹¹⁹ Höllger criticises the Misses Dodds for connecting this information with the evidence of Thomas Coke and Thomas Cheselett, concerning the desire of certain of Margaret's servants to go and fight for the Emperor or failing that, to be retained by Reginald. Ibid., no. 592; Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539,' p. 89, fn. 21; Dodds, M.H., and R., *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, II, 308. However, they have merely assumed that the band of men it was gossiped that Geoffrey was supposed to be sending to Reginald were the men who in May 1538 had expressed the desire to go. Höllger also claims to have found no reference for the rumour that Margaret would have been burnt if she had been younger, and that if it existed it can certainly not be traced back to Laurence Taylor. This is surprising as Johanne Sylkden plainly confessed she heard this rumour from her mother Alice Patchet, who had direct contact with Taylor and had heard other snippets of gossip from him including the tale of Holland's meeting with Geoffrey after his arrest. Indeed Höllger referred to this very document and Alice Patchet's confession when he discussed this meeting. Höllger, C., *Op.cit.*, p. 85.

¹²⁰ P.R.O. S.P.1/136, f. 200; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 392 (1)

¹²¹ Ibid.

been a servant of Gunter's angrily accused him of acting 'lyke an untrue man.' Gunter, realising the dangerous position he was in:

sodenly chaunged countenance, waxeng paale, and with tears and sobbing pitifully besought me to be good unto him, recognising his indiligence, and slacknes.¹²²

To make amends, he pledged to make diligent search for Laurence in order to 'serve the king in this mater truly and loyaulle.'¹²³ It seems from this incident, that Gunter, a colleague of Geoffrey Pole's, had tried to protect him. He had not made any attempt to bring this evidence to the attention of the authorities, but had imprisoned the gossip possibly in an attempt to stifle the damaging rumour. This makes Geoffrey's attack on Gunter two years later, in the belief that he had betrayed him, all the more sad.¹²⁴ If Gunter had repeated secret conversations to Fitzwilliam as Geoffrey alleged, it was due to fear and not malice. His first reaction had been to cover up for his friend.

As in the case of Hugh Holland, Geoffrey Pole languished in the Tower for nearly two months before his first official examination, although he had been questioned prior to this.¹²⁵ Not surprisingly, the first questions, numbers one to thirteen, concerned Reginald.¹²⁶ The government wanted to know which of Reginald's acts Geoffrey liked, how he knew of them, had he discussed them with family and friends and had he or his family exchanged any letters with Reginald. Next they turned to John Helyar and in questions 14 to 26¹²⁷ wanted to know what opinions Helyar held concerning the bishop of Rome, what was Geoffrey's role in Helyar's departure and whether Helyar had sent any letters or messages to him or anyone else. Moreover, showing that they had indeed taken the gossip of Alice Patchet and her associates seriously, they questioned Geoffrey about his intention to visit Helyar at Louvain, why he was going,

¹²² Ibid., f. 200b.

¹²³ Ibid., f. 201.

¹²⁴ See below pp. 319.

¹²⁵ Two of the questions are phrased in such a way that makes clear previous interrogations had taken place. In question one he is asked, regarding Reginald's proceedings 'which he had said that he well liked' *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 695 (1), and questions 46 to 49 regarding with whom he has discussed wishing for a change of this world 'other than yow have declaryd allredye.' Ibid., S.P.1/138, f. 14.

¹²⁶ Ibid., ff., 11b-12.

¹²⁷ Ibid ff., 12-13.

was he taking any men with him and if so, how many, did he intend to go on and visit Reginald, where was he going to embark and with whom had he discussed the victualling of the ship. The questions end with an attempt to try and find out with whom Geoffrey had discussed wishing for 'a change of this world,' how he intended to achieve it, who were prepared to advance it, and had he received any letters supporting this project. Out of 59 questions, twelve concerned Reginald, thirteen Helyar, thirteen wanted to know who else wished for a change and nineteen concerned Geoffrey's going overseas with a band of men.

Geoffrey's actual responses however reveal that he was only asked about those with whom he had discussed a change of this world.¹²⁸ It is clear that by this point, 26 October, the government were very anxious to discover who else was involved in this possible conspiracy. They already had a substantial amount of evidence against Geoffrey Pole from Holland, but little against anyone else. Montague had been slightly compromised by Holland, but they were unclear as to his total involvement and unaware just how extensive this network of disaffected individuals was. This line of questioning does not prove that the government were deliberately trying to implicate those they had decided to destroy. The evidence against Geoffrey was extremely serious and his actions by informing Reginald posed a threat to national security. It is no surprise that they were determined to discover the full extent and nature of this disaffection. Consequently almost the whole of Geoffrey's first examination concerned the involvement of others. Although he obligingly mentioned ten names, he strove to vindicate them from any treason. He admitted discussing a change of the world with Lord Delaware, George Croftes, Mr Friend and Mr Langley,¹²⁹ but did so without meaning any hurt to the king. Moreover Delaware and Montague were more indifferent to such opinions now he alleged, while he had not spoken to the Marquis of Exeter for two years. He admitted that Edward Neville had trusted the world would amend one day, John Stokesley complained that heretics preached at St Paul's Cross, and that Mrs Roper and Mrs Clement disliked the pulling down of abbeys and also wished for a change.¹³⁰ However the government were not to be deflected and demanded to know the meaning of the word 'indifferent' used in

¹²⁸ Ibid., ff., 16-16b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 695 (2)

¹²⁹ William Friend was Geoffrey's friend and school master of Chichester prebendal school. Mr Langley, according to *Letters and Papers*, was William Langley, sub-deacon and vicar of St. Peter's the Great, Chichester in 1531. Ibid., no. 695 (2) fn.

¹³⁰ John Stokesley was the Bishop of London, Mrs Roper refers to Margaret More, Sir Thomas More's eldest daughter who had married William Roper and Mrs Clement to Margaret Gigs, More's foster daughter who had married John Clement.

relation to Montague and Delaware, and what the nature of the change was. To this Geoffrey replied that; 'they waar nott so much affectionate to thatt part as they war att the former conferences,'¹³¹ and that the change referred to the 'plucking down of Abbys Images and pylgremages and this maner of preaching to be changyd, but nott the King's person. '¹³²

By implicating, no matter how innocently, these individuals, Geoffrey had made a rod for his own back. Aware now for certain that there were other people involved and alot more going on that they had realised, the government was determined to discover everything. It may have been, that to further that end, Geoffrey was threatened with torture at the end of the interrogation¹³³ for he sent a desperate plea to Henry VIII via his examiners, beseeching the king:

that he may have good keping and cherisshing and thereby somewhat comfort hymself and have better stay of himself, and he sayd he then wold truly and fully open all thatt he ded know or may remember whomsoever it touch, whether it bee mother, brother, uncle or any other whatt se ever he bee.¹³⁴

There is certainly an element of hysteria evident here and much has been made of Geoffrey's collapse. Although some historians might view Geoffrey with contempt as a weak man betraying his own mother and brother in order to save his own neck, others, such as the misses Dodds, take a very sympathetic view of him. G.R. Elton's general description of Geoffrey was of an 'unstable and unhappy man,' but he was not unstable or unhappy until after he was arrested and threatened with torture and death! Geoffrey was the youngest of the family, between seven and eleven years old when his mother was restored to the Earldom of Salisbury, and thus for most of his life had enjoyed the affluence and privilege that the other children had lacked. It might be for this reason that he was careless with money. A somewhat pampered younger son, when his debts started to get seriously out of hand he had the comfort of knowing his mother and brother were there to provide a solution. Despite his aversion to Henry

¹³¹ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 16b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 695 (2)

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ The anonymous author of the Spanish Chronicle certainly asserts this stating that Cromwell said to Geoffrey; 'if you do not tell the truth I will have you tortured, but if you tell the truth I promise you to get the King to give you an ample revenue to live upon.' Hume, M.A.S., *Chronicle of King Henry VIII*, p. 132.

¹³⁴ P.R.O., S.P.1/138, f. 16b, *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 695 (2)

VIII's current regime, Geoffrey generally enjoyed life. He was a jolly fellow and, notwithstanding his often imprudent behaviour, well liked. Henry VIII showed more patience over his repeated misdemeanours than he deserved, while John Gunter and Richard Cotton, his friends and colleagues, tried to protect him. Even the implacable Fitzwilliam was moved to pity him, writing to the king on his behalf in 1540.¹³⁵ It is not surprising that he was totally unprepared for the situation in which he found himself in 1538. With the cold realisation that he faced the ultimate fate and that this time neither his mother or brother could help him, he collapsed, hysterical with fear. In fact word reached his wife that 'he was in a frenzy and might utter rash things.'¹³⁶ Even worse, he could still reason through his anguish and knew that this was exactly what he was going to do. This led to his first suicide attempt, immediately after his first formal examination.¹³⁷ This reveals as nothing else, his unhinged mental condition. For a man of Geoffrey's religious beliefs, suicide meant the damnation of his soul, and yet it was a course of action he attempted to take as the only way to avoid the betrayal of his family.

Geoffrey underwent two more interrogations on 2 and 3 November before his brother and the Marquis of Exeter were arrested on 4 November. His examination on 2 November¹³⁸ corroborated more concisely Holland's visit to Reginald, adding that Reginald had sent a message that both he and Montague should remain in England and 'hold up yea and nay th[ere, for] he would do well enough.'¹³⁹ He also admitted that it was Elizabeth Darrell and Lord Montague who told him that assassins had been sent to kill Reginald. Moreover, Thomas Starkey had warned him that 'the lord Pr[ivy] Seall, if the King war nott of a good nature, for one Pole's [sake] would destroy all Poles.'¹⁴⁰ This second examination was accompanied by yet another desperate pledge of Geoffrey's loyalty to the king:

¹³⁵ See below pp. 319.

¹³⁶ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 796.

¹³⁷ John Husee wrote to Lord Lisle on 28 October that Geoffrey 'was so in despair that he would have murdered himself; and, as it was told me, hurt himself sore.' *L.L.*, V, 266-67, no. 1259. According to Richard Morisyne, Geoffrey tried to stab himself in the chest with a blunt knife which, although the wound bled, was not fatal. Morisyne, R., *An Invective ayenste the great and detestable vice, treason*.

¹³⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, ff. 214b-15b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (2)

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 215b.

Sir, I beseech your noble Grace to pardon my wretchedness That I have not done my bounden duty unto your Grace heretofore as I have ought to have done, but Sir, grace coming to me to consider your nobleness always to me, and now especially in my extreme necessity, as I perceive by my lord Admiral and Mr Controller, your goodness shall not be lost on me, but surely as I found your Grace always faithful unto me, so I refuse all creature living to be faithful to you.

It ends with complete abasement; 'Your humble slave, Geffrey Pole.'¹⁴¹

Geoffrey's third examination which took place on the following day, was far more compromising for his brother and implicated more fully Elizabeth Darrell and Gertrude, Marchioness of Exeter.¹⁴² Apparently Holland's message from Reginald included the instruction to remind Montague of their communication at Reginald's departure and Throckmorton's offer to come and fetch Montague when he was ready to come overseas.¹⁴³ Geoffrey also alleged that while he served the king Montague 'regardyd hym little' and commented in disgust that only 'flaterars' served at court and 'none sarvyd the King butt knaves,' but after he was forbidden the court, Montague 'made more of hym' and began to confide in him.¹⁴⁴ Montague also received letters from Gertrude, or Elizabeth Darrell informing him that Reginald had escaped Henry's assassins, and letters from Gertrude telling him that when Montague had been discussed in council, her husband had 'offred hymself to bee bound bodie for bodie for hym.'¹⁴⁵ Moreover Geoffrey confessed that he had repeated all Reginald's messages to Montague, but had not told him the identity of the messenger.¹⁴⁶

In addition to Geoffrey's evidence, by 28 October the government also had the detailed testimony of Jerome Ragland. He is another witness deserving of our sympathy who unwillingly gave evidence. One of Lord Montague's most trusted servants, his 'right hand,' he was a dependant of the Pole family. His marriage had been paid for by the countess while his wife was one of her ladies.¹⁴⁷ This country bumpkin was no match

¹⁴¹ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 743.

¹⁴² P.R.O. S.P.1/138, ff. 215b-16; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (3)

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, f., 215b.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, ff. 215b-16.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, f.216; *L&P*, XIII, no. 831 (1, ii)

¹⁴⁶ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 216; *L&P*, XIII, no. 804 (3)

¹⁴⁷ See above pp. 189.

for seasoned interrogators and, like Geoffrey, he was gradually worn down into revealing the most damning of allegations against Lord Montague.¹⁴⁸ These included personal criticisms of the king, revealing a lack of respect and dislike. Montague was disgusted that the king did not keep his promise to hold a parliament at York at the time of the Pilgrimage of Grace¹⁴⁹ and complained that 'he hath seyn more gentylnes and benygnytie yn tymys past at the Kyng's hands than he hathe nowadays.'¹⁵⁰ At Bisham in 1536, Lord Montague told Ragland that Henry had threatened the lords that he would go with the 'Lubekks' unless they complied with what he wanted, at which Montague remarked to Ragland 'that we shuld be well ryd of hym';¹⁵¹ and this fact is corroborated in Geoffrey's seventh examination on 12 November.¹⁵² Montague also noted disdainfully that 'the Kyng ys ffull of flesse and unweldy, and that he can not long contynue with hys sower legge,'¹⁵³ and reflected that if he was sent over sea on the king's business he would be tempted to remain there until England was 'yn a better estate.'¹⁵⁴ Indeed, that very summer Montague had wished that himself, his son and six other persons were over sea. Montague also criticised the Treason Act believing it to be too severe and, as Geoffrey said in his evidence, complained that 'knavys ruylll about the kyng.'¹⁵⁵ Montague also lamented Lord Bergavenny's death, understandable as he was very fond of his father-in-law, and at the time of the Pilgrimage of Grace claimed that Bergavenny, if he were alive 'were able to make a gret nombre of men in Kent and Sussex.'¹⁵⁶ However, as Höllger notes, Montague may have meant that they would have been raised in support of the king.¹⁵⁷ Ragland also testified to the friendship and contact between Montague and Exeter, that Montague had 'great trust'

¹⁴⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, ff. 33-40; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 702.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, f.35; no. 702 (1)

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, f.36; no. 702(2)

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, f. 36b.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, f. 219b; *L&P*, XIII, no. 804 (7) 'that the kyng shulde say one day to the lords, that he goo from them one daye and where be yow then, and the said [lord M]ontacut at the same tyme said , if he wyll serve us so wee shall be happ[ily] rydd.'

¹⁵³ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 37; *L&P*, XIII, no. 702 (2)

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 36.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, f. 33b; no. 702 (1).

¹⁵⁷ Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539,' p. 93.

in the Marquis and described him as a `nobyll man.¹⁵⁸ In addition, Ragland heard Montague say in the last year that he thought Reginald was `ordeayd of god to do good'¹⁵⁹ and that Montague's servant Perkyns spoke favourably of a marriage between Princess Mary and Reginald.¹⁶⁰ Not surprisingly, the evidence of Geoffrey Pole and Jerome Ragland guaranteed the arrest of Lord Montague, which took place on the evening of 4 November along with the Marquis of Exeter. Exeter's wife Gertrude was possibly arrested at the same time and conducted to the Tower with her son Edward to which Montague's young son Henry was also conveyed. On the following day Sir Edward Neville joined his friends at the Tower and at some later date John Collins, Lord Montague's chaplain and George Croftes also suffered arrest.

Geoffrey's next four examinations, from 5-12 November continued to implicate further his elder brother. He claimed that Montague had a dream that the king was dead, but within two days declared that the king was not dead, but he will one day die `sodenly hys legg wyll kyll hym and then we shall have jol[ly] styring.'¹⁶¹ While discussing the Pilgrimage of Grace, Montague exclaimed:

Twysse Geoffrey, thow hast no cast with [thee the lord] Darcy
played the foole he went abowt [to pluck away the] counsayle he shuld
fyrst have begoon [with the head but I beshrew] them for leaving of so
soon.¹⁶²

Montague also warned Geoffrey, most probably after Holland's arrest and with amazing foresight, `never to open any thyng if it shulde happen hym to be examined for if he opened one all must neds come out.'¹⁶³ Geoffrey also asserted that Montague only wished him to serve Catherine and not the king.¹⁶⁴ This might possibly be due to Montague's fear that Geoffrey might not exercise sufficient discretion before the king. Geoffrey also claimed that both Montague and the Earl of Huntingdon complained at

¹⁵⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 36b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 702 (2).

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 37.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, f. 38.

¹⁶¹ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 218; *L&P*, XIII, no. 804, no. 5.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, f. 218b; no. 804 (6).

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, f. 219b; no. 804 (7).

the parliaments of what was being determined there, asserting that only knaves and heretics agreed to what was being accomplished, and mostly out of fear.¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, Montague apparently declared 'that he never lovvd the king from chyldhood and that kyng Henry the viith had none affecion not fansye unto hym,'¹⁶⁶ and predicted that 'the kyng wolde be out of his wyttis.'¹⁶⁷ Obviously, the careful Lord Stafford, circumspect with the example of his father before his eyes, was concerned about Montague's increasingly treasonous remarks, apparently confiding in Geoffrey that he was afraid to converse with Montague, warning him, 'ye foll[ow] so moche the lorde Montacute that he wyll bee yor undoyng one day.'¹⁶⁸

What also emerged during the course of Geoffrey's examinations was the revelation that he had surreptitiously gone to France in 1532 in disguise, a fact which Exeter was also apparently aware of.¹⁶⁹ Keeping 'hymself secretly in hys brothers chamber,' during the day, he ventured out only at night,¹⁷⁰ and while there, Geoffrey heard his brother say that the French King was a 'hardyer man than the king our master.'¹⁷¹ Afterwards he was sent by Montague to Catherine to assure her that nothing had been done regarding the king's marriage to Anne Boleyn, 'And that the king had doon the best he cowd, but the frenche king wolde not assent therunto.'¹⁷² Also at his return from Calais he delivered letters from Montague to their mother who was then in Kent.¹⁷³

Geoffrey also provided most of the evidence against Sir Edward Neville, claiming that he heard Sir Edward 'many tymes most abhomybly deprave the king saying that his

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., f. 218b; no. 804 (6).

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., f. 219b; no. 804 (7). Höllger mistakenly interpreted this document to mean that the feelings of dislike between Montague and Henry VIII were mutual. Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539,' p. 101.

¹⁶⁷ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 219b; no. 804 (7).

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., f. 220.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., f. 218; no. 804 (6).

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., f. 219.

¹⁷² Ibid., f. 218b.

¹⁷³ Ibid., f. 219.

highnes was a beast and worst then a beast.¹⁷⁴ He told Geoffrey that they should not be seen talking together due to the suspicion in which they were held, but reassured him `it forsyth nott we shall doe well inough one day.¹⁷⁵ Another time when the court was at Westminster Neville, during an outburst of frustration and disgust, ranted to Geoffrey:

godds bloodd I am made a fole amongs them, but I laugh and make mery to dryve forth the tyme, the king kepeth a sorte of knaves here that we dare nother look nor speke, And [if I were] hable to lyve, I wolde rather lyve any lief in the world [than] tarry in the pryvey chamber.¹⁷⁶

Montague's bearing during his incarceration could not have been more different from Geoffrey's. He exhibited the same cool exterior that all but his most trusted associates ever saw. Even after Geoffrey's arrest, he ostensibly carried on business as usual, visiting Elizabeth Darrell concerning a loan she had made to Sir Anthony Hungerford¹⁷⁷ and paying a call to his sister-in-law, Constance Pole. On being informed by Constance that her husband `was in a frenzy and might utter rash things,' Montague nonchalantly replied; `It forceth not what a madman [speaketh].¹⁷⁸ In fact there seems to be an air of resignation about Montague, more clearly revealed in his mournful observation that `he hath lyvyd in prison all this vj yeres.¹⁷⁹ In fact Montague's evidence obtained from only one interrogation, was characteristically restrained as he strove to provide his interrogators with nothing too incriminating. He declared that Edward Neville had only ever sung songs that contained `meriy things,' nothing political,¹⁸⁰ but he did confess that he had burned letters and that it was

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, ff. 219-19b; no. 804 (7)

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, f. 220.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, ff. 222-22b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 772.

¹⁷⁸ *L&P*, XIII, no. 796. Constance Pole's examination.

¹⁷⁹ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 222; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 772. William Brent, one of Montague's most trusted servants who, with Jerome Ragland and Thomas Nanfant continued to serve Montague during his imprisonment, elaborated credibly upon this claiming that Montague bemoaned in the Tower `thatt he hadd rather lyve ther in prison than abroad in suspition and thatt he had lyvyd in prison all thes vj yeres ever sins he his brother hath taken this way.' P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 17; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 827 (3)

¹⁸⁰ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 222; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 772.

Thomas Starkey who told him Peter Meotes had been sent to assassinate Reginald, a fact which Montague related to Elizabeth Darrell,¹⁸¹ who then as we know, told Geoffrey. His evidence also made clear the propensity of Exeter and his wife to confide in him, admitting that Gertrude had informed him that her husband had offered to be bound body for body for him. He also revealed that Exeter had told him of Cromwell's enquiries regarding William Parr, Exeter's bearward. Parr was arrested and executed for treason in 1537,¹⁸² a situation Neville immediately informed the marquis of. Cromwell was keen to discover who had appraised Exeter of this, to which Exeter replied that 'he wold never open or disclose his ffrend if it touchyd nott the king.'¹⁸³ The marquis also warned Montague of the danger they were in, explaining that:

he was advertiseyd by certayn ffrends of his to kepe no company with hym, And therfor prayed this examine contentyd to forbear his company.¹⁸⁴

John Collins, Lord Montague's chaplain was also pressed into revealing additional fragments of damning information¹⁸⁵ some tallying word for word with that given by Geoffrey and Ragland, for instance that Montague had said knaves rule about the king, that he hoped the world would amend and that the world would come to stripes. Moreover, Montague described Exeter as having a 'very good mynd' and being 'a man of very good corage.' In Collins' opinion, if there had been any change Montague 'shuld have hadd a very assuryd frynd of the lord Marquess.'¹⁸⁶ Collins' examination also reveals the government's sinister attempts to ascertain the involvement of Montague's young son, for he was asked; 'whether the lord Montacute's soon dyd

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² Rose-Troup, F., *The Western Rebellion of 1549* (London, 1913) p. 33.

¹⁸³ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 222; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 772.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ Like Ragland, Collins was another unwilling witness. Devoted to his master, the delivery of his evidence reveals his attempts to protect Montague. Initially claiming that after he had burned Geoffrey's letters Montague did not ask anything about it, he then claimed that on better remembrance he thought he did tell him. Obviously Collins would not have forgotten something so crucial, and probably only admitted it when convinced by his examiners that they already knew of Montague's involvement. P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 30b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 827 (2)

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., f. 14b; no. 827 (1)

know anything of the letters of which he spak befor or nott,' to which Collins replied that he could `nott tell saving thatt he dydd know att thatt tyme this examinatt went to the sayd Sir geffreys howse.¹⁸⁷ In addition, Collins confessed that he and Montague had discussed a letter that Reginald had sent to the king, Cromwell and the Bishop of Durham, and that Montague showed him letters sent to himself and his mother in which the Cardinal vindicated them from any responsibility for his actions.¹⁸⁸ He testified to Montague's disenchantment with the new Treason Act,¹⁸⁹ claimed that he heard Geoffrey say that Mary should marry Reginald and believed that if there was a change then Mary should have a title to the crown.¹⁹⁰ He also signed his own death warrant when he admitted telling Geoffrey and Montague that `both the king and the lord pryvey seall wold hang in hell' for the plucking down of the abbeys.¹⁹¹

George Croftes, chancellor of Chichester Cathedral provided further information regarding his friends, Geoffrey Pole and Thomas West, Lord Delaware. He testified to Geoffrey's dislike of the Royal Supremacy¹⁹² and insinuated that Geoffrey intended to desert from the royal forces if it came to fighting during the Pilgrimage of Grace.¹⁹³ Moreover, Delaware warned Croftes about Sir Henry Owen, who was openly speaking against him and advised him what to do about it.¹⁹⁴ There does seem to have been some bad feeling between Owen and Delaware, this incident with Croftes no doubt contributing to it, for Owen was only too willing to inform upon Delaware. Although he was Delaware's brother-in-law, he was the son of Sir David Owen and thus a kinsman of Henry VIII, thus his loyalty to the king is understandable. In fact Owen had supposedly bid a Thomas Alen to inform Cromwell that Croftes:

¹⁸⁷ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 31; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 829 (2)

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, ff. 31b-32.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 32. Montague apparently complained; `it wylbe a strange worlde saying words be made treason.'

¹⁹⁰ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 14b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 827 (1)

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, f. 14.

¹⁹² P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 211; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 803.

¹⁹³ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 822.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

could te[ll] marvellous t[hings] of a great confederacy between the lord Mar[qu]es of [Exeter], the lord Montacute, the lord Chamberlain¹⁹⁵ and lord [De]laware.¹⁹⁶

Alen however, refused to repeat such things for he knew they were spoken of malice. In addition, Owen declared Lord Delaware's dislike for the dissolution of the monasteries and friendship for the Marquis of Exeter.¹⁹⁷ Croftes also testified to Delaware's conservative leanings,¹⁹⁸ his dislike for the statute of Uses¹⁹⁹ and that he advised Croftes not to flee the realm `for if he should flee he would be had again wheresoever he were,²⁰⁰ but provided little more evidence than that. Croftes also admitted that being unable to dissuade Geoffrey from leaving England he gave him twenty nobles for the journey. However, the following day he managed to persuade him to stay²⁰¹ and it was at this point that he approached Lord Montague to find a remedy for Geoffrey's debts.²⁰²

In addition to these witnesses a further host of servants and associates were questioned. Elizabeth Darrell claimed Geoffrey Pole swore to stab and kill Peter Meotes even if he were `att the king's heles,²⁰³ while Morgan Wells admitted that he himself had declared openly his intention to slay Meotes `with a hand goon' and anyone else `whom he shold know to kyl the cardinall pole And thatt he was going over sees for thatt purpose.²⁰⁴ George Tyrell, Montague's servant for the past three years, testified to letters and messages sent between Montague and Exeter and his wife

¹⁹⁵ William Lord Sandys.

¹⁹⁶ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 27b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 829 (II).

¹⁹⁷ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 821.

¹⁹⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 27b, *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 829 (II).

¹⁹⁹ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 822.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁰¹ He apparently told Geoffrey of a dream he had had, in which our Lady appeared to him and warned him that Geoffrey's leaving would be to the destruction of Geoffrey and his family. P.R.O S.P.1/138, f. 25b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 829 (I)

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 160; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 766.

²⁰⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 23; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 828 (2)

²⁰⁵ while Gertrude admitted that Neville sang in her garden; 'thatt he trustyd this world wold amend one day, And thatt honest men shuld rule one day.'²⁰⁶ At her fear for her husband's safety during the Pilgrimage of Grace, Neville said; 'Madam, [be not] afeared of this, nor of the second, but beware of the third.'²⁰⁷ Clearly Montague's residence had become a hot bed of gossip as the family, their friends and servants grumbled angrily and profusely about the state of the realm.

The evidence against Exeter comes almost entirely from Geoffrey Pole. Apart from testifying to the contacts and letters between Exeter, his wife and Montague, Geoffrey asserted that once at Horseley when Exeter gave Cromwell a summer coat and a wood knife, he winked at Geoffrey saying 'peas knaves rule abowt the king,' then holding up and shaking his fist, continued, 'I trust to give them a buffet one day.'²⁰⁸ On accepting abbey lands, Exeter assured Geoffrey that they were 'good inough for a tyme, they must have all agayn one day.'²⁰⁹ Geoffrey also made the standard accusation that Exeter liked well the proceedings of Reginald and disliked the proceedings of the realm,²¹⁰ that; 'nother the lord Mountegue nor the lord Marques ever lykyd any doyngs of the king,'²¹¹ while Montague preferred the west parts to Warblington for 'my lord Marquis of exeter is strong ther.'²¹² A far more grave allegation however, was that Lord Montague showed Geoffrey, 'that many tymys the kynys pryvye councell weare att theare wyttys ende in such matters as they had in hand,' and, Geoffrey continued, 'that the lord Montague knewe all thatt was done in the councell when the lord Marques was theare.'²¹³ Obviously if Exeter was informing Montague of the secrets of the Privy Council and Montague was telling Geoffrey, this was very serious. The government was aware that Geoffrey had been in contact with Reginald through Holland, and as Richard Ayer told Tyndall, as a result of Holland's messages

²⁰⁵ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 779.

²⁰⁶ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 224; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (3).

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 217; no. 804 (5).

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 217b.

²¹⁰ P.R.O. S.P.1/140, f. 9.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, f. 9b.

²¹² P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 217b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (5).

²¹³ P.R.O. S.P.1/140, f. 12.

to Reginald; 'all the secretes off the rem off ynglond ys k[nowyn to the] bychope off Rome as well as though he wer her.'²¹⁴ Certainly the questions drawn up for the marquis concerned his communications with Lord Montague, whether he had told him about the arrest of his bearward and of Richard Cromwell's visit to Exeter in the summer, which of course he had.²¹⁵ This visit occurred while the king was in residence at Woking, Surrey²¹⁶ and so must have taken place between 20 and 28 of July, certainly after Holland's arrest.²¹⁷ Cromwell's message to Exeter included the advice 'to be frank and plain in certain things.'²¹⁸ Clearly Exeter was being given the chance to tell the king all he knew about the Poles' activities and as a result, possibly save his life. The marquis's refusal meant that his own arrest was only a matter of time. The evidence certainly reveals the closeness between Montague and the Exeters. The marquis had offered to be bound body for body for Montague, Montague considered him an assured friend, sympathised with him over the Kendal affair²¹⁹ and said that without the wisdom of the marchioness, he, Montague, would not be able to bear this world.²²⁰ They merely feigned coolness between them to avoid suspicion but continued to correspond regularly,²²¹ while Exeter chose to protect his friends rather than the king by refusing to tell Richard Cromwell all that he knew when given the chance. All this, combined with Exeter's conservative leanings and his proximity to the throne, illustrated in the rehearsal of the Kendall affair, ensured his arrest and conviction. Unfortunately none of Exeter's depositions have survived. The scrupulous record keeping of the royal bureaucrats has convinced

²¹⁴ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 817.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 771 (iii, 4, 6)

²¹⁶ One of the questions to be asked of the marquis was 'Whether you showed Lord Montacute that the lord Privy Seal had sent Mr Richard Cromwell to you at the King's being at Oking to be frank and plain in certain things.' *Ibid.*, no. 771 (6.)

²¹⁷ The first reference to the king's presence at Woking is a grant issued from there on 20 July. *Ibid.*, (i) no. 1519 (72). It becomes clear from the 'King's Payments' that by Sunday 28 July, the king was at Petworth, West Sussex. *Ibid.*, (ii) no. 1280, f. 27b.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 771 (iii, 6).

²¹⁹ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 219; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (6). In 1531 Exeter's servant, William Kendal was arrested. He had apparently been retaining men on behalf of his master during a dispute between Exeter's father-in-law and Sir Anthony Willoughby. Rose-Troup, F., *The Western Rebellion of 1549*, p. 25. At the same time some of Exeter's followers were also reported as having made such treasonous remarks as describing Exeter as heir apparent, and promising that he 'shold wear the garland att the last.' P.R.O. S.P.1/140, f. 10; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 961.

²²⁰ P.R.O. S.P.1/140, f. 9b.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, f. 9.

Höllger that he must never have been examined at all.²²² Alternatively, he might have refused to answer any questions, he was certainly of that caste.

Least implicated of all the suspects was the Countess of Salisbury. Geoffrey Pole's evidence did not compromise his mother at all and George Tyrell, when asked if he had heard any conversations between Margaret and Montague, answered that he had not as he was never present when they took supper together.²²³ Margaret's comptroller and receiver-general, Oliver Frankelyn, in his evidence actually strove to protect his mistress. He admitted warning her that Geoffrey might cause her displeasure, and said that she replied; 'I trowe he is not so unhappye that he wyll hurte his mother, and yett I care neyther for hym, not for any other, for I am true to my prynce.'²²⁴ In her own evidence Margaret stated that she only answered 'nay nay.... he will not bee so unhappe.'²²⁵ Margaret's examination began on 12 November when Sir William Fitzwilliam and Thomas Goodrich, Bishop of Ely arrived at Warblington. Her examination lasted for two days until 14 November and continued at Cowdray to which she was conveyed on 15 November.²²⁶ Each page of her answers were signed in her own hand, firmly and legibly with no hint of nerves nor sign of age.²²⁷ Despite being relentlessly examined virtually all day on 13 November, 'sometime with doulx and mild words now roughily and asperly,' Margaret was staunch in the defence of herself and her sons, declaring:

that if ever it be found and proved in her, that she is culpable in any of those things, that she hath denied, that she is content to be blasmed in the rest of all the articles laid against her.²²⁸

Fitzwilliam's frustration is obvious:

we have dealid with such a one as men have not dealid with to fore us,
Wee may call hyr rather a strong and custaut man than a woman.²²⁹

²²² Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations 1537 and 1539,' pp. 96-7.

