THE STAFFORDSHIRE POLITICAL COMMUNITY 1440-1500

IAN DOUGLAS ROWNEY

VOLUME II

Submitted to fulfil the requirements of the University of Keele for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, 1981
CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH
An oft-neglected aspect of the county community in studies of other counties at this period has been the role of the clergy and in particular the clerical nobility. In this chapter I intend to present such a survey for Staffordshire, examining how clergy and laity interacted and were to a large extent inter-dependent. My emphasis is on the social and economic rather than the sacerdotal relationship. Most of the chapter deals with the bishopric of Coventry and Lichfield, as this was by far the most important and wealthy religious institution in the shire; but some space has been spared for Burton Abbey and some of the other local monastic houses. Supplementary material can be found in other chapters, particularly the one on crime and disorder, in which the activities of criminous clerks are touched upon.

Most of my sources for the bishopric are drawn from the account rolls and episcopal registers found in the County Record Office, the William Salt Library (both at Stafford), the diocesan Joint Record Office at Lichfield, and the Public Record Office at Chancery Lane, London. There is a reasonable run of estate accounts from 1424 to the Reformation. The only significant gap in these is between 1429 and 1444, though many of those for the early sixteenth century are mere paper draft accounts. Some of these are so mixed up that accurate dating is almost impossible. Further research might rectify this and add more names to the list of estate officials included among the appendices to this thesis.

The diocese of Coventry and Lichfield covered most of the north-west Midlands including Staffordshire. The cathedra of the bishop had moved between Chester, Coventry and Lichfield several times since the installation of the
first incumbent in 656. By the later middle ages, although the bishop was frequently styled as of Chester, the see's centre was firmly at Lichfield in south-eastern Staffordshire. This was not one of the most sought-after episcopal offices, being not particularly wealthy. It was regarded by ambitious clergymen as more of a staging post from which a bid for one of the more prestigious and wealthy sees might be anticipated.

Of the nine bishops here in the fifteenth century, four were translated from even more isolated and impecunious sees: John Burghill from Llandaff in 1398, John Catterick from St. Davids in 1415, Nicholas Close from Carlisle in 1452 and Reginald Boulers from Hereford in 1453. For the others, three deans, one abbot and the chancellor to Queen Margaret of Anjou, Coventry and Lichfield was their first episcopal appointment. Within these nine men can be found most of the varieties of later medieval bishop.

I begin with the saintly John Heyworth (1419-47), who had been persuaded to leave the wealthy cloisters of St. Albans for this position. The late eighteenth-century antiquarian, the Rev. Stebbing Shaw, was perhaps a little cynical and over-influenced by the clerical mores of his own day when he cited approvingly in his antiquarian study of Staffordshire Fuller's Church History concerning Heyworth:

'Wonder not that he should leave the richest abbey of England....In temporal considerations the poorest bishop was better (and might be more beneficial to his kindred) than the richest abbot, seeing he by will might bequeath his estates to his heirs.'

To be fair, Shaw does later describe Heyworth as 'a person of sharp judgment and learning', but he nowhere mentions the patent conscientiousness which later scholars have come to regard as one of the bishop's greatest virtues. The interest
he took in the affairs of the diocese, particularly after the absenteeism of his predecessor, was rivalled only by Boulers and Halse among his successors in the century. Toward the end of Heyworth's life, the Lord Chancellor, Bishop John Stafford, wrote asking that he 'putte remedy' to a complaint from Lady Audley concerning a patron who was apparently unwilling to provide a priest for the vacant chapel of St. Michael, Shrewsbury 'in whos defaute the parisshons decease withoute their ryghts.'

Heyworth's register indicates that he was not the sort of man to allow such a situation to prevail for long. Its numerous references to visitations, ordinations and various sorts of dispensation (e.g. to marry within the prohibited bounds of consanguinity to divorce, to take up a benefice with cure of souls though one had been illegitimate) testify to his activity as bishop. His was an episcopacy upon which contemporaries doubtlessly looked back with affection and approval—in contrast to that of his successor.

No later-medieval bishop of Coventry and Lichfield attracted such a torrent of abuse as did William Booth (1447-52). He came from Lancashire gentry stock and was only one of three brothers who took up the bishop's mitre. He was a pluralist, who like many an episcopal colleague, owed his office to the patronage of the Crown and leading noblemen at court. Booth was closely allied to Suffolk and the queen Margaret of Anjou (whose chancellor he was). As such, he was persecuted in the disturbances of 1450. In the previous year he had been the butt of a vicious poetic diatribe. I remain unconvinced that all of the flaws alluded to therein relate to Booth's personal record; much is characteristic of the standard medieval railing against evil councillors. In the poem parallels were drawn between the rule of Suffolk's faction and the corruption of Classical times,
particularly as regards the manipulation of the law. In the pieces aimed directly at the bishop, his general unfitness for his office was firstly proclaimed:

'Thy goode and thy catelle made the to mete
With the churche of Chester, whiche crieth alas
That to suche a mafflarde marryede she was.'

Here it is implied that Booth bought his office in some way. Next the poet proceeded to divide the court faction into two classes, traitors and the covetous, placing Booth in the latter as one 'that servyth silvyre and levyth the law outro.'

How justified were these and other attacks? For many, his was just not the sort of background from which bishops should be drawn. Judging from the repetitious blasts of the humourless Thomas Gascoigne, Booth's greatest sin was not a lack of personal virtue, but that timeless failing of not being an Oxbridge graduate. His 'vices' indeed seem to have sprung from this deficiency. Booth was not uneducated. He had passed through Gray's Inn and was thus condemned for mixing holy orders with a legal training— an incestuous union at the best of times. Furthermore, when he was translated to York in 1452 the fact that the chapter there had not had a free hand in the election was also held against him. Here Gascoigne found it convenient to forget that free elections to vacant sees had never been standard practice. While at York Booth 'qui nec est bonus grammaticus, nec scientificus, nec virtuosus reputatus, nec graduatus, sed legista juris regni' was accused by Gascoigne of conferring benefices and prebends on youngsters. I find no proof that such was his practice at Lichfield, though six of the ten new prebendaries appointed during his episcopacy held no degree. Many charges against him undoubtedly sprang from political animosity for his principal preoccupation was not the affairs of his diocese but maintaining his faction's domination of government. In 1450
he had obtained papal permission for his duties of visiting religious houses in his diocese to be vested in a deputy. This was ostensibly because he had argued that it was less burdensome to be descended upon by episcopal officials than by the bishop himself, but actually it stemmed from a lack of time to spare from his work at court. A few months later he was placed third in a parliamentary list of evil councillors (behind Somerset and the widowed Duchess of Suffolk) 'by whos undue means', it was alleged, the royal possessions have been 'gretely amenused.' The accused were ordered to stay at least a dozen miles from the King.

Booth's successor at Coventry and Lichfield, Bishop Nicholas Close of Carlisle, had been one of the six original scholars at King's College, Cambridge and was presumably a man favoured by Henry VI. However, he died within three months of his translation and had no time to leave a mark on his new diocese. He was followed by Reginald Boulers (1453-9). Like Booth, Boulers had been a friend of Suffolk and Somerset, enjoying their patronage. Unlike Booth, he endeavoured to remain as free from politics as possible. All the same, he does appear in parliamentary records and was appointed to the council of the infant Prince of Wales in January 1457.

There seems to have been a consistent link between the court faction and this see from the late 1440s until the dawn of the Yorkist sun in 1461. With Coventry being such a favourite haunt of both Henry VI and Margaret, it is small wonder that an interest was taken in the affairs of the diocese. Bishop Booth had been one of those 'that for the swayne sewe'—the swan being the badge of the Queen. One of her chaplains, John Whelpdale, became Lichfield Cathedral's prebendaries of Longdon (1454-8) and of Tarvin (1458-90) and episcopal receiver-general under Boulers (and possibly under Booth too). This Lancastrian link
was at its closest in September 1459 when another of Margaret's chaplains, the Devonshire-born John Halse, was provided to the see following the death of Boulers.

Halse was an Oxford University theologian and academic, who had collected prebends at York, St. Paul's and Exeter. In 1456, while Archdeacon of Norfolk, he had been elected bishop of his native diocese of Exeter, but had then been persuaded to relinquish this in favour of George Neville. The Queen soon compensated him for this loss by arranging for papal dispensation that he might hold an otherwise incompatible benefice with his archdeaconry, and he was promptly appointed Dean at Exeter. She also obtained for him the first vacant bishopric, which was Coventry and Lichfield.

After 1461 Halse begot an accommodation of sorts with the Yorkists. He needed to, after allowing Margaret to use his palace at Eccleshall as a headquarters in 1459 and arranging the escape of her and her infant son after the disaster at Blore Heath, Whelpdale too had problems to be sorted out with the new rulers. He had been noted among the Lancastrians at Towton and was thus duly attainted. Furthermore, Halse's receiver-general Edmund Basset was constrained to behave himself, as he had been active (presumably on Halse's orders) attempting to stir up the episcopal tenantry on Henry VI's behalf. In December 1460 and July 1461 commissions were issued for his arrest 'touching false news' he had been spreading against the Yorkist hierarchy. Those directed to seize him were Sir John Gresley, Ralph Wolseley and the Wrottesleys— all committed Yorkists. Yet there is no evidence that Basset was forced to go into hiding, quite the opposite. He continued with his
regular estate duties, travelling around the episcopal estates, scrutinising accounts and collecting revenue. Indeed, on 19 July 1461, just two days before the issue of the second commission for his arrest, he and his wife were dining quietly with Wolseley's parents and the Bishop at Haywood. The only other guest present then was Thomas Arblaster (a Stafford family lawyer and episcopal office-holder), so the after-dinner conversation may well have concentrated upon ironing out difficulties between the Yorkists and the see.

With the advent of Yorkist rule Halse and his fellow Lancastrian sympathisers could not expect preferment unless those sympathies were patently altered. Matters, however, soon quietened down, though the Bishop had to wait until 10 February for his pardon. If Edward IV suspected that Halse was incorrigible, he was right. During the Readeption Halse became keeper of the privy seal, and took on another of Margaret Of Anjou's chaplains, Andrew Docket, as Chancellor of Lichfield Cathedral. His own strained relationship with the Yorkists probably explains why he never climbed higher up the episcopal ladder. His stay at Coventry and Lichfield lasted some thirty-one years (1459–90) and has been described as 'serene paternalism'. He devoted much time and patronage to improving the academic standard of Lichfield's chapter. Nearly three-quarters of new prebendaries during his term in office (excluding of course exchanges within the chapter) were graduates. Four were doctors of Theology, while most of the rest were canon lawyers. It was a case of one academic helping others in the hope that eventually his would be a bishopric filled 'ex academiis eruditos et discretos viros'. Shaw wrote of him:

'This holy father found this church in a bad condition,
and therefore...he sent for certain learned and discreet men from the universities, whom he preferred to the prebend, and the offices in the church.'22

Like Halse, the final two bishops of Coventry and Lichfield in the fifteenth century, William Smith (1492-6) and John Arundel (1496-1502), were Oxford graduates.23 Smith even became Chancellor of the university for two years later. They were kindred spirits and, though both certainly played the part of an ecclesiastical courtier with interests in politics, it is to Halse rather than Booth that they are best likened. Halse had chosen the losing side in the wars of the roses and paid for it. Smith and Arundel prospered under the victorious Tudor banner of Henry VII. Before moving to Coventry and Lichfield William Smith had been Dean of St. Stephens, Westminster and Archdeacon of Surrey. He was a native of Lancashire and had links with the see before being consecrated bishop here, being prebendar of Syerscote in the collegiate church at Tamworth. A fervent academic, he was one of the founders of Brasenose Hall, Oxford and, revealing an interest in the scholastic health of this his first see, provided for a principal and twelve fellows there to be drawn from the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield (if possible from Lancashire too). Although he was a royal councillor, Lord President of the Council of the Marches of Wales and sat in the court of Star Chamber, he somehow found time for affairs in Staffordshire. There are a couple of arbitration cases he helped to decide in 149424, and he also founded the hospital of St. John's, Lichfield for a master, two priests and ten poor men.25

When Smith moved on to more valuable pastures as Bishop of Lincoln in 1496 he was succeeded at Coventry and Lichfield by John Arundel. Arundel, in the 'best' traditions of later-medieval bishops, had been a royal chaplain- to Edward IV from 1479 to 1483. In this, as in his being Dean of Exeter when translated, he followed John Halse. It was to Exeter that
he returned as bishop in 1502. There is little to write concerning him. As was common, he collected a long list of benefices during his career. However, he was mainly notable for being Chancellor to the infant Prince Arthur. He came, sojourned and left, all quietly.

By the end of the fifteenth century the diocesan administration had developed (possibly through necessity) a near-autonomous existence, thus compensating for long periods of absence or disinterest on the part of incumbents at St. Chad's Cathedral. Such absences were not unusual. Since bishops, with their immense landholdings, wealth, education and influence, had always been political appointees, it is hardly surprising that so many of them were political animals. This may have made it difficult for them to be regarded as spiritual leaders, but that was only one of their roles and perhaps not the most important at that. All of these bishops were different, though I have drawn attention to whatever similarities that can be found between them. Such similarities refer to their careers, but woefully little evidence survives as to character and tastes, making it foolhardy to venture sweeping generalisations on those scores. Professor Hilton has described the bishops of Coventry and Lichfield in the fourteenth century as 'promoted civil servants with national rather than local preoccupations', but for the fifteenth century they were less servants than academics on the make.

Hilton's study of Staffordshire concluded that in the fourteenth century the county was led, if not quite dominated by the two main landholders there, the Earls of Lancaster and the Bishops of Coventry and Lichfield. Later generations saw a change in this balance of power. There was
a gradual erosion of episcopal influence and, once Earl Henry of Lancaster had seized the throne in 1399, there was also a reduction in the personal interest of his family in this area. Hilton lists eight principal manors of the bishopric in Staffordshire: Baswich, Brewood, Cannock(bury), Eccleshall, Haywood, Longdon and Rugeley. All but two of these (Baswich and Longdon) had lucrative markets. By the middle of the fifteenth century Baswich had been incorporated into Haywood manor and Haywood itself had lost its market—probably due to competition with the one at nearby Rugeley which too was held on Thursdays. The episcopal property cut a swathe across the heavily-wooded centre and south-east of Staffordshire. It also extended beyond the county border to Wybunbury(Cheshire) and Prees(Shropshire) in the west and to the three Warwickshire manors of Chadshunt, Itchington and Tachbrook beyond Coventry in the east. In addition, there were isolated estates at Sawley-by-Derby(Derbyshire), Farndon, Tarvin and Burton-in-Wirral (all north Cheshire) and several London houses. The Staffordshire property was now organised around a different octet of manors: Brewood, Cannock, Eccleshall, Haywood, Lichfield, Longdon, Rugeley and Whittington. There were lesser estates at Beaudesert and Blore-by-Eccleshall. As a residence, Lichfield was preferred to the monastic Coventry and when not on business at London the bishops made frequent use of other Staffordshire residences at Beaudesert, Eccleshall and Haywood.

To determine the state of the episcopal finances and understand the relationship between bishop and county community requires the scrutiny of numerous account rolls and diverse deeds. Through these some idea of the structure of estate management and the pattern of income and expenditure may be derived.
THE ESTATES OF THE BISHOPRIC OF COVENTRY AND LICHFIELD

x denotes other lands within the manors.

Cannock Chase
The bishops of Coventry and Lichfield, like any lay lord, required competent, literate and numerate administrators for their estates. These would maintain the short- and long-term supply of produce and specie upon which their power and status largely depended. There was a distinct difference in social rank between those whose official responsibility was limited to an individual manor (usually yeomen or minor gentlemen) and the major estate and household administrators (important gentlemen) to whom the former group had to account. Stewards were normally of a higher rank than bailiffs and rent collectors. The bishop had at his disposal a large number of offices, each of which would provide influence and perquisites for the holder according to its power. Some posts were usually reserved for patronage purposes, often with the work being done by a deputy—e.g. the parkers of Haywood, riders of Cannock wood and collectors of ad hoc rents in Rugeley. Other posts, more time-consuming and less profitable, were filled by the abler of the bishop's tenants; usually yeomen and probably recommended by the stewards or receiver-general. The structure of episcopal estate management was simple and not unusual. Manorial stewards, bailiffs, rent collectors and farmers were accountable to the receiver, as were parkers for their financial responsibilities. Parkers were otherwise put under the master forester. There was also an auditor to check the accounts and a steward and bailiff for the bishop's liberty.

The plethora of estate appointments can best be understood when divided into three categories: manorial officials, supervisory staff and sinecure appointments. These categories were not exclusive, but they are a useful distinction.
The first of these groups contained men whose lives were led mainly on or around the manor to which they were appointed. These were the stewards, bailiffs, rent collectors and parkers. Stewards tended to be a cut above the rest, being drawn from gentry families whose property was either held of the bishop or closely intertwined with episcopal lands. For the bailiffs and rent collectors, the normal term in office was a twelvemonth and rarely above two or three years. Exceptions to this occurred when certain posts, perhaps by tradition perhaps for administrative convenience, were held in severalty. The balliwick of Longdon, Beaudesert and the ad hoc rents in Rugeley were held by a single individual during the second half of the fifteenth century, and that of Haywood was added to these early in the sixteenth. The bailiff of Lichfield and collector of nearby Hittington were also usually the same person. Under the Yorkists, and afterwards, the Cheshire estates of Tarvin, Burton-in-Wirral and Farndon were administered by the same man, John Brown, later the episcopal steward; and by 1484-5 Thomas Halley was bailiff of all the bishop's property in Warwickshire. From this it is tempting to talk of the development of a layer in the administrative system between manorial official and receiver. Each accountable unit would be supervised directly by either the nominal bailiff or more likely his deputy, but local clusters of manors were developing under one man, though each manor was accounted for separately. Two other posts were also held in severalty because of overlapping jurisdictions. The bishop's free chase at Cannock was administered through the manor of Haywood, so it is not surprising that the ridership of Cannock wood and parkership of Haywood were held jointly. This linking of offices gave additional influence to whoever held them, but there is no evidence that any attempt was made by the gentry of the area to monopolise this source of
patronage. It seems unlikely that they were uninterested in the same; perhaps the bishops did not need to sweeten the gentry as much as did the lay nobility. This is not to say that no such sweetening went on; quite the opposite was true, as we shall see.

The majority of officeholders were drawn from the ranks of the literate yeom-yny of the episcopal estates; men who could not aspire to county office, though were occasionally used as electors in parliamentary elections or as collectors of subsidies. Occasionally, more exalted names appear in the lists of estate officials. Centry cooperation was needed for the smooth running of the bishop's estates and his could be a lucrative patronage forming a valuable supplement to the family prestige and coffers. Usually it was an elder son who was appointed to an estate post by the bishop, such as John Stanley of Elford who became collector of Whittington 1448-9. These appointments served partly to keep an heir busy, for idleness (as events on the Derbyshire border showed) could lead to antagonism and expensive litigation; and partly to enable the young man to acquire valuable experience in estate management and accountancy, which would serve him well when he came into his own inheritance. The heir to the Aston family from the northern edge of Cannock chase was appointed collector of the ad hoc rents in Rugeley in 1447, 1465 and probably 1491, while a younger son of the Astleys of Patshull held the post 1484-5. This particular office seems to have held some considerable attraction for the local gentry as in 1473 and 1497 the powerful Ralph Wolseley, whose family was the only one capable of rivalling the Astons around Rugeley, accepted appointment to it. On the former occasion he too was still the heir to his family's estates, though by then he had been a baron of the Exchequer and was in need of neither an independent income from the bishop nor administrative experience.
The involvement of sons of gentry associates helped to strengthen ties between the see and successive generations of its lay neighbours. Many of the young men would have been educated in the bishop's household, like John Harcourt of Ranton, whose family enjoyed a position in the Eccleshall area equal to, if not greater than, that of the Astons and Wolseleys around Rugeley and Abbots Bromley. Usually, however, it was the educated yeomanry and minor gentlemen that the bishops turned to for their manorial officials. The extremes in class were well illustrated in the 1470s when the collector of ad hoc rents in Rugeley for 1473-4 was the eminent Ralph Wolseley, but four years later it was a poor widow Agnes Weston, who was his tenant.30

As with the Stafford family, the bishops operated an administrative ladder which could be scaled by the able, but lowly-of-birth. This might take a lifetime, or in the case of a family in episcopal service, more than one lifetime. Few names appear in both Stafford and bishop's service, and where they do, as with the Astons and Arblasters, one lord was favoured above the other. Evidence is not lacking of yeoman families giving service over more than one generation to the affairs of the see. Among the collectors of ad hoc rents in Rugeley William and John Smith (1428-9 and 1466-7), John and William Willot (1449-50 and 1470-1), and Nicholas and Richard Norman (1454-5 and 1468-9) were probably fathers and sons; while at Cannock the collectors William and John Brook (1426-7 and 1466-7 & 1474-5), and William and Richard Chapman (1454-5 and 1463-4) seem likely to have been similarly related. Certainly at Blore-by-Eccleshall two generations of Kenricks served as parker, and son followed father as the Rugeleys of Shenston held the ridership of Cannock wood from the early 1420s until 1459. However, the Thomas Rugeley of Hawksyard who was sometime collector of Whittington and of ad hoc rents in Rugeley was not related to these.
It was through these lesser men rather than the local knights and squires, that such links as the bishop possessed with his estates and tenantry were maintained. It was for this reason that they figured so frequently as dinner guests at the episcopal table alongside the pride of the county gentry. It was for this reason that they figured so frequently as dinner guests at the episcopal table alongside the pride of the county gentry.31

Like so e of the gentry, it is possible that some of the yeomen received an education of sorts in the bishop's household. Certainly they were employed for wider services than the mere collection of rents and dues or protection of the property against poachers (of whom, as the Plea Rolls reveal, there were any). They were the bishop's men and were expected to take an active part in his quarrels. For instance, it was Thomas Butler, the long-serving collector of Lichfield's tradesmen for Dean Verney in an episcopally-inspired riot there in 1442 against the Stanleys.32

This role as marshaller of the tenantry was important. If the bishop wanted a crowd, it was to his estate officials—those closest to the tenants—that he relied upon to arrange for this.

In Bishop Halsey's long struggle with the Wolseleys over illegal enclosures they had erected at Wolseley to the detriment of the right of episcopal tenants, three sortées were made to destroy the constructions, in 1466, 1479 and 1483.33 The bishop's tenants were led by many current or sometime officeholders of his. Those supervising the initial assault included the Stanleys, the receiver-general Edmund Basset, the rider of Cannock wood John Egerton, a former collector of Whittington John Shaw, and a couple of the Rugeleys of Hawksyard.34 In 1479 Richard Shirbourne, soon to be a leading cleric in the diocese and also receiver-general, led such bishop's men as John More, William Nevowe and William Wood; while four years later Shirbourne's associates in the raid included the Halses of Haywood, Ralph Nevowe, Thomas Nixon and Ralph Salt.
The bishopric had never been particularly wealthy, its endowments being adequate rather than lavish. In June 1448 the newly-installed Bishop William Booth found it expedient to consult with his two deans and then petition Rome for permission to close down or at least be excused having to keep in good repair many of 'the excessive number of palaces, castles, manors, lodgings' and other buildings of his within the diocese.35 How far this stemmed from short-term economic pressures, how far it was Booth merely wishing to increase his own income in the knowledge that the buildings would go unused due to his proccessation with matters of state in Westminster, and how far this was a move of long-term financial wisdom as the bishopric relieved itself of what had perennially been an unnecessary drain on its resources is uncertain. It was probably a combination of all of these.

Assessing the financial health of the see is difficult, and not helped by the way in which economic historians disagree over what constitutes reliable data. Dr. Carole Rawcliffe's work on the Staffords has shown that

'It was possible to offset long-term economic and organisational difficulties by careful management, and while this situation continued Buckingham had no immediate cause for concern. This was also the case in Staffordshire, where from 1450 onwards arrearages accounted for more than two thirds of the receiver's total charge....Most of it comprised 'real' debts, often written off years before. Paradoxically, clear receipts remained fairly constant.' 36

This could apply almost word for word to the estates of the bishops of Coventry and Lichfield. Arrears distort and confuse the financial picture, but, as Dr. Pollard has pointed out in his study on the Talbots at Whitchurch (Shropshire), it does not follow that failure to collect these arrears or even their very accumulation is a sure measure of
inefficiency. In the accounts of the bishopric confusion is exacerbated by the lack of any detailed breakdown of many of the constituent elements in the charge and discharge, including arrears. It should also be remembered that arrears were written off on the death or departure of an incumbent or at least they were supposed to be. Curiously the large amount of arrears in the account for the new rents in Rugeley was not cancelled in 1447, nor were the Whittington arrears in 1447, 1452, 1453 or 1459. Perhaps their size made the new man or receiver-general reluctant to follow the standard practice.

Some officials, such as the collector of Beaudesert and rider of Cannock wood, who had only a limited range or amount of accountable elements within their spheres of responsibility, consistently showed few or no arrears in their accounts. These were the exceptions. Most bailiwicks showed arrears which need interpreting. A fairly static figure over a long period, as at Rugeley (new rents) before 1454 or in Haywood manor or the park there under the Yorkists, suggests the existence of one-off or old debts which successive bailiffs have ignored or been unable to collect. During the years 1459-62 Ralph Bishton's bailiwick of Haywood ran up arrears of £31, which had been reduced to £22 under later officials by the time of Bishton's death in 1475. Significantly, Bishton's widow was sued in that year by Bishop Halse for a debt of £20. (All these figures are rounded off to the nearest pound.) It was the arrears, unpaid for a generation, which made up this debt and were the major element in the Haywood arrears until they were finally written off in 1486. Between Michaelmas 1485 and Michaelmas 1486 the arrears there dropped from £26 to twenty-two shillings.
A decline in the arrears of a bailiwick could indicate either the repayment or cancelling of debts or that allowances for the preceding year which had been accepted too late to appear in that year's account and consequently showed up as arrears were now recognized. This probably explains the annual ups and downs in the accounts of Longdon and Rugeley (new rents) under Bishop Heyworth. A general increase in arrears is equally difficult to be certain about. Large and/or growing arrears may indicate that revenue was not being raised because of bad harvests, tenant intransigence, administrative slackness or corruption. However, although none of these can ever be completely ruled out, the major factor was usually the cumulative effect of old, often petty debts or vacant tenancies, the expected rents for which the bailiff was nevertheless being held accountable. The example of Haywood in the 1460s and 1470s has already been mentioned in this respect. To it may be added that of the arrears of the collector of new rents in Rugeley. The arrears there in the six surviving accounts between 1424 and 1445 show an average arrears figure of £24-25 a year, whereas during the rest of the century the arrears never again reached £10- and it took the cumulative effect of over twenty-five years to produce that figure in 1485. The usual figure was well below £4 and the most likely reason for the high arrears before 1445 is that there were substantial uncollected or uncollectable debts predating Henry VI's reign, which mask an otherwise highly efficient administration.

Perhaps the best way to understand the financial situation is to deduct the figure for arrears from the total charge in the accounts of each bailiwick. Once this is done
a picture of a reasonably stable or marginally falling income is revealed. Consider the manor of Whittington in the prosperous south-east of the county. The total charge on the rent-collector there in 1425 was £55. Fifty years later this had risen to £203. However, a closer examination of this latter sum reveals that over three-quarters of it consisted of arrears and that if arrears were subtracted from both the 1425 and 1475 totals, the charge had actually decreased during the period by just over £2 from £49 to £47.

Charting the course of the rise of the arrears total in the Whittington accounts, there was a steady rise through the century apparently unaffected by the passage of bishops or collectors: £6 in 1425, £16 in 1429, £29 in 1444, £34 in 1457, £43 in 1462, £77 in 1464, £106 in 1469, £159 in 1475 and £188 in 1485. As with the Bishton debt at Haywood, some of Whittington's arrears were finally written off at this point and by Michaelmas 1486 the figure stood at a comparatively modest £73— in itself the equivalent of eighteen months revenue from the manor. On the translations of Bishops Smith and Arundel the slate was again wiped clean, but by Michaelmas 1498 an arrears total of £45 appears on the account. Something evidently was very wrong with the theoretical charge on the collector, for the charge less arrears (except in freak high years like 1476 and 1504) stayed persistently between £41 and £52, usually closer to the latter.

The example of Whittington could be repeated on other of the bishop's manors, particularly at Cannock (the value of which never varied from between £17 and £20 during the century) and Longdon (charged at £35 plus arrears). From the scant evidence that exists for the bishopric in general, it
appears that this pattern of stable or slightly falling revenue (arrears discounted) holds generally. There were naturally annual fluctuations, but no sharp decline in the monetary estate income of the bishopric.

I have twice pointed out sudden changes in the arrears figures for estates between the Michaelmases of 1485 and 1486. From these, it seems plausible to suggest that some financial reappraisal took place during that period, which significantly coincides with the first full year in office of Archdeacon Richard Shirbourne as receiver-general. He had succeeded Bishop Halse's namesake on whose death early in 1485 it had become apparent that the estate income was gradually being eroded. Shirbourne and his successors fought to counter this. However, this could not be done without opposition. Elizabeth Brews wrote to John Paston III around 1488:

'We ladys and jentil-women in this contrey that is wedows be sore trobyled with the Bysshop of Chestre, and haskeith of vs more than we may pay.'

Beaudesert provides a pertinent, if somewhat extreme example of the general picture. In 1424 the charge on the demesne lands was £10/4s/0d. By 1457 this had fallen to £4/15s/6\(\frac{1}{2}\)d and by 1476 it was a miserable 14s/6d. None of this decline was due to any renting out or sales. In 1486 the figure had risen slightly to £1/14s/4d and was up to £5/5s/8d by 1504. The historian Thomas Harwood gives a figure of £7/13s/4d for 1534, which was still less than it was a century earlier, though a marked improvement on the slough of despond entered into under the Yorkists. In those dark days rents to the bishop from Eccleshall had fallen by at least a third over the previous two hundred years.

There was also a Tudor revival in both the numbers of seigneurial courts on the episcopal estates and the income.
derived therefrom. Income from these fluctuated annually to a greater extent than any other element in the charge of a bailiff. Sawley, Frees and the three north Cheshire manors held courts, though the last of these did very little business. Tachbrook was alone among the Warwickshire estates in holding a court and presumably heard suits and administered entry fines for the other lands in that county. Within Staffordshire there were courts at Eccleshall, Brewood, Haywood, Cannock, Rugeley and Lichfield. Matters from Whittington and Longdon were determined at Lichfield, though accounted in the Whittington records. For Cannock and Rugeley, by the fifteenth century the earlier alternation of court between the two had broken down, probably due to increased pressure of work. Henceforth, both towns held regular courts to which cases from either might be brought.

In the half century before 1485 profits of court fell by over a third and the numbers of sessions held by about half. However, some years were worse than others and annual fluctuations can make a nonsense of any attempt to link too closely these twin declines. For example, the nineteen courts and two views of frankpledge held in Rugeley in 1449–50 raised only £1/17s/6d, while in 1480–1 only eight courts and two views there brought in £2/18s/0½d. The accounts give no indication as to what comprised the perquisites of court. It seems likely, however, that the increase in income, which was interestingly not paralleled by a similar increase in the number of courts held, was due mainly to increased entry fines on customary and copyhold leasees, as part of the general episcopal drive against falling income from its estates.
Often some discrepancy exists between the figures for the charge less arrears given in the individual manorial accounts and those in the receiver-general's account. In most cases the figure in the individual account is usually the larger. I presume that during the time between the drawing up of the manorial account and that of the receiver later either there were deliveries of money to the receiver or that more acquittances for expenditure had been accepted, thus reducing the outstanding charge and explaining the discrepancy.

An overall figure for the value of the bishop's estates is difficult to produce. Though a large number of accounts survive, these mainly refer to land in central and south-eastern Staffordshire. I can discover only two accounts for Preees and Wybunbury and very few for Eccleshall, Sawley and the extra-Staffordshire properties. There are a couple of receiver-general's accounts, for 1463-4 and 1472-3, and one for 22 August to 29 September 1485.\(^4\) A partial account for the second half of the year ending Michaelmas 1459 also survives\(^4\), along with full accounts for 1484-5 and two conflicting totals for 1533-4.\(^4\) The account for March-September 1459 gives a total charge (there were no arrears mentioned) of £248, but omits eight sources of revenue worth an extra £100 in that period. This might suggest an overall total of around £700, but it is doubtful whether income was derived equally from each half of the year. The account for 1463-4 gives a charge of £921 with arrears of £321, making a clear charge of £600; the like totals in 1472-3 were £1127, £310 and £310. In 1484-5 there was a clear estate charge of £791 to which should be added £40 from the Archdeaconry of Chester, and other petty sundries which would raise the total to about £850. The account for harvest-time 1485 (August-September) gives a clear charge of £455, once arrears of
72\textsuperscript{st} of the original charge are allowed for. For 1534 Thomas Harwood puts the bishop's income at £756; while sometime earlier Thomas Tanner had set that figure at £703. It is difficult to make any confident assertion as to the episcopal estate income, but a figure of between £750 and £800 seems likeliest to prove a workable mean around which to judge the annual yield and fluctuations.

The following table gives some idea of the relative value of the individual estates. I have included any separately accounted-for parks within their respective manors. The figures are drawn from the manorial accounts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANNUAL CLEAR VALUE</th>
<th>MANOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Over £100</td>
<td>Eccleshall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£75-£100</td>
<td>Lichfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sawley (Derbys)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£50-£75</td>
<td>Brewood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Haywood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prees (Shropshire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£40-£50</td>
<td>Whittington-by-Lichfield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£30-£40</td>
<td>Itchington (Warwicks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Longdon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tachbrook (Warwicks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wybunbury (Cheshire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£20-£30</td>
<td>Cannock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chadshunt (Warwicks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£10-£20</td>
<td>Burton-in-Wirral (Cheshire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farndon (Cheshire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rugeley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tarvin (Cheshire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under £10</td>
<td>Balliwick of the liberty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beaudesert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blore-in-Eccleshall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coventry palace (Warwicks)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The estates of the bishopric were remarkably compact, compared to those of most laymen of comparable social status. There were no isolated plots of land hundreds of miles away to worry about, which were difficult and
expensive to administer and draw revenue from. However, with the exception of property farmed out, such as Wybunbury (£31) and the palace at Coventry (five marks), no-one knew from year to year how much any given bailiwick would produce. The vagaries of the English climate meant that crop yields would vary at each harvest, while harsh winters affected sales of wood and the proportion of livestock that could be kept until the spring. Not only was this of relevance to land directly farmed by the bishop, it also affected the ability of his tenants to pay their rents. Most of the bishop's estates were extensively leased out, for example, the Cheshire lands, Rugeley and Sawley. There was a little demesne farming at Cannock, but only at Haywood, Brewood and in particular Beaudesert did this make a significant contribution to the issues of a bailiwick. The decision to lease out the demesne certainly predates the 1420s. At Rugeley the demesne had completely disappeared as early as 1277.44 The overall situation did not change significantly during the fifteenth century, except that Haywood park was gradually added to the other leased areas during the final quarter.

It was also a general policy among the bishops to lease out what might be termed 'industrial' assets. These included the coal workings at Beaudesert,45 various forges, fulling and corn mills (whether driven by water or wind). This brought benefits to both lessor and lessee. The mill at Lichfield was farmed out at £40 a year for most of the century and presumably brought in considerably more to the farmers. Leases and farms were handy morsels of patronage. During the troubled 1460s the pro-Lancastrian Bishop Halse thought it prudent to go a-courting for friends among the local gentlemen with Yorkist sympathies. Warwick's ally John
Delves was granted the lucrative farm at Wybunbury in south Cheshire (where he was already a notable landholder and was ultimately buried) on 24 June 1460, before the battle of Northampton where Buckingham was killed. Halse may have been an ardent Lancastrian, but he was hardly the most confident. After Delves' own death at Tewkesbury his powerful kinsman in the area Hugh Egerton of Wrinehill became farmer. A Neville aide, William Hugford, was appointed steward of Chadshunt and Tachbrook, drawing a fee of forty shillings from each, while the elder John Savage (an intimate of the Lords Stanley) was made keeper of Oakley wood in Tachbrook. To this list may be added the appointments of that political proselyte John Harper of Rushall as steward, George Stanley of Elford as bailiff of the liberty and his elder brother, Sir John, as steward of the same in 1464.

Bishop Halse was not the only leading figure in his diocese who felt the need of powerful friends in this time of uncertainty. The Abbot of St. Werburgh's, Chester, who held a huge, though somewhat distant manor at Weston-on-Trent in Derbyshire to worry about— it was worth £75-£80 a year—shrewdly made William, Lord Hastings his steward there. The Yorkist's interest in the protection of the manor was ensured by granting him an annuity of £8 from it. This sum, obtained from an account of 1471-2, contrasts vividly with the more usual figure of 66s/8d paid in 1436-7 to one of Hastings' predecessors, the lawyer Peter Pole. In 1472 the Abbey also paid fees of 53s/4d to Robert Staunton and 6s/8d to John Fitzherbert, local gentlemen, emphasising the importance of good relations with lay neighbours. I do not know how cordial the relationship between St. Werburgh's and the laity of and around Weston-on-Trent was, though judging from the histories
of other monastic houses in the diocese, there may have been difficulties. Conversely, the Bishops seem to have got on well with their tenants and the gentry.

It should be emphasised that the relationship between local gentlemen and episcopal estates was not usually politically motivated. Much was a simple association of neighbours. The successive generations of Arblasters, who became parkers of Beaudesert in 1426 and held that office for the rest of the century, were merely an administratively able family from the episcopal lands. at Longdon. It was to another neighbouring family, albeit a cut above the Arblasters, the Astons, that the bishops turned as their stewards of Haywood, where the family had their principal residence in this century. The Astorts were also masters of game and rule for the bishop in Cannock forest— which post they successfully claimed as hereditary after an arbitration hearing in 1496.48

Neighbouring gentlemen were well placed to assist in or hinder the day-to-day administration of the bishop's estates, with which their own were interlocked. Gentlemen and successive bishops regularly leased small patches of each other's lands in an attempt to consolidate landholdings and reduce agricultural costs by slightly simplifying the tenurial complexities in an area. Leasing property on a larger scale to the local gentry became a standard method of cultivating favour. It also meant that the Church relieved itself of the day-to-day worries involved with running its estates, and need only concern itself with what it knew best— collecting money from the laity.

Several examples can be cited of gentlemen
leasing middling amounts of the bishop's property. Perhaps significantly, these were also men of middling gentry status. For instance, the Sacheverells of Hopewell (Derbys) paid eight shillings annually for part of the bishop's nearby manor of Sawley, while in Staffordshire Humphrey Peshale of Checkley (died 1489) and Humphrey Salway (died 1493) rented episcopal lands in Bishop's Offley and Hednesford respectively.\(^49\) Hatton—by—Brewood was leased by Bishop Halse to Edward Burton, a yeoman of the Crown, who had married the widow of Ralph Lane and who controlled the affairs of that influential family during the lengthy minority of Lane's son and heir. After Burton's death Bishop Smith passed on this lease in 1495 to a couple of the Lanes' gentry neighbours, John Giffard and Roger Fowke, but not before quietly almost doubling the rent in the process.\(^50\) Desired friendships notwithstanding, the Tudor bishops still had to take every opportunity open to them for increasing their income.

Both the bishops and their gentry associates could also channel episcopal patronage towards lesser men, upon whom they relied. The Thomas Lange who received half a mark annually as keeper of the bishop's meadows in Willford in 1456—7 and 1463—4 was thus appointed to please the Stanleys of Elford whose man he was specifically set down as being.\(^51\) Not all the available patronage went to sweeten the gentry and their followers. Some went to favoured yeomen from the bishop's own estates, such as Hugh Collins who shared a twenty—one year lease of the Cannock watermill from 1463.\(^52\) Both he and the previous lessee, John Justice\(^53\), later appear as the bishop's collectors for Cannock. Perhaps the lease to Justice had been an attempt to stop him causing
trouble or repetition of an offence for which Bishop Booth had sued him in 1448, of taking his corn to be ground at a rival mill in Cannock. The Thomas Smith who collected ad hoc rents in Rureley 1466-7 may have been the lessee of Brewood forge in 1485. Another instance of patronage dates from 18 May 1492 when Bishop Smith secured from his friend and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Sir Reginald Bray, who was visiting Lichfield at the time, a grant that one John Orchard should have the farm of the Duchy mill at Tutbury once the existing lease had expired.

The bishopric paid few annuities, though the emoluments pertaining to such offices as the steward and bailiff of the episcopal liberty must have not gone unappreciated by the officers of the same. Certain other posts carried annuities. Edmund Bas-set collected £5 as constable of Eccleshall castle, while Robert Careswall picked up £3/0s/8d in the 1460s as keeper of the prison there. The receiver-general's fee was set at twenty marks, twopence a day was written off for the clerk of the consistory court, while the keeper of the episcopal gardens reaped half that amount from the issues of Haywood. The bishops even retained their own plumber and stonemason, paying them £1/13s/4d and 13s/4d respectively to repair their palaces. The auditor's fee changed in level and form between the occasions for which details survive. Thomas Rogers was paid £5 in 1464 and 145, but in the 1420s a predecessor apparently got £2 less. However, the difference was more than compensated for by a separate annuity of forty shillings he received as parker of Beaudesert and a profitable lease of the coal mines there.

William Smith's appointment in April 1452 as keeper of the episcopal household in St. Mary le Stroud, London, not only
carried an annual fee, but was also made for life. Other posts, without fees, were sometimes granted for life, with the prospect of collecting the perquisites and incidentals accruing to them for a lengthy period doubtlessly enhancing the value of the grant. William Grimsby was made steward of the liberty in Warwickshire for life on 8 December 1458. David Kenrick and son Stephen were appointed appositors general for life from September 1453. After Stephen's early death, Bishop Halse (never one to forget a friend) replaced him with one of his household men. Later, in 1464, David was given life-tenure of the parkership of Blore jointly with another episcopal consort, the identically-named John Halse of Haywood. Yet another associate of the bishop, this time from his days in the household of Queen Margaret of Anjou, Edward Ellesmere (who was at the time also constable of Newcastle-under-Lyme), was given another lucrative sinecure as rider of Cannock wood on 17 December 1459, while the Yorkist leadership was in exile. Yet when it became clear that not only were these rebels back in the country but had also seized power, that sinecure was quickly revoked as part of the see's attempt to foster good relations with Edward IV. The new rider of Cannock was the bishop's namesake and kinsman John Halse. Roper Everdon, who was appointed bailiff of the liberty in January 1459, was the brother of Thomas the justice of the peace in Staffordshire and kinsman to the influential Stafford and royal household man John Hampton.

John Halse of Haywood, who developed into one of the bishopric's most powerful estate officials, began his career as the humble collector of Beaudesert in the 1440s. However, once his relative had been translated to Coventry and Lichfield in 1459 he noticeably prospered. On 7 June 1461 he was created rider of Cannock, as just mentioned, by which time he may well have already been the parker of Haywood. Certainly
he was parker there by that Michaelmas. As just mentioned, he added to these the joint-parkership of Blore in 1464 and rose to succeed Edmund Basset as receiver-general on Lady Day (25 March) 1473. There seems little doubt that this Halse benefited from the patronage of his episcopal namesake. Although I would hesitate to suggest that nothing more would have been heard of him as an administrator in the diocese had his connection with the bishop not existed, it is pertinent to note under the category of nepotism the successful career of another Halse within the diocese. This was the theologian and fellow kinsman of the bishop Edmund Halse. Edmund prospered and became Archdeacon of Salop in 1483 and of Derby two years later. Between 1475 and 1490 he was appointed to no fewer than five prebends in Lichfield Cathedral. The last of these was that of Eccleshall, which brought him £20 a year and was the second most valuable one not attached to a principal office in the close.

