

THE ACCOUNTS OF THE TALBOT HOUSEHOLD  
AT BLAKEMERE IN THE COUNTY OF  
SHROPSHIRE, 1394-1425

by

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VOLUME 1

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This thesis is my own original work.

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CONTENTSVOLUME 1

	<u>Page</u>
Foreword	iv
Editorial Note	vi
Introduction	
I. Blakemere and its Lords	1
II The family and servants at Blakemere	24
III Household Accounting	56
IV Food acquisition, cost of living and diet	80
Descent and fragmentation of the Bridgwater and related collections	111
Principal officers at Blakemere	121
Summary of Accounts	123
<u>Appendices</u>	
Pedigree I The Le Strange Family	129
Pedigree II The Talbot Family	134
Pedigree III The Family of the First Earl of Shrewsbury	147
Bibliography	158

VOLUME 2

Note on Editorial Practice	iii
Transcript of the accounts of the Household Stewards and a Keeper of the Foreign Household at Blakemere	
1. Account of Thomas Clerc (1 October 1393 - 1 October 1394)	1
2. Account of Walter Wodburn (29 September 1401 - 20 September 1402)	10
3. Account of Robert Skynner (1 August 1411 - 20 September 1412)	56
4. Account of John Walsch (29 September 1417 - 29 September 1418)	89
5. Account of John Wenloc (30 September 1419 - 30 May 1420)	128
6. Account of Richard Kenleye (30 September 1424 - 12 September 1425)	141
Index of Persons and Places	165
Index of Subjects	177

FOREWORD

This edition of six accounts of the Talbot medieval household at Blakemere in Shropshire was undertaken in the hope that it would provide the reader with an example of a type of document not frequently found in print, and that it would also make some contribution both to the social history of the medieval nobility and to the local history of Shropshire.

The accounts consist basically of lists of outlays on commodities and services, the prices of those commodities and services, and the uses to which they were put. As source material, the accounts require study of a particular minuteness if they are to yield their full significance. It has therefore been the aim of the editor to place a transcription of the texts before the reader in a clear and straightforward manner. The introductory essay which precedes the transcription, and the footnotes to the texts themselves, although they incorporate the results of analyses and investigations undertaken in the course of editing the documents, are not presented as an exhaustive study. They are, rather, an attempt to help the reader appreciate the texts in their historical context and to display, briefly, the arrangements of one previously undescribed household.

The detailed work to which both the social and local historian are committed has been eloquently defended.

How far can we know the real life of men in each successive age....The generalisations which are the stock in trade of the social historian must necessarily be based on a small number of particular instances....There is nothing that more divides civilised from semi-savage man than to be conscious of our forefathers as they really

were and bit by bit reconstruct the mosaic of the long forgotten past.<sup>1</sup>

In such reconstruction there has been a fascination which I hope the introductory essay will convey. It has been the fascination to be found in gathering, from brief remarks and from details originally given for financial purposes alone, enough information to place these accounts in their original setting, and so convey to the reader something of the actuality and flavour of life in a medieval baronial household on the Welsh Marches.

It would have been impossible to undertake this kind of medieval study in Australia but for three factors. Basically, the work has depended on the permission kindly given by Lord Brownlow's representative for the relevant documents to be microfilmed. Above all I have been fortunate in the ready help of the County Archivist of Salop, Miss Mary C. Hill, who, over a long period, out of the wealth of her own knowledge of Shropshire and the medieval period, has advised and encouraged me in the most generous manner. The other contributing factor has been the efficiency of the Menzies Library Staff at the Australian National University in undertaking many inter-library loans for me, both within Australia and overseas. The now almost complete collection of British record publications at the National Library of Australia, Canberra and also its expanding medieval holdings, have greatly facilitated work in this field.

I would finally like to express my gratitude to my supervisors, Mrs E.M. Searle and Professor C.M. Williams, and to Mr L.J. Downer, Dr R.I. Jack and Mr A.D. Ross for their most helpful advice.

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G.M. Trevelyan, English Social History, London, 1945, pp.viii, x.

Editorial Note

Place names, as they occur in this introduction, have been modernised whenever possible. The names of families of the nobility, most of which have several possible forms, have been spelt as found in The Complete Peerage. The names of officials, servants, tenants and other individuals at Blakemere can each be spelt in a daunting variety of ways in the surviving documents; examples of this can be seen in the index to the second volume of this edition. For the purposes of this introduction, therefore, one form of surname has normally been chosen. In the case of those officials who presented accounts, the form chosen is that to be found in the heading of their respective accounts. In other cases, the form used is normally that used on the first occasion of the individual's appearance in the transcribed text. This method has been chosen in preference to attempting to modernise the variations since in many cases the modern form is not immediately apparent. For editorial methods used when transcribing the accounts, see 'Note on Editorial Practice', volume 2, p.iii.

## INTRODUCTION

### I : Blakemere and its Lords

At Blakemere today, only the site of the medieval residence of the Talbot family is visible. It lies about a mile from the small country town of Whitchurch in typical rural North Shropshire surroundings, and consists of a mound in a field on the south side of Blakemere, one of the small meres or stretches of water which abound in this area.<sup>1</sup> It was surrounded by water. The north-west side of the mound still slopes down to the mere's edge; on the south-west is (and presumably was) a stream and the land configuration shows that the other two sides were moated. The supposed motte is no longer as obvious as it was even twenty years ago, possible as the result of amateur excavation and the normal farming activities of the area.

In the fourteenth century, the house stood within Black Park,<sup>2</sup> a large area enclosed within wooden palings, in which red and fallow deer ran. The lord's heriot animals and his store cattle also grazed there. It was well watered with three meres and numerous streams, and apparently heavily wooded since it was a fruitful source of the timber used for building and for fuel. A watermill and a windmill were in the park in the fourteenth century although they later fell into decay.

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Ordinance Survey Map (1 inch scale) Shrewsbury, Sheet 118; (6 inch scale) Shropshire sheet II SW., Cheshire parts of sheets LXI, LXV. 1930 edition.

2

The spelling of the names in this period was Blakemere and Blakepark, and appears so on Saxton's map in the sixteenth century. Now, Black Park is spelt in the modern way but Blakemere remains as formerly. See H.D.G. Foxall, A Gazetteer of Streets, Roads and Placenames in Shropshire, Shrewsbury, 1967, sub:B.

Inside the park, enclosed with palings, was a garden, termed 'new' in 1395, which had a lawn made with green turf (viridibus turbis).

The house originally would seem to have been low-lying on a marshy site; its walls were of freestone and there was a gatehouse roofed with lead still standing in 1561. According to a 1561 survey, the moat was a double one. A crenellation licence dated 14 July 1322 has been traced for the house (mansum) then in existence;<sup>1</sup> contemporary documents in the later fourteenth century do not term it castellum as they do another Talbot residence, Goodrich.<sup>2</sup> Leland, called Blakemere 'a very fair place or loge'.<sup>3</sup> However, with its moats and stone walls, it was probably capable of being defended against most attacks. It is noticeable that when, in the bailiffs' accounts, allowances were made to Whitchurch tenants because of the destruction of their buildings by Welsh rebels, no mention was made of similar damage to the manor house or manor buildings.

The 'bailiffs' accounts, by detailing repairs to the house, help in part to provide a picture of the interior. In addition to the hall (aula), there was a great chamber (magna camera) which had a stone chimney mended on one occasion with one hundred stone slabs.

<sup>1</sup> Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1321-1324, p.175.

<sup>2</sup> For accounts of Goodrich Castle see Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, England, An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in Herefordshire, Vol.1 South-west, pp.74-8. For a description of a daily domestic household account for the Countess of Pembroke's household, which spent from 15 October 1296 to the 6 May following, at the Countess's Castle of Goodrich, see C.H. Hartshorne 'Illustrations of Domestic Manners during the reign of Edward I', Journal of the British Archaeological Association, Vol.XVIII, 1862, pp.213-20.

<sup>3</sup> John Leland, The Itinerary of John Leland in or about the years 1538-1543, edited by Lucy Toulmin Smith, London, 1964, Vol.IV, p.2.



This chimney had a reredos which a mason or plasterer (cimentor) repaired on another occasion with lime. The great chamber also had a chapel leading off it. This was, presumably, the chapel which housed the books mentioned in the 1401-2 account of Walter Wodburn. The chapel had glazed windows, Glass is mentioned more frequently than would be expected and was used for windows not only in the chapel, but also in the chaplain's room and the small chamber above the bridge. Other rooms to which repairs are made are the middle room or chamber, the inner room, the lady's room which had a chapel and was panelled (sellur'), a room next to the men-at-arms' room (camera armiger') the knights' room (camera militar'), the seneschal's room,<sup>1</sup> the chaplain's room, the oriel or gallery, and a garett above the gate. There were latrines in, or under, the men-at-arms' room.

The outbuildings mentioned in the sections of the bailiffs' accounts dealing with upkeep and repairs, are the stables, (one of which is known as the 'long stable' and another, 'the great stable outside the gate'), the kenel hous for the dogs (nine new couplings were made in 1364 and covered with planks), and the dovecote. A new dovecote was built in 1408-9 with stone from the old one at Heathhouse which had been pulled down. Hawks are referred to in 1400, so there may also have been a mews. A new malthouse was built in 1403. There was a bakehouse and a kitchen. The use of the word domus as in domus pistrine probably indicates that, as would be expected, these were detached buildings.

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A lock and two keys were bought for the door of this room in the Receiver's Account 17-18 Richard II 1393-94. I have used the term seneschal instead of steward to distinguish this official from the steward of the household. See later p.29.

A new wardrobe was built in 1401 and a domus was ordained for the wardrobe of Lord Furnivalle in 1412. These were probably separate, secure buildings which housed the coffers frequently mentioned, as well as clothes and valuables.

The materials for buildings and repair were near at hand. Black Park was the usual source of the oaks and other trees felled for the carpenters to use. The bailiffs' accounts give indications of a flourishing timber industry in Black Park with all types of planks, boards, shingles and palings manufactured there. Reeds called snytyll, used for thatching, were available in the nearby meres. Thatch, however, was used only for the granges, barns and farm buildings; there are many references to the roofs of the residence being repaired with wooden shingles. The kitchen, presumably for security against fire risk, was roofed with red tiles. Stone acquired from David Hanmer<sup>1</sup> may indicate that quarries at Hanmer were the source of that material. A sixteenth century survey book mentions a parcel of ground in Black Park called the Brickefeld and the possibility of bricks being manufactured there at this earlier period cannot be discounted.<sup>2</sup> Mortar was also manufactured on the manor according to Wodburn's

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1

J.E. Lloyd, Owen Glendower, Oxford, 1931, p.24, mentions a David Hanmer the father-in-law of Owen Glendower, but this is unlikely to be the same person. See Dictionary of Welsh Biography (1959) sub Hammers of Hanmer, and G. Grazebrook and J.P. Rylands eds, Visitation of Shropshire 1623, Harleian Society XXVIII (1899) pp.208-13. The latter gives four lines of Hanmer; one line at Bettisfield near Whitchurch may have provided the member of the family through whom stone was acquired.

2

For this survey entitled 'survey of all the wodes belonging to the lordship of whitchurch within the countie of the inheritance of the Righte honourable george the erle of Shrewsburyie taken thereof the viii th day of Aprill anno domini 1561' see Salop Record Office, Bridgewater Collection, 212/ Box entitled 'Whitchurch Surveys', uncatalogued.

account of 1401-2. Although all building materials seem to have been plentiful, thrift decreed that materials from demolished buildings were re-used whenever possible.

In the bailiffs' accounts, there are many references to preparations for the arrival of the family. Labourers are hired to clean the buildings and the stables, carpenters, tilers and plasterers are engaged to repair, scrub and plaster the rooms for the incoming guests, and women are hired to collect rushes (cirpus) and to strew them in the hall and other rooms.

Leland, whose journeys took place between 1538 and 1545, was impressed by the 'fair place or loge' which he saw at Blakemere in 'the large parke',<sup>1</sup> but by 1561 the buildings 'decayed of longe tyme' had been 'polled down and some money yerof maid by Frauncs the late earle of shrewisburie',<sup>2</sup> except for the gate house which, containing 'two chists of awncyent evydence of the said lordship of blakemeare', was still standing when the area was surveyed on 18 April 1561. It was suggested by the surveyor that the stone from the building and the 'aboundance of tymber within the park' could be used for rebuilding.<sup>3</sup> It would appear that the suggestion of rebuilding was taken up since an agent wrote to the 6th Earl of Shrewsbury on 11 April 1562: 'There are reports that the workmen building the Earls house at Blake Meyre will not be finished at the appointed time'.<sup>4</sup> But the whereabouts of this house is not known and would not seem to have been on the original medieval site. In 1577,

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1 Leland, op. cit., p.2.

2 Francis, 5th Earl of Shrewsbury b.500 d.1560.

3 See fifth folio of above manuscript survey book.

4 R. Meredith, Catalogue of Arundel Castle Mss in Sheffield City Library with an appendix consisting of a calendar of Talbot letters, Sheffield, 1965, p.184  
Bacon Frank Mss, letter of Piers Dod, 2/16.

Saxton's map shows 'Blakemere maner' with the house symbol correctly drawn on the side of the lake, within the clearly marked enclosed park. Camden, in speaking of the Talbot family says: 'and their seat is seen in this neighbourhood and called Blackmere from a lake of Blackish water, but now almost quite ruined', giving a marginal reference 'so said ann' 1607'.<sup>1</sup> It is clear, therefore, that the house which was the scene of the activities recorded here in the transcribed accounts of household stewards ceased to exist between 1538 and 1561.<sup>2</sup>

The whole estate has been concisely described.

It was approximately 32,000 acres which embraced the town of Whitchurch and a compact area of land within a radius of three miles, mainly to the south and east. It also included the outlying manor of Marbury, three miles to the north of the town over the Cheshire border, and isolated holdings in the villages of Lyneal, Whixall and Willaston to the south. Approximately one-sixth of the estate formed the demesne, scattered throughout the lordship. There were two main parks - one at Blackmere and another at Tilstock - and woods at Alkington, Ash, Bubney and Tilstock. The rest was broken up into approximately thirty open fields. At Yockingsgate halfway between Blackmere and Whitchurch, there stood a grange. The remainder of the estate, approximately five-sixths was in the hands of customary tenants or copyholders.<sup>3</sup>

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1

William Camden, Britannia : or a geographical description of Great Britain and Ireland, translated by Edmund Gibson, London 3rd ed. 1753, Vol.1, p.660.

2

The account of an amateur excavation of the Blakemere site undertaken by R.W. Griffiths (Shropshire Newsletter, No.24, Nov.1963) contains unreliable conclusions. The suggestion that the castle was still standing in 1700 and that the stone from it was subsequently used in rebuilding Whitchurch Church which fell down on 31 July 1711 is disproved by the Whitchurch survey.

3

A.J. Pollard, 'The family of Talbot, Lords Talbot and earls of Shrewsbury', Ph.D. thesis, Bristol University, 1968, p.337. It should perhaps be explained at this point that Dr Pollard, who worked through many and varied sources for his valuable work on the Talbots, has used the complete run of Blakemere Estate Accounts, in the Salop Record office. [See 'Descent and Fragmentation of the Bridgewater and related collections', later]. I had already been engaged on this edition of the Blakemere Household's Accounts for some years before he  
(footnote continued p.7)

This lordship was acquired by the Talbot family when Ankaretta Le Strange, the wife of Richard 4th Lord Talbot, inherited the estate on the death of her niece Elizabeth in 1383.<sup>1</sup> The Le Strange family, too, had originally acquired this manor by marriage with an heiress, Eleanor de Blauncminster (or Whitchurch). Little is known about Eleanor except her name and that she brought this property to her husband, Robert Le Strange, who died in 1276.

The Le Stranges were, even at that date, a family with long established influence in Shropshire, since Hamon Le Strange according to the Testa de Nevill held land in Ness and Cheswardine in that county, from the reign of Henry II, even as early as 1154.<sup>2</sup> They came to England from the Marches of Normandy and the Celtic form of the name of their supposed first ancestor Roland (Rhiwallon) has given rise to the theory that they were Breton in origin, an hypothesis which might account for the surname Le Strange already borne by them in Normandy.

(footnote 3 continued from p.6)  
began his work, and I have used the same estate accounts, though only for 1380-1425 when they throw light on the household accounts. I have recently had the opportunity to read, and with Dr Pollard's permission, to quote where necessary from his work. He had not considered a detailed study of the household accounts such as here given to be necessary for his work, so in our respective theses there has been no encroachment.

1

Elizabeth Le Strange (1373-1383) daughter of John 5th Lord Strange. See Pedigree I. For the Le Strange family generally see The Complete Peerage, Vol. XIII, Pt. 1, pp. 341-57.

2

Liber Feodorum. The Book of Fees commonly called Testa de Nevill, Pt. 1, 1198-1242, London, 1920, Vol. I, p. 146, see also Hamon Le Strange, Le Strange Records 1100-1300, London, (1916), pp. 24-5, where H. Le Strange writes 'Further proof of this feoffment, as far as regards Cheswardine, is afforded by an abstract of a charter, preserved in the Plea Rolls, (Coram rege Rolls, 21 Edward I dorse) from which it appears that Henry II before he came to the throne had given to Hamon land worth £7 in Wellington, Salop, which, for some reason that is not apparent, the King subsequently resumed, giving him in exchange the manor of Cheswardine, worth only £4, to be held by the service of half a knight's fee. This abstract is printed by Eyton, Antiquities of Shropshire, J.R. Smith, London, (1854-60), Vol. VII, p. 286.

In the first surviving records of this house, the intertwining throughout the whole medieval period of the fortunes of the Le Strange family with those of the FitzAlans is foreshadowed: Roland is seen to have been the hereditary steward of the Lord of Dol, the Norman ancestor of the FitzAlan family. For several generations there is hardly a surviving FitzAlan charter which is not witnessed by a Le Strange and vice versa. Ties of marriage inevitably bound them closer. Indeed, Ankaretta's own mother was Mary, sister of Richard, 10th Earl of Arundel.<sup>1</sup>

Both families were included among the group of 'new men' introduced to England by Henry I to offset and balance the 'over-mighty' Norman earls already settled in England. This new group, coming from the extreme west of Normandy and from Anjou, with connections, and names, from over the Breton border, comprises families that Henry I is thought to have known well in his youth when he was Lord of the Cotentin. Their unquestionable loyalty to the crown was a special reason for establishing them on the Welsh border after the rebellious Robert de Bellême had forfeited his estates there in 1102. From the time of this forfeiture, for three centuries, the power and influence of the FitzAlans were never equalled by any other family in Shropshire.<sup>2</sup> In the middle Welsh March, next to the FitzAlans, the Le Stranges were probably the most important family. As rewards for their loyal service to the crown, they

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See Pedigree I. This Mary FitzAlan was once thought to have been the daughter of the 10th Earl. However, it now seems clear she was the daughter of the 9th Earl. See FitzAlan family tree in M. Aston, Thomas Arundel, Oxford, 1967, following p.436.

2

Eyton, op. cit., Vol.I, pp.84-8.

gradually acquired more land and held more of those positions of vital marcher responsibility such as sheriff and castle warden. Like all the great Marcher families - the Montgomeries, the Bohuns, the Warennes, the Clares, the FitzAlans, and even the Mortimers - the Le Stranges were also well established in another part of England. But whilst 'in Norfolk they were comfortable barons of local importance mainly, in the March they could play a considerable military and political part'.<sup>1</sup>

Their original status is difficult to define: In Norfolk it is clear that they held (of the FitzAlan family) five knight's fees in Hunstanton, but in respect of Shropshire, as the family's nineteenth century chronicler remarks:

It would be interesting, but not easy to work out the status of the Le Strange lands in the March, whether they were independent lordships, or part of the Arundel fief of Oswestry. In all probability the original holdings were subinfeudations subject to the ordinary services of feudal tenure but gradually accreted large additions from the Welshry which under the 'custom of the March' tended towards practical independence of English law and even of royal authority.<sup>2</sup>

Yet in spite of such independence, the Le Strange family is distinguished for its steadfast loyalty to the crown. 'For three longlived and successive generations the heads of this house were indefinitely trusted by contemporary kings'.<sup>3</sup> For the same period, that is the lives of the three successive John Le Stranges, John I(c.1138-78), John II(c.1178-1234) and John III (1234-1269), no Le Strange ever betrayed such trust or was even suspected of betraying it. John (III) had two sons, John (IV) and Robert, and from these the

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<sup>1</sup> Hamon Le Strange, *op. cit.*, p.26.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p.63.

<sup>3</sup> Eyton, *op. cit.*, Vol.X, p.261.

Shropshire branch of the Le Strange house, splits into two distinct families. John (IV) fathered John (V) and became 1st Lord of Knockin; Robert, (who died in 1276) married Eleanor of Blauncminster, thus acquired Blakemere and subsequently fathered the Blakemere line.

The Talbot lineage is equally ancient; the first named Talbot who can be discovered is mentioned in a charter to the Church of the Holy Trinity, Rouen, dated 1060.<sup>1</sup> There were many Talbots in Normandy holding under Gournay, Giffard and the Counts of Eu, and some are found in England in 1086. The Talbot line which produced Richard, 4th Lord Talbot, Ankaretta's husband, cannot, however, be traced further back than Richard Talbot of Eccleswall and Linton, Herefordshire (living in 1174 and dead before Michaelmas 1175) whose immediate antecedents are not known. His great-great-great-grandson, Gilbert, (1276-1345/6) is held to become first Baron Talbot by writ, since from 1331 to 1343 he was summoned to Parliament. Gilbert's great-grandson was Richard 4th Lord Talbot, (1361-96) who married Ankaretta Le Strange.

Gilbert, 1st Baron Talbot (1276-1345/6) was a tenant of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, and as such, and as a kinsman of the Earl of Warwick through his mother, he was one of those who found it necessary to obtain a pardon for their share in the death of Gaveston. Just as FitzAlan ties are a constant factor in the Le Strange family history, so with the Talbots are ties to the house of Lancaster. Relationships by marriage among the Welsh Marcher families are extremely complicated

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For the Talbot family see, The Complete Peerage, Vol. XII, pt.1, pp.606-20 and D.C. Douglas, Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church Canterbury, London, Royal Historical Society, 1944, pp.48-50.



and do not usually resolve themselves into a simple pattern of two opposing groups; it is with no small sense of achievement that the historian, five centuries later, detects within the tapestry the joining and the breaking of the strands of family alliances. The Talbot and Le Strange families, joined in the marriage of Richard Talbot and Ankaretta, had previously been closely connected when, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, daughters of William Le Botiler of Wem had married, respectively, Gilbert, 1st Lord Talbot, and John, 3rd Lord Strange of Blakemere.

The Talbots held the same kinds of positions of responsibility in Herefordshire and Gloucestershire as the Le Stranges in Shropshire. They were Sheriffs and Justices and frequently on Commissions; they fulfilled their duties in battle against the King's enemies in Scotland, Ireland and France. Richard, 2nd Lord Talbot, was with the King at Crécy. Gilbert, 3rd Lord Talbot, (1332-87) also fought frequently on the continent, serving in Gascony with the Prince of Wales. He accompanied Edmund of Langley, Earl of Cambridge, on his expedition to Portugal, 1381-82, taking part in the capture of Higuera-la-Real in Badajoz and in April 1382 he was sent by the English and Gascons to Lisbon to demand payment of their wages from the King of Portugal. Froissart, who calls him 'un baron de la marche de Galles'<sup>1</sup> describes how Ferdinand received him badly because the English and Gascons had made a raid on Estremadura.<sup>2</sup> He served from July 1386 in John of Gaunt's unsuccessful expedition to Spain and Portugal,

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1

See The Complete Peerage, Vol.XII, Pt.1, p.615 note (e).

2

The Chronicles of Froissart, translated Sir John Bourchier, Lord Berners, London, 1901, Vol.III, pp.287-8.

being present at the capture of Vigo and at Noya, and accompanying the Duchess Constance on a visit to the King of Portugal at Oporto,<sup>1</sup> His duties at home included being summoned to be at Newcastle-on-Tyne on 14 July 1385 for service against the Scots, and at the time of the Peasants' Revolt he was a Commissioner for Herefordshire to assemble loyal forces against the rebels.

Ankaretta's husband, Richard Talbot, had a very quiet career compared with his ancestors. True, he was on one or two local Commissions: he was a Commissioner for Salop in 1391 and was in Ireland in the King's service in February 1384-85. But he is more frequently found acting in local duties such as Justice in Chester or in Shrewsbury. The account-records show that money was far more often delivered to him at his country properties of Irchenfield or Blakemere than in London. He may simply have preferred country life; the pilgrimage he made to Holywell, a shrine renowned for its cures, suggests he suffered from ill-health. It is possible, however, that the real reason may be found in the difficult position which his family, like the Le Strange family, found themselves in during the reign of Richard II. This reign provided the crucial test for the Le Stranges' loyalty to the crown.

The reasons for the FitzAlan opposition to Richard II have been variously interpreted, and to discuss them here would be inappropriate.<sup>2</sup> But whatever the reasons, the situation demanded a choice of the Le Stranges. There is, of course, no documentary evidence but it would

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Ibid., Vol.IV, pp.287, 339, 408-11.

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For accounts of this period and discussions of the personalities involved see A. Steel, Richard II, Cambridge, 1962, pp.94-5 and especially the narrative from pp.120-78 and pp.217-59, and M. McKisack, The Fourteenth Century 1307-1399, Oxford, 1966, pp.454-83.

seem clear that, when put to the test, the Le Stranges held fast their family loyalty to the FitzAlans, rather than maintain their obedience to the crown. The Talbots were not in quite such a difficult position while John of Gaunt was alive and proclaiming his allegiance to the crown but, nevertheless, as part of the Lancastrian affinity they were suspect. This political situation would seem to account for the lack of advancement which is seen in the careers of both the Talbots and the Le Stranges at this time.