²²³ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 779.

²²⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 154b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 875 (i).

²²⁵ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 246; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 818 (19).

²²⁶ B.L. Cotton. MS. Appendix L, f. 79; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 855.

²²⁷ In November 1538, Margaret was 65 years of age.

²²⁸ B.L. Cotton. MS. Appendix L, f. 77; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 835.

She took the king himself to witness that she did not want Reginald to go overseas, 'ffor she desired his grace that her sonne might no more goa over the sea.'²³⁰ She knew nothing of Helyar's flight, a fact which Holland in his evidence corroborated, and never received any letters from Reginald. She also prayed God 'she may bee torne in peaces' if she ever heard that her sons wished to go to Reginald and 'prayeth that she never see god in the face' if she heard they wanted to go to the Bishop of Liège either.²³¹ She denied burning letters which concerned the king, never heard that her sons had burned any and asserted that she had not heard her son say that the world was turned upside down, would come to stripes, that he wished for the king's death or 'mention any stiring, or motion or thing like days of her life.'²³² She had never heard Montague say he preferred the west parts to Warblington²³³ or that he beshrewed the Lord Darcy for leaving off so soon at the time of the Pilgrimage of Grace 'upon her damnacion'²³⁴ and believed that her son Montague was 'verie sore belied.'²³⁵ It is no wonder that Fitzwilliam exclaimed:

that [either] her sons have not made her pr[ivy] ne participant of the bottom and pit [of] their stomachs, or else is she the [most] arrant traitoress, that ever [lived].²³⁶

Margaret also described her reaction to Reginald's 'De Unitate.' After being appraised of its content by the king himself, she bemoaned to Lord Montague the misfortune of having such a child. As a result he counselled her to declare Reginald a traitor before their servants so that they might so report him when they returned to their counties, which she did.²³⁷ *She did admit however, that her sons had told her of Reginald's escape from the king's assassins 'wherfore for motherly pietie she cold not but*

²²⁹ Ibid., f. 79; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 855.

²³⁰ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 243; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 818 (1).

²³¹ Ibid., ff. 243b, 245b, no. 818 (6, 17).

²³² Ibid., f. 244b; no. 818 (11).

²³³ Ibid., f. 245; no. 818 (12).

²³⁴ Ibid., no. 818 (13).

²³⁵ Ibid., no. 818 (14).

²³⁶ B.L. Cotton. MS. Appendix L, f. 77b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 835.

²³⁷ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 246; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 818 (19).

reioysce.²³⁸ She also confessed that she knew Geoffrey had slipped over to France in October 1532 with the royal entourage, but both herself and Montague only discovered this after Montague had arrived in Calais. Moreover, if it had not been for Montague sending him back to England, she continued, Geoffrey would have gone in warfare.²³⁹ Margaret was obviously keen to vindicate her eldest son, at the expense of her younger. The story of Montague's restraint of his brother need not have been included, except that it served to protect Montague although further incriminating Geoffrey.

The final examination to take place was that of John Collins on 20 November, and three days later the first of the special commissions were issued to receive indictments in Surrey, Sussex and Buckingham.²⁴⁰ Although it was approximately five months since Holland's arrest and three months since Geoffrey's, the majority of the examinations had taken place in November, and by the end of that month the government was ready to proceed to trial. The first, that of Lord Montague, took place on 2 December, the Marquis of Exeter's on 3 December and that of Geoffrey Pole, Edward Neville, Holland, Croftes and Collins on 4 December. Excepting Geoffrey and Holland, the Misses Dodds believe that the rest of the accused were only guilty under the new laws, meaning the Treason Act of 1534, not under the old treason laws as the case against them rested on words only.²⁴¹ This is not quite true and it will be shown that the accused's comments did bring them within the bounds of the 1352 statute against treason. Moreover, words had been sufficient to indict for treason before Henry VIII's statute. The declaration in the 1352 statute that it was treason 'to compass or imagine the death of the king' was used to indict for what was considered malicious words or writings against the king.²⁴² In the second half of the fifteenth century the king's lawyers explained their extension of the clause by stating that such behaviour was; 'intended to destroy the cordial love which his people had for the king and thereby shorten his life by sadness.'²⁴³ Indeed, at the trial of the Duke of Buckingham in 1521, Chief Justice Fineux explained the difference between felony

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, f. 243b; no. 818 (5).

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 245b; no. 818 (15).

²⁴⁰ *D.K.R.*, 3, Appendix 2, p. 256, m. 20, p. 251, m. 24, p. 253, m. 32; *L&P*, XIII (ii) nos. 979, (16), 986, (7), (15).

²⁴¹ Dodds, M.H., and R., *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, II, 311.

²⁴² Bellamy, J., *The Tudor Law of Treason* (London, 1979) pp. 10-11.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

and treason. While felony required an act to be committed; 'merely to intend the king's death was high treason and such intention was sufficiently proven by words alone.'²⁴⁴ As J. Bellamy makes clear:

If the words did not suggest a direct intent to bring about the king's demise then they were held to do so indirectly and the accused found guilty of treason just the same.²⁴⁵

Montague's alleged statements that he approved of Reginald's proceedings, wished to be overseas,²⁴⁶ feared the world would come to stripes²⁴⁷ and that they would lack honest men when the time came,²⁴⁸ was explained as an indication of his intention to confirm Reginald in his treacherous opinions and to deprive the king of his dignity as Supreme Head of the Church.²⁴⁹ The sayings of Geoffrey Pole and the Marquis of Exeter that they too approved of Reginald's doings²⁵⁰ were also taken as an indication of the same treachery. Such a protestation of approval for Reginald's actions, by 1538 a recognised traitor to Henry VIII, could be seen to fall under the old treason law of 1352 which stipulated that it was treason to 'adhere to the king's enemies and be provably attaint of it by men of the offender's own condition.'²⁵¹ Montague's prediction that the king would die suddenly resulting in jolly stirring,²⁵² was used as proof that Montague wished and desired the king's death.²⁵³ This did fall under the treason act of 1534, where to wish or attempt bodily harm to the king could be

²⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 32.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

²⁴⁶ From the evidence of Geoffrey Pole's third and fifth examinations and the evidence of Jerome Ragland.

²⁴⁷ From Geoffrey Pole's third examination and the evidence of John Collins.

²⁴⁸ From the fourth and fifth examinations of Geoffrey Pole and the evidence of Jerome Ragland and John Collins.

²⁴⁹ *D.K.R.*, 3, p. 255, mm. 27, 26.

²⁵⁰ Geoffrey Pole confessed this *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 695 (2) and claimed Exeter said this. P.R.O S.p.1/140, f. 9; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 962.

²⁵¹ Bellamy, J., *The Tudor Law of Treason*, p. 9.

²⁵² From Geoffrey Pole's fifth examination.

²⁵³ *D.K.R.*, 3, p. 255, mm. 27, 26.

expressed by words, writing or deed.²⁵⁴ Montague's hope that Henry would carry out his threat to leave England,²⁵⁵ that he never loved Henry VIII from childhood and that one day the king would be out of his wits,²⁵⁶ were described as traitorous declarations while his statement that Wolsey had been an honest man if he had had an honest master ²⁵⁷ was seen as an indication of his intention to have a day upon the knaves about the king.²⁵⁸ His desire to dwell in the west parts, his regret that Lord Bergavenny had died and his criticism of Lord Darcy's failure to pluck away the head²⁵⁹ were also rehearsed. In addition to his support of Reginald's actions,²⁶⁰ and his disapproval of the king's,²⁶¹ the marquis was indicted for saying that he hoped to have fair day upon the knaves and pledged to give them a buffet,²⁶² and hoped to see a change of the world.²⁶³ These words were widely interpreted as a manifestation of his desire to procure the death and destruction of the king.²⁶⁴ Edward Neville's indictment rested on his description of the king as a beast,²⁶⁵ his hope that knaves should be put down, lords reign one day and that the world will amend.²⁶⁶ He also supposedly assured Geoffrey, 'this world will change one day, and then we will be merry. We shall have a day upon these knaves that rule about the king,'²⁶⁷ an

²⁵⁴ Thornley, I.D., 'The Treason Legislation of Henry VIII (1531-1534)' *T.R.H.S.*, XI, third series (1917) p. 104. The Misses Dodds however, do not accept that expressing joy at the prospect of the king's death suggests a wish for it. Dodds, M.H. and R., *Op.cit.*, p. 311.

²⁵⁵ From Geoffrey Pole's seventh examination and the evidence of Jerome Ragland.

²⁵⁶ Geoffrey Pole's seventh examination.

²⁵⁷ John Collins' examination, *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 830 (ii, 10).

²⁵⁸ John Collins, *ibid.*, nos. 827 (1), 830 (ii, 4).

²⁵⁹ Geoffrey Pole's fifth examination.

²⁶⁰ Geoffrey Pole, P.R.O. S.P.1/140, f. 9, no. 1; no. 962.

²⁶¹ Geoffrey Pole, *ibid.*, nos. 1, 6.

²⁶² Geoffrey Pole's fifth examination and *ibid.*, f. 9, no. 3.

²⁶³ Geoffrey Pole, *ibid.*, nos. 32, 33, ff. 11b-12.

²⁶⁴ Although Exeter did not personally threaten the king, any attack upon the king's ministers was a challenge to his right to choose his own officers and an encouragement of disorder and disobedience which could be harmful to the king.

²⁶⁵ Geoffrey Pole's seventh examination; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 830 (iii, 1).

²⁶⁶ D.K.R., 3, p. 252, m. 19.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 254, m. 13.

accusation Höllger believes was forged.²⁶⁸ The indictments against Geoffrey Pole were obviously more clear cut, involving his threat to desert during the time of the Pilgrimage of Grace²⁶⁹ and most obviously his message to Reginald, the conveyance of which Holland was indicted for,²⁷⁰ while the accusations against Croftes and Collins concerned their opposition to the royal supremacy²⁷¹ and Collins prediction that the king would hang in hell for pulling down the abbeys.²⁷²

Montague and Exeter were tried before 28 peers,²⁷³ over half of the nobility.²⁷⁴ G.R. Elton has shown how treason trials could be rigged against the accused. For instance, the lord steward's court, before which Montague and Exeter were tried, was theoretically composed of all the peers. In practice however, the peers were appointed 'by selective summons.'²⁷⁵ Clearly the opportunity for rigging the panel of lords triers existed. However, several of the 28 peers appointed to try Montague and Exeter were connected to them through marriage, friendship and kinship while the rest carried no known grudges against the two. Significantly the Earl of Arundel, a peer with whom the Pole family had experienced problems, was omitted from the panel. Of those who sat, the Duke of Suffolk was an annuitant of the countess, Thomas, Earl of Rutland was the grandson of Anne Plantagenet, Edward IV's eldest sister and George, Earl of Huntingdon's son was married to Lord Montague's daughter. Henry, Lord Morley was married to Alice St John, the daughter of Richard Pole's cousin John, Charles, Lord

²⁶⁸ Höllger notes that this last indictment cannot be found, word for word, in any of the evidence against Neville. Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539,' pp. 105-06. Geoffrey Pole in his testimony claimed that Neville 'trusted the world would amend one day,' while Gertrude corroborated this, adding that he also hoped 'honest men should rule one day,' *L&P*, XIII (ii) nos, 830 (iii, 1), 765, 830 (iv, 1) 831. She also stated that Neville 'trusted knaves should be put down and lords reign one day.' *Ibid.*, 830 iv, 3 and 831. *The sentiments expressed in the indictment, and in the testimonies of Geoffrey and Gertrude are so similar, that I am at a loss to explain why the government would feel the need to forge evidence against Neville!* Höllger feels there is no reason to believe that the papers concerning Geoffrey Pole are incomplete, equally, there is no definite way to be sure they are not. Geoffrey may very well have made a further statement that has since been lost or destroyed, indeed certain of these documents are already in a poor state of preservation.

²⁶⁹ The evidence of George Croftes.

²⁷⁰ Geoffrey Pole confessed to this, while Holland, Croftes and Collins all testified to it.

²⁷¹ Croftes's evidence.

²⁷² Collins's evidence.

²⁷³ *D.K.R.*, 3, p. 257.

²⁷⁴ Miller, H., *Henry VIII and the English Nobility*, p. 66.

²⁷⁵ Elton, G.R., (ed., and intro.), *The Tudor Constitution* (Cambridge, 1968) p. 80.

Mountjoy was Exeter's brother-in-law while William, Lord Sandys had enjoyed a long association with the Pole family to whom he was distantly related.²⁷⁶ Finally the brother of Andrew, lord Windsor, Sir Anthony Windsor, was closely connected to John Helyar, having administered his parish for him after his flight from England, for which he received letters of gratitude from Helyar.²⁷⁷ In addition, Geoffrey Pole's daughter Margaret, married a brother of Lord Windsor. Unfortunately as the date of the marriage is not known, it is not certain whether it was Andrew or William, Lord Windsor,²⁷⁸ but nevertheless, it was clearly not a panel of enemies. However, such men would naturally be particularly keen to demonstrate their loyalty to Henry VIII in order to avoid any implication themselves, especially as some, for instance George, Earl of Huntingdon and William, Lord Sandys, had been compromised in the evidence against the two families. Accordingly, although both Montague and Exeter pleaded not guilty, the guilty verdict was unanimous.²⁷⁹ The composition of the commission of oyer and terminer before which Neville, Pole, Holland, Croftes and Collins were tried was equally unremarkable, and again the guilty verdict was unsurprisingly unanimous, with only Edward Neville pleading not guilty.²⁸⁰ Initially the full penalties were to be exacted on all the condemned at Tyburn, but the king relented regarding Montague, Exeter and Neville who were to be beheaded at the Tower. All, except Geoffrey Pole, went to their deaths on 9 December.²⁸¹

Höllger has criticised the procedure of these trials, especially that of the Marquis of Exeter. In treason trials it was usual for the accused to make a plea in their defence. There is no record of a plea in Exeter's trial which Höllger interprets as an indication that the government were desperate to keep him from speaking. However, there appears to be no pleas recorded at any of the other trials either, so Exeter was not the

²⁷⁶ He had stood surety for Sir Richard Pole in 1504 and shared the same great grandmother. See above p. 70-1 and Appendix 6. He had also been constable of Margaret's castle at Christchurch for many years after her restoration. See below pp. 296.

²⁷⁷ Mayer, T.F., 'A Diet for Henry VIII,' p. 324, fn., 115.

²⁷⁸ Bannerman, W.B., (ed.), *The Visitations of the County of Sussex, made and taken in the years 1530*, LIII (Harleian Society, London, 1905) 89.

²⁷⁹ D.K.R., 3, p. 257.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

²⁸¹ Hamilton, W.D., (ed.), *A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors from AD 1485-1559*, I, 92. According to Charles Wriothesley, on Monday 9 December Collins, Croftes and Holland were hanged, drawn and quartered at Tyburn, their heads set on London Bridge and their quarters on various gates about London. Immediately afterwards Montague, Exeter and Neville were beheaded at the Tower, and their heads and bodies buried in the chapel of St Peter ad Vincula.

only one discriminated against. Apart from the documents in the *Baga de Secretis* and Wriothesley's account of their executions, the only account we have of the trials is by Richard Morisyne. Commissioned by the government to explain their version of events, he included an account of the conduct of Exeter, Montague and Neville at their trials. In treason trials the accused were not appraised of the evidence before hand, and Morisyne gives the impression of three flabbergasted men, unable to believe that comments they had made in the heat of the moment, some of which they might even have forgotten about, were now to bring them to their deaths. They stood stiff at the bar, but, 'with castyng uo of eies and handes, as though those thynges had ben never herd of before, that thenne were laid to theyr charge.' The marquis, Morisyne continued:

stack hardest, and made as though he had ben very clere in many poyntes, yet in some he staggered, and was very sory so to do, nowe chalangyng the kynges pardon, now takynge benefytte of the acte, and when al wolde not serve, he began to charge Geffrey pole with frensyne, with foly, and madnesse.

Morisyne's account does have an air of truth about it; the three men's surprise and bewilderment, the marquis's sometimes clumsy attempts to refute evidence he was totally unprepared for and at the last, his accusation of madness against Geoffrey Pole, whose mental condition was widely held by many at this time to be suspect.²⁸² Exeter was however, allowed to confront Geoffrey with this, but Morisyne loses credibility at this point by reporting a persuasive rebuttal by Geoffrey who, although not usually an accomplished speaker, was granted temporary eloquence from God for the purpose of his speech. Nevertheless even Morisyne reports no pleas from the accused. Certainly, Buckingham had been allowed a plea, even the dangerously persuasive Thomas More and Anne Boleyn. It is just possible that Exeter and Montague refused to make a plea in disgust knowing that it was useless, although this seems less likely for Neville.²⁸³ Again on the scaffold, they were circumspect in their speeches. They made no confession, only generally acknowledging their offences against the king, and requesting that all men present pray God to forgive them.²⁸⁴ A month later Chapuys

²⁸² Constance reported Geoffrey's frenzied condition to Lord Montague, while John Husee had heard of Geoffrey's first suicide attempt two days after the incident.

²⁸³ Following his conviction he made a statement declaring his innocence, he affirmed that 'I never ded nor syde the thyng that scholde be contrary to me ellegens nor harde no oddar, as Gode schalle joge me at my dethe, but that I have reherssyd, wyche cleres ny none consseyens.' *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 987.

²⁸⁴ Morisyne, R., *An Invective ayenste the great and detestable vice, treason*.

reported to the emperor that Geoffrey Pole, the witness allegedly so eloquent at Exeter's trial, so convinced of his righteousness in bringing the accusations, attempted to suffocate himself with a cushion.²⁸⁵

According to R.B. Merriman, the apparent difficulty Cromwell had:

in trumping up any plausible charges against his victims, would seem to show that no adequate proof of any really disloyal intent could be found.²⁸⁶

Could the evidence have been forged, as Höllger believes it was in Edward Neville's case? It has been shown above that certain accusations were corroborated by more than one witness. However, the interrogators would not be averse to using a point raised by one witness to press another into agreeing with it. Nevertheless, on the whole I think it is safe to accept the general veracity of the testimonies. If we look at the evidence against Montague and Exeter for instance, there is a distinct difference which accurately corresponds with their characters. It will be shown that there had never been any closeness between Montague and the king. Montague harboured no great love for him and a mutual aloofness existed. With the religious changes of the 1530s, the treatment of Catherine and Mary, and the execution of Thomas More, a man he admired, Montague found it easy to think the worst of Henry VIII and the evidence clearly reflects this relationship. Montague reserved his greatest insults for the king rather than for Cromwell, he even suggested that Wolsey would have been a better man had he had a better master. It was the king Montague blamed rather than his ministers. *The Marquis of Exeter however was fond of Henry VIII. This is not surprising as he had enjoyed many years of close friendship with him, and had been the appreciative recipient of the king's generosity.* He, unlike Montague, therefore found it difficult to think badly of him, consequently it was the ministers rather than the king that he chose to blame. Exeter's indiscretions concerned threats and insults against those about the king, especially Cromwell. Not one criticism does he utter against Henry VIII. Turning finally to Geoffrey Pole, it is hard to argue for his innocence. Both by his own confession, the detailed testimony of Hugh Holland and the corroboration of others, we know that Geoffrey sent messages and betrayed secrets of the realm to a known traitor.

²⁸⁵ *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 37.

²⁸⁶ Merriman, R.B., *The Life and Letters of Thomas Cromwell*, I, 208.

It must be considered whether the government's action regarding the Poles and their condemned associates was justifiable. Did the king take advantage of the grumblings of a disgruntled little group of friends to remove individuals who stood a little too near to the throne for comfort, or were they helpless hostages of fortune sacrificed on the altar of Reginald's conscience and Henry's quest for revenge? Alternatively does a more simple but equally dramatic explanation suffice? Did Henry genuinely believe he had actual cause for concern? Höllger is in no doubt that judicial murder had been committed. According to him, Exeter died because his, 'proximity to the throne had apparently sufficed to make him appear like a threat to the Tudor dynasty,'²⁸⁷ while:

Montague was not killed by his quick tongue, but simply because someone had to suffer for the annoyance caused to the king, by the rebellious cardinal.²⁸⁸

Each new affront that Reginald committed against Henry's authority was, he claims, followed by action against his family. When Reginald first went to Rome, they were threatened, when Reginald accompanied the Pope to the peace negotiations at Nice, Geoffrey was arrested, when Reginald went to meet the emperor on his second legation Montague was executed and when the threat of this second legation reached its climax, Margaret and Reginald's own attainder followed.²⁸⁹ He warns against viewing the fall of Exeter and the Poles as comparable, for to do this would mean falling into Henry VIII's trap; 'He wanted everyone to believe that these executions were necessary for the good of the state, which had been threatened by conspiracy,' but, he continues, 'their trials had been staged only to gain a pawn against Reginald Pole.'²⁹⁰ Moreover Höllger declares that Henry's pre-determination to exterminate the Poles is revealed in Castillon's letter to Anne de Montmorency in November 1538 in which he claims that Henry VIII told him 'quite some time ago' that he intended to destroy the family.²⁹¹ Castillon came to England between November 1533 and April 1534 and again in June 1537. His conversation with Henry VIII, Höllger places in the aftermath of the arrival of 'De Unitate' and Reginald's elevation to the cardinalate, when Henry

²⁸⁷ Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539,' p. 100.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 104-105.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 214-215.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

²⁹¹ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 753 and see above p. 233.

was sufficiently angry to make such a threat.²⁹² Although this is a year after 'De Unitate' arrived and six months after Reginald was made a cardinal, it is indeed a more likely time than between 1533-4 when Henry still had genuine hope that Reginald might support him. However, we must be careful not to make too much of this letter and Henry's alleged remark. The king's volatile temper is well known, and in June 1537 Henry was still smarting from the abject failure of his attempt to have Reginald assassinated. A furious outburst such as this would be quite understandable under the circumstances. Hence can we conclude from this one remark, spoken in the heat of the moment, that Henry had seriously decided to kill Reginald's family? It is true that Henry was indeed capable of harbouring resentments, but what of the letter dashed off by Wriothesley to Sir Thomas Wyatt on 12 November 1538? Reporting the arrests of Montague and Exeter, he observed:

yet the kings maiestie loveth them so well and of his great goodness is soo loth to proced against them that yt ys doubted what his highnes woll doo towards them.²⁹³

Mortimer Levine maintains that Henry VIII had harboured a 'long meditated aim of annihilating the house of York,'²⁹⁴ which Barbara Harris believes was behind the king's decision to prosecute the Duke of Buckingham in 1521.²⁹⁵ Alan Neame also makes much of Henry's dynastic fears, feeling that while he remained son-less, he remained vulnerable. The birth of Princess Mary settled nothing while other dynastic claimants existed and considered that Henry's only right to the throne was the fact that 'he sat on it and they did not.'²⁹⁶ Without a male Tudor heir; 'However loyal, however discreet, these close relations of his stood to gain a great deal if things remained as they were.'²⁹⁷ Certainly the families' dynastic credentials were well known in Europe and made much of by foreign ambassadors, most notably Chapuys. As early as September 1533 he wrote to the emperor in support of Reginald's claim,²⁹⁸ informing

²⁹² Höllger. C., *Op.cit.*, p. 84.

²⁹³ B.L. Cotton. MS. Appendix L. f, 71; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 825.

²⁹⁴ Levine, M., *Tudor Dynastic Problems 1460-1571*, p. 71.

²⁹⁵ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 206.

²⁹⁶ Neame, A., *The Holy Maid of Kent*, p. 103.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

²⁹⁸ *L&P*, IV (i) no. 1164.

him two months later of the illegitimacy of Henry VIII's mother,²⁹⁹ declared during the reign of Richard III. It is disquieting that Chapuys knew about this at all, since Henry VII had taken every step to ensure no copies of the statute remained. Nevertheless, in 1535 Chapuys was able to make it quite clear to Cromwell, that he knew all about the statute's contents,³⁰⁰ no doubt fuelling further suspicions as to his source of information. However, if the Pole family and the marquis had succeeded in overthrowing the Tudor dynasty, the resultant situation would have been most confusing. The Marquis of Exeter's claim was as the grandson, through the female line, of Edward IV. Lord Montague's was only as the grandson in the female line of Edward IV's younger brother, but Montague's mother unlike Exeter's, had never been declared illegitimate, a fact Chapuys considered an impediment to Henry VIII's claim. Moreover, should Montague's title prevail, then the Countess of Salisbury would have to imitate Margaret Beaufort and set her own claim aside in her son's favour. However Chapuys's preferred candidate was Reginald, initially because Reginald, unlike Montague, was free to marry Mary. This would unite once more the Tudors and the Plantagenets, as Henry VII's marriage to Elizabeth of York had done. Chapuys continued to press Reginald's claims, even after Montague was widowed, probably because he believed Mary was favourable to such a marriage.³⁰¹ For this to be successful however, both the Countess of Salisbury and Lord Montague would have to step aside in Reginald's favour. Furthermore, the situation would test the friendship between Montague and Exeter to the limit, as one would have to agree to relinquish their claim in favour of the other, thus disinheriting their sons.

M.L. Bush has constructed a convincing argument which suggests that there was indeed no vendetta against the royal race at all under Henry VIII,³⁰² a conclusion David Starkey concurs with.³⁰³ Bush has noted the prosperity enjoyed by several royal relatives under Henry VIII, which, in addition to the Poles, Courtenays, Arthur

²⁹⁹ Ibid., VI, no. 1528.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., VIII, no. 750.

³⁰¹ The only other candidate Chapuys proposed as a husband for Mary, was Montague's young son Henry in 1536. *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1536-38, p. 199, no. 72. In 1536 Montague was 44 years old, certainly middle aged by Tudor standards and perhaps Chapuys doubted his ability to father more children. Alternatively, at twenty years old Mary might have been averse to the idea of a union with someone so much older than herself. Nevertheless at 36 years old, Reginald was still 16 years older than Mary.

³⁰² Bush, M.L., 'The Tudors and the Royal Race,' pp. 37-48.

³⁰³ Starkey, D., *The Reign of Henry VIII* (London, 1991) p. 43.

Plantagenet, and the Earls of Rutland and Worcester who have already been mentioned, included the Bouchier peers; Lord Berners and the Earls of Bath and Essex.³⁰⁴ In addition to Margaret and Exeter, Henry also elevated other members of his kin to the peerage: Henry Stafford as Earl of Wiltshire in 1510, Charles Somerset as Earl of Worcester in 1514, Arthur Plantagenet as Viscount Lisle in 1523, Henry Brandon as Earl of Lincoln and Thomas Manners as Earl of Rutland in 1525 and John Bouchier as Earl of Bath in 1536.³⁰⁵ Bush also correctly notes that those members of the blood royal who fell during the reign of Henry VIII had all compromised themselves.³⁰⁶ Moreover, if Henry was as dynastically afraid as some historians maintain, then he would not have allowed Exeter's son to survive into his son's reign, while he took no action against the sons of Geoffrey Pole. Further doubt is cast upon the king's alleged terror at the spectre of rival claimants, when one notes his approval of the Pole family's marriages. Although at Mary's birth in 1516 Henry had optimistically declared that, with God's grace, son's would follow, in the autumn of 1517 Catherine suffered a miscarriage and in November 1518 the 33 year old queen was delivered of a still-born child. Although the situation was not yet as desperate as it became by 1524 when Catherine's bareness was obvious, the miscarriages, still-births and lack of a male heir would nevertheless have been a cause for concern by 1518. Yet it was in that year that Ursula's marriage to the Duke of Buckingham's son took place, and, as a result, united two strong claims to the throne.³⁰⁷ In addition, Montague's wife, Jane Neville, was descended from Joan Beaufort the daughter of John of Gaunt.³⁰⁸ It may also be significant that Montague's son-in-law, Francis, Lord Hastings was the son of Anne Stafford, daughter of the Duke of Buckingham. Indeed, Montague's grandson was to be regarded as one of the principal claimants to the throne during the reign of Elizabeth. Clearly 'it would be wrong to assume that the Tudor attitude towards subject claimants was generally harsh and ferocious,³⁰⁹ and the idea that Henry VIII was desperately afraid, and had been for some time, that either Montague or Exeter was going to successfully advance their own claim to the throne, must be viewed with caution. If, as has been suggested above, Henry VIII did

³⁰⁴ Descended from Anne, Countess of Stafford, granddaughter of Edward III, by her third marriage to Sir William Bouchier, Count of Eu. See Appendix 2.

³⁰⁵ Bush, M.L., 'The Tudors and the Royal Race,' p. 43.

³⁰⁶ Buckingham, Montague, Exeter and the Earl of Surrey. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

³⁰⁷ For Stafford's descent see Appendix 2.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁰⁹ Bush, M.L., *Op.cit.*, p. 40.

not destroy the Pole family simply for being Reginald's relatives, or because they represented the House of York and stood a little too near the throne for comfort, then why did he move against them in 1538? The various causes for concern that the king harboured regarding the family will now be examined, as will his relationship with them. However, before we proceed to such an examination, the international situation at that time must be discussed, as it had a direct bearing on the events of 1538.

By early 1539, England's political isolation had reached crisis point. In June 1538, a ten year treaty between France and the Empire had been signed. The following December Pope Paul III confirmed the suspended bull of excommunication against Henry VIII and two months later, both the French and Imperial ambassadors were recalled from England. In addition it was believed that an invasion force was mustering off the Dutch coast.³¹⁰ The government's concern at the possibility of a Catholic invasion is illustrated in the extensive defensive measures taken. 40 warships as well as impounded merchant men were prepared for action while musters were held and men and armour assembled. In addition, a survey of coastal defences was launched, the most comprehensive since the reign of Edward I, and the resultant fortifications were constructed at great expense to the crown, apparently amounting to £376,477 including works at Calais.³¹¹ Although this crisis point was reached in the early months of 1539, the situation had been brewing for much longer. England's security lay in the hostility which existed between France and the Empire but towards the end of 1537, Henry observed with increasing alarm the signs of a prospective Franco-Imperial reconciliation. On 16 June 1537 came the treaty of Bomy between France and the Netherlands, and in October an agreement between Francis and Charles to hold peace talks.³¹² The Pope was actively involved in furthering the rapprochement, for only by this could he hope to muster enough forces to destroy the enemies of the Church, which included Henry VIII. Consequently England's position became increasingly marginalised as France and the Empire drew closer together.

Between 15 May and 20 June 1538, peace talks went ahead between Francis and Charles at Nice. Francis and Charles did not actually meet, the talks were mediated by the Pope who met both monarchs separately. Nevertheless, the ten year treaty that was signed was further cemented by the eventual meeting of the two adversaries at

³¹⁰ Williamson, J.A., *The Tudor Age*, p. 161.

³¹¹ Guy, J., *Tudor England*, p. 184.

³¹² Potter, D., 'Foreign Policy' in MacCulloch, D., (ed.), *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety* (London, 1995) p. 117.

Aigues-Mortes on 14 July. It was during this meeting that Francis and Charles agreed to co-operate against the enemies of Christendom and pledged to bring heretics back into the fold.³¹³ Understandably; 'The truce of Nice was viewed by some, including Thomas Cromwell, as posing a massive threat to England,³¹⁴ and this threat had been actively furthered by none other than Reginald Pole. Both Reginald and the Pope were committed to the idea of restoring papal authority to England. They realised that this might have to involve force, but believed it was better that the king 'and all his supporters should die rather than endanger the salvation of others.'³¹⁵ Reginald expressed such aims in a position paper to the Pope, which Paul III duly included in the secret part of the bull appointing Reginald legate a latere. Finally issued on 31 March 1537 towards the end of the Pilgrimage of Grace, the bull also instructed Reginald to encourage the English rebels with a crusading indulgence.³¹⁶ Publicly Reginald's legation charged him to concentrate on obtaining 'peace with the princes beyond the mountains' the abolition of heresies and resistance against the Turk.³¹⁷ However the English government was not blind to Reginald's real intentions. Although careful not to commit his plans to paper, Reginald instructed his servant Throckmorton to warn Henry of the dangers:

off those prynces to whose honour ytt ys iudgyd to apperteyne to defend tha lawes off the churche ageinst all other prynces or nations thatt wyll impugne them.³¹⁸

Furthermore, Thomas Theobald, a protégé of Cranmer, informed his master that Reginald was disappointed that the Pope was not taking more vigorous action against England, a sentiment remarked upon by Throckmorton himself. In addition, Francis I informed Henry that Reginald was coming with money to help the northern rebels.³¹⁹ That Henry was aware Reginald's mission also included the directive to exhort both

³¹³ Knecht, R.J., *Francis I*, p. 292.