The administration of the episcopal properties, as I have discussed, was left to the laity. Although Archdeacon Tho as Chesterfield of Salop held the farm of Coventry Palace in the 1440s, only two clerics served as estate administrators. Both were employed at the highest level, as receiver-general: John Whelpdale in the mid-1450s and Richard Shirbourne during the first part of Henry VII's reign. Shirbourne also succeeded Edmund Halse as archdeacon of Salop in 1485, the duties of which post he could hardly have had much time to spare for. He is in fact once referred to in the Close Rolls as Dean of Lichfield after Heywood's death, though he was never so elected.
Although I initially stated that the emphasis of this chapter lay on the administration of the secular rather than the spiritual affairs of the see— the woolbearing rather than sinridden flocks— it is worth digressing briefly to discuss some of the episcopal officers, many of whom had estates which like the bishop's needed lay administration.

The diocese was divided into five archdeaconries: Chester, Coventry, Derby, Salop and Stafford. An archdeacon dealt with matters of probate and the administration of wills, taking the fees and profits accruing to the same. He also exercised a basic ecclesiastical jurisdiction, except in such matters as divorce and heresy which, together with such cases as he thought warranted episcopal examination, the archdeacon passed onto the bishop's consistory court at Lichfield. The most important of the archdeaconries was that of Chester. This paid handsomely (either £20 or £40 a year) for a jurisdictional independence in ecclesiastical matters similar to that which the lay palatinate of Chester enjoyed from the common law courts and parliamentary taxation.

The only fifteenth-century bishop to object to and challenge this situation was William Booth in 1449. He used his court connections to confirm his right to 'cite any persons resident in the county and city of Chester in all matters concerning ecclesiastical law.' His reasons ostensibly related to an inability on the part of others to carry out correction because of the truculence and maintenance of powerful men within Cheshire, but it seems equally likely that Booth had sensed yet another way of increasing his income, by reserving extra profits of court to himself and Lichfield. Nonetheless, this was an
exception and for the most part it was the archdeacon of
Chester, rather than the bishop, who was the leading diocesan
figure in that county. The archdeaconry was much sought-after,
and numbered among its occupants in this period two Stanleys,
a Talbot and, in John Morton (1474-78), a future cardinal
and archbishop of Canterbury.

If the bishops, abbots and priors can be described
as the clerical nobility, it is these archdeacons and cathedral
prebends, rather than the humble parish priests, who should be
seen as the counterparts of the county gentry. Indeed, many
of these were drawn from that class. As has been indicated,
and especially under Halse, a university education was
increasingly becoming a standard, even necessary qualification
for office. Tuition fees and high costs of maintenance ensured
that men with degrees were usually drawn from well-to-do or
wealthy families. The Church had been seen for centuries by
the aristocracy in the same light as the law and professional
soldiering as a suitable career for a younger son, whether
spiritually minded or not. As this tradition continued through
the fifteenth century, it is not surprising to find among the
prebendaries of Lichfield between 1440 and 1500 representatives of
such prominent local families as the Agards, Birminghams,
Delves', Egertons, Mountforts, Newport, Talbots, Vernons and
Whitgreves.

There were thirty-two prebends, ranging in value
from £56/13s/4d to ten shillings. The wealthiest were attached
to each of the senior cathedral officers: the Dean, Precentor,
Treasurer and Chancellor. In addition, the prebend of
Bolton (Lancashire) went with the archdeaconry of Chester, and
the prebend of Pipa Minor was regularly granted to a cleric
of similar rank, such as the Dean of Wells (1415-40), and the
Archdeacons of Stafford (1440-59) and Salop (1473-1500).
Like the bishop, the chapter at Lichfield was relatively poor, compared to others in England. From the 1534 values of the prebends given by Harwood, a figure of £370 per annum for the chapter's estates is obtained, exclusive of the values of the prebends of Brewood and Bolton (Lancashire), which are not given. Bolton was worth £10 and Brewood would raise the total to around £400. There was a general trend towards collecting prebends of increasing value, often by exchange. However, a regular income from one of the more moderately endowed positions was often worth more than a theoretically greater, but more difficult to collect income from another.

Little is known about the administration of the chapter's property. When one of the bishop's bailiffs, John Northall of Brewood, was sued in 1480 and 1482 for arrears there (having, as was usual, entered into a bond concerning the issues), the suit was pressed by both the episcopal receiver-general and Dean Heywood. The latter's interest is explained by the association of his office with the prebendary of Brewood and it seems reasonable to deduce that he was concerned with arrears from his lands there which were being accounted for by Northall too. The use of a common set of officials may hold only for where both bishop and chapter had property in a particular locality, for in the early 1440s at Hope (Derbyshire) where the bishop held nothing it was the Talbots that the Dean and chapter had to rely upon to secure for them rents and arrears. The chapter's steward at Hope, James Eyre, held no position under the bishop, but was from a leading north Derbyshire gentry family who were later to lease the
Much of the prebendal land was leased out. The estates at Sawley, which were the most valuable held by a member of the chapter, at one point even formed part of the episcopal patronage. Bishop Booth persuaded the prebendary to lease them to his brother Roger Booth. In the early 1450s the prebendal property at Colwich was farmed out for three years at £20 annually to Thomas Jorce of Bradley. Other lessees and officers of the chapter's lands were local clergymen (conspicuously absent from the affairs of the bishop's property). The receiver of Bakewell in northern Derbyshire in 1438, William Broom, was the local vicar; Thomas Gocelyn, vicar of Thornton-by-Horncastle (Lincolnshire) was another receiver, when pardoned on 30 October 1441 for not appearing to answer the chapter's plea that he render an account; while the chaplain of Frith and Fernilee, again in north Derbyshire, was leasing these from the Dean and chapter at £8 a year in December 1434. The tithes from Little Langton, yet another Derbyshire estate, were leased out in 1493 for five years at twelve shillings a year. Divers mineral and occasionally wooltithes from the wilderness of the Peak District were also leased out.

Whether the personal interest in their estates was markedly greater on the part of the individual prebendaries in Staffordshire, where the property was at least more accessible, is unknown. From a brief account of harvest time in 1500 on the land of the prebend of Alrewas (the Chancellor of Lichfield Cathedral) at Alrewas, there certainly was some demesne land. The account refers to sheep farming and the cultivation of rye, wheat, corn,
oats and hay. A detailed breakdown of the expenses was presented to the prebendaries, itemising every aspect of the harvesting process—though exactly what the cleric made of the claim for one shilling 'for expenses tha I dronke at the angell' is unfortunately not recorded.

Having begun this chapter with a survey of Lichfield's bishops and continued by detailing their land and the role of the gentry in administering this, I want to conclude with an examination of lay patronage in clerical appointments. This will involve extending the frame of reference from the bishops and chapter at Lichfield to include certain of Staffordshire's monastic houses.

Western Christianity never developed a separate priestly tribe, such as that of Levi in the Old Testament, so that it was from the laity in general that the clergy were drawn. Dr. Colin Platt has written of the county clergy:

'Very little is known of the social origins of that priesthood, for it belonged, for the most part, to the level of society that left little behind it in records. Unquestionably, though, it was essentially local in character, recruiting its members from the county or the city and from the class most appropriate to the office.' 79

Certainly, as was shown with the prebendaries of Lichfield, many clerics in what were undoubtedly benefices of a more exalted status to those of obscure country parishes, were drawn from gentry families, many of which were local. Frequently, however, a parish church, the advowson of which lay with a gentry family, is found with an incumbent of the same surname as the presentor. Most were either (often impoverished) relatives or younger sons sent off to take holy orders, whose living constituted their portion of the family inheritance. Examples of this are legion and
may be found in almost every parish history. I will include one example to illustrate both this and how an advowson often rotated among several patrons.

Just as subinfeudation and failure to produce a male heir combined with other factors to mangle the theoretically-simple feudal system of raising an army using the knight's fee as a basis, so they also complicated the situation concerning who held particular advowsons. The advowson of the parish church at Blymhill in western Staffordshire on the Shropshire border belonged to the lord of the manor. Back in the middle of the thirteenth century this lord, John Bagot, was succeeded by four daughters and, following an attempt by one branch to ignore the rights of the others, the advowson was settled such that each branch presented on one occasion in four. Using extracts pertaining to the church, culled from various episcopal registers, as set out in a sixteenth-century manuscript book, a near-perfect list of incumbents and their patrons in the century and a half following the Black Death can be drawn up.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Incumbent</th>
<th>Patron</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1349</td>
<td>Stephen Bromley</td>
<td>Thomas Weston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1370s or 1380s</td>
<td>John Stretton</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Dec. 1399</td>
<td>Richard Ball</td>
<td>Elizabeth Ipstones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Nov. 1410</td>
<td>William Perton</td>
<td>Adam Peshale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 July 1428</td>
<td>William Ivett</td>
<td>Robert Synnerton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Oct. 1430</td>
<td>John Bristow</td>
<td>Elizabeth Ipstones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 March 1431</td>
<td>Hugh Hexstall</td>
<td>William Mitton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Apr. 1442</td>
<td>Robert Badenhall</td>
<td>Robert Swynnerton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Oct. 1471</td>
<td>Thomas Swynnerton</td>
<td>Randle Brereton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Dec. 1485</td>
<td>William Hamett</td>
<td>John Harcourt,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>William Mitton,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>James Moreton &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Richard Lane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>William Mitton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rotation of the advowson can be seen when these names are set against a genealogy of the descendents of John Bagot of Blymhill and a letter (A,B,C or D) is used to denote
the four branches.

As the right to present was vested in the lord of the manor, it was passed on with the property to subsequent heirs or purchasers. Thus when the Paine third of the Coven portion was sold in 1267 to the Hide family and later passed to the Lanes of Bentley, the share in the Blymhill advowson originally held by Paine pertained to those families in turn. Applying the letters denoting branches of Bagot's heirs to the list of patrons, the following sequence emerges:

E, ?, A, B, D, A, B, D, A, B, B, D.

The unknown patron of John Stretton was probably Humphrey Swynerton, who married Hilary, widow of John Bromley; but even ignoring this, a clear pattern can be distinguished. By the later middle ages the Pichford branch has been passed over, and the Coven branch is beginning to dominate the advowson.
The presentation of Hugh Hexstall in 1431 is a prime example of aristocratic intervention. William Mitton, who headed the branch whose turn it was to present, was a minor at the time. As feudal overlord Humphrey, earl of Stafford undoubtedly stepped in and nominated the next incumbent—his servant Hugh Hexstall. The Earl was soon involved again in the manor, as the Pichford branch's land became the subject of dispute. His 'arbitration' in favour of William Humphreston has been examined in a previous chapter.

An example of presenting a member of one's own family or a kinsman can be seen in 1349, when a member of the fourth branch was presented by the then-head of the second. It is also apparent in the presentations of 1471, 1486 and 1499. In the first of these, Randle Brereton presented the nephew of Robert Swynnerton (patron 1428 and 1442); and in 1499, when the Swynnerton turn to present came round again, the head of the family had his younger brother installed:  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Robert</th>
<th>Thomas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humphrey</td>
<td>Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>William the clerk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The incumbent from 1486 to 1499, John Moreton, was probably a close kinsman of James Moreton, who participated in the four-handed presentation of December 1485. It may have been that John Moreton was the choice of James and William Mitton (who presented him in January 1486) in that presentation, but that the other two co-patrons, John Harcourt and Richard Lane, refused to agree to this. Lane in fact was a minor at the time, who was married to a daughter of Harcourt and may well have been residing in that man's house, pending his majority. If it was a case of Mitton/Moreton v. Harcourt, the latter's success in December 1485 was negated six weeks later.
When the King was lord of the manor he presented to the living like any other patron, but royal patronage in clerical matters did not stop there. As mentioned in the first part of this chapter it was the King who chose the English and Welsh bishops. The Crown was also patron of many religious houses. In Staffordshire these were the Cistercian abbey at Dieulacres near Leek, Rocester Abbey and Trentham Priory (both Augustinian foundations), and the former alien priory at Tutbury. The heads of these houses were royal appointees, though as only Tutbury (the property of which was valued at £245 a year at the time of the dissolution) was anything other than poorly endowed, these were not greatly sought-after appointments. At Tutbury, links with its French mother-church at St. Pierre-sur-Dives in Normandy, broken by the general royal measures against alien houses under Henry IV and Henry V (which saw the destruction of Staffordshire's other alien priory, at Lapley-by-Brewood in 1415), were continued for a short while in the early 1430s by the appointment of its last French prior, Adam Preaux. Preaux's successor, Thomas Gedney, was a monk from Westminster, who may possibly have been known to Cardinal Beaufort; the King was still a minor at the time of this appointment in 1433. After Gedney, monks from Tutbury occupied the priorship for the rest of the century. Internal appointments were also usual for Rocester and Trentham, so royal patronage in these houses was not particularly evident.

Internal appointments were also common at many other religious houses in Staffordshire at this time, such as Brewood (Black Ladies), Calwich, Farewell, Ranton and St. Thomas' Priories and Burton Abbey. Again,
ABBEYS, PRIORIES AND COLLEGIATE CHURCHES IN STAFFORDSHIRE
IN STAFFORDSHIRE 1422-1535.

- Diocese of Worcester
- Benedictine
- Cistercian
- Augustinian
- Collegiate Church
this should be seen as reducing the importance of the patron, for the combination of the insignificance of many of these institutions and their lack of generous endowments made it difficult to find prospective candidates from outside. Thus it is difficult to assess the value of their rights to such families as the Longfords, who were patrons for Calwich, the Talbots for Croxden or the Harcourts for Ranton— in this last case they certainly confirmed elections there. In some of these institutions the choice of head was further restricted by the small number of inmates from which to choose. At Calwich in 1449, 1461 and the 1520s there were only two clerics— a prior and monk. Canwell, Farewell, Hulton, Ranton, Rocester, St. Thomas', Sandwell and Trentham all had less than ten monks at the time of the dissolution; and even the wealthier houses such as Burton, Croxden, Dieulacres and Tutbury held only about a dozen. Although the number of monks and nuns in the abbeys and priories of Staffordshire rose slightly in the fifteenth century, it totalled no more than about a hundred and twenty at any time in the later middle ages.

When appointments were not internal promotions they regularly concerned monks from within Staffordshire or its environs. St. Thomas' provided priors for nearby Ranton in 1433 and Trentham in 1485–6, while the Cluniacs of Lenton (Nottinghamshire) supplied the same for Canwell in 1456 and Sandwell in 1488. Sandwell also had priors from Shrewsbury and Evesham in the fifteenth century, and Stone one from Kenilworth. However, with the exception of the Irish bishop of Achonry, who was presumably a friend of Bishop Smith of Coventry and Lichfield (whose suffragan he became), who became Prior of Stone in 1493, the monastic
houses of Staffordshire certainly do not seem to have attracted distantly based or academically distinguished clerics.

I know of only two occasions when serious dispute arose over an election to the headship of one of these institutions. In both, the trouble was caused not by the monks who supposedly made the election, but by outsiders. The first of these involved the wealthiest of Staffordshire monastic houses, Burton Abbey, in September 1430. Whether the string of corrupt abbots there had finally spurred Bishop Heyworth to put in a man of known integrity or whether he merely wanted to advance the career of an old friend from his time at St. Albans, there was certainly considerable episcopal pressure put upon the monks of Burton to elect Robert Ownesly, a member of Heyworth's household. The Bishop was reported as having said that he would rather lose a thousand marks than that his man fail to get the post. However, the monks reacted to this pressure by stubbornly refusing to elect Ownesley. It was not until Sir Richard Vernon, whom Heyworth had ensured was present at the deliberations, promised that if they elected someone else, they would not live to enjoy their 'victory', that the monks acquiesced. In fact, it was Heyworth whose victory was short-lived. Within three years there was a new abbot—Ralph Henley, a monk from the abbey itself and a return to the bad, old ways. Henley's four successors in the fifteenth century were also drawn from the abbey's own ranks.

The other dispute concerns the tiny, impoverished priory of Canwell by the Warwickshire border. This was a Benedictine foundation, dating from the first half of the
twelfth century, the patronage of which had passed from the Beauchamp earls of Warwick to the Talbots and then Lisles. My source for the dispute is an undated letter to Richard Harper, servant to Anne, duchess of Buckingham, from the Prior of Maxstoke. Maxstoke was the principal residence of the Stafford family in the north Midlands and the priory's interests were naturally theirs too. Much of Canwell's property lay in north Warwickshire and was farmed out to Maxstoke, but the latter had grander designs and with its patron's support was attempting to annex the south Staffordshire house. This move was naturally opposed by Lord Lisle, and also by the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield. The Prior of Maxstoke wrote that he thought the Bishop might be bought off, but 'the charge ther of wold be to us to grevos to bere'. The lack of a date for all these machinations is frustrating. However, as it was to the Duchess rather than Duke Humphrey that the tidings are to be relayed, it seems likely that the letter dates from 1460-80. The letter continued with a report that Lisle 'has put yn a monk ther and mayntenyth hym ther agenst the prior. And hath laboryd to the byshop to have the prior deprived'. The writer concluded that without Stafford support this forcing-out was likely to be successful and that Maxstoke would lose even the farm of Canwell's estates. The reaction of Lisle to the then-prior, whose original nominee he must have been, suggests that the Staffords had somehow persuaded the cleric to support the annexation—hence Lisle's attempt to have him replaced by a monk whose feelings on the matter were in keeping with his own.

All this is remarkably similar to the magnate struggles for influence in local, lay politics. Stafford interests were being pursued by the exercise of 'goodlordship'
towards part of the affinity; in this case Maxstoke Priory. Bribery (for that is what it was) and maintaining a suit, as revealed here, were the same tactics which a lord regularly employed to further the aspirations of any lay 'client'. Similarly, it was only through the support of other powerful lords, Lisle and the Bishop, that poverty-stricken Canwell was able to withstand the take-over bid. Its own right to an independent existence was hardly a strong one. In 1456 and 1468 the Bishop had to appoint a new prior because there were no monks living there to elect one, even at Lisle's behest. This could explain the episcopal reluctance to see the priory closed; the bishop may have been hoping that his patronage could be extended permanently to include Canwell.

Magnate patronage was also occasionally evident in the appointments to the Collegiate churches in the county. There were five of these in the fifteenth century: St. Michael's, Penkridge; St. Mary's, Stafford; St. Edith's, Tamworth; St. Michael's, Tettenhall; and St. Peter's, Wolverhampton. Of these, Tettenhall's patrons were the Ferrers of Tamworth, and the Deans of Penkridge, where the Crown was patron, were the Archbishops of Dublin. Royal patronage at Stafford was granted away by Henry VI to Humphrey, duke of Buckingham on 16 March 1446. In June 1447 the King granted away more of his clerical patronage in the area when he gave John, Lord Dudley the right to present the next dean at Wolverhampton. Edward IV made a similar grant in March 1479 of Tamworth to William, Lord Hastings. Both Dudley and Hastings took the advantage to use the deaneries as they would a lucrative parochial benefice and appointed close kinsmen. Hastings'
choice was Ralph Ferrers of Tamworth, younger brother to Sir Thomas Ferrers, whom Hastings' sister had married. For Dudley, it was his son William (later Bishop of Durham). Dudley's interest in the deanery of Wolverhampton did not end there, for another of his sons, Clement, succeeded William in that office. In 1477 the Wydevilles' accumulation of posts reached Staffordshire in general and Wolverhampton's deanery in particular with the installation of Lionel. Three years later the deanery was annexed to that of St. George's at Windsor under Richard, bishop of Salisbury. Evidently it was now considered lucrative enough to be a spoil worthy of the interest of exalted clerics. Lionel Wydeville took over the see of Salisbury in 1482, making it even less likely that he took any real interest in the affairs of the deanery.

Like the Lichfield chapter, the Collegiate churches consisted of a dean and prebendaries. For the Crown, these prebends were extra patronage. At the college of St. Edith, Tamworth, for example, there was the dean, who was ex officio prebendary of Amington (worth £21 a year), and five other prebendaries: Bonehill (£7), Coton (£8), Syerscote (£3/6s/8d), Wigginton (£10) and Wilnercote (£8). That these prebends were used to assist royal clerks and servants is indisputable. Thomas Shippy, prebendary of Syerscote 1457-60, was Henry VI's first physician; Edmund Audley, William Cox and Richard Balder were just three of the king's clerks appointed to prebends; John Arundel, chaplain to Edward IV, was prebendary of Wilnercote from 1479; and other royal servants and petitioners, such as William Taylor, scholar of Oxford University and prebendary of Wigginton 1498-99, many with other offices (e.g. dean of Warwick, prebendary of Wells or York Cathedrals), can be found drawing some of their income from Tamworth.
Royal patronage in the clerical sphere did not end there. There were also corrodies. These were 'requests' from the Crown that a religious house take in, feed and generally provide for a royal nominee. There were two types of corrody. In the first, the beneficiary was a lay servant, rewarded for long service, such as Peter Aumener, clerk of chancery, who in January 1440 was thrust upon Burton Abbey.89 Tutbury Priory reacted to the imposition of William Balgue in October 143990 by asserting that it was not bound to accept corrodians. However, it dared not push this to the point of refusing to accept Balgue and wrote back stating that he had been accepted, having renounced the initial royal letters close.91 This reply, made in February 1440, added that Balgue's acceptance into the priory should not be taken as a precedent. This independent, truculent tone did not find favour with the King, and within a few days Tutbury found it expedient to send off another reply, accepting without protest the Crown's right of corrody. Monastic houses, however, could hardly be expected to welcome the practice.

The second type of corrody occurred when the Crown used the change-over from one bishop, abbot or prior to another as an excuse for presenting to items of patronage normally pertaining to the prelate in question. Some institutions were bound, on the accession of a new head, to find a benefice for a royal nominee and a corrody for him while this was being arranged. Burton Abbey had to do this for an under-clerk of the royal kitchen after the election of Abbot Henley in 143392, while forty years later the election of Abbot Field brought a royal demand that the abbey pay a pension instead of the corrody, before providing its nominee with the required benefice.93 Back in 1435 the royal choice
for the corrody and benefice which the newly-consecrated Bishop of Worcester was bound to supply, was John Bate. Whatever living Bate did receive, he was not there for long. In August 1436 the Crown found him another office—that of Dean of the Collegiate church at Tamworth. Bate was one of the more successful of royal appointees to clerical office in Staffordshire. Unlike his predecessors (he was the fifth dean since 1429), he proved not to be an absentee who left as quickly as possible because of the church's poverty. He brought stability and leadership, though, as pointed out elsewhere, his personal morals were not all that they might have been.

I can find no reference to this corrody and benefice practice regarding the see of Coventry and Lichfield, though there is evidence that the Crown took advantage of inter-regna to present to the see's prebends. Henry VI presented to the prebends of Offley and Tarvin following Bishop Booth's translation to York in 1452, while seven years later, after Bishop Boulers' death, he did likewise to those of Dernford and Pipa Minor (Prees). The Crown also seems to have presented royal clerks regularly to the prebend of Flixton, though as with the other chapter offices, this supposedly lay within the sphere of episcopal patronage.

With this set of presentations by the King to the bishopric of Coventry and Lichfield, a full circle has been reached. What general picture has emerged? For the bishops at least this seems to have been a time of quiet, if not particularly profitable co-existence with the rest of the county. The insidious financial problems of the see could only be solved by either wholesale rent increases
or an increase in the farms of mills, mines and other assets. Although the bishops (Booth and at the beginning of the century Catterick excepted) certainly spent more time in the diocese than contemporary complaints lead us to believe was common for later-medieval bishops, they had no direct relationship with their tenantry, and hence little immediate cause of friction— in short, 'out of sight, out of mind'. The extensive employment of local men as estate officials also seems to have helped keep relations between the bishops and their neighbours and tenantry running smoothly. This was in stark contrast to the state of affairs between many of the county's monastic houses and the laity. While the bishop was around but not ever-present, the very activity and ubiquity of small numbers of often-licentious monastics seems to have aroused antagonism. Certainly houses such as Burton made greater efforts towards increasing their income by estate improvements and were a more prominent feature of the county community than the bishops. A connection between the activity of a clerical institution and its popularity would scarcely be surprising. Perhaps the bishops were liked (or at least tolerated) because they left everyone in peace. The abbots and priors acted and were counted more as part of the local gentry; hunting with them and participating in their quarrels.

As for patronage, again much was in the hands of the bishop or larger religious houses. Of the remainder, it was used to help out relatives in holy orders or, in the case of the Crown and possibly such magnate families as the Staffords, clerical servants and occasionally favoured petitioning scholars. In general, however, the paucity of the endowments ensured that Staffordshire offices went to Staffordshire men— few others were interested.
1. The registers are at the diocesan record office at Lichfield (cited as LJRO):
   - LJRO, B/A/1/9 Heyworth
   - LJRO, B/A/1/10 Booth
   - LJRO, B/A/1/11 Close and Boulers
   - LJRO, B/A/1/12 Halse
   - LJRO, B/A/1/13 Smith and Arundel

   The manorial and receiver's accounts are at the county record office at Stafford (cited as SRO), the William Salt Library, Stafford (cited as WSL), the Public Record Office (cited as PRO), and Lichfield Joint Record Office:
   - SRO, D(V1)1734/3/2/1-4
   - SRO, D(V1)1734/J.1948, J.2032 and J.2046
   - WSL, Original collection, SMS 335i
   - LJRO, B/A/21/123312, 122314-5, 124075 and 124078-9
   - PRO, Ministers and Receivers Accounts, SC6/Hen.VII/184


3. Ibid., I, p.271.

4. LJRO, B/A/1/9 fo.188R.

5. E. Axon, 'The family of Bothe (Booth) and the church in the 15th. and 16th. centuries', *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, LIII(1938), pp.36-4.


10. e.g. Ibid., V, p.241.


   Whelphdale, who was a prebend of St. John's collegiate church in Chester 1453-4 had been receiver-general to the bishop of Carlisle. This was Nicholas Close, who became bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in 1452 and presumably was instrumental in bringing Whelphdale to this area. He (Whelphdale) was receiver-general for his master's new see by Michaelmas 1453, by which time Close was dead. It seems likely that Close brought him to Lichfield as receiver-general and that Whelphdale's appointment as such for this diocese dates from Michaelmas 1452, just before Close's death.


15. Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1452-61, p. 654; Ibid., 1461-67, p. 65. The statute he contravened was 2 Richard II, St. 1 c. 5.


17. PRO, Patent Rolls supplementary, 067/45m.43. The prior and convent of the cathedral church at Coventry had to wait even longer for their pardon, to 12 May 1462 (Ibid., m. 21).


19. He was, however, a royal councillor under Edward, along with the other English and Welsh bishops.


24. Derbyshire Record Office, D231/M/E484, between Humphrey Okeover and Tutbury Priory over land in Okeover—this was not to be a final settlement, as evidenced by the renewed litigation in the early sixteenth century (PRO, Entry Books of Decrees and Orders, DL5/3 fo. 203D; SRO, D661/2/338, between John Bracy of Lichfield and Thomas Fauconer over property in Streethay.


29. This Blore was not the village by which the battle of Blore Heath was fought on 23 September 1459. That was Blore-in-Hales. This was really little more than a park a couple of miles from there towards Eccleshall, and so I have emphasised this difference in the name of it.


34. These Rugeleys of Hawksyard must have severed their links with the Wolseleys only a short time before this, as they were certainly in the Wolseleys service in the early 1460s.


38. G.Wrottesley, 'Extracts from the Plea Rolls', SHC, VI new series i (1903), p.95.


41. SRO, D(W)1734/J.1948 m.14; WSL, SMS 335i m.28; PRO, SC6/Henry VII/1846 m.16.

42. LJRO, B/A/21/124075.

43. T.Harwood, The History and Antiquities of the Church and City of Lichfield, (Gloucester, 1806), p.120; T.Tanner, Notitia lonastica, (Cambridge, 1787 edition), chapter on Staffordshire p.xv.

44. Victoria County History of Staffordshire, III, p.159.

45. The Beaudesert coalmines were farmed out from 1461 until at least 1485 to Richard and William Blurton for £3/6s/8d a year.

46. SRO, D(W)1734/J.1948 mm.1R, 2R.

47. SRO, D(W)1734/J.2004 m.3. This is from a short set of accounts; 1436-40, 1447-8, 1471-2, 1495-6. Weston was all leased out.

48. I.H.Jeayes, 'Calendar of the Marquess of Anglesey's Longden, Lichfield and other Staffordshire charters, formerly at Beaudesert', SHC, 1939, p.77 no.1579b. The arbitrators were Edmund, Lord Dudley, the Abbots of Croxden and Rocester and the Prior of Trentham. The Astons relinquished their claim in 1538.

50. WSL, SMS 3511 fo.4D (no.28). The annual rent was raised from £4/13s/4d to £8/10s/0d.

51. SRO, D(W)1734/3/2/1 m.48R; SRO, D(W)1734/3/2/2 m.9R. Willford was about half a mile from the Stanleys' principal manor of Elford in south-east Staffordshire.


53. SRO, D(W)1734/3/2/1 m.43R.


55. PRO, DL5/3 fo.83R.

56. LJRO, B/A/1/11 fo.44R; LJRO, B/A/1/12 fo.124D.

57. LJRO, B/A/1/10 fo.52R.

58. Ibid., fo.125R.


60. LJRO, B/A/1/12 fo.124R.

61. Ibid., fo.125R.

62. Whelford (1475-8), Whittington (1478-80), Offley (1480-1), Colwich (1481-90) and Eccleshall (1490-death in 1501).


65. British Library, Cottonian Mss., Cleopatra E.III fos.95D-96R.


67. In Chester itself the Abbey of St. Werburgh dominated everything. The bishops must have envied the Abbots' power and vast wealth. See D. Jones, The Church in Chester 1300-1540, Chetham Society, third series vii (1957).
68. The values of the prebends in 1534-5 were: Alrewas £26/13s/4d; Bishop's Hull £2; Bishop's Itchington £26/13s/4d; Bobenhull £1; Bolton £10 or £65/10s/0d; Brewood ?; Colwich £13/6s/8d; Curborough £6/13s/4d; Dasset Parva £12/3s/4d; Dernford 10s/0d; Eccleshall £20; Flixton £7; Freeford £20; Gala Major £5; Gaia Minor £2; Hansacre £14; Longdon £8; Offley £16; Pipa Minor (Pres) £1/6s/8d; Rytton £11/6s/8d; Sandiacre £10/11s/5d; Sawley £56/13s/4d; Tutefold £5; Tachbrook £10; Tarvin £26/13s/4d; Ufton £26/13s/4d; Ufton Decani £2/13s/4d; Weeford £14; Wellington £10; Whittington & Baswich £13/6s/8d; and Wolvey £2/3s/1d. The larger figure for Bolton prebend is given by H.Baylis, 'Prebends in the Cathedral Church of Saints Mary and Chad in Lichfield, Transactions of the Lichfield Archaeological and Historical Society, II (1960-1), pp.38-52.

69. Wrottesley, Plea Rolls, SHC, VI new series 1 (1903), pp.129, 143.


72. Axon, op.cit., p.36. This brother, Roger Booth, moved to and died at Sawley.


75. Jeayes, Derbyshire Charters, no.627.

76. Ibid., no.1617.

77. Victoria County History of Staffordshire, III, p.162.

78. SRO, D783/5/3/15.


80. SRO, D(W)1810 fo.239.

81. Victoria County History of Staffordshire, III, p.337.

82. Ibid., III, p.253.

83. Historical Manuscripts Commission, Series 69 (Middleton), pp.248ff. This is the Register of Abbot Field.

84. PRO, Ancient Correspondence, SC1/60/6.

85. Victoria County History of Staffordshire, III, p.216n.

86. Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1441-46, p.413.

87. Ibid., 1446-52, p.54.
88. Ibid., 1476-85, p.155.
89. Calendar of Close Rolls, 1435-41, p.369.
90. Ibid., 1435-41, pp.352-3.
93. Ibid., 1468-76, p.309.
95. For his Statutes of 1442 for the rule of the church, and in particular the vicars (the prebendaires being absentees), see D.A. Johnson, 'Dean Bate's Statutes for St. Edith's, Tamworth, Staffs., 1442', Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological Society, X (1968-9), pp.55-62.
96. Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1452-61, pp.28(bis), 484, 498.
97. Twice in 1426 and again in 1434, 1443 and 1444. The first of these appointees, George Radcliff, does not appear in Le Neve's lists. The reference for him is Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1422-29, p.340.
98. See for example, how the Abbot of Dieulacres sided with Sir Sampson Meverell in that man's struggle with Ralph Basset in the Peak District in the 1440s; or how the Prior of Stone took the part of the Fittons against Richard Whalley over the manor of Darlaston-by-Stone. Both cases are discussed in the chapter on law and order.
CHAPTER V

CRIME AND JUSTICE
In the fifteenth century the political history of Staffordshire, like its scenery, appears at first sight to consist of almost unmitigated drabness. Save for the antics of the Erdeswick-Mynors gang who terrorised the north-west during the opening decades, the county witnessed little of the corruption, violence and feud traditionally associated with this period. Yet this is a blessing in disguise. The lack of such features frees the historian from the mesmeric sound and fury of isolated incidents of bloody-mindedness and blood-letting, which, though rare and affecting the lives of only a tiny minority of an area's inhabitants, have dominated accounts of the period.

The vast majority of lawsuits brought before the plethora of courts in the fifteenth century related to petty matters. Inor debts, wandering cattle, arguments between neighbours, poaching and pilfering—these, rather than riot, rape or ransacking, were the staple diet of the later medieval legal system. Yet it is upon the occasional serious crimes and instances of murder, gang-warfare or struggles over an inheritance that attention has been mainly focused; possibly because they are more interesting, but more because of the greater impact they are felt to have had upon society. This in itself is a debatable assumption. For the majority of the rural population it was the petty disputes over grazing rights or debts of a few shillings that were of more immediate importance for their survival or prosperity. However, as it is with the gentry and nobility rather than the peasantry that this thesis is concerned, I only intend to concentrate upon suits involving these. I also have included a section on the use of arbitration, which was particularly prevalent in this county.
My major sources have been the legal records of central government, now stored in the Public Record Office at Chancery Lane. There are also the calendared Close, Fine and Patent Rolls, and the Rolls of Parliament, printed in the seventeenth century. Of the records in the Public Record Office the most important classes have been the Plea Rolls of the courts of King's Bench (KB 27) and Common Pleas (CP 40), the Ancient Indictments of King's Bench (KB 9), the Early Chancery Proceedings (C 1), the Pardon Rolls (C 67), and the records of the court of Star Chamber. The Plea Rolls up to 1485 were examined at the turn of this century by General Wrottesley and in the transactions of the William Salt Archaeological Society (Collections for a History of Staffordshire) extensive extracts were published. In addition numerous deeds have been referred to from several county record offices and the British Library.

Most crimes, minor or serious, were directed against property rather than the person. Above all, the importance of the inheritance dominated and conditioned attitudes to litigation and lay at the root of much of the business brought before the courts. It was the ambition of every landholder to pass onto his heir (preferably a son) an inheritance at least as secure and as valuable as when he received it. To that end, and also if there were an opportunity to improve it, he was prepared to engage in almost any amount of expensive litigation, erect or resurrect wistful claims to land held by another, and risk the disapproval or worse of neighbours, relatives or lords.

Many of the lawsuits involving Staffordshire gentlemen in the late fifteenth century relate to this obsession with the inheritance. It is with these that I will begin.
Security of tenure depended on documentary evidence of one's entitlement to hold the property in question. Hence the need to keep a strong hold on the whole range of land deeds of oneself and one's forebears (enfeoffments, fines, grants, leases, quitclaims etc.). Several Staffordshire figures had to sue associates for the return or handing-over of their deeds, since it was a common practice to lodge one's muniments with trusty friends, usually feoffees to use. John Barbour did so in 1440, as did the Dean of the royal Free Chapel in Wolverhampton and James Leveson in the following year, John Hampton in 1450, John Delves in 1463 and Robert Kynnardsley of Loxley in 1474—the list is by no means exhaustive. Sometimes trouble of this nature was inter-necine, such as when Thomas Littleton sued his mother-in-law Margaret Burley at Hilary term 1459. This suit related to the death of Margaret's husband William a few months earlier. In the disturbed political atmosphere of that time and with William Burley's previous close allegiance to Richard of York, Littleton was eager to get his hands on the Burley papers as soon as possible. He wanted to secure the inheritance due to him and his wife Joan, who was one of Burley's daughters and coheiresses (and also the wealthy widow of Sir Philip Chetwynd). Littleton's claim was for two chests of deeds, writings and other muniments, which implies that either he was making an indiscriminate grab for the Burley 'evidences' or that Joan's share of the family papers was enormous. Littleton, who was later to achieve fame as the author of the seminal work on contemporary land law, was well placed to appreciate the value of being able to produce at short notice proof of title. He and his wife had had to fight off an attempt in the late 1440s by the heirs of Sir Philip Chetwynd, the Chetwynds of Alspath, to enter Sir Philip's.
inheritance, despite this having been enfeoffed jointly upon Chetwynd and Joan Burley his wife, whom Littleton later married. One must have some sympathy with the Chetwynds of Alspath, three of whose heirs Joan was to outlive before her death in 1505, having kept out her first husband's heirs for sixty-one years. Successive Chetwynd of Alspath heirs kept up a series of suits against the Littletons, none of which had much chance of success against the prowess of Littleton, who also managed to play off Buckingham and Warwick, both of whom sought exclusive use of his skills. The obvious aim of the Chetwynds of Alspath was to so wear Littleton down that he would give up part of the inheritance to obtain peace. This failed. All that was granted away was a lease of certain properties in and around Stafford for eight marks in 1467 to William Chetwynd (about whom more later). Littleton was, however, forced to compromise with Margaret Burley after 1459. Another possible reason for his quest for the Burleys' papers was that he and his wife claimed Arley as part of her portion of the family estates. This Margaret disputed and at length was able to make the great lawyer give way. He bought her out in 1465.

While Littleton was generally able to achieve his ends by getting possession of the required pieces of parchment, one Staffordshire gentleman did manage to come out on top by using documents he should have handed to another as pawns in an attempt to get a set of debts written off. John Bagot of Blithfield, whose step-daughter was to marry one Robert Tyrell, avoided repaying money owed to Tyrell's father (money he, with both father and grandfather still alive, simply did not have) by making the delivery of "alle suche dedis of entaiile and other evidencis" concerning what was to be the bride's inheritance and dowry conditional on the debts being
remitted in December 1465.\textsuperscript{5}

Most lawsuits in Staffordshire in the fifteenth century concerned with a disputed inheritance were decided by the production of authenticated title deeds. Where these existed, it was vital to have them securely yet conveniently stored; where they did not exist, there was a great temptation to indulge in forgery. The classic features of such lawsuits are well revealed in the following Fitton-Whalley dispute.

William Houton died prematurely in 1417, leaving two sons and two daughters, all of whom were juveniles. One of the girls, Elizabeth, had married James Dey, and Dey administered the Houtons' manor of Darlaston-by-Stone for six years until the heir Thomas came of age. However, in the late 1420s both Dey and Thomas died and the property passed to Houton's other son, John. Unfortunately John was mentally retarded. The subsequent struggle over Darlaston stemmed from this fact and concerned the husbands and descendants of John's two sisters: Elizabeth, already mentioned, and Clemence, who married Sir Lawrence Fitton of Gawsworth (Cheshire). After the death of James Dey Elizabeth fell in love with one Christopher Whalley and bore him a son, Richard, before they were eventually married in 1430. Later they were to have a couple of other children, one dying a spinster, the other, curiously named Gilmot, being wedded to John Talbot. Initially it was the Fitton rather than the Whalley claim to Darlaston that prevailed. In 1436 Sir Lawrence persuaded the dim-witted John Houton to release to him all right to the family inheritance, which was settled upon Sir Lawrence's son. When Elizabeth's bastard Richard came of age he staked a claim to this property, challenging the Fittons.

It was probably this challenge which led to the Crown taking an interest in the inheritance, but the Fittons produced evidence of enfeoffments to use which thwarted the
royal attempt to take over the lands. This victory may have owed something to Stafford family support. Buckingham was feudal overlord in Darlaston and is known to have written to Sir Laurence Fitton 1450-1, possibly over the coming lawsuit the record of which was personally delivered into the court of King's Bench.6

This victory should have secured Darlaston and the other minor properties of the Houton inheritance in Annesley near Burton-on-Trent and Aston-by-Stone permanently for the Fittons. However, sometime during the 1450s or 1460s Richard "halley recovered Darlaston. The next reference to trouble there refers to 20 February 1472 when the Fittons oved into and illegally expelled "halley from Darlaston. By this time the major protagonists were Sir Laurence's son John and John's nephew and eventual heir Sir Thomas Fitton. (see genealogy below).

The Fittons were far more powerful than "halley, and were part of a large clan by that name in Cheshire and south Lancashire. They seem to have had the support of other landholders around Darlaston, such as James Lee and the Prior of Stone. It was with this prior that Sir Thomas
Fitton was convicted of the illegal disseisin of 20 February 1472 and ordered to pay damages of £180. The family refused to hand back the occupied estates and on 12 July a commission for Sir Thomas' arrest was issued to the Earl of Shrewsbury, John Acton, Ralph Wolseley, the sheriff of Staffordshire and others. Another jury found for Whalley on 3 October, but he still could not get these judgements in his favour translated into actual recovery of the lands. He did have the good lordship of Thomas, Lord Stanley, who was one of his feoffees, but Stanley was loath to alienate the Fittons on so petty a matter (as it undoubtedly seemed to him). However, Stanley did agree to arbitrate with Bishop Laurence Booth of Durham between the disputing parties, though this produced no acceptable solution. Stale-mate continued for the rest of the decade, with Whalley, aided by his friend Robert Boughay, desperately trying to end the Fittons' disregard for court decisions and they in turn sporadically pursuing litigation to disprove the authenticity of Whalley's title and deeds.

At some stage before his death in October 1487 Richard Whalley did recover Darlaston from the Fittons, though he cannot have had long to enjoy the property. He died leaving a son and heir, Thomas, aged only six; thus there was scope for yet another claimant to appear. One of Richard's sisters (born in wedlock), Gilmot, and her husband John Talbot turned up at Richard's inquisition post mortem hearing and claimed that the deceased's illegitimacy invalidated his claim to the Houton inheritance. This likewise meant that young Thomas should not come into the lands. The Talbots swore that they were the rightful heirs of Christopher Whalley and Elizabeth Houton and that Richard had occupied Darlaston by right of a life-interest in the same granted to him by themselves (the
Talbots. This version was initially accepted, but their's was only to be a temporary victory, as Thomas Whalley recovered his father's property upon attaining his majority early in the sixteenth century.

However, even with evidences locked away in a safe place and a clear title to one's properties, there still remained the problem of feoffees. The transfer of common law ownership of these estates to a set of trustees or feoffees was a legal fiction developed to prevent sequestration by the courts or a feudal overlord. Use of the lands of course went unaffected, and the Court of Chancery, its judgements in such matters based on equity, was used by 'land-holders' against recalcitrant feoffees, who refused to carry out their required duties.