After Richard, 4th Lord Talbot, died in 1396, the family's loyalty must have been clear to their contemporaries since Thomas Neville (5th) Lord Furnivalle, a staunch champion of Henry IV, in 1401 married as his second wife Richard's widow, Ankaretta;<sup>1</sup> moreover Ankaretta's second son, John Talbot, was married to Furnivalle's heiress daughter, Maud, as an added 'insurance'. From the personal viewpoint of the older parties in these alliances, (a term which comes easily to mind when speaking of baronial marriages), Ankaretta may be supposed to have gained Furnivalle's support for the protection of her estates during the Welsh unrest, whilst Furnivalle had the hope of enjoying the profits of these estates if they could be adequately protected. These matches were not only very acceptable as potentially joining together in one inheritance the estates of two influential families, (a possibility which became an actuality when John Talbot eventually inherited the estate of his eldest brother Gilbert), but

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The King probably knew of the marriage on 22 March 1401 when he granted the custody of Shrivenham and Swindon to Thomas Neville, Lord Furnivalle, Calendar of Fine Rolls 1399-1405, p.120. The King pardoned the trespass of Thomas in taking Ankaretta to wife, and her trespass in marrying him, without licence of the King, (13 December 1401), Calendar of Close Rolls, 1399-1402, p.453.

also, from a political viewpoint, as ensuring that the Lancastrian interest should have a firm base in Shropshire, thereby counteracting the loyalty to the crown and person of Richard II which was to be found in no small measure in the adjoining areas of Cheshire and Chester.<sup>1</sup>

Gilbert, Ankaretta and Richard Talbot's eldest son, became 5th Lord Talbot on the death of his father in 1396. He was a ward of the King until 9 September 1403 when, though still under age, he was granted livery of his lands.<sup>2</sup> On the death of his mother in 1413, he succeeded to a second title, that of Lord Strange of Blakemere.<sup>3</sup> He had been betrothed and possibly married to Joan, second daughter and co-heir of Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, sixth son of Edward III, but she died aged about 16 in August 1400. Gilbert's second marriage (date unknown) was to a certain Beatrice.<sup>4</sup> Little is known about her before her marriage except that she was born in Portugal and bore the ancient royal arms

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The King's ties were specially strong here; he had a special bodyguard known as 'Cheshire Archers'. His father had drawn extensively from the Chester Palatinate for men. Richard's mother had held the Manor of Macclesfield, 'and it is perhaps not too fanciful to see some connexion between the choice of the white hart as a badge and the deer of Macclesfield forest, a neighbourhood where numerous White Hart inns still attest a local tradition'. Steel, op. cit., p.233.

2

Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1401-05, p.262.

3

The phrase 'succeeded to a second title' though strictly speaking correct, is in a sense anachronistic. As A.R. Wagner points out, confusion has been caused by the attempt to equate modern peerage with medieval baronage. A Barony was a tenure, not in the modern sense a title of honour. By Norman custom, a daughter succeeded to her father's estates if he had no son. In this instance, the tenure and its concomitant honorific were inherited by Lady Ankaretta (Le Strange) Talbot and, on her death, both tenure and honorific passed to her son. See A.R. Wagner, English Genealogy, Oxford, 1960, pp.89, 92, 95.

4

See The Complete Peerage, Vol.XII, Pt.1, p.619, footnotes (d) and (g) for this lady.

of Portugal both on her seal and later impaled with those of her husband. In this family, with its traditions of dynastic marriages cementing political alliances or joining great estates, it seems strange that Gilbert, who had previously married a granddaughter of a King of England, should marry a woman not endowed with land. Possibly, she brought monetary, not landed, assets to her husband. It is known that Philippa, Queen of Portugal, a sister of Henry IV, had, in fact, proposed the marriage of a certain bastard daughter of her husband to an English nobleman as a means of cementing friendly relations between the two courts. Thomas FitzAlan, Earl of Arundel, was ordered to accept the Portuguese lady's hand and, when he protested that he was too poor to pay for such an honour, Henry IV subsidised his expenses in the match, and the pair were married in 1405.<sup>1</sup> The name of this bride was Beatriz and, although known dates make it impossible that she should have married FitzAlan and Talbot successively, she was in fact confused for many years by genealogists with Beatrice; Lady Talbot. Possibly a similar marriage was arranged for the Beatrice now under consideration, who may have been another royal Portuguese bastard.

It has however been suggested that her coat of arms indicates that she was either a member of the Pinto family, or else a daughter (possibly granddaughter) of Lope Diez Souza, himself a grandson of an illegitimate son of a former Portuguese King, Alfonso III.<sup>2</sup> It is by no means unlikely that the Talbots were in need of ready cash after a continuous outpouring of money on

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1

Russell, P.E. The English Intervention in Spain and Portugal in the time of Edward III and Richard II, Oxford, 1955, pp.545-6.

2

See Pedigree II, No.8.

warfare, first in Wales and the Marches and then in Ireland and France, and that a dowry in money would be welcome. Gilbert's brother, John, appears to have been heavily in debt and Gilbert himself complained on this score.<sup>1</sup> Although warfare in France was extremely profitable for some members of the English nobility, it is unlikely that campaigns in the Welsh Marches could produce great booty and the expenses of mounting such campaigns must have been considerable. For instance, the cost of wages of a small party of Furnivalle's men, which accompanied the 12th Earl of Arundel on a brief raiding party into Wales in August and September of one year alone, was over £50. In addition, the cost of their supplies must have been great since it is unlikely that they could have been living off the Welsh countryside. Even such small items as nails for horseshoes used while campaigning were accounted for and would help to swell the bill of expenses for these engagements.

Gilbert died at the siege of Rouen on 19 October 1418, and his only child Anchoret died, aged five, in 1421. His widow Beatrice, now also childless, married again (before 1423) a certain Thomas Fettiplace of East Shefford, Berkshire, who had been appointed by her late husband Steward of the Manor and Hundred of Bampton in 1413. In 1420-21, there is a record of money delivered to him and it would seem that he was a trusted servant of the Talbot family.<sup>2</sup>

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Dictionary of National Biography, sub Talbot, John, 1st Earl of Shrewsbury (citing Ord. Privy Council, vol.ii, p.219). J.H. Wylie, History of England under Henry the Fourth, London, 1884, Vol.2; p.412.

2

Dowagers' marriages with commoners were not unusual. T.B. Pugh and C.D. Ross in 'The English Baronage and the Income Tax of 1436', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, Vol.26, (1958), pp.1-28, state that at this period 'from necessity or inclination' eleven  
(footnote continued p.17)

John, previously known as Lord Furnivalle and later to become the 1st Earl of Shrewsbury, now succeeded to the Talbot estates on the death of his brother's young daughter. His first wife Maud, who was the Furnivalle co-heiress, died in 1423 and he soon after made another match with Margaret, daughter of the 13th Earl of Warwick. The property of which John, 6th Lord Talbot, stood seized was, therefore, extensive. He held the Talbot estates acquired via his brother, the Le Strange estates via his mother and the great Hallamshire fief centred on Sheffield via his late wife.<sup>1</sup> His second marriage provided, through his wife, a claim to the Berkeley inheritance.

Finally, in sketching the family's background, the violence, which so often erupted in the Welsh Marches, is a factor which cannot be ignored. At this period, the revolt centred on the person of Owen Glendower. The sons of Richard and Ankaretta, Gilbert and John, were prominent among the King's forces which, after long drawn out campaigns, finally defeated the Welsh rebels. The unrest started on 16 September 1400 (the year the then widowed Ankaretta married Lord Furnivalle), when Owen Glendower quarrelled with his neighbour, Reginald Grey of Ruthin.<sup>2</sup> His grievances expanded to such an extent

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(footnote 2 continued from p.16)

baronial dowagers out of sixteen whom they list married commoners although royal licences for such marriages might prove expensive (p.21). Beatrice was one of this group of eleven. Fettiplace was a man of substance being M.P. for Oxfordshire in 1432 and Sheriff of Oxfordshire and Berkshire.

1

See Pollard, op. cit., pp.411-3, Appendix I, 'The Talbot Inheritance in 1422'.

2

There are many accounts of these events. See especially E.F. Jacob, The Fifteenth Century, Oxford, (1961), pp.36-66, Sir Edward Maunde Thompson, ed., Chronicon Adag de Usk A.D. 1377-1421, London 1904 esp. pp.238-9, 246-7, and E.S. Kimball, The Shropshire Peace Roll 1400-1414 Shrewsbury, (1959), pp.9-11 and R.I. Jack, 'Owain Glyn Dŵr and The Lordship of Ruthin' The Welsh History Review, Vol.2, No.4, (1965), pp.303-22.

that he incited the Welsh to a general uprising; he was proclaimed Prince of Wales and onslaughts were made on those parts of the northern Welsh Marches which seemed vulnerable. Hugh Burnell, with the help of levies from Shropshire and Worcestershire, met Glendower's forces at Welshpool and decisively defeated them. The King reached Shrewsbury on 26 September 1400, and, as the rebellion had spread into the Conway Valley and North Wales, he made a punitive circuit, subsequently returning to Shrewsbury.

In spite of this action, however, by the end of 1401 Glendower was still the effective master of most of North Wales and in April 1402 he captured Grey and later Sir Edmund Mortimer. Mortimer was descended from Edward III's second son (Lionel, Duke of Clarence), and was uncle of Edmund Mortimer, the young Earl of March, who, according to the strict line of succession, should have been on the throne rather than Henry IV, its present occupant, who was a descendant of Edward III's third son, Sir Edmund Mortimer, whilst in captivity, married one of Glendower's daughters, and finally abandoned his shaky allegiance to the throne. He and Glendower joined forces with the new combined aim of putting the young Mortimer on the throne and securing to Glendower 'his rights in Wales'.

On 13 July 1403, Henry Percy (known as Hotspur), son of the 4th Earl of Northumberland, the great northern baron, who for various reasons was dissatisfied with Henry IV's treatment of his family and who hoped the situation of unrest could be manipulated to the Percies' personal advantage, issued a proclamation at Chester treasonably referring to the King as Henry of Lancaster. He appeared to be collecting troops in Shropshire before uniting with Glendower and Mortimer. The King



hurried to Shrewsbury, from the disturbances he was quelling in the North, and on 21 July defeated Hotspur's forces outside Shrewsbury, before Glendower could come to his aid.

Glendower's forces continued active, however, and the back of his revolt was not finally broken until the castles of Aberystwyth and Harlech were retaken in 1408 and 1409.

A brief recital of the whereabouts of Lord Furnivalle and his two Talbot stepsons during the years after Owen's uprising shows how that event dominated their lives and demanded all their energy and resources. The household of Lord Furnivalle and presumably Lord Furnivalle himself arrived in Blakemere in June 1401, after the marriage to Lady Ankaretta. In August 1402, he and Earl Arundel were together at Shrawardine, nearby, planning tactics against the Welsh. In the next month, Lord Furnivalle, accompanied by his stepson Gilbert, took part in the King's ill-omened excursion into Wales. Three armies gathered together at the strategic points of Chester (under the Prince of Wales), Shrewsbury (under the King) and Hereford (under Stafford and Warwick). They were provisioned for fifteen days; punitive warfare but from the time they entered Wales rain, hail, and tempest never ceased'.<sup>1</sup> From the English viewpoint, it was total catastrophe.

In 1403, Gilbert joined the household of the Prince of Wales and drew pay for seventeen esquires and eighty archers in April/May 1403.<sup>2</sup> In July, Lord Furnivalle and probably Gilbert, too, fought at the battle of

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<sup>1</sup> Wylie, op. cit., Vol.I, pp.285-6.

<sup>2</sup> Wylie, op. cit., Vol.IV, pp.242-6.

Shrewsbury. Furnivalle returned to Whitchurch with the body of Hotspur and buried it there, although it was subsequently disinterred and, after being publicly shown for two days in Shrewsbury, taken to York to be displayed as a deterrent to the Northern rebels.<sup>1</sup> Gilbert Talbot, three days after the battle, was granted Hotspur's office as Justice of Chester.

In 1404, the Welsh again attacked and Whitchurch, Blakemere (though not the Manor House), Tilstock and Whixall were sacked, as was a considerable part of Shropshire.<sup>2</sup> In March 1405, Gilbert with a small band defeated large numbers of Welsh at Grosmont in Herefordshire.<sup>3</sup> Lord Furnivalle was given command of the key March fortresses of Bishop's Castle, Caus and Montgomery. In 1407, John Talbot was appointed his deputy at Montgomery.<sup>4</sup> In this year, too, a determined effort was made to subdue the Welsh when the Prince of Wales gathered at Hereford and, with John and Gilbert Talbot included in his forces, marched across Wales in a summer campaign but failed to take the important castle at Aberystwyth. In the autumn of the next year, he finally managed to take the castle and the Talbot brothers were then sent up the coast to Harlech and besieged that castle until it fell in 1409.<sup>5</sup>

In 1410, Gilbert was in command of three hundred men-at-arms and six hundred archers on the borders of

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<sup>1</sup> Wylie, op. cit., Vol.I, p.364.

<sup>2</sup> Pollard, op. cit., p.359 and Rotuli Parliamentorum: ut et petitiones et placita in parlamento, Record Commission, London, 1783, Vol.3, p.637.

<sup>3</sup> Wylie, Vol.II, p.19.

<sup>4</sup> Pollard, op. cit., p.16, citing PRO. E 101/44/6, 14.

<sup>5</sup> Wylie, op. cit., Vol.III, pp.265-6.

Wales, being sent the sum of £4,939.6.8, for their wages for three months.<sup>1</sup> In July 1415, Gilbert was appointed to treat with Glendower and subsequently with his son Meredith. Finally in April 1417, as seems only fitting after his personal involvement in so long a struggle, Gilbert was appointed to receive Meredith into the King's grace.<sup>2</sup>

The Talbot brothers' further martial exploits took place in Ireland and in France. In 1414, John Talbot was made Lieutenant of Ireland, where he supported his brother Richard who became Archbishop of Dublin. He spent much of his time quarrelling with his kinsmen, the Earl of Ordmonde and Lord Grey of Ruthin.<sup>3</sup> Two younger Talbot brothers, Thomas and William,<sup>4</sup> who did not live long enough to match their older brothers' feats in arms, also fought in France, at Agincourt. John from 1427 until 1453 campaigned almost continuously in France.<sup>5</sup> Both John and Gilbert were to die on battlefields in France, Gilbert in 1418 at Rouen and John in 1453 at Castillon.

This, then, is the background of the family, for which, during brief periods of the year, Blakemere was home, if indeed the medieval baron, constantly on the

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1

Wylie, op. cit., Vol.III, p.319.

2

Calendar of Patent Rolls 1413-16, pp.342, 404; 1416-22, p.89.

3

For detailed accounts of the events in Ireland see J. Otway-Ruthven, History of Medieval Ireland, London, 1968, pp.354-65. The date 1419, given for the death of Gilbert Talbot in this work is incorrect. Pollard, op. cit., pp.103-36 and also R.I. Jack, 'The Lords Grey of Ruthin, 1325-1490, a study in the lesser baronage', Ph.D. Thesis, London, 1961, pp.414-5.

4

See Pedigree II Nos 13 and 14.

5

For general accounts of the wars in France at this period see Jacob, op. cit., pp.161-262 and sources referred to *ibid.*, p.706.

move, can be said to have entertained any notion of home. Blakemere was near one of the principal trouble centres of the realm in the early fifteenth century and was of some strategic importance in subduing the Welsh rebels. It was also important to the family as a staging post from their estates further south in the Marches on the way to Chester and thence to Ireland, in both of which places the Talbot family had many interests during this period, and where they held various administrative and ecclesiastical appointments.

Throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, a household was maintained at Blakemere whilst echoes of local, national and European conflicts reverberated against its walls. Its various lords and ladies, with their children and retinues, came and went; guests and strangers were entertained; servants, tradesmen and labourers worked at their accustomed tasks; from its bounty alms were bestowed on the needy of the neighbourhood. Truly, as Bishop Russell said, the nobility resembled islands, standing stable against the flow of sea and rivers whose shifting waters mirrored the wavering populace.

And therefor the noble persons of the worlde,  
 whych some for the merites of ther auncesturs,  
 some for ther owne vertues, bene endued whyth grete  
 havours, possessions and Richesses, may more  
 conveniently be resembled un to the ferme grounde  
 that men see in Isle londes then the lower people  
 whyche for lacke of such endumente, not possible to  
 be departed amonges so many, and therefor livynge  
 by ther casuelle labours be not withoute cause  
 likkened un to the unstabille and waveryng rennyng  
 water...then yf there be any suerte or fermesse  
 here yn thys worlde, such as may be fownde out of  
 hevyn, hyt ys rathyr in the Isles and londes  
 environed with water than in the see or any grete  
 Ryvers.<sup>1</sup>

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1

J.G. Nichols, ed., Grants etc. from the Crown during the reign of Edward V, Camden Society, old series, 60 (1854), p.xl, (Speech of Bishop Russell Lord Chancellor prepared for the intended parliament of Edward the Fifth) [M.S. Cotton. Vitellius E. x Art. 23. fol. 170-6].

The day-to-day existence of one such island is illustrated by these household accounts; they reflect a way of life which presented to medieval man the illusion of a permanent institution and which set before him standards of secular splendour and nobility. Nearly two centuries later, Shakespeare could still imaginatively construct this type of society, albeit when it was disintegrating, in his play The First Part of Henry VI, which, it has been suggested, would have been more suitably entitled The Tragedy of Talbot. England or Respublica, not the King, is the hero of this work, after the fashion of a morality play; Talbot 'England's glory', stands preeminently for loyalty and order in a world threatened by chaos.<sup>1</sup>

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1

E.M.W. Tillyard, Shakespeare's History Plays, London, 1948, p.163. W. Shakespeare, The first part of King Henry the Sixth, Act IV, Scene VII.

## II : The Family and Servants at Blakemere

Any ordinances which the Talbot family made for the administration of their various households are not, so far as I am aware, in existence. It is known that the Earl of Shrewsbury's second wife, Margaret

to the honour of God made decree in her hows, not her own childre owt set, that what ever person blasphamyd our lord by unlawful swerying he shuld lak that day ale wyn and chochyn (? cooking) and only have but bred and watre.<sup>1</sup>

In the accounts here transcribed, however, the only mention of ordinances is in connection with the customary estimation of a heaped bushel.<sup>2</sup> Nor have I been able to trace ordinances for any other baronial households within this limited period. Other large households, both royal and ecclesiastic, can provide examples of such ordinances throughout the whole medieval period and they are frequently valuable evidence for the ordering of domestic affairs.<sup>3</sup> This lack of baronial ordinances, though

1

Rous Roll, No.51, quoted in The Complete Peerage, Vol. VIII (Lisle), p:55 note f.

2

See this thesis, Vol.2, p.122.

3

Those for royal households can be traced back to the Constitutio Domus Regis (1136) [see C. Johnson ed., Dialogus de Scaccario, London (1950) pp.129-35]; later examples are the Household ordinance of 1279 [see T.F. Tout, Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England, Vol.II, Manchester (1920), pp.158-63]; the Household Ordinances of Edward II of 1318 and 1323 [see T.F. Tout, The place of the reign of Edward II in English History, Manchester (1914), pp.270-318] and the ordinances of 1478 [see A.R. Myers ed., The Household of Edward IV, Manchester 1959, pp.63-75, 76-197, 198-228]. Right up to the time of William and Mary ordinances and revisions of the royal household were made [see A Collection of ordinances and Regulations for the Government of the Royal Household made in divers reigns from King Edward III to King William and Queen Mary: Also Receipts in Ancient Cookery, London, 1790, printed for the Society of Antiquaries]. An example of Ordinances for ecclesiastical households can be found in that of 1295-98 for the Household of Walter de Wenlock Abbot Westminster [see B.F. Harvey Walter de Wenlok Abbot of Westminster 1283-1307, Camden Society, 4th series, Vol.2, 1965, pp.241-8].

(footnote continued p.25)

unfortunate, is not surprising. The comparative wealth of royal and ecclesiastical household records of all kinds (yearly accounts, journals, dieta and warrants as well as the naturally rarer ordinances) compared with similar surviving documents from baronial sources is clear. Documents such as those of the Clare family, which for some reason found their way into archives of royal administration, had the greatest chance of survival. It will be recognised that both royal and ecclesiastical establishments had a higher degree of undisturbed continuity, and their records, whether purposely kept or merely forgotten and allowed to accumulate, have survived in greater numbers.

It has been suggested that the accounts both for the estates and the households of great families were subject to some danger of loss because of the practice of taking them to one particular place in each lordship for audit, and the auditors' carrying previous years' rolls round with them on their peregrinations.<sup>1</sup> (There is indeed in bailiff John Wylym's account for 1420 the item 'Et in l bagge empt' pro compotis domini imponend' iiii d.'). But this, although partly accounting for fragmentary series of accounts, does not seem a likely reason for the loss of ordinances, since it would not seem necessary to carry these about to any great extent. It is more likely that succeeding generations found the

(footnote 3 continued from p.24)

Baronial families living on the Welsh Marches may possibly have also been aware of ordinances which anciently regulated Welsh royal households. From the very earliest times 'nearly every extant Welsh lawbook begins with a tractate running to some twenty pages of modern print "treating" of the officers of the Welsh kings' court and household', (G. Edwards 'The Historical Study of the Welsh Lawbooks' Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th Series, Vol.12, (1962), p.144.

1

J.F. Baldwin, 'The Household Administration of Henry Lacy and Thomas of Lancaster', English Historical Review, Vol.XLIII, (1927), p.184.

regulations of its predecessors obsolete so that they were not carefully preserved. However, whatever the reason for their failure to survive, there is a high probability that they were in fact produced. The ordinances of 1284 for the Lincolnshire Barony of Eresby appear to be the earliest known example. Compared with later establishments this reveals 'a bare minimum of organisation'.

There was a common establishment for the lord and his wife, presided over by a steward, who was a knight, for whom two possible deputies were provided. The chief clerical officer was the 'wardrober', who jointly with the steward examined every night the daily expenditure of the household, which was only to be 'engrossed' when the steward and his chief deputy were both present. The wardrober was also the chief auditor, or controller, of the steward's account. He too had his deputy, the clerk of the offices. Besides these there was a chief buyer, a marshal, two pantrymen and butlers, two cooks and larderers, a laundress, a saucer and a poulterer, two ushers and chandlers, a porter, a baker, a brewer and two farriers. Nearly all these officers had each his boy (or in the case of the woman her girl) attendant, and when an office was duplicated, one of the holders was to remain in the household, and the other to follow the lord. An important personage was the chaplain and almoner, who was, when required, to give help in writing letters and other documents and act as deputy of the wardrober in his absence, by serving as controller of the expenses of the household. When the lord was away from home, the chaplain was to examine the expenses of the household and account to the wardrober before the steward....The expenses of both household and wardrober were to be surveyed four times a year by the high steward.<sup>1</sup>

Later, throughout the sixteenth century, ordinances are extant for many noble households, and as far as Shropshire is concerned one even exists for the eighteenth century for the family of Hill at Hawkstone.<sup>2</sup> Although the ordinances for baronial families in the fifteenth century are missing, the household revealed by such sixteenth century ordinances, (which for example,

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1

T.F. Tout, Chapters in Administrative History, Manchester, 1920, Vol.II, p.182.

2

SRO 549/134.



exist for the households of the Earl of Northumberland,<sup>1</sup> the Earls of Derby,<sup>2</sup> the Earl of Oxford<sup>3</sup> and Viscount Montague of Cowdray,<sup>4</sup>) are in a clearly recognisable line of descent from such fifteenth century households as that of the Talbots at Blakemere.

It is of course possible to learn something of the organisation of daily life in a noble household from books of etiquette as well as from household ordinances:

The example of the Burgundian court was potent from the duties of its resplendent officials to its rules of etiquette....We find the Burgundian master of ceremonies Olivier de la Marche recognised throughout Western Europe as the greatest authority of the age on court ceremonials and rules, responding to an English request for information on the question of household management, especially the immensely complicated ritual of regulating a banquet, by writing in 1473-4 his L'etat de la maison du Duc Charles de Bourgongue dict le Hardy.<sup>5</sup>

The Boke of Curtasye (B.M. Sloane MSS 1986) to which the date 1430-40 has been assigned, after discoursing on the rules of polite behaviour, such as the necessity of washing before eating and of not pulling faces, has a section in the Third Book called De officiariis in curiis dominorum which lists in verse the duties of the various

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1

Thomas Percy, ed., The Regulations and Establishments of the household of Henry Algernon Percy, the fifth Earl of Northumberland at his castles of Wressle and Lekinfield in Yorkshire begun anno domini MDXII, London, 1827.

2

F.R. Raines ed., 'The Household Regulations of Edward, 3rd Earl of Derby and of Henry, 4th Earl of Derby', in The Stanley Papers, Part II, Chetham Society (1853), pp.8-10, 20-2.

3

Thomas Wolsey, 'An order to lymitt John Earle of Oxenford in the orderinge of his expenses of Household, 1524', ed., by Sir Henry Ellis in Archaeologia, Vol.XIX, (1821), pp.62-5.

4

S.B.D. Scott ed., A book of Orders and Rules of Anthony Browne, second Viscount Montague of Cowdray, 1595, Sussex Archaeological Collections, vii (1854), pp.173-212.