³¹⁴ Potter, D., *Op.cit.*, p. 120.

³¹⁵ Mayer, T.F., 'If Martyrs are to be Exchanged with Martyrs: The kidnappings of William Tyndale and Reginald Pole' *Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte*, LXXXI (1990) p. 296.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 296.

³¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 295.

³¹⁸ Mayer, T.F., 'A Diet for Henry VIII,' p. 312.

³¹⁹ Merriman, R.B., *The Life and Letters of Thomas Cromwell*, I (Oxford, 1902) 205.

Charles V and Francis I to take concerted action against England, is amply illustrated in the king's desperate attempts to have Reginald silenced. This, his agents were instructed, was to be achieved either by kidnapping or assassination. In addition Reginald's secretary Beccatelli claimed that Henry had put a price of 50,000 crowns on his head and offered the estates of Flanders 10,000 foot soldiers with ten months pay if they would hand Reginald over to him.³²⁰ Compounding all of this, Reginald was also present with the Pope at the negotiations in Nice. Understandably, Henry felt Reginald's treachery keenly. His betrayal was not only of his king and his country, but of his own kinsman. The education Henry had so generously provided for Reginald had now been turned against him, while Reginald's actions not only posed a danger to Henry, but were also a source of great embarrassment. Not surprisingly the family of such a traitor was bound to fall under the betrayed king's suspicion, and especially such a family as the Poles.

The Poles' track record with Henry VIII was not auspicious. The behaviour of certain members of the family had been enough to alienate the king without Reginald's added treachery. By 1538 relations between Henry and the head of the family had broken down to such an extent that the countess had withdrawn from court. Moreover the king delivered a calculated snub when he refused to visit Margaret, as he was once accustomed to doing, while progressing in the vicinity of her seat at Warblington. Her behaviour over the previous two decades had by now convinced Henry that she was both disobedient and, like her perfidious son, ungrateful. Despite being restored to the Earldom of Salisbury on extremely generous terms, she had proceeded to dispute with the king for nearly fifteen years in an attempt to retain lands to which she had no claim. She had demonstrated her defiance yet again, when she tried to prevent Henry from obtaining Mary's jewels and plate, while her name was linked to the treasonous scandal of the Nun of Kent. She also opposed Cromwell by doing her utmost to thwart his attempts to obtain the Priory of Bisham for his client William Barlow, while her stubborn devotion to Catherine of Aragon, her dynastic pride and iron will provoked Henry's extreme displeasure.

Relations with Lord Montague and Geoffrey Pole were only marginally better. As discussed Geoffrey's indebtedness and reckless disregard of the king's wishes on several occasions, had certainly tested his monarch's patience. With Lord Montague the situation is a little less clear cut. Unlike his mother and younger brother, Montague had always been careful not to provoke an open breach with the king.

³²⁰ Pye, B., *The Life of Cardinal Reginald Pole*, pp. 47-48.

Nevertheless, a definite coolness existed between Henry VIII and his cousin. Montague apparently claimed that he had never liked Henry from childhood, although opportunities to have associated with him during those years would have been rare. However, on a personal level the two men simply never warmed to each other, and Montague did not experience the type of relationship that his brother Arthur had enjoyed with the king. He was never invited to enter the inner sanctum of the Privy Chamber despite being very close in age to Henry.³²¹ In addition Montague repeatedly lost out in the elections to the Order of the Garter. He failed to obtain entry into this illustrious order on no less than twelve occasions from 1518-36.³²² Although he served as a Justice of the Peace, Montague enjoyed no real political role under Henry VIII. He held no important household nor governmental office and his presence at court was merely ceremonial. This cannot be due to any ineptness on his part, for he was an intelligent and well read gentleman.³²³ He advised his mother, as well as several friends and associates over their affairs and was appointed chief steward of Tewkesbury Abbey,³²⁴ the resting place of his grandparents the Duke and Duchess of Clarence. Neither can this exclusion be attributed to any fears Henry may have harboured regarding Montague's dynastic claims, as might have been the case with the Duke of Buckingham. One only has to look at the Marquis of Exeter to realise this. He enjoyed great favour under Henry VIII, and held many important and influential offices, yet he also possessed a claim to the throne. The letter that Wriothesley wrote doubting what Henry would do to Montague and Exeter due to his love for them, probably referred more to Exeter, while it is significant that it was Exeter and not any member of the Pole family, who was offered a chance to survive the débâcle of 1538. Obviously there was something in the characters of the two men which precluded any warmth of friendship, certainly the insults attributed to Montague reveal just how deep seated that dislike had become. They were not simply general complaints against an unsatisfactory regime, but venomous personal attacks upon the king himself. In addition to this, Montague had been implicated in the Duke of Buckingham's treason and had enjoyed a close friendship with Lord Bergavenny. Imprisoned over his involvement in the Buckingham affair, Bergavenny had also been

³²¹ Born in 1492 he was only a year younger than the king.

³²² The closest he came to gaining entry was in 1531, when, with Lord Delawarre, he received eight votes, the highest number for the barons. On this occasion Montague was piped at the post by the Earl of Northumberland with nine votes. Anstis, J., *The Register of..... the Garter*, I, 386-88.

³²³ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 35; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 702 (1). Jerome Ragland testified that Lord Montague had all Thomas More's books after his death and 'he dyd moche take pleasure [rea]ding of them.'

³²⁴ *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, II (1814) 480.

prosecuted for illegal retaining in 1516.³²⁵ Indeed, in 1525 during the collection of the Amicable Grant, the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk wrote to Henry concerning the unrest over the exaction warning:

If this business spread, lords Burgayne and Stafford should be looked to. Do not know but what they might do well, but God knows what ill spirits might put in their minds.³²⁶

Montague's collapse following the trial and execution of Thomas More,³²⁷ with hindsight, might also have taken on more significance. Clearly by 1538 the Poles were not a family in which Henry VIII would have had a great deal of confidence, without Reginald's traitorous activities on the continent to compound matters.

The premeditation of which Henry is accused by Höllger,³²⁸ goes only so far as keeping Reginald's family under surveillance once the cardinal's true colours were revealed. It is inconceivable that they would not have been kept under observation and they themselves were aware of it. Montague likened the past six years of his life to being in prison, once doubt was cast upon Reginald's adherence to Henry's cause. Exeter had been warned to avoid Montague due to the suspicion their friendship excited, while Neville was advised by the king himself, in Cromwell's presence, to shun the marquis' company.³²⁹ Moreover Tyndall's arrival at the Warblington surgeon house has been shown to be more than mere coincidence. Nevertheless, such surveillance merely points to the government's good sense rather than to any definite malevolent intentions. When the first fragments of gossip about the Poles began to reach Henry's ears, he immediately ordered a thorough investigation, but he did so as a result of genuine fear for his security

With the perceived threat of invasion hanging over England, it was obviously the coastal areas that needed to be watched and guarded and this is exactly what the king

³²⁵ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham*, p. 177.

³²⁶ *L&P*, IV (i) no. 1319.

³²⁷ More's trial took place on 1 July for which Montague was named to a commission of oyer and terminer for Middlesex. On 6 July More was executed, and on 7 July John Husee wrote to Lord Lisle that the 'saying is that my Lord Montague is sore sick or dead,' while Leonard Smyth wrote on the same day that Montague 'is sore sick and like to die.' *L&P*, VIII, no. 974, *L.L.*, II, 519, 520, nos. 412, 413.

³²⁸ See above pp. 276-77.

³²⁹ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 217, 227; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (4); IV no. 2.

ordered done in the early months of 1539. Henry was well aware that Margaret held several manors along the southern coast of England, from Hampshire down to Cornwall. Any weakness in such areas could be fatal, as it might provide an entry point for a foreign army. The south and south eastern coasts were particularly vulnerable due to their proximity to France. Indeed, in April 1539 there were rumours in Sussex 'that the King's enemies were arrived at Haylyng in Hampshire,'³³⁰ and it was in the south that the army of the King of France had landed during the reign of King John. Cornwall was the scene for a rising in 1497 which, with support from Devon and Somerset, marched all the way to London³³¹ and in the same year the county was also chosen as the springboard for Perkin Warbeck's ill fated invasion; 'Nowhere was the provincialism of Tudor England more apparent than in Devon and Cornwall.'³³² Retaining their own language which enhanced their separatism, the Celtic Cornish had maintained links with their Celtic brothers in Brittany. Good trade relations existed between them and many Bretons lived in Cornwall, while in 1530 Leland testified to the large number of Irishmen in Padstow.³³³ Julian Cornwall maintains that the Cornish, conscious of being a conquered race, had always remained 'antipathetic to their English neighbours.'³³⁴ Indeed in 1537 Dr Simon Heynes, Reginald's replacement as dean of Exeter, wrote to the king; 'This is a perilous country. For God's love let the king's grace look to it in time.'³³⁵ Joyce Youngs believes that Heynes report was undeserved and, due to Cornwall's relative tranquility since 1497, would fail to convince the king. But how can we be sure that Henry, with a propensity for suspicion, would not be alarmed by such a remark? After all:

*If there was little visible unrest, apprehension and uncertainty lurked in the minds of the commons, for Henry VIII's Reformation upset traditional religious life throughout Cornwall.*³³⁶

³³⁰ *L&P*, IV (i) no. 823.

³³¹ This rising was in protest to the tax Henry VII was attempting to levy in order to defend the Northern marches.

³³² Beer, B.L., *Rebellion and Riot: Popular Disorder in England during the Reign of Edward VI* (Kent, 1982) p. 40.

³³³ Cornwall, J., *Revolt of the Peasantry 1549* (London, 1977) p. 42.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ Youngs, J.A., 'The Council of the West,' p. 45.

³³⁶ Beer, B.L., *Rebellion and Riot*, p. 44.

Certainly, in March 1539 as part of his provisions for the security of the realm, Cromwell charged Norfolk to be responsible for the North of England, Bishop Roland Lee for South Wales and for the coasts of Somerset, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall, a team of twelve knights prominent in the four counties were appointed 'to search and defend the coast.'³³⁷ In addition to the militia and royal officers, Cromwell also recognised the importance of having 'sad and expert men in every shire near the sea to view the coasts.'³³⁸

Among her manors, Margaret held one in Cornwall, three in Dorset, six in Devon, eight in Somerset and eight in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Margaret possessed two manors on the Isle of Wight, Swainstone and Binstead, while her son Geoffrey Pole held moieties of the manors of Gatcombe and Calbourne. Stretching from the Solent to the Channel, Swainston was the largest estate on the island. Moreover, at some point Margaret had granted the tenure of it to the notorious Thomas Standish, her clerk of the kitchen.³³⁹ Classed with Hugh Holland and Henry Bykyls as a crafty fellow by the informer Peter³⁴⁰ he, alone of her servants, was arrested when Fitzwilliam returned to interrogate Margaret at Warblington on 14 November.³⁴¹ Indeed, the sensitivity of the area was made glaringly obvious seven years after the arrest of the Poles. In 1545 the French launched an invasion fleet, and troops actually succeeded in landing on the Isle of Wight in July.

R.H. Fritze has revealed the lack of any serious resistance to the dissolution of the monasteries in Hampshire, which he attributes to an absence of strong local leadership. However, he has also shown that the area was not without its problems, admitting that 'sporadic and unorganised resistance' did occur.³⁴² It was mostly the local priests who demonstrated their disenchantment with the religious policies, by uttering treasonous statements, which significantly were reported to the authorities.³⁴³

³³⁷ Youings, J.A., *Op.cit.*, p. 49.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*

³³⁹ *L&P*, XII (ii) no. 476 (83). In 1546 John Worseley was granted the reversion of Swainstone following the expiration of Standishe's tenure.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, XIII (ii) no. 817.

³⁴¹ B.L. Cotton. MS. Appendix L, f. 77; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 835.

³⁴² Fritze, R.H., 'Faith and Faction,' p. 132.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 133-34.

However this was not always the case. When Nicholas Porter, a local parson, was accused of making seditious statements in March 1538, seventeen people came forward to speak up for him, even before the Captain of the Isle of Wight; 'Loyalty to the King did not always override loyalty to one's pastor in Hampshire,'³⁴⁴ and this has been noted previously when the local constable berated Tyndal for making insinuations against the parson of Havant. Moreover, a case of 1538 reveals how local conservative officials were prepared to aid conservative clergy in their attempts to resist the enforcement of reformation statutes.³⁴⁵

Again Hampshire was a county where Margaret held several coastal manors, indeed her fortified castle at Warblington was barely a mile from the sea. Further along towards Dorset, lies the manor of Christchurch. One of Margaret's richest manors, it still boasted a substantial medieval castle in 1538.³⁴⁶ As noted, Margaret also held several other riverside and coastal manors, stretching from Dorset, through Devon and down into Cornwall. Thus substantially sensitive and vulnerable areas of coast lay under her control.³⁴⁷ Furthermore, the most powerful family in the west of England by 1538 was the Courtenay family, headed of course by the Marquis of Exeter. The dominant landowner in the Exe valley,³⁴⁸ his estate was eclipsed only by that of the Duchy of Cornwall, of which he was steward,³⁴⁹ thus further bolstering his influence.³⁵⁰ Popular locally, he certainly had no difficulty in raising men for military service during the Pilgrimage of Grace. Ironically it has been suggested that this very success in 'arraining some thousands to oppose the Yorkshire rebels'³⁵¹ contributed to his downfall as his popularity and influence further fuelled the king's suspicions. Certainly in the inventory taken after the marquis' arrest, the stature and martial abilities of his servants were noted.³⁵² If the disenchanted Pole family decided to

³⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 146-47.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., pp. 147-49.

³⁴⁶ The remains of the keep reveal that it stood 50 ft by 45ft 6in. with 9ft. 8in thick walls. Page, W., (ed.), *V.C.H., Hampshire and the Isle of Wight V* (London, 1912) 89.

³⁴⁷ See Appendix 10.

³⁴⁸ Beer, B.L., *Rebellion and Riot*, p. 44.

³⁴⁹ Appointed on 25 May 1523. *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 1002.

³⁵⁰ The minister's accounts of 1539 and 1540-1, reveal that he held thirteen manors in Cornwall and seven manors in Devon. Lists and Indexes, XXXIV, 283.

³⁵¹ B.L. Harleian MS. 2194, f. 18b.

³⁵² *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 755

withdraw totally its support of the king, then the close friendship between Exeter and Lord Montague made the marquis a natural ally. Combined, their forces would be considerable, something Henry VIII was only too well aware of.

Henry's concern is further illustrated by his determination to maintain control over Margaret's lands and those of the Marquis of Exeter. Although undoubtedly in need of funds for the provision of defensive measures, apart from Warblington, Henry made no immediate grants of Margaret's southern manors. It was not until 1540 that the first grant occurred, that of a lease of part of the demesne land of Stokenham to Nicholas Upton.³⁵³ Although a grant had been made of one of Exeter's Buckinghamshire manors in May 1539,³⁵⁴ it was not until October 1539 that the first of his southern manors was granted out when John, Lord Russell, a staunchly loyal royal servant, received 'Caryfytzpayn' in Somerset.³⁵⁵ The following year Prince Edward was granted certain of Exeter's manors in Cornwall in recompense for Wallingford, which was to be detached from the Duchy of Cornwall, while Margaret's steward of Pyworthy, Sir Thomas Denys, received another of Exeter's possessions, the hundred of Budleigh in Devon.³⁵⁶ In 1541 several more of Margaret's Devonshire and Somerset manors were granted to Henry's fifth queen, Catherine Howard, as were a selection of Exeter's manors in Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Hampshire and Somerset,³⁵⁷ and in 1545 Oliver Frankelyn, having proved himself in royal service, was granted his late mistress's manor of Clyst St Mary, Devon.³⁵⁸ Obviously, the men appointed as chief stewards of these two estates were men on whom the king felt he could rely. Sir William Fitzwilliam, a man who had exercised such diligence in the prosecution of the Poles, was appointed chief steward of all Margaret's possessions in England, Wales and the marches following her attainder. It was to carry out this office that he had the privilege of being granted Warblington at the same time in July 1539.³⁵⁹ Richard Pollard, Cromwell's protégé, was chosen to exercise the office of chief

³⁵³ *L&P*, XV, no. 611 (12)

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, XIV (i) no. 1056 (21, 22).

³⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, (ii) no. 435 (17).

³⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, XV, no. 498, cap. 34; no. 282 (39).

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, XVI, no. 503 (25) 241.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, XV, no. item 282 (39).

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, XIV (i) no. 113 (18).

steward of all Exeter's lands in March 1539.³⁶⁰ In July of the same year John, Lord Russell, a man Henry was building up in order to fill the power vacuum left vacant in the South by Exeter's fall, received several of the marquis's offices in Cornwall, Devon and Somerset.³⁶¹ Höllger attributes Margaret's downfall entirely to Henry's thirst for revenge.³⁶² While this can be advanced as a convincing motive for her execution, there is clearly more to it than just this regarding her initial arrest. In order for Henry to take control of the estates of the Earldom of Salisbury Margaret's arrest was imperative. Unlike Gertrude, she was the head of her family, she alone held the estates, therefore it was her arrest and attainder that was needed to allow the crown to absorb them. Ironically, her privileged position, if nothing else, unquestionably assured her downfall.

Although much has been made of the dynastic credentials of the Poles' and Courtenays' and Henry's fear that they might harbour designs on the throne, in reality what the government did seem to fear in 1538, and a far more understandable fear it was, was a rising in support of Mary. The testimony of witnesses during the accumulation of evidence against the Poles, reveals that they were being questioned about this very possibility. Ragland admitted hearing Lord Montague's servant Perkyns say that, 'it were a mete maryage of Reynolde pole to have the lady Marye the kings daughter.'³⁶³ while John Collins claimed he had heard Geoffrey Pole himself say that Reginald should marry Mary. He also added that 'when communication hath byn of change' he believed it referred to the possibility that 'the sayd ladie Mary shuld have a tytl to the crown one day if such change shall happen.'³⁶⁴ Certainly the devotion of both the Poles and Courtenays to Mary was well known. Margaret's loyalty to her had been proved in the face of Henry VIII's wrath, while in 1535, Chapuys wrote to the emperor that the marquis 'only regrets that he has no opportunity of shedding his blood in the service of the Queen and Princess.'³⁶⁵ Indeed, during the crisis of June 1536, Exeter was expelled from the council due to his partiality for Mary. Moreover, in order to facilitate the endorsement of Margaret's

³⁶⁰ Ibid., no. 651 (15).

³⁶¹ Ibid., no. 1354 (12).

³⁶² Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539,' p. 123.

³⁶³ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 34; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 702 (2).

³⁶⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 14b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 827 (1).

³⁶⁵ *L&P*, VIII no. 263.

attainder in the Lords in May 1539, Cromwell produced a tunic allegedly found in one of her coffers.³⁶⁶ The symbolism clearly denoted Reginald's intention to marry Mary and restore Papal authority to England.³⁶⁷ Clearly, so associated with Mary were the Poles, that Cromwell chose to present evidence he considered was plausible enough to convince the Lords of its authenticity.

Mary's restoration was a far more credible banner to march behind than any dynastic claims of the Poles and Courtenays. Mary represented a return to the old religion and her cause would necessarily appeal to conservative subjects. Indeed, one of the demands issued by the Pilgrims in 1536 was that Mary should be made legitimate again, for in addition to representing the old faith she `stood between the crown and the detested Scots claim.³⁶⁸ Although Henry had been blessed with a son in 1537, Prince Edward represented all the ecclesiastical changes inaugurated during the 1530s, a possible source of alienation for religious conservatives. Moreover, Edward had been born while England was in schism, thus, to those who still believed in papal authority, the young prince could be considered illegitimate. Compounding these fears was Edward's age, for in 1538 he was still only a baby. Indeed in May when Edward was only seven months old, Henry VIII fell seriously ill after one of the fistulas in his leg stopped, along with a blackening of the face and loss of speech.³⁶⁹ With the usurpation in living memory, perpetrated by the Countess of Salisbury's uncle, the fate of his baby son in the event of his death, was a fear Henry VIII could not ignore, especially should a religious split in the country occur.

Mary, unlike any other claimant, might also enjoy the support of the emperor who would naturally prefer to see his own cousin on the throne of England, than a member of the Pole or Courtenay families. In fact in May 1538 half a score of Margaret's servants had expressed a desire to go and fight for the emperor. Should the emperor

³⁶⁶ It is most likely that this tunic was forged by Cromwell. Warblington was searched thoroughly at Margaret's arrest in November as were her coffers. It is hard to believe that this tunic did not come to light until six months later.

³⁶⁷ In the words of John Worth, `by the one side of the coat there was the King's Grace his arms of England, that is, the lions without the flower de luce and about the whole arms was made pansies for Pole and marigolds for my Lady Mary. This was about the coat-armour. And betwixt the marigold and the pansy was made a tree to rise in the midst; and on the tree a coat of purple hanging on a bough, in tokening of the coat of Christ; and on the other side of the coat all the Passion of Christ' Worth clearly interpreted this to mean that `Pole intended to have married my Lady Mary and betwixt them both should again arise the old doctrine of Christ.' *L.L.*, IV, no. 1419.

³⁶⁸ Dodds, M.H., and R., *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, I, 356.

³⁶⁹ MacNalty, A.S., *Henry VIII A Difficult Patient*, p. 103.

be unable to keep them, the plan was to go to Reginald who they believed would be sure to retain them.³⁷⁰ It is significant that in May 1538 Mary was warned by Cromwell; 'not to give her father grounds for suspicion, particularly by entertaining strangers in her house.'³⁷¹ Mary was unable to deny the presence of these 'strangers' merely responding that their presence had been reported 'to the worst.'³⁷² It was clearly the devotion of the Poles and Courtenays to Mary's claims, more so than to their own, that gave the government greater cause for concern.

During the Pilgrimage of Grace both the Pole and Courtenay families remained loyal to Henry VIII, and some historians have used this as proof of their innocence in 1538. However, the situation might have been very different had Reginald been at the head of an army; a son, brother and friend striving to restore the church and Mary's position. The families, in that event, might not have remained quite so loyal. Indeed, Claire Cross believes that Reginald's involvement in any rising could have been crucial:

if Reginald Pole had returned to England to lead the northern rebels in person, it is conceivable that in 1536 the Tudor dynasty might have been overthrown in the name of religion.³⁷³

In addition, Richard Morisyne claimed in his 'Invective' that if Reginald had arrived in time for the uprising, 'he wolde have playde an hardier part than Aske dyd.' Both Henry VIII and Cromwell were well aware of the prediction that had been circulating since 1512, that after Wolsey's fall, Catherine's repudiation and 'much misery the land by another Red Cap be reconciled or else brought to utter destruction,'³⁷⁴ while this was compounded by other prophesies concerning a deliverer coming from overseas and a battle of priests.³⁷⁵ That the government took these prophesies seriously is illustrated by the investigations launched and supervised by Cromwell himself.³⁷⁶

³⁷⁰ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 592.

³⁷¹ Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, p. 120.

³⁷² *Ibid.*

³⁷³ Cross, C., *Church and People 1540-1660* (London, 1976) p. 66.

³⁷⁴ Jansen, S.L., *Political Protest and Prophecy under Henry VIII* (Suffolk, 1991) p. 26.

³⁷⁵ *ibid.*, p. 34.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

Henry VIII must have wondered if the day the prophecies foretold was indeed the day the Poles were waiting for.

Should the Pole family have decided to take action against Henry VIII, how substantial a network of support might they have been able to muster? This was undoubtedly a question the king must have contemplated. It has been shown in chapter five, that many of Margaret's officers were local men from the southern counties, and from most of them she enjoyed longevity of service, but would that loyalty have extended to supporting her and her family against the king? Thomas Mayer certainly believes that there were a number of candidates who would have been ready and willing to support Reginald should he have taken military action against England. However he places too much importance upon lesser figures like Hugh Holland, Morgan Wells, George Croftes, John Collins, Michael Throckmorton, Bernadino Sandro, John Walker, Jerome Ragland and John Helyar, who hardly fit the description of being 'foot soldiers and clergy in some numbers' upon which Reginald could call.³⁷⁷ They were certainly not an adequate substitute for the troops Charles V and Francis I could send, which Mayer seems to suggest they were.³⁷⁸ Moreover Mayer makes assumptions too readily on mere face value. For instance he considered George Croftes a natural supporter of Reginald because, in addition to Croftes' religious conservatism, they both attended Oxford at the same time, while Reginald's parish of South Harting lay in Chichester diocese.³⁷⁹ However, although Croftes was a close friend of Geoffrey Pole's, he disapproved of Reginald's behaviour. Believing it was due to ambition, Croftes was disgusted that his actions had put his family so much in the king's displeasure.³⁸⁰

Mayer's most incredible assumption is that Sir William Fitzwilliam, Earl of Southampton might also have rallied to the call. His evidence for this is Fitzwilliam's exclusion from the council in 1536 along with Exeter; his attempts to cover up the first signs of Geoffrey Pole's crimes as well as those accusations levied against Margaret and his enthusiasm at Cromwell's fall some years later. His expulsion from the council probably had more to do with his support of Mary than any links to Exeter, while Lord Montague believed his removal was only effected to cover up the fact that

³⁷⁷ Mayer, T.F., 'A Diet for Henry VIII,' p. 313.

³⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 313.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 317.

³⁸⁰ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 828.

it was Exeter alone whom they wished to expel.³⁸¹ Furthermore, Fitzwilliam was the first to inform Cromwell of the gossip concerning Geoffrey in September 1538 and more than diligent in his investigation of it. The only proof that Mayer offers for his supposed cover up on Geoffrey's behalf, is that Fitzwilliam wrote to Cromwell that the only evidence 'came from an old woman, a midwife, and a young woman with a small baby.'³⁸² However what Fitzwilliam actually said, in the context of the letter, was that because Laurence Taylor had confessed the words attributed to him by Alice Patchet:

who bee the toue of them an old woman, and a midwife and the toodre
a yong woman haveng a child sowking on her brests. I think it not
mutch necessarie to deteigne, or molest them ferdre.³⁸³

Fitzwilliam's diligence in investigating the Poles is not surprising as he was a man who prided himself on his loyalty and service to the king.³⁸⁴ Furthermore, although he took pity on Geoffrey Pole in 1540³⁸⁵ he revealed a marked dislike for the Countess of Salisbury. Having interrogated her ruthlessly, he was unnecessarily insulting towards her during her confinement at his residence. On one occasion in March 1539, he described Reginald as a 'whoreson' to which Margaret responded 'with a wonderful sorowful countenance' that he was 'no whoreson, for she was both a good woman and true.'³⁸⁶ Moreover, Fitzwilliam had every reason to resent Margaret's wealth and there may indeed have been an element of self satisfaction, especially when he was appointed steward of all her lands. Fitzwilliam's mother, Lady Lucy Neville, was a daughter of John Neville, Marquis Montague, but due to the acquisitiveness of Margaret's father, and her uncle Richard, Duke of Gloucester, Fitzwilliam's family were deprived of Montague's estates to the benefit of the two dukes.³⁸⁷

³⁸¹ Geoffrey testified that Montague told him that 'att suche tyme as the lorde Marques was putt owt of the pryvey chamber the rest putt owt att the same tyme war putt owt to color the putting forthe of the lord Marques.' P.R.O. S.P.1/138, 217b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 804 (5).

³⁸² Mayer, T.F., 'A Diet for Henry VIII,' p. 325.

³⁸³ P.R.O. S.P.1/136, f. 205.

³⁸⁴ He had been a companion of Henry VIII from the age of ten, and from then on rose steadily in favour. By 1538 he held the offices of chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Lord High Admiral, Treasurer of the king's household and on 18 October 1537 was raised to the peerage as Earl of Southampton. *D.N.B.*, XIX (London, 1889) pp. 230-32.

³⁸⁵ He wrote to the king in order to try and prevent Geoffrey being sentenced to a spell in the Fleet prison after his attack on John Gunter. See below p. 319.

³⁸⁶ *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 520.

³⁸⁷ See above p. 15 and Appendix 1.

Mayer is, however, correct to draw our attention to the Poles' connections and thus their potential supporters. It becomes clear that, in addition to Chapuys, the Poles had a further connection to the Imperial court as they did to that of the French court. Elizabeth Darrell, friend of both Lord Montague and Geoffrey Pole, was the mistress and true love of Sir Thomas Wyatt English ambassador to the Imperial court. Elizabeth did not shrink from repeating snippets of information passed on to her by Wyatt. Jerome Ragland confirmed that in the summer of 1538 Elizabeth told him about a poison Wyatt had discovered in Spain, and that he had asked Henry VIII if he should bring some to England, to which Henry had replied 'nay.'³⁸⁸ Indeed Edmund Bonner, Wyatt's enemy, took advantage of the tense and suspicious atmosphere to write letters of complaint from the Imperial court to Cromwell. One reported that Wyatt had instructed John Mason to make contact with Reginald.³⁸⁹ Although this was an attempt on Wyatt's part to gain information 'that were worthe the kynges knowledge,'³⁹⁰ Bonner naturally preferred to infer a more sinister intention. Although Cromwell was confident of Wyatt's innocence, after the minister's fall these charges were again raised against Wyatt resulting in a short spell in the Tower to which he was conducted in January 1541.³⁹¹

Both Sir John Wallop and his brother Oliver had connections with the Pole family. One of the ambassadors to Paris in 1532, Sir John also received the lieutenancy of Calais in 1530. He certainly made a good impression on Francis I, whose favour he enjoyed.³⁹² He also reaped the benefits of Henry VIII's favour, receiving land and manors in Somerset and Devon, augmenting his already substantial inheritance in Hampshire.³⁹³ Sir John had married as his first wife Elizabeth, widow of the eighth Earl of Kildare and a kinswoman of the Poles. Daughter of Oliver St John, Elizabeth was Sir Richard Pole's first cousin.³⁹⁴ *It emerged from the evidence of 1538, that it*

³⁸⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 34b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 702. Wyatt enjoyed 25 days leave from the Imperial court in the summer of 1538 and was in England from May 24 to June 20. He may have told Darell about the poison during this visit.

³⁸⁹ Muir, K., *Life and Letters of Sir Thomas Wyatt* (Liverpool, 1963) p. 83.

³⁹⁰ Thomson, P., *Sir Thomas Wyatt and His Background* (London 1964) p. 63.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

³⁹² *State Papers Henry VIII*, VIII, 415, fn. 1.

³⁹³ *D.N.B.*, LIX, (London, 1899) pp. 152-55.

³⁹⁴ See Appendix 5.

was to Wallop that Lord Montague had sent his dependant Thomas Nanfant, to learn the French tongue. Fortunately for Wallop, what the government did not discover was a letter written by Cardinal Ridolfo Pio Carpi, Bishop of Faenza, and papal legate to France to Signor Ambrogio the Papal secretary in March 1537 describing Wallop as 'a great friend of the Legate (Reginald).'³⁹⁵ Certainly the fact that all the government's plans to kidnap or assassinate Reginald were revealed to the Cardinal, seriously unnerved the king who must have wondered just where Reginald's help was coming from. Furthermore, Wallop had been in France as ambassador during Geoffrey Pole's surreptitious visit in 1532 and by 1538, his brother Oliver had been appointed constable of the Countess of Salisbury's castle at Christchurch, Hampshire. Significantly Sir John was arrested in 1541 at almost the same time as Wyatt due, as Chapuys put it 'to his having said something in favour of Pope Paul.'³⁹⁶ Although the charges are not specific, it appears that his treasons were manifest in certain letters he had written to Richard Pate. During his examination before the king and Privy Council, these letters were presented to him at which 'he cried for mercy, knowleaging his offences' but declared that, 'the same never passed uppon any yvel mynde or malicious purpose, but only uppon wilfulnes and ultraquidance.'³⁹⁷ Fortunately for Wallop, Henry accepted that he was genuinely repentant and, like Wyatt, he was eventually pardoned.

In the mid 1530s Cromwell was also experiencing problems in Calais with another potential Pole ally, Lord Lisle, and again Calais was an area in which the Countess of Salisbury held properties. Cromwell was concerned that Calais under the conservative Lisles was a potential weak spot and thus a danger 'if either French or Imperial forces were placed at the Pope's command against Henry VIII.'³⁹⁸ Indeed Lisle was arrested in 1540 under suspicion of having communicated with Reginald in order to deliver Calais up to him.³⁹⁹ These fears were exacerbated by Cranmer's constant complaints that Lisle was hindering the furtherance of the Reformation in Calais.⁴⁰⁰ Cromwell's attempts to mediate between the two proved useless and by

³⁹⁵ *L&P*, XII (i) no. 705.

³⁹⁶ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1538-42, no. 155.

³⁹⁷ *State Papers Henry VIII*, VIII, 545.

³⁹⁸ Slavin, A.J., 'Cromwell, Cranmer and Lord Lisle: a study in the politics of reform.' *Albion*, IX (1977) 319.

³⁹⁹ *L.L.*, VI, 118.