Who were the feoffees? They were mainly friends, kinsmen and neighbours of the grantor. Lawyers were useful acquaintances and regular appointees, while few lists were complete without at least one cleric, who might belong to any of the above categories. Noblemen figured less frequently. Even among men with known close connections with a particular magnate, they are a rarity. The feoffee, like an executor, was someone thought unlikely to abuse his position of trust after the grantor's demise. One's number of feoffees depended upon one's status; a minor gentleman might have only four or five, a magnate a couple of dozen with small groups allocated to his estates in the particular area where they lived. The idea of having more than one feoffee was partly to insure oneself against that one person dying still seized of one's lands and partly to reduce the risk of one's wishes being disregarded. Collusion was more difficult as the number of feoffees increased. The number of one's feoffees would be
maintained by replenishment if and when old feoffees died, were no longer suitable or quarrelled with one.

Such cases as came before the Chancellor involving complaints against feoffees—and there were many—usually related to a refusal (or could it be in some cases just slowness) on the part of the feoffees to execute some request. The most common complaints were from heirs, who wanted livery of their inheritance, or from grantors, who wanted, for whatever reason, the return of the common law title to their estates. There are dozens of such cases, but one will suffice to make the point. In 1454 a Lincolnshire gentleman Henry Hawkin, whose kinsman Richard Hawkin was vicar of Madeley (about four miles east of Newcastle-under-Lyme), revealed that the cleric had enfeoffed Robert Davy, clerk and Oliver Bromley in a hundred acres of land in Madeley, intending that they should make an estate of this to Hawkin. When this was not done, Hawkin began a suit before Chancery to force them to do so. In answer to such a charge feoffees had a number of ripostes. They might deny ever having been enfeoffed in the property in question, as John, Lord Dudley did in the mid-1460s in a suit brought by one John Huddleston over land and rents in Wednesbury; or that there were other factors to be taken into consideration before a re-enfeoffment could be made, as John Leventhorp (another of Huddleston's feoffees) claimed—in this case a debt of £296.

Occasionally feoffees were sued not for failing to make any enfeoffment, but for making an 'illegal' one. For example, after the death of the long-time Stafford family servant John Barbour in 1468, his feoffees were supposed to grant the manor of Haseley-by-Stafford as dower to his widow with reversion to his younger son Robert. Instead, after their mother's death the elder son Humphrey conspired with the feoffees to dispossess the younger and was granted the land.
One of the constant fears of an under-aged heir was that his guardians, out to make as much money as possible from their temporary control of his inheritance and sparing no thought for the economic condition they left this in, would run down all the property's resources and neglect repairs and necessary maintenance to buildings. Sir Robert Harcourt tried in vain from 1436 to at least 1444 to get restitution from his guardian's executors (who included Sir Thomas Blount) for damages allegedly done during his minority to his patrimony in Oxfordshire and at Ellenhall in western Staffordshire. He claimed that the Ellenhall fisheries had been destocked and buildings everywhere so neglected that they were now structurally unsound; but with Blount as deputy-steward of the Honour of Tutbury he had little chance of collecting the three hundred marks he wanted as damages.

Some heirs did not even wait to enter their inheritances before commencing litigation. In 1485 William Birmingham, who incidentally was later declared non compos mentis, after keeping a close watch upon his mother's dower lands in Birmingham, sued her for selling off a large number of trees and allowing a mill to go unroofed. Tenants were also liable to be taken to court on similar charges. In 1441 Hugh Erdeswick at Hintes and Philip Chetwynd at Penkridge sued tenants for failing to keep leased property in sufficiently good repair. It was, however, possible for a tenant to protect himself from this sort of action by ensuring that his lease contained a clause guaranteeing their tenure to be 'without impeachment of waste'.

Neighbours often fell out when the action or inaction of one adversely affected another. Straying cattle might damage crops, untrained dogs worry sheep, or, as at
Wychnor in 1463 an untended fire lead to the burning down of an adjoining building. On the more 'deliberate' level is the difficulty caused by the Curzons of Kedleston building a weir at Barton-under-Needwood which led to a series of complaints by the farmer of the royal mill there between 1486 and 1490 that his income was thereby reduced. The council of the Duchy of Lancaster dispatched Sir Humphrey Stanley to the site and, upon his report that the weir 'stoppis the water gretely', it was broken up. However, the major source of antagonism of this type was caused by enclosures.

The blanket term 'enclosure' covers two distinct processes involving a change in land-use. The first was a continuation of the centuries-old reclamation of wasteland for cultivation (assarting); the second, and for Staffordshire at this time the more important, was the conversion of arable land into pasture with an accompanying loss of jobs and houses for numerous farmers, whose small-holdings and rights to common were disregarded in the aristocracy's search for profit or sport. The Staffords in 1500 may have claimed that Duke Henry had 'ade the allowance to a penny' to his tenants at Thornbury (Gloucestershire) for having 'used them hardly for inclosing theyr grounds', but even if this were true (which I doubt) it was exceptional. The aristocracy were wealthy enough to finance the construction of enclosures and powerful enough to protect their investment. There was little thought for the social implications of their actions as the sheep and deer beggared both those tenants who tried to stay and those who could not. Thomas More in Utopia, written in 1516, complained:

'They're even tearing down houses and demolishing whole towns- except, of course, for the churches, which they preserve for use as sheepfolds. As though they didn't waste enough of your soil already on their coverts and game-preserves, these
kind souls have started destroying all traces of human habitation, and turning every scrap of farmland into a wilderness... It only takes one shepherd or cowherd to graze animals over an area that would need any amount of labour to make it fit for corn production. 24

To be accurate, this was no class war with gentlemen cooperating in each other's enclosures. That occurred only rarely, as in March 1490 when the closely-allied Basset and Okeover families in the Peak District exchanged pastureland in Lathfield and Coldwall specifically to facilitate enclosures that they wanted to construct at Blore and Okeover. 25 The more usual situation was for one gentleman's attempts to enclose to be (often violently) opposed by neighbouring gentlemen acting with or alongside those of their tenants who would be adversely affected by the move. Not everyone got a licence to enclose, as John Hampton did in May 1446 for three hundred acres of arable land, pasture, meadow, marsh and wood in Stourton. 26 The Wolseleys only bothered to get sanction for their enclosures at Wolseley in the 1460s after armed opposition from the Gresleys, Stanleys and the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield—this case will be discussed later in this chapter and elsewhere. Enclosures of the kind that were to cause so much distress in the sixteenth century were, at least in Staffordshire, rare in the fifteenth and usually confined to its last two decades. Earlier, the Abbot of Burton at Burton in the early 1450s, Nicholas Fitzherbert at Snelston (just inside Derbyshire) in 1443, and John Delves at Crakemash-by-Uttoxeter in 1466 had been openly opposed in their attempts to enclose. Delves, who was lord of the manor at Crakemarsh, had built hedges and ditches around a large field where the people of Uttoxeter had traditionally been allowed to pasture cattle after harvest and when it was lying fallow. Some of these men made a hole in the enclosure and continued grazing
their beasts. 27 Delves won damages of £12, though there is no record of his ever receiving any of this. A further attempt to enclose at Crakemarsh was made in 1502 by Sir Robert Sheffield (who had married one of Delves' granddaughters and heirs), when the tenants of Uttoxeter petitioned the council of the Duchy of Lancaster for a commission of inquiry. 28

From the last quarter of the century local gentlemen seem to have been increasingly loath to support the opposition of local people and tenants to the enclosing activities of their gentry neighbours. From the inquiry into enclosures since the advent of the Tudors led, by Wolsey in 1517 29, it appears that the reason for this decrease in gentry opposition was that neighbours gradually saw enclosures less as a threat to their own prosperity and position (or those of their tenants), and more of an opportunity for aggrandisement. In other words, they too decided to enclose. According to the inquiry, Thomas Cumberford enclosed thirteen acres of pasture at Cumberford in 1489 and also 'augmentavit parcum suum ibidem eidem anno de communiis terre per spaciwn xl. perchiarum.' He enclosed another forty acres there three years later. In all, the inquiry lists fifteen gentlemen who enclosed a total of 488½ acres in Staffordshire between 1485 and 1517, 30 of which just over a third (175½ acres) went to provide pasture for sheep, while the rest provided game for sport as emparked hunting areas (pro feris nutriendis). Of these, the largest single amount was one hundred acres emparked by John Aston the younger at Tixall in August 1497 for a hunting chase. We may speculate that this action was prompted by Aston's successful defence of his family's claim to be episcopal masters of game and rule in Cannock forest the previous
summer. It is also possible that the large cost of the work came from his share of the compensation paid by Thomas, earl of Ormond at this time to other claimants of the Bergavenny inheritance—both of these episodes are referred to more fully elsewhere in this thesis.

Wolsey’s inquiry, as previous examples have shown did not produce an exhaustive list of enclosures in Staffordshire since 1485. While there is no evidence that anything of the scale of the thousand acres enclosed in the 1460s by the Wolseleys went unrecorded by the Cardinal’s commissioners, enclosures of up to thirty acres were often missed. Only in the north-west of the county were enclosures rare by 1517, though why this should be I cannot say.

From affairs concerned principally with land and the inheritance, I turn now to offences directed more against the individual. Of these, debt and crimes of violence are the most important.

The word ‘debt’, when used in medieval litigation and pardons, although strictly meaning a claim for money owed by one party to another, covers a multitude of sins. Frequently the records are uninformative as to the nature of the debt and occasionally there is only circumstantial evidence for its very existence. It seems likely that an outstanding debt of sorts lay behind a certain Robert Taylor’s breaking into the Stafford residence of the recently-deceased Robert Whitgreve in June 1453 and removal of most of the furniture therein contained, but of what the debt consisted can only be speculated upon. 31

An analysis of what details do survive concerning the nature of debts in suits involving the gentry, reveals that these could generally be placed within one of four categories. Firstly, there were debts arising from non-
payment of the cost of goods received. For example, through the 1460s William Bailey tried in vain to collect the bulk of the £33/6s/8d owed to him by Anne Swynnerton of Hilton from 1462 for forty-two oxen she had purchased from him at Walsall market.\textsuperscript{32} In the following decade Robert Middleton had a similar difficulty with Thomas Curzon of Croxall. This time the goods in question were not livestock but haberdashery, or to be more precise, half a dozen pairs of breeches and 82\(\frac{1}{2}\) yards of dyed cloth.\textsuperscript{33}

Secondly, there were cases of executors suing and being sued for debts pertaining to the deceased. The vigour with which these were pursued was naturally greater and more tenacious when the executors were close relatives or heirs than when they were simply friends or business acquaintances. Thomas Whitgreve, for instance, was still pursuing one unfortunate debtor of his father Robert in 1466—fourteen years after Robert's death.\textsuperscript{34}

Thirdly, there were broken bonds or recognizances. These might deal with a wide variety of matters—e.g. agreements to keep the peace towards someone, to save someone harmless (not let him suffer after having agreed to stand surety for one), to go to arbitration, or to repay a debt, and so on. The final point here leads into the fourth of the types of litigation concerning pleas of debt; non-repayment of a loan.

Just how common it was for Staffordshire gentlemen to take out loans in the fifteenth century is uncertain. Few engaged in trade and although several fought in the French wars, only Sir William Peyto is known to have been unfortunate enough to get captured. In 1451 he had to mortgage his estates at Wyrley and in Warwickshire at Sowe and Chesterton to the lawyer and controller of the Chetwynd estates Thomas Littleton for £390 to pay off his ransom.\textsuperscript{35}
One possible indicator of gentry financial problems is the land market. One's inheritance, as shown in the struggles of gentlemen earlier on in this chapter, was jealously guarded; so sales of part of it surely signify a desperate need for money. Humphrey Stafford the younger of Grafton (Worcestershire) certainly was in difficulties. Towards the end of 1465 he had to sell off Chebsey, Bradwell (Warwickshire) and Dynchampton (Wiltshire). The buyer was Thomas Littleton—further indication of how lucrative the legal profession could be. Stafford's problems were not helped by an inability to get his debtors to pay up. Sir William Birmingham owed him money, but could not even be got into court by Stafford; while Edmund Hastings, a fellow Worcestershire squire, whose bond for £20 Stafford had held since 27 January 1456, successfully procrastinated in the court of Common Pleas until at least Trinity term 1469 on the unlikely grounds that he was illiterate and knew not what he had signed.

By August 1473, when Stafford was appointed to a commission enquiring into monies owed to but not paid over to the Crown, he was certainly well qualified for the post.

Another plea regularly used to evade paying a debt, especially after breaking a bond, was to claim that one had been forced to sign under duress—which, if proven, would invalidate the bond. Given the tremendous power and often unscrupulous character of Sir John Savage, it is not inconceivable that the bond in one thousand marks he exacted from his son-in-law Roger Draycote the younger on 2 September 1464 (curiously, with the assistance of Draycote's father) was forced out of him; but it is hard to swallow that the London jeweller Edmund Shaa could have frightened that most pig-headed and litigious of all Staffordshire lawyers Ralph Wolseley into signing a bond for a mere forty marks through
fear of his life. The bond was dated 9 December 1468 and referred to a debt owed to the jeweller for exactly half that amount. Evidently, Wolseley, one of the barons of the Exchequer, having eventually got around to paying that back, had no intention of giving Shaa any profit on the deal.

The other common cause of litigation for debt concerns the administration of estates. A bailiff was personally responsible for the issues of his bailiwick and might be sued for any shortfall in the accountable revenue, even though that shortfall was not his fault. I have gone into this point more fully in the chapter on the Church in Staffordshire, but it is worth emphasising here the different ways in which a land-holder expressed his dissatisfaction with the financial running of his property. Sometimes it was even necessary to take a bailiff or receiver to court to get from him an account in the first place. The list of gentlemen who had to so sue is lengthy and includes John Lane in 1451 and 1458, John Hampton in 1472, Simon Mountfort in 1484 and also such clerics as the Prior of St. Thomas', Stafford and the Dean of the King's Chapel, Wolverhampton. It seems reasonable to presume that accounts were occasionally late in appearing not because of any excessive work involved in their being drawn up, but because the bailiff or receiver in question, knowing that a significant proportion of the expected revenue was uncollected or uncollectable, was loath to lay himself open to being sued for the same. Some arrears could be recouped, others were chronic. Few would have envied the position of the Crown's bailiff of Barton-under-Needwood who complained to the Council of the Duchy of Lancaster in 1481 that he was unfairly being charged for uncollectable rents under an out-of-date rental. Sometimes it was the arrears themselves that a land-holder would sue for, but equally common was the claim
for the amount stipulated in the bond covering arrears drawn up before the bailiff or receiver took up office. These bonds go far towards explaining why the Plea Rolls record large numbers of cases involving a member of the county gentry suing obscure yeomen and husbandmen for enormous sums of money, several times the annual income of the latter. For example, Sir John Talbot and the Abbot of Croxden sued three husbandmen from Ramsor-by-Alton for sums of £60 each which they 'unjustly' detained. The money must have been connected with an estate income of some sort; there is no other plausible explanation of the suit.

Sheriffs too were, on a financial level, no more than glorified bailiffs (shire-reeves) and could be sued if their accounts showed unvouchered shortfalls of revenue. Accordingly, it is no wonder that many are found suing their receivers for accounts and specie pertaining to the shrievalty. When a man who has been sheriff is found suing as 'late sheriff' others for a debt, it is more than likely that the money in question was part of his shire farm. Similarly, sheriffs could be sued if they failed to hand over money allotted to individuals from their farms. Two examples will suffice to illustrate this. In the first, Nicholas Warings M.P. for Staffordshire 1461-2 won an undefended case in 1464 for £22/16s/0d in unpaid wages and travelling expenses for his parliamentary duties and forty shillings in damages from the then-sheriff John Harcourt. In the second, Sir Henry Stafford sued at Michaelmas term 1469 every Staffordshire sheriff appointed from 1455 onwards, with the exception of Walter Wrottesley and Sir John Stanley, for a fee farm of six marks a year due to him from Walsall in the right of his wife. Successive sheriffs had received
the money in question from the bailiff of Walsall, but had not passed this on to Stafford. The most likely explanation for this is that authorisation for the payments was lacking, rather than that the money was purloined or deliberately directed towards other purposes. Why Stanley and Wrottesley should not have been sued along with all the rest remains a mystery. Perhaps they were empowered to pass on the six marks; perhaps, for some reason or another, Stafford chose not to inconvenience them with litigation. He had certainly taken his time in deciding to sue.

Before turning to violent crimes, there are a few odds and ends to be quickly dealt with.

The courts for fifteenth-century Staffordshire were not without 'consumer complaints'. In 1477 John Harcourt of Ranton sued a couple of Seighford masons for building him a tower at Swynnerton so badly that it soon collapsed. At least Harcourt got a tower of sorts for his money; William Cumberford in 1440 and Robert Aston in 1460 had to take their builders to court for not even bothering to begin work on edifices commissioned from them. In 1459 James Leveson, the wealthy Wolverhampton wool merchant, sued a craftsman there for fulling his cloth so negligently that part was ruined. Most consumer complaints appear on manorial and urban court rolls, as bakers, fishmongers, publicans and other sinners were regularly arraigned for proffering shoddy or wrongly described merchandise. A few such cases even reached the Plea Rolls. For instance, a husbandman from Stonehall-by-Lichfield was sued in 1476 for selling honey adulterated with sulphur and other impurities; while at Burton-on-Trent a decade earlier a butcher had been caught using loaded dice in a gambling game called 'le dozen'. The clergy too were not above employing deception in the market place. In
1466 and 1472 respectively the Prior of St. Thomas, Stafford and the Abbot of Burton were accused of selling horses which, although presented as healthy, were in reality only fit for slaughter. Had the clergy been as ready and ingenious to proclaim the Gospel and live according to the precepts of the Good Shepherd and the monastic founders as they were to fleece their flocks, then doubtlessly their standing in the eyes of the laity would have been considerably higher than it was.

Anti-clericalism was rife. It was this, together with cynicism, rather than doctrinal unorthodoxy that lay at the heart of most of the heresy trials in the diocese of Coventry and Lichfield. From the records of these, it becomes apparent that it was the (often superstitious) accretions to the central dogmas that aroused the most antagonism, especially when these accretions were exploited for monetary gain by the clergy. For example, John Blunston of Coventry was convicted in 1485 of denying the value of pilgrimages, requiem masses and alms-giving for the dead, or that those powers granted to St. Peter by Christ were handed down to succeeding Bishops of Rome. What annoyed Blunston most was the way in which such things were used to suck money out of ordinary people, and he angrily swore 'an vengeance on all suche horeson prests ffor thay have gret envy that a pare man shulde gete hyis levynghe amonghe hem.'

Not all priests, however, approved of all the lucrative customs that the Church was generally seen to favour. Doctor John Bredon, an elderly friar of Coventry, in 1446 was banished from there by Henry VI for having 'sturred and mooved the people of oure said cite otherwise then wel and agenst the laudable custumes herebefore had and used in our cathedral chirch there.' As a certain German monk was to do at Wittenburg sixty-one years later, Bredon had taken a
dispute with ecclesiastical authority to the point of nailing up his views and condemnations to a church door. Bredon promised to deliver the inhabitants of Coventry from 'the thraldom of Pharao'. However, his were no 95 Theses. His quarrel concerned who should get the candles surrounding funeral biers in the cathedral after the funerals!

Both Blunston and Bredon quickly recanted when faced with the might of the church establishment. As with all the other convictions in the diocese, they received, after agreeing with 'pure herts and frewills to forsake the seyde errors', full absolution. Doctrinal heresy, as already stated, was rare in this area. There is a legend of a secret Lollard meeting place at Rushton Spencer (near the Cheshire border), and a travelling Lollard preacher is known to have operated briefly in south Staffordshire and Coventry in the 1420s. Coventry supplied most of the heretics mentioned in this diocese's episcopal registers of the period—evidently a centre for religious freethinking. An exception in the list of heretics was John Woodward of Wiggington-by-Tamworth in south-eastern Staffordshire. He was alone in being charged on solely doctrinal grounds. He appeared in the bishop's consistory court in 1453 for denying the real presence in the eucharist and the need for baptism in certain cases. Like the others, he recanted and the diocese was spared an auto-da-fé.

How justified was the caricature of the later-medieval cleric as less devoted to the sacraments, Virgin Mary and vespers than to the worldly wine, women and song? Clergymen appear surprisingly rarely in the Plea Rolls, and when they do, it is just as likely that it is as the plaintiff than as the defendant. Many of the lawsuits in
which they were involved were the same petty matters with which all landholders were bogged down—straying cattle, poaching, minor debts and the like—for there was much ecclesiastical land in the county. Some was held by the Bishop and chapters of Coventry and Lichfield, some by the local monastic houses, and some was glebeland pertaining to the parish priest. However, occasionally there were more serious incidents which, together with a general moral laxity that is widely attested to though difficult to produce empirical evidence for, served only to brand the clergy en masse as hypocritical parasites. Monasteries and nunneries were widely regarded as dens of iniquity, and, since they were often stocked with men and women whose 'calling' had been chosen for them rather than by them, there was frequently some truth in the popular view. Many made a convenient distinction between the way of the flesh and the pleasures of the flesh; renouncing one but not the other. This was certainly the case in the most depraved of Staffordshire religious houses, Burton Abbey.

By the time the Crown stepped in and granted custody of the Abbey on 20 July 1433 to Humphrey, earl of Stafford, John Harper, Robert Whitgreve and William Munden for seven years, the Abbey had long been financially and morally bankrupt. No accounts had been kept since at least the turn of the century and successive abbots were in the habit of having to resign. As for their monastic habits, these were most frequently to be seen on the ground while their some-time wearers busied themselves with prostitutes and other men's wives. The most notorious of Burton's abbots was Ralph Henley (1432–55). His forte was not womanising, but getting on everybody's nerves. Under Henley, whose absenteeism, drunkenness and gambling finally resulted in
his being forced to resign in 1455, the Abbey's relations with the rest of the county reached an all-time low. He fell out with Burton's townsfolk over enclosures he tried to erect. He fell out with the Abbey's tenants and in July 1439 sued them in Chancery, alleging that they had 'procured theym [selves] to be empanelled on questys for the kyng to that entent that they maliciously and wrongfully endyte certein of the covent (md) of the seid Abbey'. There is a certain irony in Henley concluding this petition 'and thus devyne service ys gretely hyndred'. It was hindered by a lot more than the antics of a few husbandmen. At this time the Abbey also fell out with the local gentry. In 1449 two commissions were issued for the arrest of the Gresleys of Drakelow, Thomas Dethick and others to prevent them continuing their divers trespasses, riots and other offences against the monks of the Abbey.

The worst clerical womaniser of the period came from another religious house— he was Dean John Bate of Tamworth, who was also involved in a lengthy lawsuit with Nicholas Finderne of Derbyshire throughout the 1440s and 1450s over the Tavernor inheritance. Bate was obviously a man of strong passions, not all of them spiritual. He was accused of raping Margaret Chamberlain on 4 October 1457 and, though he found securities for his future behaviour, was arraigned on a similar charge four years later— this time he got off on a technicality. Whether in these cases rape meant sexual intercourse with an unwilling other party or simple adultery is unclear. Medieval records on this point tend to be ambiguous. Sometimes a charge of rape was used to bring to heel an errant wife or daughter, or in cases of abduction. One of Bate's servants, John Bredhill, who is
the last criminous clerk I want to examine was involved in at least two of these rape/abduction cases. On 18 September 1430 he carried off the wife of one John Harward. This would appear to have been a genuine, straightforward abduction, as he also stole over £20 worth of the man's cattle at the same time—hardly the action of someone just out for a quick night's wenching. In 1438 he was pardoned for breaking into the house of Felicia Derby at Alcester (Warwickshire) five years earlier. This time only theft was alleged, but on 9 January 1439 he made off with the wife of a certain Reginald Tanner—less than eighteen months after being indicted for knowingly receiving a man who had just stolen some communion silver. He evidently had no scruples about the sacrosanctity of church property. Bredhill had a stormy relationship with his patron Sir John Sutton (Lord Dudley from 1440). He seemed positively to revel in poaching on the Sutton estates, especially as he knew their owner to be frequently abroad or tied up with affairs of state in London. Back in June 1433 Sutton had ransacked the parsonage at King's Swinford and according to a petition to Chancery submitted by Bredhill on the incident, had removed goods worth £133/10s/0d. The list of stolen items is worth referring to, as besides household goods Bredhill lost several 'glosed' biblical commentaries, some devotional literature, eight books of grammar, a dozen of divers poets, and twenty 'tretys of logik, musik, geometre & othor sciencis'. This is evidently no semi-literate, backwoods priest with whom we are dealing, but a man of culture who, like Chaucer's Parson in the Canterbury Tales, could knit mighty matters out of books. In the end, he was shipped off to France (probably Dudley's doing), where he became rector of Chalkwell and St. Nicholas, Calais.
Kidnapping was rare. In 1437 Sir John Gresley the elder complained that he and his wife had been imprisoned at Abbots Bromley by Richard Lane for three days so that they could not reach Chester, where a court was deciding on the ownership of two parts of a manor called 'Marchalle', which Gresley was disputing with Richard Winnington. Foul play of some sort there certainly had been, though it seems more likely that the couple were somehow deliberately delayed rather than that they were held captive, as they later alleged.

But why should a lawyer from the south-west of the county want to delay a gentleman and wife from the south-east en route for Chester? The answer is as complicated as the situation which spawned it, but beneath everything is, again, a struggle for land. At the centre lay the formidable and four times married Margaret Norwood. By her second husband, the short-lived Robert Winnington of Winnington (Cheshire) she had two children, Richard and Elizabeth. After Winnington's death late in 1428 Margaret arranged for the marriage of her daughter to Richard, the eldest son of her Staffordshire and Cheshire neighbour John Delves. Soon after this Margaret and Delves, both having lost spouses decided themselves to get married. However, almost before their wedding celebrations had died down, Margaret was once more a widow. She took a fourth husband sometime later, Sir John Gresley the elder, by which time she had three sets of dower to recommend her and was a highly eligible catch. What then followed was a struggle for control of the Delves estates throughout the late 1430s between on the one side Margaret and Gresley and on the other Richard Delves, aided by his mentor and father's friend Ralph Egerton of Wrinehill. Every opportunity was taken to frustrate the ambitions of Margaret and Gresley. Even if his marriage to Elizabeth
Winnington was gradually breaking up, this did not prevent Delves with Egerton from assisting Richard Winnington (a young man approaching his majority and in roughly the same sort of position as Delves viz a viz Margaret and Gresley) as best he could.

Thus when the Gresleys and Winnington clashed over what the latter felt was part of his inheritance Egerton got in touch with Richard Lane, whose eldest son had married one of Egerton's daughters, and Lane was instrumental in delaying the Gresleys, probably under the guise of offering them hospitality en route. This squabble between various members of the Delves family and friends produced yet another 'kidnapping', when Delves and Egerton 'liberated' the former's younger brother John in 1439 and married him off to another of Egerton's daughters Elena. There is no evidence that any of this was against John's will; indeed he and Egerton enjoyed a friendship that lasted until death parted them. On the other hand, none of this was to Gresley's liking and may well have prompted him to seek the Staffordshire shrievalty, to which he was appointed on 5 November 1439. If, by taking office, he hoped somehow to reverse his fortunes in l'affaire Delves, he was to be disappointed. Things continued to go against him and Margaret. Even after Richard
Delves' early death in 1446, they were unable to secure any of the family property. John Delves and Ralph Egerton, after a lengthy series of inquiries (the bulk of the Delves family estates were held in chief), secured all for John.71

Most so-called kidnappings or abductions were achieved with the consent of the 'victim', and many were effected to avoid feudal incidents. In 1452 Sanchia, widow of John Curzon of Croxall and her nephew Sir John Gresley the younger (son and heir of the John Gresley involved in the last case-study) smuggled away Sanchia's eldest son Thomas from Lutterworth in order to deprive their feudal lord Sir Edward Grey, Lord Ferrers of Groby of the lad's wardship and marriage.72 Similarly, in 1474 another widow, Elena Ward of Stafford, was sued with John Harrington from Lancashire, for so abducting her child John that Margaret Harcourt lost his wardship and marriage.73 A variation on this had occurred three years earlier when the child alleged by Thomas Littleton to have been abducted in fact had only been taken into Halesowen Abbey, and presumably in time holy orders.74 There were other feudal dues which might be evaded, given a plea of abduction. On 22 January 1472 Humphrey Cotes of Woodcote (Shropshire), son of one Staffordshire sheriff and brother to another, carried off his Helen to a border Troy. According to the prosecution, he seized Margaret Ryman, widow of William Burley and carted her around half of Shropshire before feloniously ravishing her. Margaret was a wealthy widow who presumably wished to marry Cotes without having her jointure seized by her feudal lord—hence the plea of abduction. Cotes produced a general pardon in Trinity term 1474 and no more was heard of the matter. Had the abduction
been 'for real', as it was in the Kebell-Vernon case of 1502 when Margaret Kebell was seized by two of Henry Vernon's younger brothers (one of whom wanted her hand in marriage), a far greater fuss would have ensued.

The principle of trial by jury was completely accepted, even though juries, open to bribery and intimidation, often seem as loath to put in a court appearance as many of the litigants. Only on one occasion was any other form of trial—by combat—suggested or arranged. Even then it was merely a chivalric gesture in a collusive suit of 1446 by which John Savage acquired half of Dove-by-Norton (just inside Derbyshire) from his step-brother Richard Peshale. A determined man might remain at large for years, though few were as bold as John Forman who was freed by friends 'like as it hadde be Robyn-hode and his eyne' in December 1438 while being taken from Scropton (Derbyshire) to stand trial at Tutbury. The usual course of action was simply to evade any writs or enforcement officers coming one's way. This was often not particularly difficult as sheriffs might not get round to serving writs on their friends or innocently return those writs to Chancery, pleading that such and such a person could not be found within the shire. When the cat and mouse game proved too wearisome, a defendant could always buy a blanket pardon from the king. Not surprisingly there were few convictions.

Yet not all those ordered to be arrested evaded the officers sent after them. Those who evaded arrest or summons figure more often in the legal records because of references to their continual non-appearance in court on successive law terms. The impression that this was a time of empty jails and a countryside teeming with men on the run is a false one. The frequent commissions of jail delivery indicate a different situation. The prisons of Staffordshire are unlikely to have
been substantially different from those of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, which were so over-crowded that in 1443 the King had to grant permission for men to be sent all through them soliciting alms for their inmates. 78

A high level of violence was even taken in some quarters as a source of national pride. Ex-Chief Justice John Fortescue enthused in his *Governance of England*

'Ther bith therfore mo men hanged in Englande in a yere ffor robbery and manslaughter, then therbe hanged in Fraunce ffor such maner of crimes in vij. yeres.' 79

In addition to actual killings, there were large numbers of alleged attempted murders and of conspiracies to murder. In actions for serious assault it was almost common practice to stress an element of premeditation, claiming that one's assailants had plotted, assembled 'in riotous wyse' and lain in wait before doing the foul deed. However, such details should be treated with caution. Much of the record borrows less from the actual events than from contemporary legal formulae and phraseology—themselves a function of the conventional exaggeration in such matters.

A master suing thugs who beat up one of his servants would commonly add that the wounds inflicted eant that he lost the services of his man for some time, but whether this was just half an hour while a black eye was seen to or a couple of months for broken limbs is not recorded. There were other stock phrases. An undated petition (probably from the early 1440s) from Thomas Nevowe complained that while he had been peacefully growing hay at Handsacre, Walter Griffith, one of a sizeable number of hot-headed young gentlemen in Staffordshire at the time, had sought him out intending to slay him. Had Nevowe not fled the area, he continued, he would have been killed and he 'never sithen
durste be seyne in his owen contrey for drede of betyng or of lesyng of his lyf unto his grete hynderyng and perpetual destrucciOfl.'8° This point about not daring to return to one's own 'contrey' was a common feature of actions for assault and threatened assault, though by 'contrey' we should not assume that county is meant. In this case it might only have been the field of hay, about which there had doubtlessly been some altercation.

I am not arguing that court records contain little or nothing but misleading or inaccurate references to the crimes they are covering, rather that the various features or aspects of those crimes were recorded in a stylised form. It is when additional details and variations from this stylisation occur that the historian is best justified in claiming knowledge of a precise sequence of events. For such courts as Chancery and Star Chamber in the fifteenth century detailed sets of pleadings may even have survived, but these are rare for King's Bench and Common Pleas. One interesting letter, written between 1496 and 1505 also survives concerning one case of attempted murder in Staffordshire. It was written by William Harper J.P. to the Keeper of the Privy Seal:

'Rygth reverent and onorabull good lord wt all dew recomendacyon Sir hyt ys soo that my lord Farrus [Ferrers] hath wryten to me aletter desyryng me wryte to youwr lordschyp of a mater that was knowlageyd and confessed before Sir humfrey Stanley george Stanley Nicolas agard and me at Pype acordyng to the trowth of the mater, my lord hyt was soo that won Morgan Neuton brought before us and oder dyvers persones beyng present that he was desyred by won Wylyam Orchard to kylle the seyd Morgan and also won Wylyam Bothe reported be for us and confessed that he was desyred to doe the same and by cause he wold not akre therto he was put owte of hys sarvyce.'81
This matter may well have been bound up with Newton's position as the Ferrers' bailiff of Chartley at the time; bailiffs have never been much liked. In 1499 the one for the collegiate church of Wolverhampton was attacked inside that very house. Swords were drawn, blood spilled and the holy place desecrated. Back in 1480 John Agard, one of the most important administrators in the Honour of Tutbury, was assaulted at his lodgings by a yeoman and a crowd of well-wishers, when he had arrived in Newcastle-under-Lyme to collect 'ye kinges dueties'. However, these were isolated incidents. There was no general resistance to or violence offered against a lord's officials.

Most of the county's crimes were the work of its own inhabitants, though, as might be expected, people from adjacent counties are found in suits concerning border areas. Staffordshire was far enough inside England to escape the attentions of the mauroading gangs of Welsh ruffians and cattle rustlers, who dogged neighbouring Shropshire and the Marches. Some stock was taken from Weston-under-Lierceard in June 1448 by a group led by Griffin Vaughan of Wales, but this was an exceptional incident and anyway Vaughan's men were mainly drawn from and operated out of Shropshire. The Celts in general were regarded as vicious and bestial, and were held in contemptuous fear by the English. This prejudiced generalisation was occasionally reinforced by instances of crime, such as when one of the number of unruly Welshmen employed by the powerful Griffith family of Wichnor in eastern Staffordshire, Rhys ap Madoc, cold-bloodedly...
knifed to death Richard Edward, a fellow servant, on 1 January 1447 at Barton-under-Needwood.85

However, if there was one section of the county community which did contribute more than its 'fair' share to the amount of crime in Staffordshire, it was not an ethnic one. Irresponsible youth was to blame—men such as Christopher Draycote (younger brother of the escheator and Stafford family administrator, Roger), who was indicted in October 1444 with an associate for cattle and horse theft in Leicestershire and for the murder of an owner who disturbed them in these activities.86 Such angry young men were certainly at the heart of the troubles in the Peak District throughout the 1440s and 1450s. It is these I now want to turn to and examine in some detail.

During these decades Staffordshire was generally quiet. It was spared any of the bloody, factional feuds which ran through several other counties, including Warwickshire and Derbyshire. There were disputes, but no society has ever got by without these. The major series of disturbances was centred on the harsh uplands of the Peak District along the Staffordshire-Derbyshire border. However, there is no reason to assume that the parting comment of the sheriff of Derbyshire that 'the people is wilde' can be attached as an epitaph to all Staffordshire.87

Many historians have exaggerated the importance of these events in determining later political allegiances and their severity at the time. Everything is relative, and let it not be forgotten that no-one was killed or even seriously wounded in these troubles. Although at times
portions of land or revenue were at stake, these were soon superseded by pride as the principal motive behind the continuing discord. To use an appropriate canine metaphor, the attacks of one gentleman upon another in this area were more akin to the bites of a bulldog in the backside than a wolf at the throat. Such tactics as were employed emphasise this; there were no attempts to kill or maim, rather, the targets were the property of one's opponent, his time and patience.

The border between Staffordshire and Derbyshire stretched for about seventy miles from the bleak Peaks of the north, along Dovedale and the Trent valley, and around the great royal forest of Needwood, until it finished near Clifton Camville on the edge of Warwickshire. The land, although heavily wooded, supported a great deal of sheep farming and became increasingly amenable to arable farming the further south one went. However, neither Staffordshire nor Derbyshire at this time were particularly wealthy counties. Such disturbances as there were took on a political significance towards the southern part of this border, towards Warwickshire. They were caught up in the struggle for control of the northern part of that county between Buckingham and the Beauchamp/Neville Earls of Warwick. In the Peak District most of the trouble involved and, more importantly, originated among the competing gentry families, with little more than pride to fight for and jealous of every aspect of their status. Generations of inter-breeding and doubtless in-breeding had woven so complicated a pattern of kinships among those of gentle birth that it is difficult
to be certain how important family ties actually were in determining how an individual acted. The following cases show kinship was no guarantee of goodwill and support; people in the fifteenth century got on well with their relatives no more regularly than in any other age. The classic example of one of these disputes (and one which was later to develop into something more serious) concerned the Meverells of Throwley and Tideswell and the closely-allied Bassets of Blore and Okeovers of Okeover. Such matters, though undoubtedly of immense importance to the participants, hardly merit the term 'feud'. They were conducted along predictable and surprisingly restrained lines. There was no general breakdown of law and order; such raids as were carried out were accepted as much as an accompaniment to litigation as a cause of it. The origins of the dispute are obscure, but were of only local concern. What was probably at the heart of the matter was the fate of the tithes of Meverell's principal manor of Throwley. These belonged to the church at Ilam whose vicar, John Southworth, was a close friend of Ralph Basset. Sometime around 1442 Southworth devised these tithes to Basset, to the fury of Sampson Meverell—a substantial contributor to them. Southworth had been presented to his living by Basset's ally Thomas Okeover, whose grandson and heir had recently married Basset's daughter.

On 8 September 1442 Meverell and some associates raided property that Basset held at Throwley and set their cattle to graze there, as an expression of Meverell's anger. Thus began a series of petty, yet annoying offences against Basset and Okeover. Behind Meverell's actions can be seen the strong determination of a landowner to prevent any erosion of what he considered to be his rights and privileges. Sir Sampson had entered his inheritance only earlier on in that year and had discovered that he was being cheated out of certain lands in Stapley (Cheshire) by one John Roope, who had stolen the Meverell seal while Sir Sampson's father lay ill and used it to
to forge a deed, returning it 'enbrowed with reed wax.'

Thus Meverell was extremely sensitive about his interests, real or imagined. There may have been other factors too. Meverell had a younger brother Richard, about whom little is known except that he was on and stayed on good relations with Basset and had received an extremely generous livelihood from his father. Fraternal jealousy may have entered into Sampson's heart as he saw his own inheritance under threat from not only Roope but also the bequeathing of Ilam's tithes to his neighbour Basset, and this may have helped sour relations between the two families. The raid on Basset's estate was the old soldier's way of expressing his feelings on the matter. Meverell's wrath was also vented upon Southworth. The clergyman was not prepared to take things lying down and refused to have anything to do with the Meverells in church. To his cost, however, he had reckoned without the knight's connection with the Archbishop of Canterbury, John Stafford. After Meverell had complained about Southworth the vicar was excommunicated on 29 July 1444 for failing to answer the charges made against him, namely:

'That Sr Jon Southworth vicar of Ilam dede corus Sr Sampson Meverell and Dam Isabell is wyff the v. day of Aprill in the ii and xxte yer of K.H. the vi. without any aconte... having told all the prests in the contie that they schold do no service when I or my wyeff or any servegens of ourus wer in any of the churches.'

This was not the only quarrel in which Basset was concerned at the time, but these were unconnected with the Meverell matter. For instance, he and Okeover were in dispute with Nicholas Fitzherbert of Norbury (Derbyshire) over property there for which Okeover was a feoffee. An attempt by Fitzherbert to erect enclosures may lie behind this. Certainly Basset and Okeover reacted to a Fitzherbert theft of timber
from a close at Snelston (about four miles from Blore) by leading their tenants on an expedition to demolish these enclosures; for which escapade they were summoned to answer before the King's council. With tongue no doubt in cheek Basset protested to the assembled worthies that although Okeover's men had thrown down the ditch, 'thei that cam with him had jakkes bowes arowes & salades to see that the poeple sholde not riotte.' In the albeit fragmentary records of the case which survive there is significantly no mention of any violence having occurred. This implies that nothing of the sort actually transpired; for it is inconceivable that with Archbishop Stafford presiding at the hearing any opportunity would have been lost to present evidence of lawlessness on the defendants' part had it existed. The court's decision, if there ever was one, has not survived, though the Close Rolls record that Basset and Okeover had to give recognizances not to harm Fitzherbert or any of his servants and a commission was issued to three judges in February 1444 to inquire into crimes committed by the pair of them.

One point which needs constantly to be borne in mind when judging medieval legal pleadings is that a tremendous amount of exaggeration went on over the severity of the alleged crimes. This, if not recognized, can lead to a misunderstanding of the scale of lawlessness at the time. For instance, few crimes seem to have been committed without 'vi et armis' and few people who had been assaulted did not have their lives deserted of. Raiding gangs of allegedly over a hundred strong were in reality groups of between a dozen and twenty, while losses put at the annual income of
a prosperous knight can probably be divided by ten for a more accurate figure. Thus when Ralph Basset described the Fitzherbert theft from Snelston as involving the felling of a hundred oaktrees and the carting away of both these and two hundred loads of underwood— and all in one day— this Herculean feat, worthy of an entire royal army, should not be taken as the economic decimation of a plot of 'olde England'. That the outcome of this matter is unknown is unfortunate, but it is not unlikely that it was all soon settled amicably or slowly fizzled out. The former of these possibilities, as the Paston Letters show for East Anglia, was quite common, with disputants being on good terms generally despite difficulties over a specific issue. The dispute is also of the kind that might reasonably have been sent for arbitration.

Nevertheless, Basset felt in need of substantial support and good lordship. He turned to Humphrey, duke of Buckingham, with whom he had had earlier dealings both as sheriff of Staffordshire 1437–8 and also when he was one of the electors who returned the Stafford placemen Robert Whitgreve and Richard Brown to the parliament of 1442. Buckingham retained Basset with an annuity of ten marks in October 1444. This arrangement suited both Basset and the Duke, who was trying to build up an affinity in the Peak District. Basset's links with such other local families as the Bradbournes, Bagots and Curzons of Kedleston (Derbyshire) were useful to the Duke. As the 1440s were to progress this relationship was to become somewhat strained, but initially there were benefits for Basset and his allies. On 14 October Southworth's excommunication was lifted and over the following two years life generally quietened down. A possible indication of Stafford support
for Basset comes from a petition that Meverell (of all people) sent in to the Chancellor, his friend the Archbishop, in the mid-1450s, complaining of 'wronges, extorsions and mysreules' done to him by Basset. Meverell's complaint that he can get no remedy at common law because of the 'grete.myght and support' given to his enemy may be no more than standard wording (it was certainly a common phrase in such petitions), but it may also be evidence that Buckingham was aiding Basset. Having retained him the Duke could hardly ignore the man's problems without it reflecting badly on his own ability to provide good lordship.

There were two other reasons why the dust began to settle in the area. The first of these was that the mid-1440s saw an increased assertion of power by the Blounts of Elvaston-by-Derby. This family seem to have been a force for restraint at the time, moving easily among the various gentry cliques in the area. Blounts appear among the witnesses to deeds with Basset and John Curzon in the early 1440s and with Meverell, Fitzherbert, Fulk Vernon and John Cockayne (who will enter the story shortly) in September 1447. Not only were the Blounts a powerful family in their own right, but they also exercised considerable authority in the Honour of Tutbury, where the head of the family, Sir Thomas, was deputy steward under Buckingham. He was also sheriff of Staffordshire 1444-5 and of Derbyshire 1446-7 and on the Derbyshire commission of the peace. Humphrey Blount, a kinsman, was escheator of Staffordshire 1445-6 and sheriff there 1446-7.