5

A.R. Myers, The Household of Edward IV, Manchester, 1959, p.4.

household officers. Those of the household steward are described as follows:

Now speke I wylle of þo stuarde als,  
 Few ar trew, but fele ar fals.  
 þo clerke of kechyn, countrollour,  
 Stuarde, coke, and surueyour,  
 Assenten in counselle, with-outen skorne,  
 How þo lorde schalle fare at mete þo morne.  
 Yf any deyntethe in countré be,  
 þo stuarde schewes hit to þo lorde so fre,  
 And gares by hyt for any cost,  
 Hit were grete syn and hit were lost.  
 Byfore þo cours þo stuarde comes þen,  
 þe seruer hit next of alle kyn men  
 Mays way and stondes by syde,  
 Tyl alle be serued at þat tyde.  
 At countyng stuarde schalle ben,  
 Tylle alle be breuet of wax so grene,  
 Wrytten in-to bokes, with-out let,  
 þat be-fore in tabuls hase ben sett,  
 Tyl countes also þer-on ben cast,  
 And somet vp holy at þo last.<sup>1</sup>

The clerk of the kitchen, an official whose counterpart at Blakemere joins in presenting the 1417-18 account transcribed later, is described as follows:

The clerke of þe cochyn shalle alle þyng breue.  
 Of men of court, bothe lothe and leue,  
 Of achatis and dispenses þen wrytes he,  
 And wages for gromes and zemen fre;  
 At dressour also he shalle stonde,  
 And fett forthe mete dresset with honde;  
 þe spicery and store with hym shalle dwelle,  
 And mony thynges als, as I nozt telle,  
 For clethyng of officers allé in fere,<sup>2</sup>  
 Sane þe lorde hym self and ladys dere.

The Household Steward. Such literary extracts do not necessarily display actual practice; however, by

<sup>1</sup>

F.J. Furnivall, Manners and Meals in Olden Time, Early English Text Society, Original Series No.32, London, 1868, p.316. Furnivall modernises this as follows: 'Of the Steward. Few are true, but many false. He, the clerk, cook and surveyor consult over their Lord's dinner. Any dainty that can be had, the Steward buys. Before dishes are put on, the Steward enters first, then the Server. The Steward shall post into books, all accounts written on tablets, and add them up'. It does seem however, that the reference to 'tabuls' is to the use of a chequered board for counting the counters set in columns, rather than to 'tablets'.

<sup>2</sup>

Furnivall, op. cit., p.317, modernised as follows: 'Of the Clerk of the Kitchen. He shall keep account of all purchases, and payments, and wages, shall preside at the Dresser, and keep the spices, stores, &c., and the clothes of the officers'.

analysing the accounts transcribed in this edition, the duties in the establishment of this particular household steward can, to a certain extent, be deduced. It should be noted that the household steward is in the Latin of these accounts always termed senescallus hospicii so that there can be no confusion between him and the official referred to as the senescallus, whom I shall term in English the seneschal.<sup>1</sup> As Denholm-Young points out, even in the thirteenth century a distinction is made between these two officials, although tracts dealing with administrative practices give the duties of only one official who 'combines supervision of the estates with that of the household'.

The departments of the household controlled by the household steward consisted of the usual and basic domestic areas, namely the Buttery concerned with the acquisition, storage and distribution of ale and wine, the Pantry and Larder concerned with the acquisition, storage and provision of foodstuffs including meat, the Kitchen together with the Bakehouse concerned with the preparation and serving of food and the Stable occupied with the feeding and housing of horses and the provision of household transport in general by means of carts and packhorses. The Wardrobe although mentioned as a department for purposes of expenditure did not necessarily have a separate resident staff as the other departments did. All the personnel with surnames indicating that this is their department such as Richard del Chambre, John Chambre garderooper are part of the

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1

Modern authorities use both steward and seneschal, and there is no strict rule concerning the usage of these words. For a discussion on the two types of steward see N. Denholm-Young, Seignorial Administration in England, London, 1937, pp.66-70. He prefers to term the seneschal the estates or land steward.

foreign household or that travelling with the lord. The second names of a considerable number of the servants mentioned in these accounts indicate the work which they were doing - Botiler. (Butler), Chaplain, Lavynder (Laundress) - although not every servant has an occupational surname.

The household steward's principal duty was the overall responsibility for the acquisition of all foodstuffs needed for the household at Blakemere. These foodstuffs consisted of grain, pulses, wine, ale, meat (including beef, mutton, pork, poultry and game), fish (fresh, dried and salt, and most especially herrings), salt, spices and sweetmeats, honey, mead and wax, cheese, milk and butter, and dried fruit. Fresh vegetables and fruit are not mentioned. He, or various individuals acting on his behalf, acquired such items as the estate produced from the manorial bailiff and granger, either by a cash transaction or by the appropriate 'book keeping' entries on the accounts. He also received substantial sums of money from the lord or lady, or the financial receiver, and spent these on goods required which were not home produced. Such goods would seem to have been purchased from merchants in London, Shrewsbury, Gloucester, Chester and, to a lesser degree, Coventry and Nantwich. It was obviously the household steward's duty to lay in stocks of all goods, not just to superintend day-to-day acquisition and consumption.

In addition to seeking and purchasing these goods the steward had to arrange for their carriage. This must have been a considerable item of expense when large quantities of such bulky goods as wine or grain were involved, and also when there were no tenant carting services to be utilized.

Although the provision of firewood was in part the duty of the bailiffs, the steward had the final responsibility, as was only to be expected, since fuel for cooking throughout the year, and also for heating, was a domestic commodity quite as important as, for instance, the provision of grain.

The household steward in these accounts was also responsible for the stable in that he provided fodder, peas, hay and straw for the household's horses, and those of visitors. He also accounted for the cost of shoeing the horses. There were stable staff who actually looked after the horses, but the shoeing appears to have been done by contract.

He was financially responsible for the keep of any messengers sent from the household on the lord's business and, if the lord or lady went on a journey, for their living expenses also and those of their attendants.

The steward was also held accountable for the by-products of kitchen activities; that is, he sold the hides and skins of slaughtered animals, or arranged for their use within the household. He also had to account for the fat skimmings, lard and tallow produced in the cooking. Rabbit skins were the perquisite of the office of the cook. It seems strange that no mention is made of the feathers of the tremendous numbers of pigeons and poultry consumed by the household on occasion since use must have been made of them for bolsters, quilts and mattresses.

The household steward also had to replenish kitchen utensils and equipment as needed and buy cloth for napery. Only one account shows him buying cloth for livery; presumably cloth buying took place when stocks were depleted, and was not necessarily a yearly activity.

Another of the household steward's minor duties was the acceptance of gifts (a valuation was put on all gifts for accounting purposes before they were used in the household) and the tipping of the servants who brought the gifts.

Finally the household steward was responsible for the payment of the stipends of domestic staff. These people included the chaplain, the clerk of the kitchen and/or clerk of the household, the provisor, the butler, the usher, the poultryman, the laundress, the granger and servants in the bakehouse, kitchen and stable. There were servants who did not travel with the family such as possibly Wenllyan Fylles whose husband or relative William was provisor. There was also a David Maynles who appears to be a kind of odd job man. The five farm labourers employed under William Paulyn also received their keep in their household.

It is, however, difficult to estimate the number of resident staff. An almost princely establishment such as that described for Lady Elizabeth de Burgh should not be envisaged for Blakemere.<sup>1</sup> If other types of household records had survived, doubtless lists of staff names would be available. In the Blakemere accounts the nearest to such a list is that of the feoda for 1417-18. This has twenty-one people on it who range from six individuals who were obviously in the higher administrative grade (since they were paid 20s. per annum and include the chaplain and clerk of the kitchen) to such people as the laundress, the granger and men whose appellations are del Cochyn, (kitchen) del Stabull, labourer and Reve.

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C.A. Musgrave, 'Household Administration in the Fourteenth Century with special reference to the Household of Elizabeth de Burgh, Lady of Clare', M.A. Thesis, London University, 1923.

In the later accounts, in addition to the household steward there appears a Clerk of the Kitchen and a provisor (a kind of supervisory manager or manciple it would appear) as well as second or third household stewards. It seems reasonable to suppose that the domestic staff expanded. All the evidence, however, points to a resident staff which was not large; it would be similar, for instance to that of Fastolf's at Caister Castle.<sup>1</sup>

Information regarding the salaries of officials and servants is slight. The account for 1393 gives the total of all the payments made to staff, that is £17 for the year, but it does not enumerate the officials who were paid nor is the salary of the household steward stated. The second account for 1401-2 shows that in the unusual circumstances of this year the custos paid a fee to the household steward of Blakemere - 40s. for the year; the total of salaries and payments he made is £15.4.8d but yearly payments are not stated, only a part, so that the amount of salary for individual offices cannot be given.<sup>2</sup> In the account of 1411-12 no salary details appear. The account of 1417-18 has a total salaries bill of £22.4.0d paid to various servants of the lord's household 'as appears in the list of their names with total contained in the said daybook'.<sup>3</sup> A list of officials' names is

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Historical Manuscripts Commission, Appendix to 8th Report, 1881, p.268.

2

The whole account with part payments both for salaries, and to creditors, shows the lack of Furnivalle's ready cash in this area and the extent to which credit was extended.

3

Cf. C.D. Ross's article 'The Household Accounts of Elizabeth Berkeley Countess of Warwick, 1420-1'. Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society Trans., Vol.70, 1951, p.84, where the first part of the book is said to contain a list or 'Kalendarium' of members of the household.

also given in the attachment to this account but again the payments seem to be for only part of the year. In 1419-20 again there is no mention of salary payments. In the final household account for 1424-25 a total of £9.10.3d is spent on part payment of salaries, including £3.6.8d for the household steward, £1.6.8d for the fisherman and £1.6.8d for the carter. In this account John Chariotere had part of his salary paid by a sum being deducted from the rent of his tenement in Ash, and John Bertram, the Yockingsgate granger, from the rent of his tenement in Whitchurch, and this was probably a common means of salary payment for staff.

The pattern of duties as described above for the household steward is quite standard in Accounts 1, 3, 4 and 6. Account No.5 (1419-20) has additions of estate affairs: collection of rents, farms, and the maintenance of the property are all accounted for. This is apparently because the household steward, John Wenloc, took over the position of Blakemere receiver when its holder John Wylym was murdered only part way through his term of office, and rendered account of the two positions in one document. The household duties are exactly the same as detailed above.

The Custos. The second account is that of Walter Wodburn, ,who, is described as the Custos hospicii forinceci Domini Thomas de Nevyl1. The document for this year (1401-1402) which would correspond to the type of accounts found in Household Steward's Accounts 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 described above would be the (non-existent) account of John Wyspyngton who is mentioned as the steward of the household at Blakemere in Walter Wodburn's account.

Wodburn was an official of Thomas de Neville, Lord Furnivalle, whose main residence was in Sheffield.



Wodburn was evidently allotted the rents of the Blakemere lordship for his income; his account shows that he made no purchases of meat, fish, spices or milk products and bought only a little wheat, ale and wine, possibly just as the occasion to do so arose, when he would be acting as the agent of the Blakemere steward. It is obvious from Wodburn's expenditure that the provisioning of a storeroom and the arrangements for feeding family and staff are not his province at all; his duties appear to be administering one foreign or peripatetic household unit of Lord Furnivalle in all its aspects except the acquisition and laying out of foodstuff. His record of expenditure shows that, as Receiver and therefore having received estate income, he must be responsible for estate maintenance, and consequently the upkeep of buildings, repair of fencing, and meadow scything are charges upon him. His expenditure, other than that on estate matters, consists of payments to the lord's soldiers and his minstrels, of expenses concerned with the Welsh war, the livery and outfitting of staff, and the shoeing of horses. He paid stipends to grooms, a wardroper and members of the household (del chambre), an entirely different set of officials from those whose stipends the household steward paid. They are in fact those members of the lord's staff who would naturally accompany him when travelling. The household steward's payments are to staff who on the whole would remain in one fixed place, Blakemere.

Wodburn has an extraordinarily varied set of payments under the heading 'Necessities'; it is as though he carried the petty cash around and made payments as need arose for the varied requirements of the household and its members. He is also much concerned with payments to numerous messengers who travel on the lord's

business, and with payments of the lord's debts, or instalments of these debts, to various tradesmen and merchants, in various places. He transfers money to the Blakemere household steward, John Wyspyngton, but it is not certain whether this amount is some sort of agreed proportion towards the cost of the maintenance of the foreign household whilst at Blakemere, or an allowance of cash made by the lord to the household steward and delivered by way of the Custos.

The Seneschal. The position of the seneschal at Blakemere can also be compared with the ideal manorial official as portrayed in four well-known thirteenth-century tracts, namely that written by Walter of Henley, those known as the Seneschaucie and the Husbandrie, (whose authors are unknown), and Les Reules Seynt Roberd by Grosseteste.<sup>1</sup> The Fleta also contains variations upon extracts from these works. The office of the seneschal has been described as 'the voice and executive of the lord on the manor'.<sup>2</sup> His qualities and qualifications as an individual are listed by Fleta; he is required to be

provident, discreet, civil and courteous, well-conducted, not a quarrelsome or overbearing man, having a good knowledge of the law and local customs, and of the duties of a seneschal, careful to protect all the rights of his lord, and one who knows how to instruct and teach the lord's under-bailiffs when they make mistakes or are in doubt; one who will not be hard on the destitute, or moved to a wrong decision by prayer or price from the path of duty. It is part of his duty to hold the courts of the Manor, and if he should often do this by deputy, he should at least hold personally the view of frank-pledge, or if the lord does not enjoy that franchise, then at all events he ought to hold the courts personally

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For these tracts see E. Lamond, Walter of Henley's Husbandry, together with an anonymous Husbandry, Seneschaucie, and Robert Grosseteste's Rules, London, 1890.

2

H.S. Bennett, Life on the English Manor, a Study of Peasant Conditions 1150-1400, Cambridge 1948, p.158.

at least two or three times a year: if he should not be able to find time for more he should make diligent inquiry about appropriations by others of dues, service rents, suits and services at the Court, Court fines, and the lord's mills and as to the rights of inspection and of all other franchises etc. pertaining to the lord; and also as to the alienations of lands, woods, meadows, pastures, waters and the like, by whom and from what time and by what right in the time of what bailiff or servant such alienations were made.<sup>1</sup>

His agricultural duties are summarised by Hone as follows:

He is also to check the amount of seed required by the reeve for each manor, for under the steward there may be several manors.

On his appointment he must make himself acquainted with the condition of the manorial ploughs and plough teams. He must see that the land is properly arranged, whether on the three-field or two-field system, and the ploughing regulated accordingly.

Besides the manorial ploughs and plough teams, he must know how many tenant or villain ploughs there are, and how often they are bound to aid the lord in each manor. He is also to inquire as to the stock in each manor, whereof an inventory indented is to be drawn up between him and the reeve, and as to any deficiency of beasts, which he is<sup>2</sup> at once to make good with the lord's consent.

Fleta alone of these tracts has a section on the household duties of the seneschal

S.17. Item, it is moreover the seneschal's duty (either himself or by his deputy) to account every night to the lord's behalf for the expenses of the household, with the buyer, mareschal, cook, the chief officer of the buttery and other officers and to ascertain the total of the day's expenses.

S.18. Item, to receive from the provost of the larder by tally according to what will be necessary, all kinds of flesh and fish, and he should have the joints cut in his presence and delivered by tale to the cook, and from it a proper account can be audited.

1

Extracts from Fleta as given by F.H. Cripps-Day, The Manor Farm, London, 1931, pp.47, 48. Also see Fleta Vol.2, eds, H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, Seldon Soc. Vol.72, (1955), p.241.

2

N.J. Hone, The Manor & Manorial Records, London, 1906 p.68. Also see Fleta, as cited above, pp.241-3.

S.19. Item, it is his business to know accurately how many obole loaves of bread are made out of a quarter of corn. These the panter has to receive by tally from the baker. Also (to know) how many joints and loaves are required by the household on ordinary days.

S.20. Also he must have one copy of the triplicate tally about the corn and rye delivered to the bakery by the provost.

S.21. Finally, all the servants are jointly and severally liable to the seneschal in the discharge of their duties; and each is bound to bear witness to all that is done.<sup>1</sup>

Possibly in the thirteenth century, at Blakemere, the seneschal's position conformed to these model regulations; on the other hand, perhaps these tracts never did reflect actual practice. As Maitland says of Walter of Henley's writing, 'we must be careful before we treat it as an exponent of the traditional mode of agriculture for evidently Walter was an enlightened reformer'.<sup>2</sup>

At all events, at Blakemere by the fifteenth century, practice was not in accordance with these old-fashioned precepts. There is no evidence that the seneschal had any household duties such as are detailed by Fleta and it is quite clear that the holder of the office of senescallus hospicii had taken over all responsibility for the domestic side of the lord's establishment. Moreover all the seneschal's agricultural duties as summarised by Hone are undoubtedly transferred to the bailiff, with possibly only a final supervisory authority vested in the seneschal.

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Extracts from Fleta as given by F.H. Cripps-Day, op. cit., pp.54-6. Also see Fleta, p.243. Denholm-Young, op. cit., p.67, n.5 writes that in Fleta 'there is a reference to a Seneschallus hospicii who may be distinct from the land-steward'. This is a tentative remark, and indeed open to dispute since the term seneschallus hospicii is nowhere used in this passage of Fleta (cap. 72); rather, it appears that the author is referring to one individual for both estate and domestic duties.

2

Maitland, Domesday Book & Beyond, Cambridge, 1897, p.397.

However, the seneschal's responsibilities in respect of the manorial courts remained intact. When holding the courts at Blakemere his expenses (the normal rate for which would seem to be 8d per day,) were always paid by the bailiff, and his fee of 100s was a charge upon the bailiff up till 1404; afterwards this fee does not appear on the bailiff's charge and would appear to have been paid by the receiver. Possibly this change was part of the reorganisation which also affected the collection of rents.<sup>1</sup> This fee is not large compared with that received by the seneschal of Berkhamsted in 1300, who received a yearly fee of £15.6.8d and two robes with fur, as well as hay, litter and firewood,<sup>2</sup> but it is likely that the bailiff of each manor in which the seneschal held courts would pay a similar fee. The seneschal, when mentioned in the Blakemere accounts, is usually termed 'seneschal of the lordships of Blakemere, Marbury, Cheswardine and Wroockwardine', or of 'all the (Talbot) Lordships in the county of Salop', so that his combined fee from Shropshire could easily come to over £20.

In addition to holding the courts at Whitchurch, a specially mentioned duty of the seneschal is that of coming to the fairs held there twice yearly pro nundinis custodiendis causa malefactorum.<sup>3</sup> This entry, found from 1400 onwards, is another indication of the lawlessness of the area at this time. In 1418-19, in bailiff William

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See below, Introduction III, p.73.

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Bennett, op. cit., p.58.

3

Bailiff's Accounts, 1399-1400, 1402-3, 1407-8, etc. For grant of fair see Calendar of Charter Rolls, V, p.174, grant made 3 November 1362, for fair to be held on the Vigil, day and morrow of the feast of St Simon and St Jude, i.e., 27, 28, 29 October.

Fleccher's account, the phrase et villa gubernand' causa malefactorum is added.

The seneschal was a member of the lord's council; this can be seen from a bailiff's account where there is the heading Expense senescalli et aliorum de consilio domine.<sup>1</sup> The lord's council, like the personage of the seneschal, is difficult to discern in the records. The importance of this body cannot be over-estimated. The lawyers, seneschals, advisers, auditors and administrators known collectively as the consilium domini worked together like a combination of the modern estate office, family solicitor and personal secretary, spending their lives in the service of the great landowners.<sup>2</sup> Few indications of its activities survive in existing records. In fact apart from references to the lord's council in relation to expenses, and the inference that members of the council took part in the Audit, there are only slight references to the lord's council such as that in the receiver's account of 14-15 Henry VI where the purchase of cloth which is given to a blind man is approved ut per elemosinam domini ex ordinacione consilii eiusdem domini.

As a member of the council the seneschal must have been in some ways a confidential agent of the lord. A room was kept for his visits to Blakemere.<sup>3</sup> In 1399-1400, the bailiff paid his expenses for coming to

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Bailiff's Account, 9-10 Henry IV, 1407-08.

2

On the subject of councils see G.A. Holmes, The Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth Century England, Cambridge, 1957, pp.76-7; R.I. Jack, The Grey of Ruthin Valor, Sydney, 1965, pp.51-2 and J.T. Rosenthal, 'The Estates and Finances of Richard, Duke of York 1411-1460' in Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History II, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1965, pp.178-81.

3

See above, Introduction I, p.3.

Blakemere on the lady's business 'the household being absent'. He often had the responsible task of escorting quantities of cash to their destination; for instance in 1397-98 he and the receiver of Blakemere went four times to Corfham and to Ludlow to deliver money there. In addition to receiving all court dues and fines he also received the cash (amounting to 44s in one instance) from tolls and prise of ale at Whitchurch and he presumably received these items from all these Talbot manors in this area which were his responsibility. He must have travelled widely in the course of his duties and have had opportunities to display administrative qualities of no mean order.

Seneschals were often men of substantial family who, in addition to their paid posts in the service of some great lord, also took up positions in local government and appeared not to find these two roles incompatible. Whilst being of the 'affinity' of some great lord, they took advantage of being also members of the floating civil and local government service to build up their own family fortunes. There is no doubt that if the seneschals of the great landowners could be identified and then their careers 'namierized', a great deal of light would be thrown on the processes of local government and also on the dynastic struggles which took place amongst the baronial classes.

A table of the principal office holders in the Blakemere lordship has been constructed and placed at the end of the introduction.<sup>1</sup> In addition to those offices already mentioned, it includes the office of Receiver of the lordship, who was responsible for garnering all the cash receipts from the bailiff and

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See below, pp.121-2.

rent collectors, transferring the cash to the lord, and providing cash for certain activities within the lordship. Where the accounts of an official exist, his name has been underlined; in addition names of the officials whose accounts are presented in this thesis have been starred. Sources for the information concerning officials whose accounts do not exist are given in the footnotes; the seneschal did not produce accounts. The accounts are normally for the period from Michaelmas to Michaelmas and the date column is headed accordingly. If any account is for a differing period, its dates are given in footnotes since these may possibly indicate that the official held the same office for some time preceding or subsequent to the Michaelmas period.

It was hoped that the construction of this table would throw light on the careers of the officials concerned and thus give some idea of individual length of service and movement between offices. It shows two notable instances of progress up the administrative ladder which service in a noble household provided. Walter Wodburne is first encountered in 1400-01 as a custos of the foreign household of Lord Furnivalle. It seems likely that he first came to Shropshire from Sheffield with Lord Furnivalle: a surname ending in burn is likely to be a northern one, and Wodburne obviously knew the North of England, since he was sent to Bywell in Northumberland to collect Furnivalle rents. His service with the foreign household stretches probably to 1403, and he is next found as third household steward of the lord in 1416-17; this may not have been at Blakemere but at one of the other households. In 1417-18 he is receiver of Blakemere and also holds the important position of receiver general of the lord's



English estates. There are, unfortunately, apparently no receiver-general's accounts in existence, and holders of this office are only rarely mentioned.<sup>1</sup>

The second example is John Wenloc, whose father had been employed in Lord Richard's service; he is first mentioned in the account of Walter Wodburn (1400-01) where he receives 2 ells of blue cloth for Christmas, price of an ell, 2s.4d. It is not known what type of servant in the Blakemere household received blue cloth. The general colour for the livery would seem to be green, while the squires wore some white garments.<sup>2</sup> In the Clare household of fifty years earlier, blue cloth was worn by the clerks or as a supertunica on top of green cloth by the armigeri.<sup>3</sup> John Wenloc is next described as servienti domini, that is, a servant of Gilbert, 5th Lord Talbot, in the household account of 1417-18 where he was undertaking transactions with a draper; his fee as a serviens was 20s per annum. In 1419-20 he was steward of the household at Blakemere. Some time after Michaelmas 1419, John Wylym, receiver and bailiff of Blakemere was murdered. [In the Bailiff's account for 1419-20 there is an entry claiming expenses for escorting Wylym's murderer, Henry Bykeley, to Shrewsbury Castle]. John Wenloc, whilst remaining household steward, then assumed the receivership of Blakemere for the rest of that year. The next year Wenloc is found as receiver

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Pollard, op. cit., p.293 et seq. discusses in detail the administration of the estates and states that the office of receiver-general did not come into full existence until 1422, when Richard Legett was appointed. The terminology Receiver-general as applied to Walter Wodburn here may not imply quite the same position as later. It is quite clear that, as Dr Pollard states, the individual receiverships in each area were the main administrative units until the early 1420s.

2

See this thesis, Vol.2, pp.28, 29.

3

Musgrave, op. cit., p.50.

[it is not known whether he was also household steward], and his account reveals that in addition to his stipend of 20s per annum he had been given an annuity from the farm of Heathhouse for the term of his life and that of his wife Margaret, valued at 48s per annum. He is found as receiver ten years later and probably retained that position for the rest of his life. He died in 1462-63 and his son John also took possession of his land in Whitchurch. After the Countess Margaret's death this John served Sir Humphrey Talbot. In the second John's will in 1477, a chantry was to be founded in the Church of St Andrews, Baynard Castle, to pray for the souls of the Earl and Countess of Shrewsbury, for John Wenloc (presumably himself) and Isabella his wife and also Richard and Jane Legett.<sup>1</sup> Richard Legett was receiver-general of all the Talbot lands and from this placing in John's will it would appear possible that John had married his daughter Isabella. John Wenloc and Richard Legett therefore, who had both spent long years in the service of the Talbots, possibly saw their children married to each other and continuing that service.<sup>2</sup>

Incidentally, Wenloc did not take over Wylym's place as bailiff; Robert Daykin filled that position. There is only one case in this period of a bailiff becoming a household steward: John Walsch, bailiff in 1410-11, is found as household steward in 1418-19. However, even one such example, together with other evidence, shows that although the bailiffs were obviously men of practical agricultural knowledge, they were not

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See N.G. Nicholas, *Testamenta Vetusta i*, London, 1826, pp.343-4 for will (1477) of John Wenloc the servant of Sir Humphrey Talbot.

2

Pollard, *op. cit.*, pp.296-301, 304, gives a full account of Richard Legett and his service to the Talbots.

what one might term 'yokels' but men of administrative talents and experience. Several of the bailiffs (e.g., David Maceson) were stewards of the court, and the luckless John Wylym was receiver as well as bailiff.