⁴⁰⁰ Slavin, A.J., *Op.cit.*, p. 323.

1537 resulted in a breakdown of relations between the Lord Deputy and Cromwell himself. Certainly Lisle's conservative leanings, kinship to the Poles and strategic office, would again raise doubts as to his loyalty if the Pole family took action against the king.

Another name to conjure with is that of William, Lord Sandys. He had enjoyed a long connection with the Pole family. A colleague and distant kinsman of Sir Richard Pole's,⁴⁰¹ he bound himself in a recognizance for Richard to fulfil his duties as constable of Harlech Castle in 1504.⁴⁰² Accused by Sir Henry Owen of being involved in a 'great Confederacy' with Exeter, Montague and Delaware,⁴⁰³ he had been appointed constable of Christchurch Castle in 1499 for life⁴⁰⁴ and presumably held it for some years during Margaret's possession before relinquishing it possibly due to ill health.⁴⁰⁵ A religious conservative, he was described by Chapuys in 1535 as 'one of the most experienced soldiers of this kingdom.'⁴⁰⁶ By the 1530s, disgusted with the goings on at court he quietly withdrew. However his conservatism was known and when one of his servants criticised a sermon by Hugh Latimer, the king was seriously offended.⁴⁰⁷ In addition in August 1537, Lord Lisle apparently tried to block an investigation by John Butler, Commissary at Calais, into Lord Sandys' activities.⁴⁰⁸ Moreover his sister Edith, had been Lord Darcy's first wife. Sir Thomas Denys, Margaret's steward of Pyworthy in Devon, was another possible danger man. Hailing from a local Devonshire family, Denys was recorder of Exeter and had been pricked sheriff five times.⁴⁰⁹ In 1537 however he was accused by Thomas Cromwell of hanging at the Courtnays' sleeve,⁴¹⁰ while in the same year it was discovered that he

401 See Appendix 6.

402 See above pp. 69.

403 P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 27b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 829, and see above p. 256.

404 Fritze, R.H., 'Faith and Faction,' p. 81.

405 Fritze describes the 1530s as a period of deteriorating health for Sandys. However, he also states that Sandys feigned ill health as an excuse to stay away from court. *Ibid.*, pp. 82, 117.

406 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

407 *Ibid.*, 117.

408 Slavin, A.J., *Op.cit.*, p. 324.

409 Youings, J.A., 'The Council of the West,' pp. 46, 48.

410 Fletcher, A., *Tudor Rebellions* (Essex, 1983) p. 53.

had assisted a fellow J.P to conceal a robbery carried out by a member of the J.P's own family.⁴¹¹

Muriel St Clare Byrne has described the fall of the Poles and Courtenays as 'one of the most violent and merciless political coups of the reign.'⁴¹² What in fact is surprising, is that it was not more of a blood bath than it was. Of those mentioned above none were questioned or appear to have been molested in any way, nor were they the only ones. John Stokesley, Bishop of London was also Rector of Brightstone, Isle of Wight,⁴¹³ three quarters of which manor was held by Margaret. He was also a known friend of Sir Geoffrey Pole having given him the keepership of a park and lent him money.⁴¹⁴ Implicated in the evidence against the Poles, ⁴¹⁵ he had also written a letter to Lord Lisle about which Cromwell was preparing to question John Dove of the Calais Chapter House in 1538. Apparently Stokesley ended the letter with the possibly treasonous wish 'that all should not perish there as it is lost here.'⁴¹⁶ Moreover his previous career had involved accusations of witchcraft and adultery, culminating in the scandalous accusation of a sexual affair with Anne Colte Abbess of Wherwell, resulting in her pregnancy.⁴¹⁷ As a result her resignation was secured in September 1535.⁴¹⁸ Although a supporter of the divorce, Stokesley opposed any kind of doctrinal change which brought him into opposition against the king and Cromwell. Accepting the Royal Supremacy only with the proviso that safeguarded 'the laws of the church of Christ,' Stokesley was the subject of several proceedings, and in 1535 he had to send the king a copy of one of his sermons. Indeed in 1535 a 'preaching war' broke out at St Paul's Cross between the preachers of Cranmer, Latimer and Cromwell and those of Stokesley which resulted in the understandable confusion of the citizenry.⁴¹⁹ In fact 'At least twelve of Stokesley's chosen preachers came before the

411 Youings, J.A., *Opcit.*, p. 46.

412 *L.L.*, V, 322.

413 Fritze, R.H., *Op.cit.*, p. 106.

414 *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 803.

415 Geoffrey testified that Stokesley complained to him that Cromwell and then the Bishop of Rochester had appointed heretics to preach at St Paul's Cross. *ibid.*, no. 695 (2).

416 *Ibid.*, no. 248; Slavin, A.J., *Op.cit.*, p. 332.

417 Fritze, R.H., *Op.cit.*, p. 106.

418 *Ibid.*, p. 108.

419 Brigden, S., 'Popular Disturbance and the Fall of Thomas Cromwell and the Reformers, 1539-1540' *The Historical Journal*, XXIV, (1981) 258.

authorities for open resistance to the new ways and royal policies.⁴²⁰ In 1538 Praemunire charges were initiated against him, but having confessed he was pardoned.⁴²¹ Despite such a track record, Stokesley escaped unscathed from the débâcle, he was not even questioned, although it had provided the perfect opportunity for Cromwell to rid himself of an enemy.

Cromwell was given a similar opportunity regarding Sir William Paulet. Comptroller of the king's household, steward of Winchester diocese and one of the most influential men in the locality, he had worked satisfactorily with Cromwell in the past, actively participating in the dissolution of the monasteries and the furtherance of the reformation in Hampshire.⁴²² Unfortunately Sir William's loose tongued younger brother George, glaringly revealed the Paulet family's true feelings for the lord Privy Seal in a series of insulting remarks that found their way back to Cromwell. As a result, George was committed to the Tower in May 1538, prompting Sir William to dash off a letter to Cromwell pleading for George's release and promising that 'from hensfurth he will no more offend you nor oder noble man with word or ded.'⁴²³ George was eventually released, and served on the commission of the peace of 9 July 1538.⁴²⁴ Nevertheless, Sir William's implication in the Helyar affair coming to Cromwell's attention at roughly the same time as his brother's faux pas was most unfortunate.⁴²⁵ Nevertheless, Paulet survived and took every opportunity to demonstrate his loyalty to Henry VIII. Involved in the interrogation of Geoffrey Pole, he was among those who informed Geoffrey he could avoid torture by revealing all he knew.⁴²⁶ Compromised by Geoffrey Pole's testimony,⁴²⁷ George, Earl of Huntingdon realised the dangerous position he was in. As a result he fell abjectly under the tutelage of Cromwell. By March 1539 Cromwell was beginning to exact payment for

⁴²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

⁴²¹ *D.N.B.*, LIV (London, 1898) 404.

⁴²² Fritze, R.H., 'Faith and Faction,' p. 152.

⁴²³ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

⁴²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁴²⁵ See above p. 245.

⁴²⁶ See above p. 255.

⁴²⁷ Geoffrey claimed that both Huntingdon and Montague, communing together, complained about what was done in parliament, that only knaves and heretics agreed with what was done there out of fear. P.R.O. S.P.1/138, f. 218b; L&P, XIII (ii) no. 804 (6).

his services by 'requesting' the reversion of the rape of Hastings. Huntingdon promised to do all he could to gratify Cromwell, 'for I shall never forget the good counsel you gave me between Mortlake and Wandsworth as you rode towards London before Christmas.'⁴²⁸

Mrs Roper and Mrs Clement, the daughter and foster daughter of Sir Thomas More, were also mentioned by Sir Geoffrey, and had apparently complained about the dissolution of the monasteries while John Babham knew that Holland had spoken with Throckmorton. Nevertheless, none apparently suffered any investigation, in fact Babham continued to sit as a J.P. for Buckinghamshire. Despite evidence which suggested that they tried to protect both Geoffrey and his mother, John Gunter and Richard Cotton respectively, also escaped the débâcle. Although Gunter received no more than a severe telling off from Southampton, Cotton was eventually granted the manor of Warblington in 1551. William Friend, school master of Chichester Prebendal school and William Langley,⁴²⁹ sub-deacon and vicar of St Peter's the Great Chichester, also lived to preach another day.

This brings us finally to Thomas West, ninth Baron Delaware, who of all the other survivors came closest to losing his head. Born in Hampshire, from 1513 he resided mostly at Halnaker in Sussex. An associate of both the Poles and Lord Lisle, his name was put forward along with Lord Montague's to stand proxy for Lisle in the Lords in 1536.⁴³⁰ He was on friendly terms with both Pole brothers, who were accustomed to visiting him at Halnaker. In the evidence gathered against the Poles, Delaware had been compromised for his conservative religious beliefs and his familiarity with the Marquis of Exeter.⁴³¹ After understandably ordering an investigation, Henry VIII received a letter from the Lords of the council reporting that they could find 'as yet no sufficient ground to commit him to the Tower,' and begged pardon, 'for not proceeding more summarily, as it would touch the King's honour if he were imprisoned on a weak ground.'⁴³² Henry however, considered the ground not so

⁴²⁸ *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 513. Huntingdon was unable to gratify Cromwell immediately, because he had settled his inheritance upon his son Francis and Lord Montague, with bonds of £5000 to maintain the same until his debts were paid. Consequently after Montague's arrest and attainder the bonds stood to the king's use so Huntingdon was powerless to act unless the king discharged him of them.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid.*, XIII (ii) no. 695 (2).

⁴³⁰ *L.L.*, III, 387, no. 705.

⁴³¹ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, ff. 27b, f. 28b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 829 (II, III).

⁴³² *Ibid.*, item 968.

weak, and Delaware went to the Tower on 2 December, the day of Montague's trial.⁴³³ On 15 December William Ernley, a J.P., of Sussex and a colleague of both Delaware and Geoffrey Pole, wrote to John Hyberdyn Cromwell's servant, reporting the sayings of a priest Sir Simon Fowler. According to Fowler, the reason Delaware was sent to the Tower was because 'he wold not be ye foreman of ye quest to my lord Montagew.'⁴³⁴ Perhaps Delaware had shown some reluctance to sit on the panel of peers. Nevertheless, by 21 December Husee was able to inform Lisle that Delaware had been discharged.⁴³⁵ However, the recognizances required of him were substantial, £3,000 'for his personal appearance before the King and Council when called on, within a year of date.'⁴³⁶ In addition he had to relinquish Halnaker to the crown receiving in exchange the nunnery of Wherwell, Hampshire.⁴³⁷

Some of the above mentioned must have been on tenterhooks during the winter of 1538 and felt their heads lose on their shoulders. Certainly the evidence would have allowed for the troublesome Stokesley's removal, and John Babham, while the government could have made life difficult for Thomas More's daughters. Yet it chose not to, restricting itself to those Henry considered to be the most dangerous and those, like Collins, Croftes and Holland who had committed blatant treason. The government probably believed, and quite rightly, that the executions would provide sufficient warning should any other southern notable suffer an attack of wavering loyalty. One only has to note the behaviour of men like Sir William Paulet and Sir Thomas Denys who fell over themselves to prove *their loyalty to the king*. Also, by restricting punitive action to Reginald's immediate family and their closest associates, it sent a clear message to anyone else who might be considering flight overseas. Anyone who cared for their family's safety would certainly now think twice. Moreover, Höllger has suggested that the reason Delaware obtained a pardon was because 'the Government wanted to avoid unrest among the nobility,'⁴³⁸ and this is

⁴³³ *L.L.*, V, 320, no. 1299.

⁴³⁴ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 1062.

⁴³⁵ *L.L.*, V, 343, no. 1316.

⁴³⁶ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 1117. Standing surety for the recognizance were the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, the Earl of Sussex, Sir John Dudley, Sir Owen West, Sir William Gownynge, George Blunt and John Guldyyford.

⁴³⁷ Harris, B.J., 'Women and Politics in Early Tudor England,' p. 273; *D.N.B.*, LX (London, 1899) p. 343.

⁴³⁸ Höllger, C., 'Reginald Pole and the Legations of 1537 and 1539,' p. 110.

probably true. If Henry had hauled in everyone against whom evidence pointed, he might have provoked the very disturbances he was trying to prevent. The resultant shift in the local power distribution would also have caused uncertainty, a consequence which would have gone against Henry's attempts to create stability and a united front in the face of a prospective invasion.

Henry VIII was aware that the Poles were not enthusiastic supporters of his regime, and possessed the means to threaten his position. It will now be shown that his fears, at least where Montague and Geoffrey are concerned, were well founded. The two brothers were quite prepared to use those means against the king, and were certainly not the innocents that Scarisbrick and other historians would have us believe.⁴³⁹ Lord Montague and his brother Geoffrey had definitely committed treason by keeping the Imperial ambassador Chapuys informed of what was going on at court. This had begun as early as 1534 when Montague appraised Chapuys of the progress of the proposed interview between England and Germany.⁴⁴⁰ In the same year Geoffrey, who had to be dissuaded by Chapuys from visiting him quite so frequently, implored the ambassador to encourage Charles V to invade England explaining, 'how very easy the conquest of this kingdom would be, and that the inhabitants are only waiting for a signal.'⁴⁴¹ Gertrude, Marchioness of Exeter also communed with Chapuys, and in November 1535, sent to him begging him to inform Charles V of Henry VIII's threats against Catherine and Mary, praying Charles, 'to have pity upon the ladies, and for the honour of God and the bond of kin to find a remedy.'⁴⁴² In order to impress the urgency of the situation, Gertrude then came in person to Chapuys, the perilous position she knew she was in illustrated by her use of a disguise.⁴⁴³ Although Henry VIII was unaware of these transgressions, he did suspect, and quite rightly, that information was being betrayed to Chapuys. In January 1539 the ambassador informed Charles V, that Cromwell had claimed that the marquis 'and his accomplices' had had intelligence with Chapuys:

⁴³⁹ Scarisbrick, J.J., *Henry VIII*, pp. 364-65. According to Scarisbrick, notwithstanding their own behaviour, the Poles were tarred with the same brush as Reginald, and he describes Lord Montague's execution as judicial murder.

⁴⁴⁰ *L&P*, VII, no. 957.

⁴⁴¹ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1534-35, p. 325, no. 109.

⁴⁴² *L&P*, IX, no. 776.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, item 861.

for it had been found several times that your Majesty was informed beforehand of their intentions; and also they must have had intelligence with some other ambassadors or agents of your Majesty and with cardinal Pole, and it could not but be that their intrigues were known.⁴⁴⁴

In 1536, while dining with Chapuys and complaining of the bad state of the realm, Montague eagerly kept Chapuys up to date with the latest instalment on the state of the Boleyn marriage.⁴⁴⁵ In fact the Poles joined enthusiastically in the conspiracy to oust Anne Boleyn. On 25 April Sir Nicholas Carewe and others of the king's chamber 'sent word to the Princess to take courage, for very shortly her rival would be dismissed,' while Geoffrey Pole revealed that John Stokesley, Bishop of London, had been asked by a courtier whether it was possible for the king to abandon Anne.⁴⁴⁶ The Poles, the Marquis of Exeter, Sir Nicholas Carewe and others who supported Mary, found an unlikely ally in Thomas Cromwell himself who, also wishing Anne's removal, joined their ranks in April 1536. His allegiance lasted only until Anne's fall was completed, then he turned his attention towards neutralising his former co-horts. He achieved this by encouraging Mary's hopes of restoration, while ensuring that nothing was done to accomplish it. As a result, her supporters became more outspoken in their support of her rights, until they learned with horror that Anne's removal did not signal a return to Rome nor to Mary's restoration.⁴⁴⁷ Thus they stood accused of attempting to restore Mary to the succession⁴⁴⁸ while Mary found herself facing the death penalty, until she dramatically capitulated in June. Cromwell's behaviour understandably earned him even more animosity from the conservatives at court, thus he sensibly sought to consolidate his victory by gaining control over the Privy Chamber. The places left vacant by Anne's supposed lovers were filled by Cromwell's supporters.⁴⁴⁹ Indeed the executions of Sir Edward Neville and Sir Nicholas Carewe might be viewed partly as the tail end of this faction fight. Neville's threat to Cromwell existed in his membership of the Privy Chamber, a position he had

⁴⁴⁴ Ibid., XIV (i) no. 37.

⁴⁴⁵ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1536-38, no. 43. Also present were Henry Grey, Marquis of Dorset, the dowager Countess of Kildare, probably Dorset's sister Lady Elizabeth Grey and several others not named.

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 106, no. 47.

⁴⁴⁷ Ives, E.W., *Faction in Tudor England* (London, 1989) p. 18.

⁴⁴⁸ Starkey, D.R., *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, p. 111.

⁴⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 112-13.

held since 1516, while Carewe, also a member of the Privy Chamber and an esquire of the body since 1514, had been one of Henry VIII's greatest favourites.⁴⁵⁰ For Cromwell to control the Privy Chamber, the final removal of these two conservatives would be necessary. As we have seen, the evidence against Edward Neville was sparse, while that against Carewe is even more mysterious. At his trial on 14 February 1539, the charges against him concerned his friendship and correspondence with Exeter, and his amazement that 'the indictment against the lord Marquis was so secretly handled and for what purpose, for the like was never seen.'⁴⁵¹

It is also possible that either Montague or Geoffrey kept Chapuys well informed about the progress of the Pilgrimage of Grace. These bulletins could have been crucial, for if Chapuys learned that the Pilgrims had won an overwhelming success, it might just have been enough to persuade Charles V to take action. Certainly 'one of the principal gentlemen in the King's army' incorrectly told Chapuys that one of the Pilgrims' demands required that:

the property of the Duke of Buckingham and others, which has been taken by the King and his ministers, may be restored to the lawful heirs.⁴⁵²

The Misses Dodds feel that this suggests the informant might have been one of the Poles as the Northern rebels had no great interest in the Duke of Buckingham's heir. They believe the Poles may have drawn up their own list of grievances and shown them to Chapuys before sending them north to Aske.⁴⁵³ This seems unlikely as the risk of interception would have been far too great and the Poles had no known connection to Aske. A more reasonable explanation, is that the Poles could have discussed these demands either with Lord Hussey, who had once served as Mary's Lord Chamberlain, or with Lord Darcy before his return to the North in 1536. Both Lord Hussey and Lord Darcy had had treasonous communications with Chapuys as early as 1534 when Darcy invited the Emperor to invade England. Indeed he wished to obtain licence to go home to Templehurst in Yorkshire so that; 'With the assistance

⁴⁵⁰ *D.N.B.*, XL (London, 1894) p. 250; IX (London, 1887) 56.

⁴⁵¹ *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 290; *D.K.R.*, 3, p. 258.

⁴⁵² *L&P*, XI, no. 1143.

⁴⁵³ Dodds, M.H., and R., *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, I, 332.

of your majesty he would raise the banner of the Crucifix together with yours.⁴⁵⁴ Moreover, after his departure and before the Pilgrimage had broken out, the Poles could easily have sent verbal messages to Darcy via the lawyer Thomas Grice. Grice had served Darcy since 1492,⁴⁵⁵ he was also by 1528 the clerk of Margaret's court at Cottingham.⁴⁵⁶ After forty years of faithful service, he was willing and able to take the risks Darcy required. Searching through Darcy's correspondence Cromwell's protégé, Richard Pollard, commented that Grice 'was a great doer among the commons in the insurrection.'⁴⁵⁷

It must be considered whether it is possible to justify the destruction of these two great houses. Certainly both Henry VIII and Cromwell have suffered criticism over it. A cursory glance does indeed suggest that a harmless group of friends were eliminated for occasionally grumbling about the state of the realm and having royal blood in their veins. With hindsight of course, we know that England was never in any danger of invasion. Neither Charles V nor Francis I had any intention of answering Reginald's call to arms, while the Pope himself failed to give Reginald any practical or material assistance. The ease with which the families were removed, the lack of protest or outcry, also reveals that they probably would not have enjoyed the support their extensive contacts suggested. Moreover, should an invading force have landed, English xenophobia would undoubtedly have worked in Henry's favour, while a question mark must forever hang over the families' actions in that instance. The evidence presented above has not sought to prove that the Poles and Courtenay's were definitely conspiring against the crown, or that they ever posed a serious danger to Henry. It has attempted to show that they possessed the potential to do so and faced with such facts, Henry VIII could not have taken any other action. *He could not have known that England was in no danger from invasion, or that the families' support network was not as strong as it appeared. Indeed, at Margaret's removal to Cowdray, Fitzwilliam felt it necessary to instruct several carefully chosen individuals:*

who be all gentlemen and neighbours there with other the kings
servants and faithful subjects to have vigilant eye to the same, that if

⁴⁵⁴ *L&P*, VII, 467, no. 1206.

⁴⁵⁵ Ives, E.W., *The Common Lawyers of Pre-Reformation England*, p. 13.

⁴⁵⁶ *L&P*, IV (ii) no. 4653.

⁴⁵⁷ Ives, E.W., *Op.cit.*, p. 15.

any stirring or disorder chance or befall, the same by their good means, powers and discretions may be stayed and put in quietness.⁴⁵⁸

The evidence of Montague's and Geoffrey Pole's disaffection with Henry's regime was overwhelming, while the Countess of Salisbury's views were well known. Among the top five wealthiest peers in the country, her lands lay predominantly in the south and along the coast, areas vulnerable to invasion, while both her sons were competent military leaders. Close by lay the huge Courtenay estate headed by the Marquis of Exeter. The friendship between the two families, especially Exeter, Gertrude and Montague, was not an opportunistic, political relationship, but a deep and close friendship based on mutual affection. Höllger claims that Exeter was brought to account on 'flimsy evidence,' but was it? The 1530s, explains John Guy, was a time when, 'Not since Bosworth had the need for radical decisions and confidentiality in the Council been so pronounced.'⁴⁵⁹ Yet the marquis had apparently kept Montague informed of everything. In addition when the first signs of treason started to emerge with Holland's arrest, Exeter was immediately given the chance to talk. Henry was astute enough to know that his closeness to Montague meant he would know a great deal about the Poles' activities. The choice Exeter faced was simple; unquestioning loyalty to the king or to his friends. By choosing the latter over his king, he sealed his fate and from that moment on Henry VIII could never more be sure of him. Faced with such facts, the tense situation of 1538 and Reginald's openly treasonous behaviour abroad, Henry VIII would have been no less than negligent if he had let pass such transgressions. It was clear that the families had both the inclination and the means to threaten the security of his throne, and it is not surprising that they died for it.

⁴⁵⁸ B.L. Cotton. MS. Appendix L, f. 78; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 835.

⁴⁵⁹ Guy, J., *Tudor England*, p. 160.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE EXECUTION OF THE COUNTESS OF SALISBURY AND THE AFTERMATH OF 1538.

The Countess of Salisbury was to survive for three more years after the débâcle of 1538. Although honourably incarcerated at Cowdray to begin with, she enjoyed little kindness from her gaoler. No doubt Fitzwilliam's aversion was exacerbated by Margaret's propensity for continual complaint. Although he appointed a gentleman to do 'nothing but attend on her,' she was bitterly upset that neither he nor his wife would speak with her on their return to Cowdray. Having forced himself to do so, Fitzwilliam pledged that he would have no more conversations with her while he was at Cowdray. His wife also kept her distance, refusing to remain in the house alone while Margaret was there. As a result Fitzwilliam was forced to take her with him while he carried out his royal duties!¹ He resented her presence in his household, and wrote to Cromwell begging him 'to rid me of her company, for she is both chargeable and troubleth my mind.'² She was eventually removed to the Tower by 20 November 1539 at the latest.³

Although she realised early in the proceedings that both her sons stood in a *perilous* position, she seems to have been totally unprepared for her own arrest. In September of 1538 she made a new will, possibly in the belief that Geoffrey's fate was sealed. At about the same time she dictated a letter to Lord Montague revealing her knowledge of the seriousness of his situation. As it is both the last known letter she wrote and the only extant letter from herself to Lord Montague, it warrants quotation in full:

Son Montague I send you hertely goddes Blessing and myne. This is the gretist gift that I can send you for to desire god of his helpe wich I perceave is great need to pray for. And as to the case as I ame enformid, that you stand in Myne advise is to enser you to god principally, and upon that ground so to order you both in word and deed to sarve your prince not disobeyeng goddys comandments as far

¹ *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 573.

² *Ibid.*, no. 520.

³ *Ibid.*, (ii) no. 554.

as your power and life woll serve you, ffor of this mynd [am I] this [dooch....] I doe not doubtte but ye shall please god and doo your Prince right true service to the confu [rt] of us all and that you may doo this shall my daylie prayer to almightie god to be you.⁴

When Fitzwilliam, however, informed her on 14 November that she was to be removed from Warblington and held in detention at Cowdray 'she seemeth therat to be somew[hat] appauled.'⁵ That she still hoped for a reprieve is clear from her conversation with Fitzwilliam at Cowdray in March 1539 when, proclaiming that Reginald was 'an ill man to behave so to the King who had been so good to him,' she hoped that 'the King would not impute his heinous offence to her.'⁶ Neither age nor the death of one son and disgrace of another had broken her, she still wanted to live. Unfortunately her hopes were dashed when her attainder passed through Parliament in May 1539,⁷ and in 1540 she, along with her grandson Henry Pole, was specifically exempted from the king's general pardon.⁸ Although the attainder included 52 other names, Margaret and one other person only, Hugh Vaughan of Margaret's manor of Welsh Bicknor, Monmouth, were accused of having:

trayterously confederate themselves to and withe the saide false and abhominable trayters henrye poole late lorde montacute and Reignold poole sonnes unto the saide countes knowinge them to be false trayters and co[mm]en Enemyes unto your maiestie and this your realme.

In addition to being further accused of having traitorously aided, maintained, abetted and comforted Montague and Reginald in their 'false and horrible treasons,' the act also declared that Margaret and Vaughan had:

comytted and p[er]petrated div[er]se and sundrie other detestable and abhominable treasons to the moste fearfull p[er]il and daunger of the destruction of your most royall p[er]son and to the utter losse disherison and desolacon of thys your Realme.⁹

⁴ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, f. 131. Unfortunately, the second page is extremely faded, and some words are still illegible even under ultra violet light.

⁵ B.L. Cotton. MS. Appendix L, f. 77b; *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 835

⁶ *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 520.

⁷ John Worth to Lord Lisle. *L.L.*, V, 481, no. 1419.

⁸ *L&P*, XV, no. 498 (II, cap. 49) p. 217.

⁹ P.R.O. C.65/147, m. 22.

Not surprisingly, the government did not detail these sundry other detestable and abominable treasons. Margaret's attainder and that of Gertrude attracted comment abroad, as Marillac made sure Francis I and the French court were kept up to date¹⁰ while Aguilar dashed off a report to Charles V on 20 July. Reginald took advantage of the situation to announce dramatically to Cardinal Contarini that Margaret had been condemned, not to death but 'to eternal life.' Nevertheless Reginald's genuine outrage, enhanced by the emperor's inactivity, is clear; not only had this 'western Turk' condemned his mother 'a woman of seventy' but also Montague's son 'the remaining hope of our race.'¹¹ This tyranny which began with priests, then extended to nobles, has now 'come to women and innocent children.'¹² In the document which proclaims itself to be 'A Summary declaration of the faith, uses and observations in England,' an explanation of the recent executions was given:

The King never caused any man to be put to death by absolute authority, but by ordinary process. No one has been condemned but by twelve of his peers, and no lord without the sentence of 24 lords at least.¹³

Obviously this cannot be said regarding Margaret and Gertrude's condemnation nor the continued imprisonment of Margaret's grandson and Edward Courtenay. They were accorded no trial while the actual evidence against Margaret amounted to very little. Moreover, nothing at all was put forward against the two children who were not even included in the act of attainder. Clearly the crown had no legal pretext for keeping them prisoners.¹⁴ What must have been extremely galling for Margaret was the release and pardon of the Marchioness of Exeter on 21 December 1539,¹⁵ a woman who had certainly committed treason. In February 1540 Gertrude received £100 'by way of his grace's reward,'¹⁶ and on 22 March she was granted an annuity of

¹⁰ *L&P*, XIV (i) nos. 988, 989, 1091.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, (ii) no. 212.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*, (i) no. 402.

¹⁴ The government did try to find that pretext however when they questioned John Collins regarding any involvement of Montague's son in the burning of Geoffrey's letters at Lordington. See above pp. 262-63.

¹⁵ *L&P*, XIV (ii) no. 780 (32).

¹⁶ B.L. Arundel MS., 97, f. 116b.

£163 15s 11d out of her late husband's lands in Devon and Essex.¹⁷ Just why she was so generously treated we can never be sure. She was certainly an engaging woman who was nearly thirty years younger than Margaret. Moreover, unlike Margaret, she had mastered the art of grovelling successfully before the king.¹⁸ Whether it is in order to cast a sinister light upon her reward, it is impossible to say. Certainly, if she had finally been induced to provide any useful evidence against Margaret, it would have been shouted from the roof tops by the government. Consequently, in this instance it appears that Henry's quest for revenge did play a part. Such a distinct difference between the way Margaret and Henry were treated compared to Gertrude and Edward sent a clear message to Reginald; they were being persecuted because they were his relatives. Thus Marillac wrote to Francis I in July 1540 that Edward Courtenay:

is more at large than he was, and has a preceptor to teach him lessons; a thing which is not done towards the little nephew of Cardinal Pole, who is poorly and strictly kept and not desired to know anything.¹⁹

So while Gertrude walked to freedom, the aged countess ended her days as her father and brother had done, within the walls of the Tower. Nevertheless, Henry VIII provided extremely well for his prisoners paying £13 6s 8d a month for the diets of Margaret and the two children. Moreover Margaret was allowed a waiting woman to attend upon her, who was paid 18d a week.²⁰ However the cold eventually gave Margaret cause to complain, and in the autumn of 1539 Thomas Phillips informed Cromwell that 'the Lady Sallysbury maketh great moan for that she wanteth necessary apparel both for to change and also to keep her warm.'²¹ It is not known whether Margaret's request was immediately granted, but in March 1541 the queen's own tailor Scutte was paid £11 16s 4d as reimbursement 'for certain apparel by him bought and made for Margaret Poole, late countess of Salisbury,'²² and again in April 1541 66s 8d

¹⁷ *L&P*, XV, no. 436.

¹⁸ As she did when her involvement with the Nun of Kent came to light. Neame, A., *The Holy Maid of Kent*, pp. 273-75.

¹⁹ *L&P*, XVI, no. 1011.

²⁰ B.L. Arundel MS., 97, f. 186.

²¹ *L&P*, XIII (ii) no. 1176. Although there is no date on the document, the marchioness is included as a prisoner while one of her waiting ladies is described as having been with her a whole year.

²² *L&P*, XVI no. 1489, f. 185b.

was spent on necessaries for her.²³ Indeed, the king ordered a number of well-appointed garments and footwear for her on 1 March 1541 and the presence of four pairs of shoes in the order might suggest that she was allowed some little freedom to walk about.²⁴

As previously noted, Henry VIII had spent a considerable sum on Margaret's new clothes, yet she was to die only two months after the order was placed. This would suggest that the decision to order her execution was a spontaneous rather than a pre-meditated one. On 8 January John Babham, late steward of Margaret's household, was examined before the Privy Council. Unfortunately no more details are given, but just over a week later Sir Thomas Wyatt was arrested on 17 January under suspicion of having had 'intelligence with the King's traitor Pole.'²⁵ On 23 February Jerome Ragland and his wife Anne were also examined, 'touching the burning of certain letters after the apprehension of lord Montague.'²⁶ However, no action appears to have been taken against them. At about the same time, Sir John Wallop was arrested concerning letters he had written to Richard Pate. Pate had been the English ambassador at the Imperial court before defecting to the Pope who, in July 1541, provided him to the bishopric of Worcester.²⁷ Wallop was brought before the council some time before March 1541 and on 5 March, Babham was examined once again.²⁸ On the first day of the same month Margaret's new clothes had been ordered, so at this point it seems that the arrests of Wyatt and Wallop had not prompted Henry into taking any action against Margaret. However the examination of Babham on 8 January and the Raglands on 23 February tend to suggest that the government was searching for further evidence of contacts between the two ambassadors and Reginald. Moreover the identities of those questioned suggests that they were also investigating the possibility of Margaret's involvement. Babham had been her steward, and had a close relationship with the family, while Anne Ragland had been one of her waiting

²³ B.L. Arundel MS., 97, f. 186.

²⁴ 'a nyght gowne furred, a kyrtel of worsted, and a peticote furred, a nother gowne of the facon of a nyght gowne of saye lyned with saten of Cypres and faced with saten, a bonet and a frontlet, four payer of hose, four payer of shoys and one payer of slippis.' Nicolas, H., (ed.), *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England*, VII, 32-33 Henry VIII (London, 1837) 147.

²⁵ *L&P*, VI, no. 641.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 557.