The other reason for the lull in the hostilities was that Basset, probably at Buckingham's suggestion, joined the ducal retinue at Calais for a short period. However, nothing had been settled permanently and on his return Basset was greeted by a fresh round of cattle rustling and trespassing. He was also to find Buckingham less ready to assist him. Southworth was ambushed and
forced to grant the tithes to Meverell.99 Meverell was later acquitted of this, a fact which owed less to any innocence on his part than to the occupation of the Derbyshire shrievalty at the time by Nicholas Fitzherbert. It may well be that the reopening of anti-Basset sentiment was fostered by this occupation. Certainly Meverell and Fitzherbert were by this time acting in concert against Basset.100

Gradually the number of people involved in these disputes was growing. The longer the bad-feeling continued, the more pride was invested and the more difficult it became to achieve any compromise solution. In 1444 an attempt to bring about arbitration between Basset and Meverell by John, Lord Dudley had failed, as neither party was prepared to compromise. Status was an important commodity in these barren and often inaccessible areas and that, rather than the financial stakes, soon became the heart of the matter. Many of the charges brought against a disputant were extremely petty and, as mentioned before, wildly exaggerated— I cannot believe that these gentlemen faced economic ruin as a result of a neighbour's grazing of a dozen cattle on a plot of their land for a day. Deliberate depasturing of cattle and the subsequent taking of the matter to court were recognized steps in such a dispute and were designed to annoy and provoke one's opponent. Bloody-mindedness had replaced blood-letting.

There was no time when separate factions as such could be identified in the area, but small gangs of gentlemen and their associated tenants did exist. Certainly the same names recurred whenever the Meverell group was sued.

In the late 1440s incidents of lawlessness in the area became increasingly violent, a trend accelerated by the emergence to prominence of John Cockayne of Ashbourne (Derbyshire). Cockayne was certainly a major thug. As both Sir Richard Vernon and even Buckingham himself allowed a daughter to marry Cockayne at various
times, he must have had redeeming qualities; though all I can
discover about him which might have commended him was a sizeable
inheritance in north Warwickshire— but by medieval standards this was
enough. A more charitable R.L. Storey, while classing him as a
'lawless and dissolute ruffian', continues:

'It is possible, however, to make him some allowance
for his father had so disposed of his property that
for many years the son enjoyed only a small proportion
of his inheritance. Sir John [the father] had arranged
that all his lands in Warwickshire and Staffordshire
should be held by his widow until her death, leaving
John the son only the Ashbourne property. Sir John
died in 1438, when John junior was some sixteen years
of age, but his widow was still alive in 1466.'

The widow of the elder Sir John Cockayne remarried Thomas Bate of
Pooley (Warwickshire), a lawyer, councillor and retainer of the
Staffords. Son and step-father hated the sight of each other,
though to his credit the Duke did not allow this to lead to either
of them leaving his affinity. Cockayne's financial straits certainly
contributed to his sour relations with Bate and led him to be ever
vigilant for the possibility of pressing a claim to property (whether
or not it was a legitimate claim). That his close friends should be
young men is hardly surprising. His gang, including such people as
Thurstan Vernon and Thomas Meverell, consisted of heirs and younger
sons of the local gentry with time on their hands as they waited in
financial stringency for their fathers to die. Bonded together and
bogged down by the legacy of an older generation and fired by the
impetuosity and exhibitionism of youth, they habitually put valour
before discretion and the chevauchée before the writ. The Cockayne-
Vernon gang existed as early as May 1443 when Bate was besieged at home
by a band of rustlers raised from Ashbourne and various Vernon manors
in Staffordshire and Derbyshire.

The Cockaynes formed a bridge between Meverell and the
Vernons, with a little help from the Montgomerys and Longfords. The
Vernon connection helped Meverell get appointed to the Staffordshire
commission of the peace in July 1449, as Meverell himself lacked links with Duke Humphrey. In 1450 Meverell was being sued by William Trussell for being on a jury which accepted bribes from Sir Richard Vernon back in June 1448 to return a wrong verdict in Vernon's struggle with Trussell over the Pembridge inheritance.103

An appreciation of the position of the Vernons is necessary if one is to understand local politics during this period. They were among the half a dozen most powerful gentry families in Staffordshire and western Derbyshire. Sir Richard Vernon was a knight of the shire for Staffordshire in 1419 and for Derbyshire in 1422 and 1426— for which last parliament he was Speaker of the Commons. Three of his sons also became members of parliament: Richard in 1433, Fulk in 1439-40 and William in 1442, 1449-50 and 1450 all for Derbyshire—William also sat for Staffordshire in 1455. These are just the known times when the family provided M.P.s. They were well represented in other county offices too, and Sir Richard's power was extended on 16 December 1439 when the Duke of Norfolk made him steward of his property in Derbyshire and later knight-steward in the Earl Marshal's court of chivalry.104 He was also steward of the High Peak for the Duchy of Lancaster and not the sort of man to be crossed if possible. Around 1440 the council of the Duchy was petitioned by several of its tenants complaining of Vernon's high-handedness in pursuit of his duties and accused him of imprisoning people without cause. One complainant added that 'the said Richard is so mighty in the said county that the "besecher" may not abide the danger of the suit' he had brought against Vernon.105 It was Sir Richard's large number of sons, secure in the knowledge that their father's power would protect their every action, who were involved in most of the disturbances at this time. For instance, William Vernon needlessly made enemies of the Gresleys of Drakelow over the petty matter of the admission of cattle to a plot of
pasture land. This was eventually settled by the arbitration in 1447 of William, Lord Ferrers, but relations between the two families were to remain permanently strained. Another son, Thomas, was outlawed in 1449-50 for poaching in Queen Margaret's parks at Stockley in the Needwood forest, and a third son, Thurstan, was ordered to be arrested by a royal commission of 26 June 1450 for various offences committed with Hugh Davenport (who with a fourth of Sir Richard's sons, Edmund, had married the Handsacre heiresses while they were wards of Vernon). In late 1450 Agnes Hert, the widow of a Gresley servant, appealed William Vernon, Davenport and others of the murder of her husband, and in 1455 when Buckingham eventually intervened to arbitrate between the Vernons and Gresleys, one of the clauses of the award he made insisted that twenty marks compensation be paid to Agnes.

The whole matter of arbitration in gentry disputes is an important one and will be dealt with more fully at the end of this chapter; but one point does need making here. It concerns the Ferrers arbitration of 1447 mentioned earlier. Vernon had been part of the Ferrers affinity in the area, an affinity which had never attained the importance it had had under Edmund, Lord Ferrers in the 1420s and 1430s and which was slowly breaking up. That in their quarrel with the Gresleys, the Vernons turned as late as 1448 to Ferrers rather than to Buckingham, however, indicates that the Staffords who had retained Sir Richard in 1441 and had also retained Sir John Gresley the elder is significant in explaining the politics of the area. It was Buckingham's uncertainty of his influence with the Vernons and his need for their support and his tactics in trying to prevent them following most of the rest of the Ferrers affinity into the camp of his rival the Earl of Warwick that led him to turn a blind eye to the disturbances in the Peak District and to the plight of his retainer Ralph Basset. Lords,
were not always expected to interfere constantly in the affairs of their supporters, but when violence occurred some action on their part was demanded to give credibility to their 'good lordship'. When the Meverells and Cockayne-Vernon gang attacked Basset's property at Blore next, he reacted by not only suing them in the courts but also petitioning against them in parliament. This decision was prompted not so much by any notable losses sustained in the attack (of 30 October 1448), but by his feelings that Duke Humphrey was not going to come to his rescue again, and by a similar more serious attack by the same group five days later on the Okeover's home manor at Okeover. Philip Okeover had only a short time before taken over that manor from his grandfather after the latter had gone to live on his second wife's property in Nottinghamshire. One likely theory for this second attack is that John Cockayne had manufactured a claim to the land. Certainly the complex interweaving of the lands of the two families gave scope for an unscrupulous exploitation of the territorial boundaries. The attack on Basset may have been a warning not to interfere, coupled with a reaction to the fact that Sir Sampson Meverell was at the time in prison at the Marshalsea being tried for the attack on Southworth mentioned earlier. On 8 December Okeover's property received yet another visitation from the travelling thuggery as what had previously been sporadic harassment developed into something more sinister. Okeover too petitioned parliament, possibly so advised by Edward, Lord Grey of Groby upon whom he had been attending at the time of the attacks. These petitions were full of vivid descriptions of the raids. Okeover's, for instance, related how after breaking up 'the dores, baywyndowes and other wyndowes of the seid maner with fourmes, trestille and tabulle dormant', they added insult to injury by using these to cook all but five of the deer in the adjacent park in a barbecue of destruction. A jury later assessed the damage at three
hundred and ninety five marks, though it is unlikely that Okeover was ever compensated for the attack. In 1452 Basset was awarded £80 damages and £20 costs for the raid on him. The defendants were difficult enough to get into court. As in the case concerning Okeover, the money was probably never paid. However Basset too had friends, as was revealed in his petition to parliament:

'Had not John Curbourne, Richard Bagot and Henry Bradbourne with others ...come thither to the entent for to se pees kept and for to entrete them to go thens, thei the attackers hadde brennyd the place of youre seid besecher, and his brother Richard Basset and other divers of his tenaunts the which were at that tyme within the seid place, and so at the request and at the instaunce of the seid John Curboyn, Richard Bagot and Henry Bradbourne the seid misgoverned and riottous persone was intretide to go thence and so thei dide.'

From this passage two interesting points may be drawn. First, it is significant that three of Basset's saviours were closely related—Bradbourne and Curzon had married Bagot's sisters. This whole episode reveals how the 'extended family' could assemble within a surprizingly short period of time for a common purpose— in this case to rally to the support of an ally. Did Cockayne's raid, or rather the extent of it trigger off some defence mechanism within gentry society by over-stepping some unconscious threshold of acceptable violence? Certainly the sudden show of solidarity and 'gathering of the clans' was in marked contrast to the apathy of the previous half a dozen years. There was a real danger of someone getting killed, possibly by accident, and then a blood feud could well develop. The reaction of Bagot, Bradbourne and Curzon was instinctive rather than calculated, as contemporaries clearly saw the attacks as going beyond the undefined boundaries of accepted illegality.

Secondly, it is significant how effective the show of support was. The words 'entrete', 'request' and 'instaunce', used to
describe how the attackers were stopped in mid-rampage, suggest a
growing belligerency among the relievers, which may help explain
their success.

The central point to bear in mind when examining all
these disputes is the extraordinary mixture of local and wider
factors that contributed to the course that events eventually took.
Overlaying the petty rivalries was the building and maintenance of
magnate affinities. Buckingham could not afford to take any action
which might result in the political alienation of either Cockayne
or the Vernons, but failed to see the long term disadvantages of
ignoring the morality of issues for short term gain. The longer he
acted in this vein, the more he risked losing the goodwill of the
uncommitted and limiting his freedom of manoeuvre. Dr. Carpenter
has shown for Warwickshire that his failure to dominate that county
was ultimately due to the way 'he upheld the use of force for
illegitimate ends, and so identified himself with a tyrannical
attitude to property.'\textsuperscript{113} Dr. Rawcliffe in her study of the Staffords
has best summed up the Duke when she wrote that 'against an obvious
talent for dealing with his own estate staff must be set a harsh and
often vindictive disposition, which... continued to cloud his
political judgement until he fell at the Battle of Northampton in
1460.'\textsuperscript{114} This is not to argue that all the problems with which
Buckingham was faced could have easily been solved by a more-gifted
man. There were constant, dangerous undercurrents within the
Stafford affinity and often the Duke was compelled to support one
man on one issue and oppose him on another— individuals were
recruited for their personal ability and/or local influence, not
for their ability to get along with one another. In a perfect world
there would have been no disputes within the affinity to strain
loyalties, but this was far from being a perfect world and the Duke
was left having to consider the day-to-day preservation of his
affinity as his prime task. He certainly would have agreed with
the Red Queen that 'it takes all the running you can do, to keep
in the same place.' Two examples of the awkward position which the
Duke could find himself in occurred at this time.

The first was that the nobleman whom Philip Okeover was
waiting upon at the parliament of February 1449 and because of whom
he was absent earlier on in that winter when the raids were
perpetrated, Edward Grey, Lord Ferrers of Groby, was one of the
Duke's staunchest supporters in Warwickshire at the time— and here
was Cockayne whose support Buckingham also needed ransacking one of
Grey's attendants' homes— three miles from Grey's own manor of Wootton.

The second involved the struggle over the Mountfort
inheritance (related elsewhere) in which Buckingham laboured long
and hard to disinherit Baldwin Mountfort in favour of his younger
step-brother Edmund— despite the fact that Baldwin was married to
Joan Vernon, Sir Richard's sister. So while bending over backwards
in one dispute not to antagonise the Vernons, the Duke was doing
just that in another.

After 1450 these Peak District disputes gradually petered
out, to be replaced by more overtly political in-fighting within
Derbyshire, which led to the alienation of the Blounts from the
Staffords and was led by a Cockayne-Vernon gang strengthened by
the Egertons and Longfords; but that story is outside the parameters
I have set for this thesis on Staffordshire. There was, however,
one more disturbance along the border which was both politically
motivated and Staffordshire-based. Again, behind it lay the Stafford-
Neville struggle for northern Warwickshire, and again, it concerned
part of the old Ferrers of Chartley affinity.

A cadet branch of the Ferrers family held Tamworth on the
Warwickshire border (about six miles south-west of Clifton Camville).
In 1449 fighting broke out there between them and Buckingham's men.
On 20 September Thomas Ferrers the elder and his son Thomas attacked a couple of the Duke's men, Richard Emme and Hugh Colman, supposedly so injuring and frightening them that they were unable to leave their homes for thirty weeks. However, nine days afterwards they were fit enough to join with others led by Thomas Hexstall (brother of William, clerk of Buckingham's household and Stafford family placeman in the parliament of early 1449) in a return attack on the Ferrers family. Thomas the younger petitioned parliament that his attackers numbered over eighty and at Coleshill

'assault made to the seid Thomas Ferrers, Gilbert and Hugh More [his servants], and theym thenne and ther bete wounded and...lefte for dede and...come to the seid towne of Tamworth yn the seid shyre of Warrewik arraied in maner beforeside and than and there assaulted the castelle of Thomas Ferrers the elder Squyer to the entente to have slayne hym yf they might have goten the same castelle.'

It should not be forgotten that at the time of all these disturbances Thomas Ferrers the elder was sheriff of Staffordshire. He was soon to be replaced by Humphrey Swynnerton, a friend of Buckingham. Not surprisingly the justices of the peace presided over a jury which found against the Ferrers, but the award of costs and damages was suspended while the effect of the verdict was assessed. Perhaps Buckingham wished to make some conciliatory gesture in the hope of wooing the Ferrers family away from Warwick, to whom they had become attached; if so, he was unsuccessful. In fact it was to Richard, duke of York rather than Warwick that the Ferrers' allegiance was closest. The marriage of Thomas the younger to Anne Hastings in the summer of 1448 may indeed have been instrumental in provoking the troubles of that autumn, as the Hastings family were among York's most loyal supporters.

This, like the Peak District problems, was not continued in Staffordshire in the 1450s, but did help fashion
the eventual allegiances of 1459-61.

This sort of violence, however, was rare. Most people simply got on with the business of producing and providing for the next generation as quietly as possible. Trouble meant distress and expense; and there is no evidence that the people of the fifteenth century were generic masocists seeking out ways of antagonising their neighbours. Such disturbances as there were tended to be of a personal nature. Riots were almost unknown. Staffordshire remained quiet in 1381 and 1450, but there was always a fear of popular insurrection in the minds of the establishment. Certainly the burgesses of Coventry were greatly alarmed by rumours that the area was on the point of rising after a series of Lollard sermons preached there and in south Staffordshire in 1424.¹¹⁷

The county's only major urban disturbances occurred in Lichfield in 1436, 1442 and 1488, all involving the Cathedral chapter there. In the first of these, tradesmen besieged the close, even using slings and war-engines to hurl stones over the walls.¹¹⁸ This led to a royal grant in 1441 that the close be outside the jurisdiction of secular officers— the cause of the trouble. The 1442 riot was organised by episcopal estate officials and directed against the Stanleys of Elford for some obscure reason. However, it was the trouble on 28 December 1489 when a brawl inspired by three of the Chapter vicars led to four deaths, mayhem with gentry from the Bishop's estates riding armed about the town throughout the following day, and a somewhat belated royal commission into the matter which did not sit until the following 12 September.¹¹⁹ Lichfield chapter was not the only local religious institution whose relations with neighbouring townsfolk were not always harmonious; Lilleshall Abbey, Shrewsbury and St. Werburg's, Chester had their problems too. However, it was neither the clergy nor the common people who were the major source of social disorder. As shown
by the incidents in the Peak district, it was the gentry- and in particular its younger elements- who were to blame. This was not a phenomenon confined to those harsh northern uplands.

In autumn 1498 Roger Dingley the mayor of Walsall complained to the court of Star Chamber about a couple of young swash-buckling gentlemen, John Beaumont of Wednesbury and Walter Leveson. Two men had been arrested for their part in a Walsall brawl in which a third participant had been badly, possibly fatally injured. Then Beaumont and Leveson, who obviously had some connection with the imprisoned duo, rode into the town, threatening to run riot if their friends were not immediately released. However, they were turned away by William Harper and William Wilkes, J.P.s who lived locally. Beaumont and Leveson were later to claim that they had turned up simply out of curiosity.

All of this happened on Wednesday 13 June 1498 and Harper and Wilkes, fearing that more trouble might develop the following Sunday at Willenhall fair immediately forbade all the inhabitants of the locality to go there- at least that was how Dingley the mayor reported their words. Leveson and Beaumont claimed that the only ones forbidden to attend what was after-all a traditional Trinity Sunday affair were those armed and looking for trouble. On this point at least the mayor's version seems less plausible, and may well have been an attempt to further blacken the reputations of his antagonists. Whatever the truth of all this may be, there is little doubt that, come the day of the fair and probably enlivened by readily-available intoxicants, Leveson and friends made a considerable nuisance of themselves, cavorting about, as Dingley put it, in riotous assembly. That phrase covers a multitude of sins, but the high-jinks apparently included one man yelling he was Robin Hood, another the Abbot of Marram and several that they would see to any Walsall folk they could lay hands on. The reply to Dingley stated that
all this was simply a show put on to raise money for charity.\textsuperscript{122}

Most so-called feuds were little more than brief, petty differences, settled after posturing, threats and inconvenient litigation without violence. There were exceptions. In April 1456 the Cox family of Wolverhampton, minor burgesses with whom Nicholas Warings had had dealings three years earlier when he sued for a £40 debt, broke into the Warings home at nearby Lea and abducted a serving wench.\textsuperscript{123} They were later acquitted of this by a local jury, but not before Warings and his men had been out to exact what Francis Bacon called that wild justice that is revenge. They beat up the attackers and kidnapped John Cox the elder, who was held captive for three days until he agreed to sign a bond in £100 to Warings.\textsuperscript{124} Presumably this was intended to forestall any legal retaliation; if so, it failed. However, perhaps significantly, the suits begun by Warings are known to have been heard almost immediately, whereas two years elapsed before there is the first reference to suits brought by his antagonists—after all, Warings did have two kinsmen on the Staffordshire bench in John Hampton and Thomas Everdon. He and his men swiftly arranged for and received pardons in spring 1458 and the matter was apparently left there.\textsuperscript{125}

This was not the only piece of litigation Warings' servants got him involved in with Wolverhampton burgesses at that time. He had to sponsor a petition to the Chancellor on behalf of his man Stephen Heuster against the Salford family. They had come to Heuster's house at night to attack him and when he refused to step outside they set the property on fire and smoked him out before beating him up.\textsuperscript{126} Such a level of arson and premeditated violence, however, was rare, risking as it did a participant's death.
The number of unlawful killings in the area during this period was remarkably low. For instance, John Young of Charnesby-Eccleshall killed one Thomas Wybbunbury with a lance in 1473 when defending himself from an attack, while John Mynors the younger, bailiff of Uttoxeter was pardoned on 15 November 1457 for mortally wounding a troublemaker at the local market the previous July, whose brawl Mynors had been called in to break up. The coroners' court also had to sit on such cases of accidental death as when the Earl of Shrewsbury lost a son in a joust at Caurs Castle in 1443, or when Elizabeth Taylor fell from her horse at Over Penn on 15 June 1496.

1496 was an extra-ordinarily busy year for the county's coroners. They presided over views of eight corpses, of which seven were found to have been murdered. Rarely can this figure of murders have been surpassed. In the fifteenth century it was rare for Staffordshire to have more than one murder per year, if that. Murders, when they did occur, rarely involved the gentry. They were usually the results of arguments involving yeomen, husbandmen or town traders, and death was often caused by a blow with either a club or an agricultural implement, such as a billhook. Occasionally, however, a gentry family was implicated, as when the Coyneys (Robert Coyney was escheator in 1460-1) got away with killing a certain husbandman Henry White of Mere and wounding his wife as they lay in bed.

Convictions, especially against the gentry, were hard to secure. Arranged acquittals or the production of easily-purchased pardons so mocked natural justice that it is more noteworthy that violent revenge was not commonplace than that it occurred at all. Only two local murders between 1440 and 1500 were premeditated acts of revenge—those of Sir Robert Harcourt...
How the feud between Sir Humphrey Stafford of Grafton and Sir Robert Harcourt began is unknown. Stafford had acquired fees totalling £71 a year, of which forty marks came from Humphrey, duke of Buckingham. Stafford was also the Duke's lieutenant at Calais (1442-4), while Harcourt has been linked with Suffolk. Though the affair cannot be proved to have grown from or expressed factional rivalry, it may be pertinent to note that the Harcourts were part of the Ferrers affinity and turned to Richard, earl of Warwick rather than Buckingham in the 1450s.

As far as we know, hostilities opened on 22 May 1448 when the Harcourts ambushed the Staffords in the middle of Coventry fair. The dust settled to reveal Sir Humphrey Stafford lying unconscious and badly wounded and his eldest son dead of a blow to the head from Sir Robert Harcourt's own broadsword. Any hopes the Staffords might have entertained of judicial vengeance were dampened by Harcourt's good lord William, Lord Ferrers presiding over the indictment proceedings on 16 July. There was also the difficulty of getting a defendant to appear in court, but Harcourt was eventually outlawed on 16 June 1449. Nonetheless the Staffords plotted violent revenge. On 1 May 1450 Sir Humphrey, his second son (Humphrey the younger), and kinsmen Richard Beauchamp and Thomas Burdet gathered a large war-party and rode south through the night to raid at dawn their enemies' principal residence, Stanton Harcourt in Oxfordshire. Arriving as the family were hearing matins in the village church, they attacked the same and drove them into the church tower. A six-hour siege then ensued with volleys of arrows raining down on the cowering defenders, until either as a result of resignation or news of an approaching force of relievers, the Staffords retired.
By 23 May a commission of oyer et terminer into the Stafford raid had been ordered. However, both sides played 'the pardon game', producing the all-important pieces of parchment to halt legal proceedings against themselves—Humphrey Stafford the younger on 6 July 1452 and Harcourt on 18 November 1452.

This was not to be the end of the matter, though the Harcourts went seemingly unpunished for the murder of May 1448. Humphrey Stafford took no further part in the feud—or indeed in anything—for he was captured and executed by Cade's Kentish rebels in June 1450; but the younger Humphrey still sought an eye for an eye. This preoccupation with revenge cost him dear. Dr. Carpenter has written of young Stafford's career during the 1450s, a decade which saw the Harcourts ally themselves with Warwick, that he 'lost most of the friendships his father had built up, [and] was unable to get a hearing against the Harcourts even when that family was rendered vulnerable by the Yorkist confiscations of 1459.' Even his family's friendship with Buckingham seems to have cooled when it became apparent that the Duke was not able to procure Harcourt blood. Revenge was to be a long time coming. The Harcourts were even more powerful in the 1460s than they had been earlier on. While Sir Robert's attention lay mainly around his Oxfordshire estates, his brothers William and more particularly John of Ranton (sheriff 1461-3, 1466-7) represented the family and its power in Staffordshire.

The opportunity for the Staffords to avenge themselves came during the Readeption, when for the first time in over a generation their enemies lacked the protection of Ferrers/Neville good lordship. Although Sir Robert
Harcourt accompanied Warwick on a diplomatic mission to France in the early summer of 1467 for Edward IV.\textsuperscript{140} Evidence for the continued closeness of their relationship thereafter is lacking in deeds or lawsuits. The Harcourts suddenly found themselves omitted from county commissions in the late 1460s, which is particularly noticeable given their prominence within the county gentry, the frequency of their appearances on the same in the earlier part of the decade and their previous prominence among the Earl's allies in the area. From general circumstantial evidence it appears that, along with many other of Warwick's gentry associates, the Harcourts were not enthusiastic about his alienation from Edward IV. They were loath to support his alliance with the Lancastrians, favouring loyalty to the Yorkist king. Certainly there is a letter from Harcourt's brother Richard to Thomas Stonor dated 1 February 1470 stating 'ye know wele the besynesse that I have aboute the Kynges maters atte this tyme.'\textsuperscript{141} At this time Warwick and Clarence were arming for the final break with Edward. Perhaps the appointment of John Harcourt sometime between Michaelmas 1469 and 14 June 1470 by that Lancastrian partisan Bishop John Halse of Coventry and Lichfield as bailiff of his episcopal liberty was part of an attempt to woo the family into support for the return of Henry VI— a support which would go far towards securing the county's loyalty to Warwick and his new regime. The Harcourts may have found themselves unsure of their best interests in a political no-man's land; tempted, but loath to desert Edward IV.

Simultaneously (and perhaps not unconnected with this) was a growth in the Stafford of Graftons' support for Edward IV. When Warwick and Clarence finally broke with Edward in March 1470 part of the royal reaction to this
was to remove the Earl from the shrievalty of Worcestershire and replace him with someone more dependable. The choice fell upon that long-standing Neville enemy Humphrey Stafford the younger of Grafton. He was appointed sheriff on 30 March 1470. With Harcourt in political difficulties and Stafford in (at least temporary) power the springboard for revenge was constructed. Sir Robert Harcourt's movements were scrutinised and on 14 November, with their prey half a dozen miles north of Wolverhampton at Hilton, nemesis was exacted. At two o'clock in the afternoon Harcourt was knifed to death by raiders led by Stafford's half-brother William. News of the murder travelled swiftly, if not entirely accurately. A letter from Margaret Paston in East Anglia written 1 December 1470:

'Trost not mych vp-on promyse of lordes now a days that ye shuld be the suerere of the favour of ther men; for there was a man, and a lordes sone, seid but late and toke it for an exampill, that Ser Roberd Harecourt had the good will of the lordes after ther comyng in, and yet wyth-in short tyme after here men kylled hym in his owyn place. A mannes deth is litill set by now a days.'

Although the inaccuracies in this account (Harcourt was cut down neither in his own place nor by agents of the Readeption) show the author to have been misinformed about or completely misunderstood the significance of these events, it appears that Harcourt's acquisition of the goodwill of Arwick and Clarence was sufficiently noteworthy to be taken as an example. Here is surely evidence both of the rift between Sir Robert and the Earl and also of the latter soliciting desperately needed support by assuring Harcourt that past differences had been put aside and he need fear nothing from the new order. That Harcourt was murdered so soon after the return to power of the Lancastrians is unsurprising
since the Staffords were not Warwick's men. Nonetheless, the incident, misconstrued as it was by the East Anglian lady or by those from whom she got her information, may have been only one of a number of pieces of information which led her to remark on the lack of control a lord could exercise over the members of his affinity. It was precisely because so much was set by a man's life, rather than so little, that the fraternal single-minded hatred lasted over twenty years before being sated and that the Staffords were able to count upon the support of not only kinsmen and tenants but also several wealthy Wolverhampton burgesses such as Richard Leveson and the Salfords, who may well have also supplied the vital information as to Harcourt's movements.

This time it was the Staffords who cloaked themselves with the immunity fostered by public office, powerful allies and procured pardon. With Humphrey as sheriff in Worcestershire, the wheels of justice were sure to get clogged. Indeed the coroner's report took nearly nine months (4 August 1471) to be returned. There the matter rested. Harcourt's widow spent a fruitless five years trying to secure a court verdict against her husband's murderers, but with as little success as the Staffords had had a generation earlier. In addition to the other factors pertaining to the Harcourts' escape from judgment, there was also a general feeling that two wrongs had made a right. Throughout the early 1470s Humphrey Stafford was a confirmed, protected and favoured Yorkist. In October 1474 his position was buttressed by a grant of the forfeited Ormond estates of Clent, Handsworth and Mere in southern Staffordshire. This loyalty to the house of York extended to Richard of Gloucester, for whom the Staffords of Grafton
fought at Bosworth. Humphrey was later executed in 1486 following an unsuccessful revolt against Henry Tudor, but that is another story.

Murder most foul, however, was rare in Staffordshire, political assassination particularly so. The death of Sir Robert Harcourt had resulted from a blood-feud, but that of William Chetwynd in 1494 is shrouded in mystery.

Sir Humphrey Stanley was the architect of Chetwynd's murder. He had not risen to be the most powerful man in Staffordshire after 1485 by being a fool; he and his family were renowned for surviving through flexibility of response to crises rather than being in on their precipitation. In short, the murder was planned and, more importantly, calculated. Written evidence for Stanley's motives does not survive (in fact it probably would have never existed), but from the questions which are raised by the detailed description of the attack on Chetwynd given by his widow Alice in her petition for justice to Henry VII, certain suppositions become highly appealing. Alice's account of the events of 20 and 21 June 1494 runs as follows:

'The friday at nyght next before the Pest of Sent John Baptist last past, a counterffet letter was then directed in the name of Randolf Ererton, Squyer, unto your sayd late servante[William Chetwynd], specyably dysyryng hym by-the same to mete with hym at Stafford at v.of the clock the next morning after, whereapon your said late servaunt thynkyng the sayd letter to have byn good and true, where in troth no such was made nor directyd from the said Randolf, but was feyned and craftly by the ungoodly dispocyon of Sir Humfrey Stanley, on of the knights of your Body, counterfete, dressyt hynself, beyng accompanied bot with ii of his servaunts, and his owne son, toward Stafford aforsayd, and as he was going on his fote the next wey thederward in your highwey upon an heth calyt Tyxall Heth, then and ther issued out of a schep cote and a depe pyt upon the same heth
...household servaunts of the said Sir Humfrey Stanley, accompanyed with many other evyll dyspossyt persons...persly assautun your sayd late servaunte, saying all with on voyse, upon the horysson he schall dye, and there wyth summe of them scott at hym, and strake hym with swerdds, and knyvis in such wyse, as that they kyld hym then and there owt off hand, and wyle the sayd misdoers were doying the sayd mischevous deed, the said Sir Umfrey accompanyd with xxxiii persons and above came rydyng for bye the sayd place, saying that he had byn there to hunt a dere, where no dere was seyn there xl yers byfore.'149

Alice then went on to complain that Stanley's power and position as sheriff made it impossible to get justice. This was despite a coroner's jury indicting one James Stanley and two others of the murder three days later.150

Yet what was the connection between Chetwynd and Brereton, and what sort of business was it that had to be conducted before dawn. From the coroner's return it seems that it was all supposed to look like a hunting accident, but why was Stanley so coincidentally there and with so patently lame an excuse? Finally why was no action taken against the murderers of not only a leading county gentleman but also an usher in the royal chamber?

There is no doubt that Stanley sent the letter in Brereton's name to ambush and murder Chetwynd. There is also no doubt that Chetwynd was not expecting trouble; otherwise he would have taken a larger protective retinue and not have had his teenage son and heir along with him. Stanley must have known that Chetwynd would answer the summons from Brereton. What could the reason for the meeting have been and why fix the time of it at five in the morning? The cause must have been important, but had it resulted from a serious illness of Brereton's, for example, Chetwynd would surely have been asked to come immediately or as soon as
possible—hardly at precisely five o'clock. Had the cause of Chetwynd's journey not been either urgent or confidential surely a more sociable time would have been arranged. What seems most likely is that this was a secret rendezvous that Chetwynd was attending. That Stanley knew what would drag Chetwynd from his bed to such a meeting is clear, as is the way he used this knowledge to lure Chetwynd to a violent death. But what secret could there have been such that it cost Chetwynd so dear? The most commonly advanced theory is that he became entangled in the negotiations ('plot' is too strong a word) with Perkin Warbeck and Margaret of Burgundy. Others involved included Sir Simon Mountfort, Robert, Lord Fitzwalter and above all the king's chamberlain Sir William Stanley. Stanley was betrayed, convicted and on 16 February 1495 beheaded, but Polydore Vergil implies that Fitzwalter and Mountfort were at least arrested sometime before him. The King had known that negotiations were going on since the middle of 1493. Could it be that Chetwynd's part in the matter had been one of the first to be uncovered by Henry VII's agents, and that what appears to have been a murder was more of an execution for treason? Factors that point to this are the closeness of the Mountfort and Chetwynd families, the general suspicious circumstances surrounding the killing, a grant to Randle Brereton of some of Sir William Stanley's confiscated property in 1498, and the apparent unconcern on the King's part at the death of one of his most intimate servants. It may well be that punishment for his treason was meted out quietly on Tixall heath instead of after a show trial because Henry, no doubt shocked and afraid that one so close to him had proven false, wanted to ascertain exactly how far the cancer had
spread. He may not have wanted to disclose the sources and extent of his information, judging that to do so would be more likely to send the other conspirators scurrying into exile beyond his reach than the news of Chetwynd's murder.

All of this has to remain speculation, as there is no conclusive evidence as to why Chetwynd was disposed of. Brereton's role may have been akin to that of Sir Robert Clifford in the conviction of Sir William Stanley and the others— that of either turncoat or royal spy. That Sir William, Lord Fitzwalter and Chetwynd were all prominent members of the royal chamber suggests that this was a plot based upon there; but more than that I am loath to speculate upon.

Whether Henry VII later repented of the murder of Chetwynd or whether he was not fully informed of the matter is debatable. The King's incredulity at the eventual revelations concerning his chamberlain seems to indicate that he knew less about the conspiracy than was previously thought. In this case, the decision to eliminate Chetwynd may have been taken by 'loyal advisors' rather than the King. Sir William Stanley's fate was sealed by the production of later corroborating evidence ('indisputable' was how Vergil put it). Was this evidence supplied by Brereton (some genealogies have Joan Brereton of Brêreton as Sir William's wife)? If so, Chetwynd's culpability would have reached the King in full, explaining why the widowed Alice got nowhere in her suit against Sir Humphrey and his men. Perhaps the King knew of Chetwynd's elimination only after the event; in which case Sir Humphrey's gradual loss of power in Staffordshire after 1494-5 might be explicable in terms of royal wariness at
such power as Stanley exercised there being in the hands of someone so ruthless. Certainly Sir Humphrey seems to have gone unrewarded for his part in the affair. Indeed, I cannot find evidence for any royal grant to him after Chetwynd's death. Indeed he was taken off the commission of the peace for three years (1496–99) and never again appointed sheriff, despite a desire for the office.  

Such then is the picture of crime within Staffordshire in the second half of the fifteenth century. From the tales of woe recounted in the legal records of other counties, it appears that this one was exceptionally quiet— I hesitate to say lawabiding. Why should this be? In part, it must be put down to a fortunate absence of scoundrels. Much mischief can be wrought by the actions of one unruly individual or family and Staffordshire in the late fifteenth century lacked the likes of a Hugh Erdeswick of the earlier part or the Gresleys of the fourteenth. There was a background level of unrest and bullying, as I have shown, but nothing systematic or prolonged. Even the antics of John Cockayne were as nothing compared with those of, for example, the Herbergs in Herefordshire or the Courteneys of Devon. The development of the blood-feud was something to be avoided at all costs. In Staffordshire, this was done successfully and contributed greatly to the stability of the area. Such violence as there was came, to borrow a term from atomic physics, in quanta— that is, in small, discrete packets, rather than as a high continuous amount. For most of the people and most of the time life continued unaffected by violent or prolonged disputes. What needs to
be played down is the sensationalism of earlier historians for whom the fifteenth century held little worth recording once the spilled blood had dried and the thunder faded into silence. Yet it is upon just those silences that the real emphasis should be laid. For every incident of rustling, let us not forget the thousands of sheep who safely grazed; for every unfortunate dying violently, let us recall the thousands who passed on in peace (if not always in comfort or good health). Of course, the very nature of the source material contributes to the erroneous picture of England at this time as being nothing more than an arena of crime. As Professor Lander has pointed out:

'The good fame of any age generally withers before documentation of its practices as distinct from its legislation, and the publication of some of the judicial records of earlier times shows a state of affairs so appalling that any theory of massive deterioration in the fifteenth century is hardly credible.'156

As long as studies concentrate upon judicial evidence, which are merely catalogues of crime, this aspect of life will continue to occupy its position of prominence. Yet that position must never go unqualified or the historian forget how in Shakespeare's words:

'The evil that men do lives after them, The good is oft interred with their bones.'

One instance of that good, to which frequent mention has already been made in this and earlier chapters, is arbitration. The popularity of this in Staffordshire in the fifteenth century is another reason for the low level of serious crime. Here was a method of settling disputes without recourse to the regular courts wherein settlements were difficult to obtain and litigation both expensive and fraught with danger.
With perhaps only the dispute and attempts to achieve one's desires by force predating it, arbitration surely ranks as one of the earliest of all human activities. The later middle ages saw a resurgence in the popularity of arbitration (especially in gentry disputes) as an alternative to litigation and the regular court system reaching a peak at the end of the fifteenth century. Almost every kind of dispute or lawsuit, with the exception of treason, currency offences and other crimes against the state, went to arbitration—together with a selection of other non-illegal quarrels. A parliamentary attempt at restricting the likely disputes of certain magnates travelling to France for Henry VI's coronation there decreed that: 'Should enny dissention or debate fall betwix Lorde and Lorde, the remenant....shall, all other thynges left, labour and entende to the redresse and appresyng of the saide dissention or debate, and that withouten holdyng of partialtes, or more favoir shewing to oone partie thenne other, to stond hool, unit and knyt togedres; and the seid lordes bytwix whom peradventuer such division shall fall be stand in heigh and lowe to the redress and reule of the remnant.' 157

Here, distant behind the forced optimism of chivalry, lies much of the theory though little of the practice of arbitration. Any attempt to explain or restrict our description of arbitration by legal terminology wrongly emphasises the actions and attitudes of the adjudicators, when it is the disputants whose actions and attitudes were the crux of the matter. Philippe de Mézières' letter to Richard II in 1395 comes far closer to encapsulating the essence of arbitration than does the above 1430 parliamentary proclamation. Mézières wrote pleading that the 'wound' between England and France be healed and stressed that 'each side must do its share, so that, by the mercy of Jesus, both sides will be satisfied and divisions removed and brought to nought.' 58 Using not unsuitable religious metaphors, here in the world of statutes and
precedence was once more enacted the age-old struggle between ritual/liturgy and improvisation/initiative- with quality of response the determining factor.

Part of the attraction of arbitration lay in its provision of a quick and reasonably equitable solution, which was all that most men asked of the law. Yet, the contemporary legal system in which 'labouring' meant bribery or threats rather than persuasion based on the justice of one's case, and in which acquittal followed should even the defendant's name be misspelt on a writ hardly presented the law as an adequate deterrent to the criminal or the courts as a viable forum for the redress of injury. When a certain Robert Curtis of Fauld-by-Hanbury took out letters of pardon in February 1456 for his part in the Cockayne gang's attack on Okeover (nearly eight years earlier) he insisted on no fewer than forty-seven aliases being set down in the deeds before feeling secure against the legal machinations of his enemies.¹⁵⁹

Litigation was often initiated to harass one's opponent rather than in expectation of obtaining a just verdict. Unshackled by the technicalities of the law, and (for the most part) lawyers, 'lay' arbitration simply got things done. That its rise in popularity coincided with and paralleled that of equitable jurisdiction of Chancery is significant. Both were parts of the three-pronged attack in response to dissatisfaction with existing legal processes and institutions- the third being a growing tendency for seigneurial councils 'to act as tribunals in quarrels arising not only between tenants and retainers, but also those with less tangible connexions.'¹⁶⁰ Extra-legalism- that is action outside of, though not necessarily contrary to, the law- flourished while established institutions remained unappreciative
of (or at least unresponsive to) such changing aspects of life as the enfeoffment to use and developments within trade and finance. The possibility of quick, cheap and intelligible justice attracted business from the regular courts, persuading the interested parties to forgo the traditional processes. It was such cases which featured in the bulk of arbitration awards. However, arbitration never became a succour to, or a refuge for the poor and needy; it remained essentially class-based (i.e. tradesman with tradesman, gentleman with gentleman, lord with lord). There were few exceptions to this rule. One is revealed by an award from King's Bromley dated 1466. In it Sir John Stanley and his wife Elizabeth arbitrated between his friend William Praers, lord of the manor there, and John Lynton, one of Praers customary tenants, who wished to relieve himself of certain feudal incidents. Praers claimed merchet and a massive heriot from his customary tenants consisting of 'all ther horses, bees, gees, swyn, bacons, hide, cloth dyed, brasen pots and all other soundre war and iron bounden waïn.' The Stanleys awarded that for a payment of forty marks Lynton and his heirs were to escape from the merchet and hand over only the best beast or goat as a heriot. I suspect that the real cause of the arbitration was not the feudal incidents in themselves, but the amount to be paid for their reduction. Praers had only bought the manor of Kings Bromley weeks before this award and would doubtless have welcomed an opportunity to recoup some of his financial outlay.

The very role of the arbitrator, like arbitration itself, was that of a transitional link. Often chosen by only one of the disputants, yet expected to produce an award acceptable to all, he exhibited features of both medieval and
modern views of a juror. The former saw him as a member of a small, intimate community who might realistically be expected to arrive in court with a knowledge of the facts and a preconceived verdict. The latter stressed the need for impartial adjudication based upon weight of evidence. This was an age of reaction, adaptation and innovation, and, though change was slow in coming, to characterise the fifteenth century as an age of stagnation is to misinterpret the subtle dynamism of pupation.

There were four stages in the arbitration process: the choice of arbitrators, the exchange of bonds to abide by the decision, the submission of 'claymes, chalanges, unswares and replicacions' by the disputants, and the award itself, sealed by all concerned.

The number of adjudicators varied from one to about seven, depending on the matter and participants. Unless the quarrel had been taken to a single individual, the number of actual arbitrators was usually an even one, with half chosen by each side. Occasionally, an umpire acceptable to all was added. This was more to prevent there being any stalemate in the decision-making process, rather than to cast a deciding vote. The essence of arbitration was agreement not democracy. A solution agreed upon by all the arbitrators was likelier to be adhered to than one in which some dissented. Sometimes a rider was added to the award directing the arbitrators to hand the matter over to someone else if they were unable to agree on a decision or to perform their duty for any reason.

One Staffordshire example of passing on the role of arbitrator dates from 1451. A struggle between two gentry
Kinver forest families arose over Rommenysland in Morfe and Lutley. The disputants, Robert Grey of Whittington and John Whorewood of Compton, called in as arbitrators John Wood and John Hampton of Stourton (ranger and lieutenant of Kinver forest). Hampton and Wood passed this on to their friend the lawyer Richard Bingham who was a royal justice on the Staffordshire bench, though he held no land within the county. As Grey’s son Humphrey held the disputed land in 1485, it seems reasonable to assume that Bingham’s decision was in favour of that family (though the award itself has not survived to the present day).