The family at Blakemere. The various departments of the household continued to function, although on a more restricted scale, when the family was not resident. It is not easy to establish how much of each year the family spent at Blakemere since household records for other Talbot establishments such as those at Painswick, Eccleswall or Castle Goodrich no longer exist. Even among the relatively numerous Blakemere accounts, the household books or journals, which kept a daily account record and usually listed the names of those personages staying in the household, have not survived.

The entire way of life of the medieval baron demanded constant journeying. He travelled to look to his estates, to be present at audits, to hold sessions, to attend to the many duties of royal and local administration, which were inescapably his lot in life. In addition, in the early part of the fifteenth century, the Welsh uprising meant even more travelling for this family, since so large a proportion of their estates were in a position to be affected by the rebels.

The Talbots had a chain of estates, which were within easy travelling distance of each other, and in each locality there were established residences for the lord. These estates stretched along the borders of Wales 'from Marbury in South Cheshire through Whitchurch in North Shropshire, Corfham near Ludlow in South Shropshire, Credenhill near Hereford and Goodrich on the Wye in South Herefordshire to Painswick on the Cotswolds' edge in South Gloucestershire'.<sup>1</sup> In the years before

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Pollard, op. cit., p.8.

Lord Richard's death and the later troubled times it is possible to see the family following an almost halcyon round, journeying through the Marchland visiting their various residences, staying at the country towns and making the occasional excursion to London or places of pilgrimage.

The only way these movements can now be traced is by entries in the receivers' or bailiffs' accounts of money delivered to Lord Richard or Lady Ankaretta at various places, or by other, quite incidental, references to them. Perhaps in the absence of direct records it will not be considered entirely indefensible if, for the sake of illustration, the clues to travel which have been gathered from a five-year period are listed as though in one year, to make the semblance of a normal annual round. In October and November, Lord Richard and Lady Ankaretta were in London,<sup>1</sup> in January at Eccleswall. In February they were at Shrewsbury for three days to hold the sessions there and then in the same month on to Chester again for three days to hold sessions there.<sup>2</sup> Blakemere, conveniently situated on the road between Shrewsbury and Chester, was surely visited then. They were back in March at Chester<sup>3</sup> again for sessions, followed by a visit to Holywell on pilgrimage.<sup>4</sup> They were at Painswick,<sup>5</sup> in April and again in August, then at Blakemere before moving to Goodrich in September.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Receiver's Account 13-14 RII 1389-90, 1415-RII 1390-91.

<sup>2</sup> Receiver's Account 13-14 RII 1389-90.

<sup>3</sup> Receiver's Account 15-16 RII 1391-92.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Receiver's Account 13-14 RII 1389-90.

<sup>6</sup> Household steward's Account 17-18 RII 1393-94.

It has been suggested that Lord Richard had a certain fondness for Eccleswall and possibly that he undertook various new building enterprises and improvements there.<sup>1</sup> Lady Ankaretta surely had an attachment to Blakemere. It was her own family's principal seat and in the early days of her first marriage John, and probably other of her children, were born there. She spent Christmas there with her second husband in 1401, since Whitchurch men came with an 'interlude' to play before them on the Feast of St Stephen.<sup>2</sup> In the year before she died, two of her daughters, Anne and Alice, had their betrothal ceremonies there.<sup>3</sup> In the same year (1411-12), by the account of gifts delivered to her, she was there at least in August and September and although there is no mention of Christmas, it seems possible that she was there either then or at least for a large part of the year, since such a large quantity of exotic spices was consumed.<sup>4</sup>

It is not known where she was when the Welsh were active, but as soon as the area was pacified she obviously was frequently there, sending messages from Blakemere to Devon in October 1410 and to Suffolke in January 1411. Her son Thomas was also at Blakemere with her some of the time; he was sent to Sheffield to his elder brother John and then on to London in November 1410.<sup>5</sup> Lady Ankaretta was buried in St Alkmund's Church, Whitchurch,

<sup>1</sup> Pollard, op. cit., p.395.

<sup>2</sup> Custos of the Foreign Household, Account 3 Henry IV, 1401-02.

<sup>3</sup> Household Steward's Account, 12-14 HIV 1411-12.

<sup>4</sup> 66 lbs in all. It seems reasonable to assume that in spite of the medieval fondness for spices, the ordinary food for the servants, etc., would be plainer since spices were so expensive.

<sup>5</sup> Receiver's Account 12 HIV 1410-11.

and probably, therefore, died at Blakemere. Although there is nowhere any hint of her personality, when considering the events of her sixty-two years of life, it is tempting to see her as an indomitable character, skilful in the management of her estates and her children's future.

Her son Gilbert, whose life was spent in warfare and not in the more tranquil manner of his father Lord Richard, was buried at Whitchurch although he died in France. There is an account for the wood spykyng nail for the herse and also for candles and for the wake and black cloth for the mantelet.<sup>1</sup>

Gilbert's wife, the Portuguese Beatrice, must have spent much of her time, in the year before his death, at Blakemere since she acted as household steward. Henry Samon, Blakemere household steward in 1416-17, for some unknown reason relinquished his post half-way through his yearly term, and Lady Talbot herself took over the household duties. She may well have found this 'office' an agreeable occupation in a quiet place, whilst her husband and his retinue were absent in France. That she did take over the actual duties of the household is clear from the way it is phrased in the account, Domina de Talbot gerens officium senescalli hospicii domini in ultima medietate anni precedentis habet de superplus' nihil.

Beatrice must have become household steward shortly after the birth of the only child of this marriage, a daughter, Anchoret. This child later stayed at Lathom in the household of Sir John Stanley, whose ward she was, for some time, possibly while her mother went to Normandy and accompanied the Queen of England, an

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<sup>1</sup>

Bailiff's Account 6 H V, 1418-19.

event mentioned briefly in an estate account.<sup>1</sup> Anchoret died when she was only five years old and in the account<sup>2</sup> which mentions her death there is a note of money given to the minstrels at the Stanley house and to Colyn Trumpet whilst she was there.<sup>3</sup> Her mother sent a gentlewoman to Holywell on pilgrimage and also sent Wennllyan oratrix domine on pilgrimages, events most likely connected with the child's illness and death. The mention of Beatrice's pet popinjay, in the same account, though quite matter of fact, sounds a pathetic note in these circumstances. Gilbert's brother Richard Archbishop of Dublin and eight other persons stayed at Blakemere for three weeks in Lent and Lady Beatrice was there for three weeks after Easter in 1421. Blakemere, even when not used continuously as a residence, was extremely useful to members of the family who could use it on their numerous journeys to Ireland, Anglesey or in the Marches.

The next mistress of Blakemere must also have spent some time at this residence before the end of the period which is being considered. Margaret was the eldest co-heir of Richard 13th Earl of Warwick. There is some

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Bailiff's Account 7-8 H V 1419-20.

2

Receiver's Account 8-9 H V 1420-21.

3

Gervase Mathew has 'a theory that Sir John Stanley was the patron of the Gawain Poet'. See his work The Court of Richard II, London 1968, p.166. If this theory is correct and if minstrels were a regular feature of the household, the Stanley household could have been a seat of old-style provincial culture. The Gawain poet may also be the author of Pearl, an allegory on the death of a young child. The death of infants was a frequent occurrence in the middle ages and Pearl and Gawain and the other two South West Lancashire poems in the same manuscript have been dated slightly earlier than this period. This tenuous connection is nevertheless worth noting.

dispute about the date of her marriage to John Talbot<sup>1</sup> but she must have been married earlier than the date given in the Complete Peerage, since she spent Christmas 1424 at Blakemere and the first child of their marriage, a daughter, would appear to have been born, died, and buried in Whitchurch, before September 1425.

The Family in the Household Accounts. Some information about various members of the family can be gained from the accounts in this edition. The first account, that of Thomas Clerc the steward, for 1393-4, belongs to the period just before the end of Ankaretta's first marriage, since Richard Talbot died in September 1396. There were (at least) nine children, five sons and four daughters, of his marriage with Ankaretta Le Strange, but none of them is mentioned in this first surviving account. The only details concerning the family which this account gives are, first, the gift of corn sent from Corfham, near Ludlow, by Ankaretta's mother; Mary (FitzAlan), who, a widow for thirty-five years, was known as the Lady of Corfham and apparently spent much of her time on her dower property in South Shropshire, and, secondly, the moving of the Lord and Lady with their household to Goodrich Castle in the late summer.

Some time in 1400-01, Ankaretta became the second wife of Thomas Neville, Lord Furnivalle. To this period belongs the second roll here transcribed, the account for

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Pollard, op. cit., p.37, points out that Lady Margaret Talbot was a supervisor of Sir William Talbot's will on 14 April 1425 and cites The Register of Henry Chichele vol.ii; ed., E.F. Jacob, Oxford, 1938, p.326. The deed which the Complete Peerage cites, then at Castle Hale Painswick, is no longer traceable. As Pollard proves that Talbot did not fight at Verneuil in August 1424, it is indeed quite probable that the marriage was on 6 September but in 1424, not 1425; and that they were married for the whole period of this account roll (1424-1425).



1401-02 of Walter Wodburn, keeper of Lord Furnivalle's foreign household at Blakemere. Lord Furnivalle is mentioned in this account where under the heading 'Necessities' is the entry 'also paid for 1 medicine for the Lord for Colikapassyon, 2s'. This document mentions some members of Ankaretta's family by her previous husband: Elizabeth, her daughter had a gown cleaned ('spurg') on the last day of December and in May was paid 40s; a horse, value £10, was bought for Gilbert Talbot, her eldest son, from the rector of Whitchurch; William, another son, had a gown lined with two ells of white cloth; and Thomas, yet another son, gave 20d at Whitchurch in oblacione, ad primam missam. There is a reference to trimming with fur the gowns domini et domine ac puer which apparently refers to the families of both Ankaretta and Lord Furnivalle by their previous spouses.

The third account roll, that of Robert Skynner for 1411-12, belongs to the period of Ankaretta's second widowhood. This year saw the betrothal of two of her daughters from her first marriage: Anne to Hugh Courtney, Earl of Devon, and Alice to Sir Thomas Barre. An account is here rendered of the wax used in candles and tapers at their betrothal, and in the same year Alice is referred to as married; fodder is provided for the horses of Thomas Barre et Alicie uxoris eius. Ankaretta died at the age of sixty-two in June following this account 1413. She was buried in St Alkmund's Church at Whitchurch; in the receiver's account for 14-15 Henry VI, the item of 4s for 8lbs of wax for candles burning before the tomb of Lady Ankaretta Talbot there is brought to the charge.

The fourth household account here presented, that of John Walsch steward and Thomas Hemmyngbrough clerk of the

kitchen, is for the household of Gilbert, Lord Talbot at Blakemere, for the year 1417-18, that is in the early years of his second marriage. It is in this account that Lady Beatrice is said to have acted in the office of Household Steward for part of the previous year. The only other family members mentioned in this fourth account roll are Gilbert's brother, Thomas, who sent a gift of salmon from Ireland, and his other brother, Lord Furnivalle, against whose arrival at Blakemere wheat was purchased. Gilbert's brother, Richard, had been Archbishop of Dublin since 20 December 1417; Lord Furnivalle was the King's Lieutenant in Ireland; and there were numerous strong family connections with Ireland. Lord Furnivalle's visit to Blakemere must have been before April 1418 for by that date he is known to have been back in Ireland. This account also gives the information that during the whole accounting period Lord Talbot was in the King's service in France and, in fact, shortly after the end of this account, on 19 October 1418, he was killed at the siege of Rouen.<sup>1</sup>

The fifth household account, that of John Wenloc, steward of the household of Lady Talbot for 1419-20, belongs to the period when Beatrice was a widow. It is in this account, incidentally, that we learn that this year Whitchurch<sup>2</sup> was destroyed by fire. Beatrice, Lady

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A date commemorated in the heading of a Blakemere bailiff's roll, a xix die Octobris anno regni regis Henricii quinti post conquestum sexto quo die Gilbertus dominus Talbot obiit.

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Fires such as this over the centuries must have been responsible for the development of the byelaws described in the article by E. Hopkins 'The Byelaws of Whitchurch in 1636' Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society Vol.56, Pt.II, 1959, pp.180-4, esp. pp.180-1. 'These laws were ordained, by the great Inquest of the Manor of Whitchurch at a court leet held at Whitchurch on 28 April 1636. They cover a variety of subjects, and the penalties range from 1/- to 4/-. There are ten  
(footnote continued p.53)

Talbot, had occasion to send messages to speak with the Duke of Bedford when he was in Shrewsbury. Possibly this matter concerned the respiting of Beatrice's homage and her enjoyment of her husband's estates, since the Letter Close of 23 October 1419 to the Escheator in Salop, is tested by John Duke of Bedford. John Wenloc, the steward, was sent during this period to the place of Sir John Stanley at Lathom. From another account we know that Lady Talbot's daughter lived for a period at least in the Stanley household.

The sixth and last account transcribed here is that of Richard Kenleye for the year 1424-25. John Lord Talbot, as already proved, was now married to Margaret daughter of the Earl of Warwick. There is a paragraph dealing with the expenses of the Lord and Lady, and mention of money received by the steward from the Lord presumably then at Blakemere in August 1425. Two men from Shrewsbury performed a play before Lady Margaret on Twelfth Night. There are noticeably lavish preparations for Christmas

(footnote2 continued from p.52)

pages of laws and penalties in all, the last law detailing the names of those responsible for maintaining the fire equipment of the town. Fire precautions, in fact, figure prominently among the matters dealt with.... Keeping the town clean and healthy was obviously of prime importance to all inhabitants; equally so was the prevention of fire in days when houses were built close together and were constructed of highly inflammable materials. For these reasons it was essential to lay down detailed regulations for fire-fighting, particularly for the dry summer period. Thus, from 1st May to 31st August, inhabitants had to set a pail of water at their door every night for "danger of ffier". Inhabitants were to take every precaution against fires starting in their houses; chimneys and ovens were to be kept properly repaired either with brick or clay, and householders might be fined 6/8d. for keeping a fire in an unsafe chimney or oven. No-one was to lay any hay, straw, fern, wood or any other combustible matter within 12 feet of any chimney, oven or other place where fire or candles were much used, the penalty being 13/4d. Brewing or baking or heating an oven or a kiln before four in the morning or after eight at night was also forbidden "to prevent further dangers". Tanners were not to dry bark upon their kilns. No fire was to be carried uncovered in the streets, but was to be carried in some iron or brass or earthen pan, chafing dish or the like'.

in this account. The costs for the funeral and burial of the daughter of Lady Margaret are given and finally there is mention of an oblation made on the anniversary of the death of Lord Jehn's mother, Ankaretta.

Naturally when the family was in residence the number of staff increased, since the family would be accompanied by members of the Council, the staff of the Chamber, esquires and valets, messengers, heralds and minstrels, and also companion - servants for the ladies of the family. There are several of this later category;<sup>1</sup> two at least, Maunde (Maud) Over and Eleanor Camvyle, were married to men in the Talbot service. Special events were connected with the family visits, which were sometimes at festivals such as Christmas. There are the plays and interludes mentioned in the accounts, and visits from nearby families.

It should not however be imagined that Blakemere only came to life when the family was present. The Seneschal would arrive to hold the courts; when the twice-yearly fairs were held in Whitchurch the armigeri would arrive to help keep the peace; the auditor and clerk would make their yearly and possibly half-yearly visit. All these would stay in the household. Other relatives of the family would stay at Blakemere when making journeys; some, such as Lady Marion de Grene, Ankaretta's daughter, stayed for quite long periods.

It is quite possible to see from these accounts what a busy centre of local life and employment the house was. Carpenters, smiths and plasterers, workmen of every kind came to repair and build, and were boarded in the household. Some came great distances from other estates,

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Margery Colchester and Margaret Lighbury are other names encountered.

like John Justice the Carpenter, from Sheffield. A fisherman was hired seasonally to fish the lake. The provision of new liveries meant that tailors stayed in the household for several weeks to sew the garments. More exotic visitors came, such as the goldsmith, or the man displaying the dromedarie.<sup>1</sup> Servants of neighbours brought gifts of foodstuff, messengers arrived and alms and hospitality were extended in the name of the family. In the family's absence the house was not shut up with a skeleton staff. It remained the animating centre of the life of the area.

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<sup>1</sup>

Receiver's Account 17-18 RII, 1393-94.

### III : Household Accounting<sup>1</sup>

The phrase 'household accounts' is often a blanket description covering various types of medieval records which might, with profit, be distinguished by separate nomenclature. The term has been applied to accounts which arose from the household as an administrative organization dealing with the social and economic unit which the baronial estate and family interests constituted; it has been applied also to the household in its domestic or catering capacity.

In royal households, the first class of documents described above arose from administrative activities originally performed by a financial and secretarial office known as the wardrobe. The domestic offices which gave rise to the second type of accounts were the indoor domestic offices such as the kitchen, pantry and buttery, and, out of doors, the marshalsea with its charge of horses and transport. Professor Johnston describes this type of administrative structure clearly when writing of the Queen's Household in 1327-36.

General discipline and supervision depended upon the officer known as the steward of the household, who called to his assistance the chief officer of the wardrobe described as keeper or treasurer, when, daily if possible, he went through the accounts which were presented to him by a clerk on behalf of each of the domestic offices.... The steward of the household was like the manager who today is responsible for the smooth running of some great hotel. The guests all know him, all complaints reach him, the domestic staff do not look beyond him, he may be called into consultation

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Much of this section has, with the permission of the Australian National University, been printed prior to the presentation of this thesis as an article entitled 'The accounts of the Stewards of the Household at Blakemere: an example of Medieval Accounting Practice' in Abacus, Vol.IV, No.1, 1968, pp.51-72. Three minor calculating errors in 1424-25 account as printed there have been corrected here.

on many matters of general policy. Nevertheless, to those who are financing the concern, as essential or more so is the bookkeeper with his staff of clerks, who must set forth for audit at intervals, in detailed and intelligible form, a statement of receipts and expenditure. The latter was the work which the wardrobe did.<sup>1</sup>

It is not clear, however, to what extent the royal 'wardrobe' type of administrative structure was generally adopted or adapted in baronial or lesser households. The considerable household of Lady Elizabeth de Burgh, for instance, appears to have been organized on lines similar to those of royal households. At Blakemere on the other hand there is no evidence that 'wardrobe' bore any other meaning except its original one of the domestic office which dealt with clothes, wax and spice, and which actually housed cash and valuables. Both 'wardrobe' and 'domestic' types of household accounts can be found for daily, weekly, or yearly periods.

The Blakemere accounts are yearly domestic accounts and a summary of these is given later on pages 123-8. From them can be gained consolidated information concerning cash receipts and their source, and then under departmental headings, or sometimes commodity headings, can be seen the quantity of goods purchased and expended, and their cost; they describe on the dorse, under commodity headings, consumption, method of consumption, and the remainder to be accounted for next year. Such an account could only have been compiled with the help of some daily household record, together with writs, dockets and tallies to substantiate statements.

The type of domestic account which gives daily details could be organized in different ways. By the

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H. Johnston, 'The Queen's Household' in J.F. Willard and W.A. Morris, The English Government at Work 1327-1336, Vol.I, Medieval Academy of America, 1940, pp.266, 267.

beginning of the fifteenth century a recognized form for the 'journal' had emerged and was standard until the beginning of the sixteenth century; it was a form which could be used whether the household was stationary or peripatetic.<sup>1</sup> The earliest private household account in existence, that of Eleanor de Montfort for 1265 is a daily one.

The format of the daily account is unvarying. The clerk...first gives the day of the week to which the account applies. Then he mentions the presence of the countess, and gives the names of her important visitors. After this he gives the amount of grain used each day, mentioning whether it came from storage or was bought....After the grain comes the supply of wine and then of beer with the same note as to whether it was bought or came from storage. In the case of beer it was often brewed at the castle, and the amount of grain required is listed....The next item deals with the amount of supplies turned over to the kitchen, sometimes indicating where the meat or fish came from. The last item was from the stables and included the number of horses that had to be fed.<sup>2</sup>

The amount of money is totalled each day, and each membrane or rotulus is usually totalled; as this particular account

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Examples of daily accounts of itinerant households are to be found in (a) 'The Beauchamp Household Book', University of Birmingham Historical Journal, No.2, 1949-50, pp.208-18. (b) N. Denholm-Young, 'Edward of Windsor and Bermondsey Priory' English Historical Review, Vol.48, 1933, pp.431-43. (c) J. Webb, 'A roll of the household expenses of Richard de Swinfield, Bishop of Hereford' Camden Society Old Series, Vols 59 and 62, London, 1853, 1855. (d) Account of Bogo de Clare 12-13 Edward I, Joanna de Valentia, Countess of Pembroke, 23-24 Edward I, and Princess Elizabeth, Countess of Hereford, 32 Edward I, 'Illustrations of Domestic Manners during the reign of Edward I' by Reverend C.H. Hartshorne, in Journal of British Archaeological Association, Vol.XVIII, 1862, pp.66-75, 145-52, 213-20, 318-32. See also M.S. Giuseppi, 'The Wardrobe and Household Accounts of Bogo de Clare, A.D. 1284-6', Archaeologia, Vol.70, 1918-20, pp.1-56. For a translation of an account for moving a household see the household account of Edward Duke of York, 1409 translated in Chaucer's World, compiled by E. Rickert, ed. C.C. Olson and M.M. Crow, London, 1948, pp.248-51. The Duke's household was moved from Cardiff Castle to Handley Castle, Worcestershire. See also the article by Grace Stretton, 'The Travelling Household in the Middle Ages', Journal of the British Archaeological Association, New Series, Vol.XL, 1935, pp.75-103.

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M.W. Labarge, 'Eleanor de Montfort's Household Rolls', History Today, Vol.XI, No.7, London, 1961, pp.490-500, and A Baronial Household of the Thirteenth Century, London, 1965, pp.194-201.



is incomplete, the final method of totalling cannot be seen. Expenses for spices as well as wax are recorded on the front of the roll and fitted into daily expenditure whenever settlement was made. The other main types of expenditure (wine, wages, clothes) are listed separately on the back of the membranes. So that already in these early years, although in roll and not book form, the later format of the liber hospicii with food consumption, listed daily and carefully differentiated between store and purchase, and sections with commodity headings giving details of expenditure and purchases, can be seen.

A later daily account, that for the Le Strange household at Hunstanton in Norfolk in 1344 is of a similar type; this family is another branch of the Le Strange family who had held Blakemere, but the household at Hunstanton is obviously a much smaller one. An entry for one week runs as follows:

Sunday: For break baked, 6 bz. wheat and 2 bz. maslin. For meat and 1 quarter of a wether bought from Alan Grey, 16d. For pork bought from R. Gardel, 1d.  
From stock 1 pig for the larder also 1 hen.  
Monday & Tuesday: From stock 2 hen, 1 capon.  
Wednesday: For plays bought,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. For a half a gallon of milk bought from Richard, the dairy man,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d.  
Thursday: Feast of Apostles Simon and Jude: For eggs bought by R. Chaplain, 1d. For mustard bought by G. Mass, 1d. Also for mustard bought at Hecham,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d.  
From stock 1 hen.  
Friday: For plays bought at Holm,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. For ale brewed  $\frac{1}{2}$  qr. malted barley.  
Saturday: From stock as above. For butter bought from Richard, the dairy man,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.  
Total cash,  $22\frac{1}{2}$ d.                      Total of wheat, 6 bz.  
Total of maslin, 2 bz.                      Total of malt,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ qr.  
Total of stock, 1 pig, 1 capon, 4 hens.<sup>1</sup>

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Norfolk and Norwich Record Office, Le Strange Collection, N.H. 4. See also Hamon Le Strange, 'A Roll of Household Accounts of Sir Hamon Le Strange of Hunstanton, Norfolk, 1347-8', Archaeologia, 2nd Series, Vol. XIX, London, 1917-18, pp.111-20.

A slightly different type of daily account which gives total daily expenditure in cash terms only, listed under the nine 'departments' of the household, is to be found in an account of Joan, widow of Henry IV. One day's accounts run thus:

Sunday, 17 March at Ledys: Dispensary, 2s.4d;  
Buttery, 10s.9½d; Wardrobe, 6s.7½d; Kitchen,  
19s.2½d; Poultry house, 16d; Scullery, 3d;  
Saucery, 2½d; Hall, 11d; Wages (Vadia), 5s.4d.  
Total 45s.3d.

The expenditure for each day is totalled, then that of each week and then that of each month. Lists of important visitors are given in the margin. There are also sections on gifts, oblations and prestita et remanencia ('loans' or 'payments' and 'remainder'). This type of account seems to be a preliminary document for the final 'wardrobe' type of account. However, royal accounts are to some extent different perhaps because of the more complicated methods of disbursement,<sup>2</sup>

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Extracts from John Rylands Library, Latin MS 238. Account book of the household (in the form of a diary of Joan de Navarre, widow of Henry IV) 17 March 1420-7 March 1421 as transcribed on pp.276-7 of an article by A.R. Myers, 'The Captivity of a Royal Witch', Bulletin of John Rylands Library, Vol.24, Manchester, 1940, pp.263-84.

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See for example N. Denholm-Young, loc. cit., p.433. 'The way in which the majority of the payments were made reveals the organisation of the household into departments, of which there were five, with a clerk at the head of each: wardrobe, marshalsea, kitchen, pantry and buttery. The marshalsea was subdivided into the stable and the wages' office, payments to which are made super officio stabuli and super officio vadiorum respectively. The clerk of the kitchen was at the head of six sub-departments: the "great kitchen", the larder, the salsary, the scutellary, the poultry office, and aula et camera. We may suppose that each of these offices, including the eight subordinate ones, rendered accounts in writing. It will be observed that, although payments are described as being made to a clerk in charge of one of these five departments, and if necessary on the account of one of his subordinates, this is only a fiction, the person through whose hands the money was paid being in fact the person to whom debt was due. The clerk incurs the debt and must account for it, but the cash passes direct from a central fund to the creditor. It is the discharge side of this central fund which is represented by the document here considered, and this would be under the control of the treasurer, William de Cusaunce'.

and so may not be relevant to the picture it is desired to draw here of the records of non-royal households.