²⁷ *D.N.B.*, XLIV (London, 1895) 11.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 596.

ladies. On the 22 March however, the plans for a rising in the North had been discovered and arrests were taking place.²⁹ Before the middle of May convictions were under way and on 20 May some of the northern rebels were confined in the Tower awaiting interrogation.³⁰ The full extent of the rising's potential would now be known. According to Chapuys there were between forty and fifty conspirators involved, 'nearly twelve of whom were gentlemen, men of substance and mature age, or priests holding benefices from the English Church,' complete with 'their ordinary servants and retainers to the number of upwards of 300.'³¹ Indeed, Chapuys considered that this rising posed more of a danger than the Pilgrimage of Grace:

because the people's indignation against the King has risen to a higher pitch since then, owing to the cruelties and exactions that followed the rebellion in the North.

Moreover the time of year was more favourable to warfare, while the opportunity allowed 'for men to assemble together in arms, for there was to be a great fair at Pontfret (Pontefract)-the town in which the last rising took place.'³² Although twenty five conspirators were captured, Marillac inferred that most escaped.³³ Certainly, the time was propitious for a rising as Henry had just sent troops to France, while the Scots were massing on the border in preparation for renewed border raids. Indeed, the rebels had hoped to gain the support of the King of Scotland in addition to as many people as possible and then:

denounce, and declare openly against, the King's bad government and tyranny, and slay all those who should raise in defence of the commonwealth.³⁴

One of those gentlemen implicated in this latest rising possessed the dreaded surname of Neville; Sir John Neville of Chevet, High Sheriff of Yorkshire in 1519, 1524 and

²⁹ Dickens, A.G., 'Sedition and Conspiracy in Yorkshire during the Later Years of Henry VIII' *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* XXXIV (1939) 393.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 394.

³¹ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1538-42, p. 321, no. 158.

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Dickens, A.G., *Op.cit.*, p. 385.

³⁴ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1538-42, p. 321, no. 158.

1528.³⁵ Of course Henry would not have forgotten that Margaret was also a Neville, a granddaughter of 'the kingmaker' himself. Moreover, the large involvement of priests may have reminded him once again of the prophecy that 'ther shallbe a battell of prelates and that the Kynge shalbe distroyed and ther shalbe never no kynges in Ynglond.'³⁶ In addition there was the prediction that:

thar is a religious man alyve in an ilond and is called the ded man and he shall come and kepe a parlament at the Towr and it shalbe called the parlament of peace.³⁷

Of course Reginald was still at large, and it appears that he might have earlier tried to organise his mother's escape from the Tower. In a letter to the Bishop of Lavaur, which unfortunately bears no date, Reginald wrote:

As to what you write of my affairs, both what was lovingly planned for my mother's release and about that friend of ours who procured this, who afterwards on the shameless demand made by the enemy's letters was kept in custody, although you relate that he has since been liberated.³⁸

In *Letters and Papers* the identity of this 'friend' is explained as Gregory Botolph, one time chaplain to Lord Lisle, whose defection to the Pope brought about Lisle's fall. Indeed Botolph was imprisoned at Diest at the instigation of the English ambassador in 1540, and in June of that year Reginald informed Cardinal Cervini that he was going to write to the Nuncio in the hope of obtaining Botolph's release.³⁹ Unfortunately we have no more evidence than this and cannot even be sure if Henry was aware of any rescue attempts. However, even without this knowledge, it seems that there was sufficient accumulation of incidents to cause Henry to finally snap. First came the arrests of his ambassadors involving the dreaded name of Reginald Pole, then another rising in the north prompted by animosity to the Royal Supremacy and finally Henry may have got wind of Reginald's plans to rescue his mother. Not

³⁵ Dickens, A.G., *Op.cit.*, p. 385.

³⁶ Jansen, S.L., *Political Protest and Prophecy under Henry VIII*, p. 33.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *L&P*, XVI, no. 403.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, XV, no. 1017 and Appendix 5.

much is known about those arrested over the northern rising, it is not known whether they mentioned Reginald or spoke of their support for him, but by this time Henry had most probably had enough. By executing Margaret, he would foil Reginald's rescue plans, and more importantly, hurt the cardinal just that little bit more. Moreover, if Henry had allowed Margaret to live in an attempt to restrain Reginald, it had not worked. Nothing Henry had perpetrated against Reginald's family had prevented the cardinal from acting according to his conscience. Moreover, Margaret's execution would serve as a punishment for the northerners, whose devotion to the old faith would be seen to have resulted in the death of Cardinal Pole's mother. In fact Marillac reported on 29 May that he had heard from a good source that, 'before St Johns tide, they reckon to empty the Tower of the prisoners now there for treason.'⁴⁰ A month later on 30 June he confirmed that before departing on his northern progress, Henry gave orders:

for the Tower to be cleared of prisoners, and, as he lately began by the execution of the countess of Salisbury such progress has since been made that in eight days all will be despatched, either by condemnation or absolution.⁴¹

Henry would have had no second thoughts about ordering Margaret's execution. He no longer had any affection left for her and would welcome the opportunity to rid himself of this expensive nuisance. Most importantly, she had already been attainted for the greatest crime of all; treason, for which Henry could have had her executed in 1538. The king's supreme self righteousness meant that he would have no qualms about it; her great age notwithstanding, the countess deserved to die.⁴²

That it was indeed something of a spur of the moment decision is revealed by the lack of a proper scaffold. Margaret was hustled out to a small block at 7 o'clock on the

⁴⁰ Ibid., no. 868.

⁴¹ Ibid., no. 941.

⁴² A month later another of the Pole's kinsmen Lord Leonard Grey son of Eleanor St John and Thomas, Marquis of Dorset, went to the block for aiding and abetting the escape of his nephew Gerald, eleventh Earl of Kildare. It was with Reginald that the young earl found refuge and the Cardinal generously arranged his education and settled an annuity of 300 crowns upon him. FitzGerald, B., *The Geraldines: An Experiment in Irish Government 1169-1601* (London, 1951) pp. 241-42. Among the accusations against Grey, was that he employed the services of a page who had been in Lord Montague's service for four or five years, and used him as a messenger during his treasonous intrigues. Moreover in 1538, as Deputy of Ireland, he reputedly left all the king's artillery in Galway ready to be put at the disposal of the Pope or the Spaniards should they invade 'as a report was that cardinal Pole with an army would land about that time.' *L&P*, XV, no. 830, pp. 398, 399; Ibid., XVI, no. 304 (iii).

morning of 27 May 1541. The only two contemporary accounts of the execution are from Marillac the French ambassador and Chapuys the Imperial ambassador, whose reports diverge over the number of people who witnessed it. According to Marillac, Margaret was 'beheaded in a corner of the Tower, in presence of so few people that until evening the truth was still doubted,'⁴³ while Chapuys claimed that 150 people including the Lord Mayor of London were present.⁴⁴ The fact that so few accounts survive and the news was somewhat slow to spread, may suggest that Marillac was correct. Although he was the first to find out, sending off a report only two days later, it was two weeks before Chapuys was able to send his report to the Queen of Hungary. On 22 June Francesco Contarini, Venetian ambassador with the emperor, could only write to the Signory, that it was said Margaret had been executed from a letter he had seen written at Antwerp on 13 June and it was not until 27 June that he could confirm it.⁴⁵ Moreover, if we are to believe Chapuys, Margaret was not told until the morning of her execution that she was to die, giving her little time to prepare. As with her arrest, she was understandably shocked. Chapuys wrote:

At first, when the sentence of death was made known to her, she found the thing very strange, not knowing of what crime she was accused, nor how she had been sentenced.⁴⁶

She was not even accorded a professional executioner, as the usual headsman had been sent north to deal with the executions of certain of the northern rebels. As a result Margaret was left to suffer at the hands of, 'a wretched and blundering youth who literally hacked her head and shoulders to pieces in the most pitiful manner.'⁴⁷ In fact the whole execution gives the appearance of having been rushed with the main concern being to get it over with as quickly as possible. Indeed, Chapuys felt constrained to describe it as 'very strange.' However, the covert manner

⁴³ *Ibid.*, XVI, no. 868.

⁴⁴ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1538-42, no. 166.

⁴⁵ *C.S.P.*, Venetian, 1534-54, nos. 265, 267.

⁴⁶ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1538-42, no. 166.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* There is a story originating from 'a person of great quality' who told Lord Herbert of Cherbury that Margaret refused to lay her head on the block declaring: 'So should Traitors do, and I am none: neither did it serve that the Executioner told her it was the fashion; so turning her grey head every which way, shee bid him, if he would have her head, to get it as he could: So that he was constrained to fetch it off slovenly.' *Life and Reign of King Henry VIII*, (1649) p. 468, cited in *Complete Peerage*, XI, 402. As the editor of the *Peerage* correctly notes, this tale was probably a later invention to explain Margaret's appalling end.

in which it was conducted was probably to ensure that the spectacle of an old lady's execution was avoided. Indeed, both Marillac and Chapuys commented on her advanced age, Marillac describing her as 80 years old and Chapuys estimating her to be nearly 90. She was in fact 67 years old, three months from her 68th birthday and, by Tudor standards, very elderly. Both ambassadors were shocked and at a loss to explain the necessity of her execution. Marillac found it hard to believe:

as she had been long prisoner, was of noble lineage, above 80 years old, and had been punished by the loss of one son and banishment of the other, and the total ruin of her house.⁴⁸

Chapuys wrote in sorrow and disgust that:

there was no need or haste to bring so ignominious a death upon her, considering that as she was then nearly ninety years old, she could not in the ordinary course of nature live long.⁴⁹

Nevertheless, despite the suddenness of the execution Margaret, after her initial shock, composed herself and conducted herself with characteristic courage and dignity. After walking to the small block, she commended her soul to God and asked those present to pray for the royal family. Her love for Mary had not diminished during their years of separation, and the sufferings Margaret had undergone partly on her behalf. Of all the royal family, it was to Mary that she wished to be commended most of all, sending her blessing and begging for hers in return. It was a request Mary, at the time, may have found embarrassing. Margaret was not allowed to continue, she was not to be given a last chance to humiliate the king nor of prolonging the scene. After those words 'she was told to make haste and place her neck on the block, which she did.'⁵⁰ 'God in His high grace pardon her soul' wrote Chapuys 'for certainly she was a most virtuous and honourable lady.'⁵¹ Many epithets have been used with regard to Margaret in addition to those expressed by Chapuys above; her piety, goodness and nobility are frequently mentioned. The truth, however, is somewhat simpler, to use John Scarisbrick's words; 'Thus ended a very remarkable woman.'

⁴⁸ *L&P*, XVI, no. 868.

⁴⁹ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1538-42, no. 166.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 1534-35, no. 166.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

Margaret's body was laid to rest, not in her magnificent chantry in Christchurch Priory, but in the chapel of St Peter ad Vincula at the Tower. On 11 November 1876, during restoration work on the chancel, Margaret's remains were discovered lying close to those of Lady Rochford who had gone to the block with Queen Catherine Howard nine months later.⁵² Ten years after her exhumation and reburial, Margaret Pole was beatified by Pope Leo XIII.⁵³

Reginald's reaction to his mother's death was characteristically dramatic, and somewhat stage managed. After announcing to his 'thunder-struck' secretary that he was now the proud son of a martyr, he disappeared into his closet for about an hour 'and then came out as cheerful as before.'⁵⁴ With Mary's accession to the throne in 1553 Reginald was finally able to return to England. On 16 August 1557 Richard Pate, Bishop of Worcester, wrote to the queen that Reginald; 'is ordained to complete his mother's handiwork of godly education in your youth.'⁵⁵ Indeed, Reginald did become one of the queen's closest and most trusted advisers, and in 1556 he was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury. He died on 17 November 1558, twelve hours after Queen Mary herself, with a 'most tranquil and placid transit, which appeared a slumber.'⁵⁶

Unfortunately there is no record of Mary's reaction to Margaret's death, but her treatment of Margaret's relatives after her accession does give us some clue to her feelings. Her kindness to Lord Montague's daughters reveals that she had not

⁵² Bell, D.C., *Notices of the Historic Persons Buried in the Chapel of St Peter Ad Vincula in the Tower of London* (London, 1877) p. 24. Queen Catherine Howard's remains, due to her youth and the presence of lime in the internments, had completely disintegrated. For the report on Margaret's remains see Appendix 15.

⁵³ Due to the veneration paid through the centuries to 63 martyrs who had suffered during the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, Pope Leo XIII judged that veneration to constitute 'a legitimate and immemorial cult.' Such a judgement was equivalent to papal approval of 'the fact of martyrdom,' and 63 martyrs were beatified, 54 on 29 December 1886 and nine on 13 May 1895. *The Catholic Martyrs of England and Wales*, (Catholic Society, 1985) p. 4. According to the decree confirming the beatification, they did not 'hesitate to lay down their lives by the shedding of their blood' for the dignity of the Holy See. Bartolini, D., (trans.), *Decree (of the Congregation of Sacred Rites) confirming the Honour given to the Blessed Martyrs John Cardinal Fisher, Thomas More, and others, put to death for the Faith from the Year 1535-1583* (1886). I am most grateful to Father Ian Dickie, archivist of the Westminster Diocesan Archives, for this information.

⁵⁴ Pye, B., *The Life of Cardinal Reginald Pole*, pp. 155-56.

⁵⁵ P.R.O. S.P.11/11, no. 41. I am most grateful to Dr Charles Knighton for providing me with this reference.

⁵⁶ *C.S.P.*, Venetian, 1557-58, no. 1287.

forgotten her former governess, although at times it might have appeared so, nor the devotion of the Pole family to her cause. Catherine, Countess of Huntingdon Montague's eldest daughter and Lady Winifred his younger daughter, were both restored in blood and honours by Act of Parliament 1554-5. They also received several manors which had once belonged to their grandmother.⁵⁷ Significantly, the grants were made; 'in consideration of the service to the queen in her tender age of the said countess of Salisbury;' in addition to the service of the two sisters and their respective husbands. Moreover the manors were granted to Montague's daughters and their heirs, not the heirs of their husbands, and in default of issue, to the remaining heirs of the Countess of Salisbury.

Ursula and her husband also fared well during Mary's reign. Lord Stafford did not fail to take advantage of his late mother-in-law's past relationship with the queen to plead his cause. Writing to Queen Mary three months after her accession, he reminded her that his wife's family 'chose death rather than consent to your disinheritance in your tender years.'⁵⁸ Nevertheless, he was a genuine supporter of Mary and received as his rewards the chamberlainship of the exchequer, reversion of the custody of the herbage and pannage in various hays of the royal forest of Cannock,⁵⁹ and, more importantly, Thornbury and other Gloucestershire lands that had belonged to his father the Duke of Buckingham.⁶⁰ Warm relations existed between Ursula and her niece Catherine, Countess of Huntingdon. They socialised together and visited each other often,⁶¹ and it was into this atmosphere of warmth and

⁵⁷ Catherine Pole, Countess of Huntingdon received *Stokenham, Yealmpton, and the hundred of Coleridge*, (Devon), *Newton Montague*, (Dorset), *Ringwood and Christchurch*, (Hampshire), *Ware*, (Hertford), and *Yarlington, Congresbury, Somerton and Donyatt Park*, (Somerset) on 22 June, 1554. Lady Winifred Hastings, married to the Earl of Huntingdon's younger brother Sir Thomas, received *Aston Clinton, Aston Chevery and the fee farm and rent of Aylesbury*, (Buckinghamshire), *Clavering*, (Essex), *Bushey*, (Hertford), *Brixton and Swainstone*, (Isle of Wight), *Caister with all the fisheries in North Kelsey and yearly rents called 'Boyes rente' in South Kelsey*, (Lincoln), *Llanvair and Llangyfiw*, (Monmouth), *Aldbrough, Catterick, Cottingham and Hangwest Frendles*, (Yorkshire) and *Earlstone*, (Wiltshire), also on 22 June 1554. *C.P.R.*, 1553-54, pp. 147-48, 186-87.

⁵⁸ P.R.O. S.P.11/1, no. 17. Once again I am most grateful to Dr Charles Knighton for kindly providing me with this reference.

⁵⁹ Anderson, A.H., 'Henry, Lord Stafford (1501-1563) in *Local and Central Government*' *E.H.R.*, LXXVIII (1963) 226.

⁶⁰ *Idem*, 'Henry Lord Stafford (1501-63) and the Lordship of Caus,' p. 14.

⁶¹ In November 1555 Reginald wrote to Catherine that he was glad to hear of her arrival home 'and of my sister's arrival with you, which I doubt not will be to both your comforts in this absence of your husbands.' Again in August 1556 when Catherine was not feeling well, Reginald wrote that he was sorry to hear of her malady, but 'for the recovery whereof you use a good remedy, as I take it, to make that little journey unto my lady my sister, where I trust you shall find yourself better in body for your

affection that Reginald was welcomed upon his return. Reginald had a great affection for his niece, Catherine, and took a keen interest in her children.⁶² He was also fond of his sister, despite an apparent aversion to her husband Lord Stafford.⁶³ Ursula like her mother survived to a great age, she did not die until 1570⁶⁴ having outlived her husband and all her siblings.⁶⁵

Of those who did not fare quite so well, we must note firstly Margaret's grandson Henry, Lord Montague's son. He was still alive in the Tower in 1542 when the last payment for his diet was made.⁶⁶ After this no more is heard of Henry Pole. Certainly he was not alive in 1553 when Edward Courtenay was released by Mary, and no comment was made about his fate at that time. He may have died of natural causes or as a result of the rigours of his imprisonment. As has been noted, he apparently suffered more harshly than Edward Courtenay. Certainly the young man's death was expected. At Margaret's execution Chapuys wrote that when Margaret's death had been decided upon, her grandson:

who had occasionally permission to go about within the precincts of the Tower, was placed in close confinement, and it is supposed that he will soon follow his father and grandmother. May God help him!⁶⁷

To speculate with so little evidence is pointless, but his birthright and relationship to Reginald and the rest of the Pole family, ensured that Henry would have no inclination to treat him with any kindness or consideration.

Finally we must turn to Geoffrey Pole. Chapuys believed his life was spared because the government hoped to learn something more from him. However, this would not

exercise and change of air and comforted in mind with that company, to whom I pray you make my most heartiest commendations.' *H.M.C.*, 78 Hastings, II, 3, 4.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Priuli wrote after Reginald's death that 'he had not a very high opinion of the young man.' *C.S.P.*, Venetian, 1557-58, no. 1287.

⁶⁴ P.R.O. WARD 7/13. Ursula's Inquisition Post Mortem is dated 27 October 1570.

⁶⁵ Lord Stafford died in 1563.

⁶⁶ *L&P*, XVII, no. 880, f. 43b.

⁶⁷ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1538-42, no. 167.

explain his pardon, which was granted on 2 January 1539,⁶⁸ nor his subsequent freedom. The government might have hoped that Geoffrey's pardon would help to encourage others who, due to their own guilt, were too afraid to inform on their accomplices. In addition, his release as opposed to his execution, might have been considered a greater humiliation for his family. Despite the little marks of favour occasionally given,⁶⁹ Geoffrey was a broken man. Writing pathetically to Cromwell in June 1539, he described himself as fatherless and motherless in an attempt to win Cromwell's sympathy and receive some 'comfort and help' for the sake of his children.⁷⁰ His plea seems to have worked, for in December Cromwell gave him £20.⁷¹ In May 1543, Geoffrey and Constance were granted the manor of 'Grandysomes' in Kent, possibly one of Margaret's former properties, with the issues from September 1537.⁷² However the following year he alienated it to Sir Thomas Moyle.⁷³ Geoffrey's credibility and standing had been completely destroyed, no one trusted him and no one was prepared to vouch for him. In September 1540, without any provocation, Geoffrey sent for his former colleague John Gunter and berated him for telling Fitzwilliam the things he had been constrained to do in September 1538. Gunter's words, Geoffrey believed, had made his situation worse. As the argument became heated, Geoffrey attacked Gunter who sustained a head wound. Nevertheless, Fitzwilliam was loth to proceed against him considering 'the ill and frantique furious nature of the unhappy man.' He was also unwilling to commit him to prison in case it should 'reduce him into his phrenzy or some other inconvenience.' Unfortunately, he was unable to obtain guarantors for him for 'no man of wit will become his surety.' Knowing the friendship that had existed between Gunter and Geoffrey, Fitzwilliam believed that if the king was prepared to forget the matter, Gunter would drop all charges.⁷⁴ However, Henry was not prepared to forget the matter and on 9 September it was decided to commit Geoffrey to the Fleet.⁷⁵ Fortunately, following the pleadings

⁶⁸ *L&P*, XIV (i) no. 191 (3).

⁶⁹ He was involved in the muster of March 1539, in May 1540 he delivered letters from the king ordering a sessions to be held in Sussex and in December 1545 he was licensed to export 1000 dicker of leather. *Ibid.*, no. 652; XV, no. 681; XX (ii) no. 1068 (31).

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, XIV (i) no. 1127.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, (ii) no. 782.

⁷² *Ibid.*, XVIII (i) no. 623 (92).

⁷³ *Ibid.*, XIX (i) no. 610 (116).

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, XVI, no. 19.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 32; *A.P.C.*, VII, 32.

of his wife his sentence was revoked providing he came to an agreement with Gunter and stayed away from the court.⁷⁶ In April of the following year, Geoffrey was again in trouble, this time for assaulting the parson of Racton, John Mychail.⁷⁷ He also prompted his chaplain Robert Sandwich, to accuse Mychail of traitorous words which resulted in Mychail's imprisonment until it was discovered that he had been accused only as a result of malice.⁷⁸ According to the anonymous writer of *The Chronicle of King Henry VIII*, Geoffrey 'went about for two years like one terror-stricken,' before, unable to bear it any longer, he fled to Rome where he threw himself at Reginald's feet, and begged for forgiveness. The Misses Dodds feel that Reginald should have asked Geoffrey for forgiveness also, whose behaviour, they believe, had brought Geoffrey to his terrible predicament. Of course Reginald did not, but he did send his brother to the Bishop of Liège who treated him honourably.⁷⁹ His unbalanced state of mind must have blinded him to the fact, that by these actions he had once again placed his family in extreme danger. Fortunately no action was taken against them. During the reign of Edward VI, he attempted to obtain leave to return to England, but was unsuccessful and in 1552 he sent a letter to his wife 'whom he pined to see after 4 years.'⁸⁰ With Mary's accession, Geoffrey was finally able to return to England, where he arrived before September 1553, but his sufferings were not over. Edward Courtenay, newly released from the Tower, held Geoffrey responsible for the death of his father the marquis, and of the Countess of Salisbury, and thus pledged to kill him. So serious did the government take these threats that they lodged Geoffrey in a house and placed him under guard for his own protection.⁸¹ Although included in the general pardon of 1554,⁸² Geoffrey received little else. With ten children to support, five sons⁸³ and five daughters, Geoffrey and his family struggled on in poverty,

⁷⁶ *L&P*, XVI, nos. 74, 75.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 708.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, nos. 721, 747.

⁷⁹ Hume, M.A.S., *Chronicle of King Henry VIII*, pp. 133-34. The Imperial ambassadors in England in 1553, also testified to Geoffrey's presence at Liège. *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1553, p. 241.

⁸⁰ Bindoff, S.T., *The History of Parliament: The House of Commons*, III, 117.

⁸¹ *C.S.P.*, Spain, 1553, pp. 241-42.

⁸² *C.P.R.*, 1554-1555, p. 351.

⁸³ Arthur, Geoffrey's eldest son and one of his younger brothers, Edmund, were arrested for treason in 1562. Arthur was incensed that the Protestants intended to advance the Earl of Huntingdon, Lord Montague's grandson, as a claimant to the throne, and had decided to press his own claim. However, he apparently agreed to forgo his claim and support Mary Queen of Scots providing he was created Duke

although according to Priuli, Reginald 'never failed to succour them as paupers,' and stipulated that part of his property should be distributed to them after his death.⁸⁴

Clearly, Geoffrey Pole's life effectively ended on 9 December 1538 as surely as if his head had fallen with his brother's. Never more was he to enjoy peace of mind or be free of the nightmares his conscience would not let him forget. Shunned and despised, the Misses Dodds have described Geoffrey's degradation as 'the worst insult to humanity.'⁸⁵ Indeed when Geoffrey closed his eyes for the last time in November 1558, a few days before his brother Reginald, it was said that he made a 'very pious and catholic end.'⁸⁶ This is understandable, for with the sure knowledge of death, was the anticipation of final relief.

of Clarence. Both himself and Edmund remained in the Tower until their deaths where the inscriptions they both carved in the Beauchamp Tower can still be seen. They were not executed due to 'their youth and the futility of the plot.' *D.N.B.*, XLVI (London, 1896) 19; *C.S.P.*, Spain. 1558-67, no. 184. The Bishop of Quadra, Ambassador to Philip of Spain, refers several times to Arthur having married a sister of the Earl of Northumberland and enjoying the patronage of Lord Loughborough. *Ibid.*, pp. 292-93; 260, no. 184.

⁸⁴ A letter from Geoffrey's eldest son Arthur possibly to William Cecil in 1559, in which he offers his services to Elizabeth, claims that this was not so, and that Reginald 'would never see him and left him nothing in his will.' *C.S.P.*, Domestic 1547-1580, 145.

⁸⁵ Dodds, M.H., and R., *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, II, 286.

⁸⁶ *C.S.P.*, Venetian, 1557-58, no. 1287.

CONCLUSION

In 1886, 354 years after her death, Margaret Pole was beatified by Pope Leo XIII. The reason given for her beatification, was that she, and many others, had laid down their lives for the dignity of the Holy See and for the truth of the orthodox Faith.¹ In truth Margaret did not die a willing martyr to the faith, and right up until the end of her life she still hoped her second cousin would relent and reprieve her. Despite a life dogged by tragedy, her indomitable spirit had not been broken. Margaret Pole was a fighter and a survivor who, despite her sufferings, still wanted to live. At the age of three her mother had died amid rumours of poisoning and two years later her father was mysteriously executed at the Tower, on the command of his brother King Edward IV. Virtually from the outset of the reign of Henry VII, who eyed the remaining representatives of the House of York with suspicion, her younger brother Edward was strictly incarcerated in the Tower where he was executed in 1499, an act widely considered to be judicial murder even by the Tudors' own chronicler Polydore Vergil. Ironically, Henry VII provided Margaret with a husband who gave her a rare period of stability in a life of upheavals. Although evidence is slim, their marriage seems to have been a happy one. Margaret often resided at Stourton Castle in Staffordshire in order to be near her husband while he carried out his royal duties in Wales, and it was here that Reginald was born in 1500. However, Richard's death in 1504 left Margaret in the most difficult of financial situations. Initially receiving a monetary gift from Henry VII, no further help appears to have come from that quarter. Although he had been fond of Sir Richard, his feelings towards Margaret were muted, while relations with Margaret Beaufort were never close. That she was a woman whose stoicism, determination, family loyalty and pride matched Margaret's own, might explain why no friendship was possible between them. Margaret's children were also marginalised as a result of their mother's strained relations with the monarch and his mother. Her eldest son Henry was not introduced at court, while she was forced to give Reginald to the church relinquishing all financial responsibility for him, a fact he resentfully threw back in her face in 1536. However, Margaret's fortunes improved dramatically with the accession of Henry VIII. In 1512 she was restored to the Earldom of Salisbury and all those lands which her brother Edward had held at the time of his death, a tacit recognition of the injustice of his execution. Her restoration made her a wealthy and

¹ Bartolini, D., (trans.), *Decree (of the Congregation of Sacred Rites) confirming the Honour given to the Blessed Martyrs.*

independent woman in her own right; in fact she was potentially one of the most influential women in sixteenth century England. Yet a mere 26 years later she had lost everything; her eldest son had been executed, her youngest son was a broken man, her other son was in exile abroad and regarded as a traitor, her house was in ruins and three years later her own execution followed. How then may we evaluate Margaret, Countess of Salisbury? Can she be blamed for not maintaining her house and failing to perpetuate a line of Plantagenet Earls of Salisbury? With the disaster of 1538, can Margaret and her achievements be judged to have been in any way a success or an unmitigated disaster?

□

□The restoration of 1512 put Margaret in a position of having to operate in a man's world. She held sway over vast estates and tenants, employed a host of servants, retained an affinity and was the head of her family; she was indeed a true matriarch in every sense of the word. Margaret adapted easily to her new found power and the responsibilities required of her. Although she had been instilled with conventional beliefs, she fortunately had the example of other strong females in positions of influence before her, which made her situation less unfamiliar. For instance her aunt and namesake, Margaret Duchess of Burgundy, played an invaluable supporting role to her husband Duke Charles. During his long absences on campaign, he was able to make his presence felt throughout his domains through the person of his wife. She conducted many progresses around the Low Countries, and ensured that social contact was maintained with the major noble families.² She was also a vigorous campaigner on behalf of her husband, and in 1476 was instrumental in ensuring that more troops were sent to augment his army in Lorraine.³ Indeed, after Charles' death in 1477, she continued her role as the closest supporter and adviser of the duke's daughter, Mary, and without her intervention in 1477 'little of the administrative and political unity of the Low Countries would have survived.'⁴ Margaret also had the example of her grandmother, Cecily Duchess of York. A woman of great piety, she was also a vigorous landlord and politically active. Exercising a considerable influence over her son Edward at the outset of his reign⁵ both Edward and his brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester discussed matters of state with her on a regular basis.⁶ In addition

² Weightman, C., *Margaret of York, Duchess of Burgundy 1446-1503*, pp. 76, 84.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 104.

⁵ *The King's Mother*, p. 67.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

Margaret was well aware of Margaret Beaufort's achievements, whose vigorous campaigning on behalf of her son was well known. Moreover, she was an exceptionally gifted administrator as the records of her land administration show,⁷ while her position as *femme sole* despite being married, illustrates the rare independence she, like the Countess of Salisbury, enjoyed.

□

□ Indeed, Margaret was no less successful than these women in discharging the duties which were incumbent upon the Earldom of Salisbury. The men she appointed to positions of responsibility on her estates were highly talented administrators, and with almost every one of them she enjoyed a good working relationship. In this respect she was far more successful than, for example, the Duke of Buckingham. He incurred the deep resentment of several of his servants by his propensity for suing them, and his high handed manner of dealing with them:⁸

few of his household officers felt much affection for or loyalty to him, even when they remained in his service for many years. Instead, his methods bred insecurity, fear and distrust.⁹

As a result two of his household officers informed upon him to the government in 1521, one almost certainly voluntarily and the other possibly so, thus precipitating his downfall.¹⁰ In contrast, those servants who gave evidence against the Poles in 1538, had to be constrained to do so. They were not willing witnesses, and in the case of Oliver Frankelyn, he tried to protect his mistress by slightly fabricating the evidence in her favour. Indeed, Margaret was well served by her officers and her estates were administered successfully, suffering no obvious maladministration, decay nor loss of income during her possession. At her death, the arrears on her lands were respectably low. Clearly, while under Margaret's care, the estates of the Earldom of Salisbury were in capable hands.

□

□ Margaret, like her father George, Duke of Clarence, knew the importance of conspicuous consumption and maintained a lifestyle accordingly. Understandably proud of her Plantagenet lineage, her arms were prominently displayed at her various

⁷ Ibid., p. 252.

⁸ Harris, B.J., *Edward Stafford, Third Duke of Buckingham* pp. 97-100.

⁹ Ibid., p. 100.

¹⁰ Charles Knevet, a former estate official and Robert Gilbert his chancellor. Ibid., pp. 188-189, 191.

residences. Her household at Warblington was extremely impressive. Like Hampton Court, it boasted a great chamber, a waiting chamber and an inner dining chamber,¹¹ and was clearly fit enough, not only for a countess, but for the king who stayed there in 1526. Her table ware was grandiose, among her plate of silver could be found items of gold, serpentine and venetian glass. A tall and elegant woman, Margaret's presentation of herself however, was somewhat restrained. Her gowns were predominately of black or tawny,¹² and it is black that she wears for her portrait. Her jewellery is equally discreet in this portrait and more symbolic than magnificent.

□

□Margaret also proved herself to be a tough and astute negotiator, as the marriages she organised for her children and granddaughter illustrate. Only with the Duke of Buckingham did she allow herself to be out-negotiated, agreeing to pay an exorbitant dowry for her daughter. However, as Duchess of Buckingham Ursula would have been one of the highest ranking women in England, outstripping her own mother in precedence. Thus Margaret considered the match worth paying for.¹³ However, she gained very favourable terms for the marriage of her granddaughter Catherine to the Earl of Huntingdon's son, while a mutually beneficial agreement appears to have been concluded with Lord Bergavenny for the marriage of her son and his daughter. In addition, the marriages of her two younger sons, both to young childbearing heiresses, was a considerable achievement. The fact that none of the marriages produced the expected dividends was the result of an unfortunate and unforeseen series of coincidences. The shocking and entirely unexpected execution of the Duke of Buckingham in 1521, the birth of a son to the elderly Lord Bergavenny and the death of Arthur are events for which Margaret can hardly be held responsible. It might be argued that Geoffrey's increasing profligacy resulting in a coolness of relations with his father-in-law might have been stemmed by his mother. Geoffrey however, was a grown man, over whom Margaret could not exercise constant control. Moreover, he was not the first, nor would be the last son of a peer to get himself into debt. It might also be asked whether Margaret, as head of her family, should have exercised more control over her sons and restrained their activities in the 1530s.