There was no simple formula governing the choice of arbitrators. Family, friends, lawyers, judges, lords, members of a guild, burgesses, clergymen— all might be used depending on the issue and participants concerned. Some were involved because of a personal connection with on of the parties, some because of an expertise in the matter at hand, others might have their say as part of the wider community in which dissent was evident. For example in an award of 1488 between Burton Abbey and William Detbick over a few minor plots of land, the list of arbitrators ended with 'and other of there frendys frendly commyng be twyxt them.' This was the community settling its own problems without recourse to outside interference or the law (the two were not always viewed as distinct).

At the level of the Boughay family of Whitmore, who were little more than prosperous yeomen/traders, arbitration was through relatives and neighbours with the addition of a more eminent member of the local squirearchy. Turning to a big fish in a small pond was common. It was evident in the above-mentioned Grey-Whorewood dispute in the choice of Hampton, who was through his Stafford family and royal connection the most powerful gentleman in that area. Involving such
people partly ensured compliance with the award (as refusal to obey it would offend them) and also brought in expertise; for these local worthies were the more likely to possess a legal education and experience in government and administration which might increase their attractiveness as arbitrators. Along the Staffordshire-Derbyshire border certain families' names recur so frequently that they must have established a reputation of sorts in such matters. Such families as the Agards, Babingtons, Poles and Curzons of Kedleston were certainly frequently called in to add respectability to these panels. A tradition of going to arbitration may also have been developing, though whether this was national or regional is uncertain. Staffordshire, at least, saw frequent use of the institution of arbitration.

Important gentry cases, especially if they involved the descent or division of an inheritance, were occasionally referred to judges for expert opinion. In the 1490s arbitration was effected by the two common law chief justices, the lords Diriham and d'Aubigney, over part of the much-contested Bergavenny inheritance, resulting in Thomas, earl of Ormond having to pay £800 to three rivals—Sir Henry illoughby, Sir Thomas Ferrers of Tamworth and John Aston of Tixall.

Less successful was the attempted settlement of the Delves of Uttoxeter and Apedale lands in the last two decades of the century. Sir John Delves (the sheriff of Staffordshire during the readeption) had fallen at the battle of Tewkesbury in May 1471 and his eldest son John (not James as reported in Warkworth’s chronicle) had been executed three days later for his part in the affair. This left the younger John’s two infant daughters as coheiresses. However, the family estates were confiscated after post-mortem attainders were passed against the two men. Although these lay unreversed until 1483, some of the forfeited lands found their way back to the family on 12 June 1475 when Apedale, Uttoxeter and Marchington were granted to Sir James Blount who had married one of the girls, Elizabeth. The attainders were reiterated at the time of this grant. The other girl was wedded to Sir Robert Sherfield from Lincolnshire. Stafford family influence was evidently behind
both of these matches, for Blount was the younger brother of Walter, Lord Mountjoy who had married the widowed Anne, duchess of Buckingham, and Sheffield was a councillor to the Duchess. Meanwhile, Ellen Delves (widow to the elder Sir John), thrown back upon her own resources and small personal amount of property and preyed upon by neighbours taking advantage of her weakened state, lived on to a cantankerous old age. The experience of her struggle to retain what little was left her after the loss and disgrace of her husband and first-born had made her wary of all with whom she had dealings. It is small wonder that on the reversal of the attainders she staked a fiercely-contested claim to a sizeable proportion of the family estates and proved to be a formidable negotiator over the legitimacy and composition of the same.

The matter was sent for arbitration at least four times before some sort of an agreement was seemingly reached. The attempts were made in April 1484, July 1484, December 1484 and August 1485. The first three panels were led by judges; the third included two London aldermen. The fourth panel was a local affair using officers of the Honour of Tutbury: Sir Marmaduke Constable (the steward), Sir John Babington, Nicholas Montgomery and William Harper. When none of these panels succeeded, the Delves and their kinsmen the Egertons tried force and raided Blount's land at Tillington, but eventually what was envisaged as the final award was given on 6 December 1486. This set Ellen's jointure at £91/16s/4d a year including Doddington (Cheshire). Sheffield was allocated the residue of the inheritance save for Apedale which went to Blount.

Clues as to why arbitration proved so difficult and protracted in this case can be gleaned from the following extracts from letters in the Plumpton correspondance dated 1490, by which time trouble had again flared up between Ellen and the husbands of her two grand-daughters: (a) 'I rode to your comandment by my lady Delphes, a full trobleous way in that great snaw; notwithstanding I cold not speed of your matters
at that tyme. But now she is at London, and promyses me well.' - 10 February.

(b) 'I cannot gyte myne entent of my lady Delphes, wherfore I have comyned with Masters Blunt and Sheffield in this forme; the(sic) say they will take yt in ferme, or els make yt exchaunce with you of lands lyeing in Yorkshire, or els pay you redy money therfore.' - 4 November.

(c) 'Sir, afore your lands in Crakenmarsh, I can not deale with my lady Delfs; I find hir varyable in hir promyse, wherfore I have according to your comandment, letten them in your name to Mr. Blount by indenture.' - 27 November.

The background to these letters is that Sir Robert Plumpton (to whom the letters were written) held property in Crakenmarsh alongside the Delves' lands. He was a Yorkshire knight and found these isolated plots difficult and expensive to administer and therefore sought to lease or exchange them for more accessible lands. Dispute over the Delves inheritance's division had festered on and he was uncertain which side to deal with. A further arbitration tribunal consisting of the Bishop of Ely, Lord Dinham and James Hobard had been appointed on 28 February 1490 presumably to settle this. Bad feeling persisted between Ellen and the others. That the former was 'varyable in hir promyse' undoubtedly would have hampered any settlement, as unwillingness to accommodate stiffled mediation. Ellen's years of struggle had made her suspicious and she would surely have agreed with Chaucer when he wrote that

'It is an hard thing and right perilous that a man putte him al outrely in the arbitracioun and iuggement and in the might and power of hise enemies.'

Refusal to comply with the terms of an award was, however, rare and often a later generation or an initially-uninvolved party was to blame. That the success rate was so high is hardly surprising given that solutions unlikely to be adhered to tended to be rejected in debate by the arbitrators or on first hearing of them by the disputants. For disputants 'examined, agreed and assented' to the
awards, rather than were forced to accept the decision of their arbitrators. Sir Walter Griffith, who had arbitrated in the 1470s between the Abbot of Burton and one William Scherard over a small amount of land, wrote a humble, advisory letter to the Abbot which concluded

'I thinke yt gode wysdom yt ye calle yor lerned counsell to you and deuyse ffor yor surete heryn [so that] ye waste nott yor rewarde and as ye herafter ar contented soo I schall sealle as shall please you.'

Conciliation rather than judgment lay at the heart of arbitration, which is why the phrase 'submitting to arbitration' has been avoided in this study. Although the conflicting parties had agreed to abide by the decision of the adjudicators, in practice this only meant that the principle of arbitration had been accepted. Even after an award had been decided upon there still remained the problem of getting it implemented.

In a dispute over the inheritance of the humble More family of Penkridge, the arbitrators, who included two members of the powerful Erdeswick family, John Lane 'a lernede monne in the lawe' and the Duchess of Buckingham's chaplain, reported that they had 'entreted' the heir, Thomas, that he should make some provision for his siblings but 'the seyd Thomas denayed hit and seyd that they shulde have no parcell of his lyvelode and so be longe tretes wee entreted hym that he granted hem certen parcelles'

Eventually the pressure on Thomas told and he consented to make over some minor plots, provided that his antagonists promised to be 'to hym gode brother and suster.' That somebody who could not have been of more than yeomanly status could defy the likes of these gentry arbitrators for so long says much about the nature of arbitration and stands in contradiction of many traditional attitudes about the totality of class control in the later middle ages. Nor was this merely a 'freak' case. The
elder son cannot have been alone in realising that unless his 'betters' wished to get involved violently in the matter, there was little other than persuasion they could bring to bear on him. Arbitration was a matter of diplomacy and negotiation rather than brute force or legal manipulation.

Not all awards, however, could be 'sold' verbally to both sets of disputants; especially if the decision involved only one side having to make concessions or pay compensation. Refusal to accept arbitration might cause resentment and certainly failure to abide by an award, once it had been initially accepted, could produce retribution. Members of a guild were often bound by rules to take inter-fellowship disputes to a panel of the guild's officers. The Guild of St. Mary, Lichfield drew up a new set of ordinances in 1486-7, the second of which decreed:

'Also it is ordened that if ony vnkindely, or ony caus vnkindely to be giuen in deling amongst the seid xlviii[1.e. the members of the guild], that then the knowledge therof cum to the master, he and his brothers here the mater and causes betwixt them; and the parties to abyde the rule, arbitrement and award of the seid master and his brothers. And the seid parties so moved wyl not abide the ordinaunce of the seid master and his brothers, they to be kept owt of the worshipfull eleccion and fraternyte of the seid Cyte, and neuer to cum amongst them to noo Councell, but be discharged as a man forsworne openly and audyently vpom a boke.'174

However, few were members of a guild. The loss of good relations with those drawing up an award was not always a sufficient deterrent to someone who would only take note or advantage of arbitration when it operated in his favour. For the victim of a refusal to comply with an award once it had been accepted, several courses of action were available. In theory arbitration was not enforceable in the regular courts, but in fact suits concerning the practice do appear in their records. Although the award as such could not strictly be enforced by King's Bench or Common Pleas, the bonds given to abide by the arbitration were legal contracts and breaking these came within the province of the
courts. An example of this occurred in 1427 over the costs and damages awarded to one Ralph Hosee by Henry Booth and the Curzons of Croxall, after Hosee's wife's struggle with her sons by a previous marriage to Robert Dethick of Uttoxeter over dower lands in Nottinghamshire. Other alternatives included petitioning Chancery for a decision based on equity or (for disputes between clergymen or the church and a parish) appeal to Rome. Unfortunately I can find no Staffordshire examples of these, though plenty of clerical disputes needed arbitration before they were settled.

For example, the claim by the Abbot of Burton that Sir John Bagot had been poaching from his park at Abbots Bromley and with-holding rents due to the Abbey from their lands in Fauld-by-Needwood (which all probably stemmed from a dispute over common pasture in Abbots Bromley) went to arbitration by Humphrey, earl of Stafford and Bishop Heyworth of Coventry and Lichfield in 1428. In this case the Abbey prevailed and three years later Bagot quitclaimed all right to the pasture in question.

Much of the problem was due to Burton Abbey's chronic shortage of money. Never the most devout of institutions, it had for centuries suffered from a glut of financiers and a dearth of accountants. Relations with the surrounding laity were perennially bad, as the Abbey was unable to prevent their frequent encroachment on its lands and privileges. It was probably in an attempt at increasing its income, which had never been more than adequate, that the Abbey enclosed some of its property on the outskirts of Burton in the early 1450s. However, this met with considerable resentment from the townsfolk who broke down the 'dykes and heggez of diversez closez.' This matter too went to arbitration, as did a slightly later squabble between the Abbey and a gentry neighbour, Sir John Gresley, in 1467 over rents and property in Burton, Drakelow and Tattenhill which the Abbey held,
but were claimed by the Gresleys.\textsuperscript{179}

It was often in a disputant's interest to accept arbitration when offered, especially if that offer came from a powerful or valued relation or acquaintance. Edward IV's intervention in the early 1470s in a dispute between Henry Vernon, John Stanley and William Troutbeck telling them to 'observe our peas....til ye shall have opened your griif unto us and herd our advis and commandement' has about it an air of indeclinability.\textsuperscript{180} Such an intervention was not a part of any general or conscious policy of maintaining peace on the King's part - though he doubtless had such a policy. Neither when magnates so intervened were their actions part of one. These were personal responses to particular situations. The principal concern was to prevent the dispute spreading and escalating in gravity. Edward IV in the above example cautioned the disputants about the possible consequences of their actions, remarking that 'grete unrest and trouble is like to growe to thinhabitantes of our Countiees about you onlas than we see for sufficient remedie in that behalve.'\textsuperscript{181} Magnates stepped in when the normal legal processes failed to take the heat out of a potentially-dangerous situation, when their affinity was involved or when they had a personal interest in the matter.

It was not expected of a lord that he intervene in every scrape that an associate of his got into. Retainers might ask for support in major suits, but in practice 'good lordship' did not mean that such support was automatic. Evidence of a lord's biased activity rather than his inactivity was the more likely to produce disaffection and defection. The only noblemen who seem to have arbitrated with any regularity are the Stanleys - and their activities were confined to Cheshire and Lancashire. Some lords undoubtedly did try to enhance their positions and reputations through arbitration, finding, as the Stanleys had, that lasting success demanded the provision of public justice and an absence of sectarian partiality.
From the lord's point of view, arbitration could be both tiring and time-consuming, even if much of the work could be delegated to retained lawyers and officials. William, Lord Hastings certainly regretted intervening in a dispute in the early 1480s between Ralph Wolseley and the Bishop of Coventry & Lichfield over rights in Wolseley Wood and the enclosure of certain grounds there. The Wolseleys were a pig-headed family at the best of times and in exasperation Hastings finally confessed that 'ther be such defyculties on aither partie that withoute longer laisure and forther examinacon I can not seually determyn ther titles and claymes.' In other words neither he nor his council could afford to spend any more time on the matter. At this time Wolseley had only just concluded an argument with the Gresleys of Drakelow over a similar matter, which had been sent to three different sets of arbitrators at various times: to Richard Bagot, Walter, Lord Mountjoy, and a third, unknown party. Both Bagot and Blount were related to Wolseley and the Gresleys. As in the Delves inheritance dispute, mentioned earlier, a settlement was difficult to effect because of a basic lack of goodwill between the protagonists. Wolseley had begun enclosing as early as 1465, though it was four years before he got a licence for this. Old Thomas Wolseley, Ralph's father, had agreed initially to a compromise with Anne, wife of Sir John Gresley when complaints were first raised on the matter, but Ralph had Gresley arrested after 'much sinister labour' before this could be arranged. The enclosures hit at the rights of Gresley, the Bishop of Coventry & Lichfield and their tenants and by the time Hastings, as Steward of the Honour of Tutbury, was called in the dispute had festered on in the courts for nigh on fifteen years - a testimony to Wolseley's procrastination and an indictment of legal practice. Both Sir John Gresley and his son Thomas were
Hastings' retainers by 1479 and this, linked to the death of Thomas Wolseley the year before that, may help explain the renewed interest in settling the dispute by arbitration. Hastings was known as a fair judge and Ralph Wolseley can hardly have wanted the matter to drag on indefinitely and may have wished to clear outstanding problems up on entering his inheritance. Hastings too would have welcomed such an opportunity to enhance his position in Staffordshire by a show of accomplished lordship. As things turned out, negotiations proved difficult and the award had to include the rider that it was merely a stop-gap measure and

'after the deth of eny of the said parties be in no wyse takyn for title evyidence ne presumpe' on to hurt any of the said parties, there successoures or heyres in the ryght title or possession of the premissess or eny parte of theyn, bot only for a direc'on and peas for the tyme betwene the same parties at my disyre and enstaunce.'

Such concepts as altruism and a general hope for prosperity through peace are unfashionable, but patronage cannot be used as the medievalist’s touchstone, answering all questions and silencing the quizzical. Its all-pervasiveness can often provide an attractively simple, though misleading solution to the perennial search for motives. I am not arguing that magnates always acted selflessly, only that they should not be assumed always to act selfishly. Each case must be judged on its own merits. Reputations for good or ill, were the products of experience. Humphrey, duke of Buckingham was not asked often to arbitrate in Staffordshire because past experience had shown the gentry there that impartiality was not one of his qualities. Many were prepared to accept his fees and livery, though not his intervention in their disputes as an arbitrator. Buckingham's propensity for subordinating justice to immediate political expediency certainly contributed to his failure to build an effective affinity in the Peak District. It was not until 1459 that he (and the Earl of
Shrewsbury) intervened in the protracted Basset-Meverell dispute; and then it was only because of the need for unity within the Stafford affinity as civil war became increasingly likely. The award was given at Burton-on-Trent on 10 July 1459 and that it was the young Thomas Meverell and not his father Sir Sampson who was in dispute with William Basset, the head of that family, suggests that 'the Derbyshire disease' of sons and younger brothers with time rather than prosperity on their hands was causing much of the county's woe. After enforcing bonds in two hundred marks from the disputants to accept and abide by the award, Buckingham and Shrewsbury awarded damages of £20 to Meverell and ordered the cessation of all suits between him and Basset. Even this did not bring peace and ten years later Henry, Lord Grey of Codnor had to intervene and arbitrate once more. What Basset thought of the 1459 award is not recorded, but significantly he had become a prominent Yorkist by the time of Edward IV's accession. This sort of dispute stemmed from pride as much as material harm and that deadly sin was at the heart of other cases, beyond the jurisdiction of the courts, which could be settled by arbitration at the time.

In 1484 a dispute arose between parishioners in Horton-by-Leek over seating arrangements in the village church. The parishioners were ordered to assemble and 'prove by ancient custom where each person ought to sit for the messuage he occupied.' Nine of them were nominated by the steward of Wall Grange, Hugh Egerton, to arbitrate between their fellows and decide the matter. A similar case arose just over the Cheshire border at Little Moreton in 1513, as part of a wider dispute between William Moreton and Thomas Rood. George Bromley, the deputy-justice of Chester and William Brereton arbitrated generally, but were unable to produce an acceptable solution to the matter of which of the disputants 'shuld sit highest in the churche, and
foremost goo in procession.' That point had to be referred to a committee of twelve of the oldest parishioners; but even they could not agree and ultimately Brereton decided the matter on the criterion of annual income.

Finally, the Vernon-Trussell struggle in the 1440s and 1450s reveals both arbitration as a mechanism to be turned to when the law could not respond in a required way and also an area for further research— that of hidden evidence of arbitration settlements where no documentation survives.

The estates of the Trussells of Acton Trussell became the subject of contention between the powerful Vernon family of Haddon (Derbyshire) and the Trussell family of Billesley (Warwickshire). Whatever the rights and wrongs of the situation, it is clear that here was an instance of one gentry family's attempt to use political muscle to achieve its ends. Certainly the lands in question were worth contesting— over nine thousand acres, one hundred and thirty messuages and between £30 and £40 worth of annual rents. Property without a clear-cut title or which was passing from one person/family to another was likely to attract the attention of covetous persons, who would produce weak or fabricated claims to it. To challenge successfully even a single deed or get a 'newly-discovered' one accepted in court might radically affect the descent of such land.

The Trussell property at the heart of the dispute lay mainly in Staffordshire. It consisted of the manors of Kibblestone and Acton Trussell and half of Sheriff Hales on the Shropshire border. In addition there were the Berkshire manors of Shotesbrook, which came to the family in 1335, and Eton Hastings, which the Crown exchanged in return for other Trussell lands in 1359. The inheritance was entailed upon the main branch of the family, with reversion to a second and then to a third (see diagram).
The whole case rested upon the validity of a grant of this property in 1409 to Fulk Pembridge by his feoffees. The Vernons claimed that Pembridge held it in fee simple and that it should come to them as his rightful heirs. On the other hand, the Trussells claimed the property as the third branch of the old Trussell family who were the rightful remaindermen for the entailed inheritance.

Even before the Vernon claim, which was not made until the early 1440s, the Trussell estates had attracted fortune-hunters. During Henry IV's reign Pembridge had fought off Sir Alfred Lathbury and Thomas Appleby who alleged that they were the rightful heirs of John Trussell through a daughter of his. However, on closer examination of their claim, it was discovered that the girl in question came from a totally different Trussell family, from Northamptonshire. The Vernons had been silent about 'the Pembridge inheritance', as it is sometimes known, between 1409 and c.1442 and, perhaps significantly, they made no claim on the death of Pembridge. Thus it seems likely that either a chance perusal of old documents or conversations with Pembridge's second wife, Isabella (not on the above, simplified genealogy) or a deliberate search by Sir Richard Vernon for extra revenue led to the advancement of his family's claim. That he possessed
considerable political muscle in the area can only have encouraged him to chance his arm. Vernon's action to oust the Trussells of Billesley began in 1442 when he disseised William (d.1464) the Berkshire manors. However, Vernon's influence did not extend so far south and at Easter 1443 a local jury found against him with a hundred and twenty marks damages. Although Vernon tried to get this decision overturned by suing the jury for allegedly accepting bribes from Trussell, he knew he was fighting a losing battle. By May 1446 Trussell was secure in his possession of these estates and able to report that his damages had been satisfied.

Attention now centred on the more valuable Staffordshire lands and Trussell took the precaution of making William Burley and Thomas Littleton his feoffees. He could hardly have made a wiser choice; both were able lawyers and among the close advisors of several magnates—both were also descendants of one John Grendon. Grendon had been one of the Trussell family's original feoffees in the fourteenth century (as was William Trussell himself, coincidentally). In 1447 inquiries were held concerning the contested lands and once more Trussell's claim was upheld. However, soon afterwards a jury was assembled at Tutbury, in the heart of 'Vernon country' which not surprisingly found for Vernon, awarding him in addition damages totalling a staggering £2080. Trussell naturally retaliated by suing these jurors for accepting bribes, in the time-honoured convention. He also alleged that Sir Richard Vernon and two members of the Brown family of Cold Norton (half way between Eccleshall and Stone) had forged a deed which purported to be a quitclaim to Pembroke of the Staffordshire lands now in dispute and also Blacon (Cheshire) and Guild Norton (Leicestershire) dated 4 August 1406. Vernon's reasons for including these other manors in the deed were presumably to muddy the waters; for the
Leicestershire property was undoubtedly his, while the Cheshire one had been Trussell land since the reign of Edward II and was not part of the 'Pembroke inheritance'. Guild Norton in fact, as Vernon well knew, formed part of a grant made in 1410 by Pembroke's second wife to the Vernon-controlled college at Tong on the Staffordshire-Shropshire border, a handful of miles south of Sheriff Hales, for the benefit of the souls of her late husband and his first wife. Perhaps Vernon coveted this land as well. Certainly the date of the alleged forgery, 5 December 1446, was during the last few days of Isabella Pembroke's life.

The appeal against the verdict in favour of Vernon was pressed early in 1451 and involved not only William Trussell but also his wily legal friends, as anyway it was they who in law had been disseised. While Vernon had attacked using the court of King's Bench, the Trussell side used the court of Common Pleas. Judging from the records of the lawsuits, it seems that this change of court was a tactical move rather than due to problems over jurisdiction. The result was that while Vernon won in one court, Trussell won in the other, having had the case transferred to Stafford. The Trussell victory in Common Pleas was made easy by the death of Vernon in August 1451. Burley and Littleton, knowing of this, managed to get a decision against him on the grounds that his nonappearance had meant that he lost by default. Gradually the legal records of the two lawsuits dry up. Although in many cases this just means that these records have failed to survive the intervening centuries, in this case I feel there is another explanation.

Sir Richard Vernon's son and heir William was not a man of outstanding talent and it must have soon become apparent to him that his chances of defeating the opposition ranged against him were slim. Equally, Trussell was loath to fight a long and expensive legal battle, especially as the Vernons were
drawing increasingly close to Humphrey, duke of Buckingham, whose support might be engaged to manipulate the courts. Compromise and arbitration by persons unknown was at some time effected. Later records show that the Vernons held Kibblestone and the Trussells Acton Trussell and Sheriff Hales. A closer inspection of the properties involved shows that Kibblestone (4100 acres) was almost exactly equal in size to the Trussell parts of the other Staffordshire manors (3915 acres), so it is reasonable to assume that there was a simple division in half of the disputed lands. This could not have occurred as part of a court decision. As far as the legal situation stood, the inheritance was indivisible; either it was held in fee simple and thus went to the Vernons or it was entailed and stayed with the Trussells of Billesley. Only an extra-legal settlement could have produced the agreed-upon division and compromise, but it would be misleading to imply that the courts failed in this dispute. They were simply not designed to operate against the tenets of medieval land law, which was what was needed to satisfy the disputants.

Although references exist illustrating the popularity of arbitration in the fifteenth century, these usually relate to only a single aspect of the process. However, the lack of complete sets of documents for particular cases is partially compensated for by revealing phrases within what has survived. The indentured award often gave details of the nature of the dispute which lay behind it, while there was within the award a fluidity of language and diplomatic which emphasises their individuality and 'independence' from institutional legalism. Lawyers were consulted occasionally, but arbitration was essentially an extra-legal procedure. Ideas rather than set formulae were what different awards had in common.

Although all parties, including the legal profession, assisted and even occasionally advocated arbitration, it never
made a serious impact on the number of suits dealt with by the regular courts, nor were these ever replaced in the public mind by the adjudicating panel as the natural forum for settling disputes. Arbitration’s real value lay in dealing with problems uncatered for by existing legislation and in defusing potential sources of serious disorder. Each award was tailored to meet particular needs. It by-passed the court system, offering an honourable and cheap compromise, substituting satisfaction for victory and avoiding the rancour and humiliation of defeat. The decline of arbitration under the Tudors resulted from the creation of new courts, improved procedures in established ones and the need for the greater security of title and judgement pertaining to a court verdict. Nevertheless, in the fifteenth century it was a process which was a regular feature of Staffordshire disputes. How regular we cannot tell; neither do we know how often it was suggested, but not adopted because of the intransigence of one or both of the parties or the unwillingness of the only acceptable arbitrator to intervene in a particular quarrel. Yet, as the examples I have given reveal, arbitration was used by all levels of the county gentry, as indeed it was among the titled nobility and (often on a less formal basis) by the sub-gentry classes. Though the subjects for their disputes might vary, all had a vested interest, financial as much as anything, in 'appeasing', as a later writer was to put it, 'thos troublesome sutes by which I think in thend neyther partie will gaine, but the lawyers enriched.'
As mentioned in the course of the chapter, I have made use of Wrottesley's extracts from the plea rolls up to 1485. I have used the following abbreviations concerning these.

**Plea Rolls, Henry VI**
Extracts from William Salt Archaeological Society's Collections for a History of Staffordshire (cited as SHC), III New Series (1900).

**Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV**
Extracts from SHC, IV New Series (1901).

**Plea Rolls, Edward IV-Richard III**
Extracts from SHC VI New Series 1 (1903).

2. Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, p.112.
4. S. Shaw, The History and Antiquities of Staffordshire, (London, 1798-1801), II, p.257; Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1461-67, p.452; Historical Manuscripts Commission, Hastings papers, Series 78, I, p.151. Littleton's feoffees and later executors were Humphrey Salway and Guy Westcote. Westcote was Littleton's father's surname; he himself had been given the surname of his mother Elizabeth Littleton.
5. Staffordshire Record Office (cited as SRO), D986/87.
11. There is a mention of the Fitton-Whalley dispute in the history of Pirehill Hundred by Walter Chetwynd in SHC, XII New Series (1909), pp.95-100, but this is full of errors and seems to be based more on a garbled earlier account than on Chetwynd's own appraisal of the evidence.

13. PRO, C1/24/135.

14. PRO, C1/33/285-6.

15. PRO, C1/45/128.


20. Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, p.128. For a similar incident at Gratwich in 1467 see Ibid., p.149.


22. Ibid., letter bound between fos.174-5.

23. SRO, D(W)1721/1/3 fo.90R. In the accounts of Humphrey, duke of Buckingham for 1447-8 £4/6s/0d was paid for the cost of enclosing parks of Caurs and Minstele, and another £2 for enclosures at Lowhogstow- SRO, D641/1/2/19m.6R.


25. Derbyshire Record Office, D231M/T278.


27. Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, pp.154-5.

28. PRO, DL5/3 fo.214R.


30. The listed enclosures are:
   2 April 1486-30 acres at Biddulph by Richard Biddulph.
   12 May 1486-60 acres at Throwley by George Meverell.
   2 Henry VII - 5 acres at Chillington by John Giffard.
   1 May 1487-20 acres at Adbaston by Francis Bredock.
   1 March 1488- a cottage at ? by Lord Berners.
   1 March 1488- a messuage at High Offley by Wm. Cotton.
   1 March 1488-40 acres at Bridgefard by Simon Harcourt.
10 Feb. 1492 - 60 acres at Rushall by John Harper
13 March 1492 - 40 acres at Cumberford by Thos. Cumberford
9 Henry VII - 4 acres at Hoar Cross by Thos. Wells
12 Henry VII - 3 acres at Patshull by Richard Astley
1 August 1497 - 100 acres at Tixall by John Aston
3 August 1501 - 30 acres at Haywood by Humph. Stanley
1 March 1502 - 60 acres at Cheadle by Thos. Walton
20 Henry VII - 23 acres at Loxley by Thos. Kynardshley

31. Plea Rolls, Henry VI, p.221.
32. Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, pp.148, 152.
33. Plea Rolls, Edward IV - Richard III, p.129. The cloth was bought at Burton-on-Trent on 22 October 1475.
34. Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, p.144.
37. Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, p.150.
40. Ibid., p.108.
41. PRO, DL5/1 fo.57D.
42. Plea Rolls, Henry VI, pp.186-7.
44. Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, pp.165, 167-8; Victoria County History of Staffordshire, XVII, p.170.
45. Plea Rolls, Edward IV - Richard III, p.112.
46. Plea Rolls, Henry VI, p.155; Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, p.176.
47. Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, pp.114-5.
50. Ibid., pp.148, 174.
51. Lichfield Joint Record Office (cited as LJRO), B/A/1/12 fo.166R.

53. Ibid., p.45.

54. LJRO, B/A/1/12 fo.167R.

55. M.D.Harris (ed.), The Coventry Leet Book, Early English Text Society, (London, 1907-13), I, pp.96-7. The preacher was a hermit called John Grace. He preached at Coventry on 30 November 1424 and for four days following that, claiming that he had episcopal sanction for his ministry and had previously preached in the cathedral close at Lichfield. He had been to Birmingham, Walsall and Coleshill before reaching Coventry. Interestingly, one of the hermit's most vehement opponents at Coventry was the self-same John Bredon with whom there was so much trouble in 1446. Bredon was also in trouble with the authorities in the early 1440s, after he had claimed to have obtained parliamentary sanction for the use of larger than normal measures for corn at a time of food shortage- Ibid., III, p.854.

56. LJRO, B/A/1/11 fo.50R.


58. Victoria County History of Staffordshire, III, p.207.

59. PRO, C1/9/378.


61. Plea Rolls, Henry VI, pp.159-60; Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, p.117; Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1452-61, pp.432-3; Calendar of Close Rolls, 1454-61, pp.312, 372.

62. PRO, KB9/298/93; Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, p.111, 128.


64. PRO, KB9/234/50.

65. PRO, KB9/232/1/31.

66. PRO, C1/12/250. There is an awful and fanciful monograph on the Dudley-Bredhill dispute by D.R.Guttery, The Two Johns: patron and parson, (Brierley Hill, 1950). The author, however, does make some illuminating points about the stolen books- see pp.21, 26, 30.


68. Plea Rolls, Henry VI, pp.139, 142-3.

69. PRO, C1/39/87. She bought Richard Delves' marriage for three hundred marks.
70. Their marriage was nullified on 8 July 1439—LJRO, B/A/1/9 fo.166D. Elizabeth Winnington married the Staffordshire sheriff Humphrey Blount of Kinlet a few years later and survived until 1502. Her will is at the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London, PCC 22 Blamyr.


74. Ibid., p.174. Littleton and the Abbot were in dispute over another matter as well at this time— the Abbot's failure to maintain, as was customary, a chaplain in a chapel at Littleton's principal residence of Frankley (north Worcestershire), Ibid., pp.174-5.


80. PRO, C1/45/192. The Griffiths were something of a nuisance in the area. Among other troubles in which they were concerned was a similar case to that brought by Nevowe, brought this time by John Huberd again about this time—PRO, C1/71/154.

81. PRO, Ancient Correspondence, SC1/51/175.

82. LJRO, B/A/1/13 fo.243.

83. PRO, DL5/1 fo.33R.

84. PRO, KB9/271/100. The inquiry into this took nearly five years to be held.

85. PRO, KB9/255/2/67; Plea Rolls, Henry VI, p.181.

86. PRO, KB9/235/36.

87. POPC, VI, pp.272-3.
88. L. Morsbach, Mittleenglische Original Urkunden von der Chaucerzeit bis zur Mitte des XV Jahrhunderts, (Heidelberg, 1923), p. 34. The document was dated 13 October 1446 and formed part of the evidence Meverell amassed to fight Roope. The present location of the Morsbach deeds is unknown to me.

89. British Library, Additional Charters 27504 and 57231.


91. PRO, C1/16/158.

92. POPC, V, pp. 290-1.

93. POPC, V, p. 295.


95. PRO, Writs and Returns for Parliamentary Elections, C219/15/2/85. The Duke was also Basset's feudal lord for Blore and Grendon.

96. PRO, C1/148/81.


100. Ibid., pp. 182-3.


102. PRO, KB9/250/45. The inquiry was held at Warwick on 11 January 1445 and Bate himself led the presiding justices, ensuring a verdict favourable to himself.


104. E.A. Ayres, Parliamentary Representation in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire in the Fifteenth Century, (Unpublished Nottingham M.A. thesis, 1956), p. 163. There is also a study of the gentry of this area to which unfortunately I have not been granted access. Nevertheless I will cite it here as a reference for others who may have more success—S. Wright, A Gentry Society of the Fifteenth Century, c. 1430-1509, (Unpublished Birmingham PhD thesis, 1978).


106. Ibid., VI, p. 29.

107. Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1446-52, p. 395. Another son, Thomas, also got into trouble and had to give a recognizance for his future behaviour—Calendar of Close Rolls, 1447-54, p. 400.


110. Derbyshire Record Office, D231M/T277. It has been suggested that Cockayne was Philip Okeover's step-father, but they were of roughly the same age and no evidence exists that Philip's father, Thomas Okeover the younger, married a future wife of Cockayne's or Cockayne married Philip's mother. That Cockayne did concoct some claim to the property he damaged is given credence by his later quitclaiming the lordship of Okeover to Philip in April 1462-Derbyshire Record Office, D231M/T26.

111. Plea Rolls, Henry VI, pp. 196-7. Once again there may be a measure of exaggeration in the account given in the petition, for much of the land at Okeover was leased out at the time-Derbyshire Record Office, D231M/E9, E10. Furthermore, since one lessee renewed his lease on 22 January 1450 (Derbyshire Record Office, D231M/E11), life could not have been too intolerable.


115. Plea Rolls, Henry VI, p. 201.


118. Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1436-41, p. 84. Among the eleven Lichfield traders mentioned in the plea rolls as participating in this attack were two parchment makers and a skinner- Plea Rolls, Henry VI, p. 160.

119. PRO, KB9/383/92. For the commission, issued on 23 August 1489 see Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1485-94, p. 318. Why the vicars began the trouble (by attacking a Thomas Painter) is unknown.

120. PRO, Proceedings in the Court of Star Chamber, STAC 1/2/951.

121. PRO, STAC 2/13/247.

122. PRO, STAC 1/2/951. One of the troublemakers, Roger Marshall, said that they were accustomed 'to gether money wt ther disportes to the profight of the chirches of the seide lordshipes'. The suit's outcome is unknown.

123. Plea Rolls, Henry VI, pp. 222-3.

124. PRO, KB9/282/26; Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, pp. 107-8.

125. PRO, C67/42 mm. 13, 23.

126. PRO, C1/178/18.
129. PRO, KB9/410/92.
130. PRO, KB9/408/22-4; PRO, KB9/410/89-91, 93.
133. For Stafford's appointment, see National Library of Wales, Peniarth Mss. 280 fos.22D-23R; for Harcourt, see Storey, *op.cit.*, p.58.
134. *Plea Rolls*, Henry VI, pp.186, 198-99. See also PRO, KB9/266/77.
135. Harcourt later got this outlawry annulled on the grounds that he was held captive in Chester prison at the time that it was issued. What he was doing there is unknown.
137. *Calendar of Patent Rolls*, 1446-52, pp.386-7; PRO, KB9/266/50. There were also pardons issued 23 November 1450.
139. He was MP for Oxfordshire 1450-1 and for Berkshire 1460-1; sheriff of Oxfordshire & Berkshire 1455-6; JP Oxfordshire 1452-8, 1460-70 and Berkshire 1446-9, 1452-8, 1463-8.
142. Harcourt may have been at Hilton looking after his niece Joan's interests. She had married Humphrey Swynnerton the younger whose mother had died 27 March 1470 and whose mother's manor of Hilton may well have been being disputed between Swynnerton as her heir and John Mitton her second husband, by whom she had had issue.
143. PRO, KB9/992/77. This is the return of the presiding Staffordshire coroner John Osmondlow. See also *Plea Rolls*, Henry VI & Edward IV, pp.176-77.
144. N. Davis (ed.), Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century, (Oxford, 1971-6), I, no.213. Davis wrongly dates this letter to 7 December 1471. It was, however, clearly written in 1470 during which the Saturday next after St. Andrew's day fell on 1 December.

145. Humphrey Stafford's pardon was issued on 1 November 1472.

146. Plea Rolls, Henry VI & Edward IV, pp.176-77.


150. PRO, KB9/402/7. The other two men indicted were Godfrey Holford, gentleman of Newcastle and Edward Hardman of Cheshire.


154. Lambeth Palace Library, Shrewsbury Mss. 695 fo.77.


159. PRO, C67/41 m.6. See also Plea Rolls, Henry VI, pp.185, 197.

162. SRO, D1485/7/4/3.
163. SRO, D(W)1734/5/2136.
164. See SRO, D1743/T8, T399 for cases in 1455 and 1487.
166. Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1467-77, pp.535-6; Rotuli Parliamentorum, VI, p.128. See Ibid., VI, pp.218-9 for the reversal of the attainders.
168. For the attack see PRO, KB9/1060/62; for the award see Walter Chetwynd, 'Collections for a History of Pirehill Hundred, SHC, new series XII (1909), p.49.
172. Burton-on-Trent Public Library, Marquess of Anglesey papers, J.2088b.
176. I.H.Jeayes and M.Deanesly, 'Descriptive Catalogue of the Charters and Muniments belonging to the Earl of Anglesey', SHC, 1937, no.654. This is the same collection as mentioned in footnote 172. The Anglesey papers are split between Burton and the County Record Office at Stafford. The catalogue wrongly dates this deed.
177. Ibid., no.659. In 1439 and 1445, after Sir John Bagot's death, his son and heir Richard made similar quitclaims—Ibid., nos.674, 688.
178. Ibid., no. 698. However, the Abbey did get a licence to enclose land at Abbot's Bromley on 16 July 1440. Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1436-41, p. 434.


181. Ibid., p. 7.


183. Ibid., pp. 77-86.


188. Victoria County History of Berkshire, III, p. 87.


190. Ibid., p. 162.

191. Calendar of Close Rolls, 1447-54, p. 12. The entry on the roll is dated 3 June 1448, though refers to earlier events. See also William Salt Library, Stafford, SMS 268, p. 166.

192. Plea Rolls, Henry VI, pp. 188-91.

193. Ibid., pp. 191-2.


195. Keele University Library, Plas Newydd papers, property of the Marquess of Anglesey, Early Paget Correspondence, series 1 box 7 fo. 77. This is a letter from Bess of Hardwick in 1581 to Thomas, Lord Paget.
CHAPTER VI

KINSHIP AND MARRIAGE
Much of this thesis has centred upon the lives and relationships of members of the Staffordshire gentry. Various chapters have been designed to highlight the nature of these relationships and their effects on local government, the lay and clerical nobility, disorder and litigation. Besides stressing the importance for success of personal ability, I have also illustrated the importance (some might say necessity) of having supporting political connections—occasionally formalised by the indentured contract or wedding ring. It is with this last factor that I want to conclude.

In his book *Feudal Society* Marc Bloch began his examination of kinship by asserting that 'ties based on blood relationships existed long before, and were by their very nature foreign to, the human relations characteristic of feudalism.' Yet there is no evidence that in fifteenth-century Staffordshire the two were anything but complementary. No father fought son or brother fought brother during the Wars of the Roses. Families stuck together, though usually, it must be aid, in deciding to opt out of the action. Only in the case of the Mountforts in the 1450s was there any division in a local family between rival magnate affinities. The growing 'strangeness' between Edward IV and Warwick in the late 1460s did, however, strain many friendships. Ralph Wolseley and Walter, Lord Mountjoy took different sides, as did John Delves and Hugh Egerton—the latter pair, though brothers-in-law, fighting in opposing armies at Tewkesbury. Yet the power of kinship and self-interest (to which it was very closely related) were such that the theory that Sir Walter Wrottesley was saved from attainder and execution in 1471 by the intervention of
his kinsman John, Lord Dudley is by no means too fanciful.\textsuperscript{2} One of Dudley's granddaughters was married to Wrottesley's eldest son, and if Sir Walter had been attainted, the couple would have been disinherited. Such an intervention, from the thankful Wrottesley's point-of-view, might have been anticipated; for it was partly what one's kinsmen were for.

It was to his kinsmen rather than to his lord that a gentleman initially turned for aid in time of need. Friends and relations were more immediately accessible. They were not swathed in layers of underlings, often lived locally and might also have a vested interest in his success. Not only was an eldest son who wanted to protect his inheritance to be relied upon; younger sons, brothers, cousins and in-laws too were expected to assist in time of trouble or in one's enterprises. As the earlier section on the disturbances in the Peak District showed, the terrorising Vernon-Cockayne-Meverell gang was led by brothers and kinsmen of the leaders, and two of those leaders, John Cockayne and Thurstan Vernon, were brothers-in-law. It is also no coincidence that when in 1449 the estates of Philip Okeover were near to being completely razed to the ground by this gang, it was Okeover's kinsmen Bagot, Bradbourne and Curzon who gathered and rode to his rescue.

There were three basic reasons— a mixture of affection and self-interest— which nurtured this strength of kinship. The first was simple loyalty to one's immediate family. Blood was thicker than water and familial love existed just as now. Secondly, everybody needed help (one might say, good kinship) at some stage; thus the
wages of disloyalty or failure to provide assistance were retribution in like kind at a future stage. There was also the threat of losing whatever bequests that might have been expected in the 'victim's' last will and testament. This leads into the third point. Though death at human hands in the fifteenth century was rare away from the battlefield, disease was as swift as ever in taking its toll. The possibility of coming into a valuable bequest or even an inheritance could not be ruled out, especially by those married to the daughters or sisters of a land-holder, whose assets and problems might one day be their own. For among the gentry families of Staffordshire between 1440 and 1500 the extinction rate was one in ten and a quarter of them endured at least one minority. Thus it was prudent to consider and protect the interests of one's 'extended family'.

Principal concerns of a head of a family were how to ensure the continuation of that family into the next generation and how to provide spouses for his children. On the one hand, a large family would insure against the possibility of the death of an only son leaving no immediate heir; on the other hand, it might mean that one's children might not all be married off as well as the parents would have liked. There was only a limited number of highly eligible bachelors in the area, and each family could only afford to allocate a certain amount of land or money for the marriage settlements of younger children. In 1447 Sir Nicholas Montgomery's daughter Elizabeth had a dowry of two hundred marks for her marriage to Thomas Meverell⁴, while the lawyer William Littleton sixty years later was wealthy enough to bequeath a dowry of four hundred marks for his only daughter⁵, but the
sum of two hundred and eighty marks which Humphrey Swynnerton the younger was able to put aside for his daughters' marriage settlements by the time of his death in 1505 had to be split evenly between seven girls. The small size of the available dowry may explain why Swynnerton died in his early fifties with all his daughters as yet unmarried. He might conceivably have taken a leaf out of the book of John Harcourt of Ranton who, despite only being a younger son himself managed to wed his brood of four daughters to leading members of the county gentry: Walter Wrottesley the younger, Ralph Lane, Hugh Erdeswick and Swynnerton himself. Harcourt was a shrewd and occasionally ruthless man, and the following two episodes reveal how much importance he placed upon obtaining as favourable a marriage settlement as possible for his kinswomen.