In the account for 1420-1 of Elizabeth Berkeley, Countess of Warwick, can be seen an example of the final form a household book took with its daily details and supporting information.

The first seven folios contain a statement of the receipts of the keeper of the household, an account of the household provisions left over from the previous year, and a list ('Kalendarium') of the members of the household. Folios 8-34 are occupied by details of the purchase of household stores and stock, arranged by commodities - wine, corn, hay, oxen, spices and the like. The remainder of the volume is taken up by an elaborate household day-book - 'Journal' as the Ms. has it. Under each day are set forth the numbers of persons who sat down to each of the three principal meals, the names of guests and their arrivals and departures, and the consumption of food and provisions, either from stock or by daily purchase, by the six departments of the household - pantry, buttery, kitchen, poultry, wardrobe (which dealt with wax, candles, spices and linen) and marshalsea, the office responsible for the feeding and care of the horses in the lady's stable, and for transport arrangements when the household was on the move. Then follows the 'foreign' or outside payments (usually the lady's oblation), and finally the total sum expended by the household for the day. At the end of each month's journal there is a summary of provisions consumed - but without cash equivalents - and a final statement at the end of the account sets forth totals for the whole year.<sup>1</sup>

That this form was current for a whole century can be seen in the household book of Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, for his household chiefly at Thornbury in Gloucestershire for the Christmas quarter in 1507, which possesses the same features.<sup>2</sup>

This description of what a household book, journal or dieta was, and what information is provided for the accountant and auditor has been elaborated here, because unfortunately no journal or daily record survives for the

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C.D. Ross, loc. cit., pp.84-5.

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'Household book of Edward, Duke of Buckingham' transcribed by Lord Bagot, Archaeologia, Vol.25, 1836, pp.311 et. seq.

Blakemere household. This loss is to be regretted on many counts but possibly most of all because of information which could have been gained about visitors to such a troubled area during the early years of the century. However, from references in the yearly accounts which are the subject of this article, it is possible to deduce that the missing household book had a similar form to that of the Countess of Warwick. The Blakemere liber hospicii or jornale is cited as authority for the following information: details of the gallons of ale received by purchase as well as the amount of ale sent to rooms and used by the kitchen; the quantity of soup and horse provender made from white peas; purchase and slaughter of cattle; the acquisition of fish; purchase of wax, and indeed most items for household consumption. The liber also records transactions which took place away from Blakemere, for example the purchase of spices, rice, and oranges in London, and salt at Wyche; it also had entries relating to such items as hay, shoeing of horses, and the cutting and carriage of fuel. To keep track of the consumption of every kind of foodstuff, it seems likely that entries would have to be made daily. In fact this is stated once: 'and for meat...butter, cheese, milk and fish salt and fresh and other foodstuffs for the kitchen bought as detailed daily in the household book'; but, although in this particular entry it says daily, in fact the cost is subsequently given weekly. It seems reasonable to suppose that some grouping of items took place or possibly that the book was divided into sections. It is interesting in this connection to note that the account book of Munden's Charity at Bridport, although on a scale suitably reduced for its small household, may in some ways reflect the same sort

of arrangement as that deduced above.<sup>1</sup> The arrangement of the Munden's Charity book is as follows: weekly food accounts, followed by a yearly statement on miscellaneous expenditure in which there are breakdowns into sections: gifts, store, wages, upkeep of buildings, etc. Miss Wood-Legh in the introduction to this volume gives the information that the priest who kept this account book had been presented to his rectory by the Earl of Devon. 'This suggests at least the possibility of his having been previously in the Earl's service, in which case he may have seen something of the way in which accounts were kept in a great household and drawn upon that experience for guidance in execution of his task'. In the Blakemere accounts one can also see a household official, Roger Thresk, a receiver who was instituted to the living at Whitchurch at the presentation of his former employer, and it is probable that such two-way traffic between church livings and households was not uncommon.<sup>2</sup>

Charge and Discharge. The Blakemere documents in form and content are typical examples of the product of the medieval accounting system. The nature and method of this system have frequently been described.<sup>3</sup> Du Boulay has given one of the clearest expositions:

<sup>1</sup>

K.L. Wood-Legh (ed.), A Small Household of the XVth Century, Manchester, 1956, pp.xiv-xv.

<sup>2</sup>

See R.I. Jack, 'The ecclesiastical patronage exercised by a Baronial Family in the late Middle Ages', Journal of Religious History, Vol.3, 1964-5, pp.283-4. See also H.S. Bennett, Six Medieval Men and Women, Cambridge, 1955, p.59.

<sup>3</sup>

See for example N. Denholm-Young, Seignorial Administration in England, London, 1937, pp.120-51; F.B. Stitt, 'The Medieval Minister's Account', Bulletin of Society of Local Archivists, No.11, 1953, pp.2-9; D. Oschinsky, 'Medieval Treatises on Estate Accounts', Economic History Review, Vol.XVII, 1947, pp.52-154; J.S. Drew, 'Manorial Accounts (footnote continued p.64)

The medieval account was a dialogue between an accountant who was charged to answer for certain sums and an auditor with whom, agreeing that these sums were owing, he had to 'discharge' himself of all kinds of items he had disbursed or failed to collect. As these were 'allowed' by the auditor, so the total with which the accountant was initially charged dwindled. Even money just paid over to the auditor's master was made to count among the items of 'discharge'. At the end of the hearing (for an account was more like a plea than a piece of arithmetic) the accountant might still owe something to discharge himself completely - et debet - and this sum was usually carried on to a future occasion as arrears unless he had been shown culpable in some way. Conversely, he might have discharged himself of too much and found himself out of pocket, and thus be said to have a superplusagium, a surplus, which would be credited to him at the head of his next account. Or by handing over an exact balance he could go quit - et quietus est. The same method was followed with stock as with money: first there was stated what remained over from last year, then how many oxen (shall we say) had been added by purchase or in other ways, then how many had died and lastly how many remained at the moment of account. Medieval accounts retrace the doings of the past in order to fix responsibility upon particular men. To us this can be puzzling because the 'receipts' were not necessarily what had been really received, but only what ideally ought to have been received, and because the expense part of the account might include in-payments of money or allowances for value received which in fact amounted to receipts.<sup>1</sup>

And so in the Blakemere accounts as would be expected, the charge (the first section of the account), can consist of arrears from previous accountings (see account for 1424-25, for example), estimated values which were put on goods received either in the ordinary course of events from the bailiff, or from heriots, or of values put on items which were missing or disallowed at the audit,<sup>2</sup>

(footnote 3 continued from p.63)  
of St Swithun's Priory Winchester' in Essays in Economic History, Vol.II, London, 1962, ed. E.M. Carus-Wilson, pp.12-30; S.M. Jack, 'An Historical Defence of Single Entry Bookkeeping', Abacus, Vol.2, 1966, pp.137-58; and D. Oschinsky, 'Notes on the editing and interpreting of Estate Accounts', Pt.1 and 2, Archives, Vol.IX, No.42, 1969, pp.84-9 and Archives, Vol.IX, No.43, 1970. pp.142-52. See also R.H. Parker, 'Accounting History: a select Bibliography', Abacus, Vol.I, No.1, 1965.

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F.R.H. Du Boulay, Documents Illustrative of Medieval Kentish Society, Vol.XVIII, Kent Archaeological Society, Canterbury, 1964, p.42.

2

Such items were usually priced under the heading Vendicio super comptum.

as well as actual cash received from the lord, or from rents, and dues from tenants, or from the sale of goods.

The second part of the account, the discharge, details the way in which money was spent on various sections of the household and is normally set out under the headings (tituli) of the various sections of the household such as buttery, which lists ale and wine, pantry (wheat and grain), kitchen (meat and fish), wardrobe (spices, honey, fruit), stable (oats, hay and shoeing), and foreign or additional payments, a heading which covers any extraordinary expenses; occasionally however the name of the commodity is used as a paragraph heading instead. The account for 1393-94 is a departmental summary; the other accounts are commodity summaries or a mixture of both.

By adding up the cost of all the items in the discharge, the total expenditure is obtained, which sum is then subtracted from the total receipts or charge. Should there be a superplusagium, unless it was decreed by the lord that the steward was to stand this excess of expenditure over income out of his own pocket, the lord would reimburse him or allow him to reimburse himself from the receipts of the next year. In the account of Richard Kenleye 1424-5, the superplusagium quite clearly at one point has deducted from it the sums due to creditors. If the expenditure is less than the charge then the resulting debet is owed by the steward to the lord. If for some reason the debet cannot be paid by the steward or is not demanded by the lord at the time of audit, it will become an arrear, and, as such, part of the steward's charge in the following year. The

general view that arrears seldom equalled cash-in-hand is borne out by the Blakemere accounts.<sup>1</sup>

The third part of the account roll, to be found on the dorse, deals with the actual goods which were involved in the financial entries of the charge and discharge on the face of the roll. It details how much of the foodstuffs acquired for the household was actually consumed, and how much remains for the household in the following year. Usually cost and money values are not mentioned, only quantities of goods and the purpose for which they were used. However a cash value is put on the remanencia in the 1417-18 account of John Walsch. Any goods remaining would be accounted for at the audit in the following year.

In other words, as in the parable of the talents, the household official is personally responsible for his stewardship of his lord's assets, and the account he renders at the yearly audit displays 'the state of the game' over a whole series of often complicated transactions. That 'complicated transactions' is no mere form of words may be illustrated by following through one small item in the charge of Robert Skynner in 1411-12. Under the heading 'Wrockwardine' there is the entry: 'And for 15s received from John Leton reeve there, as the price of one ox from the heriot of John Smith as appears in the account of the said reeve'. One must not assume that John Leton sold the ox and gave 15s

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For a comprehensive note on this much discussed point see E.M. Myatt-Price, 'Cromwell Household Accounts 1417-1476' in A.C. Littleton and B.S. Yamey eds. Studies in the History of Accounting, London, 1956, p.106. See also R.R. Davies, 'Baronial Accounts, Incomes and Arrears in the later Middle Ages' Economic History Review, 2nd series, Vol.XXI, No.2, 1968, pp.220-1, who points out that arrears figures are three kinds (a) money in kind, (b) money which is to be paid off in instalments (respite or atterminated) and debts - desperate or otherwise.



to Robert Skynner, or that John Smith's family handed over 15s in cash, or that Robert Skynner sold the ox which John Leton had previously given him. What happened was that John Leton handed over the ox and Robert Skynner put the value of 15s on it. By turning to the account of goods on the dorse under the heading 'Bulls, oxen, heifers, steers and cows', we can see that Robert Skynner acquired from various sources 99 animals, one of which is this particular animal, the heriot of John Smith. After the 'reckoning' we are told that all except five were slaughtered. The next paragraph of the account shows that, having accounted for the beasts, the steward must now account for the carcasses which the household acquired by this slaughter. We are told that all these carcasses were consumed by the household. Robert Skynner is now left to account for the hides resulting from this slaughter and this he does in detail including one hide used in making a coracle 'nactante in le mere de Blakemere'.

We can see therefore that the apparent complication is rooted in complete actuality and is entirely logical; the mystification which medieval accounts of all kinds can on occasion induce in the modern reader would be incomprehensible to their contemporary compilers. However, it must be admitted that although the Blakemere household steward's accounts have the same general format, there are considerable variations between them in such matters as the order of the paragraphs and the way in which information is presented. The accounts do not follow a set pattern in the way that monastic accounts so often do, possibly because in a lay estate, centralized administrative procedures were not so

strongly developed.<sup>1</sup> The rather haphazard methods employed here and the disorderly manner of presentation is epitomized in a statement such as this:

and for 10s from the price of milk and butter from the produce of the cows of the manor's stock of Yockynsyate which the same steward has allocated below under the heading 'Allocations of fish caught in the lord's meres'.<sup>2</sup>

Such haphazardness is not an attempt to conceal dishonesty; it more often represents the actual event of accounting, for the clerk is writing as the steward remembers or checks the necessary tallies or subsidiary documents. These documents are in no sense a formal set of statements forwarded to headquarters in response to standard directives.

The state of preservation of the Blakemere bailiffs' accounts does not allow in every case for the figures for livery of home-produced goods to the household to be checked against the dorse, where details of the production and disposal of crops and animals would be recorded. But in the cases where it is possible the cash figures and the goods figures tally exactly. For instance, in the bailiff's account 1 Henry IV to 2 Henry IV under liberacio denariorum we can see that the total value of goods sold to the household is £19.15.1d; the bailiff costs these items as follows: 3 pigs, 4s.2d;

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On monastic conditions see E. Searle and B. Ross, Accounts of the Cellarers of Battle Abbey 1275-1513, Sydney University Press, 1967, pp.9-14; and pp.172-5 for bibliography of printed monastic domestic accounts.

2

E.M. Myatt-Price, 'Cromwell Household Accounts 1417-1476', loc. cit., p.108, also gives an amusing example of a paragraph which would seem to be entitled comprehensively enough 'Purchase of herrings, fish, sprats, hens, geese and salt' and yet it also contains entries relating to spices.

5bz. wheat, 4s.4d; 1 qr. 2 bz. rye, 9s.2d; 1 qr. barley, 4s.8d; 3½ bz. peas, 21d; 6 qr. 4 bz. oats, 17s. 4d; 65 loads of hay, 108s.4d; 1 bull, 6s.8d; 2 calves, 4s; 88 qr. oats, £11.14s.8d. By examination of the respective commodities on the dorse, it can be seen that these are exactly the quantities which are stated to have been delivered to the household. This amount as delivered to the household presumably could also be checked by comparison with the daily household book. It would be an easy matter for the auditors to search through the relevant pages for the items which the household steward maintained he had received from the bailiff. That the household book was searched at the audit and entries brought together for the relevant official's accounting can be seen in an attachment to the bailiff's account of 12-13 Henry IV.

The quantity of foodstuffs which the bailiff delivered to the household is also accounted for in the yearly account of the household steward, although in this case entries are made under the individual commodities not under any overall heading such as 'goods received from bailiff'.<sup>1</sup> It can therefore be seen that the transactions between bailiff and steward can be checked minutely, and that any cheating would be certain to come to light at the audit unless there was collusion between the two officials. Moreover it is unlikely that someone holding a responsible, well-paid and secure position, as the bailiff's at Blakemere obviously was, would be likely to jeopardize it by manipulating accounts for what could only be petty pilfering.

The items which are disallowed by the auditors in the accounts of the bailiff or any other Blakemere ministers are always those where the accountant acted on his own responsibility and either had no evidence of

<sup>1</sup> Except for account 1417-18, see Vol.2, pp.95, 105.

the transaction such as a tally or indenture, or else could not produce any authority from the lord in the shape of warrants, letters or writs.<sup>1</sup>

The audit process, is mentioned only briefly in the extant Blakemere accounts;<sup>2</sup> the only indication of the time of the year at which it was held at Blakemere, although outside the period under consideration, is in the receiver's account of 14-15 Henry VI when 17s is allowed for:

the expenses of Richard Legett receiver-general of the lord and auditor of the said lord staying here [Blakemere] for hearing and completing the accounts of the ministers, of this lordship with members, together with the expenses of the said ministers and others coming there on behalf of the lord for six days in October at the end of this account.

There are no receiver-general's accounts in existence, but the anomaly whereby the official who was the ultimate receiver of the cash profits of his lord's lands was also the auditor would no doubt be removed when he himself would be called upon to answer for his own 'stewardship' before the lord and his council.

There are several indications that the lord was present at the audit and was called upon to verify statements made by the accountant. For instance in the account of Thomas Clerc, receiver for 17-18 Richard II (he also held the position of household steward), under the heading liberacio denariorum, there is the entry:

And paid to the lord on various occasions as appears in detail in a certain schedule reserved

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As Barbara F. Harvey writes 'breve and littera in ministers' accounts betray written commands; preceptum and mandatum may refer to oral commands'. However oral commands seem to have needed the lord's acknowledgement at the audit. Walter de Wenlok, Abbot of Westminster 1283-1307; Royal Historical Society, Camden Society, 4th Series, Vol.2, 1965, p.11.

2

Pollard, op. cit., pp.307-9 gives details of the auditor's itinerary in 1433.

at this account and shown before the lord and which the lord acknowledges that he has received, £24.7s.7d.

This is crossed out, the considerably smaller sum of 53s.4d is substituted, and above is written 'because the lord repudiates this'. The next entry has a similar turn of phrase except that it is the lady who is involved; in this case the amount is acknowledged and allowed to stand.

The same account also shows that warrants were expected as the authority for expenses which were not usual. Under the heading expense domini et forincede, the entry 'And paid for the expenses of the lord staying at Shrewsbury, Thursday 2 July to hold the Sessions there, 57s' is crossed out, and above is written 'because he shows nothing concerning a warrant of the lord for this'.

Another case where a warrant is cited is in the receiver's account of 16-17 Richard II where there is mention of a 'standing warrant' for a payment to be made: 'And for Thomas Hynton's fee per year 40s. as appears by the lord's letter of standing warrant [de warrant' dormient']'.<sup>1</sup>

Another example in a bailiff's account runs 'and paid to William Huls and Robert Swanewyke by the lady's letter of warrant, sealed with her seal and delivered with this account, £4'.

Supporting Evidence and Documents. In the household accounts there is only one mention of a warrant but there are frequent references to other accounting aids such as cedule (schedules), papiri (paper accounts), abbreviamenta

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Thomas Hynton is described as armiger and is paid 20s for his services to the lady in the bailiff's account 23 Richard II-1 Henry IV.

(writs) and tallies. Of these aids examples have survived only of cedule (in this case lists of creditors) and papiri hospicii. An existing paper account for 12 Henry IV consists of a list of purchases of ale from various Whitchurch people, and it would appear from other references to papiri that these paper accounts did mostly deal with one type of merchandise, since there is mention of one each for wine, for oats, and for cattle. Perhaps it could be conjectured from the following sentence found at the beginning of the abovementioned paper account, that the paper accounts were periodically written up for tallies:

Item to the wife of Philip Higynson for 390 gallons of better ale taken, of which 83 gallons of ale were taken by John Uston, 107 gallons of ale by Thomas Pensax and 200 gallons of ale by the cook of the buttery after the return of the said Thomas as appears by tallies.

It might be that tallies were used when the transaction was a small one and also perhaps when the participants were illiterate.<sup>1</sup> Tally transactions include ale for the buttery, delivery of loaves by John the Baker, and the handing over of rents by the rent collectors.

Otherwise it would seem that indentures are used when the sums are large and when a degree of literacy could be assumed. For example, there is reference to an indenture between the household steward and a receiver, and also an indenture recording the receipts of cash from the lady's coffer in the absence of the lord.

Abbreuiamenta appear to have served the same purpose as tallies for small internal transactions; for instance, the delivery of quantities of corn for feeding partridge or for processing into loaves.

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<sup>1</sup>

In the Cromwell Household accounts, previously cited, 'the tally seems to have been used more for stock records than for money purchases'.

It is impossible to incorporate into this introduction to the household accounts an outline of the extremely complicated financial administration of the Talbot estates.<sup>1</sup> So many factors, including changes in the administrative structure, have to be taken into consideration when calculating the income, net value or profit from the estates that any attempt to set expenditure in the Blakemere household against family income, whether it be from the whole estates or from Blakemere alone, is not at the moment possible. It is clear that, although the system of administration can be reconstructed, a final calculation of the relation of household expenditure to total income cannot be made even for one year since a complete set of ministers' accounts and other necessary documents (i.e., receiver-generals' accounts in the later period, receivers' accounts, bailiffs', rent collectors' and household stewards' accounts plus court rolls) does not exist for any one year.<sup>2</sup>

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Pollard, op. cit., pp.293-314, 336-93 and esp. pp.384-93. Dr Pollard is engaged in writing an article on the profitability of the estates at present.

2

One change in the administrative structure occurred about 1409. Because of the Welsh devastation of the area the collection of rents by the bailiff in the early years of the fifteenth century grew more and more difficult and the bailiff's arrears became so large that the account he presented was quite unrealistic. This fact must have been recognised by the auditors because in the bailiff's account for 1409-10 (11-12 Henry IV) it is stated that the collectors of each vill are to render their own account and the rents of the free holdings are the responsibility of the receiver, so that the bailiff is no longer responsible for rents; his large arrears of that year, £62.-.2d are apparently cancelled and the next year he starts with a clean slate and only 4s of arrears. The fact that the bailiff's Recepte drop from £183 in 1408 to just over £80 in 1411 would be a puzzling one had not this note on the new accounting procedure survived.

As far as the study of the household is concerned, the most important conclusion to be drawn from this brief survey of the accounting and administrative procedures in use at Blakemere is that the household steward's accounts are the only sure way of knowing how much was spent on the various departments of the household. This statement is not the truism it appears to be, since it would be reasonable to assume that, given the existence of the receiver's and bailiff's accounts, it would be possible to work out how much it cost to maintain the household from (1) cash which the receiver accounts for as delivered to the household steward; (2) cash which the bailiff accounts for as delivered to the household steward; and (3) the value of the goods which the bailiff 'sold' to the household. However, this is not so because the household steward received cash from other sources also; namely at the hands of the lord or lady, or from officials other than the local Blakemere bailiff or receiver. For instance, in 1411-12, £14.18s.7d came directly from the lady's coffer, £3.6s.8d in cash from the reeve of Wrockwardine and £14.15s.4d from the reeve of Sutton (in addition to goods from these officials). In 1417-18, the household steward received £196.18s.4d from the lady's coffer in the lord's absence. In 1424-5, £10.13s.4d was given to him directly by the lord or his servant, and the sum of £101.14s.10d was received from the receiver-general. In addition there are always to be taken into consideration gifts in kind which were presented to the Talbots by relatives or individuals within the household's orbit, as well as heriot animals or tak pigs which were also consumed, and which as an accountable item only needed to appear on the court rolls, though they may occasionally occur on the



bailiff's accounts if the animals were subsequently handed over to him.

There was constant traffic in gifts of staple and luxury items of food between establishments such as Blakemere. These gifts could be of considerable worth: on one occasion, they are valued at as much as £6.19s.2 (1411-12). Such things are donated to the Talbot household as wheat, beans, a boar, a cow, salted salmon, capons, poultry, perch, a doe, bream, oysters, hay, a crane, wine, geese, partridges, and bitterns. They come from people of local eminence including the Prior of Shrewsbury, the Abbot of Combermere, Sir John Radcliffe, Sir Thomas Talbot, Lady Draycote, and also from various people who appear to be tenants.

Although the interest and comparative scarcity of household documents such as these edited here attract our attention, it must be recognized that a household steward's account must once have been almost as common a document as any other sort of medieval minister's account. That they have not survived in any quantity indicates that, naturally enough, their importance for their contemporaries was not great. Household accounts, unlike charters, had no evidential value; unlike court rolls they had no precedent value; they could not be used for purposes of financial comparison as could receivers' accounts, nor could they be used for such practical purposes as tracing rents or amounts of seed sown and crops gathered as could accounts of bailiffs.<sup>1</sup>

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M. Aston, Thomas Arundel, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1967, p.167, argues similarly for the lack of bishops' household records: 'To contemporaries such records were only of ephemeral value. Unlike his ecclesiastical registers, to which a bishop would need frequently to refer and which had to be handed over to his successors in the see, the accounts of his household would be unlikely to be wanted for record once their totals had  
(footnote continued p.76)

It is difficult to imagine for what purpose a daily household account would ever be needed once it had been brought to its yearly audit. The yearly accounts such as these for the Blakemere household would be required in the following year as evidence for the stock or provisions remaining, but otherwise would only be needed in the event of some zealous official wishing to compare the expenses of various years. In only one of the Blakemere accounts, that of John Walsch for 1417-18, does the steward attempt any analysis. After listing all his expenditure under commodity headings he then dissects it into main types such as, to pantry £18.10.8d, cellar £38.5s.4d, kitchen £46.0s.6d, etc. He then works out that a week's average expenses were 76s.4d, and by using the (now non-existent) journal he calculates the number of meals provided, that is 15,700, and determines that the cost of each meal is 2½d. Nevertheless the evidence for budgeting or economizing in medieval households is not great, and it is not at all certain that anyone connected with medieval housekeeping in the establishments of the nobility ever decreed, 'Next year less must be spent on ale, or spices, or meat, or wine'. The economizing which such an attitude would imply is quite foreign to medieval notions of generosity, largesse and munificence, which were regarded as necessary attributes for any person of rank. Once the auditors had allowed an item at the audit it was presumed that the transaction was fair and just and the amount consumed reasonable and fitting. Numerous attempts were indeed made during the fifteenth century to reform

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(footnote 1 continued from p.75)

been entered in the central financial documents...their long-term survival is fortuitous, and when we consider that Arundel's episcopate at Ely must have produced about 170 such accounts in all, it is not hard to understand contemporary treatment'.

the administration of the royal household, and there were 'detailed regulations of the consumption of food, light and fuel, the ordering of supplies, and the numbers and categories of approved personnel'.<sup>1</sup> Even there, however, the reformers were attempting to make the royal household cut its coat to fit the available cloth; they did not intend the lustre of the finished garment to be any the less. Moreover the plight of the royal household with its constant and extreme excess of expenditure over assets is not necessarily typical.<sup>2</sup>

Du Boulay's remark that an audit was more like a plea or a court hearing than a piece of arithmetic reveals the basic reasoning behind these and many other medieval accounts. The official rendering the account must give a true statement of his stewardship of the powers and assets invested in him by his lord, complete with all the warrants and authorities which his activities required. The lord and his auditors wished to know what the official had done, by what authority he had done it,

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A.R. Myers, The Household of Edward IV, Manchester, 1959, p.8. See also A. Steel, Richard II, Cambridge 1962, pp.161, 220.