□

□To begin with, Margaret relied upon her eldest son Lord Montague and trusted his judgement. She often deferred to his advice, as her behaviour after being told about

¹¹ See Appendix 11, f. 74.

¹² *Ibid.*, f. 90.

¹³ There was only one other duke in England in 1518, the Duke of Norfolk.

Reginald's 'De Unitate' by the king, shows. Montague was a mature and intelligent man over whom she would not have felt it necessary to 'keep control.' In addition, he maintained his own residence at Bockmer where most of the various treasonous complaints were voiced. Margaret possibly did not know about all Montague's comments against the king, although she must have been aware of the level of his disenchantment with the regime. She certainly did not know about Hugh Holland's trips to Reginald until it was too late to prevent Geoffrey's recklessness. It does seem that both her sons kept certain things secret from her, and found it easy to do so, but as previously noted, they were adults with their own residences and Margaret, at least in Montague's case, trusted him.

□ Margaret of course, committed her own offences against Henry VIII which must be contrasted with those of her sons.' The evidence gathered against the Pole family in 1538, combined with the earlier ambassadorial reports, reveal that both Montague and Geoffrey had committed offences behind the king's back. Margaret's transgressions however, were committed blatantly, before his very eyes. For instance, she alienated the king over her determination to reclaim Canford and other manors to which she had no right, and attempted to disrupt the king's ability to regrant some of them elsewhere. It was a serious misjudgement, as it succeeded in convincing the king of her ingratitude, a trait he saw manifest in Reginald's betrayal of him. She also incensed Henry by taking an opposing stand on behalf of Princess Mary, and also earned a certain amount of hostility from Cromwell by trying to thwart the appointment of William Barlow to Bisham Priory. The only area in which she could possibly be accused of underhandedness, is over the Nun of Kent. Although she never met the nun, she probably did meet Barton's advocate Father Hugh Rich, but so had other prestigious personages including Catherine of Aragon, who would never, under any circumstance, have seriously conspired against Henry. Indeed, no evidence suggests that Margaret behaved like her two sons or the Marchioness of Exeter, by acting as informer to the Imperial ambassador. Neither did anyone testify to any insulting or treasonous remarks made by her against the king. Although Henry did not appreciate it, at least he knew where he stood with Margaret. In fact this brings to mind an interesting comment upon the similarities between Margaret's character and that of Princess Mary.¹⁴

□

□ For a year between 1520-21 and eight years between 1525-33, Margaret was the

¹⁴ For an invaluable evaluation of Mary's character, please see -, Loades, D.M., *Mary Tudor: A Life*, pp. 315-45.

princess's governess and it is therefore inevitable that she would have had an influence upon the future queen. As has been pointed out above, Margaret had little guile, something which Mary also lacked. Mary never became the accomplished showman her sister Elizabeth I did; instead, as queen she presented an honest but uninspiring image of herself to her subjects. Again Margaret, like Mary, tended to conduct herself according to her conscience, rather than politic objectivity. In Mary's case, this manifested itself in her persecution of Protestants, and her execution of Thomas Cranmer, although revenge also played a part in the latter's case. With Margaret, her stand over Mary's jewels provides an example. The sensible course of action would have been to deliver them to Henry and encourage Mary to obey her father and accept the Boleyn marriage. With hindsight, this would have been to the advantage of both women, but Margaret believed that Henry was wrong. Her devotion to the old faith and loyalty to Catherine of Aragon was steadfast, as it was to Mary whose position she was futilely attempting to preserve. Thus she did the unforgivable and opposed the king. Again she believed that Canford and the other manors under dispute, which had once been held by her ancestors, should by rights be hers. She understandably resented her brother's execution and the difficult circumstances thrust upon her during Henry VII's reign, and felt that she should enjoy these manors as recompense, but it was a foolish course of action to take. Again the sensible thing to have done, would have been to accept graciously all that Henry decided she should have, which was certainly adequate enough to maintain a lifestyle commensurate to her title. Indeed, in fairness to Henry her restoration had been granted under the most generous of terms, and it is easy to appreciate his resentment at her behaviour. Both Margaret and Mary were undoubtedly tenacious complainers and liable to dramatics, but they were also pious, virtuous and ostensibly conventional women who found themselves having to wield male responsibilities, a requirement that Margaret discharged more successfully than Mary. Margaret did not suffer from the indecisiveness which plagued Mary when her conscience was not engaged, moreover unlike Mary, Margaret enjoyed the support and advice of men she trusted, and in whom she happily placed her confidence.

□

□ One of Margaret's greatest attributes which must be mentioned, is that of loyalty. This was a trait that both Lord Montague and his close friend and kinsman, Henry Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter also possessed. It was Exeter's refusal to inform upon Montague that led him to the block. Although personal letters are few, and no wills of the family have survived, the image that comes through to us over 450 years later, is that the Poles were real flesh-and-blood human beings, not mere historical ciphers. After all these years, their sense of humour and personalities are still discernible.

Even now one cannot help but laugh at Geoffrey's dreadful pun to William Friend, nor at Lord Montague's outrageous insults against Henry VIII. What is clear is that they were individuals who cared, they had convictions and beliefs and they were prepared to risk their positions and at the last, their lives for those beliefs. Even Sir William Fitzwilliam, Earl of Southampton, grudgingly paid tribute to Margaret's strength of character during her examinations when he was clearly unable to intimidate or break her:

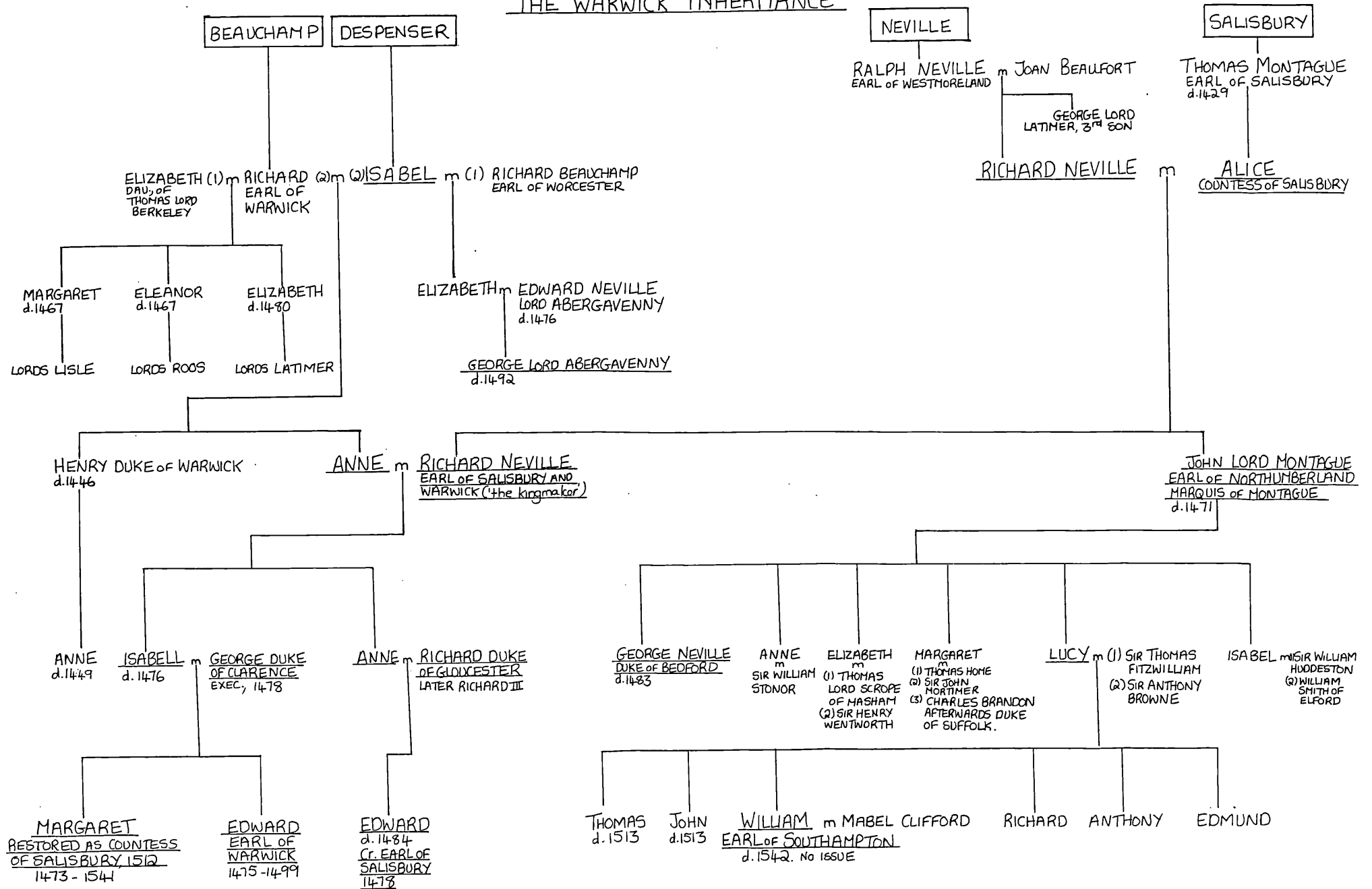
we suppose, that there hath not been seen or her[d of a] woman, so earnest in her co[untenance] manlike in continuance and ... so precise aswell in gest[ure or in] words, that wonder is to be.¹⁵

Margaret was certainly not the most circumspect nor sensible of women, but to those who enjoyed her friendship, she proved herself both loyal and devoted. Throughout the last decade of Henry VII's reign, when it was by no means certain, and in fact unlikely, that the widowed Princess Catherine would succeed as queen, Margaret's friendship continued. It was to do so again when Catherine was rejected by the king and lost all influence at court. Although this gained her no favour with Henry VIII Margaret remained true to herself and her principles, even in the face of the royal wrath, can this be classed as failure? Staunch to the point of ruthlessness in the defence of her family, as Arthur's widow discovered, and implacable in the protection of her rights, Margaret's success as Countess of Salisbury, as employer, as 'good lord' and as friend must be recognised despite her unsavoury and unhappy end. In fact, the only area in which she failed completely was as the grateful and submissive subject of Henry VIII, understandably it was the one failure which inevitably brought her to the block.

¹⁵ B.L., Cottonian MS. Appendix, L., f. 77b, *L&P.*, XIII (ii) no. 835.

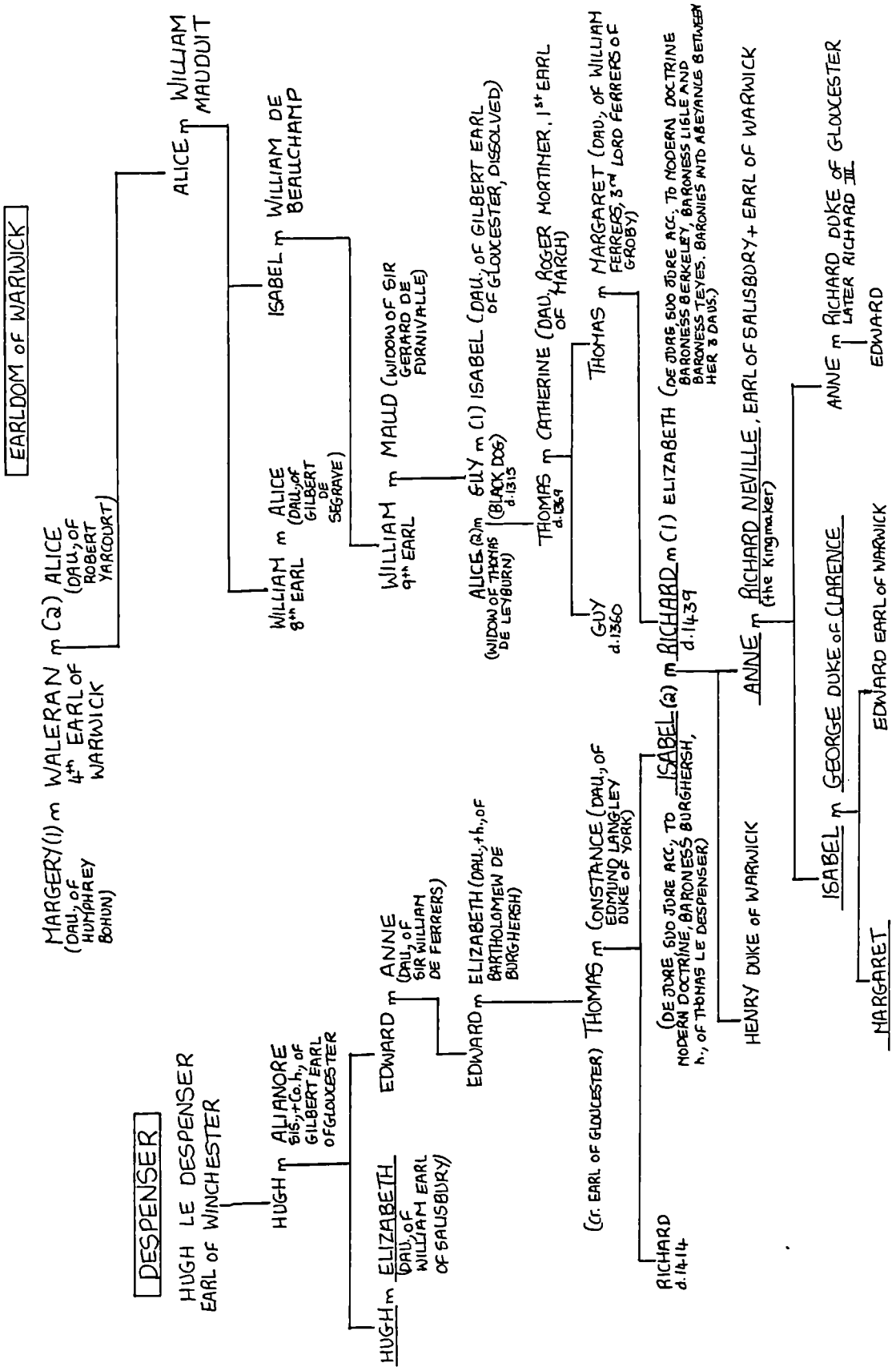
APPENDIX I

THE WARWICK INHERITANCE



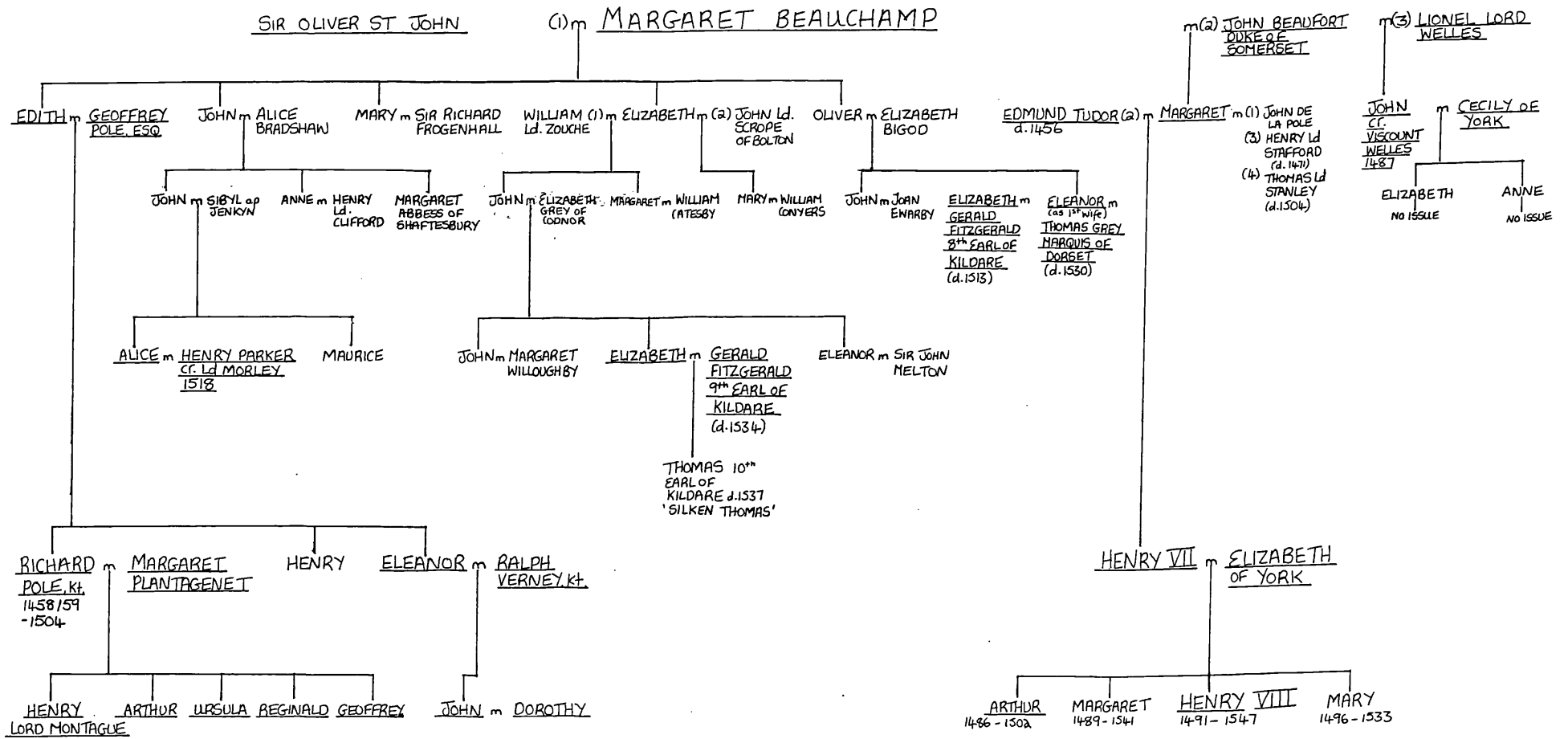
APPENDIX 3

THE DESPENSER AND BEAUXCHAMP DESCENT



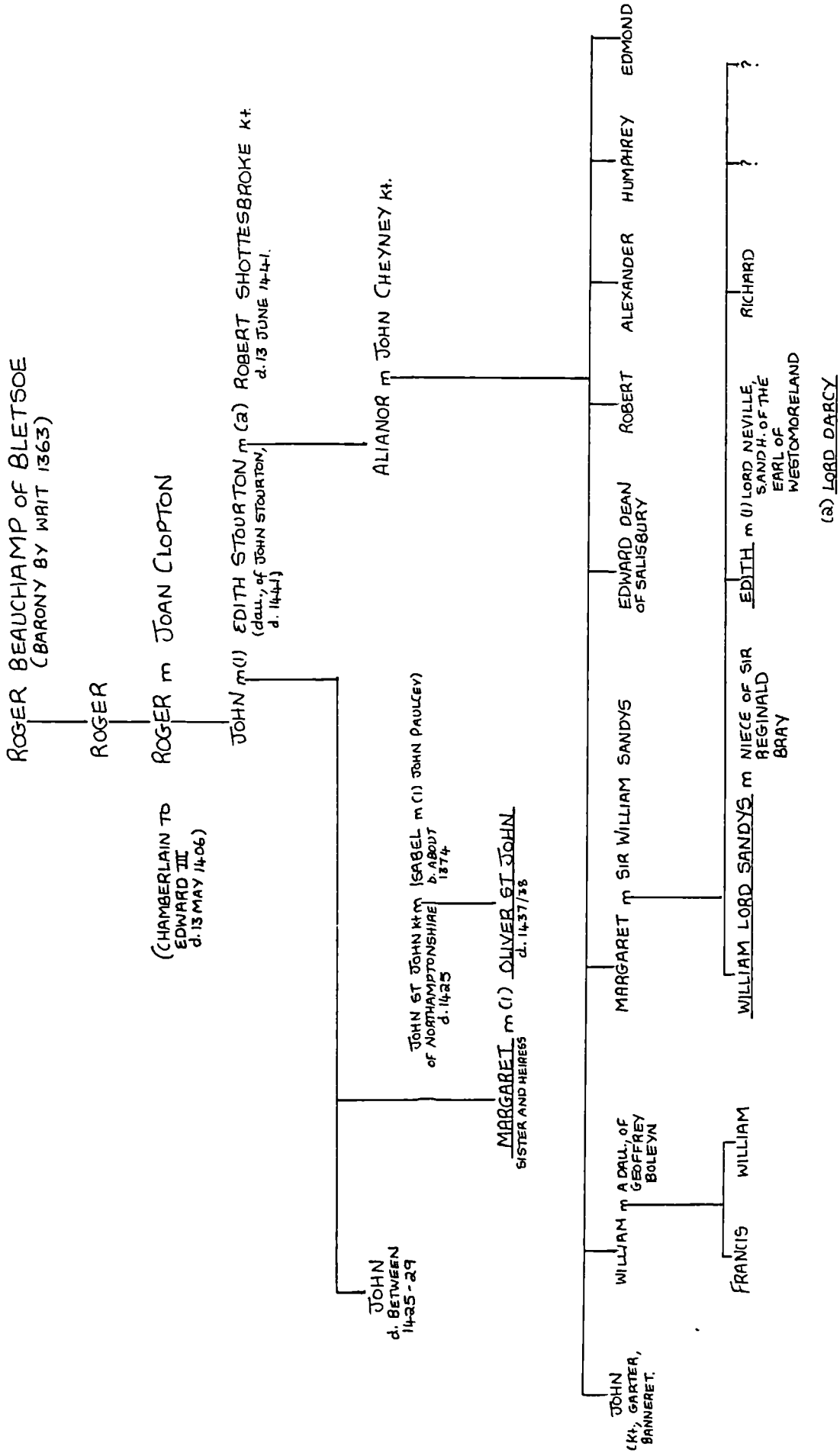
APPENDIX 5

THE DESCENT OF SIR RICHARD POLE



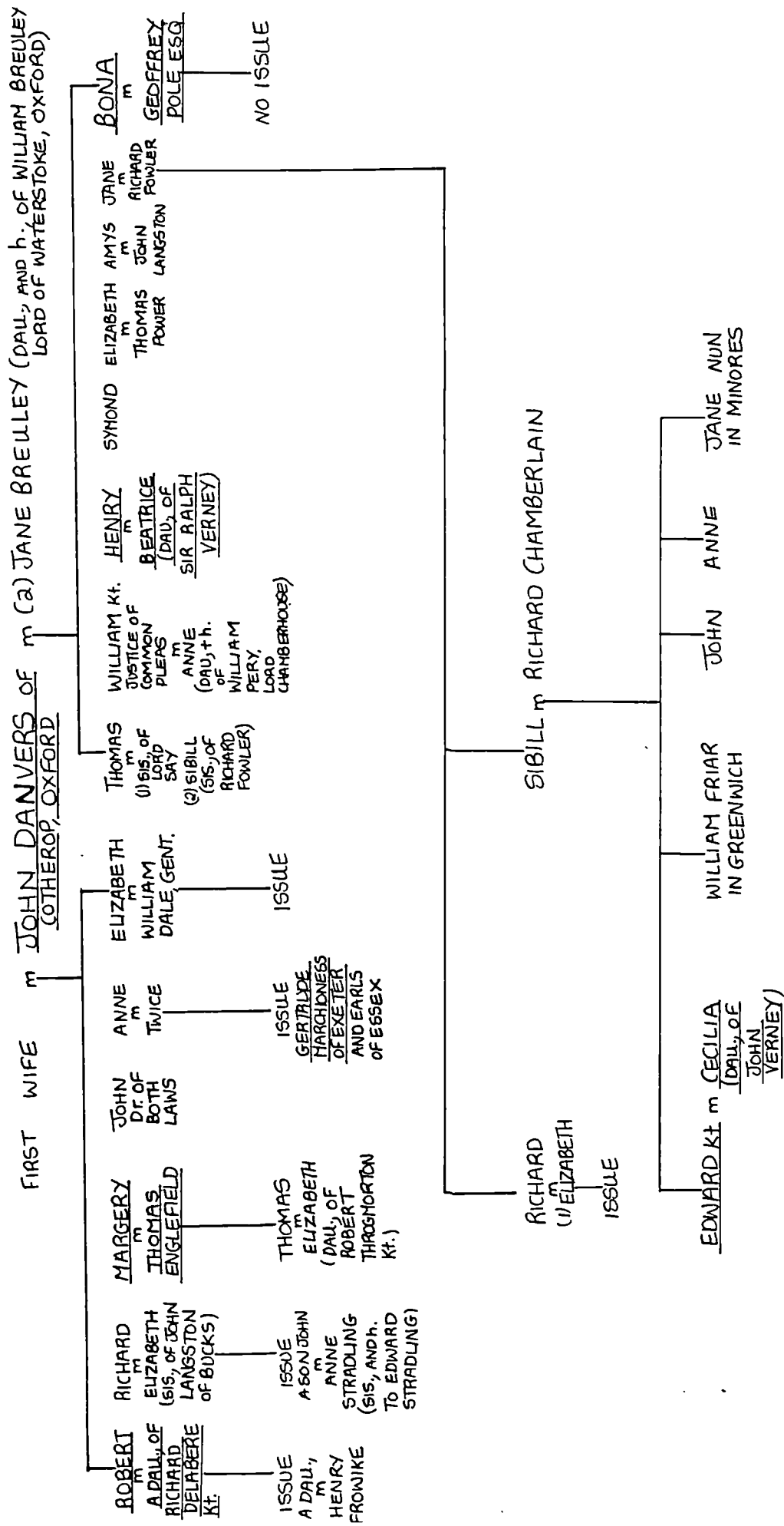
APPENDIX 6

THE DESCENT OF EDITH ST JOHN



APPENDIX 7

THE DANVERS FAMILY



APPENDIX 8

THE APPOINTMENTS OF SIR RICHARD POLE

	APPOINTMENTS	SOURCE
1.	20 September 1485, C.O.P.,* Buckinghamshire.	<i>C.P.R.</i> , I, 481-82.
2.	22 October 1485, grant of 50 marks a year as the fee of an esquire of the body.	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 5.
3.	26 February 1486, constable of Harlech Castle for life and sheriff of Merioneth for life.	<i>Ibid.</i> , p. 78.
4.	19 August 1487, C.O.P., Buckinghamshire.	<i>Ibid.</i> , pp. 481-82.
5.	15 April 1488, constable of Conwy Castle and captain of the town.	S.C.6/Hen VII/1595.
6.	16 July 1489, C.O.P., Buckinghamshire.	<i>C.P.R.</i> , I, 481-82.
7.	6 March 1490, chamberlain of North Wales for life.	S.C.6/Hen VII/1552.
8.	11 March 1490, steward and receiver of the lordships of Montgomery, Ceri and Cedewain for life and constable of Montgomery Castle for life.	<i>C.P.R.</i> , I, 299.

* C.O.P.-Commission of the Peace.

9. 30 November 1490, C.O.P.,
Salop. Ibid., p. 498.

10. 3 January 1491, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid., pp. 481-82.

11. 28 January 1491, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire, the parts of
Holland. Ibid., p. 491.

12. 20 February 1491, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-East Riding. Ibid., p. 506.

13. 21 June 1491, commission
to Richard Pole alone to
pardon all persons in Ceri,
Cedewain and the lordship of
Montgomery. Ibid., p. 359.

14. 7 July 1491, commission to
gain support for Henry VII's
invasion of France. Richard Pole,
William Stanley, William Griffith,
John Suttell for the lordships of
Merioneth, Camarthen and Anglesey.
Richard Pole alone for Ceri,
Cedewain and the lordship of
Montgomery. Ibid., pp. 353-54

15. 8 September 1491, steward and
receiver of the lordship of Elvell. Ibid., p. 365.

16. 14 November, 1491, commission to
Richard Pole, Samson Norton and the
sheriff of Salop to enquire by jury
into certain murders, riots and
spoilations committed in the Ibid., p. 393.

hundreds of Purslowe and Bisshopen.
The suspects to be placed in the
castle of Clonne and the council
informed.

17. 2 August 1492, C.O.P.,
Derbyshire. Ibid., p. 484.
18. 3 September 1492, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. Ibid., pp. 487-8.
19. 13 February 1493, C.O.P.,
Salop. Ibid., p. 498.
20. 14 February 1493, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-East Riding. Ibid., p. 506.
21. 28 February 1493, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-North Riding. Ibid., pp. 506-7.
22. 20 March 1493, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. Ibid., pp. 486-7.
23. 20 March 1493, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. Ibid., pp. 487-8.
24. 20 March 1493, C.O.P.,
Salop. Ibid., p. 498.
25. 20 March 1493, commission
of gaol delivery for the castles of
Gloucester, Hereford, Shrewsbury
and Worcester to Jasper Duke of Bedford,
Thomas, Marquis of Dorset, Thomas,
Earl of Arundel, William Stanley,
William Husee, Richard Pole, Ibid., p. 434.

Richard Nanfan, Henry Vernon,
William Uvedale, John Mordaunt
and Thomas Englefield.

26. 20 March 1493, commission of
oyer and terminer for Gloucester,
Hereford, Salop, Worcester, the
marches of Wales adjoining these
counties and Wales, to Jasper, Duke
of Bedford, Thomas, Marquis of Dorset,
Thomas, Earl of Arundel, George, Lord
Bergavenny, William Stanley, William
Husee, Richard Pole, Richard Nanfan,
Henry Vernon, William Uvedale, John
Mordaunt and Thomas Englefield. Ibid., p. 441.
27. 20 May 1493, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid., pp. 481-2.
28. 20 May 1493, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-the parts of Holland. Ibid., p. 491.
29. 20 May 1493, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-the parts of Kesteven. Ibid., p. 492.
30. 20th May 1493, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-East Riding. Ibid., p. 506.
31. 20 May 1493, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-North Riding. Ibid., pp. 506-7.
32. 20 May 1493, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-West Riding. Ibid., pp. 507-8.
33. 28 June 1493, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. Ibid., pp. 487-8.
34. 2 December 1493, C.O.P., Ibid., pp. 486-7.

Gloucestershire.

35. 5 February 1494, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid., pp. 481-2.
36. 10 April 1494, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. Ibid., pp. 486-7.
37. 10 April 1494, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. Ibid., pp. 487-8.
38. 30 April 1494, commission
of gaol delivery for the city
of Herefordshire to John Walle,
Richard Pole, Richard Croft,
John Devereux, David Philip,
Thomas Poyntys, Roger Bodenham,
William Rodehale, Thomas Draper
and Roger Gibbes. Ibid., p. 476.
39. 14 July 1494, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-East Riding. Ibid., p. 506.
40. 26 November 1494, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. Ibid., pp. 639-40.
41. 14 December 1494, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid., pp. 630-1.
42. 9 January 1495, commission to
enquire what lands John Grey, Lord
Powis held in Salop and the marches
of Wales on the day of his death and
who is his heir, to Richard Pole,
Richard Croft, James Englefield,
Roger Bodenham and Thomas Lynom. Ibid., II,
27.
43. 8 February 1495, commission to Ibid., p. 29.

enquire what lands and possessions
 William Stanley held in North Wales,
 the Welsh marches, Chester, Flint
 and Salop, to Arthur Prince of
 Wales, William, Bishop of Lichfield
 and Coventry, Thomas, Earl of Derby,
 George Stanley, lord Strange, John
 Arundell, Edward Stanley, Richard
 Pole, Richard Croft, Henry Vernon,
 Edward Pykeryng, David Philipp,
 Robert Froste, John Mordaunt,
 Thomas Englefield, Thomas Poyntz
 and Henry Wyotte.

44. 15 February 1495, commission of
 oyer and terminer for Bedfordshire,
 Buckinghamshire, Cambridge, Huntingdon,
 Norfolk and Suffolk, to John, Earl of
 Oxford, Thomas, Earl of Derby, Edmund,
 Earl of Suffolk, Edward, Earl of
 Wiltshire, George, Earl of Kent, George
 Stanley, Lord Strange, Giles Daubeney,
 John Grey of Wilton, William Huse,
 John Fyneux, John Fyssher, Reynold
 Bray, Richard Pole, Thomas Lovell,
 Christopher Willoughby, John Wyngfeld,
 Edmund Bedyngfeld, William Knyvet, Henry
 Heydon, William Boleyn, John Paston,
 Ralph Shelton, John Seynt John, John
 Donne, John Verney, William Fyndern,
 James Hobart, John Mordaunt, Robert
 Parys, John Burgoyne, William Tayllard,
 Thomas Burton, John Wake, Robert
 Partsoyle and Thomas Leventhorp.
- Ibid., pp. 30-1.
45. 18 February 1495, C.O.P.,
 Lincolnshire-parts of Holland.
- Ibid.,
 pp. 646-7.