In the first of these Harcourt improved upon the financial settlement made in a marriage contract. He was, as might be expected, a feoffee for his son-in-law Humphrey Swynnerton, and took advantage of the young man's lack of resources. Swynnerton did not receive his mother's Hilton inheritance until 1472 (because it was being held by John Mitton by the courtesy of England). Soon afterwards Harcourt swooped and Swynnerton was forced to enfeoff his wife jointly with him in this awaited property. This was in consideration of 'divers favours, penalties and expenses done and incurred' by Harcourt in Swynnerton's lawsuits and quarrels, and for certain sums paid and dues forgiven to Swynnerton by Harcourt. Presumably Harcourt had been lending financial help to his daughter and son-in-law, and had decided to be repaid thus. The Harcourts were also to be Swynnerton's executors, thereby taking an even
tighter control on Swynnerton's estates.

The other example concerns Harcourt and the Peshale of Hopton inheritance. Sometime before 1476 Sir John Stanley had paid £100 to old Humphrey Peshale for an assurance that all of his estates would pass to his son, Hugh Peshale, to whom Stanley had married a daughter. This was probably done because Humphrey had taken a second wife after the death of Hugh's mother. Stanley was afraid that this later union would produce off-spring upon whom some or all of the family property might be devolved, to the disinherance of his daughter. (Trouble between step-children had previously occurred in the area with theountforts and Talbot Earls of Shrewsbury and ironically within Stanley's own family after his death). The trouble with the Peshale inheritance, however, did not come from Humphrey's second marriage, but his third, to Lettice Harcourt. After the death of Lettice's father, John of Ellenhall in 1484, Harcourt took it upon himself to look after his kinswoman's interests. After Hugh Peshale's untimely death in 1489, he and old Humphrey combined to slice off a large portion of the Peshale lands, including the manor of Knightley, which were enfeoffed on Harcourt and obviously destined for Lettice. This conspiracy was challenged by John Blount, who had married in Hugh's only child, Catherine, what he had thought to be an extremely wealthy heiress. John and Catherine petitioned Chancery over the matter and recovered the lands once an inquiry had shown the stories of Humphrey and Harcourt to be contradictory. Yet it was not until 7 June 1497, after Harcourt's death, that the property, which must have been Hugh's jointure, was recovered by the couple.

Marriage and marriage settlements certainly
regularly exercised the minds of the gentry, but exactly who was marrying whom?

Analysing marriage patterns is difficult. Lists can be made for the places of origin and parentage of the partners, and one can also gauge whether there was any marked preponderance of widows, heiresses or multiple marriages in the lists. However, ultimately there are few useful statistics to be drawn from this exercise. Taking the sheriffs and escheators of Staffordshire between 1440 and 1500, for example, all but one of the sheriffs are known to have married. The exception, Thomas Basset (1465-6), probably married as well. Eight of the sheriffs married twice, one married three times and one, Sir Henry Willoughby (1486-7), four times. Evidence is more sparse for the escheators and nine are not known to have married. This is not, of course, to say that they did not marry, though one, Edward Fowke (1494-7), was a cleric. In other words, marriage was almost universal among these men. This pattern and others to which I now want to turn were not peculiar to the county office holders. They are reflected in the entire gentry of Staffordshire; it is just that it is easier to take these leading gentlemen as an exemplary sample.

Although in theory one could construct diagrams showing distances between the homes of office holders and their wives in an attempt to determine the average distance people went to marry, many factors would render this misleading. These include the effects of differing types of terrain and the quality of road and water communications in an area; the whole question of from which manors to measure from, especially when it is not known where the principal residence of a family was or how much travelling between its estates occurred; the practice of sending sons, especially the eldest
ones out to live on a distant part of the family inheritance; and the contacts and friendships made while the head of a family was performing official duties as an office holder or estate or household administrator for a noble family. For instance, it is clear that Sir Walter Griffith of Alrewas, who was sheriff in 1471-2, met his second wife, Agnes Constable of Flamborough (Yorkshire), or at least her family, while steward of Holderness for the Staffords in the early 1470s, which office the Constables had themselves held a generation earlier.9

In the end we must conclude that only generalisations are advisable, and that it is upon the exceptions that most interest should be turned. At the simplest and safest level, the chances of two people getting married were greatest when their families were neighbours, on good terms and not so closely related that the Church would not sanction the match. The greater the distance between the couple's families and the less travelled their kinsmen were, the less likely that the eligibility or even existence of each of the youngsters would be known to the other's family or that marriage negotiations would be entered into. If some figure has to be put onto the distances involved, it would be safe to say that few marriages among the gentry were contracted between individuals living more than fifty miles apart, the exceptions being widows and wealthy heiresses, about whom news travelled far and fast. In short, most people in Staffordshire married someone from that county or an adjacent one. Apart from Griffith, only three of the sheriffs and escheators are known to have had spouses from further afield: William Harper, who married Margaret Cook of Lilbourne (Northamptonshire); Sir Walter Wrottesley, who married Joan Baron of
Reading (Berkshire); and Robert Hill, who married Elizabeth Woodford of Ashby-Folville (Leicestershire). Among the rest of the Staffordshire gentry there were a few others who also married brides from other regions of the country, including Richard Harper (William's brother), a letter from whom closes this chapter. Conversely, there were a few Staffordshire heiresses who attracted husbands from far afield, such as Anne Swynnerton of Hilton and Joan Chetwynd (née Burley), both of whose cases have been dealt with in earlier chapters.

Marriages were arranged, though it is clear from contemporary letters that the feelings of the prospective partners were also taken into consideration. Parental love was such that few would knowingly consign a child to an unwanted or unsuitable match merely for financial or political gain. Not that these were totally ignored, as the following example reveals. The death of Walter, Lord Mountjoy's eldest son, William Blount, at the battle of Barnet meant that Staffordshire and Derbyshire held a highly eligible young widow. The progress of one of her (ultimately unsuccessful) suitors, William Stonor, in 1472 was recorded in this letter from Thomas Mull:

"My cosen Wilyam hath ben with a full goodly Gentilwoman, and comynde with her after love's lore: and for certein I knowe that ych of them ys verlely (sic) well content of other....Of my lorde Mountjoyes lande she hath iiiiiXX marcs of annuite fe by dede endentid, for where the lande was in value C. marcs shee hath layn it ayen to my seid lord for yelding her yerly iiiiiXX marcs. These certentees I have by my bedfellow Thomas Powtrell, which ys of counsell with my seid lorde, and was of counsell at the marriage makyng....For certaine shee is well named, and of worshipful disposicion." 10

The reference to Mountjoy's councillor and the 'marriage makyng' could mean merely that Powtrell was present at the wedding ceremony, but it is more likely to be evidence of
the lord's council being called in to advise over this important though personal decision. Certainly advice and brokers were often sought over such matters. Richard Brown of Eslingham (Kent), M.P. for Newcastle-under-Lyme in 1435, arranged the marriage of a daughter of his parliamentary companion from that constituency William Hexstall. Back in the 1420s Sir William Mountfort had been consulted over the proposed match between Sir Edward Grey and Elizabeth Ferrers, heiress of the Groby barony. A letter written between 1465 and 1483 by John Aston of Haywood to an intermediary, Ralph Delves, reveals, as did the Stonor letter, a stage in the marriage negotiations:

"Unkell delves I hartely etc. recomende me unto you & to my aunte also desiringe to heare of your wefares, thankinge you of your great kyndnes shewed unto me & to my daughter Elin all tymes prayinge you of your good contynnuance in the same, and where you send me worde by my servant Wilm. Kirkham to sonde you a bill of my mynde as touchinge my daughters joiture in Leghton, I pray you streyne for the whole manor wt thapp'naances[appertenances?], and also I pray you yf it woulde please you to take the paynes upon you to folow the lawe to the extremitie in all causes for Samsone Erdeswick will keep no payment, wherfore she shall have all the lawe will geve her."'

Though the Stonor letter was written from the viewpoint of a suitor and this Aston one from that of a prospective father-in-law, the considerations of both parties were not dissimilar—human concern tempered with financial diligence.

Although financial concern featured in most marriage negotiations, it was particularly evident where widows and minors were concerned. It is to widows and wards that I now want to turn.

Although modern statistical evidence shows that women tend to live longer than men, the situation in the middle ages cannot be said to have been the same by a simple
extrapolation of this data. Far more babies were lost then at birth or in infancy than are lost today, and lack of hygiene or proper medical care resulted in the deaths of a large number of women either in child-birth or through septicaemia (blood-poisoning) shortly afterwards. Nevertheless, there were usually quite a few widows around, each of whom held dower (usually one third) of their late husband's property. Some of these were elderly and did not want to get remarried, but many were widowed either while young or in middle age; these were the real marital catches. In such cases it is pertinent to note that their later husband(s) tend to be from families of at least as great wealth and prominence as were their initial spouses, and often of superior eminence. For example, Margaret Curzon of Kedleston married Thomas Kniveton after the death of her first husband Thomas Okeover in the late 1430s; while Margaret Aston married the important lawyer and Exchequer official following the early demise of her first husband John Kynnardsley; or again John, Lord Dudley's daughter Eleanor married first Sir Henry Beaumont and then George Stanley of Elford. In the last two of these cases the widows were still young enough to have children by their later spouses— an additional attraction because of the 'courtesy of England' mentioned earlier. Wolseley lived on until 1504 and Stanley until 1508–9, keeping out the children of the widow's first marriage from part of their inheritance. It may have been tension from this sort of situation that was responsible for the fact that on the only occasion that William Blount the elder of Blore is known to have had any connection with his step-father
Nicholas Montgomery it was to sue him for assault while Basset was paying a visit to Cubley (Derbyshire), probably visiting his mother in 1458.\textsuperscript{14}

As mentioned earlier, the fears of the children of a first marriage over a surviving parent's remarriage was that step-children would partially or wholly disinherit them. Thomas Littleton, who married Joan Chetwynd (née Burley) certainly syphoned off some of the Chetwynd lands for his own brood to the loss of the Chetwynd heirs (though, it will be remembered these were not other children but the Alspath branch of the family). In this case the influence of the Chetwylnds of Alspath was obviously diminished by Joan's longevity (she held the Chetwynd estates from 1444 to 1505), as they were deprived of the power that the estates she held would have given them. Cassandra Humphrestone, who around 1465 became one of the very few examples in the county of a teenager marrying an old man, Robert Giffard of Chillington, also did the pocket and influence of her heir, her son Sir John, no good by living to be almost ninety, with most of the family lands bestowed upon her.\textsuperscript{15} In this case the son did eventually get his inheritance, though only in 1537, and had in the meantime acquired two wives, the second of whom, Elizabeth Montgomery (née Gresley), being a wealthy widow.

Some sons, however, were less fortunate, dying before they could get their hands on their mother's dower (e.g. John Aston the elder, John Harcourt of Ranton\textsuperscript{16} and Sir Walter Wrottesley). Alice Butener, widow of Humphrey Lowe of Tressel, even outlived both her heiress daughters' husbands. Widows were thus either an important asset or liability, depending on how one was related to them. They could heavily supplement or diminish a gentleman's wealth and power, especially if they held, besides dower from their
late husband's estates, a life-interest in all those estates
and/or property in their own right.

Those with a financial interest in the process
of marriage and determination of who should wed who were not
confined to the prospective partners and their fathers. If on
the death of a land-holder the heir was under-age, his or her
wardship and marriage were part of the feudal incidents
pertaining to the feudal overlord of that child's inheritance.
Any land held in chief would make the Crown one of these
overlords and legally the only one that mattered. However,
royal efforts to realise these feudal incidents were resisted
by the gentry, who regularly connived to conceal from the
Crown the existence of such property held in chief or to
give a greatly underestimated figure for its value. Indeed,
the enfeoffment to use had been developed in the later
middle ages largely to prevent the loss of revenue and
control of the family inheritance to its feudal overlord
during a minority - hence the importance of maintaining a
well-stocked and trustworthy set of feoffees.

Recognizing that the Crown could claim a relief
on a gentleman's inheritance should even the smallest part
of this be held in chief by military tenure, Henry VII
trawled for wardships, using the inquisition post mortem
energetically and indiscriminately wherever there was the
slightest possibility of financial gain: a boon to later
historians but doubtlessly an unrelished extra-workload
for escheators at the time. In late 1486 and July 1496
Henry issued commissions in Staffordshire to enquire into
feudal incidents especially escheats which were being or
might be concealed from him. He was not the first king
in this period to recognize the loss of these lucrative
perquisites and attempt to prevent it; Henry VI in February
1448 and Edward IV in August 1473 had acted similarly.
These commissions and the inquisitions post mortem were of some use to the Crown even when they proved initially barren. They provided records from which royal officers could work on future occasions; for among the gentry's (and indeed all tenants') most powerful weapons was any lack of detailed written evidence about tenures and obligations.

Apart from commissions dealing with the forfeited estates of rebels in 1461 and 1483, these general inquiries into incidents due to the Crown were supplemented by others relating to specific individuals. These commissions, referring to known tenants-in-chief, were issued not to the county escheators via a writ of 'diem clausit extremum', but to groups of four to six important gentlemen of the county. In Staffordshire there were five such commissions between 1440 and 1500: for Richard Delves in 1446, John Winnesbury in 1450, Sir Robert Harcourt in 1471, Ralph Lane in 1477 and John, Lord Mountjoy in 1487. In each case the commissioners were local men, including at least one lawyer and drawn from the Duchy of Lancaster's Honour of Tutbury. In September 1473 there were also commissions of inquiry into the heirs and Staffordshire estates of the third Earl of Shrewsbury and the disgraced Sir Walter Wrottesley. These, curiously, were sent out, not to the local gentry, but to two financial experts: Thomas Stildolf, receiver for the Queen's feefarms and queen-gold and her attorney; and John Elrington, treasurer of the Household, who had been the successful suitor for William Blount's widow's hand. Why these courtiers should have been employed for Staffordshire is a mystery, especially since the commission into Wrottesley's property in Worcestershire,
issued a few days before the Staffordshire one, had been
directed to Humphrey Blount and Nicholas Leveson—both of
whom had held public office in Staffordshire.

Having emphasised the Crown's difficulties in
obtaining information about and possession of those wardships
which were due to it, it may be surprising to learn that
quite a few Staffordshire under-age heirs and heiresses
fell into royal hands (or indeed those of any feudal lord).
Some minorities have been discussed in other contexts earlier
in this thesis, nevertheless it is worth listing in one
place the more important wards of the area at this time:
Humphrey and John Beaupo, Humphrey and Robert Blount, Nicholas
Burdet, Robert Cawardyn, the two Richard Corbets of Moreton
(Shropshire), John Cotes, Thomas Curzon, Richard Delves,
John, Lord Ferrers, Humphrey Grey, Walter Griffith, John
Handforth, Richard Lane, Richard Macclesfield, Nicholas
Montgomery of Cubley (Derbyshire), John Peyto, German Pole,
Humphrey Stafford of Grafton (Worcestershire), Anne and
Alice Swynnerton, Edward Trussell, John Tuchet and Richard
Wrottesley.

Grants of wardship and marriage were highly prized
pieces of patronage, sought by a whole variety of people,
usually just for financial gain. The grant to Simon Mountfort
of the wardship of the son of Clarence's executed follower
Thomas Burdet in 1478 was a reward for long and loyal service
to the house of York, which may also have owed something to
the good lordship of the powerful William, Lord Hastings,
whose retainer Mountfort was. 22 Courtiers were frequently the
recipients of this form of patronage, whether it was as a
straight grant or a sale. John Hampton of Stourton received
the wardship of John Botrell in 1438 and shared those of
John Woodhill with William Tresham in 1441 and John Grendon (an idiot) with Sir Edmund Hungerford in 1446. William Cumberford, the Stafford servant and lawyer, had the lands of Joan Catesby in 1460. When large sums were demanded for the grant of a wardship it was the lawyers and courtiers who were best able to come up with the cash.

Sometimes a guardian did more than just buy up a wardship and marriage (the two usually, though not always, went together). Edward Burton, a yeoman of the Crown, on becoming the guardian of Richard Lane of Bentley in 1477, promptly moved to Staffordshire and married his ward's widowed mother. William Hugford, the Beauchamp/Neville servant, had done the same thing in the early 1460s, becoming step-father to Humphrey Beafo of Hilton, whom he married to his niece. As by their very nature wards were heirs or heiresses, their marriages were widely sought by others, often neighbours, with children themselves to find advantageous marriages for. Walter Griffith the younger of Alrewas was married off to the daughter of his guardian Sir John Ferrers of Tamworth, and John Handforth was similarly wed to the daughter of his guardian Sir John Savage. The same happened to Richard Corbet the elder, whose marriage had been acquired by Walter, Lord Ferrers on 30 May 1468, though in Corbet's case the match may not have been the 'fait accompli' it often was for wards; he was twenty years-old at the time and could easily have held out for the few months until he came of age, had he objected to the bride.

Occasionally, the kinsmen of a ward sought to acquire his wardship and marriage, usually to prevent the family estates falling into the hands of an outsider, who might misuse them, having no thought for the long-term effects of over-farming and ignoring maintenance. John,
Lord Audley petitioned in the parliament of 1472-5 for his nephew's wardship. In 1488 Robert Throckmorton bought the wardship of his nephew John Peyto for £160, and five years later the grant of the wardship of German Pole went to his uncle and grandmother. In 1468 Walter, Lord Mountjoy had the wardship of his nephew Robert Blount of Grisby (Lancashire), and though that of his step-son Henry, duke of Buckingham was reserved to the Crown, Mountjoy and his wife the Duchess Anne did get the commitment of Henry's estates during his minority.

There are also a couple of unusual wardships from the area. In September 1465 Sir Nicholas Montgomery, sheriff of Staffordshire in 1443-4, who was dying granted the wardship and marriage of his son and heir, Nicholas the younger, to Ralph Wolseley. Why he should have done so is unknown. The Montogmerys were a powerful family in both this county and in Derbyshire; if anything, of more importance than the Wolseleys. Ralph Wolseley, though a baron of the Exchequer, was still only an heir to his family's estates and certainly could not have raised enough money to buy the wardship. Perhaps Montgomery merely wished his son's future to be in the hands of somebody he trusted, though I can find no special link between Wolseley and the Montogmerys. Nicholas the younger must also have been not far from attaining his majority anyway, for in 1474 he was deputy-steward of the Honour of Tutbury under William, Lord Hastings, one of whose closest associates he became. The younger Nicholas soon married Jane, daughter of Sir Nicholas Longford of Longford in western Derbyshire, one of his neighbours. Wolseley's only sister had long been married to John Agard, and since he is not known to have had any daughters, a match between the youngsters and a Wolseley seems not to have come.
into the reckoning. Anyway, had a Wolseley-Montgomery match been contemplated, it would have been easier simply to arrange it normally, rather than make young Montgomery a ward of his prospective in-laws. The mystery remains, heightened by the fact that after 1465 there seems to have been as little contact between the two families as there was before it.

The final wardship I want to mention was that of Roger Horton of Catton, whose marriage was granted away by his father in 1503 to Henry VII's mother, Margaret, countess of Richmond. The elder Horton was bound in five hundred marks that his son would be married to 'such a gentlewoman as her Grace and her assigns shall think convenient.' For her part the Countess would 'find' the lad's schooling so that he would 'learn the laws'. In addition, and here's the rub, the Countess promised

'that she, at the cost of the father, will cause labour to be made to the King, that such lawful title as the father has to any manors, lands and tenements in England, may be recovered to him and to his heirs.'

Here, as we have seen repeatedly throughout the thesis, the importance of labouring and good lordship is apparent; so important in fact that Horton's son was, effectively, sold off to purchase them. Marriage like service, whether administrative, legal or military, was a commodity. It could be bought and sold. Being more of a merger of two sets of interest than merely a union of two individuals, marriage and the way in which it affected who were one's kinsmen was often used for political advantage; hence the importance of marrying one's daughters off to gentlemen from important local families wherever possible and the social as well as financial lure of widows and heiresses. As in most societies, success in fifteenth-century England, whether locally or nationally, depended to a large extent on
cultivating the right friendships, being able to rely on competent kinsmen, knowing the right people; and carefully thought-out marriages could be the talismans of success. Wardships could mean financial gain or a short-cut to a favourable marriage, with all its concomitant advantages and new kinsmen.

The criteria for holding office, outlined near the beginning of the thesis—personal ability, a degree of wealth and political acceptability—were the same for procuring an advantageous marriage, from which political success might derive or to which it might lead.

Although three gentry families of the area were raised to the peerage during this period—the Blounts, Suttons and Tuchets—none of them achieved this by marrying into a title. Walter Blount did indeed marry the dowager Duchess Anne of Buckingham, but he had already been created Lord Mountjoy for services rendered to Edward IV. There was an assure of inter-marriage among the nobility of Staffordshire, but this owed little or nothing to the fact that they did hold property within the county—a place most of them hardly visited. The Talbot Earls of Shrewsbury were at the centre of these marriages with the second Earl marrying a daughter of James, earl of Ormond and Wiltshire, the third Earl a daughter of Humphrey, duke of Buckingham and the fourth a daughter of William, Lord Hastings. In addition, the second wife of Thomas Stanley, earl of Derby was Margaret, countess of Richmond, whose previous husbands had been Henry VII's father and Humphrey, duke of Buckingham's second son, Sir Henry Stafford.

Except of course for Herefordshire's Walter Devereux, who married Lady Anne Ferrers of Chartley, none
of the heads of Staffordshire's noble families married within the county. However, five leading local families did marry into this nobility. The marriage of Richard Corbet to Elizabeth Devereux has already been referred to; the others were John Cockayne marrying a daughter of Humphrey, duke of Buckingham, Sir Henry Beaumont marrying a daughter of John, Lord Dudley, Sir Henry Vernon marrying a daughter of the second Earl of Shrewsbury and Sir John Savage marrying a daughter of Thomas, Lord Stanley. In all but the first of these cases the gentleman in question was already part of the lord's affinity before the marriage, which led to an even closer relationship as kinship supplemented the bonds of bastard feudalism. This leads into the whole question of the relationship between marriage/kinship and political allegiance.

As I showed in the long chapter on patronage and local government office, there was a marked difference between the Stafford affinity, which had not particularly inter-married under Duke Humphrey, and the Neville affinity, which, coming to the fore in the 1460s, was based upon fairly discrete family clans. These clans are developed before Warwick came along; the vital marriages of Hugh Wrottesley, Thomas Astley and Thomas Blount predated the marshalling by Warwick of their families, which concentrated upon their younger generations. The Hastings affinity took the process a step further. Unlike Warwick, Hastings did not attempt to raise a new oligarchy based upon the ties of kinship. He used the existing oligarchy of leading Duchy families, which had emerged under Buckingham and Clarence, simply giving it a new leader. Here again—and this is the important point—there was no particular feeling of marrying within
one's affinity or marrying outside of it. As I pointed out before, marriages were most regularly contracted between neighbours and friends, and these did not necessarily have the same good lord or sympathies as oneself. If they did, so much the better. There certainly were marriages between political allies (such as Elizabeth Meverell to Henry Cockayne, evis Hampton to Elizabeth Everdon, and Nicholas Agard of Sudbury to Margaret Vernon), but the vast majority cannot be so catagorised. Magnates came and went, but the value of a good marriage was not so transient.

By the end of the century most of the disputes about which I have written were either forgotten or merely dim m mories in the minds of old men. The head of the Bassets had married a Meverell and the heir to the Gresley estates and taken a Vernon for his bride. A new age was dawning; an age in which the county gentry would not scorn inter-marriage with the new and essentially-urban wealth of such merchant families as the Levesons of Wolverhampton: a sister of

ir Richard Wrottesley married Thomas Leveson. In this, the Wrottesleys might have been influenced by Sir Richard's own in-laws, the Dudleys, whose close associates the Levesons were. Slightly earlier, around the middle of the century, Richard Leveson had married Joyce, daughter of Fulk Birmingham, but these were the only marriages of their kind that I can discover. For Staffordshire at least such matters were for the sixteenth century. Perhaps the fifteenth century equivalent was the rise in wealth and social importance of lawyers, as seen by the histories of the Arblasters, Lanes, Wolseleys, Sacheverells, Curzons of Kedleston and Littletons. The wealth that such families generated and the contacts that their professional activities\(^\text{combined}\) (including serving in local
government) were the keys to their rise. They enabled them to find advantageous marriages, and it was this, rather than opportunities to buy land which ultimately brought social (and indeed territorial) advancement. For although there was an active land market around such prosperous areas of the county as Lichfield, Stafford and Brewood, only tiny patches of land changed hands in most transactions.²⁹ Inheritances were inherited or married into, not purchased.

Though marriages and kinship were essentially local affairs, a considerable role was played (as I have shown) in Staffordshire's affairs by men from out-of-county. Most came from neighbouring shires, though the small group of aliens in Staffordshire also deserve a passing note, as they blended into this political community. Commissions to locate them were held at Stafford or Lichfield³⁰ in 1443, 1450, 1451, 1455, 1456, 1457, 1463, 1467, 1468, 1469 and 1483.³¹ In the returns some seventy-two names³² appear, of which fifty-five came in the two commissions of 1443.

The commissions were to raise money. They named those liable to pay the alien subsidy of the particular time and the sheriffs were duly held accountable for a appropriate sum. This may have led to falsification of the returns; for after finding fifty-five aliens in 1443, the commissioners professed to find only four in 1450 and none at all in the next five commissions.³³ One or two are found in the county in 1467, two in both 1468 and 1469, and eight aliens were recorded in 1483. The places of abode of the aliens in Staffordshire, where known, are set out on the diagram overleaf, though from the map I have excluded three foreign women who married locally: Anabella Irish of Bednall, Anabella Lane of Abbots Bromley and Alice Hascard of Hopton. There was a fairly even distribution of aliens among the English people, with Burton-on-Trent having the
only slight concentration of aliens.

Often the surnames of the aliens revealed their owners' places of origin. 'Frenchman' and 'Irishman' or 'Irish' were common, while 'Welshman' and 'Fleming' also occurred. There were also Scottish immigrants. Many aliens worked as domestic servants, one, Maurice Okynmaker, being in the service of the vicar of Alton. Perhaps Okynmaker was a Talbot recruit from France. One alien was a clerk, others were urban craftsmen: cooper, shoemaker and cordwainer. Walsall even had a 'brigandyn' maker in 1483. Also, 'skinner' and 'hatmaker' appear as occupational surnames.
Much of the past is a world forever lost to us despite our efforts to retrieve it from the stone and parchment that survive to record where others once passed. We may have fragmentary records of court sessions, but it is difficult to picture the scenes reported from them. To us a verdict may illustrate political pressure, legal niceties or litigational bloody-mindedness; but of the eloquence of lawyers, the striving for justice or a judge's indigestion, all of which may also affect decisions, we know nothing. We have writs and enrolments in plenty and may know when they were found inaccurate or misspelt; but of the Chancery clerks whose colds, hangovers or sheer exhaustion caused this nothing remains. We have account rolls, though little knowledge of how much clumsiness or care, thrift or extravagance, honesty or fraud, or the vagaries of the English climate affected the 'summa totalis'. Visits to and from friends, personal characteristics, tastes and piety, pains of birth and bereavement, conversation late into the evenings— all these and much more, if we but had them, would bring to life that distant age. In short, our picture of the fifteenth century is like that which we have of its individual gentlemen— an effigy rather than a portrait. The historian's task is to reconstruct the latter from the former.

I want to close this chapter on kinship and indeed the whole thesis with an undated letter from Richard Harper, second son of Humphrey, duke of Buckingham's placeman John of Rushall-by-Walsall and brother of the equally prominent William. Like these two, Richard was a Stafford servant, being an executor of the Duchess Anne and from 1485 until his death in 1492 the family's receiver-general. Between these years he was also receiver-general of the Duchy of
Lancaster. Though he was M.P. for Stafford at least twice (1467-8 and 1472-5) and once for Newcastle-under-Lyme (1491-2), he had married a wealthy Essex widow\(^35\) and spent much of his time on her estates there, a long way from home and his family. The letter\(^36\), though in many ways unremarkable, sums up so much of that life behind the writs, enfeoffments and recognizances, which I have sought to set down in this work. Read slowly, each phrase speaks of a 'real' incident, of the immediate concerns of a later-medieval gentleman, and of the practical, day-to-day meaning of his relationships.

'Master Baryngton as hertzly as I kan I recomoand me to you and to my mastre[s] your wyfe and pray yow to delyver unto my servaunt bere herof a buk wich I have promysed a gentilman shall be sent hym and not saylied in myn absence I pray you to remember me as I late dede yow in your absence where ther was grete wordes spoken ayenst yow. And also now at the sessions of the fforest for lake of yor claime ye ar lyke to lose your title of the fforest wtowt specyall belpe wich I have & woll be gladde alwes to helpe yow well. I fynde yow kyndly dysposed as knowith god who kepe yow, savynge my quarell that nether ye nor my mastres your wyff woll take my pore bowse in your way as ye ryde to London. I wold I hadde the cheyne in plegge & then ye wold se me. From Ippyngbury the xxvi day of August

Yours to his power Richard Harpur

Of such men were the political communities of the shires composed; with such bonds they were held together.


6. Ibid., III, no.1125.

7. See footnote no.6.


10. C. L. Kingsford (ed.), *The Stonor Letters and Papers*, Camden Society, third series, XXXIX (1919), no.121. See also Ibid., no.124. Blount's widow was Margaret, daughter and co-heiress of Sir Thomas Echingham. She actually remarried an up-and-coming courtier John Elrington.


16. Harcourt's influence in Staffordshire was negligible since his mother Margaret- a formidable woman- had decided to take the family's estates in this county (Ellenhall, Coven, Sharehurst and Saredon) as her dower.


18. J.C.Wedgwood, 'Staffordshire Members of Parliament', SHC, 1917-8, p.274; Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1494-1509, p.66. The second of these was repeated on 1 September 1496.


21. Ibid., 1467-77, p.408 (bis). Stildolf's wife, who was a servant of Queen Elizabeth, had an annuity of five marks from the town of Stafford from 6 January 1481- Calendar of Close Rolls, 1476-85, pp.182-3.


27. Historical Manuscripts Commission, Series 78 (Hastings), I, p.110.


30. One commission was held elsewhere, at Wolverhampton, on 16 July 1443.

31. Public Record Office, Lay Subsidies, E179/177/55 (bis), 64, 66, 74, 68, 67m.2, 73, 78, 70, 81m.2.
32. The return for 1467 is barely legible. The total figure for aliens may be seventy-three.

33. Commissions in the 1450s also took pains to stress that no Italian merchants had entered the county. Cheap silk imports, allied to an endemic xenophobia, lay behind the numerous restrictions on foreigners and activities of foreign traders. The commissioners for the alien subsidy were apparently required to look out for any contravention of the statutes governing these merchants. See R.A. Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI*, (London, 1981), p. 791.


35. *Victoria County History of Essex, IV*, p. 213.

36. *British Library, Egerton Mss. 2664 fo. 2R*. 
CONCLUSION

I have deliberately painted this portrait of Staffordshire on as broad a canvas as possible to obtain the fullest appreciation of the complexity of human relationships and social interdependence. To sum up fifteenth-century Staffordshire in a few choice phrases is beyond my limited powers. Thus my conclusion is more of a musing on two central concepts—power and success—the appreciation of which may prove of wider benefit in understanding the county's community.

By 'success' I mean the fulfilment or surpassing of an individual's aims; and by 'power' I mean the ability to influence others. These concepts have traditionally been linked together. Yet, certainly in the study of a county in the later middle ages, important qualifications are needed to such an assumption. For the nobility and gentry, there was far more to success than the acquisition of political offices. Some men had no interest in government and politics and, like the Nevilles of Tyrley, enjoyed the quiet, safe life to that of the ambitious courtier. Some had no aptitude for politics and were wise enough to recognise this and refrain from getting involved; while others had pressing financial difficulties which did not allow them time for county offices. Are these men to be dubbed failures? Surely not. Not everybody was on the make, though those who were are easier to spot. If success has to be measured, the question 'what did this man grab?' is less important than that of 'what did this man pass on?'. Success lay not with the high-fliers who died sine prole, but with those who consolidated their family's position, perhaps extended it slightly, and had sons to whom to bequeath it. The dilemma facing Henry VIII in the late 1520s was not novel.
Success was not synonymous with power, nor power with wealth—survival was more important than these. This is not to decry the value of holding offices of profit under the Crown, a bishop or a local magnate, merely that these were a means to an end, not an end in themselves. Lasting success, not surprisingly, depended on the ability to last. Warwick, Clarence and Hastings found this out to their cost among the local magnates, while on a humbler level John Hampton, the Peshales of Hopton and Stanleys of Elford, great men in their time, left barely a rack behind. By the time John Leland visited Staffordshire the wealthiest landholder in the county was not descended from one of the leading gentry families of the fifteenth century, but James Leveson, the wool merchant of Wolverhampton and the staple at Calais.

The importance of magnate connections in securing political office and wealth is clearly evident from the evidence presented earlier. However, this influence was dependent more on the calibre of the individual gentleman than his social position. Lords chose men of ability; after all, they themselves would be judged by the quality of their affinity as much as its size. Support had to be attracted and it was too expensive to attempt to build an affinity solely through lavish annuities. So the quality and ability of a particular lord became of importance. John, Lord Dudley could never hope to gain more wealth than, for instance, Henry, duke of Buckingham—yet by surviving, consolidating his family's general position and using his personal qualities to the full, he was the more important figure locally and
nationally. Similarly, the contrast in fortune between the Harpers of Rushall and the Cockaynes of Ashbourne at the gentry level was a matter of personality. The former family grew successful through loyal and efficient service, while the latter squandered their power in a dissoluteness which came home to roost with the murder of Thomas Cockayne in 1488 by a neighbour as they rode to church and the pathetic impecuniosity of Thomas' loutish father John in his final years.

Yet Staffordshire was essentially a county at peace, where virtue and ability were usually rewarded, though not always as promptly as some would have liked. As for the inhabitants in general— they wined, they dined, they whored and (occasionally) they slaughtered, but no more than a thousand generations before them or, like as not, the thousand yet to come.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

(1) Unpublished Original Source Material
(ii) Published Original Source Material
(iii) Secondary Source Material

Abbreviations in section (iii) for Staffordshire periodicals

NSJFS North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies

SHC Collections for a History of Staffordshire, William Salt Archaeological Society

TLAHS Transactions of the Lichfield Archaeological and Historical Society, which subsequently became

TSSAHS Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society
UNPUBLISHED ORIGINAL SOURCE MATERIAL

British Library, London.

Additional Charters - 19858, 27179, 27343, 27504-11, 27514-5, 43357, 57231, 57819, 57822, 57840, 57863, 58199, 58200.

Cotton Manuscripts - Cleopatra E.III, Galba B.I.

Egerton Manuscripts - 2664.

Harleian Manuscripts - 2059.

Lansdowne Manuscripts - 1236.

Burton-on-Trent Public Library.

The library holds many of the Marquess of Anglesey's papers, catalogued by I. Jeayes for the William Salt Archaeological Society in the 1930s. I have used photocopies of J.654 and J.2088a&b from the library's collection and am grateful to the librarian for allowing me to obtain these.

Cheshire County Record Office, Chester.

Classes DCR - Crewe papers
DBW - Baker-Wilbraham papers

Derbyshire County Record Office, Matlock.

Classes 231 - Okeover papers
369 - Derbyshire Archaeological Society deeds
410 - Vernon papers
518 - Harrington papers

Keele University Library, Keele, Staffordshire.

Tamworth Court Rolls
Raymond Richards Collection of Miscellaneous Historical Documents

Lambeth Palace Library, Lambeth.

Shrewsbury papers Mss.695.

Leicestershire County Record Office, Leicester.

Class 26D53 Shirley papers (National Register of Archives no.874).

Lichfield Joint Record Office, Lichfield, Staffordshire.

Bishops' Registers B/A/1/9 Heyworth
B/A/1/10 Booth
B/A/1/11 Close and Boulers
B/A/1/12 Hales (Halse)
B/A/1/13 Smith and Arundel

Miscellaneous Deeds B/A/21/123312, 123314-5, 124075, 124078-9.

Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London.

Classes C 1 Early Chancery Proceedings
C67 Patent Rolls Supplementary, Pardon Rolls
C139-41 Inquisitions Post Mortem Henry VI-Richard III
C219 Writs and Returns for Elections to Parliament
Common Pleas, Plea Rolls
Duchy of Lancaster, Entry Books of Decrees and Orders
Duchy of Lancaster, Accounts, various
Duchy of Lancaster, Ministers' Accounts
Duchy of Lancaster, Chancery Rolls
Duchy of Lancaster, Miscellanea
Council and Privy Seal Receipts
Accounts, various
King's Remembrancer, Miscellanea
King's Remembrancer, Subsidy Rolls
King's Remembrancer, Sheriffs' Seizures
Writs and Warrants for Issues of the Exchequer
King's Bench, Ancient Indictments
King's Bench, Plea Rolls
Special Collections, Ancient Correspondence
Special Collections, Ministers' Accounts
Special Collections, Ancient Petitions
Proceedings in the court of Star Chamber- Henry VII
Proceedings in the court of Star Chamber- Henry VIII

Staffordshire County Record Office, Stafford.

Classes D239 Blagg, Son and Masfield deposit
D240 Shrewsbury papers
D260 Hatherton collection
D515 Earl of Dartmouth's deposit
D538 Miscellaneous deeds
D615 Earl of Lichfield's deeds
D641 Stafford manuscripts
D661 Dyott papers
D740 Papers of Miss T.Pudsey
D783 Airewas records
D798 Papers of Major R.Eld
D986 Bagot papers
D(W)1474 Wolverhampton deeds
D1485 Miscellaneous deeds
D(W)1490 Miscellaneous deeds
D(W)1721 Bagot papers
D(W)1733 Sneyd-Kynnersley collection
D(W)1734 Anglesey papers
D1743 Cavangh-Mainwaringe deeds
D1790 Vernon papers
D3005 Cooper of Aldridge papers

William Salt Library, Eastgate Street, Stafford.

Original Collection (SMS)- 35 i, 170, 201, 268, 274, 300, 301, 321, 324, 335 i, 370 i, 459 iii.
Hand Morgan deeds - Uncatalogued Box 23 (Box 1 Stafford)
Hand Morgan Aston deeds - Box 'A' Stafford

National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Peniarth Manuscript 280 (The Red Book of Caurs Castle)


H.M.S.O.  Calendar of Charter Rolls, 5 Henry VI - 8 Henry VIII, (1927)

Calendar of Close Rolls, 1429-1500, 9 vols, (1933-56).

Calendar of Fine Rolls, 1430-1509, 7 vols, (1936-63).

Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, 3 vols, (1898-1955).


Inquisitions and Assessments relating to Feudal Aids A.D. 1284-1431, vols 1 & 5, (1899 and 1906).

D. Hay (ed.)  

R. H. Hilton (ed.)  

Historical Manuscripts Commission  
Series 13 (Westmoreland)  
Series 24 (Rutland)  
Series 55 (Various)  
Series 62 (Lothian)  
Series 69 (Middleton)  
Series 78 (Hastings)

I. H. Jeayes  

C. L. Kingsford  

C. Monro (ed.)  
*Letters of Queen Margaret of Anjou and Bishop Beckington and others*, Camden Society, LXXXVI (1863).

L. Morsbach  

Sir H. Nicolas  

J. G. Nichols (ed.)  

F. Parker  

J. Strachey and others (eds)  

A. Saltman (ed.)  

T. Stapleton (ed.)  
G. Wrotesley

'Final Concord or Pedes Finium, commencing 1 Edward III., A.D. 1327', SHC, XI (1890), pp. 127-292.

'The Chetwynd Cartulary', SHC, XII (1891).

'Extracts from the Plea Rolls of the Reigns of Henry V and Henry VI', SHC, XVII (1896).


'Extracts from the Plea Rolls, temp. Henry VI and Edward IV', SHC, new series IV (1901), pp. 95-212.

'The Giffards from the Conquest to the present time', SHC, new series V (1902).

'Extracts from the Plea Rolls', SHC, new series VI, i, (1903), pp. 91-162.

Secondary Source Material

W.J. Andrew


C.A.J. Armstrong


E. Axon

'The Family of Bothe (Booth) and the Church in the 15th and 16th Centuries', Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, LIII (1938), pp. 32-82.

E.A. Ayres


P.V. Bate & D.M. Palliser

'Suspected Lost Village Sites in Staffordshire', TSSAHS, XII (1970-1), pp. 31-36.

H. Baylis

'Prebend in the Cathedral Church of Saints Mary and Chad in Lichfield', TLAHS, II (1960-1), pp. 38-52.

M.J. Bennett


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W. Chetwynd</td>
<td>'Collections for a History of Pirehill', 2 parts, SHC, new series XII (1909) and volume for 1914.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.C. Cox</td>
<td>The Churches of Derbyshire, 4 vols (London &amp; Derby, 1875-79).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.T. Driver</td>
<td>Cheshire in the Later Middle Ages, (Chester, 1971).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
J.P.Earwaker
East Cheshire, past and present, 2 vols (London, 1877-80).

J.F.Ede

S.Erdeswick

P.J.C.Field

A.Fletcher

J.Fletcher

J.Fortescue

J.B.Frith
Highways and Byways in Derbyshire, (London, 1908).

J.B.Prith

J.E.T.Rogers (ed.)

Irene Gladwin
The Sheriff, (London, 1974).

S.Glover
The History, Gazetteer and Directory of the County of Derby, 2 vols, (Derby, 1829-33).

J.Gould

H.S.Grazebrook
'An Account of the Family of Swynnerton of Swynerton', SHC, VII(1886), ii.

V.H.H.Green

M.W.Greenslade

R.A.Griffiths

D.R.Guttery

The Two Johns; Patron and Parson, (Brierley Hill, 1950).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Annals of Willenhall, (Wolverhampton, 1903).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.D. Harrod</td>
<td>'A Defence of the Liberties of Chester, 1450', Archaeologia, LVII (1900), pp. 71-86.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.T. Lapley</td>
<td>Some Notes on the Parish of Lapley-cum-Wheaton-Aston in the County of Stafford, (Wolverhampton, 1912).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Harwood</td>
<td>The History and Antiquities of the Church and City of Lichfield, (Gloucester, 1806).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>False, Fleeting, Perjur'd Clarence, (Gloucester, 1980).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. A. Johnson</td>
<td>'Dean Bate's Statutes for St. Edith's, Tamworth, Staffs., 1442', <em>TSSAHS</em>, X (1968–9), pp. 55–62.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H. M. Lane</td>
<td>Lane of Bentley Hall, (London, 1910).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
G. Le Blanc-Smith  
Haddo-- the Manor, the Hall, its Lords and Traditions, (London, 1906).

J. Le Neve  

B. Lyon  

K. B. McFarlane  

F. Madon  
'The Gresleys of Drakelow', SHC, new series I (1898).

G. Mander  
'Ancient Deeds preserved at the Wodehouse, Wombourne', SHC, 1928, pp.3-171.

F. Mason  
The Wolverhampton Antiquary, I, (Wolverhampton, 1933).

J. Mee  

W. Midgley  
A History of the Town and Chase of Sutton Coldfield, (Birmingham, 1904).

D. A. L. Morgan  

L. Morsbach  

T. More  

Sir O. Mosley  
History of the Castle, Priory and Town of Tutbury, (London, 1832).