2

See A.P. Newton, 'Tudor reforms in the Royal Household' in Tudor Studies presented to A.F. Pollard, ed. R.W. Seton-Watson, Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1924, pp.231-56, esp. p.234 where the royal position is succinctly described thus: 'The supply of the Household in the first half of the fifteenth century derived from two sources, the produce of the royal estates in money and the "kind", the King's "livelode" as Fortescue calls it, and the commodities and service that could be claimed from the subjects under traditional rights of purveyance and other analogous dues. There was no clear distinction between the supply of the King for what we now regard as the natural purposes and tasks of government, and his supply for his own maintenance and that of his children and personal servants...but the decay of the royal revenues under the Lancastrians was such that not merely was it impossible for them to discharge the expense of government, but the revenues were also insufficient to defray the actual living expenses of the King and Queen, and their attendants and they were reduced to serious financial straits'.

and what the result of his actions were. If he had erred and the results were unfortunate, the official nevertheless had to stand by his actions and eventually make them good.

Then, as now, there may well have been fraudulent office holders, and there may well have been varying types of malpractice. But it is surely misleading to assume that the procedures as described developed only in response to the need to detect such frauds. The primary purpose of the accounting practices, culminating in an audit, was to investigate whether the holder of an office was serving his lord's interests in a proper and diligent manner, and to record his actions and their consequences within a clearly defined area of responsibility. As a result, weak and unsatisfactory officials, as well as any fraudulent activities, would become known to the lord.

Considered as a human activity, the accounting procedure naturally reflects general medieval attitudes: the process is not hurried, repetition is not eschewed, and the accounting ritual with its written evidences is mannered and formalized as befits an hierarchical, and possibly under-employed, society. The questions whether or at what period medieval accounts were used to calculate financial profit and loss cannot be discussed in relation to this type of household accounts.<sup>1</sup> The economic functions of the medieval baronial household are to be found in the consuming of goods and the providing of 'domestic' services; one of its social functions was to create stable centres of confidence

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For a discussion on profit and loss account see S.M. Jack 'An Historical Defence of Single Entry Book-keeping' Abacus, Vol.2, 1966, pp.153-5.

throughout the political and commercial world. The establishment was not necessarily supposed to be making a profit.

IV : Food Acquisition, Cost of Living and Diet

The pattern of purchasing displayed in these accounts is interesting in that it bears out so clearly Sir Frank Stenton's contention that 'In the middle ages, England, west of the Cotswolds and the hills descending from the Peak into the Midlands, enjoyed something approaching economic sufficiency'. Apart from London, the towns in which the officials of the Talbot family shopped were, Chester (for wine and herrings), Nantwich (for wine and ale), Wych (for salt, almonds and rice), Whitchurch (for ale, almonds and cloth), Shrewsbury (for wine, foodstuffs, spices, sugar and cloth), Worcester (for wine), Gloucester (for spices, wax), and Coventry (for cloth), which are all in Stenton's suggested self-sufficient area.<sup>1</sup> In addition, all these places (except Coventry) are on what Stenton calls 'One of the best recorded of medieval roads which ran from Bristol through Gloucester, Tewkesbury, Worcester and Bridgnorth to Shrewsbury and then either by Ellesmere or Whitchurch to Chester'.<sup>2</sup> The Whitchurch branch of this road undoubtedly passed very close to the Blakemere manor house.

From London, which is outside this economic area and away from this route altogether, luxury items only were purchased, such as wine of the Tyre variety, spices, dates, rice, green ginger, preserved quinces and oranges. London was easy to reach; the Shrewsbury-London road

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In this section, reference to the transcribed texts in Volume 2 of this thesis has been kept to a minimum since most of the facts relating to commodities can be traced through the index.

2

F.M. Stenton, 'The road system of Medieval England', Economic History Review, Vol.vii, No.1, November 1936, p.5.

(the old Watling Street) was a much travelled one, but the cost of transporting bulky items from there to Blakemere would be too great, when such goods could be acquired nearer at hand.

The relationship between the manor house of Blakemere and the nearby town of Whitchurch deserves comment. Whitchurch market is not mentioned in these accounts but in all probability it was there that some grain and cattle were purchased for the household; however, as a named source it would only occur in the liber hospicii. It can be seen from these accounts that residents of Whitchurch supplied the household with most of its ale; loaves also were acquired there when an extra supply was needed. Cloths were shorn there, and sheets were sewn there. Houses in Whitchurch appeared to have fed and stabled the horses of visitors to the Talbot family as a regular thing. Two of the households are named, those of Janyn French and Matilda Walsh. 'Wedale a soldier of the lord' and his horses were lodged at the latter house. Presumably the two women kept hostelries. Various men of Whitchurch came to the Manor House with a play, cum interludio, on the feast of St Stephen. An interesting sidelight on the possibilities of trade is the fact that Hugh, a mercer of Whitchurch, sold the household almonds (almost always a concomitant of the spice trade) which he could have acquired in London when on his cloth-selling expeditions.

The close links between Shrewsbury and London because of the cloth trade possibly also enabled Shrewsbury to become a centre for regional luxury trade, such luxuries being originally acquired in London or from the ports of Bristol and Chester. In Shrewsbury the household steward bought 'i pottus viridis zinziberi,

i cofyn Chardekoyns, i cofin de pasteriall', also 'anys in confit', plate sugar and 'dragerial', while spices were acquired there as often as from London.

When we look at the commodities individually, it will be seen that wine is the item which was purchased from the widest number of sources. Chester is the place most frequently mentioned and the vintners there who supplied the Blakemere household are Richard Kilyngton, John Walsh, Richard Thocley, Adam Wooton, William Stanmere, John Querton and Thomas Spencer. Wine was bought less frequently at Shrewsbury; John Glover was the retailer concerned there and he also supplied the household with almonds, dates, dried fruits, rice and spices.

The keeper of the foreign household and the receiver-general (Richard Legett) also bought wine in London presumably acquiring it there as the opportunity arose on 'any 'business' visits since, on the whole, the costs of carting wine a great distance would make it desirable to buy nearer home if the quality of the products was that required. S.L. Thrupp suggests that receivers were frequently members of London religious or guild fraternities, which may thus have acted in the office of a London Club, and have provided useful contacts in the merchant world.<sup>1</sup> One London cellarer is mentioned by name, Martin Randolph. Wine is also bought at Worcester on one occasion. Other vintners' names given are Richard Bentyle, John Page, Richard Page and John Taverner, but their places of business are not known.

Only small quantities of ale were brewed in the Blakemere household; in 1411-12, out of 15,107 gallons

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S.L. Thrupp, The Merchant Class of Medieval London, Chicago, 1948, p.257.



of ale consumed there, only 751 gallons were brewed on the premises. (Barley and oats were malted for this ale). Whitchurch provided 12,027 gallons of ale and the rest came from Nantwich, Foulewich and Malpas. Ale, before the introduction of hops into England, could not be kept for any great length of time; its manufacture, therefore, had to be geared to current demands. The tenants at Whitchurch provided an extra gallon at no charge for every twelve gallons they supplied to the lord; on occasions 'book entries' were made against the tenants' rents, of sums of money, still owed by the Household Steward, for ale supplied to him by such tenants.<sup>1</sup> In 1417-18 it is noted that one gallon of ale was used at every three meals<sup>2</sup> (that is,  $2\frac{2}{3}$  pints at each meal) and not more because 1,224 $\frac{1}{2}$  gallons of wine were also used; this, as the number of meals was estimated at 15,700, averages out at about  $\frac{5}{8}$  pint of wine per individual meal.

Cloth, another important commodity, for liveries, napery and family clothing, is purchased from several sources. The largest amount purchased at one time is from Coventry but the draper's name is not given. It would be convenient to purchase at Coventry since this town was on the route to London. In London, another source for cloth, Thomas Bridlyngton and Thomas Wootton are the drapers from whom purchases are made. The local industry at Whitchurch is also patronised. One account entry in 1417-18, of 183 woolfells (24 stone) being delivered ad cameram domine pro panno inde faciendū is the only indication of the existence of some spinning and cloth-making activities within the household.

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<sup>1</sup>

See this thesis Vol.2, pp.113 and 55.

<sup>2</sup>

Ibid., p.114.

This is during the period when the Lady Beatrice who had been household steward was in residence at Blakemere, and it would appear that she was a practical manager of the varied household activities.

Spices in great quantities and varieties were purchased; pepper, saffron, cloves, mace, saunders, cinnamon, tansole, alkanet and canell were very often supplied by John Glover of Shrewsbury, but such items were also purchased from Gloucester and London although no grocer's name is given. Pepper rents, from Longhope, were also used in the household. Dried fruits, raisins and dates and also almonds were purchased from the same places as spices, that is from London and Shrewsbury.

Salt, another important bulk commodity, is bought at Wych (where poultry is also acquired on one occasion) but no vendors' names are given. There is no evidence that salt was used for the home salting-down of fish; on one occasion a large number of fresh herrings was purchased, but they appear to have been consumed in that state. Vast quantities of salted fish are bought but their place of purchase is not revealed by the accounts, except in one instance where the immediate place of origin is mentioned as the lord's store in Ireland, which store also on occasion provided wheat, wine and salted salmon. The salted fish purchased are overwhelmingly herrings but also include cod, ling, 'aberdeen', salmon and sprats. Fresh saltwater fish and seafood purchased comprise cod, conger, plaice, thornback, whiting, bass, halibut, smelt, grayling, whelks, shrimps, crabs, oysters and mussels. Fresh water fish purchased include pike, pickerel, bream, tench, perch, roach, dace, flounder and trout. Fresh fish would also be available in large quantities in the nearby meres. The stew at Blakemere is first mentioned in 1401 when flekes are

made and installed pro piscibus includendis iuxta pontem dicti manerii. Blakemere and Marbury stews provided a good variety of freshwater fish as, for example, in 1424-25, pike, pickerel, bream, tench, perch and dace. A fisherman was employed in 1424-25, and paid £1.6s.8d for his year's work. On another occasion, a fisherman was hired from Wych for three weeks in April and in May.

It is difficult to be precise about the source of cattle, sheep and pigs eaten by the household, from the steward's accounts. The stock at Corfham, Culmynton and Yockynsyate are mentioned, also the stock of John Egge and John Huls; possibly these men were farmers of part of the Talbot North Shropshire property. On one occasion, 20 oxen were received from the stock at Sheffield. As usual with aristocratic accounts, both now and later, a very large number of animals was consumed although, of course, the amount of meat which one person would eat is not known.<sup>1</sup>

In 1411-12, one bull, 27 oxen, 23 steers, 25 yearlings, 16 cows,  $35\frac{3}{4}$  pigs,  $211\frac{1}{4}$  sheep,  $90\frac{1}{4}$  calves were consumed. Of these one bull, one ox and three cows were heriots; a steer and a cow were waiff; six oxen came from the stock at Corfham, two from the stock at Culmynton, two from the reeve of Wrokwardine, one pig from tak. It would seem that all the other animals were purchased.

It is not absolutely certain that the word 'bought' is always used literally, that is, for a money transaction with a person outside the estate; it may merely be an accounting term which covers the transfer of goods from the bailiffs although, normally, if the bailiff is

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See, e.g., L. Stone, The Crisis of the Aristocracy 1558-1641, Oxford, 1965, Appendix XXIV.

involved, he is named. A phrase frequently used 'from various persons at various prices on various occasions' would seem to refer to transactions outside the estate; its use, for example, on p.99, vol.2 seems to imply that the estate was nowhere near self-supporting for meat since 36 oxen, 3 cows and 34 yearlings and heifers were bought. The dorses of the bailiffs' accounts in existence also give little evidence that large numbers of cattle were transferred from the manor to the household.

In 1417-18, 16 oxen, 2 cows, 18 yearlings and heifers, 16 calves, 100 sheep, 21 pigs were consumed. Of the pigs, 12 were from outside sources, the rest from the bailiff of Blakemere. The sheep appear to be purchased; seven of the calves came from the manor. Of the oxen, cows, etc., some were purchased and joined the 'lord's stock' in Black Park under the care of John Reve. The stock there is mentioned later in these accounts and the case of cattle thieving on the Shropshire Peace roll also proves that cattle, as well as deer, were kept in the park.<sup>1</sup>

It seems possible that this park was the source of fresh meat available throughout the winter. It would be simple to kill off at intervals either discarded or previously earmarked animals, which were fattened there. Much has been made of the medieval practice of killing-off stock in the autumn and of the constant medieval winter diet of salt meat, but household accounts do not by any means bear this out; salted fish are encountered frequently, but salted meat rarely. The priests of Munden's Charity were able to purchase quantities of fresh meat throughout the winter. In years when grain and fodder were plentiful, it would be quite feasible to

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Kimball, op. cit., p.60.

handfeed cattle throughout the winter months for slaughter when required. At Blakemere 'winter pasture' is mentioned,<sup>1</sup> which also may have been used for feeding cattle to supply meat for the household. It may be that the supply of fresh meat throughout the winter is the reason for the practice at this period of the Berkeley family which so puzzled their seventeenth century family historian

for the provission of his own table, this lord had yearly divers oxen fatted at Simmondsall cum arenis in garbis, with eates in the straw, which manner of feeding I have not formerly observed in the dayes of any of his Ancestors; neither do I well conceive the reason thereof...<sup>2</sup>

In 1419-20, 35 cattle (oxen, cows, steers, heifers), 17 calves, 56 sheep were slaughtered.

In 1424-25, 89½ carcasses of oxen, yearlings and cows, 186 wethers, 30 boars and pigs, 51 calves, 237 geese, 200 sucking pigs, 399 capons and 1,178 hens, pullets and chickens were consumed. Apart from 20 cattle from Sheffield and some gifts, the source of these birds and animals is not given.

The meat supply of the household was substantially added to by game and the cultivated products of warrens and dovecotes. The Blakemere household in 1424-25 used 142 rabbits produced by the Blakemere warren and, in 1411-12, 116. Other warrens which on occasion supplied the household were at Eccleswall, Brownheath and Painswick. The dovecote at Blakemere produced, in 1411-12, 1,252 pigeons for use and on other occasions pigeons were purchased. Game in more exotic forms, such as roebuck, pheasant, bitterns, partridge, woodcock, teal, snipe, plover and ousel, were also acquired and consumed.

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<sup>1</sup> Vol.2, p.91.

<sup>2</sup> John Smyth, Lives of the Berkeleys, ed., J. Maclean, Gloucester, 1883, Vol.ii, p.7.

Fresh fruit or vegetables are not found in these accounts except for one small purchase of oranges, a gift of apples and pears, and the mysterious Lenten fruit purchased at Gloucester; nor are the onions and garlicks so frequently mentioned in abbey cellarers' accounts to be found.

Eggs and dairy products are not often mentioned; when they are, it would seem that on one occasion they are supplied by the 'home dairy' at Yockingsgate, a very short distance away. The final account for 1425 shows large purchases of eggs (9,337), milk (311 gallons) and butter (211 disks), although their cost, being included with other items, is not known. Bacon is not mentioned at all, and cheese only once. However, it must not be automatically assumed that, because dairy items (including bacon and eggs in this instance), and garden and orchard produce, are not mentioned, they were not available for use. In fact, there is one account in existence of Alice of the dairy in which she accounts for milk, butter and eggs and also mentions pigs, which could of course be reared profitably with the skimmings of milk left from cheese and butter making. At all events, the household must have lived of its own in these commodities in the early part of the period under consideration since it is clear from these accounts that these goods were not purchased until 1425. Possibly a gardener also accounted separately; a gardener acquired spades from Sheffield in the 1401-02 account roll.

The final questions which must be considered in this section are the type of grain consumed, the sources from which it came and the use which was made of it. It is, of course, beyond all doubt that the upper classes ate wheaten bread; this is one reason why wheat production

figures so largely in the accounts of the bailiffs who, if soil and climate permitted, had to cultivate the demesnes to fulfil the requirements of this class. The types of grain cultivated by tenants at Blakemere can only be deduced from two sources: first, the tolcorn accounted for - that is the tenants' grain ground at the lord's mill and the toll subsequently paid in kind to the lord, and, secondly, from mentions of the tercia garba<sup>1</sup> which would appear to be a levy in kind from the crops produced either by certain tenants or from certain fields. The grains mentioned as being provided by the tercia garba are rye and oats. Tolcorn mentioned is maslin, wheat and oatmeal. There are well known works written in the sixteenth century which in all probability reflect the habits of even a century earlier. For instance,

The bread throughout the land is made of such grain as the soil yieldeth; nevertheless the gentility commonly provided themselves sufficiently of wheat for their own tables, whilst their household and poor neighbours in some shires are forced to content themselves with rye or barley, yea, and in time of dearth many with bread made either of beans, peason or oats or of all together or some acorns among.<sup>2</sup>

or

The English being great epicures, and very avaricious by nature, indulge in the most delicate fare themselves and give their household the coarsest bread, and beer,

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References to tercia garba occur in Vol.2, p.6, 67qr. oats 'de terciã garba seminacionis in campo de heyrnydyng'; pp.42, 129, 'De pastura heyrnydyn. ...per annum lv s nichil hic reddit quia traditur hoc anno variis tenentibus ad seminandum cum avenis ad terciã garbam que car' usque grangiam domine usque Yokenesyate'; p.154. 'Et de v quarteriis siligonis' receptis de exitu grangie de Yocknesyate provenientibus de terciã garba intrata ad gul' Aug' ultimi anni precedentis'. Pollard regards this as a rent in kind. R. Lennard in 'Statistics of Corn Yields in Medieval England' Economic History (A supplement to the Economic Journal), vol.3, 1934-37, p.176, gives examples of the 'third sheaf' used as a synonym for a third part of the tithes due.

2

W. Harrison, The Description of England, ed., Georges Edelen, New York, 1968, p.133.

cold meat baked on Sunday for the week which however they allow them in great abundance.<sup>1</sup>

The tables below, constructed to show the amounts and types of grain consumed by the household and the use to which it was put, show that at Blakemere wheat was overwhelmingly the grain used for human consumption. It is also stated that the bread given as alms is wheaten (unlike many monastic ordinances which specify the poorer sorts of grain) and that the servants ate wheaten bread on one occasion. Wheat was even used for fattening poultry and partridge. Even though the area was overwhelmingly an oat-growing one, oats were mainly used for horse fodder and not in the kitchen. Only small quantities of rye are used, and maslin (mixed wheat and rye, either grown together or mixed after threshing) is mainly used for dog food, when presumably it would be fed with the meat which the dogs would also require.

In the accounts of 1417-18 and 1424-25, separate accounts are made of loaves (panes). Some were bought from Whitchurch where there was a common bakehouse at farm to Yokys the baker for 40s per annum. Certain facts have to be kept in mind when considering wheat and bread.<sup>2</sup> A baker was required by assizes of bread to produce 418 lbs of bread from every quarter of wheat. (The quarter normally equals 8 bushels of 64 lbs). Any bread produced above that amount was his own 'advantage bread'. It was assumed that the average baker would produce 24-25 lbs of advantage bread per quarter.

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Charlotte A. Sneyd trans, 'A relation, or rather true account of the Island of England', Camden Society Old Series, xxxvii, London, 1847, p.25.

2

See S. and B. Webb, 'The Assize of Bread' Economic Journal, vol.14, 1904, pp.196-218 and A.S.C. Ross 'The Assize of Bread' Economic History Review, 2nd series, vol.ix, no.2, 1956-57, pp.332-42, and also M.W. Labarge, A Baronial Household of the Thirteenth Century, London, 1965, pp.73-5.



Therefore, the amount of bread produced from every quarter of wheat was about 442 lbs.<sup>1</sup> The number of loaves, as distinct from the weight of bread which each quarter of wheat should produce, was not fixed, since the assize was concerned with the size of loaves to be produced for fixed prices of  $\frac{1}{4}d$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}d$ , or  $1d$ . Three types of bread were commonly produced from each batch of flour, white (Wastell bread), wheaten (bread of the whole wheat) and household (bread treet, which was made of unboltd meal). Proportionate amounts of each kind were made and each loaf bore a fixed proportion in weight to the others, the finest weighing three quarters of the second, and the second quality three quarters of the third quality. The assize, therefore, did not fix the price of bread; it fixed the price of loaves in relation to the proclaimed price of wheat. It was not till the mid-eighteenth century that 'prised' loaves, of fixed weight at varying prices, became an alternative to the old 'assized' loaves, of varying weight at a fixed price.<sup>2</sup>

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Postan gives these figures: 1 qr. of grain, rye or mixed produces 350 to 500 lbs of meal, 1 lb meal produces 1 lb bread. (See M.M. Postan, The Famulus, the estate labourers in the xiith and xiiith Centuries, Economic History Review Supplements no.2, 1954, p.20.) For comparison it may be noted that G.H. Fowler gives figures which show that on a bushel of 60 lbs, 1 bushel gives 78 lbs of bread (see 'A household expense Roll 1328', English Historical Review, V.55, 1940, p.631). Harrison, op. cit., p.134, in the sixteenth century gives differing figures which, depending on one's interpretation of the word, 'cast', are open to question. For manchet or white bread 'good workmen deliver commonly such proportion that of the flour of one bushel with another they make forty cast of manchet, of which each loaf weigheth eight ounces into the oven and six ounces out'. For cheat or wheaten bread 'is generally so made that out of one bushel of meal after two and twenty pounds of bran be sifted and taken from it, they make thirty cast every loaf weighing eighteen ounces, into the oven and sixteen ounces out. A cast was a batch and the editor, G. Eldelin states 'apparently here a dozen'. In that case however, a bushel would equal far more than one of 64 lbs which Harrison normally uses. It would seem more likely that a cast or batch was the number put into the oven each time, on the wooden implement used, and was probably three in the case of manchets.

2

A modern example in Australia of the latter method of retailing would be blocks of chocolate which are sold at 5c, 10c or 20c, but whose size is varied (usually reduced) by the manufacturers.

It is, therefore, difficult to use panes as a measurement of diet. Although it is clear that one loaf was part of each ferculum or meal for each person, the loaf would become smaller if the cost of wheat had risen. It is also difficult to estimate the weight of each loaf even when told the amounts of wheat used and the number of loaves provided from it. Advantage bread may or may not have been included in the figure, the moisture content is not known and the percentage of bran extracted by bolting cloth is not known. The number of loaves consumed cannot be used to calculate meals on every occasion since it is clear from the 1417-18 account that loaves went into additional food preparations. In 1411-12, the fact that 52,230 loaves were consumed would mean that an average of 72 people were fed at each meal if one loaf equalled 1 meal and there were 2 meals each day. But it is only in the account for 1417-18 that we actually know how many loaves were used in fercula, 15,700, which gives an average of 21.5 people fed at each meal. In only one case in these accounts can an extraction rate of  $1/5$  be calculated. This is 1417-18 when 14 quarters and  $\frac{1}{2}$  bushel of bran was extracted from 75 quarters of wheat (i.e., as the accounts says  $1\frac{1}{2}$  bushels from each quarter).

The source of this grain can be briefly summarised as follows: for 1393, rye is not mentioned and all the wheat consumed (80 quarters), except for 4 quarters, a gift from Lady Mary Le Strange from Corfham, was purchased outside the estates, the place of origin not being stated; as for oats, 67 quarters were home-produced from the tercia garba sown in Heyryndyng field, whilst 34 quarters 7 bushels were purchased.

In 1401-2, the year when (presumably because of the Welsh raids) the price of wheat was in this area

phenomenally high, some quantities of wheat were purchased between 3 April and 20 August in Whitchurch by the custos, who was not the usual officer to undertake this duty, as though every available amount of grain was being acquired and stockpiled.<sup>1</sup>

In 1411, grain came from a wider area of the Talbot estates in Shropshire; for wheat, 46 quarters came from Corfham grange, 41 quarters 2 bushels from Culmington grange, 6 quarters 7 bushels from Yockingsgate, 6 bushels from Whixall, 4 quarters 3 bushels from the grange of John Dod, 7 quarters from the receiver of Whitchurch, 5 quarters are a gift from John Kyngeley and 71 quarters 5 bushels were purchased, the sources not being mentioned. For rye in this year, 5 quarters 5 bushels came from the grange of Yockingsgate and 6 bushels were purchased; for barley, 1 quarter 5 bushels came from the grange at Yockingsgate and 3 quarters 6 bushels purchased; for oats, 91 quarters came from Yockingsgate, 9 quarters 1 bushel from Whixall, 67 quarters 1 bushel from the receiver of Whitchurch, 9 quarters 1 bushel from John Dod, and 17 quarters 2 bushels were purchased.

The 1417-18 account is a particularly interesting one since it details under one head all foodstuffs acquired from the Blakemere bailiff and it is quite clear from this that all the wheat consumed is purchased. It gives no details apart from the standard 'at various places from various persons on various occasions'. A total of £16.1s worth (60 quarters 5 bushels including 4 bushels which were brought from Bangor) was bought. All the other grain came from the Blakemere bailiff.

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<sup>1</sup>

J.E.T. Rogers, A History of Agriculture and Prices in England, Oxford, 1866, Vol.iii, p.4, and Vol.iv, p.221 where prices up to 10s per quarter are given.

The account for 1419-20, on the other hand, shows that the granger of Yockingsgate provided all the grain consumed, that is, 105 quarters 3 bushels of wheat, 2 quarters 3 bushels of maslin, 5 quarters 2 bushels of barley, 41 quarters 6 bushels of oats, and that no grain was purchased from elsewhere. The household steward, here acting as receiver, naturally, sold 42 quarters 3 bushels of wheat, 5 quarters 2 bushels of barley and 4 quarters of oats.

The final household account shows that all grain is again purchased except 21 quarters of wheat from the lord's store in Ireland and 5 quarters of wheat from the tercia garba from the grange at Yockingsgate. One of the persons from whom wheat is purchased is John Heth. Also purchased are 4 bushels of maslin and an additional 3 quarters of rye.