46. 18 February 1495, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-parts of Kesteven. Ibid., pp. 647-8.
47. 18 February 1495, C.O.P.,
Northumberland. Ibid., pp. 652-3.
48. 18 February 1495, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-East Riding. Ibid., p. 666.
49. 12 March 1495, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-parts of Kesteven. Ibid., p. 647.
50. 31 March 1495, Justice of
North Wales. Smith, J.B., 'Crown
and Community,'
p. 161, n. 75.
51. April 1495, constable of
Caernarfon Castle and captain
of the town. S.C.6/Hen VII/1595.
52. April 1495, constable of
Beaumaris Castle. Chapter 3, pp.
64, 76.
53. 16 July 1495, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-parts of Kesteven. *C.P.R.*, II,
647.
54. 14 November 1495, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-parts of Holland. Ibid., p. 646.
55. 14 December 1495, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. Ibid., 641-2.
56. 4 February 1496, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-parts of Kesteven. Ibid., pp. 647-8.
57. 24 February 1496, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. Ibid., pp. 641-2.

58. 2 March 1496, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-North Riding. Ibid., pp. 667-8.
59. 3 March 1496, C.O.P.,
Northumberland. Ibid., pp. 652-3.
60. 8 March 1496, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid., pp. 630-1.
61. 23 April 1496, commission
to muster and array the men
of Lincoln (Kesteven) due to the
warlike preparations of the King
of Scotland which threaten the
town of Berwick, to John, Viscount
Welles, Richard Pole, Thomas
Wymbysshe, Oliver Seynt John, John
Panell, Mancer Marmyon, George
Tailboys, John Huse, John Walcot,
Thomas Delalaund, Thomas Quadryng
and the sheriff. Ibid., p. 67.
62. 8 May 1496, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-West Riding. Ibid., pp. 668-9.
63. 17 May 1496, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. Ibid., pp. 639-40.
64. 14 September 1496, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. Ibid., pp. 641-2.
65. 14 September 1496, C.O.P.,
Salop. Ibid., pp. 655-6.
66. 12 October 1496, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid., pp. 630-1.
67. 12 October 1496, C.O.P., Ibid., pp. 646-7.

Lincolnshire-parts of Holland.

68. 23 November 1496, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-East Riding. Ibid., p. 666.
69. 24 November 1496, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-parts of Kesteven. Ibid., pp. 647-8.
70. 4 January 1497, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-parts of Kesteven. Ibid.
71. 22 February 1497, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid., pp. 630-1.
72. 11 March 1497, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. Ibid., pp. 641-2.
73. 24 June 1497, C.O.P.,
Worcestershire. Ibid., pp. 665-6.
74. 23 August 1497, commission of
gaol delivery of Gloucester Castle,
to Richard Pole (kt.), Richard Croftes,
John Hudelston, John Seyntlowe,
William Grevyll, John Welsse,
Thomas Poyntes, Richard Pole and
William Baynam. Ibid., p. 145.
75. 7 November 1497, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-parts of Holland. Ibid., 646-7.
76. 17 December 1497, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid., pp. 630-1.
77. 24 December 1497, C.O.P.,
Salop. Ibid., pp. 655-6.
78. 24 February 1498, commission to Ibid., p. 148.

enquire into the escapes of
prisoners in Herefordshire, to
Richard Pole, Richard Uvedale,
Richard Croft, John Lyngayn,
Walter Baskerville, Thomas Englefield,
William Rudale, John Braynton and
the sheriff.

79. 21 May 1498, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-East Riding. Ibid., pp. 666-7.
80. 22 May 1498, C.O.P.,
Yorkshire-West Riding. Ibid., p. 668.
81. 4 June 1498, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-parts of Kesteven. Ibid., pp. 647-8.
82. 5 June 1498, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-parts of Holland. Ibid., pp. 646-7.
83. 11 December 1498, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid., pp. 630-1.
84. 20 June 1499, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid.
85. 4 July 1499, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. Ibid., pp. 639-640.
86. 6 December 1499, C.O.P.,
Lincolnshire-the parts of Holland. Ibid., pp. 646-7.
87. 14 January 1500, Chamberlain
of Chester during pleasure. Deputy Keeper's
37th report, App., II,
p. 144.
88. 1 July 1500, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. *C.P.R.*, II,
pp. 630-1.

89. 10 September 1500, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid.
90. 16 November 1500, C.O.P.,
Worcestershire. Ibid., pp. 665-6.
91. 19 December 1500, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. Ibid., pp. 639-40.
92. 28 January 1501, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid., pp. 630-1.
93. 13 February 1501, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid.
94. 4 June 1501, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. Ibid., pp. 641-2.
95. 12 July 1501, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. Ibid.
96. 20 July 1501, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. Ibid., pp. 639-40.
97. 1 December 1501, commission of
gaol delivery for the the castles
of Worcester, Shrewsbury and
Hereford. Ibid., p. 288.
98. 3 December 1501, C.O.P.,
Worcestershire. Ibid., pp. 665-6.
99. 4 February 1502, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. Ibid., pp. 639-40.
100. 14 March 1502, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. Ibid., pp. 639-40.

101. 11 June 1502, C.O.P.,
Salop. Ibid., pp. 655-6.
102. 13 June 1502, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. Ibid., pp. 641-2.
103. 13 June 1502, C.O.P.,
Worcestershire. Ibid., pp. 665-6.
104. 14 June 1502, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. Ibid., pp. 639-41.
105. 18 June 1502, commission
of oyer and terminer and
of array in North and South
Wales and Gloucestershire,
Herefordshire, Salop,
Worcestershire and the marches
of Wales to, William Bishop
of Lincoln, Robert Froste,
Gilbert Talbot, Richard Pole,
William Uvedale, Thomas Englefield
Peter Neweton and William Grevyll. Ibid., p. 295.
106. 4 June 1502, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. Ibid., pp. 630-1.
107. 1 July 1502, Chamberlain
of Chester during pleasure. Deputy Keepers
37th report, App., II,
p. 144.
108. 12 November 1502, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. *C.P.R.*, II,
pp. 630-1.
109. 10 February 1503, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. Ibid., pp. 639-40.

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|------|---|---|
| 110. | 14 February 1503, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. | Ibid., 630-1. |
| 111. | 16 February 1503, C.O.P.,
Herefordshire. | Ibid., pp. 641-2. |
| 112. | 26 February 1503, C.O.P.,
Salop. | Ibid., pp. 655-6. |
| 113. | 4 July 1503, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. | Ibid., pp. 630-1. |
| 114. | 14 July 1503, C.O.P.,
Gloucestershire. | Ibid., pp. 639-41. |
| 115. | 1 April 1504, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. | Ibid., 630-1. |
| 116. | 3 April 1504, Chamberlain
of Chester during pleasure.
p. 144. | Deputy Keeper's
37th report, App., II, |
| 117. | No date, C.O.P.,
Buckinghamshire. | <i>C.P.R.</i> , II,
pp. 630-1. |

APPENDIX 9

THE LANDS OF MARGARET POLE, COUNTESS OF SALISBURY¹

BERKSHIRE

Crookham	R
Lambourn	R

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Aylesbury	R
Aston Clinton	R
Aston Chevery	A
Dundridge ²	R

CORNWALL

Lantyan	R
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DERBYSHIRE

Chesterfield ³	R
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DEVON

Clyst St Mary	R
Coleridge Hundred	R
Pyworthy	R
Stokenham	R
Wonford	R
Yealmpton	R

DORSET

Canford	L
Newton Montague (Blackmoor Manor)	R

¹ Apart from those manors which were repossessed by Henry VIII, this list of Margaret's estates is based upon the minister's accounts P.R.O. S.C.6/Hen VIII/6874 and 6875, unless otherwise stated.

² *L&P*, XIX, (i) no. 1035, (18)

³ Portland MSS D.D.P. 59/2, Nottingham record office. Information courtesy of Derbyshire record office, and *L&P*, XIV (ii) no. 293.

Swyre	R
ESSEX	
Bretts in	R
West Ham	
Catmerhall ⁴	R
Clavering	R
Northweald Basset	R
HAMPSHIRE and the ISLE OF WIGHT	
Chalton	B
Christchurch	R
Ringwood	R
Hunton	R
Warblington	R
Binstead, I.O.W. ⁵	R
Brightstone/	R
Brixton, I.O.W	
Swainstone, I.O.W	R
HEREFORDSHIRE	
Kinnersley	W
Dinmore	W
HERTFORDSHIRE	
Bushey	R
Ware	R
KENT	
Dartford and	R
Willmington	
Chistlehurst ⁶	U
Crayford	U

⁴ *L&P*, XVIII (ii) no. 327 (11)

⁵ *Ibid.*, XIX (i) no. 812 (94)

⁶ For the following four manors *L&P*, XVIII (i) no. 623 (92)

Stone	U
Sutton at Hone	U
LINCOLN	
Coppices: Eselounde, Alanhill, Horowhill, Popeland and elsewhere in the lordship of Bourne.	U
Lordship of Caistor, incl., Nth., and Sth., Kelsey, Fulnetby and Girsby	C
LONDON	
Le Herber ⁷	R
MIDDLESEX	
The Wyke ⁸	R
NORTHAMPTON	
Easton near Stamford	R
SOMERSET	
Charlton	L
Chedzoy with Canteloos	R
Donyatt	R
Dunpole	R
Henstridge	L
Shipton Montague	R
Somerton	R
Yarlinton	R

⁷ P.R.O. S.C.12/11/34; *L&P*, XVI, no. 947 (31)

⁸ Sold to William Bower in 1538. P.R.O. E.40/1362.

SUFFOLK	
Newton Hall	R
SUSSEX	
Lands in	D
Marden Borne and Chambeleyens Marshe ⁹	
WILTSHIRE	
Alderbury	L
Amesbury	L
Crombridge	L
Earlstone	R
Tefont Evias ¹⁰	R
Trowbridge	L
Wilton	R
Winterbourne	L
YORKSHIRE	
Aldbrough	E
Cottingham	F
Catterick	E
Hang West	
Frendles	E
CALAIS	
Properties in St Nicholas Parish ¹¹	R
WALES	
MONMOUTH	
Llanfair (Llanfair Discoed)	U
Langyfiw	U

⁹ P.R.O. C.P.25/2/43/299, f. 27.

¹⁰ Crowley, D.A., (ed.), *V.C.H.*, Wiltshire, XIII (Oxford, 1987) 188.

¹¹ I am grateful to Mr David Grummitt for this information.

Welsh Bicknor R

GLAMORGAN

Cogan¹² R

FEE FARMS

BUCKINGHAM

Aylesbury:

£60 from Thomas Boleyn R

Earl of Wiltshire

DORSET

Lullworth:

£20 from the Abbot of Binden R

HAMPSHIRE

Pedilton:

£20 from the Prior R

of Christchurch

HUNTINGDON

£50 from the Abbey R

and Convent of

Ramsey

SOMERSET

Axbridge, Cheddar and Congresbury:

£54 from the Bishop of Bath and Wells R

YORKSHIRE

Christhall:£13.6s.8d from the Abbey and Convent U

¹² *L&P*, XIX (i) no. 442 (26)

KEY

- A Purchased in 1532 from Sir John Gage.¹³
- B Purchased in 1532 from the Earl of Shrewsbury.¹⁴
- C Margaret was apparently granted the Lordship of Caister, formerly parcel of the Duchy of Lancaster, in 1518/19.¹⁵
- D Purchased in 1533 and 1534.¹⁶
- E Granted to Margaret in 1522/23,¹⁷ formerly parcel of the Lordship of Richmond.
- F The fourth part of the lordship was granted to Margaret in 1516/17.¹⁸
- L Initially included in the restoration of 1512, by 1518 it had been repossessed by the crown.
- R Restored to Margaret in 1512.
- U It is unclear how this manor came into Margaret's possession
- W Delabere lands held by Margaret in wardship from 1521-29.

¹³ *L&P*, V, no. 909 (21)

¹⁴ P.R.O. C.P.25/2/37/245, f. 66.

¹⁵ *Lists and Indexes*, XXXIV, p. 81.

¹⁶ P.R.O. C.P.25/2/43/299, f. 27.

¹⁷ *Lists and Indexes*, XXXIV, pp. 185, 190.

¹⁸ P.R.O. S.P.1/102, f. 129; *Lists and Indexes*, XXXIV, p. 190.

APPENDIX 10

ESTATES HELD BY MARGARET POLE, COUNTESS OF SALISBURY IN 1538



- | | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. ALDBROUUGH | 10. PROPERTIES IN ST. NICHOLAS PARISH | 19. CLYST ST MARY | 29. FULLNETBY | 39. NORTHWEALD BASSET | 49. TEFONT EVIAS |
| 2. ASTON CLINTON including ASTON CHEVRY+ DUNDRIDGE | 11. CRATMERHALL | 20. COGAN | 30. GIRSBY | 40. PYMCARTH | 50. WARBLINGTON |
| 3. AYLESBURY | 12. CATTERICK | 21. COLERIDGE | 31. HUNTON | 41. RINGWOOD | 51. WARE |
| 4. BINSTED | 13. CHALTON | 22. CROKFORD | 32. NH., + SH., KELSEY | 42. SHIPTON (MONTAGUE) | 52. WELSH BICKNOR |
| 5. BOURNE | 14. CHEDZOY WITH CANTELOS | 23. CROOKHAM | 33. LAMBOLAN | 43. SOMERTON | 53. WILLMINGTON |
| 6. BRETT'S | 15. CHESTERFIELD | 24. DARTFORD | 34. LANTYAN | 44. STOKENHAM | 54. WILTON |
| 7. BRIGHTSTONE | 16. CHISTLEHURST | 25. DONYATT | 35. LLANFAIR | 45. STONE | 55. WONFORD |
| 8. BULSHEY | 17. CHRIST CHURCH | 26. DUNPOLE | 36. LLANGYFIW | 46. SULTON AT HONE | 56. YARLINGTON |
| 9. CAISTOR | 18. CLAVERING | 27. EARLSTOKE | 37. NEWTON | 47. SWAINSTONE | 57. YEALMPTON |
| | | 28. EASTON | 38. NEWTON MONTAGUE (BLACKHOOR HANOR) | 48. SWYRE | |

* I HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO LOCATE MARDEN BORNE AND CHAMBELEYN'S MARSHES IN SUSSEX AND HANG WEST FRENDELES IN YORKSHIRE.

APPENDIX 11

f. 72.

THE INVENTORY OF MARGARET POLE, COUNTESS OF SAILSBURY, TAKEN 14 NOVEMBER, 1538.¹

The Wardrobe at Warblington
the 14th day of Novembre
in the thirtie year of the
Reigne of our sovraigne
lord king henry the VIIIth as herafre foloweth

1. In Primis a great chest of waiynskot.²
2. Item in the same chest a xiiij pair of linen sheets
3. Item xij pillobers
4. Item vj small carpetts for cupbordes of Turky making
5. Item a greate square foot carpet of Turky making
6. Item ix peeces of hangeng for thall of the storie of the newe fownd land
7. Item a great peece of hanging of the storie of
8. Item a covering for an horse litre with ij small for both theends of blewe and greene velvet fri[nged] with silk
9. Item a sealer and Tester³ of Arras with my ladie Armes in the middes without fringe
10. Item a sealer and Tester of old greene velvet fringed with greene silk
11. Item a sealer and a tester of black velvet panid⁴ with grene damask
12. Item an old sealer and tester of Tafata embrodred with garters
13. Item a sumpter cloth⁵ of blew and red cloth
14. Item a red sumpter cloth with my ladies Armes
15. Item ij Travesses⁶ of Tawny and blew sarcenet⁷

¹ P.R.O. S.P.1/139, ff. 72-84. Line numbers have been added to the transcript for ease of reference.

² Waiynskot.-Foreign oak of superior quality, mostly used for fine panel-work.

³ Tester and celure.-A canopy over a bed, supported on the posts of the bedstead or suspended from the ceiling.

⁴ Panid.-'pannier'-To furnish with a pannier or panniers, to dress something up.

⁵ Sumpter Cloth.-Covering for a pack animal.

16. Item iij cushions of crule⁸ with Roses
17. Item ij smaller cushions the one with a carpet knot and the toodre with pooles Armes in the middes
18. Item certayne cruile of diverse colours by estimation xxix pound
19. Item a frame for Arras worke with an old carpet in it
20. Item iij ougt syds for cushions made of crule
21. Item of old worn sheets course and brokin xiiij pairs
22. Item more of course sheets iij parr and an half
23. Item a fier shovel of Iron and a sorie lether chest of small valor

f. 72b.

24. Item v fetherbedds and v boldsters
25. Item a fyne matres of canvas
26. Item v fustian⁹ pillowes of downe
27. Item ij course mattresses
28. Item more iij boldsters
29. Item an old quilt
30. Item iij forfronts for aulters of crule with this set in sterrs
31. Item iij peeces of hanging for the chapel of the same work
32. Item ij great peeces of verdure¹⁰ for hangeng to the chapel lyned with canvas
33. Item ij peeces of hangeng of white fustian for the chapel for Lent with dropes of blood
34. Item ij small keverings for beddes of berie making
35. Item an oodre chest of waynskot
36. Item iij fyne sheets in the same chest
37. Item an old harnes for an horse with gilt binketts
38. Item v banketing dishes of glasse with the kings Armes in them
39. Item an aulter cloth of diaper¹¹ with ij small napkins

⁶ Traverse.-A curtain or screen placed crosswise, or drawn across a room, also, a partition of wood, a screen of lattice-work, or the like.

⁷ Sarcenet.-A very fine and soft silk material made both plain and twilled.

⁸ Crule.-'Cruile, Cele, Ceile, Celure'-Hangings of a bed, tapestry for a wall, screen of drapery. Rood-celure -canopy over the rood. Possibly in this case, tapestry cushions.

⁹ Fustian.-A kind of course cloth made of cotton and flax.

¹⁰ Verdure.-A rich tapestry ornamented with representations of trees or other vegetation.

¹¹ Diaper.-Linen fabric.

40. Item a matres a bolster and ij keverings of berie making

In the middle chambre over the gate

41. Item iiij peeces of verdure for hangeng about the
42. Item iiij carpetts for the cupbord and windos of Turkey
43. Item a Trussing bed¹²
44. Item a fetherbed with a bolster of downe
45. Item a counterpoynt of verdure lyned with canvas
46. Item a sparvar¹³ paned with blak and greene velvet and Tawny damask with counters of blewe and yelowe sarcenet
47. Item more a fetherbed and a bolster
48. Item a pair of wollen blanketts
49. Item a counterpoynt of verdure

f. 73.

50. Item a chair of waynskot
51. Item ij cushions the tone of verdure and the toodre of crule
52. Item a payre of fustian blanketts

In the lower chambre over the gaate

53. Item vj peeces of hanging Tapestry work of imagerie
54. Item iiij carpets for the cupbords and windos of Tu[rky] making
55. Item a fetherbed and a bolster
56. Item a paire of fustian blankets
57. Item a counterpoynt of verdure
58. Item v cushions of crule iij long and ij
59. Item an old cushion of Russet velvet
60. Item an oodre fetharbed with a bolster
61. Item a payre of wollen blanketts
62. Item a counterpoynt of verdure
63. Item a sealer and tester of blewe and grene sarcenet with iiij curtens of the same

In the nether corner chambre

64. Item the hangeng of the chambre of greene say¹⁴

¹² Trussing Bed.-Portable bed, can be packed up for travelling.

¹³ Sparvar.-A canopy for a bed or cradle.

65. Item a Trussing bed
66. Item a cealer and tester of blewe and grene say with iij curtens of the same
67. Item ij fetharbeddes and ij bolsters
68. Item ij paire of wollen blanketts
69. Item ij counterpoynts the tone of verdure and the toodre Tapestry
70. Item an old carpet upon the cupbord
71. Item a cushion of carpet worke

In the uppermost corner chambre

72. Item the hangeng about the chambre of greene say
73. Item a trussing bed

f. 73b.

74. Item a cealer and tester with ij curtens of blew and red say
75. Item a fetherbed and a bolster
76. Item a paire of fustian blanketts
77. Item a coynterpoynt of verdure
78. Item ij carpetts of Turky making
79. Item a long cushion of old verdure
80. Item a square cushion of verdure with a Rose in the middes
81. Item a chaire of waynskot
82. Item more a fetherbed and a bolster
83. Item a payre of wollen blanketts
84. Item an old kevering of verdure

In the third bedchambre

85. Item ij featherbedds and ij bolstrs
86. Item iij wollen blanketts
87. Item a white quilt
88. Item a kevering of bery making

In the lower parlurne next the great parlur

89. Item vij peeces of hangeng of Tapestry work of ulixes Journay
90. Item iij carpetts of Turky making
91. Item ij cushions one long and the toodre s..... of crimsyne velvet and cloth of

¹⁴ Say.-A cloth of fine texture resembling serge. In the sixteenth century sometimes partly of silk, subsequently entirely of wool.

gold

92. Item an oodre cushion of crimesyne velvet
93. Item ij cushions of crule, the tone with a roose and the toodre my ladies Armes
94. Item a paynted Trussing bed
95. Item a bed and a bolster of downe
96. Item a quilt of blewe sarcenet
97. Item a payre of fustian blanketts
98. Item a sparvar of black velvet and Tynsell

f. 74.

99. Item iiij cushions of whit and chargal
100. Item more a featherbed and bolster
101. Item a counterpoynt of verdure unlyned
102. Item a payre of wollen blanketts
103. Item a chaire of waynskot

In the great chambre

104. Item vij peces of hangeng of Arras Imagerie work and storie
105. Item a paire of virginalls
106. Item a carpet of Turkey work
107. Item ij peeces of Arras hangeng undre the
108. Item an old peece of Arras hangeng over
109. Item a joyned Table with ij Trestles
110. Item of joyned stooles in all
111. Item a joyned cobord of waynskot

In the next chambre called the wayteng chambre

112. Item viij peeces of hangeng of small verdure lyned with canvas
113. Item ij small carpetts of Turkey work
114. Item a peece of course Tapestry work undre the windo
115. Item a payre of virginalls
116. Item a cupbord

In the dyneng chambre

117. Item v peeces of hanging of Imagerie of diverse sorts
118. Item a peece over the chymnay with my ladyes Armes
119. Item ij small flaunders carpetts in the windoos
120. Item ij great carpetts for tables of Turkey work

- 121. Item ij small carpetts for cubords of Turkey work
- 122. Item ij cushions of Tawny velvet
- 123. Item an oodre long cushion of Russet figure¹⁵ velvet

f. 74b.

- 124. Item a chaire of Cipresse
- 125. Item a long table of firre and a short table

In master stuards chambre

- 126. Item a Tester of blew and red say with iij curtens of the saame
- 127. Item a peece of grene say about the chambre
- 128. Item a fetherbed and a bolster
- 129. Item a pillowe
- 130. Item a payre of blanketts
- 131. Item a happing¹⁶
- 132. Item a matres
- 133. Item a payre of sheets
- 134. Item a nother betherbed (sic) and a bolster
- 135. Item a blanket
- 136. Item a single counterpoynt

In master chamlay.....

- 137. Item a trusseng bed, a Tester of blewe
- 138. Item a fetherbed and a bolster
- 139. Item a payre of blanketts
- 140. Item a counterpoynt of verdure lyned w[ith] canvas
- 141. Item thangeng of grene say

In Sir Roberts chambre

- 142. Item a cushion of carpet work.

In master Nicholsons Chambre

- 143. Item a matres and a bolster to the same
- 144. Item ij payre of sheets

¹⁵ Figure.-Adorned or ornamented with patterns or designs.

¹⁶ Happing.-A covering. A coverlet, quilt, rug.

In the clerks chambre

145. Item a fetherbed and a bolster

f. 75.

146. Item a wollen blanket

147. Item a payre of sheets and a quilt

In George Mysse and Harry Somers chambre

148. Item a fetherbed and a bolster and a payre of wollen blankets

149. Item a payre of sheets and a covering of Bery making

150. Item a matres, a boster (sic) and a payre of sheets

151. Item an old red sompter cloth lyned with canvas

In the Cook's chambre

152. Item a fetherbed and a bolster

153. Item a matres with a bolster

154. Item ij payre of sheets

155. Item a blanket

156. Item ij coverings of Bery making

In John Hode and Harry Latymer his chambre

157. Item a fetherbed and a bolster and a payre of sheets

158. Item a blanket and a kevering of bery making

In Edmund Thurlowe's chambre

159. Item a fetherbed and a bolster

160. Item a payre of sheets

161. Item a white happing

In Thope and Davy his chambre

162. Item a fetherbed and a bolster

163. Item a payre of sheets. Item a blanket

164. Item a covering of bery making

f. 75b.

In the porters chambre

165. Item a qwilt

166. Item an happing

- 167. Item a blanket
- 168. Item a bolster
- 169. Item a payre of sheets

In the comptrollers servants chambre

- 170. Item a fetherbed and a boster (sic) with a kevering of bery making

In maistre Newburghs chambre

- 171. Item a fetherbed and a bolster
- 172. Item a payre of sheets
- 173. Item a kevering of Tapestry worke
- 174. Item an old happings a blanket
- 175. Item a matres, a payre of sheets, and a boster (sic)
- 176. Item a covering of bery making

In maistre Warnay and maistre Middletons chambre

- 177. Item a fetherbed and a bolster
- 178. Item a payre of sheets
- 179. Item a blanket
- 180. Item a covering of bery making

In master Perkyns and master Hassetts chambre

- 181. Item ij fetherbedds and ij bolsters
- 182. Item a kevering of Tapstrie worke lyned
- 183. Item a payre of sheets, Item a qwilt

In Broune and Cotismor his chambre

- 184. *Item a fetherbed and a bolster*

f. 76.

- 185. Item a blanket
- 186. Item a payre of sheets
- 187. Item a kevering of bery making

In the grome of the stables chambre

- 188. Item a matres
- 189. Item a kevering of bery making

In the bakers chambre

190. Item a matres and a bolster
191. Item a blanket
192. Item a payre of sheets
193. Item a kevering of bery making

In John Pristowes chambre

194. Item a matres and a boster (sic)
195. Item a payre of sheets
196. Item a kevering of bery making
197. Item a Sumpter cloth

In my ladies owne chambre

198. Item a peeces of hanging of verdure
199. Item a Traves of Red sarcenet
200. Item a carpet upon the cupbord of Turky making
201. Item a counterpoynt that was on my ladies bed
202. Item iij cushions of crule wherof ij of my ladyes Armes, the tooder of the carpet knot
203. Item one of Aras work
204. Item one of carpet work
205. Item a pillowe of downe coverd with Tyke
206. Item ij corteignes for the windoes of black bokeram
207. Item one joyned cubbord of waynskot

f. 76b.

In the chambre within my ladies chambre

208. Item one Trussing bedsted
209. Item ij fetherbedds, and ij bolsters
210. Item ij payre of blanketts
211. Item one coverlet of verdure single stuff
212. Item a pillow of downe coverd with fustian
213. Item a pilowe of fethers and one payre of sheets
214. Item one counterpoynt of great borders with flowers and bests
215. Item one joyned table of Aspe
216. Item ij stillitories¹⁷

¹⁷ Stillitories.-Stillatory. A still.

217. Item a pewter pott

In the chapel chambre

218. Item ij bedstedds, ij fetherbeds, ij bolsters

219. Item ij payre of blankets and ij payre of sheets

220. Item ij coverlets of verdure single stuff

In the chapel closet

221. Item ij peeces of hangeng small verdours

222. Item ij peeces of flauders carpetts

223. Item iiij cushions of verdurs

224. Item one joyned cofer full of old writengs

225. Item one playne cupbord of waynskot

In the chapel

226. Item ij aulter clothes of blewe and yelow silk damaske work with the vestment of the saame

227. Item one vestment of Tawny velvet

228. Item one vestment of bawdkyn¹⁸

229. Item one vestment of white fustian

f. 77.

230. Item ij Antiphoners¹⁹ printed with ij grayles²⁰ printed

231. Item ij great Imaiges of the Trinitie and our Lady

232. Item ij candelsticks of silver and gilt

233. Item ij cruets of silver

234. Item one Corporis caas²¹ of crimsyn velvet

235. Item one oather of the salutation of our Lady

236. Item an aulter cloth A mass book

237. Item one table of the vernacle²² all of Ares work

¹⁸ Bawdkyn.-Baudekin/Baudkin-A rich embroidered material, originally made with warp of gold thread and woof of silk, later with rich brocade, rich shot silk.

¹⁹ Antiphoners-Book containing a set or collection of antiphons.

²⁰ Grayle.-Grail

²¹ Corporis Caas.-Corporas Case-A receptacle in which is placed an ancient eucharistic vestment or a cloth, usually of linen, upon which the consecrated elements are placed during the celebration of the mass, and with which the elements, or the remnants of them, are covered after the celebration.

238. Item divers oother tables

In the middle chambre in the Tower over my ladies
chambre

- 239. Item iiij peeces of old greene say for thanging
- 240. Item one Trussing bedsted and one old matres
- 241. Item one fetherbed and a bolster
- 242. Item one counterpoynt of Imagerie single stuff
- 243. Item a canopeo of yelowe sarcenet
- 244. Item a ioyned cupbord of waynskot
- 245. Item one Trussing bested in a caas of lether

In the great parler

- 246. Item ij tables, ij payre of Trestles with vij formes and Stoles
- 247. Item a wyned cupbord
- 248. Item one olde carpet
- 249. Item a payre of virginalls

In the Ewry

- 250. Item one Table cloth of old diaper
- 251. Item iiij diaper towells
- 252. Item vj old diaper napkyns
- 253. Item one diaper cobord cloth
- 254. Item x playne Table clothes

f. 77b.

An estimate view of thole Remaigndor in all offices²³

- 255. Item in wheat 1000 lb
- 256. Item in malt quart 30 lb
- 257. Item hoppes 5 lb
- 258. Item mustadele 12 pitchers
- 259. Item Sack 80 pychers
- 260. Item Malveson one but
- 261. Item wyne of Angeo one pipe half drawn
- 262. Item gastoigne wyne 3 Tonnes

²² Vernacle.-Vernicle-Representation of Christ's face.

²³ For ease, I have converted all Roman numerals from nos. 255-86 to arabic numerals.

263. Item french wyne 2 pouchions and de
264. Item Suger 4 loves
265. Item oxen at Warblington 9
266. Item oxen at Crokham 33
267. Item Motons at Warblington 100
268. Item linge²⁴ 90
269. Item bay salt 8 quarters
270. Item signets 4
271. Item wodd 500 lodes
272. Item coles, quarters 40
273. Item hay at Warblington 47 lodes
274. Item at Crockham 60 lodes
275. Item at Dorford, 21 lodes
276. Item gueldinges 5 wherof 4 with my lady. The fift with the cator²⁵

f. 78.

277. Item half a barel of Resyns.

In the Skullery

278. Item 4 chargers
279. Item plates 142
280. Item dishes 92
281. Item Sawcers 1051
282. Item 4 potaigers
283. Item 8 botom dishes
284. Item 2 doson french Trenchers

In the [B]uttery

285. Item lether potts 2 dosen
286. Item stone potts one dosen

The appayrel in her guardrobe

287. Item one gowne black velvet furrid with bowge²⁶

²⁴ Ling.-A long slender gadoid fish in seas of northern Europe, largely used for food either salted or split and dried.

²⁵ Cator.-A buyer of provisions or 'cates.' In large households the officer who made the necessary purchases of provisions, a caterer.

²⁶ Bowge.-Bulged or raised work.

288. Item one gowne of black saten furred with martons and the sleeves lyned with
sables
289. Item one gowne of black velvet lyned with bokram the sleeves lyned with saten
290. Item a fuis of foynes²⁷ for a womans gowne the sleeves martons
291. Item one kirtle of Tawney velvet
292. Item one old kirtle of Tawney damaske
293. Item ij small cloth sacks
294. Item vij Tod of woll and d
295. Item a botel sadle²⁸ coverd with buff

f. 78b.

296. Item vij playne Towelles
297. Item viij playne cubbord clothes
298. Item ix neck Towells
299. Item a xj course damaske diaper napkyns
300. Item ij short table clothes playne
301. Item ij short table clothes playne for the gentilm[en]
302. Item iij playne Table clothes
303. Item one playne table clothe for my lady
304. Item ij clothes for the porters table
305. Item latyn²⁹ candlesticks xxxiiij
306. Item ij chavers³⁰ of brasse

In the ketchin

307. Item vij brasse potts and ij laten potts
308. Item ij great pannes and vj small pannes
309. Item a boyling Cawthorne of coper
310. Item a boyleng led standing fast
311. Item a greate gredirne³¹ of Iron

²⁷ Fuis.-Foison-A great quantity or number. Foynes-Foin-An animal of the pole cat or weasel kind, the beech-marten.