J. Myers  

T. R. Nash  
J. Nichols  The History of the Antiquities of the County of Leicester, 8 parts in 4 (London, 1795-1815).

J. Nightingale A Topographical and Historical Description of the County of Stafford, (London, c. 1815).


C. F. Palmer The History of the Town and Castle of Tamworth, (Tamworth, 1845).

C. F. Palmer The History and Antiquities of the Collegiate Church of Tamworth, (Tamworth, 1871).

T. Pape Medieval Newcastle-under-Lyme, (Manchester, 1928).

J. Parkes A History of Tipton, (Tipton, 1915).

J. Pilkington A View of the Present State of Derbyshire, 2 vols (Derby, 1789).

W. Pitt A Topographical History of Staffordshire, (Newcastle-under-Lyme, 1817).


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W. B. Smith</td>
<td>Staffordshire, (Cambridge, 1915).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Staffords, Earls of Stafford and Dukes of Buckingham 1394-1521, (Cambridge, 1978).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.Thoroton</td>
<td>The Antiquities of Nottinghamshire, 3 vols (Nottingham, 1790-96).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.R.Twemlow</td>
<td>The Battle of Blore Heath, (Wolverhampton, 1912).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'Two Staffordshire Elections to lost Parliaments', SHC, 1928, pp.272-3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.W.Willmore</td>
<td>Records of Rushall, (Walsall, 1882).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Author</td>
<td>Reference</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'When and why did Hastings lose his head?', English Historical Review, LXXXIX (1974), pp.835-44.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T. Wright</td>
<td>Political Poems and Songs, 2 vols, (Rolls Series, 1859-61).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDICES
APPENDIX 1
SHERIFFS OF STAFFORDSHIRE 1440-1500 (under-sheriffs in brackets)

4 November 1440 Humphrey Lowe
4 November 1441 Richard Archer
6 November 1442 William Mitton
4 November 1443 Nicholas Mountgomery
6 November 1444 Sir Thomas Blount
4 November 1445 Sir John Griffith (Nicholas Leveson)
4 November 1446 Humphrey Blount
9 November 1447 Thomas Ferrers
(The old sheriff had to stay on as the man originally appointed, John Hampton, talked his way out of having to serve)

20 December 1449 Humphrey Swynnerton
3 December 1450 John Stanley
8 November 1451 Thomas Astley
8 November 1452 Robert Aston
5 November 1453 Richard Bagot (John Streethay)
4 November 1454 John Cotton
4 November 1455 John Delves
17 November 1456 John Cotes
7 November 1457 William Mitton
7 November 1458 Hugh Egerton
7 November 1459 Sir John Stanley
7 November 1460 Walter Wrottesley (John Salter)
7 November 1461 John Harcourt
(The old sheriff had to stay on because of the precarious political scene and the lack of others prepared to accept the post)
5 November 1463 Humphrey Peshale
5 November 1464 Sir John Stanley
5 November 1465 Thomas Basset
5 November 1466 John Harcourt
5 November 1467 John Acton
5 November 1468 Sir John Stanley (William Praers)
5 November 1469 Sir Randle Brereton
8 November 1470 John Delves (William Praers)
11 April 1471 Henry Beaumont
9 November 1471 Sir Walter Griffith
9 November 1472 William Basset
5 November 1473 George Stanley
7 November 1474 Sir John Stanley
5 November 1475 John Aston
5 November 1476 Hugh Egerton
5 November 1477 Richard Bagot (Simon Hadington)
5 November 1478 Nicholas Mountgomery
5 November 1479 John Aston
5 November 1480 William Basset
5 November 1481 Humphrey Stanley
5 November 1482 Nicholas Mountgomery (Simon Hadington)
6 November 1483 Sir Thomas Wortley
5 November 1484 Sir Marmaduke Constable
12 September 1485 Sir Humphrey Stanley
5 November 1486 Henry Willoughby
4 November 1487 William Harper
4 November 1488 Hugh Peshale
5 November 1489 Sir Thomas Gresley
5 November 1490 Ralph Okeover
5 November 1491 Roger Draycote
26 November 1492 Richard Wrottesley
17 November 1493 Sir Humphrey Stanley
5 November 1494 Sir Robert Harcourt
5 November 1495 John Mitton
5 November 1496 John Draycote
5 November 1497 Sir Thomas Gresley
5 November 1498 William Harper
11 November 1499 Sir John Ferrers
## APPENDIX 2
### ESCHATOES OF STAFFORDSHIRE 1440-1500

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 November 1440</td>
<td>Humphrey Cotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1441</td>
<td>Robert Whitgreve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 1442</td>
<td>Thomas Cotton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 November 1443</td>
<td>Nicholas Leveson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 November 1444</td>
<td>Nicholas Warings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 November 1445</td>
<td>Humphrey Blount</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 November 1446</td>
<td>John Barbour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 November 1447</td>
<td>William Vernon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 November 1448</td>
<td>John Archer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 November 1449</td>
<td>Richard Beafo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 December 1450</td>
<td>Sir John Gresley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 December 1451</td>
<td>Thomas Bate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 December 1452</td>
<td>Roger Draycote</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 December 1453</td>
<td>Nicholas Leveson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 November 1454</td>
<td>John Cotes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 November 1455</td>
<td>William Colwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 November 1456</td>
<td>William Humphreyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 November 1457</td>
<td>Humphrey Swynnerton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 November 1458</td>
<td>William Colwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 November 1459</td>
<td>Hugh Davenport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 November 1460</td>
<td>Robert Coyney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 November 1461</td>
<td>Thomas Erdeswick</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The old escheator had to stay on, presumably because no-one else was prepared to accept the post)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 November 1463</td>
<td>Robert Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1464</td>
<td>John Lee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1465</td>
<td>William Owdeby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1466</td>
<td>Nicholas Agard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1467</td>
<td>Philip Preston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1468</td>
<td>Richard Reed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1469</td>
<td>George Stanley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 November 1470</td>
<td>John Cawardyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 November 1471</td>
<td>John Mynors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1472</td>
<td>Thomas Woodall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1473</td>
<td>Thomas Swyneshead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1474</td>
<td>Humphrey Swynnerton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The escheator stayed in office for five years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1479</td>
<td>William Harper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1480</td>
<td>Richard Rugeley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The escheator stayed in office for three years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 November 1483</td>
<td>John Agard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 December 1484</td>
<td>Robert Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 November 1485</td>
<td>William Harper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1486</td>
<td>Robert Mershe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1487</td>
<td>Thomas Woodshaw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(How long the escheator stayed in office is unknown)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1492</td>
<td>Louis Lloyd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 November 1493</td>
<td>William Fowke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Edward Fowke, the son and heir of William rendered the account, as his father died in office. How long William was in office is unknown)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1497</td>
<td>Edward Knight</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(How long the escheator stayed in office is unknown, but it was not after 1501)
APPENDIX 3

COMMISSIONS IN STAFFORDSHIRE


3. 18 Feb. 1441 Commission to raise the parliamentary subsidy— to Humphrey, earl of Stafford, Thomas Stanley, Thomas Arblaster, Robert Whitgreve and the sheriff (Humphrey Lowe); and the collectors.


5. 30 March 1442 Commission to raise a loan for Henry VI— to William Heywood, bishop of Coventry & Lichfield, Humphrey, earl of Stafford, Sir Roger Aston, Hugh Erdeswick the elder, Thomas Stanley and the sheriff (Richard Archer).


7. 1 June 1446 Commission to raise a loan for Henry VI— to William Heyworth, bishop of Coventry & Lichfield, Robert Whitgreve, Thomas Arblaster, William Cumberford and the sheriff (Sir John Griffith).


9. 8 Feb. 1448 Commission to inquire into feudal revenues owed to but concealed from the King— to John Hampton, John Harper, Robert Whitgreve, John Archer, William Cumberford, Thomas Arblaster and the sheriff (Thomas Ferrers the elder) and escheator (William Vernon).

10. 4 July 1449 Commission of the peace— to William, earl of Suffolk, Humphrey, duke of Buckingham, William Booth, bishop of Coventry & Lichfield, James, Lord


13. Early 1453 Commission to raise a loan to finance the French wars to Humphrey, duke of Buckingham, George Radcliff, John Hampton, John Stanley and John Riddell.

14. 20 Nov. 1453 Commission of the peace to Humphrey, duke of Buckingham, Reginald Butler, bishop of Coventry & Lichfield, James, Lord Audley, John, Lord Dudley, Sir Sampson Meverell, John Harper, John Hampton, Thomas Arblaster and William Cumberford; and the royal justices William Yelverton and Richard Bingham. In addition William, Lord Ferrers and Robert Whitgreve were appointed though they were dead at the time.


22. 17 Dec. 1457 Commission to assign the number of archers each town, hundred etc. in the county shall supply and how they are to be paid for - to Humphrey, Lord Stafford, William Branston, abbot of Burton, John, Lord Dudley, Sir John Griffith, John Hampton, William Mynors, John Harper, John Stanley, William Cumberford, Hugh Egerton (not Ralph, as is at times thought), John Delves, Thomas Everdon and William Mitton.

23. 20 June 1458 Commission to enquire into all murders, rapes, felonies, conspiracies etc. in Staffordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire - to John, earl of Shrewsbury, John, Lord Dudley, Sir John Burgh, Sir John Griffith, William Burley, John Harper, Thomas Greswold, Thomas Horde, John Cotes, Ralph Wolseley and the sheriffs of the three counties (William Mitton, Fulk Sprencheaux and the under-sheriff of the last county Walter Wrottesley).


25. 21 Dec. 1459 Commission of array - to Humphrey, duke of Buckingham, John, earl of Shrewsbury, Sir Henry Stafford,

26. 18 March 1460 Commission of the peace- to Humphrey, duke of Buckingham, John, earl of Shrewsbury, John, Lord Dudley, Sir William Vernon, John Harper, John Hampton, Thomas Arblaster, William Cumberford and Roger Dratcote; and the royal justices Richard Bingham and Richard Choke. In addition Reginald Butler, bishop of Coventry & Lichfield was also appointed, though he was dead at the time.

27. April-May 1460 Commission to assemble and lead troops against the Yorkists when they land- to Humphrey, duke of Buckingham, Sir Henry Stafford and John, Lord Dudley (wrongly called William).


the royal justices Richard Bingham, Richard Choke, Thomas Heath and Roger Bailey.


36. 1 July 1465 Commission to assess the populace of Staffordshire for the parliamentary subsidy- to Sir Robert Aston (sic- he was dead), Sir John Griffith, Sir Thomas Astley, John Delves, Hugh Egerton and Richard Bagot.


Wood, Henry Vernon and the royal justices
Richard Bingham, Richard Choke and Roger Bailey.


47. 4 Apr. 1473 Commission of the peace— to John Halse, bishop of Coventry & Lichfield, George, duke of Clarence, Richard, duke of Gloucester, Henry, duke of Buckingham, John, earl of Shrewsbury, John, earl of Wiltshire, John, Lord Dudley,


52. 1478 Commission to enquire into the escheated estates of George, duke of Clarence- to Hugh Egerton, John Harcourt, William Harper, George Stanley, Robert Hill, Peter Beaupie and John Worsely.


54. 27 Apr. 1483 Commission for the Alien Subsidy (n.b. this never actually reported, as it was superceded by a commission issued by Richard III, see no.57) - to William, Lord Hastings, Sir John Gresley, Sir John Ferrers, Hugh Egerton, Ralph Wolseley, William Basset, William Harper, Robert Hill and the royal justice Roger Bailey.


59. 10 Dec. 1483 Commission to discover and seize rebels' lands and goods for the Crown - to Nicholas Montgomery, Robert Hill, the sheriff and the royal justices Sir Gervaise Clifton and Roger Bailey.

61. 1 May 1484  
Commission of Array- to John, Lord Dudley, Sir Nicholas Montgomery, Humphrey Peshale, Ralph Wolseley, Robert Hill, William Wilkes (not William Wells- CPR, 1476-85, pp.397-401) and the sheriff.

62. 8 Dec. 1484  
Commission of Array- to John, Lord Dudley, Sir Marmaduke Constable, Sir Thomas Wortley, Sir John Gresley, Sir Nicholas Montgomery, Ralph Wolseley, Humphrey Peshale, Robert Hill, John Cawardyn, William Wilkes (not Wells, see above Ibid., pp. 488-92) and the sheriff.

63. 13 Mar. 1485  

64. 27 Sept. 1485  

65. 11 Nov. 1486  

66. Late Nov. 1486  
Commission to enquire into escheated estates- to Sir Humphrey Stanley, Ralph Wolseley, William Harper and the sheriff.

67. 12 Feb. 1487  

69. 21 Jan. 1487 Commission to assess the parliamentary subsidy and appoint collectors for it- to George Stanley, Roger Praers, John Blount and William Wilkes.


73. 7 July 1491 Commission to raise a loan for a war in France- to Edward, Lord Dudley, Sir Humphrey Stanley, Nicholas Montgomery, William Harper, Thomas Brereton and William Creton.


77. 8 July 1496 (repeated 1 Sept. 1496) Commission to enquire into concealed wardships and marriages due to the Crown in Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Leicestershire—Sir Humphrey Stanley, Sir Ralph Shirley, Sir Ralph Longford, John Savage, John Agard, Nicholas Kniveton, Thomas Babington, Thurstan Aleyn and the royal justices Andrew Dymmock, John Cutte and John Luthington.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Knights of shire</th>
<th>Stafford boro'</th>
<th>Newcastle-under-L. boro'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1439-40</td>
<td>John Hampton</td>
<td>Rob Whitgreve</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thomas Arblaster</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1442</td>
<td>John Hampton</td>
<td>Rob Whitgreve</td>
<td>John Needham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ralph Egerton</td>
<td>Richard Brown</td>
<td>William Cumberford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1445-6</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1447</td>
<td>John Stanley</td>
<td>Robin Atkinson</td>
<td>John Needham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Mitten</td>
<td>William Garnet</td>
<td>John Cudworth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1449</td>
<td>John Hampton</td>
<td>Richard Brown</td>
<td>Thomas Everdon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>William Cumberford</td>
<td>Nicholas Ashby</td>
<td>John Needham</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1449-50</td>
<td>John Hampton</td>
<td>Humph Whitgreve</td>
<td>Ralph Wolseley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Robert Whitgreve</td>
<td>William Preston</td>
<td>Thomas Mayne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1450-1</td>
<td>John Gresley</td>
<td>Humph Whitgreve</td>
<td>Thomas Colcough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Stanley</td>
<td>John Barbour</td>
<td>Richard Mosley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1453-4</td>
<td>John Gresley</td>
<td>William Barbour</td>
<td>Thomas Colcough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Hampton</td>
<td>John Barbour</td>
<td>John Spencer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1455-6</td>
<td>William Vernon</td>
<td>William Barbour</td>
<td>Richard Mosley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humph Swynnerton</td>
<td>John Barbour</td>
<td>John Spencer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1459</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1460-1</td>
<td>Walter Wrottesley</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1461-2</td>
<td>Nicholas Warings</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Gresley</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1463-5</td>
<td>Walter Wrottesley</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Stanley</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1467-8</td>
<td>John Delves</td>
<td>Richard Harper</td>
<td>James Norris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Stanley</td>
<td>John Preston</td>
<td>Robert Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1469</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1470-1</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Richard Harper</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1472-5</td>
<td>Edmund Dudley</td>
<td>Robert Hill</td>
<td>William Paston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Stanley</td>
<td>Richard Harper</td>
<td>John Wood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1478</td>
<td>John Bagot</td>
<td>John Egerton</td>
<td>William Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Ferrers</td>
<td>Thomas Gresley</td>
<td>Reginald Bray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1483</td>
<td>John Egerton</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1484</td>
<td>John Egerton</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>John Ferrers</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In addition to these the following are likely to also have served:

1439-40  Robert Whitgreve  Stafford boro'
1459     William Vernon & John Hampton  Staffordshire
1470-1   William Mitton & John Delves  Staffordshire
         " "   William Paston & Robert Hill  Newcastle boro'
1485-6   Humphrey Stanley  Staffordshire
1480s)   John Egerton  Newcastle boro'
APPENDIX 5

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTORS FOR KNIGHTS OF THE SHIRE IN STAFFORDSHIRE 1440-1500

(Information taken from Public Record Office, Writs and Returns for Parliamentary Elections, C219)

The following are the only surviving documents.

1442
Writ of 3/12/1441 - C219/15/2/84
Return - C219/15/2/85
M.P.s - Robert Whitgreve & Richard Brown
Sheriff - Richard Archer

1447
Writ of 14/12/1446 - C219/15/4/90
Return - C219/15/4/91
M.P.s - John Stanley & William Mitton
Sheriff - Humphrey Blount
Electors (8) - Robert Whitgreve, Humphrey Cotes, Nicholas Leveson, Thomas Lockwood, William Burton, John Osmondslow, Thomas Staumford & John Boughay.

1449
Writ of 2/1/1449 - C219/15/6/91
Return - C219/15/6/92
M.P.s - John Hampton & William Cumberford
Sheriff - Thomas Ferrers

1449-50
Writ of 22/9/1449 - C219/15/7/94
Return - C219/15/7/95
M.P.s - John Hampton & Robert Whitgreve
Sheriff - Thomas Ferrers
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>MP's</th>
<th>Sheriff</th>
<th>Electors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1450-1</td>
<td>5/9/1450</td>
<td>C219/16/1/89</td>
<td>John Stanley &amp; John Gresley</td>
<td>Humphrey Swynnerton</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1453-4</td>
<td>21/2/1453</td>
<td>C219/16/2/90</td>
<td>John Gresley &amp; John Hampton</td>
<td>Robert Aston</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Return</td>
<td>C219/16/2/91</td>
<td>Roger Draycote, Thomas Wolseley, Thomas Rugeley, Roger Clerk, Thomas Lockwood, John Streethay, Humphrey Clerkson, John Colwich, Thomas Aleyyn, John Aleyn, John Staumford, William Wyde, Thomas Hampton and John Smith.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1455-6</td>
<td>26/5/1455</td>
<td>C219/16/3/60</td>
<td>William Vernon &amp; Humphrey Swynnerton</td>
<td>John Cotton</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note in the 1455-6 return one name is missing from the list of the electors, as are parts of two others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1467-8</td>
<td>28/2/1467</td>
<td>C219/17/1/100</td>
<td>John Delves &amp; John Stanley</td>
<td>John Harcourt</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1472-5
Writ of 29/8/1472 - C219/17/2/104
Return - C219/17/2/105
M.P.s - Edmund Dudley & John Stanley
Sheriff - Sir Walter Griffith
Electors (21) - Humphrey Blount, George Stanley,
Hugh Davenport, John Cawardyn, Thomas Rugeley, Richard Leveson,
John Salford, John Ringley, Nicholas Leveson, William
Biddulph, James Moreton, Thomas
Noels, Humphrey Swynnerton of
Elymhill, Robert Swineshead,
Ralph Checkener, William
Charnebury, Thomas More, John
Wright, Richard Smith, William
Francis and John Chirkyll.

1478
Writ of 22/2/1478 - C219/17/3/113
Return - C219/17/3/114
M.P.s - John Bagot and John Ferrers
Sheriff - Richard Bagot
Electors (26) - John Harcourt, Richard Mitton,
Richard Norman, John Halse,
Richard Rugeley, William
Thornbury, Robert Bayer, John
Brole, Henry Byford, Robert
Cumberford, Ralph Salt, William
Sonbage, ? Nik?son, Roger
Parker, Thomas Fulford, Ralph
Dawne, William Green, Hugh
Bradshaw, John Rogers, Roger
Perry, Thomas Pace, Robert
Gunaryour, John Sperry, Ralph
Smith, John Fletcher, John
Bartram.
APPENDIX 6
OFFICERS OF THE BISHOPS OF COVENTRY AND LICHFIELD IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

* Denotes 'at least'
Mich. is of course Michaelmas (29 September)

Receiver-general

*Micb.1423 - *Micb.1429 John Hitchkin
*Micb.1443 - *Micb.1445 John Fisher
*Micb.1453 - *Micb.1455 John Whelpdale (probably from Micb.1452)
*Micb.1456 - early 1473 Edmund Basset
25/3/1473 - early 1485 John Halse
25/3/1485 - *Micb.1488 Richard Shirbourne
*Micb.1497 - *Micb.1498 John Heath

Auditor

*Micb.1424 - *Micb.1429 William Repington
*Micb.1463 - *Micb.1485 Thomas Rogers

Steward

Micb.1463 - Micb.1464 John Harper
*Micb.1463 - *Micb.1473 John Gresley
*Micb.1484 - *Micb.1485 John Brown

Steward of the Household

*Micb.1454 - *Micb.1462 Edmund Basset

Masterforester in Staffordshire

*Micb.1423 - *Micb.1429 John Bagot

Master of Game and Rule in Cannock Forest

Hereditary possession of the Aston family of Haywood until 1538

'Appositoris' general

? - 1453 Henry Wrightington
8/9/1453 - ? David and Stephen Kenrick
30/9/1461 - ? David Kenrick and John Hody

Steward of the Liberty in Warwickshire

8/12/1458 - ? William Grimsby
23/11/1461 - ? William Hugford

Steward of the Liberty in Staffordshire and Shropshire

*Micb.1464 - *Micb.1476 John Stanley (Stanley died in 1476)
3/10/1488 - ? George, earl of Shrewsbury

Bailiff of the Liberty of Staffordshire, Derbyshire, Shropshire and Warwickshire

24/1/1459 - ? Roger Everdon
*Micb.1462 - Micb.1463 John Streethay
Micb.1463 - *Micb.1469 George Stanley
*14/6/1470 - *Micb.1476 John Harcourt (except Warwickshire
*Micb.1472 - *Micb.1473
Thomas Rounton)
### Collector of Beaudesert

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1423</td>
<td>Thomas Butler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1444</td>
<td>John Halse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1447</td>
<td>Thomas Butler</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1449</td>
<td>Henry Wrightington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1453</td>
<td>David Broughton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1461</td>
<td>John Osbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1465</td>
<td>William Fletcher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1470</td>
<td>Ralph Salt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1503</td>
<td>Richard Tripet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1508</td>
<td>Thomas Colwich</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Thomas Butler

- Mich. 1425: William Repington
- 18/6/1426 - death: Thomas Arblaster (died c.1433)
- c.1433 - death: Thomas Arblaster II (died c.1471)
- c.1471 - death: Richard Arblaster (died 1483)
- 10/2/1483 - death: Richard Arblaster II (died 1502)

### Parker of Beaudesert

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1447</td>
<td>David Kenrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1449</td>
<td>Stephen Kenrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1454</td>
<td>David Kenrick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20/2/1464</td>
<td>John Halse (probably until death in 1485)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Parker of Blore

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1447</td>
<td>Mich. 1464: John Fowke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Collector of Brewood

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1461</td>
<td>Mich. 1465: John Brown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Bailiff of Burton-in-Wirral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1423</td>
<td>Mich. 1426: Simon Colman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1427</td>
<td>Mich. 1428: Richard Aleyson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1444</td>
<td>Mich. 1445: Richard Aleyson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1447</td>
<td>Mich. 1448: John Reynold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1449</td>
<td>Mich. 1450: John Radich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25/3/1459</td>
<td>Mich. 1459: John Baxter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1461</td>
<td>Mich. 1462: John Cox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1463</td>
<td>Mich. 1464: Richard Chapman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1466</td>
<td>Mich. 1467: John Brook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mich. 1468</td>
<td>Mich. 1469: Elizabeth Pope</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mich.1473 - Mich.1474 Roger Birches
Mich.1474 - Mich.1475 John Brook
*Mich.1477 - Mich.1478 William Brayesford’s heir (he died in office)
Mich.1497 - *Mich.1498 Thomas Lamepit

Rider of Cannock Wood

17/12/1459 - ? Edward Ellesmere

Bailiff of Chadsunt


Steward of Chadsunt


Farmer of the Palace of Coventry


Bailiff of Eccleshall


Constable of Eccleshall Castle

26/3/1474 - ? Hugh Egerton

Keeper of Eccleshall Castle Prison

14/12/1459 - *Mich.1476 Robert Careswall
29/6/1500 - ? Reginald Wolvesdon

Bailiff of Farndon

Bailiff of Haywood

*Mich. 1423 - Mich. 1453  Ralph Bishton
*25/3/1459 - *Mich. 1463  Ralph Bishton

Parker of Haywood

*25/3/1459 - *Mich. 1459  Thomas Hampton
*Mich. 1461 - early 1464  John Halse  (but there is an account for 1464-5 from Halse)

Steward of Haywood

The Aston family of Haywood: Roger 1437
Robert 1437-1465
John 1465-1483
John II 1483-1523

Bailiff of Itchington


Bailiff of Lichfield

Sometime 1473-84  Edward Dorset

Collectors of Longdon

*25/3/1459 - Mich. 1465  John Osbourne

Keeper of Oakley Wood


Bailiff of Prees


Bailiff of Puys (Rugeley) in Cannock Chase

Hereditary possession of the Mitton family
Bailiff of Old Rents in Rugeley


Collector of Old Rents in Rugeley


Collector of New ('ad hoc') Rents in Rugeley


Bailiff of Sawley

*Mich.1463 - *Mich.1473  William Widows (This could be one man)

Steward of Sawley

Bailiff of Tachbrook

Steward of Tachbrook

Bailiff of Tarvin

Bailiff of Trumwyn in Cannock Chase

Hereditary possession of Salway family

Collector of Whittington
Mich.1448 - Mich.1449  John Stanley
Mich.1449 - Mich.1450  Thurstan Southworth
Mich.1452 - Mich.1453  Thomas Ostler
*Mich.1463 - Mich.1471  Thomas Rugeley
Mich.1471 - Mich.1473  William Fletcher

Farmer of Wybunbury
24/6/1460 - 4/5/1471  John Delves (killed at Tewkesbury)
APPENDIX 7

STAFFORDSHIRE MEN FIGHTING IN THE WARS OF THE ROSES

* Killed ? Probable ?? Educated guess
(L) Lancastrian/royal force (Y) Yorkist

Saint Albans 22 May 1455
Humphrey, duke of Buckingham (L)
John, Lord Dudley (L)
Humphrey, Lord Stafford (L)

Blore Heath 23 September 1459
James, Lord Audley*(L)
John, Lord Dudley (L)
John Egerton*(L)
Sir John Gresley (L)
Nicholas Leveson (L)
Richard Leveson (L)
Sir John Stanley (L)
William Stanley (Y)

Ludford/Ludlow 12 October 1459
Humphrey, duke of Buckingham (L)
John II, earl of Shrewsbury (L)
Walter, Lord Ferrers of Chartley (Y) this may have been his father. The barony was not
granted until 1461, but I include it for clarity.

Walter Blount (Y)
Fulk Stafford (Y)

Northampton 10 July 1460
Humphrey, duke of Buckingham*(L)
John II, earl of Shrewsbury*(L)
John, Lord Audley (Y)
Walter Blount (Y)
John Stafford (Y)

Wakefield 31 December 1460
Sir Thomas Ferrers (Y)

Saint Albans 17 February 1461
John III, earl of Shrewsbury (L) he was still a minor
Mortimer's Cross 24 February 1461
John, Lord Audley (Y)

Towton 29 March 1461
John III, earl of Shrewsbury (L) he was still a minor
James, earl of Wiltshire*(L)
Sir Walter Blount (Y)
Edmund Mountfort (L)
"Lord" John Stanley
Fulk Stafford (Y)
Sir Henry Stafford (L) a younger son of Humphrey, duke of Buckingham
John Stafford*(Y)
Humphrey Whitgreve (L)

Hexham May 1464
Edmund Mountfort (L)
Sir John Astley (Y) either here or at Hedgeley Moor the previous month he was captured

Edgecote 26 July 1469
Oliver Dudley*

Barnet 14 April 1471
?Sir Thomas Astley (Warwick)
William Blount*(Y)
William Harewell (Warwick)
?Nicholas Kniveton (Y)
??Richard Lowe of Enville (Warwick)

Tewkesbury 4 May 1471
Sir Henry Beaumont (Y)
Sir Humphrey Blount (Y)
Henry Delves (L)
Sir John Delves I*(L)
John Delves II*(L)
Hugh Egerton (Y)
Sir Henry Ferrers (Y)
Sir John Ferrers (Y)
?Nicholas Kniveton (Y)
Sir Nicholas Longford the younger (Y/Clarence)
Humphrey Peshale of Hopton (Y)
Sir John Stanley (Y)
Humphrey Tuchet*(L)

??Humphrey Whitgreve (L)

John Wood (Y)

Bosworth 21 August 1485
George, earl of Shrewsbury (Richard III)
Walter, Lord Ferrers of Chartley (Richard III)
Thomas, Lord Stanley (Henry Tudor)
Richard Bagot*(Henry Tudor)
James Blount (Henry Tudor)

William Chetwynd (Henry Tudor)
Humphrey Cotes*(Henry Tudor)
Thomas Curzon*(Henry Tudor)
Sir John Devereux (Richard III) son & heir of Walter, Lord Ferrers
Robert Harcourt (Henry Tudor)
Nicholas Knivetton the elder (Henry Tudor)
Sir Hugh Peshale of Horsley (Henry Tudor)
John Sacheverell*(Richard III)
Sir John Savage the younger (Henry Tudor) and other members of his family
Humphrey Stafford of Grafton (Richard III)
Thomas Stafford of Grafton (Richard III)
Sir Humphrey Stanley (Henry Tudor)
William Stanley (Henry Tudor)
Sir Gilbert Talbot (Henry Tudor)

Henry Vernon (Henry Tudor)

Rebellion of 1486
Humphrey Stafford of Grafton later taken and executed

Stoke April 1487
Sir Humphrey Stanley (Henry VII)
Sir Gilbert Talbot (Henry VII)

In addition to these may be added the following who died around 'the right time' and may have done so in battle: Richard Beafo (d.1460), Humphrey Beafo (d.1485), Richard Boughton (d.1485), Sir Randle Brereton (d.1470), Sir John Bromley (d.1485), Robert Grey of Whittington (d.1460) and Sir Henry Stafford (d.1471).
### APPENDIX 8

**RECEIPTS OF THE HONOUR OF TUTHURY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Amount (£)</th>
<th>Average (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1437-38</td>
<td>861</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1438-39</td>
<td>652</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1439-40</td>
<td>795</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1440-41</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>Average 778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1441-42</td>
<td>1055</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1442-43</td>
<td>602</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1443-44</td>
<td>733</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1476-77</td>
<td>577</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1477-78</td>
<td>774</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1478-79</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>Average 764</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1479-80</td>
<td>874</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1480-81</td>
<td>851</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1499-1500</td>
<td>1038</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


All figures are receipts clear.

*All figures are rounded off to the nearest pound.*
APPENDIX 9

GENEALOGIES

The following list of genealogies of county families is designed as far as possible to include younger siblings whose marriages may indicate important links. It was an age of large families and lack of space precludes my including of every younger son or daughter. Where relevant, I have indicated cross references. These are the abbreviations used:

- Born (bn)
- Circa/about (c)
- Died (d)
- Died childless, Died before father (dp, dp)
- Last known occurrence. Where two dates are given, they indicate the first and last known occurrences, to give some idea of the dates of the individual (occ)

Married first, second etc. Husband on top, wife below (\*arroned in 1450. Sometimes this replaces an indication of whether this was the first or second marriage when it is obvious which it was.

Dates and relationships recorded in earlier genealogies have been retained, except in cases when my own research has shown these to be inaccurate.
ACTON of Bewdley (Derbys) and Whittington
see also Lowe and Grey of Whittington

Walter Acton = ?

Robert Grey = Eleanor = John Acton = Cecily Clay
Lowe 2 a 1479

ACTON of Longnor (Salop)

? Sprencheaux = William Acton
Mary Horde = Thomas = Joan Downe
Thomas II = ?
L 1458

AGARD of Foston (Derbys) and Newborough

Thomas = ?

Ralph Wolseley = John Agard = Nicholas Agard of Newborough
W 1456

? - Ralph Nicholas = Isabel Clement Ferrers = John Rolleston
John = ?
D 1456

3 daughters
all unmarried
in 1497

8 sons

AGARD of Sudbury (Derbys)
see also Montgomery, Vernon and Ferrers of Tamworth
John Agard = ?

John II = Anne Montgomery
D 1468

Margaret Vernon = Nicholas
L 1465

ARBLASTER of Longdon
see also Bagot

Thomas = Alice Worthy
D 1467
of Manchester and Dosthill (Warwicks)

Thomas II = Alice Butler
D 1471
of Pickleton (Bucks)

William Thomas III Edmund Richard = Agnes
D 1463
Humphrey
D 1467
Margaret Richard II = Maud Bagot
L 1460
ARCHER of Statfold and Tanworth (Warwicks)  
see also Stafford of Grafton and Mountfort

Thomas Lucy = Alice = Richard Archer (1327 - 471)  
John = Christine Blacklow

Alice Mountfort = John II = Margaret Stafford  
of Grafton

John III

Note- Richard Archer is said in certain sources to have had  
Margaret, widow of Thomas Newport as his second wife  
and Alice Lee, widow of Thomas Stokes as his third.

ASTLEY of Patsbull  
see also Grey of Ruthin, Harcourt and Gresley

Thomas, Lord Astley = Elizabeth Beauchamp

William = Cath. Willoughby  
Sir Thomas = Eliz. Harcourt  
Joan = Reginald, Lord  
Grey of Ruthin

Joan Gresley = Thomas  
John = William Richard Henry

? = Thomas II = Margaret Butler = John Cawarden  
Sir John K.B.

Joyce = William  
Richard = Joan Ottley Thomas 2 daughters

Note- Lost authorities place the famous Sir John Astley, royal  
champion of Henry VI as brother to Thomas I, but a  
closer examination of the dates of births, marriages and  
deaths of the family and its kinsmen renders this  
highly unlikely. Sir John, who was also a knight of the  
Bath, can be traced as late as 1486 when his royal  
annuity was last paid. He is more likely to have been  
brother to Thomas II.

ASTON of Haywood and Tixall  
see also Bagot, Delves, Draycote, Littleton and Wolseley

Sir Roger Aston = Joyce Freville

Isabella = Sir Robert Agnes = Roger Draycote  
Ector  
Isabel = Richard Bagot

Eliz. Delves = John  
Margaret = John Kynnardsley  
Richard Robert

= Ralph Wolseley

Sir John = Joan Littleton  
Margaret = William  
Eleanor = John

St. Andrew  
Basset
AUDLEY (Tuchet) of Heighley

William, Lord Roos
Margaret = James, Lord Audley = Eleanor
Anne Dutton = John, Lord Audley
Sir Humphrey Thomas Henry Edmund (bishop)
John = Jane Anne
William = Elizabeth
Margaret = James II, Lord Audley = Joan George
Fillol
Daynell
Fitzwarine

BAGOT of Blithbury and Bagot’s Bromley
see also Aston, Curzon of Kedleston
Sir John Bagot = Beatrice Villiers

? = Richard = Isabel = Nicholas = John = Margaret = Henry
Aston = Kniveton = Curzon = Bradbourne

Richard II = ?

John = Isabella Curzon = John II = Agnes Kniveton = Isabella = William
Eyton of Essex
Eleanor = Robert Cawardyn

Richard = Maud = Lewis = Anne = Anne = Robert = Margaret = John Davenport
Arblaster = Montgomery = Kniveton = Roger Bradbourne

Note- The marriage of Richard, son of John Bagot and Isabel, daughter of Roger Aston on 19 January 1427 is recorded in the register of Bishop Heyworth in Lichfield Joint Record Office, B/A/1/9 fo.156. This is important because Isabel is usually thought of as the wife of Richard II; they were about the same age. Lewis Bagot had five wives.

BARBOUR of Flashbrook

Thomas = ?

William = John = Joan Jordan
Humphrey = Robert

Note- John Barbour was once called John Brown, and this might have been the family’s earlier surname. Erdeswick says he was the barber of Humphrey, duke of Buckingham. Chetwynd makes Robert Barbour Humphrey’s son and not brother.

BARLEY or BARLOW of Barlow-by-Chesterfield (Derbyshire)
see also Cockayne and Delves

Sir Henry
Robert Barley = Margaret Delves = Robert II = Agnes = Thomas Cockayne
Eleanor = Robert III
Robert IV = ?
BASSET of Blore
see also Montgomery and Okeover

Ralph Basset + Maud Dethick = Sir Nicholas Montgomery

Cecilia + Hugh Erdeswick = William + Alice Moton
Thomasine = Philip Okeover

Joan Byron = William II Thomas

Hugh Egerton
Eleanor = Ralph Egerton = Elizabeth
John = Eleanor
Nicholas = Eleanor Meverell = Aston

Thomas Ketell = Margaret
Ralph Egerton =

BEAUFORT of Whilton (Northants) and Burford St. John (Oxfordshire)
see also Swynnerton of Hilton and Hugford

John = Thomas Swynnerton

Richard + Alice + William Hugford = John
Humphrey = Joan
John

BEAUMONT of Wednesbury
William, viscount Beaumont = Sir Henry + Joan Heronville = William of Wednesbury = Leventhorp

John, Lord Dudley

George Stanley + Eleanor = Sir Henry II
Constance = John Mitton = Eliz. = John = James

BERESFORD of Beresford
William Basset

John Beresford = Elizabeth

Robert Davenport

Elizabeth = John II

Thomas = Agnes Hassall

John III = Elizabeth Erdeswick

John IV = Margaret Basset
BIDDULPH of Biddulph

William Biddulph=Ellen Greenway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sir John Savage</th>
<th>? = Margery = Richard</th>
<th>= John</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sir Robert Aston</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Richard II = Petronilla</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Francis Eliz. = Humphrey, Richard III = Margery Catherine Joyce Legh Salway

Note: There is also a William Biddulph who was elector of Staffordshire in 1472.

BIRMINGHAM of Birmingham
See also Mitton.

Adam Peshale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sir William = Joan</th>
<th>Margaret = Sir Richard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Mitton</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Sir William II = Isabel Hilton | Thomas |
| ? = Agnes |
| ? = William III | Fulk | John ? |
| Edward = ? | Nicholas |

BLOUNT of Elvaston and Barton Blount (Derbyshire)
See also Gresley, Stafford and Wolseley.

Eliz. = Sir Thomas Blount = Margaret = Sir John Gresley

| Ellen = Walter, Lord = Anne, duchess | Thomas = Agnes | Agnes = Ralph |
| Mountjoy = of Buckingham | Hawley = Wolseley | Catherine = Clifton |

Robert = Richard = Eliz. = Delaford

William = Margaret | John, Lord = Lora |
| Echingham = Mountjoy = Berkeley | Sir James = Eliz. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>John</th>
<th>Edward = Alice</th>
<th>William, Lord</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oxenbridge = Mountjoy</td>
<td>Delves</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BLOUNT of Kinlet (Shropshire)
See also Delves

John Blount = Alice Delabere

Humphrey = Eliz. = Winnington = Richard Delves

Sir Richard Croft

Anne = Thomas | John = Elizabeth Yee
BURLEY of Bromcroft (Shropshire)
See also Chetwynd and Littleton

John Burley= ?

? Ellen Grendon=William Margaret=Pulk Anne=Rolind
Rayman & Sprencheaux Winnesbury

John=Margaret John Eliz.=Thomas Philip=Joan=Thomas
Harcourt Trussell Chetwynd Littleton

BURTON of Fauld-by-Hanbury

Maud Gibbon=Richard Burton Oliver

William Elizabeth=William
Cotton

Ralph=Elizabeth Okeover

CAWARDYN of Mauvesyn Ridware

Robert Mauvesyn=Joan

Sir John Cawardyn=Eliz.=Roger Margaret=Sir William
Chetwynd Handsacre

Randle David= ? Catherine=John=Margaret Butler
Gresley of Wem (Salop)

Sir William Chetwynd= ?

Ellen=Roger=Eliz. Richard=Thomasine John of Alspath= ? Gerald
Hawkeston Mauvesyn = Mauvesyn Frodsham

Edmund,=Elena=Philip=Joan=Thomas
Lord Ferrers=of Litteton

Robert Thomas=Elena
Hugh Egerton
Alice=Sir William II
Elizabeth=William III
Ferrers
of Tamworth
COCKAYNE of Ashbourne (Derbyshire)
See also Vernon and Meverell

Thomas=Isabella Shirley=Sir John Cockayne=Joan Bate d.1408

Sir Richard Vernon = Humphrey, duke of Buckingham
Agnes Vernon=John II=Elizabeth

Agnes Barley=Thomas Edmund=Catherine
John Fitzherbert=

Barbara=Thomas II Henry=Elizabeth Margaret=Humphrey

Meverell Lowe of Denby

COLCOUGH of Newcastle-under-Lyme (2 families)

(a) William Colcough= ? Elizabeth

William II

(b) Richard Colcough= ?

John= ?

Thomas= ? Mainwaring

Richard=Blanche Thomas II Ralph/Roger
Davenport

John II=Agnes

Lockwood

CONSTABLE of Flamborough (Yorkshire)
See also Stafford of Grafton and Griffith

Sir Robert Constable=Agnes

Sir Walter=Agnes Joyce=Marmaduke=Margery
Griffith Stafford of Grafton

CORBET of Moreton Corbet (Shropshire)

Robert+ Corbet= ?

John, earl of Worcester=Elizabeth=Sir Roger

Sir William Stanley= Walter, Lord Ferrers

Sir Richard=Elizabeth John

Robert= ? Richard

Note- Robert Corbet's Inquisition Post Mortem says he died leaving a ten year-old brother! This surely should be 'son'.

COTES of Woodcotes

Humphrey Cotes = ?

Elizabeth = John Robert Humphrey = Margaret = William

Burley = Fulk

Spenceaux

John = ?

COTTON of Cotton and Hamstall Ridware

William Cotton = ?

Eleanor = Robert Joan Venables = John = Elizabeth

Fauconer

Thomas = Elizabeth Green Mary = John II = Joan

Pole = Fitzherbert

William = others Elizabeth = Ralph Burton

Joan = Richard = Richard

Burton = Thomas

CUMBERFORD of Cumberford and Wiggington

John Cumberford = Joan = Henry

John Parles Anne = William = Thomas

Joan = John II William II Margaret = William Holt

CURZON of Croxall

See also Gresley

William Curzon = Elizabeth Giffard

Cecily = John Thomas = ?

William = Sanchia = John II Richard = Maud

Hide = Gresley = of Alrewas

Thomas = Margaret = 6 others

Hartington

Mary = John III John IV = Anne Ashby
CURZON of Kedleston (Derbys)
See also Bagot and Okeover.