Grain and pulses accounted for by Household Steward  
and their uses

1393-94

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Use</u>
Wheat	80qr.	All 'used by household'
Maslin	8qr.	4qr. <u>panes</u> for dogs
Rye	5qr.	
Barley		
Oats	101qr. 7bz.	Fodder <sup>1</sup>
Peas	4qr.	
Beans		
Bran		

1

From the figures for horse fodder in these accounts it can be seen that feeding the horses was almost as important as feeding the people. In Animal Management, Army Orders London, 1933 it states that 10 lbs of oats a day is required for working animals and half that amount for horses with rest periods. With a bushel of oats at 40 lbs, (1 quarter 320 lbs) this could, on these figures, mean an average of 9-18 horses were fed daily.

1411-12

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Use</u>
Wheat	188qr. 1½bz.	<u>Panes</u> 165qr. 1½bz. Pastellaria & Furmenty 3qr. Rem. 20qr.
Maslin		
Rye	6qr. 3bz.	<u>Panes</u> for household (all)
Barley		
Oats	352qr. 5bz.	Fodder 335qr. 2bz. Malt 10qr. Dog biscuits 2qr. 4bz.  Oatmeal 3qr. Fattening pigs 2bz. Gift 1qr.
Peas	1qr.	Fodder (all)
Beans	5qr. 4bz.	Fodder and <u>panes</u> for horses (all)
Bran	47qr. (from wheat)	Fodder (all)

1417-18

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Use</u>
Wheat <sup>1</sup>	75qr. 4½bz.	<u>Panes</u> (including Alms) Pastry Feeding poultry and partridge
Maslin	3qr. 7bz.	Baked with bran and oats for running dogs (all)
Rye		
Barley	5bz.	Feeding poultry; <u>panes</u> for running dogs.
Oats	85qr.	Fodder 77qr. Flour 3qr. Dog biscuits 2qr. 6bz. Poultry feeding 2qr. 1bz.
Peas	9qr. ½bz.	Soup Fodder
Beans		
Bran	14qr. ½bz. (from wheat)	Horses' fodder 9qr. 6½bz. Dog biscuits 4qr. 2bz.

A separate account for bread under the heading panes is as follows:

Remainder from last year	363	
75qr. wheat	<u>30,000</u>	
Total	30,363	
of which		
For meals	15,700	[of which 2,172 for strangers]
Marshalsy	2,762	
Kitchen & <u>cuisoria</u>	2,099	
<u>potaciones</u>	359	
Saucery, pantry	1,430	
Delivered to rooms	929	
Alms	419	
<u>Vend' super comptum</u>	6,365	
Remainder	300	

<sup>1</sup> 3qr. Wheat used for servants' bread after departure of household.

This is supposed to total 30,363, but actually makes 28,766 panes. The Baker says he tenders 320 loaves for each quarter. This gives 24,000 loaves not 30,000. So I think that as it is stated that there was no advantage bread beyond the assize it is possible that the 6,000 loaves would be the advantage and the Baker did not have it as a perquisite.

1419-20

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Use</u>
Wheat <sup>1</sup>	105qr. 3bz.	<u>Panes</u> 63qr. Sold 42qr. 3bz.
Maslin	2qr. 3bz.	<u>Panes</u> (all)
Rye		
Barley	5qr. 2bz.	Sold (all)
Oats	41qr. 6bz.	Fodder 37qr. 6bz. Sold 4qr. <sup>2</sup>
Peas		
Beans		
Bran		

1424-25

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Use</u>
Wheat*	92qr. 6bz.	91qr. 1bz. <u>panes</u> 7bz. feeding poultry 4bz. kitchen for pastry 1bz. frumenty 1bz. feeding partridge
Maslin	4qr.	
Rye	8qr.	5qr. 4bz. <u>panes</u>
Barley		
Oats	369qr. 6bz.	Horses
Peas		
Beans		
Bran	34qr. 4bz.	Horses

\* A separate account for bread under the heading panes is as follows:

91qr. 1bz. wheat issued provides	37,298	<u>panes</u>
5qr. 4bz. rye provides	2,004	"
Wheaten loaves purchased	588	
Rye loaves purchased	148	
Wheaten loaves in hand	120	
Rye loaves in hand	31	
Total loaves	40,189	
Total consumed	40,177	

The way in which the loaves were used is not given.

1

3qr. Wheat used for servants' bread after departure of household.

2

Monetary value of surplus grain 'sold' is:

Wheat	£16.17.7d
Barley	£ 1. 4.6d
Oats	13.4d.

Grain and Pulses home produced and consumed by household

Note: This table has been constructed from the dorses of the Blakemere Bailiffs' accounts, and in one case (1420-21) from the dorse of a Receiver's account. Four accounts as stated in the notes have no dorse. The account of 7-8HV 1419-20 gives no account of grain because that is the responsibility of the granger of Yockingsgate or of cattle because that is the responsibility of the Parker of Blake park. There is no grain account on dorse of 20 August 1419-Michaelmas 1419, although cattle are given. The small quantities of grain sometimes found under 'Amount accounted for' may have been acquired by purchase or from the tercia garba. Blakemere was predominantly an oat growing area. It must be remembered that Blakemere household would also have produce from other manors of the Talbots e.g., Wrockwardine, but there are no bailiffs' accounts in existence for these.

	1389-90	1394-95	1400-01
Barley	Amount Accounted for		1 qr.
	To Household		All
	Other uses		-
Maslin	Amount Accounted for	4qr.2bz.	4qr.2bz.
	To Household		*
	Other uses	Livery* (all)	Livery* (all)
Oats	Amount Accounted for		82qr.2bz.
	To Household		77qr.6bz.
	Other uses		4½qr.Seed*
Peas	Amount Accounted for		5bz.
	To Household		-
	Other uses		Fattening Tak pigs
Rye	Amount Accounted for		3qr.
	To Household		All
	Other uses		1qr.2bz. All
Tolcorn	Amount Accounted for		
	To Household		
	Other uses		
Wheat	Amount Accounted for	6qr.4bz.	6qr.4bz.
	To Household		7qr.1bz. 5bz.
	Other uses	Livery* (all)	Livery* (all) 6qr.4bz. livery
Straw	Amount Accounted for		
	To Household		
	Other uses		
Hay	Amount Accounted for		31 loads
	To Household		All
	Other uses		65 All

Notes: 1389-90 \* Maslin: Amount purchased for the livery of garcio ballivi who received 1 bz. a week.  
 \* Wheat: Amount purchased for the livery of bailiff who received 1 bz. a week.  
 1394-95 \* Maslin: Amount purchased for the livery of garcio ballivi as above.  
 \* Oats: sown in Ebbefurlong. The amount 4½qr. was purchased according to face of roll, so did not sow own produce.  
 \* Wheat: Amount purchased for the livery of the bailiff as above.

[1397-98 no dorse] [1399-1400 no dorse]

1400-01 \* Maslin: nothing produced or purchased apparently.

Garcio Ballivi receives his livery in cash 10d a week.

	1402-3	1410-11	1418-19	1420-21
Barley	Amount Accounted for	5qr.	2qr.7bz.	1qr.5bz.
	To Household		All	15qr.
	Other uses		Seed	Seed & Sold
Maslin	Amount Accounted for		1qr.2bz.	
	To Household		All	
	Other uses			
Oats	Amount Accounted for	76qr.	60qr.	169qr.4bz.
	To Household		All	40qr.
	Other uses		Seed	95qr.4bz. Sold & 34qr. Seed
Peas	Amount Accounted for		3bz*	7qr.6bz.
	To Household			4qr.*
	Other uses		Fattening pigs	1qr.Seed & rest 'rem'
Rye	Amount Accounted for	2qr.2bz.	5bz.	11qr.4bz.
	To Household		All	
	Other uses			All as Seed
Tolcorn	Amount Accounted for		32qr.7 $\frac{1}{2}$ bz*(sic)	
	To Household		9bz.1pk.	
	Other uses		rest sold	
Wheat	Amount Accounted for		28qr.*	80qr.4bz.
	To Household		All	29qr.4bz.
	Other uses		All Seed	10qr.Seed 39qr.4bz. sold and 1qr. 'rem'
Straw	Amount Accounted for			5qr.21bs.
	To Household			
	Other uses			Sold
Hay	Amount Accounted for		175 loads	
	To Household		85	
	Other uses		90 'rem'	

Notes: 1402-3 Barley: from tercia garba at Wybley and Essh''sold as within', i.e., has value of 33s.4d put on it in charge and remains in lord's hands.

Oats: from tercia garba at Tilstock, Wybley and Lanceterfeld 'sold as within', i.e., has put on it in charge £12.13s4d but remains in the lord's hands.

Rye: from tercia garba at Tilstock 'sold as within', i.e., has had a value put on it in the charge (18s.4d) but remains in 'manu domini'.

[1407-8 no dorse] [1409-10 no dorse]

1410-11 \* Tolcorn: amount accounted for is made up of wheat, 6bz; maslin, 6qr.4bz.; bras' capital', 7bz.; bras' cursal 19qr. 2 bz.; oatmeal 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ bz. Household received, wheat, 4bz.1pk.; bras' cursal', 3bz.; oatmeal, 2bz.

\* Wheat: being the exitus of Yockingsgate from the tercia garba.

1418-9 \* Peas: also 6 bz. beans 4bz. peas purchased which was used as seed.

1420 \* Peas: for horsefodder.



Prices paid for grain in household stewards' accounts

		<u>1393-94</u>	<u>1401-02</u>	<u>1411-12</u>	<u>1417-18</u>	<u>1419-20</u>	<u>1424-25</u>
Barley	Bz.			4d	4d	7d	
	Qr.			32d	32d	56d	
Maslin	Bz.	5d		4d			7.5d
	Qr.	40d		32d			60d
Oats	Bz.			2.5d	3d	5d	
	Qr.			20d	24d	40d	
Peas	Bz.			4d	3d		
	Qr.			32d	24d		
Rye	Bz.			4d			2.9d
	Qr.			32d			23.3d
Wheat	Bz.	6.5d-8d	17d-20d	6d	7d-9 d	11d-12d	10.73d
	Qr.	52d-64d	136d-160d	48d	56d-74d	88d-96d	85.84d

Notes to table

- 1401-2 Wheat 'At this time about Michaelmas, a quarter of wheat on a sudden rise in price from one noble (i.e., 6s8d) to two and in some parts of England to three nobles'. Chronicle of Adam of Usk, ed. E. Maunde Thompson, London, 1904, p.237.
- 1424-5 Wheat This is an average price calculated from several purchases for which the accountant does not give individual prices.

To complete the information concerning grain at Blakemere the above table of prices paid for grain and pulses has been constructed. For ease of comparison, all prices are shown in this table in terms of pence and decimals of pence per bushel and quarter.

It is nowhere in these accounts stated for how many residents the household steward is catering; the account of 1417-18 is the only one which gives any data from which calculations can be made. For instance, in accounting for 15,700 loaves, the steward John Walsch explains that 15,700 meals were provided (i.e., a loaf for each meal),

of which, 2,172 meals were for strangers who turned up at various times in so far as may be seen by the said day book examined against this account as above, and not for more because the Lord did not reside within his said household within the same period of account, but was in the King's presence in his service with the King himself in French parts throughout the whole period of the account.

We, therefore, know that the household at this period was not up to its full strength. The actual number (of the reduced household) can be estimated from some figures given after the Summa where John Walsch, who seems to have been more statistically-minded than other stewards, gives a breakdown of his expenditure for the year.

Pantry £18.10.8d; Cellar, £38.5.4d;  
 Buttery £27.1.10½d; Kitchen, £46.0.4d;  
 Wardrobe, £1.2.2d; Saucery, 2.0d;  
 Chandlery, £1.7.6d; Stables £16.17.9½d;  
 Fees, £22.0.4d; Purchase of Livery, £19.12.4d;  
 Payments for necessities, £1.9.11d; Payments  
 provided for £4.1.2d, £1.3.9d, and 11s.

He then works out that 'taking one week with another, the weekly expenses were 76.4d, and that the average cost of a meal is 2½d.' This figure of 2½d is not arrived at from the cost of food alone; it is based on the amounts spent in every department of the household. But we are nevertheless able to work out that circa 430 meals were served a week or circa 60 a day. If it is assumed that two meals a day is the allowance, this diminished household numbered 30 people.

The implication that the provision of 2,172 meals meant that only relatively few guests had visited Blakemere should forewarn us of the difficulties in estimating the number of any household and, unless additional information can be obtained, perhaps no more can ever be attempted, from household accounts, than estimating the number of meals served. Resident numbers of a household are only rarely stated, which possibly indicates that the auditors did not consider such numbers an important factor in assessing a just and proper outlay for household foodstuffs; on the other hand, in the daily type of account, the numbers at each

meal and the names of visitors are almost always necessary parts of the accounting process.

Nevertheless, the figure obtained from this household account of  $2\frac{1}{8}$ d a meal (or  $4\frac{1}{4}$ d per day,  $2s.5\frac{3}{4}$ d per week and £6.8.11d per year) is useful for visualising costs and standards of living at Blakemere in relation to those of other groups of society, and also in relation to wages and the costs of individual items. Tables of figures for wages and prices of food have been constructed by some authorities but so far the problems involved in formulating cost-of-living indexes have appeared to be so complex that few attempts have been made.<sup>1</sup> Information is scattered through so many differing types of records that it has seemed impossible to codify it on any workable common basis. Varying documents such as lodging agreements, provisions made in wills, almsgiving records, hospital and corrody costs, royal messenger allowances<sup>2</sup> and wardship allowances might also all have to be surveyed. The most successful attempt so far has possibly been the construction of a table based on a composite unit of consumables.<sup>3</sup> This is not entirely satisfactory and the whole area needs so much further study that it is at present impossible to draw any scientific or even statistically accurate

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Wage and cost tables may be found in the following: J.E. Thorold Rogers, A History of Agriculture and Prices in England, Oxford, 1866, 4 vols.

E.H. Phelps-Brown and S.V. Hopkins 'Seven Centuries of Building Wages' Economica, Vol.22, 1955, pp.195-206.

H.O. Meredith, Economic History of England, London 4th edition, Appendix I, pp.402-5 giving Steffen's tables. W. Beveridge, Prices and Wages in England, Vol.1, London, 1939, has a few details only on the medieval period.

2

See M.C. Hill, The King's Messengers 1199-1377, London, 1961, pp.46-50.

3

See E.H. Phelps-Brown and S.V. Hopkins, 'Seven Centuries of the Prices of Consumables compared with Builders' wage-rates', Economica, Vol.23, 1956, pp.296-314.

conclusions, although impressions are undoubtedly gained from documents of the period.

There is, for example, a lodging agreement for a noble family, another branch of the Shropshire Le Stranges, dated 1383, whereby John, 6th Lord Le Strange (of Knockyn) and his wife Maud with one esquire, one lady (damoisele), two yeomen, a nurse and a page, pay Lord Le Strange's mother, Lady Alyne of Knockyn, £50 a year for lodging with her.<sup>1</sup> This, like information from an unanalysed household domestic account, is not a very revealing figure, but fortunately the document goes on to state that if any of the 'lodgers' shall be absent from the Lady Alyne's household the following sums shall be subtracted from the total: for the lord and lady 7d a day (i.e., 4.1d per week, or £10.12.11d per year); for the esquire and damoisele 4d a day (i.e., 2.4d a week of £6.1.8d per year); for the yeomen and nurse 3d a day each (i.e., 1.9d per week or £4.11.3d per year) and for the page 1d a day (i.e., 7d per week or £1.10.5d per year).

Figures quoted by S.L. Thrupp help to illustrate further the range of the cost-of-living scale.<sup>2</sup> She points out that £2.13.4d to £4 per year (i.e., 4-6 marks), or 12½d to 1s.6½d per week was regarded as a minimum standard of 'decent subsistence' in the fifteenth century; inmates of the Elys Davy and the Ewelme almshouses were discharged if they inherited amounts such as these. University students were expected

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1

'Early deeds relating to Shropshire', J.G. Nichols, ed., Collectanea topographica et genealogica, V (1838) pp.180-1. Also quoted in translation from the French given in the previous reference in Chaucer's World compiled by E. Rickert, ed., C.C. Olson, and M.M. Crow, London, 1948, pp.56-7.

2

Thrupp, op. cit., pp.142-3.

to manage on a similar amount. Her figures taken from merchant wills of various dates from 1408 onwards, whereby executors set aside sums of money for household expenses in the first few months after a testator's decease, would give (counting children and servants on the same basis) the sum of  $2\frac{1}{4}d$  to  $7d$  a head per day, or  $1s.3\frac{3}{4}d$  -  $4s.1d$  a head per week and  $\pounds 3.8.5\frac{1}{4}d$  to  $\pounds 10.12.11d$  a head per year. In fact this range of allowances is almost identical with the scale shown by the Le Strange lodging agreement, and suggests that the Blakemere average of 1417 is slightly higher than the middle of this range. It is a pity that, for purpose of comparison, it is usually impossible to make similar calculations from monastic cellarers' accounts, since there the number of individuals catered for or meals provided is hardly ever stated.

It is true that impressions only can be gained from these figures but, nevertheless, the reader of the Blakemere accounts is left with the distinct feeling that the standard of living they reveal, even for the ordinary household dependents, would be higher than that of the lower merchant and journeyman class. Throughout these accounts, there are many indications of the feeding of workmen in the household: the six famuli (farm labourers, or ploughmen, here), the carpenters and hired labourers doing repairs and other work around the manor are specifically mentioned in 1417-18. It must also be realised that for workmen employed at Blakemere, cash wages could be almost doubled by the practice of eating ad mensam. For example, carpenters' wages are given as  $5d$  or  $6d$  a day and whilst plying their trade they presumably ate two meals a day valued together, for what the average referred to above is worth, at  $4\frac{1}{4}d$ . Possibly the greatest advantage in having one's

subsistence more or less guaranteed by a settled household, or a monastic community, was what might be termed the cushioning effect this afforded the individual against harsh economic reality. For instance, when wheat doubled or even almost trebled in price in 1401-2, it was still purchased and available in the Blakemere household. At such times, the peasant must have been reduced to a miserable diet. The bailiff's 'boy' at this date for the first time received a livery of cash not of grain. The wage, 10d a week, might superficially seem an adequate sum but under these conditions who can doubt that he would have preferred the certain security of a weekly amount of food?

From a modern standpoint, it would appear that the diet, which from these accounts the Blakemere household must have been consuming, would be healthful and reasonably balanced (the apparent lack of what would now be considered essential health foods, that is dairy produce and fruit and vegetables has previously been commented on and partly explained).<sup>1</sup> The nature of the diet revealed in these accounts is only partly relevant to discussions such as that initiated in Annalés in 1961.

Were the peoples of medieval western Europe living for the most part under a régime of monotonous diet, like the rice-eaters of Asia? Or was the Middle Ages as suggested by the German historians Schmoeller and Abel, an age of high protein consumption, a consequence of abundant pastures and therefore of meat?<sup>2</sup>

I do not consider that from the Blakemere accounts statistics similar to those produced in that journal can be satisfactorily produced by using figures based on

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1

. Above, p.88.

2

R.H. Hilton, Notes and Comments in Past and Present, No.23, November, 1962, p.85.

percentages derived from expenditure on grain/bread, wine/ale, and meat/fish as against total expenditure.<sup>1</sup> So much of the total expenditure is seen to be on items such as horse provender, dogfood, spices and other miscellanea such as napery, tips and fees. To provide realistic figures, notice should be taken of gifts of food and entries relating to the three required categories on the dorse of the account which state whether a previous remainder was used, how much of the yearly purchases was consumed, how many left alive in the case of animals or how much put into store in the case of provisions. Factors such as these appear to have been neglected previously. I have, therefore, constructed an adjusted table based on all the available information relating to expenditure, acquisition and consumption; this is merely an exercise showing relative proportions of expenditure in the three categories.

Only three of the edited accounts are included in the table; the other three are either incomplete or were compiled in a format which cannot be used. I believe that it is justifiable to ignore expenditure on spices, a luxury,<sup>2</sup> and also any expenditure, if any, on dairy products which, is usually small (10.0d in 1417-18). If this method were to be applied to monastic accounts,<sup>3</sup>

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'Enquêtes Ouvertes, Vie Matérielle et Comportements Biologiques' Annales: économies, sociétés, civilisations Paris, Vol.16, Pt.1, 1961, p.571.

2

Spices were a luxury in the sense that they were not absolutely essential. They were doubtless used to make dry and salt foods more appetizing, but were also recognised as items of display and conspicuous consumption. See M.W. Labarge, A Baronial Household of the Thirteenth Century, p.86. The fashionable methods of cooking involved spices since the idea was that nothing should be left in its natural state and also since it was believed that spices aided the digestion. See W. Mead, The Medieval Feast, London, 1967, pp.53, 77.

3

Text continued on p.107.

	1393-1394 <sup>1</sup>				1417-1418 <sup>2</sup>				1424-1425 <sup>3</sup>			
	£	s	d	%	£	s	d	%	£	s	d	%
Grain/loaves	22.	19.	8	13	19.	3.	11	15	34.	17.	2	12
Wine/ale	76.	10.	0	43	65.	7.	0½	52	134.	12.	9	45
Meat/fish	78.	15.	0	44	41.	17.	5½	33	131.	14.	7	43
	178.	4.	8	100	126.	8.	5	100	301.	4.	6	100

Notes to table

1 1393-1396

Grain/loaves	Original total, £23.13.0d, minus 13s.4d, which was spent on maslin for dogs.
Wine/ale and Meat/fish	Assumes all bought in year was used since consumption cannot be checked.

2 1417-1418

Grain/loaves	Purchases, £16.12.0d, has value of 5ls.11d, added for a remainder from previous year. Other grain purchases not used for human consumption.
Wine	£36.3.4d, plus remainder valued at £8.10 = £44.13.4d; £6.8.0d worth was unused therefore net value of wine consumed £38.5.4d.
Ale	£27.17.6½d plus remainder valued at 10d = £27.18.4½d; 16s.8d worth was unused therefore net value of ale consumed £27.1.8½d.

The accounting problem of gallons reperit<sup>9</sup> super comptum has been disregarded. This may account for the over-weighting in favour of Wine/ale.

Meat/fish	Calves £1.10.3d, wethers £10.9.8d, plus £1.10.0d, value of remainder. Boars and pigs £2.7.11d; fish and herrings £9.13.10½d minus 18d worth remaining unused; fish caught in meres 40s; cattle [£35.15.6d purchased plus £8.4.8d remainder] = £44.0.2d, minus value of live stock with bailiff [£12.4.11d and £6.18.0d or remaining £10.10.0d] i.e., £29.12.11d = £14.7.3d.
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3 1424-1425

Grain/loaves	Wheat £25.1.8½d; Rye used for human consumption 5s.10d; loaves purchased £1.8 11; Editor's valuation of 5qr. rye from <u>tercia garba</u> 9.8½d. Editor's valuation of 2lgr. 1 bushel wheat received from Ireland £7.11.0d.
Wine/ale	Wine £45.13.4d; 18s, 1.9d, plus 13 pipes gift, editor's estimated value £37.2.0d. Ale £50.1.0d, plus 200 gallons remainder 16.8d.
Meat/fish	Purchasing under 'Meat and other items pertaining to kitchen' would appear to cover meat and fish items dealt with separately on dorse.



a case could be made for including expenditure on dried fruits and particularly nuts, which were a much used source of protein. Naturally rises in prices in one or other category affect the proportions but there is no suggestion that meat is abnormally highly priced in these years. The table at least shows that the smallest proportion of expenditure went on grain/bread.

The household provided food for all people from the highest to the lowest class: it is not suggested that they all ate the same food. Hilton's requirement, since nutritional standards varied from class to class, of 'a sequence of dietary history which will respect basic class divisions' cannot be met.<sup>1</sup> However, it is not likely that the lower members of the household were kept at starvation level whilst their betters lived on luxuries and gave as alms wheaten, not low quality, bread.

The daily fare of the peasant is not encountered in these accounts and, indeed, accurate information on this subject would be very hard to find. A guess might be hazarded that habits of life were so static in the period before the discovery of the New World, and the adaptation of its products to European use, that it is likely that, (unless periods of severe food crisis occurred - a thesis which has so far not been proved), an English agricultural laborer's diet in the fifteenth century would be very like that described by the sixteenth century Oxfordshire female labourer Alice George, who lived to be one hundred and eight years of age (1572-1680). She, at an advanced age, lived on bread, cheese, butter and ale, and appeared to have been

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<sup>1</sup>

R.H. Hilton, op. cit.

acquainted with meat in all forms, and to be particularly attached to sucking-pig.<sup>1</sup>

Again, the exact nature of the diet of the lower merchant and journeyman class is far from easy to ascertain, but it is difficult to be convinced that the monotony of their diet, or that of the peasant, could be even remotely compared with, for instance, that of the Irish in the century before the famine when

The great mass of the population had in effect a single solid foodstuff:...day after day, people ate salted, boiled potatoes, probably washing them down with milk, flavouring them, if they were fortunate, with onion or a bit of lard with<sup>2</sup> boiled seaweed or a scrap of salted fish.

As regards the middle classes, the food accounts of one household at least, that of the two chaplains at Bridport, prove that they 'lived comfortably on a diet which if not luxurious was at any rate far from monotonous'.<sup>3</sup>

Certainly monotony cannot be claimed as a feature of the Blakemere diet, and protein in the form of meat, fish and, to a lesser degree, of dairy produce was both plentiful and varied. When one considers, in addition, the abundant wine, the nutritious ale, the wholesome

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1

P. Laslett, The World We Have Lost, London, 1965, pp.109-10.

2

K.H. Connell 'The Potato in Ireland', Past and Present No.23, November, 1962, p.57. Unpleasant as this diet sounds to modern Western ears it should be noted that Dr Connell writes, (ibid., p.60).

If as commonly happened he had a cupful of milk with each meal, to the bio-chemist, if not to the gourmet, he was admirably nourished: he had some 4,000 calories a day compared with the required 3,000, he had enough protein, calcium and iron; he had a sufficiency, or a superabundance of the listed vitamins.