²⁸ Botel saddle-Bottle-horse-A horse for carrying bundles or packages, a pack horse.

²⁹ Latyn-Latten-A mixed metal of yellow colour, either identical with, or closely resembling brass, often hammered into thin sheets.

³⁰ Chaver-Chafer-A vessel for heating something.

³¹ Gredirne-Grediron-A cooking utensil formed of parallel bars of iron or other metal in a frame, usually supported on short legs and used for broiling flesh or fish over a fire.

312. Item one Iron peelee³² and iij frieng pannes
 313. Item one filleng ladle, one Scomer³³ and a laten ladle
 314. Item ij dressing knives and one ij Mynseng knives
 315. Item ij chopping knives a colender of laten
 316. Item a brasen Morter and a pestle A stone mortar and the pestel
 317. Item one grater ij drippeng pannes, ix great broches³⁴
 318. Item one broche for birds and a great brasen cawdron for the slaughter house
 319. Item ij small gredirons
 320. Item one long Trivet of Iron
 321. Item payre of Iron Racks
 322. Item one payre of pothooks
 323. Item ij hogisheddes of whyte salt

f.79.

Thys Inventare made the xvth day
 of Novembre anno ... H viij Trigesimo
 by the lord Admyrall, and the
 Bushoppe of Elie, of the goods of the
 Ladie of Sares conteigneth the
 parcelles that heere ensue.

First of the coffers that bee at her house of Warblington, All wich the sayd lordes have
 ensealid up with their seales and left in the custodie of John Chadreton and John
 Babham stuard of houshold to the sayd Lady.

324. In primis a litle standard bound with Iron wherin is no thing but evidence
 325. Item a litle cofer bound with Iron wherin was no thing but silke and gold to work
 with
 326. Item a noodre litle cofer with silke for to set the yong a worke, and a cushion
 wrought with the nedil
 327. Item a litle lectrine³⁵ wherin bee writengs and recknings for houshold and oother

³² Peele.-Peel-A bakers shovel, a pole with a broad, flat disk at the end for thrusting loaves, pies etc.,
 into the oven and withdrawing them from it.

³³ Scomer.-Scummer-A shallow ladle or sieve for removing scum or floating matter from the surface of
 a liquid.

³⁴ Broche.-Bro'chette-In cookery, a small broach, spit or pointed stick.

³⁵ Lectrine-A writing desk.

things

328. Item a chest bound with Iron, wherin is old silkes of garments
329. Item an noodre standard with sheets and napry
330. Item an noodre standard, wherin bee Trussing beddes, somemade, some unmade and a crosse for a vestiment unmade
331. Item a coffer coverd with seales skynnes wherin arr court rolles and evidence
332. Item an oodre cofer bounden with Iron wherin is linen and a caas of knives silver and gilt, with a litle cuppe of the mother of perle
333. Item there is an oodre chest bound with Iron wherin

f. 79b.

- is linen, and a box and a purse with an Image of Ivorie and Instruments to embrodre with all
334. Item [a] wodden chest with linen clothes and pillows
 335. Item an oodre chest coverd with lether wherin is linen and some silke and a payre of chorall beadis, a grater of silver with oodre peeces of broken gold
 336. Item a casket of Iron made in bretaigne with writengs and Reckeninges
 337. Item a waynskot chest standing by the windo wherin is no thing but evidence
 338. Item there is a great chest bound with Iron wherin is newe diaper almost full
 339. Item an oodre chest coverd with lether wherin is evidence
 340. Item a presse wherin bee pelowes, books, linen and glass

Coffers brought from Warblington to Cowdrey
and there remaineng ensealed with the sayd
lordes seales with the stuff in the same
coffers conteyned

341. First a black cariage chest coverd with lether and barred with Iron wherin arr thes parcelles foloweng
342. In primis a ginger box of silver and gilt
343. Item a chafing dishe of Silver
344. Item a cupp of serpentine bordred about with silver and gilt
345. Item a boll of silver and gilt with rosys and portcolys
346. Item a cuppe of silver and gilt withoutg armes in ye topp

f. 80.

347. Item a broken Trencher of silver
348. Item a silver candelstick
349. Item a pax of silver and gilt

350. Item a litle pax with reliques within
 351. Item a cupp silver and gilt with a rose and a pomegranade in the Topp
 352. Item a pot for grene ginger of silver and gilt
 353. Item a boll of serpentine
 354. Item a stonding cuppe with a rose in the Top silver and gilt
 355. Item an Ewre silver and gilt percel
 356. Item a stonding cuppe silver and gilt with a crowne in the Topp
 357. Item an Ewre percel gilt
 358. Item ij gobletes gilt
 359. Item a stonding cupp silver and gilt with a round Topp
 360. Item a stonding cupp silver and gilt with a man in the Toppe
 361. Item a stonding cupp silver and gilt with St John Baptist in the Topp
 362. Item a stonding cupp gilt with scules with no thing in the Topp
 363. Item ij basens of silver
 364. Item a salt and a cover of silver lacking a knoppe
 365. Item iij great gilt pottes wherof ij bee writhen
 366. Item ij oother gilt pottes writhen of a less sort
 367. Item ij great gilt stonding cuppes playne [work]
 368. Item one great stonding cuppe gilt with
369. Item one standing boll with the cover gilt and writhen
 370. Item j boll with the cover gilt playne [wor]k

f. 80b.

371. Item ij salts, with one cover gilt wrought with flower delice
 372. Item a liten casket of Iverie wherin is broken silver
 373. Item a liten gilt cuppe with a cover, withe port colys and Roses

In the litle chest of seo.... with a chequier in the Topp

374. First a litle salt of mother of perle
 375. Item a litle booke of silver to put in conserva quinces
 376. Item a pomander of gold

In the great red carriage chest at Cowdrey bee thees
 parcelles

377. In primis one great salt withoutg a cover of silver percel gilt pomised
 378. Item one salt of silver and gilt with a cover pomised with hertes
 379. Item vj trenchers of silver percel gilt with the gruffithes hed
 380. Item one great spone of silver gilt

381. Item one stock of xiiij knives, the hastes of silver enamelled percel gilt with a forque
382. Item one basen and Ewre of silver
383. Item iij candelstickes of silver
384. Item iij prikets of silver
385. Item one standing cuppe with a cover gilt
386. Item one pottel pot of silver with a cover percel gilt
387. Item one flat bowll with a cover percel gilt and upon the Toppe of the cover a rose with a scripture
388. Item a pottel pot with a cover haveng a flowre on the Topp percel gilt

f. 81.

389. Item one bowll of silver pomised with thospreys foote and the gorget³⁶ percel gilt
390. Item one standing cuppe with a cover pomised of silver and gilt with a boy in the Toppe
391. Item v Trenchers percel gilt
392. Item one course Table cloth of diaper takin furth of the Ewrie at Warblington
393. Item ij Towelles of diaper
394. Item ij cruetes of silver
395. Item a bag of lether wherin is in gold lxxxviiij li xiiij s iiij d
396. Item in the same bag within a purse of crymesigne velvet xxxiiij li
397. Item in the same chest a litle black coffer gilten wherin arr these parcelles foloweng
398. Furst a salt of gold garnished withe stone and perle
399. Item one oodre salt of gold with a cardinall hat in the Topp
400. Item a casting botel of silver and gilt
401. Item iij spones wherof one is writhen with a red flower and grene leaves in the Topp
402. Item the second spone with an angel in the Topp holding a skotchin in his hand
403. Item the Third spone writhen with a peeche in the Toppe
404. Item vj spones of silver wherof iij bee gilt
405. Item a litle paire of beades of golde
406. Item one litle Imaige of our Lady of pai of gold
407. Item a litle casting bottel of venys glasse writhen with gold

³⁶ Gorget.-A piece of armour for the throat. This was the badge of George, Duke of Clarence, and was incorporated into the standard of Lord Montague. See Appendix 12.

f. 81b.

- 408. Item ij payre of beads garded with gold
- 409. Item pralie Tablet of silver and gilt
- 410. Item a litle forque for grene ginger
- 411. Item the Toppe of a salt
- 412. Item a litle pralie box, wherin are litle pottes and dishes for newe yeris giftes litle worth

Off all wich coffers aswell those at Warblington, as those at Cowdrey the sayd Lady hath the cayes in her owne custodie and as it is aforesayd, the sayd lordes have ensealed uppe the same

Of such stuff as the sayd Lady hath in her owne custody, to serve her at Cowdrey

- 413. In Primis a litle flat coffer of wod bounde with Iron wherin arr boxes with medicine and spices and a litle box wherin was iij ringes, ij of them emerodes and the third a ruby and a serpentis tong enclosed in a litle gold
- 414. Item a Trussing cover wherin is no thing but poticarie ware, saveng a payre of braceletes of gold
- 415. Item an noodre Trussing cover wherin is no thing but linen
- 416. Item a litle coffer of Cipresse

f. 82.

- 417. Item a standing chest coverd with lether and bounden with Iron full of dredge ruberbe and such oother
- 418. Item one salt without cover of silver gilt wrought with roses and port colys
- 419. Item one salt with a cover of percel gilt engraved
- 420. Item iiij great spones of silver playne
- 421. Item v spones of silver of a lesse sort
- 422. Item ij spones gilt
- 423. Item one basen and an Ewre of silver
- 424. Item ij standing cuppes with their covers gilt
- 425. Item iij bolles with one cover of silver pomised with thospreys foote and the gorget percel gilt
- 426. Item ij quart pottes with their covers of silver percel gilt
- 427. Item one cupp of silver gilt and a man standing theron with an hand gonne
- 428. Item one pair of flagons of silver
- 429. Item one cuppe of Assay siver and gilt

- 430. Item one silver pot, to serve beare in
- 431. Item one chafing dishe of silver
- 432. Item an holy water stog of silver gilt with the sprinkle
- 433. Item ij dishes and ij sawcers silver white
- 434. Item a clock and a dyall
- 435. Item an old bowll with a cover with an hole in the Toppe
- 436. Item one spoone

f. 82b.

- 437. Item ij couse table clothe of diaper taken forth of thewrie Warblington
- 438. Item ij towelles of diaper taken thense
- 439. Item ij cupbord clothes of diaper taken thense
- 440. Med that over and besides the sayd money remaineng in the lether bag and the crimesyn velvet purse there is of the monay found in the coffers of the sayd Lady xx li deliverd on a prest to John Chadreton, to serve thoushold at Warblington, and vj silver spoones to bee occupied there.
- 441. Item that over and besides the plate wiche is at Cowdrey, there was pledgid to the stuard Babham, ij great standing cuppes gilt, and ij dosen Trenchers of silver
- 442. Item there is pledgid to the comptroller Oliver Franklayne a salt of gold and vj bolles of silver

f. 83.

The names of her Servantes

The Ladie Margret Stafford

Maistres Wenefred

Marie Poole	}	daughters to
Margaret Poole		Sir Arthur Pole
Katherine Poole	}	daughter to Sir Geoffrey

Johan Cholmeley

Johan Francleyne

Anne Ragland

Elisabeth Cheynye

Dorothe Erneley

Alice Denstill

John Babham

Stuard

Oliver Frankleigine

Comptroller

Mr Newton
Mr Nicholson
Sir Robert Bankhouse

Chapleignes

George Vernay
William Perkyns
Christofer Newburgh
Edward Middleton
Walter Browne
Anthony Cotismor

Gentlemen Waiters

John Larke
Thomas Tandise

Clerks of
the Kitchen

f. 83b.

Edward Hasset
Rauf Fawkenner
Edward Thrup
Richard Bull[er]
Edmund Thurbarne
William Legg

Yeomen of the Chambre

Nicholas Fawkenner
John Hode

Marshull and Usher
of [the Hall]

George Myllan
John Gaylord

Pantry

Henry Sommer
John Baewyke

Buttry

Henry Latimer
John Barbor

Ewry

Nicholas Arasman
Christofer Donne

Wardrobe

Harry Robertes		At Bisham
John Tubler		Porters
John Phillips		
Thomas Gemeres		Gromes of the Chambre
William Robinson		
John Lenthall		
Barnard Pay		Cookes
William Horne		
<u>f. 84.</u>		
John Day		Bakers
Robert Gyblet		
John Nuttall		Slaughterman
William Bates		Cator
Humfrie Corkes		Tyler
David Merchannt		Berebrewer
Cotton		
Nichol		Boyes of the Kethin
Robin		
Wylliam Breche		Housekeeper
Richard Nevil		Squillery
David Vaughan		Amener
Wythendes wief		Launder
Babham	2	Gentylemens servantes
Frankleigine	2	
Newton	1	
Nicholson	1	10
George Verney	1	
Parkyr	1	
Newborough	1	
Cotismor	1	

Harry Corbet

found of Almes

The foole

The nowmber - lxxij (sic)³⁷

³⁷ The number is actually 73!

APPENDIX 12

1. THE COAT OF ARMS OF MARGARET POLE, COUNTESS OF SALISBURY

The countess's arms are impaled with the arms of her husband, Sir Richard Pole, which lie on the dexter side. The countess's arms are on the sinister side and, as they appear in the Rous Roll, incorporate the following:

The first four-France and England quarterly, with the label of the countess's father, George, Duke of Clarence.

The second four-Sir Guy of Warwick, Beauchamp, Neville and Newburgh.

The third four-Montague, Monthermer, Francis and Tony.

On her seal, the countess's arms are not impaled with her husband's.¹

2 THE STANDARD OF HENRY POLE, LORD MONTAGUE²

The standard incorporates the gorget, a badge of Montague's grandfather, George, Duke of Clarence. The bird of prey is an osprey holding a fish in its dexter claw, the badge of the Pole family.

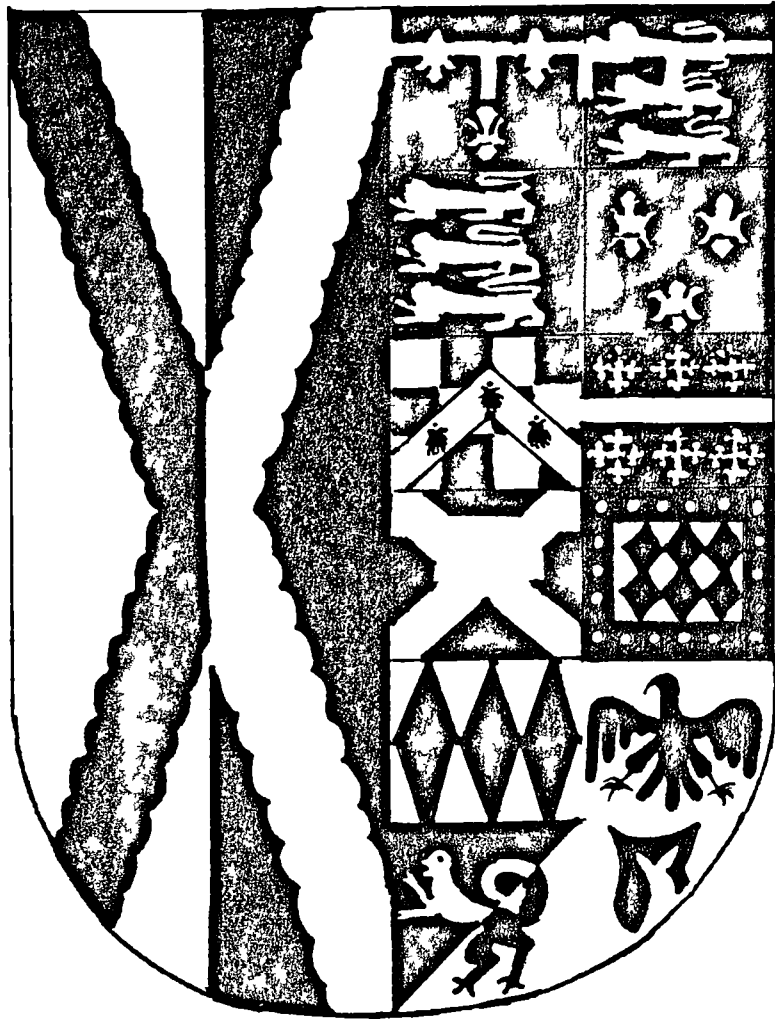
3. A BADGE OF THE POLE FAMILY³

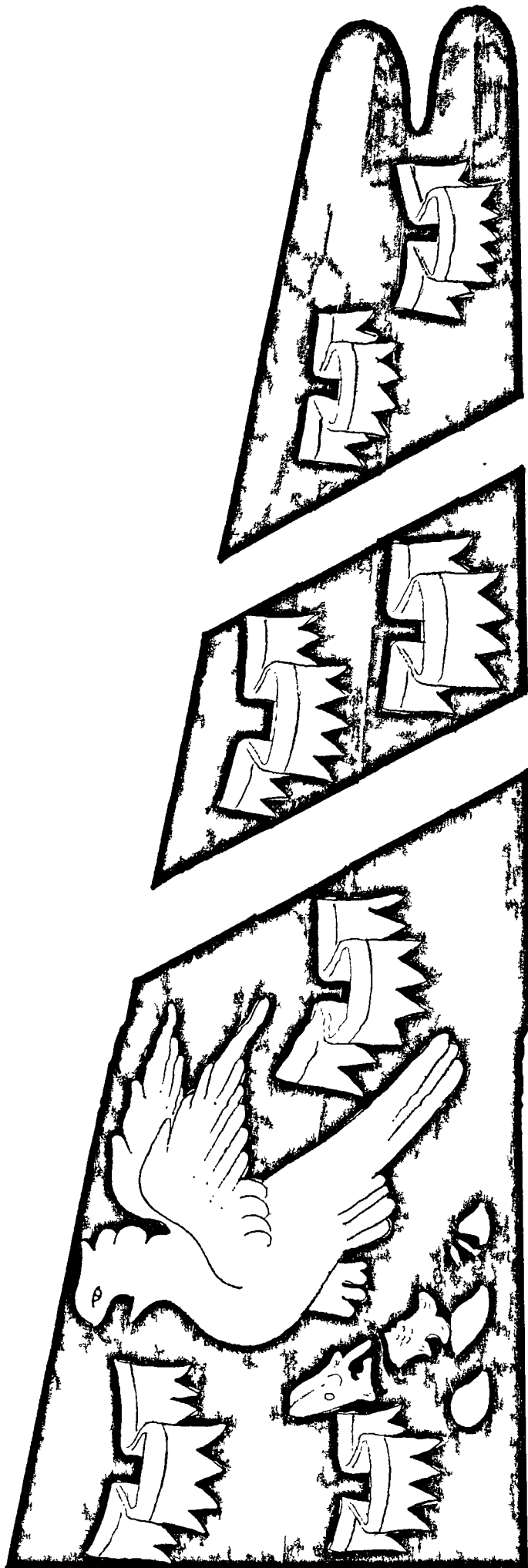
An osprey's claw holding a silver fish was also a badge of the Pole family, in addition to the depiction of the whole osprey gripping a silver fish.

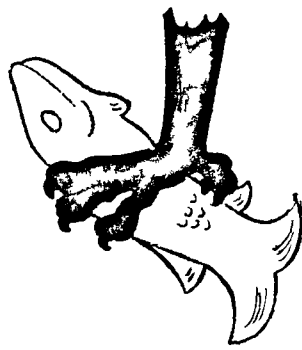
¹ B.L. Harl. Ch., 42, f. 8. Unfortunately, this seal has been damaged and only three quarters of it remains intact.

² From Ellis, T.E., *Banners, Standards and Badges from a Tudor MS* (London, 1904) no. 179.

³ Ibid.

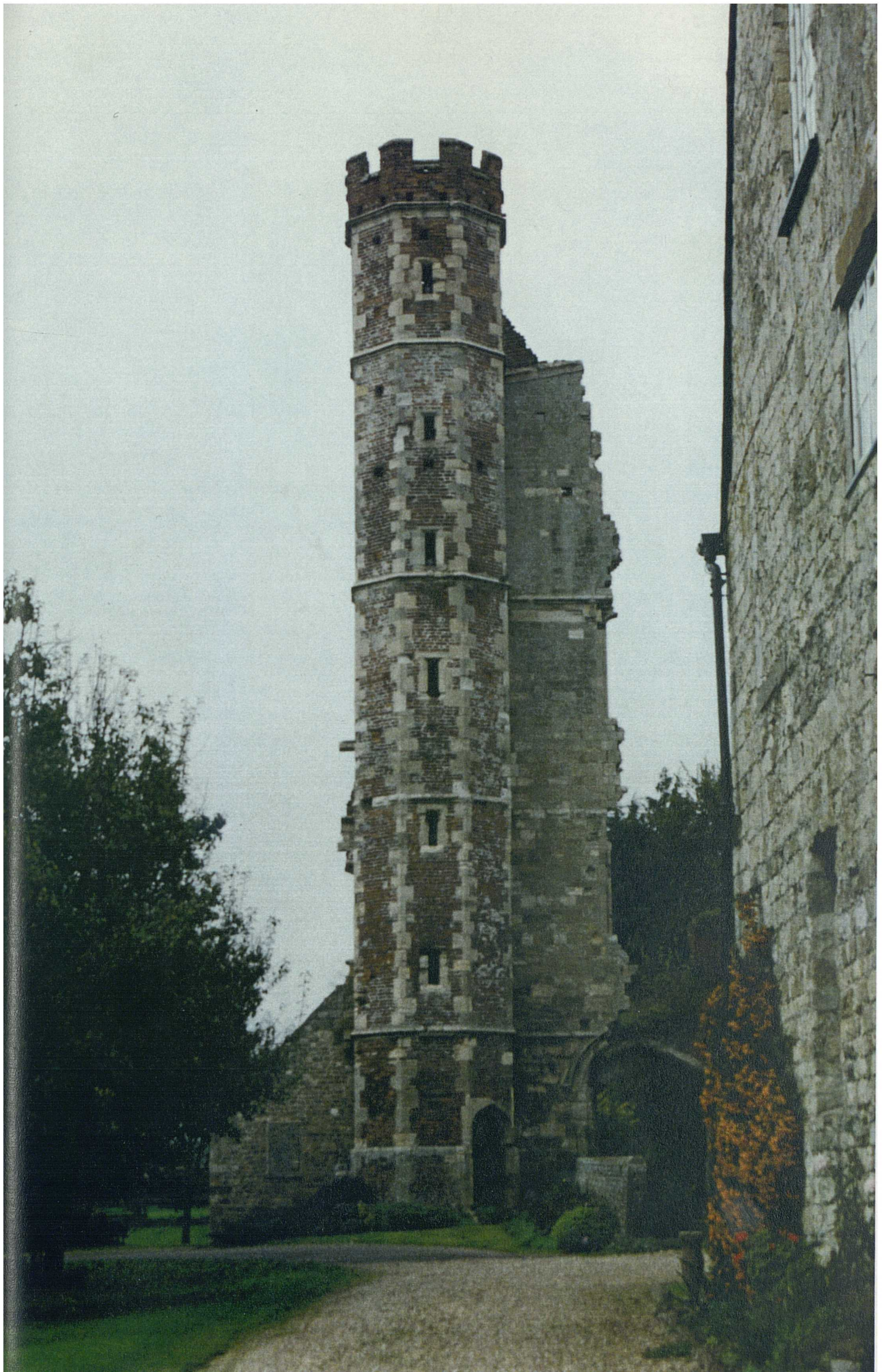






APPENDIX 13

**THE SURVIVING TOWER OF
WARBLINGTON CASTLE**



APPENDIX 14

THE PORTRAIT OF MARGARET POLE, COUNTESS OF SALISBURY¹

The portrait believed to be of Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, which is at present in the National Portrait Gallery, no. 2607, was originally owned by Colonel Selby-Lowndes, a descendent of Winifred Pole and Sir Thomas Barrington. Colonel Selby-Lowndes sold it in 1921 to a Mr Silva White for £1200, and it passed through several more hands before being presented to the National Portrait Gallery by the National Art Collections Fund in 1931. Its value in 1983 was estimated to be £40,000. In 1963, the scientific department of the gallery examined the portrait together with X-Radiographs made of it in 1932 by Kennedy North, and produced a five page report, the findings of which are discussed more concisely below.

The panel is of oak, the wood most commonly used in panel pictures of the sixteenth century. Tree ring dating suggested that the oak was felled in 1482, thus the most likely period of use is believed to have been between 1515-25, and this would concur with the historical facts. Margaret was restored to the Earldom of Salisbury in 1512, and would have commissioned the portrait shortly after that. Consequently, the portrait will have captured the countess at some point during her forties.

The ground on the panel is coated with a chalk/glue mixture, again common in a panel painting of this period. Although several areas of the picture have suffered from re-touchings over the years, the report disagreed with Kennedy North's supposition that there is, or was, white diaphanous drapery extending from the throat to the bodice. White lines either side of the neckline and just inside the edge of the white shawl were visible, but they had been painted on top of the original craquelure and, as a cleaning test revealed, in or on top of the varnish layer. In addition, it was felt that the black necklace may not be original, the black paint being on top of the craquelure of the original flesh paint beneath. In places beneath the black paint there appeared to be a greyish, opaque body colour in the form of beads. It was believed that this might suggest a pearl necklace threaded with links of gold chain.

¹ I am most grateful to the National Portrait Gallery Archives for the information in this Appendix.

The black stripes on the inner cap of the head-dress have either been extensively repainted or are a later addition, while it appeared that the ermine spots on the outer part of the head-dress had been painted over the original craquelure, which suggested that these too were later additions, and that originally the head-dress was of plain white fabric and not fur. Again the ermine spots on the outer sleeves did not appear to be original or the 'furry' effect along the top of the bodice, although the black and white work on the top edge of the bodice did seem to be original. However, when the picture was finally cleaned in 1973, the ermine spots did not in fact come off, which might after all, suggest authenticity. The hands have suffered damage as a result of a crack in the panel and it looks as though the black ribbon threaded through the fingers has been added to distract attention from this damage. The crack also continues through to the 'W' suspended from the ribbon, which the report again felt should be regarded with suspicion. The coral bracelet has undergone much repainting but there does appear to be red paint of an earlier version underneath. The ribbon around the wrist resembles closely the ribbon running between the fingers, and appears not to be original while tests revealed that the barrel suspended from it has no craquelure in the paint surface, although craquelure is present in the original paint beneath. Therefore it was felt that the barrel was likely to be a later addition. However, again when the picture underwent cleaning, neither the barrel or the 'W' disappeared. It is difficult to be certain about the authenticity of all the rings, but the ring with the reddish stone does have craquelure in the paint while the blue pigment of the gold and blue twisted ring was found to be azurite and so could be original. It is certainly unlikely to be as late as the nineteenth century. The green background would appear to be original, although it has suffered from re-touchings and the darker green areas nearer the edges of the picture were felt to be of doubtful authenticity. After cleaning, the background certainly became lighter, although dark areas have remained. Although the coat of arms which was on the left of the picture was not original, the presence of blue azurite pigment underneath suggested an earlier coat of arms, if not an original one, while it was thought that the inscription to the right of the picture was also repainted. These two features did disappear when the picture was cleaned.²

Roy Strong has discussed the portrait in his catalogue *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits*.³ By an unknown artist, the portrait is apparently an Anglo-Flemish work, which Strong dates to the 1530s. The inscription had stated that the countess was 62 years of age,

² The photograph of the painting used in this appendix was taken before the picture was cleaned.

³ Strong, R., *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits*, (H.M.S.O. London, 1969) pp. 271-73.

which would date it to 1535.⁴ However, the inscription was not contemporary, while it is unlikely that the countess would have waited 30 years to commission her portrait, although this portrait may have been preceded by an earlier one or ones. However, even allowing for the possible flattery of the portrait painter, Margaret does not look as old as 62 in the picture. It is impossible to be certain about the date, but as stated above, it was most probably painted shortly after her restoration, when she was adapting to her position as countess, and when a portrait would have been a prerequisite of her status. Strong also notes that the portrait was first recorded in 1785 as the 'Countess at Barrington Hall.' He believes that it might have descended from Winifred Pole, or that a Barrington lady of that date was 'dressed up' as the countess, from whose descent the family prided itself. He feels that doubts about the identity of the sitter can only be clarified by the appearance of a contemporary portrait of the countess. Certainly one existed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁵ He also considers that the presence of the 'W' suspended from her fingers cannot be explained unless the portrait was once intended for Winifred, who he wrongly describes as Margaret's daughter.⁶ It is however, most unlikely that the countess intended this portrait for Winifred, out of all her grandchildren. Moreover, the presence of the 'W' is not inexplicable when one considers that it might denote 'Warwick.' This could be an allusion not only to her descent, but to her unfortunate brother Edward, Earl of Warwick, to whose lands she was restored.

Strong fails to look for any family resemblance between this sitter and the extant portraits of George, Duke of Clarence and Reginald Pole which might help towards identification. The portrait of Clarence was painted in 1540 by Lucas Cornelisz, painter to Henry VIII, and it is strange that he chose to paint Clarence in 1540, when his daughter was a prisoner in the Tower under sentence of execution. Although, unfortunately, the painting is not contemporary, earlier portraits of the duke probably existed from which Cornelisz could work. Certainly, there does appear to be a resemblance between the duke and the subject in the painting believed to be his daughter. Obviously, the countess is somewhat older in her portrait than her father in his, for he was only 29 when he died, but although the face is older and gaunter, the length of the face and nose are similar. Although the countess's eyes are more sunken and smaller due to ageing, they are almond shaped with large lids as her father

⁴ Baker, C.H., 'Margaret Plantagenet, Countess of Salisbury' *The Burlington Magazine*, LXII (1933) 212.

⁵ Strong, R., *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits*, p. 273.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 272.

possesses in his portrait. Moreover, her thinner mouth reveals the rosebud shape of her father's while her hair colouring is also the same. The Duke's is fair, as is Margaret's from the very small amount it is possible to see beneath her hood. Reginald was also fair haired. This is clear from his contemporary portraits and the description of him by his secretary Beccatelli.⁷ He too possesses the heavy lidded almond shaped eyes, long nose and face, which is as similarly gaunt as his mother's towards the end of his life.

The symbolism in the picture is somewhat limited. The barrel, should it be authentic, is obviously an allusion to the Duke of Clarence and the supposed manner of his execution. The suspended 'W' as noted above, again if authentic, must stand for Warwick. Between the thumb and index finger of her left hand she holds a sprig of honeysuckle. This flower was a symbol of affection, marriage, bonds of love and sweetness of disposition,⁸ and thus might refer to the countess's late husband, Sir Richard Pole. Similarly, the choice of her sober dress might also be a token of her widowhood, while the possibly authentic ermine spots advertise her status. The picture is a modest representation of the countess. She wears no large or impressive pieces of jewellery while the edge of her bodice is not trimmed with jewels nor her gable hood marked by an ornamental border. Somewhat lugubrious, the portrait does have a mausoleum atmosphere about it alluding as it does to several deceased personages; the countess's late husband, father and brother. Tall and slender with delicate hands, a pale complexion and the fair to auburn hair of the Plantagenet's combined with the charming facial features of her father, in youth Margaret must have been a most attractive woman. With a serene dignity about her face and a wistful look in her eyes, this sombre representation is perhaps the most fitting depiction of such a tragic individual.

⁷ 'he was fair and yellow-haired.' Pye, B., *The Life of Cardinal Reginald Pole*, p. 132.

⁸ *The Tudor Garden*, courtesy of Tudor House, Bugle Street, Southampton; *The Language of Flowers* (London, 1994). I am most grateful to Mrs Vera Lewis for drawing my attention to the latter work.



Portrait of a Noblewoman
Hans Memling
c. 1480

APPENDIX 15

THE 1876 EXHUMATION OF THE REMAINS OF MARGARET POLE, COUNTESS OF SALISBURY¹

On Saturday 11 November, 1876, as part of the restoration work in the chapel of St Peter ad Vincula at the Tower of London, it was necessary to temporarily remove the remains of several persons from the south side of the chancel. The remains of a tall female, considerably advanced in years, are believed to be those of Margaret, Countess of Salisbury. They were found lying in a south-east direction, near to the wall of the chancel in close proximity to the remains of another female, approximately 30-40 years of age, believed to be those of Jane, Viscountess Rochford. Both groups had been considerably disturbed, and many bones were found to be missing.

An examination of Margaret's remains revealed that she had been tall, certainly of above average height. Although the skeleton was not complete, part of the skull had survived with the left orbit complete. In addition, portions of the breast bone, pelvis, forearms, collar bones, fibulae and a portion of the humerus in the upper arm had survived. Also, one finger bone and four vertebrae were intact. It was not considered necessary to make further examination of the remains and they were carefully placed in a box in the 'Queen's House' until the leaden coffer was ready for their re-internment in the same place.

¹ For this report of the exhumation, Bell, C.D., *Notices of the Historic Persons buried in the Chapel of St Peter Ad Vincula*, pp. 24, 29.

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