John Curzon=Margaret Montgomery

Sir John Bagot

Joan=John II Thomas Thomas=Margaret=Thomas Okeover Kniveton

Joan=John III Henry Thomasine=Thomas Margaret=John Joan=RALPH Stathum Mynors Sacheverell

Richard=Alice Cecily=William Walter=Margaret Willoughby Trussell Cambridge

DAVENPORT of Bramhall and Mauvesyn Ridware

Robert Davenport=Joan Ashton

Robert=Alice Nicholas Hugh=Margaret Handsacre Alice=George

Fitton

John Bagot

Cecily=John=Margaret=Roger

Warren Bradbourne

DELVES of Apedale and Uttoxeter
See also Egerton, Gresley and Blount

Thomas Massey=Margaret=John Delves=Philippa Harcourt

Robert Winnington=3

Sir John Gresley=

Elizabeth=Richard John=Elena Thomas Margaret Egerton

?=John Henry Ralph Elizabeth=Sir John Aston

Helen=Sir Robert Sheffield Elizabeth=Sir James Blount

Devereux of Chartley and Weobly

Walter Devereux= ? William, Lord Ferrers

Thomas Vaughan=Jane=Walter, Lord Ferrers=Anne

Edward Blount

Thomas Pointz=

Sir Richard=Elizabeth Cecily=John, Lord Ferrers

Corbet

Sir Thomas Leighton
DRAYCOTE of Draycote and Paynesley

John Draycote=Agnes Gascon

Roger I=Agnes Aston  Christopher
Roger II=Catherine Savage
Sir John II=Elizabeth Eyre

DUDLEY (Sutton) of Dudley

John, Lord Dudley=Elizabeth Berkeley

Joyce =Edmund=Maud Sir John William Oliver Jane Eleanor=Henry
Tiopoft/ Clifford  Beaumont
Edward,=Cecily Willoughby Edmund=Elizabeth
Lord Dudley Grey

EGERTON of Wrinehill
See also Delves and Peshale

William Egerton=Ellen Hawkeston
of Wrinehill

Randle Mainwaring

son John son Ralph =Elizabeth

Hugh=Mary Margery=John Anne=Humphrey Ellen=John
Dutton Lane Peshale Delves

Ralph=Isabella Ellen=Ralph Isabella=Thomas John= ? Cotes
Hill Basset Harcourt =Alice Gresley
= Eleanor
Brereton

ERDESWICK of Sandon

Thomas Erdeswick=Ellen Venables

Hugh=Thomasine Henry=Joan Sampson Elizabeth=John
Meynell Twiford Kingsley

Hugh II=Cecilia Basset Margaret=Ralph Thomas others
Macclesfield

John Harcourt

Elizabeth=Hugh III Sampson=Elizabeth Grey
of Whittington
EVERDON of Bushbury

William Everdon = ?

Maud = Thomas = Elizabeth = Thomas Eliz = John Corbin = Roger Clemence = Nicholas East

Humphrey

PERRERS of Chartley
See Devereux and Chetwynd

Edmund, Lord Ferrers = Elena = Philip Chetwynd

Elizabeth = William, Lord Ferrers = Joan = John, Edmund, Lord Clinton = of Tichfield (Est)

Anne = Walter Devereux

PERRERS of Groby and Tamworth (two families)
See also Grey of Groby, Gresley and Stanley of Elford

William, Lord Ferrers of Groby

Thomas, duke of Norfolk

Isabel = Sir Henry

Edward = Elizabeth Grey

Sir John = Elizabeth Wydeville = Edward IV

Baldwin Freville

Thomas = Elizabeth of Tamworth

William, Anne = Sir Thomas II = Ralph Sir Henry = Margaret Lord Hastings = d. 1554 = d. 1571 = d. 1555 = d. 1583

Thomas Gresley = Anne

John I = Maud Stanley = Alice = John

Dorothy = John II = Maud = Joan = Walter Harper = Griffith = Griffith II

Fitzherbert of Norbury (Derbyshire)

Henry Booth

Alice = Nicholas = Elizabeth Ludlow

Ralph = Elizabeth John = Margery Robert = Elizabeth Joan = John Marshall

Anthony Humphrey Barbara = Thomas Joan = John Bradbourne = Cotton

John = Benedicta Joseline = of Elstow Babington = Cotton Cocksayne Pole
POWKE of Brewood and Gunstone

William Fowke = ? Eyton of Salop

Elizabeth = Roger Wybaston of Brewood
John = Agnes / Alice Newman of Gunstone

John Streethay William Humphreyston

William = Joan

Cassandra = Roger Thomas = Margery William Lane

John = ?

Margaret = Roger II Edward Catherine = Francis

Macclesfield

GASCOIGNE of Tyrley
See also Neville of Tyrley

John Neville

Sir William Gascoigne = Joan = Sir James Harrington
Sir William II = ?
Sir William III

GIFFARD of Chillington

John Giffard = ?

Thomas = Joyce Francis / Jane = Richard Knightley William Jane Greville

Richard

Isabel = Robert = Cassandra Blount Humphreyston

Joan = Sir John = Elizabeth = Sir John Horde

Gresley Montgomery

GRESLEY of Drakelow
See also Blount, Peyto, Wrottesley, Stanley of Elford, Ferrers

Thomas Gresley = Margaret Walsh

Thomas = Margaret Joan = Thomas Sanchia = John Eliz. / ? = John = Margaret Blount Astley Curzon Mary Massey Clarell

Emma = Sir John = Anne Thomasine = Hugh Catherine = Thomas Stafford

Hastings? Stanley Wrottesley = William Peyto

Sir Thomas = Anne Eliz. = Thomas Alice = John Thomasine = John Ferrers Mountfort Egerton Darell

Benedicta = William George = Maregaret Mulsho John Eliz. others Vernon =? = Cathrine Sutton
GREY of Groby and Whittington-by-Kinver

Margaret = Reginald, Joan Astley
de Roos | Lord Grey

Elisabeth = Edward Grey, Lord Ferrers
Robert = Eleanor = John Acton

Humphrey Lowle

Humphrey = Anne Fielding
John, Earl of Shrewsbury

Edward Grey, Eliz. = John Talbot
Lord Ferrers Whittington
viscount Lisle

GRIFFITH of Wychnor and Alrewas
See also Constable and Blount

Thomas Griffith = Anne

Sir John = Catherine
John = Joyce

Tyrwhit

Joan = Walter = Agnes
Constable
Rhys = ?
Margaret = Robert

Willoughby

Joan = Walter II
Anne = Sir Gervaise
Maud = Sir John

Ferrers = Clifton
Ferrers

HAMPTON of Stourton, Kinver and Dunston-by-Wolverhampton
See also Everdon

John Hampton = Margaret = Robert Chetwynd

Thomas = Agnes = John II = Anne
Huntley

Bevis = Elizabeth
Hanham

Everdon

Note—John Hampton the younger's heir was Bevis. The family estates then passed to Thomas Hampton of Hampton (Hampshire).

HARCOURT of Staunton Harcourt (Oxon.), Maxstoke, Ellenhall and Ranton.

Sir Thomas Harcourt = Joan Francis = Robert Strelley

Sir Robert = Margaret
Edith = Richard = Cath.
Byron

Anne = John = William
Chris.
Norris

Anne = Henry, Lord Say
Moton

Isabel = Thomas
Isabel = Ralph
Anne = Isabel
Walter
Egerton

Erdwicke
HAREWELL of Ashley and Water Eaton

John Harewell = ?

? = William

Roger = Agnes Clopton

Thomas

William

Agnes = William

Wogen

D. 1543

Anne = John

William

Thomas

Thomas

Note - the elder branch in this genealogy is speculation

HARPER of Rushall

William Grobbere

John Harper = Eleanor

Margaret = William

Richard = Elizabeth = John

Humphrey Agnes

Cook

Booth

Skrene

Eleanor = John II

Margaret Nicholas

Cornelius Dorothy = Sir John

Bromley

Ferrers

Robert = Ellen

Dorothy = Sir Thomas Horde

Eliz. = William

Littleton

Legh

HASTINGS of Kirby (Leicestershire)

Sir Leonard Hastings = Alice

Richard Neville, Catherine = William

Anne = Thomas

Earl of Warwick

Lord Hastings

Ferrers

Lord Wells

Mary = Edward

Lord Hastings

Richard

Anne = George, Earl

William

Hungerford

of Shrewsbury

HEXSTALL of Milwich

Hugh Hexstall = ?

John = Margaret

Bromley = William

Henry

Thomas = ?

Needham

Edward

Humphrey

Joan = John

Bromley

Margaret = Richard Petit

or = Wm. Whetenhall

= Sir Henry Ferrers
HILL of Marchington and Houndhill

Robert Hill=Agnes

Robert II=Elizabeth Woodford

? =Robert William

Humphrey

HUGFORD of Emscote (Warwickshire)
See also Beaufo

Thomas Hugford=Margaret Dinge

John Metley

Margaret=John

Joan=William\(^2\)=Alice=Richard Beaufo Gradier

Anne=Gerald

Cotes

Danet

HUGFORD of Emscote (Warwickshire)

John Metley

Margaret=John

Joan=William\(^2\)=Alice=Richard Beaufo Gradier

Anne=Gerald

Cotes

Danet

KNIVETON of Quixall (Derbyshire)

John Curzon of Kedleston

Thomas=Margaret=Thomas Kniveton Nicholas= ? Henry Okeover

Agnes=John

Bagot

John

Nicholas= ? Thomas=Margaret Shaw

KYNNARDSLEY of Loxley

Robert= ?

Robert Aston

Ralph Wolseley=Margaret=John

Robert II=Elizabeth=William Joner

Margaret Agard=Thomas= Dorothy Wolrich

LANE of Bentley and Hide
See also Egerton and Harcourt

Richard Lane=Elizabeth Hide

John=Margery

Hugh Egerton

Edward Burton=Joyce=Ralph

Margaret Richard Alice Cresset

Anne Harcourt=Richard Christine Margery=Thomas Powke
LEE of Aston-by-Stone
See also Stanley

William Lee = Matilda
   Sir James =
   Ellen = Humphrey Stanley = ?

LEGH of Adlington (Cheshire)

Robert Legh = Matilda = William Hanford
   Isabel = Robert II = Isabel Savage
   Ellen = Roger Stanley
   Robert = Ellen Venables
   Thomas = Catherine Reginald Savage

LEVESON of Wolverhampton (two families)

Richard Leveson = ?
   Richard William = Joan
   Richard = Juliana
   Isabel = William James = Elizabeth
   Richard = Joyce Birmingham
   Fulk Walter = Elizabeth William Arden
   Thomas Elizabeth John

LITTLETON of Frankley (Worcestershire) and Pillaton
See also Chetwynd, Talbot and Winsbury

John Massy = Maud = Thomas Westcote = Elizabeth Littleton
   Thomas Littleton = Joan = Philip Chetwynd Nicholas = Agnes others Burley Westcote Vernon

Ellen = Sir William = Mary Richard = Alice Walsh
   Joan = Sir John John = Elizabeth Talbot Edward = Ellen Swynnerton
   Thomas Aston
LONGFORD of Longford (Derbys)
See also Montgomery

Ralph Longford= ?
Sir Nicholas= ?

John=Elizabeth Margaret=Sir Nicholas II Ralph Joan=SIR Nicholas Pole
Melton Montgomery

LOWE of Tressel, Seisdon and Whittington-by-Kinver
See also Grey

John Lowe= ? William Butener

William=Elena=John Humphrey=Alice=Henry Dawson Everingham

Richard Constance Eliz. John=Eleanor=Robert Grey
Acton

MACCLESFIELD of Maer

John Macclesfield=Catherine Kingsley

Ralph=Margaret=Richard Clive Nicholas
Erdeswick

Richard=Julian Hugh John Alice Salter

MAINWARING of Over Peover

Randle Mainwaring=Margery=Richard Buckley Venables

John Margaret=Sir John Randle Eliz.=Ralph others
Delves

William=Ellen Butler

John II=Maud Legh of Adlington
Sir John III

MEVERELL of Throwley and Tideswell

John Meverell= ?

Sampson=Isabella Richard Elizabeth Isabella

Thomas I=Elizabeth Montgomery George

Thomas II=Jane Eyre Nicholas Elizabeth=Henry Cockayne
MITTON of Weston-under-Lizard
See Swynnerton and Beaumont

Sir Adam Peshale

Richard Mitton=Margaret
Joan=William
Richard\n
Margaret=William
Corbet
of Lye

Humphrey\n\nSwynnerton\n\nRichard Eleanor=Thomas\nSwynnerton\n\nJohn\n\nEleanor=Thomais
of Hilton
\nJohn II=Joan
Middlemore

John III=Constance
Beaumont

John=Elizabeth

MONTGOMERY of Cubley (Derbyshire)
See also Basset, Meverell and Longford

Sir Nicholas Montgomery

Sir Reginald Dethick

Ralph Basset=Maud\nSir Nicholas II=Eleanor Chersey

Sir Nicholas III=Jane\nAnne=John\nEliz.=Thomas
Longford\nAgard
Meverell

William

William

William Nich.=Eleanor
John=Elizabeth
Anne=Lewis
Isabel=Henry
Gresley
Bagot
Secheverell

MOTON of Pickleton (Warwickshire)

Margaret\nSir Robert Moton=Elizabeth
Malory

Henry, Lord Grey=Margaret?\nReginald\nWilliam=\nHarcourt
of Codnor

daughter Eliz.=Ralph
Pole

NOTE- an Alice Moton married William Basset probably in the
first two decades of the fifteenth century. She is obviously
a daughter of Sir Robert, but which of his wives was her mother
is not clear.
MOUNTFORT of Coleshill (Warwickshire)

Margaret = William Mountfort | Joan Pecche
Anne | Alderwich

Joan Vernon = Baldwin Richard Robert = Mary Edmund

Robert Anne = Simon Alice = John Catherine

Anne Harcourt = Henry, Henry Thomas = Elizabeth

Lord Say Gresley

Jocas = Simon = Anne
Rugeley Longford

MYNORS of Blakenhall

John Mynors = ?

Margaret = Richard

Richard = Maud Bracebridge

of Kingsbury (Warwicks)

William = Elena, Thomas John

Shepherd

MYNORS of Uttoxeter

Margaret = John Mynors = Isold

William Thomas

Hunt/ Curzon Trussell

Thomas William John Robert

Note - there is no little confusion about this. Some genealogies make Isold Trussell the wife of the younger John. A Rose Mynors who was married to Rowland Thirkill also figures somewhere in the proceedings, possibly as a daughter of Isold and whichever John Mynors she married.

NEVILLE of Tyrley

Margaret = Ralph, earl of Westmorland | Joan Beaufort = Robert Stafford

John Ralph = Mary, Robert, Lord

of Tyrely Newmarsh

Elizabeth = John Greystock

Humphrey = Anne Duke of Buckingham

Richard = Cicely Duke of York

Richard, earl of Salisbury
NEWPORT of Lichfield

Sir William = ?
  William = Alice Burgh
    John = William = Joan

NOEL of Hilcote and Stafford

Richard = ?
  Jane = Thomas = Jane Draycote = Robert
  Sonde
  Thomas = Isabel = Robert = Maud = Brereton
  Chitwood
  ? Pole = James = John = Richard
    Mary = Robert = Arthur = Thomas = others

OKEOVER of Okeover

Sir Philip Okeover = Alice
  Ralph Moton = Eliz. = Thomas = Thomasine = George Sallow = John
  of Cheshire
  Thomas II = Margaret Curzon = Thomas Knivetont = Isabel = John
    Philip II = Thomasine = Basset
  Ralph = Agnes = Eliz. = Ralph Burton = Margaret = Robert Findern
    Bradbourne
  Humphrey = Isabella = Aston = William = Thomas

PESHALE of Hopton and Horsley (two families)

? = Sir Thomas = Peshale = Alice = Gnosall
  Richard = Nicholas = Ellen = Malpas = Humphrey = Maud = Swynnerton
    Julian = Sir Hugh = ? = Richard = Maud
      Corbet
  Henry = Ellen = Humphrey = Delves
    John
  Anne Egerton = Humphrey = Margaret
    Chadworth
    ? = Lettice = Harcourt
  Isabella Stanley = Hugh = Eliz. = Vernon
    Catherine = John = Blount
PEYTO of Chesterton (Warwickshire) and Great Wyrley
See also Gresley
Sir William Peyto—Catherine Sir John Gresley
John—Eleanor Mantfeld
Edward—Goditha Throckmorton

POLE of Hartington and Radbourne (Derbyshire) (two families)
Sir John Pole—?
Poles of Newborough (Staffs) Peter—Elizabeth Chandos
Ralph—Joan Grosvenor John—Elizabeth Longford
Ralph II—Eliz Mary—John Cotton John II—Alice
Mary—John Cotton
John—Jane Margaret—Randle
German—Anne Plumpton

PRAERS of King's Bromley
William Praers—?
Margery—Roger Alice—Thomas Partridge

RUGELEY of Hawksyard
Richard Rugeley—?
Nicholas—Edith Waldeve Anne—Thomas Burdet
?—Thomas William Nicholas—?
(Thomas) William—Jane Massey James
Edith John

Note—there is a disagreement over the children of Thomas Rugeley. One version says that he left an only daughter Edith, while Stebbing Shaw says that there was a son, Thomas, living in 1498. Somewhere on this genealogy there is a place for Simon Rugeley of Hawksyard, who died in 1516, leaving a son, Thomas, aged ten. However, I cannot tell where these fit in.
**RUGELEY of Shenston**

Richard Rugeley = ?

Alice = William

Robert = ?

Agnes = Richard II

William = Alice Claxson of Whittington

**SACHEVERELL of Hope and Hopewell (Derbyshire)**

Robert Sacheverell = ?

Anne = John

William = Ralph = Joan

Leek

Ralph = Joan

Sir Richard = Statham

Curzon

John II = Joan

Ralph = Sir Richard daughter = William

Slorry

Henry

**SALT of Rickerscote**

Thomas Salt = Iugote

William = John

John = Thomas

Note - Ralph Salt, who was the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield's rent-collector for Loundon, Beaudesert and part of Rugeley in the 1470s, 1480s and 1490s may be related to these Salts.

**SALWAY of Cannock and Stanford (Worcestershire)**

John Salway = Elizabeth Trumwyn

Humphrey = ?

Margery Erdeswick = John Thomas Anne = Richard Edmund Walter

Acton of Sutton

Richard = Margery

Cecily = Hugh

William = Joyce = Ralph

Biddulph

Conningsby

Ashby

Wolseley

**SAVAGE of Clifton (Cheshire) and Rushton Spencer**

Sir John Savage = Maud Swynnerton

Robert Legh = Isabel

Sir John II = Eliz. Brereton

Dorothy = Robert Needham

Thomas, Lord Stanley

Thomas, Earl Catherine = Sir John III of Derby

Dorothy = Sir John IV

Humphrey = Sir John V

Thomas Vernon

Vernon
SNEYD of Bradwell

Richard Sneyd=Agnes

Nicholas=Margaret Downes
of Shrigley (Cheshire)

Joan Ledsam=William

Richard=Anne Foulshurst

Anne Barrow=William II=Jane Chetwynd

STAFFORD of Grafton (Worcestershire)
See also Constable

Humphrey Stafford=Eleanor John William

Aylesbury

Richard Humphrey II=Catherine Thomas Eliz.=Richard Joyce

Fray Beauchamp

Marmaduke=Joyce Margaret=John Humphrey III=Margaret Anne William

Constable Archer Fogge

STAFFORD of Harvington-by-Kidderminster (Worcestershire)

Humphrey Fulk=Margaret John

of Heywood's Frome
(Herefordshire)

STAFFORD of Stafford
See also Blount

Humphrey Stafford=Anne Neville=Sir Walter Blount, earl of Stafford

and Duke of Buckingham

Margaret=Humphrey, Edmund=Margaret=Sir Henry John Cath.=John Beaufort Lord Stafford Tudor Beaufort=Thomas, earl of e. of Derby Wiltshire Shrewsbury

HENRY VII

Duke Henry=Cath.=Jasper, duke of Bedford

Humphrey

Eleanor=Duke Edward Henry, earl Elizabeth Anne

of Wiltshire
STANLEY (Lords Stanley; Stanleys of Elford) (two families)
See also Stafford, Savage, Gresley, Dudley, Ferrers of Tamworth

Sir John Stanley

John

Henry

Matilda=Thomas=Elizabeth Arderne

Baro'

Lord Stanley Goushill of Hooton

Thomas, =Joan William

Richard, earl of Salisbury

Eleanor=Thomas=Margaret Beaufort William Cath.=John e. of Derby

of Holt Savage

Cecily Arderne—Sir John=Elizabeth Anne=Sir John Maud Vernon l'Estrange Greasley

Sir John=Maud Anne=John Ferrers Hanford

Humphrey= ?

3 daughters

John= ? Alice=Thomas Swynnerton

Elizabeth Isabel

SWYNNERTON of Hilton and Swynnerton (two families)
See also Mitton, Beafo, Hugford and Harcourt

William Swynnerton=Ellen of Swynnerton

Trumwyn

Thomas Swynnerton=Elizabeth of Hilton

Bond

Humphrey=Anne=John Mitton

Richard=Alice=William Beafo Hugford

Joan Harcourt=Humphrey II

Alice Stanley=Thomas 7 daughters

TALBOT of Alton

Margaret=John, earl of =Maud Neville

Shrewsbury

Lisles

Earl John II=Eliz. Christopher Joan Butler

Earl John III=Catherine Sir Gilbert=Eliz. Scrope Eliz. Anne=Henry Stafford Ethelfreda Vernon

Earl George=Anne Hastings Thomas
TRUSSELL of Acton Trussell and Billesley (Warwickshire)
See also Chetwynd and Littleton
Sir William Trussell=Margery Ludlow

Avery=Catherine  John=Iseult  Thomas=Elizabeth  Joan
Trussell  Mynors  Burley

Joan Curzon=Sir William II=Margaret  Kene
Margaret=Sir Edward  Dun
John  Elizabeth

Note—I think that there was another daughter to Sir Edward Trussell. Sir William the elder may have had a younger brother John, who was in the Stafford of Grafton/Burdet raiding party on the Harcourts in 1450. There is also a William Trussell, who became bailiff of Maxstoke and keeper of Maxstoke castle in 1486.

VERNON of Haddon (Derbyshire) and Harlaston

Sir Richard Vernon=Benedicta Ludlow  of Tong (Salop)

Eliz.=Richard  Fulk  Sir William=Margaret  Roger  John  Thurstan
Gray  d.1417  d.1417  d.1417
Sir John=Maud  Stanley  John  =Agnes  Cockayne
Gray  d.1417  d.1417

Anne=Henry  Benedicta=Henry  others  Foljambe

John  Benedicta=William  Richard  Thomas=Anne  Alice=Humphrey
Gresley  d.1416  d.1416  d.1416
Ludlow

WARINGS of Lea-by-Wolverhampton

William Warings=  ?
Nicholas=Clemence  Richard=  ?
Everdon
Ralph

WELLS of Hoarcross

John Wells=Alice Aston
Robert Sprot=Agnes  Thomas=Joan Bonnington

John Fitzherbert
Anne=John  Isabel=John  others  Saperton
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Death</th>
<th>Marriage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THOMAS J. SIR THOMAS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALICE SANCHIA RICHARD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDWARD, Viscount Lisle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHALLEY of Darlaston-by-Stone</td>
<td>William Hooton=Elena</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAMES=ELIZABETH=CHRISTOPHER THOMAS JOHN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEY=WHALLEY=FITTON &amp; GCAH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELIZ=RICHARD ELIZ. GILMOT=JOHN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LECK=TAULT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THOMAS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIR LAWRENCE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hooton=</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FITTON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilmot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talbot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FITTON &amp; GCAH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROGER=ANNE HUMPHREY= ? EGERTON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TONG=</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIR THOMAS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OF LONGFORD (Salop)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROBERT II=MARGERY STAMFORD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILKES of Atherley and Willenhall</td>
<td>William Wilkes= ?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JULIAN=RICHARD WILKES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAM= ?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEORGE= RICHARD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLOUGHBY of Wollaton (Nottinghamshire)</td>
<td>Isabel=Sir Hugh Willoughby=Margaret Freville=Richard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FOLJAMBE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RICHARD 2 BROTHERS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ROBERT=MARGARET</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHERS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRIFFITH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIR HENRY=MARGARET MARKHAM</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDWARD, Viscount Lisle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANNE=JOHN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARGARET JANE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDWARD</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WALTERS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WINNESBURY of Pilleton, Penkridge and Hockleton (Salop)</td>
<td>Roland Winnesbury=Anne William Burley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOHN=JOAN EGERTON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAMLET=ELIZABETH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILLIAM=CATHERINE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALICE=RICHARD LITTLETON</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note—Although direct evidence is lacking to prove it, I believe that Ralph Wolseley had another younger brother, Thomas. This Thomas, who survived Ralph, held the family property at Careswell and Tibbington, probably for the term of his life only.

Note—Two others fit in here somewhere: John and Edmund.
APPENDIX 10

Emmanuel Bowen's Map of Staffordshire, 1747 (with index).

I have included this map of Staffordshire to enable the reader to note, as he reads the text of the thesis, the locations mentioned therein. The map has been photocopied from the endspiece of the volume of Collections for a History of Staffordshire published for 1917-8 by the William Salt Archaeological Society, and was my basic geographical guide during the research for this thesis. The map, as bound here, is divided into four sections, corresponding to the following scheme.
## INDEX TO BOWEN'S MAP OF STAFFORDSHIRE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbots Castle</td>
<td>E 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abnalls</td>
<td>H 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acton in Swnyerton</td>
<td>E 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acton Trussel</td>
<td>F 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addleston</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adderley (Salop)</td>
<td>B 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admaston</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adsal</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldershall</td>
<td>J 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldingde</td>
<td>H 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldwark (Derby)</td>
<td>L 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alkenmore</td>
<td>E 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alumstone</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alrewas</td>
<td>J 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alsager (Cheshire)</td>
<td>E 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alspath (Warwick)</td>
<td>L 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alstonefield</td>
<td>J 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alstone-in-Bradley</td>
<td>E 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alton</td>
<td>H 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amblescot</td>
<td>F 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amerton</td>
<td>G 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amington (Warwick)</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anker R</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anscot</td>
<td>H 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anslow</td>
<td>K 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apeale</td>
<td>E 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appleton</td>
<td>E 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appleby (Lanes)</td>
<td>L 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquilat</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arcale (Salop)</td>
<td>C 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arley</td>
<td>D 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armitage</td>
<td>H 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashbourne</td>
<td>K 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashcombe (see Bottom)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashenbrook</td>
<td>H 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashennor</td>
<td>H 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashley</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashmere</td>
<td>G 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashwood</td>
<td>F 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspley-by-Penkridge</td>
<td>E 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aspley-by-Shareshill</td>
<td>F 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aston-by-Stone</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aston-by-Osmley</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aston-in-Seighford</td>
<td>F 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aston, little</td>
<td>H 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aston Manor (Warwick)</td>
<td>H 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aston, Wheaton</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audlem (Cheshire)</td>
<td>B 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audley</td>
<td>E 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autherley</td>
<td>F 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avils Heron</td>
<td>J 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baddiley</td>
<td>G 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badenhill</td>
<td>E 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badger (Salop)</td>
<td>E 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagnew</td>
<td>G 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balerley</td>
<td>D 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bancroft</td>
<td>J 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bar Hill</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barlaston</td>
<td>F 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnhurst</td>
<td>F 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barr, Great</td>
<td>H 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barrows Hill</td>
<td>F 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barr, Perry</td>
<td>H 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barton Blount (Derby)</td>
<td>K 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barton-in-Bradley</td>
<td>E 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barton-under-Needwood</td>
<td>K 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basford</td>
<td>G 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bassett's Pole</td>
<td>J 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baswich</td>
<td>G 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batchacre</td>
<td>C 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach Lane</td>
<td>G 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaminhal</td>
<td>H 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautyderg</td>
<td>H 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bednall</td>
<td>F 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beech</td>
<td>E 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belcote</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellamour</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bellecourt (Salop)</td>
<td>C 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belmont</td>
<td>K 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bemersley Green</td>
<td>F 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bentley</td>
<td>G 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beresford</td>
<td>J 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berry Bank</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bescot</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Betley</td>
<td>D 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bickford</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biddulph</td>
<td>F 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bignall Hill</td>
<td>E 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibbrook</td>
<td>F 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billington</td>
<td>F 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilton</td>
<td>F 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birkenhaugh</td>
<td>H 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birkhill</td>
<td>G 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishopwood</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bishopton</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bitham</td>
<td>F 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bitterscot</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bitterton</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Ladies</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blakelds</td>
<td>E 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blakely</td>
<td>F 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blakenhall</td>
<td>K 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaizing Star</td>
<td>H 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blithbridge-by-Kingston</td>
<td>F 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blithbury</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloomsbury</td>
<td>D 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blore J</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blore Heath</td>
<td>C 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blore Pipe</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blounts Hall</td>
<td>H 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bloxwich</td>
<td>G 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Hill</td>
<td>H 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burton</td>
<td>F 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blythfield</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobbington</td>
<td>E 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bold</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bole Bridge</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bole Hall</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonehill</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boothen</td>
<td>F 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borne R</td>
<td>J 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boscombel</td>
<td>E 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boteslow</td>
<td>F 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottom</td>
<td>G 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourne</td>
<td>H 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradley (Derby)</td>
<td>L 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradley-in-the-Moors</td>
<td>H 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradley-by-Tipton</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradley-by-Stafford</td>
<td>F 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradnop</td>
<td>H 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bradwell</td>
<td>E 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bramcot (Warwick)</td>
<td>L 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bramshall</td>
<td>H 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bramstead Heath</td>
<td>D 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brascov</td>
<td>E 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Braunston</td>
<td>K 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breerton</td>
<td>H 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bredwood</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgford</td>
<td>F 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgworth (Salop)</td>
<td>C 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brerley</td>
<td>F 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brinneton</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brinsford</td>
<td>F 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brentford</td>
<td>F 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadmeadow</td>
<td>J 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brockmead</td>
<td>F 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brocton</td>
<td>G 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bromley-Abbots</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bromley-Bagot</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bromley Gerard</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bromley Regis</td>
<td>J 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bromley-by-Swinford</td>
<td>F 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brownshch Castle (Warwick)</td>
<td>J 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brownwich, West</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookhead</td>
<td>J 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broomes</td>
<td>E 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broomhall</td>
<td>D 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broughton</td>
<td>E 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browndene, F 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browndills, F 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brownhills, G 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brownhills Green, H 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bucknall, F 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddleets, D 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burgh Hall, E 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burlaughton, D 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnett Green, D 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnwood, H 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burslem, F 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burton, F 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burton-on-Staaffs, F 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burton-on-Trent, L 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushbury, F 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buttermilk Hill, J 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buttenwyck-Newcastle, E 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buttenwyck-Staffs, F 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cakaway Head, J 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calk Heath, F 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calkingwood, K 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Callowhill, H 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calton, J 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calverhall (Salop), B 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calwich, J 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell, D 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancock, G 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cannock Priory, J 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casterne, J 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Croft, H 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catshall, H 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etwall (Derby)</td>
<td>L 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair Oak, G 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farnsley, D 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farley, H 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farncote (Salop), D 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farwell, H 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faseley, K 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faundley (Warbury), K 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fawleyhead, J 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Featherstone, F 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fenton, F 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fernyfold, H 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field, H 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finspot Hill, G 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fosbourne, K 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flash, H 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flashby, G 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fold-by-Leek, G 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fotherby, H 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford Green, F 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forde-by-Wolverhampton, F 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foremark (Derby), M 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forge Houses, F 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forssbrook, G 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Ashes by Enville, E 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fux Crosses, F 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostery, H 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fradwell, G 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freford, J 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frenchman’s Street, D 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Froghall, H 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Froghall-by-Lichfield, H 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulfen, H 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fullbrook, G 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gailey, F 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garnhall, G 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garston, H 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatacre (Salop), D 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gawsworth (Cheshire), F 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gayton, G 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentleshaw, H 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glascote (Warwick), K 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gosnall, E 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Hill, F 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldsworth, H 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldthorne, F 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldby Bridge, F 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gornall, F 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goram, D 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gosport, G 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gratwich, H 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grateaddy, D 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Bridge, G 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Yate, H 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grendon-in-the-Moors, J 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grendon (Warwick), M 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greeton, G 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grigiton, G 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grubbers Ash, E 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunstone, E 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadbury (Salop), C 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haddon (Derby), L 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadley End, J 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadley End, G 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hales, C 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hales Hall, H 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hales, Sherriff, D 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hall o’t the Wood, D 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halmer End, E 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hammerwich, H 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hams Hall (Warwick), K 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamstead, H 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanbury, J 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanham, E 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanwell, H 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanbury, H 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardinge Bridge, K 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanley, F 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harborne, H 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardwicke, G 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardwick Heath, F 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrington, K 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harracles, G 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartington (Derby), J 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haselwicr, K 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatton-at-Swainerton, E 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hatton-by-Coven, F 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haughton, B 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haughton (Salop), B 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haunch Hall, J 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haunton, K 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawkby, D 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawkstone (Salop), B 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay End, J 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heathley Hall, G 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath Hall, D 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heathhouses, F 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heathley, H 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath, G 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hednesford, G 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heley Castle, D 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hem Heath, F 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henley, H 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexstall, E 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heybridge, H 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heylins Park, J 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heywood, G 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hide-by-Stourton, E 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herley, G 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Bridge, L 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Hall, E 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hibiscus, E 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilderstone, G 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill Hook, J 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilton in Sheriff Hales, D 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilton-by-Featherstone, G 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinshley-in-Colton, H 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinshley, F 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hinksford, E 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hines, K 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hitchin Hill, H 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hixton, G 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoarcross, J 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoarcross, F 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoarcross, F 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoarcross, H 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holford, G 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hockley, E 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hogs Hall, K 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holbeach, F 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holies-by-Knaughtley, E 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holies, Enville, E 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollickingbury, H 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollington, H 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holme Hill, H 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holloway, F 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollybush, J 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmby-Caverswall, G 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmby-Tettersworth, H 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmes (Cheshire), D 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holt, The, G 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoo, North, E 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope Dale, J 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hoppas, K 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopton, G 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsley, K 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsebrooke, E 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseby-Eccleshall, D 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsley-by-Tipton, G 10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horton, G 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houndhill, J 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huddersford, J 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hulton Abbey, G 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huntington, G 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huntley, H 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyde-by-Chillington, E 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyde-by-Staaffs, F 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilam, J 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingestre, G 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipstones, H 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivetscy</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson</td>
<td>E 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keele</td>
<td>E 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibblestone</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidderw</td>
<td>F 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiddimore Grange</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsley</td>
<td>H 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kings Standing</td>
<td>H 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kings Swinford</td>
<td>F 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingston</td>
<td>H 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knockwood</td>
<td>E 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knutsford</td>
<td>C 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knoton</td>
<td>F 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knver</td>
<td>E 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knees Castle</td>
<td>H 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinnell</td>
<td>F 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knightley</td>
<td>E 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knighton-n-Hales</td>
<td>E 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinutton</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Llanfawdd</td>
<td>( 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lan Delph</td>
<td>F 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laston</td>
<td>E 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leek</td>
<td>G 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lees by Draycot</td>
<td>G 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lees by Kingsley</td>
<td>H 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leesh</td>
<td>H 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leighton</td>
<td>A 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levedale</td>
<td>F 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leycest</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licheld</td>
<td>J 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lilleshall</td>
<td>D 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London-by-West Bromwich</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linford</td>
<td>C 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longnor-in-the-Moors</td>
<td>J 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longnor</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longbridge</td>
<td>F 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longton</td>
<td>F 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loxley</td>
<td>H 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loynton</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludchurch</td>
<td>G 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luttle</td>
<td>E 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lutton</td>
<td>F 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynn</td>
<td>H 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyeveys</td>
<td>H 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madeley Allac</td>
<td>H 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madeley Manor</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mael</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manifold R.</td>
<td>J 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marchington</td>
<td>J 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marston</td>
<td>F 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marston-in-Blymhill</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maw Green</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medtoke (Warwick)</td>
<td>K 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meaford</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meerkenn</td>
<td>G 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meere-by-Envill</td>
<td>E 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meerton</td>
<td>F 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meer-by-Longton</td>
<td>F 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlesex Warw</td>
<td>J 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlethorpe by-Leigh</td>
<td>G 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middlethorpe by-Middlethorpe</td>
<td>J 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller Green</td>
<td>J 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickle - by - Leek</td>
<td>G 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickle</td>
<td>G 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickle</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mickle</td>
<td>G 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millbank</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mole Cop</td>
<td>F 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monk's Bridge</td>
<td>L 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monmore Green</td>
<td>F 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore End</td>
<td>E 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore Great</td>
<td>E 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreton-in-the-Clay</td>
<td>J 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreton-by-Droitington</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreton</td>
<td>K 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreton-by-Wilbrighton</td>
<td>D 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moreton Hall</td>
<td>F 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morf</td>
<td>E 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morridge</td>
<td>H 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moseley</td>
<td>F 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mossop Bank</td>
<td>F 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muchall</td>
<td>F 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muchan</td>
<td>J 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nantwich (Cheshire)</td>
<td>B 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrowdale</td>
<td>J 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nashend</td>
<td>D 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netheals</td>
<td>G 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needwood Chase</td>
<td>J 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newbold</td>
<td>K 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newborough</td>
<td>J 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>E 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Hall-by-Audley</td>
<td>D 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Inn</td>
<td>H 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Invention</td>
<td>G 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newlands</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport (Salop)</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newton Solney (Derby)</td>
<td>L 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newton-by-Droitington</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobut</td>
<td>H 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norbury (Derby)</td>
<td>J 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norbury</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normacot</td>
<td>G 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Town</td>
<td>J 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwood-by-Wootton</td>
<td>J 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norton Canes</td>
<td>G 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norton, Cold</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norton-le-Moors</td>
<td>F 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norton</td>
<td>E 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakamore</td>
<td>H 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oaken</td>
<td>E 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakley</td>
<td>K 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otley</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Othlow</td>
<td>J 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okeover</td>
<td>K 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldbury</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldfallings</td>
<td>F 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oldhull</td>
<td>G 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oncot</td>
<td>E 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onecot</td>
<td>H 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onn</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onn</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ormsley</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orgreave</td>
<td>J 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orslow</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottemaston (Derby)</td>
<td>L 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontherton</td>
<td>F 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oulton-by-Forton</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oulton-by-Beacon</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oulton-in-Biddulph</td>
<td>F 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overton-by-Bilston</td>
<td>F 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overton-in-Cannock</td>
<td>H 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oveyesthay</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INDEX TO BOWEN'S MAP OF STAFFORDSHIRE.

Oxley, F 9.

Packington, J 9
Packington (Warwick), L 11.
Paddinton (Derby), L 1.
Paradise, F 9.
Parkhall-by-Cheadle, G 5.
Parkhall-by-Longton, F 5.
Paynsley, G 6.
Paynty Hall, H 6.
Patshull, E 9.
Pattishall, E 9.
Paxton, G 6.
Penn, H 8.
Pennal, E 9.
Penkhull, F 6.
Penkridge, F 8.
Penn, F 9.
Penn, E 8.
Penn, G 6.
Pert, F 7.
Perch Hill, F 6.
Pitmaston, H 3.
Pelsall, G 9.
Penkridge, F 8.
Pemberton, E 9.
Perston, H 9.
Perston, E 10.
Pondmore, D 6.
Piel, E 6.
Pitt, E 9.
Piddington, F 8.
Pitt Hall, E 9.
Peldwick, E 9.
Pleasance, H 7.
Pocksall, D 9.
Penkridge, F 8.
Penkridge, F 8.
Pentygarn, E 10.
Ranton Abbey, E 7.
Redditch, F 5.
Ridware, Hill, H 7.
Riddock, H 9.
Ridgacre, E 9.
Ridware, Hamstall, J 7.
Ridware, M Buysey, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
Ridgware, Pipe, H 8.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swinescoc</td>
<td>J 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swineshead</td>
<td>E 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swithamley</td>
<td>G 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swynnif</td>
<td>J 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swynnerton</td>
<td>E 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk o' the Hill</td>
<td>E 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tame R.</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamworth</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatenhill</td>
<td>K 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tattershall</td>
<td>E 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taznworth</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatenhill</td>
<td>K 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacesworth</td>
<td>H 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thachmore</td>
<td>J 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thamborn</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thackbroom</td>
<td>J 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrapton</td>
<td>C 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tittensor</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threave</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throckby</td>
<td>J 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Shire Head</td>
<td>H 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throwley</td>
<td>J 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tideswell (Derby)</td>
<td>K 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tipton</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tittensor</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tixall</td>
<td>G 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolend</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tong (Salop)</td>
<td>D 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totmonslow</td>
<td>H 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tower Hill</td>
<td>H 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trenthor</td>
<td>G 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trescot</td>
<td>E 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tryeal</td>
<td>E 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tubney</td>
<td>J 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuck Hill</td>
<td>D 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunstall</td>
<td>F 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunstall-by-Abbaston</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunstall-in-Bromley</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tupper Pool</td>
<td>G 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnhurst</td>
<td>F 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutbury</td>
<td>K 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyeley Castle</td>
<td>C 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttoxeter</td>
<td>J 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walford</td>
<td>E 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall</td>
<td>H 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall Grange</td>
<td>G 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walsall</td>
<td>G 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walton-by-Brocton</td>
<td>G 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walton-by-Chebsey</td>
<td>E 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walton-by-Stone</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walton Grange</td>
<td>D 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walton-on-Trent(Derby)</td>
<td>K 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wambourne</td>
<td>E 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warton</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warton (Warwick)</td>
<td>M 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterfall</td>
<td>J 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterhouses</td>
<td>J 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watling Street</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesbury</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>G 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeford</td>
<td>J 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wenlock Salop</td>
<td>B 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wergs, The</td>
<td>F 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weston Cooney</td>
<td>G 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weston Jones</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West n-under-Lazard</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West n-by-Sandon</td>
<td>G 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weston-by-Standon</td>
<td>E 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westwood</td>
<td>G 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetmores</td>
<td>L 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetton</td>
<td>J 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetwood</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetherhill (Salop)</td>
<td>B 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheat n Aston</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiston-by-Kingsley</td>
<td>H 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiston-by-Penridge</td>
<td>F 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whiterhurst</td>
<td>G 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Ladies</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whargrave</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitemore</td>
<td>E 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitemal End</td>
<td>E 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whittington</td>
<td>E 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whittington-by-Lichfield</td>
<td>J 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wichnor</td>
<td>K 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wigginstall</td>
<td>J 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wigginton</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wightwick</td>
<td>F 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wibrighton</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildcat</td>
<td>E 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildmore Hollies</td>
<td>H 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willenhall</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiltlesley (Derby)</td>
<td>M 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willford</td>
<td>J 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingtonworth</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willowbridge</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willcote (Warw.)</td>
<td>K 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winkley Hill</td>
<td>H 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windyfields</td>
<td>H 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnington</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wirksworth (Derby)</td>
<td>M 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wirtongham-Leigh</td>
<td>H 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolaston</td>
<td>F 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolgarston</td>
<td>F 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wollaston</td>
<td>E 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolseley</td>
<td>G 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolston</td>
<td>F 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolveshampton</td>
<td>F 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodcote (Salop)</td>
<td>D 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodaves, Offley</td>
<td>D 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodaves-by-Astley</td>
<td>D 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodend</td>
<td>H 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodend-by-Shenstone</td>
<td>J 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodford</td>
<td>E 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Green</td>
<td>G 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodhead</td>
<td>H 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodhouse</td>
<td>F 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodhouses-by-Blure</td>
<td>J 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodhouses-by-Spot</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodhouses-by-Tutbury</td>
<td>K 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodhouses-by-Wrottesley</td>
<td>E 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodhouses-by-Yoxall</td>
<td>J 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodseat</td>
<td>J 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Sutton</td>
<td>F 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolwall Green</td>
<td>D 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooton-under-Weaver</td>
<td>J 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wordsley</td>
<td>F 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worsfield (Salop)</td>
<td>C 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worslow</td>
<td>J 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worston</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wotton-by-Eccleshall</td>
<td>E 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrmehill</td>
<td>D 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrottesley</td>
<td>E 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wyreley</td>
<td>G 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarlet</td>
<td>F 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarnfield</td>
<td>E 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yealfield</td>
<td>G 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoxall</td>
<td>J 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>