A comment such as this should prevent too hasty a judgment being made on the adequacy of the peasants' diet in the Middle Ages. On this point see also J.C. Drummond and A. Wilbraham, The Englishman's Food, revised London 1958 pp.75, 465-8.

3

K. Wood-Legh, A small household of the XVth century, London, (1956), p.xxiii.

nature of the wheat bread, the quantities of nuts and dried fruit, the innumerable spices and honey which all played their part in the diet throughout the year, it is clear that the section of the populace which drew commons from this or similar noble households had a diet which was far from monotonous or inadequate, even though, naturally, the delicacies and luxuries would be reserved for the family.

It is hoped that this introduction will lead the reader into the accounts of the Blakemere household which follow with an increased understanding of the milieu which produced them, and of their value to the social historian. It is not claimed that they contain a 'complete system of ancient oeconomics' such as Bishop Percy suggested could be found in his edition of the Earl of Northumberland's household book.<sup>1</sup> It will surely be found however that they display

that regularity which for many ages had been observed in th'estate and household affaires of these lords; in the Accompts of their receivers, keepers of the wardrobe, steward of the household, clark of the kitchen, Reeves and Bayleys of manors and hundreds and the like accomptants which by their auditors with singular care and exactnes were yearly cast up and preserved ingrossed in parchment...and ubi nullus est ordo, ibi est confusio....  
And it is a true observation in all great families that where noe government or order is observed, there consumption follows.<sup>2</sup>

'Consumption' certainly was not the lot of the Talbots at this period; they flourished, began their years of ascendancy and consolidated their position of prominence. Their servants, whom we can here observe assiduous in the activities of a long-vanished day, surely by the exercise of that regularity in their

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1

Thomas Percy ed., op. cit., p.viii.

2

John Smyth, Lives of the Berkeleys, Vol.ii, pp.37-8.

duty which the Steward of the Berkeleys so praised,  
contributed in no small way both to their lords'  
prosperity and to their own welfare.

DESCENT AND FRAGMENTATION OF THE BRIDGWATER  
AND RELATED COLLECTIONS

Collections of documents variously known by such group descriptions as the Talbot Papers, the Shrewsbury Papers, the Bridgwater Collection, the Egerton Papers, or the Ellesmere Collection are familiar, by footnote citation at least, to students of English history interested in periods stretching from the fourteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Talbot/Shrewsbury and Egerton/Bridgwater are the names of the two prominent families who dominate the history of Blakemere, and I shall now attempt to display the relationship of these families and their document collections one to another and, by doing so, to trace the provenance of the Blakemere household accounts. These are today part of the Bridgwater collection which was deposited in the Salop Record Office by Lord Brownlow in 1948. The chain of events, which, over some five and a half centuries, led to Lord Brownlow's becoming their ultimate owner has not been easy to disentangle.

In the late fourteenth century Blakemere and the nearby manor of Whitchurch, together with other North Shropshire property, descended into the sole hands of Ankaretta Le Strange.<sup>1</sup> By her marriage (which took place probably in 1377) to Richard, 4th Lord Talbot, the Le Strange lands became merged with the already extensive lands of the Talbots. The Blakemere estate continued in

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The principal estate records relating to the Shropshire Le Stranges are part of the Bridgwater Collection in the Salop Record Office. The other branch of the Le Strange family, which lived principally at Hunstanton in Norfolk, left a large collection of records, many of which are informative about all branches of the family history. These were used in the family history entitled Le Strange Records 1100-1300, London, 1916, by Hamon Le Strange, and are now in the County Record Office, Norwich.

the hands of the Talbots until 1598 when Sir Thomas Egerton purchased it from Edward Talbot, later 8th Earl of Shrewsbury, who died childless.

Other Talbot lands were removed at this period from the Talbot/Shrewsbury name and line when Alatheia, the youngest of Gilbert 7th Earl of Shrewsbury's three daughters, married in 1606 Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel. It was their grandson who was restored to the Dukedom of Norfolk. Through this alliance, since Alatheia was the only one of Gilbert's children to produce an heir, the Norfolks enjoyed the great estates of Talbot and Furnivalle in South Yorkshire. Some of the Talbot records, both family and estate papers, also followed this alliance. In 1671 a Yorkshire antiquary, Nathaniel Johnston, used these Talbot papers, then at Sheffield manor, for his unpublished lives of the Earls of Shrewsbury.<sup>1</sup> Under his direction some fifteen volumes of these documents were bound, after being rescued 'from amid multitudes of waste papers and the havock that mice ratts and wett had made at Sheffield manor' and, in 1677, presented to the College of Arms by the Duke of Norfolk.<sup>2</sup>

Nathaniel Johnston retained many of the Talbot papers which he had consulted in his own collection and some of these later found their way to Lambeth Palace Library. Neither the date nor the circumstances in which Lambeth acquired these are known. Johnston had them in 1697; he died in 1705 and by 1715 it is known that they

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These lives, written during 1692-94, are now in Sheffield Central Library (Mss 3-6).

2

A.R. Wagner, The Records and Collections of the College of Arms, London, 1952, p.32. A catalogue of these is in preparation. A large number was printed by Edmund Lodge in Illustrations of British History, 1791, and many more summarized in the appendix to the second edition in 1838.

were in Lambeth Palace. One conjecture is that they were sold on Johnston's death. Other papers of the Earls of Shrewsbury, and also Johnston's own collection, were finally dispersed in the Bacon Franks Sale at Sotheby's in August 1942.<sup>1</sup> Many were bought by dealers and others were acquired by the Bodleian Library and Sheffield Central Library.<sup>2</sup> However, some Talbot papers still remained in the hands of the Dukes of Norfolk as can be seen from the recently published lists of records still at Arundel Castle in the Duke of Norfolk's possession.<sup>3</sup> As an example of how scattered information about Blakemere can be, it may be noted that the document which tells us of a new house to be built in Blakemere Park in the sixteenth century is in Sheffield; this completes a story begun in a Survey book now in the Salop Record Office. Furthermore some related documents are in the Lambeth collection.<sup>4</sup>

In spite of a move from one male Talbot line to another at the beginning of the seventeenth century, necessitated by Gilbert, the 7th Earl, having no male heirs and his brother, the 8th Earl, having no heirs at

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For a detailed account of these events see C. Jamison, A Calendar of the Shrewsbury and Talbot Papers in the Lambeth Palace Library and the College of Arms, vol. 1, Shrewsbury Mss in Lambeth Palace Library, H.M.S.O. 1966, and Janet Martin's unpublished thesis 'The Antiquarian Collections of Nathaniel Johnston', B.Litt: Oxford. See also H.J. Todd, Catalogue of Manuscripts in Lambeth Palace Library, London 1812, pp.179-87.

2

Rosamond Meredith, Catalogue of the Arundel Castle Manuscripts, with an appendix consisting of a Calendar of Talbot Letters, Sheffield, 1965, pp.181-222. Also Historical Manuscripts Commission, 6th Report, 1877, Appendix 5, pp.448-65 which lists the Bacon Franks Collection.

3.

F.W. Steer, ed., Arundel Castle Archives, Interim Landlists Nos. 1-12, Chichester, 1968.

4

Jamison, op. cit., 16, 53, 130, 148. It is possible that some attributions of Blakemere Park to County Hereford in the Index might possibly be to Shropshire.

all, the Talbot/Shrewsbury line and title continued until the nineteenth century. Then, however, the 17th Earl of Shrewsbury, believing that all descendants in the male line of John Talbot 'the celebrated warrior' and 1st Earl were extinct, devised all the family estates to Lord Edmund Bernard Howard, the infant third son of the Duke of Norfolk.<sup>1</sup> Lord Edmund assumed the name of Talbot by royal licence on 17 May 1876. The papers of this 17th Earl, subsequently possessed by Lord Edmund (Howard) Talbot, were the subject of report by the Historical Manuscripts Commission in 1870 and 1903.<sup>2</sup> Towards the end of his life Lord Edmund reverted to his first name, Howard, and was created Viscount FitzAlan, a name which was the surname of the original Earls of Arundel before the male line had died out in 1580. In 1937 he deposited this major collection in the British Museum where it is known as the Shrewsbury (Talbot) Collection. A document in this collection is the sole source for the date of Ankaretta Le Strange's marriage to Richard Talbot.<sup>3</sup>

The Talbot/Arundel family strand in the history of this accumulation and fragmentation of document groups has been briefly outlined and I shall now return to the Talbot North Shropshire estates acquired by Sir Thomas Egerton and trace the history of their ownership and records.

<sup>1</sup>

Complete Peerage, vol. XI, p.727, vol. XIII, p.347.

<sup>2</sup>

Historical Manuscripts Commission, Report on Manuscripts in Various Collections, vol. II (No. 55), 1903, pp.289-330.

<sup>3</sup>

'The Shrewsbury (Talbot) Manuscripts - Gloucestershire references prepared by Miss Edith S. Scroggs', Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, IX (1938), pp.260-96, esp. p.292.



Sir Thomas Egerton, the illegitimate son of a minor country gentleman,<sup>1</sup> was Lord Keeper under Elizabeth and had become Lord Chancellor in 1603. By purchasing land in Shropshire, Northamptonshire and Hertfordshire, including the family seat, Ashridge, he established his social position and consolidated the fruits of office.<sup>2</sup> Sir Thomas Egerton's son was created 1st Duke of Bridgwater.

The 1st Duke, who had the vision to employ James Brindley to build what Mantoux calls 'the first real canal in England', led the expansion of canal building in England and thereby added to his already considerable fortune.<sup>3</sup> The 3rd Duke of Bridgwater died in 1803, without heirs, and the Dukedom thereupon became extinct, but a large proportion of his wealth was bequeathed to his nephew George, Marquess of Stafford, who subsequently became the Duke of Sutherland. George's younger son, Francis, who assumed the surname Egerton in 1833 and was created Viscount Brackley and 1st Earl of Ellesmere in 1846, inherited the portion of the Bridgwater wealth and property which had been bequeathed to George.<sup>4</sup> The Ellesmere line has continued, father to son, until the present day.

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1

Sir Richard Egerton of Ridley in Cheshire.

2

See E. Hopkins, 'The Bridgwater Estates in North Shropshire in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century', M.A. thesis University of London 1956 and 'The Re-leasing of the Ellesmere Estates 1637-1642', Agricultural History Review, X, 1962.

3

See Hugh Malet, The Canal Duke, Dawlish 1961, pp.187-90 for a description of Bridgwater record sources relating to the Duke.

4

Complete Peerage, vol. V, pp.54-5. See J. Payne Collier, ed., The Egerton Papers, Camden Society, vol. 12, 1840, for some Egerton family papers belonging to the 1st Earl of Ellesmere. The particular documents described there are now either at Mertoun or in the Huntington Library, California.

In consequence of the death of the 3rd Duke of Bridgwater without heirs, the Earldom of Bridgwater (a minor title of the Duke of Bridgwater's family) reverted to a grandson of the 1st Duke's brother Henry. This was John William Egerton who thereupon became the 7th Earl of Bridgwater. He married an heiress, Charlotte Hayes, whose property, added to his portion of the Bridgwater Estates, made him a man of considerable wealth. The 7th Earl and his wife Charlotte had no children, so the title passed to the Earl's brother, Francis Henry, the 8th Earl, on whose death without issue in 1829 the Earldom also became extinct.<sup>1</sup> The 7th and 8th Earls, however, had a sister Amelia, who had married Sir Abraham Hume; their daughter Sophia married the 1st Earl Brownlow in 1810. The 7th Earl bequeathed property to his great-nephew, that is to Lord Alford, the eldest son of Sophia and Earl Brownlow, upon interesting conditions described by Sir Bernard Burke as follows:

The succession of Ashridge Herts and the other vast estates of the Earl of Bridgwater gave rise to one of the most curious of our causes célèbres. In 1823 John William 7th Earl of Bridgwater made a will by which he bequeathed property which had been estimated at about £2,000,000 to the then Lord Alford on condition that if the said Lord Alford should die without his having attained the rank of Marquis or Duke or should not have attained either of those dignities within 5 years after he should have become Lord Brownlow the property was to go to his brother the Honourable Charles Henry Cust, subject to the like term. Lord Alford died in the year 1851 without having attained the dignities in question and then arose the point was his brother or his son entitled to the estate. On the one side it was urged that the late possessor being dead, without having obtained the stipulated grade, his descendants had thereby incurred the penalty of forfeiture.

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<sup>1</sup>

In 1829 Francis Henry Egerton, 8th Earl of Bridgwater, bequeathed sixty-seven manuscripts together with £12,000 (the Bridgwater Fund) to the British Museum, the income from which was to be devoted to the supervision and augmentation of the Collection. This is the famous 'Egerton Collection' but it contains no archive material relating to the family or the property. See T.C. Skeat, The Catalogues of the British Museum, 2, Manuscripts, p.27.

To this it was replied that only one year having expired the matter must be as yet considered doubtful. Both parties appealed to law and law in its court of highest appeal, the House of Lords, decided that the condition being contrary to the principals of the English constitution and one which the devisee had no legitimate means of controlling, should be passed over and the will read without it. This judgment confirmed the youthful Earl of Brownlow (Lord Alford's son) in this estate.<sup>1</sup>

But in 1867 the youthful 2nd Earl Brownlow died without issue, as did his brother and all the other descendants of Sophia. The title and property, therefore, passed to Adelbert Salisbury a descendant of Sophia's brother-in-law the Reverend Henry Cust. The 5th Earl and present Lord Brownlow is Adelbert's son.

After following this through, we are now in a position to list the places where the records accumulated under the above circumstances are to be located. The material concerned with estate management is usually to be found in the relevant local record offices that is, at Salop, Northamptonshire and Hertfordshire Record Offices, since it usually, though not always necessarily, comes from the local estate offices. But a complicating factor is introduced by the fact that the Egerton family had inevitably accumulated a valuable collection of personal, legal and semi-official papers kept by members of the family who held such positions as Lord Chancellor, President of the Council of Wales and the Marches, Admiralty Commissioner, and Commissioner for Trade and Plantations. These, together with many literary manuscripts which the family had acquired, were purchased by Mr Huntington from the Earl of Ellesmere in 1917 and are now in the Huntington Library, California: this took place before there were any restrictions placed by the

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1

Sir Bernard Burke, Vicissitudes of Families, vol. ii, London 1869, pp.390-91.

British government on records leaving England.<sup>1</sup> It can be seen therefore that the general division of the accumulation is this: the literary and personal manuscripts descended with the money to Lord Ellesmere and so to the Huntington Library, and the estate management records went with the estates to Lord Brownlow and so to various record offices. In practice some manorial material and early deeds are in California when they might be in the Salop and possibly other Record Offices, and a handful of seventeenth century letters are at the Salop Record Office, and others at Belton, when they would fit in with the Huntington Ellesmere Collection.

It should be noted that some of the material listed in the pre-sale list or Calendar made about 1900, is not, as one would expect, in the Huntington Library but has been retained by the Earl of Ellesmere and is believed to be at Mertoun, the seat of the present Earl, and not available for students.<sup>2</sup>

A large quantity of documents, part of Lord Brownlow's portion of the accumulation of centuries, has been deposited by him in the Salop Record Office. The Bridgwater Collection now held there came from three separate places: some from a loft over a workshop in the estate yard at Ellesmere, North Shropshire in 1948; some from the estate office at Ellesmere in 1951-2; and some from Belton, Lincolnshire over the period 1953-62.

Lord Brownlow retains an unknown quantity of records at Belton, his home when in England. Sir Frederick Kenyon

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1

Jean Preston, 'Collections of English Historical Manuscripts in the Huntington Library', Archives, vol. IV, Michaelmas 1963, pp.96-7.

2

Information from Asst. Sec. Historical Manuscripts Commission, London.

of the British Museum published a brief list only of what are usually termed the Ashridge Muniments (Ashridge was Lord Brownlow's previous residence) in 1927.<sup>1</sup> Miss M.C. Hill, County Archivist of Salop, informs me that she has a letter from Lord Brownlow stating that these documents are now at Belton and presumably the Collection there (inaccessible to students) also contains those documents mentioned in Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to the Bridgwater Collection in the Salop Record Office the County Archivist writes in the Guide to the Shropshire Records, 'Large as this collection is, it is clear that they are only a surviving part of an enormous accumulation'.<sup>3</sup> This collection is also described there as follows:

These records of the administration of the Bridgwater estates in North Shropshire are of outstanding interest. They provide material for a detailed study of the area from the fourteenth century and are especially valuable for the light they throw on estate management over a wide period. In addition to manorial records there are accounts and incidental papers presented by receivers general, receivers, rent collectors, bailiffs, stewards and reeves. These accounts continue as rolls until the mid-seventeenth century when the modern form of accounting was adopted. A long series of rent rolls and rentals with frequent and detailed estate surveys show each step in the improvement of the estates from the late sixteenth to the nineteenth century; and the gradual inclosure and reorganisation of demesnes, parks, commonfields and wastes is illustrated by estate maps covering the same period.<sup>4</sup>

As regards the provenance of the household accounts, it is interesting to note that though they came to the

1

Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society, 4th Series, vol. XI, 1927, pp.78-82.

2

Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica, first edited by Sir F. Madden, B. Bandinel and others; afterwards by J.G. Nichols, 8 vols, London, 1834-43, vol. V, pp.175-81.

3

Guide to the Shropshire Records (1952), p.86.

4

Ibid., pp.85-6.

Record Office from the Estate Loft at Ellesmere, they were almost certainly in 1561 to be found in the 'two chests of awncyent evydence' kept in the 'Yatehouse' of 'the late Castle of Blakemeare', which was then 'standinge and well covered with lead and drye'.<sup>1</sup> Many of the collections touched upon in this account of fragmentation have, in their dispersal, travelled far. The surviving Blakemere household accounts however stayed close to the place which engendered them. Although the manor house has vanished, and the resting place of most of its inhabitants is unknown, the documents, written on enduring parchment, remain in Shropshire.

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1

Detail taken from a Survey, made 18 April 1561 of the Woods of the Lordship of Whitchurch. Salop Record Office, Bridgwater Collection. Box 'Whitchurch Surveys'.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AT BLAKEMERE

Where the accounts of the official for the year given exist, his name has been underlined. Except in the case of the document for 1415-16 which is an item, reference number D641/1/2/51 in the Stafford collection in the Staffordshire County Record Office, all these documents are part of the Bridgwater Collection in the Salop Record Office (at present without final reference numbers), identified as 212/.

Michaelmas to Michaelmas	(a) Receiver Blakemere	(b) Household Steward Blakemere	(c) Bailiff Blakemere	(d) Seneschal <sup>1</sup>
1389-90	<u>John Pulford</u>		<u>Thomas Muleward</u>	
1390-91	<u>John Pulford</u> <sup>1</sup>			John Boerley
1391-92	<u>John Pulford</u>			Thomas Cholmely
1392-93	<u>Thomas Clerc</u>	Thomas Clerc <sup>1</sup>		
1393-94	<u>Thomas Clerc</u>	* <u>Thomas Clerc</u> <sup>2</sup>		
1394-95			<u>John son of Hugh</u>	
1395-96				
1396-97				
1397-98	<u>Thomas Malpas</u> <sup>2</sup>	William Newton <sup>3</sup>	<u>David Maceson</u>	David Malpas
1398-99			<u>David Maceson</u>	
1399-1400		William Newton <sup>4</sup>	<u>David Maceson</u>	
1400-01	<u>Richard Overton</u> <sup>3</sup> David Malpas	William Newton <sup>5</sup>	<u>David Maceson</u>	David Malpas
1401-02	* <u>Walter Wodburn</u>	John Wyspyngton <sup>6</sup> (* <u>Walter Wodburn</u> ) <sup>7</sup>		
1402-03	Richard Clerc <sup>4</sup>	John Wyspyngton <sup>8</sup>	<u>John Baron</u>	David Malpas
1403-04				
1404-05				
1405-06				
1406-07				
1407-08			<u>Jevon Gogh</u>	William Lee <sup>2</sup>
1408-09				
1409-10	<u>William Lee</u>		<u>Jevon Gogh</u>	

Notes:(a) Receivers

- 1 Termed receiver and clerk of the court in this account
- 2 Account states 'prima vice'
- 3 Bailiff's account of this date gives Malpas as receiver. He was also seneschal of lordships of Blakemere, Cheswardine and Wrockwardine
- 4 Bailiff's account of this date. Auditor from 1405 onwards.

(b) Household Steward

- 1 Receiver's account of this date
- 2 Account dated 30 October 1393 - 30 October 1394
- 3 Receiver's account of this date
- 4 Bailiff's account of this date
- 5 Bailiff's account of this date
- 6 Account of keeper of foreign household this date
- 7 Custos of Lord Furnivalle's foreign household at Blakemere. This is also his account as receiver
- 8 Bailiff's account of this date.

(d) Seneschal

- 1 Details from bailiffs' accounts in all cases, except 1391-1392
- 2 Later receiver in Anglesey: Household steward's account 1417-18.

\* Starred accounts are transcribed in vol.2.

Michaelmas to Michaelmas	(a) Receiver Blakemere	(b) Household Steward Blakemere	(c) Bailliff Blakemere	(d) Seneschal
1410-11	<u>Roger Thrisk</u> <sup>1</sup>	Robert Manavan <sup>1</sup> Thomas Pensax <sup>2</sup>	<u>John Walsch</u>	
1411-12	Roger Thrisk <sup>2</sup>	* <u>Robert Skymex</u> <sup>3</sup>	John Walsch <sup>1</sup>	
1412-13				
1413-14				
1414-15	<u>Roger Thryshe</u>	John Camvyle <sup>4</sup>		John Warston <sup>1</sup>
1415-16		John Camvyle <sup>5</sup>	<u>John Walsch</u> <sup>2</sup>	Richard Cholmely <sup>2</sup>
1416-17		Henry Samon <sup>6</sup> Lady Talbot <sup>7</sup>		
1417-18	Walter Wodburn <sup>3</sup>	* <u>John Walsch</u>	John Hugynesson <sup>3</sup>	
1418-19		John Walsch <sup>8</sup>	<u>William Fleccher</u> <sup>4</sup> <u>John Wylvm</u> <sup>5</sup>	
1419-20	John Wylvm <sup>4</sup> * <u>John Wenloc</u> <u>John Wenloc</u>	* <u>John Wenloc</u> <sup>9</sup>	<u>Robert Daykin</u>	
1420-21				
1421-22				
1422-23				
1423-24		John Stuard <sup>10</sup>		
1424-25	Richard Kenleye <sup>5</sup>	* <u>Richard Kenleye</u>		

**Notes:****(a) Receiver**

- 1 Rector of Whitchurch Church. See this thesis, vol.2, p.56. He is still rector according to household steward's account of 1417-18.
- 2 Household steward's account of this date
- 3 Household steward's account of this date, also termed receiver general, see vol.2, p.101
- 4 Household steward's account: 'recently receiver', see vol.2, p.133.
- 5 Household steward's account of this date. Richard Leggett is receiver general.

**(b) Household Steward**

- 1 Bailliff's account of this date
- 2 Bailliff's and receiver's account of this date
- 3 Account dated 1 August 1411 - 30 September 1412
- 4 Receiver's account of this date, and in household steward's account 1417-18, Camvyle is steward of 'second preceding year'
- 5 Bailliff's account of date (Stafford Record Office D641/1/2/51)
- 6 Lately steward in household account of following year, 1417-18. According to that account William Thomas is household steward at Goodrich Castle, and Walter Wodburn is third household steward
- 7 Household steward's account of 1417-18
- 8 Bailliff's account of this date
- 9 Account dated 30 September 1419 - 30 May 1420, which is also his account as receiver
- 10 Household steward's account, 1424-25 (vol.2, p.155).

**(c) Bailliff**

- 1 Household steward's account of this date
- 2 Bailliff's account 1415-16 Stafford Record Office D641/1/2/51
- 3 Household steward's account of this date
- 4 Account dated 19 October 1418 - 20 August 1419
- 5 Account dated 20 August 1419 - Michaelmas 1419.

**(d) Seneschal**

- 1 Lately' seneschal according to D641/1/2/51
- 2 Now seneschal according to D641/1/2/51.

\* Starred accounts are transcribed in vol.2.



SUMMARY OF THE ACCOUNTS

1

1 October 1393 - 1 October 1394BLAKEMERE: THE ACCOUNT OF THOMAS CLERÇ, STEWARD OF THE  
HOUSEHOLD OF SIR RICHARD TALBOT THERECharge

Cash (from himself as receiver of the lord's monies)	£274.16. 3
Received from oxskins, woolfells and produce of the lord's store	6. 7. 6
Cash from lord	15.13. 4
Received from honey	2. 5. 4
Received from fish	6.13. 3
Gift of wheat	1. 6. 8
	<u>Summa</u> £307. 2. 4

Discharge

Payment of last year's <u>superplusagium</u>	£17.17. 2
Pantry (wheat, maslin)	23.13. 0
Buttery (ale, red and white wine)	76.10. 0
Kitchen (cows, heifers, pigs, geese, poultry, salt, and fresh fish, rabbits, cartage)	78.15. 4½
Wardrobe (spices, wax, honey)	11.18. 1
Stable (oats, hay and shoeing)	37. 2. 1
Additional (harness, carts, carting, wages of A. the Lavynder, and T. the Chaplain, buying a pasture for grazing sheep, making candles)	21.10. 5½
	<u>Summa</u> £277. 6. 2 <sup>1</sup>
	<u>Debet</u> £ 39. 6. 2 <sup>2</sup>

- 1 Editor's summa using steward's sub-totals, £267. 6s 2d.  
 2 Editor's debet using steward's summa £29.16s 2d.  
 Editor's debet using editor's summa £39.15s 11½d.

2

29 September 1401 - 29 September 1402VIEW: THE ACCOUNT OF WALTER WODBURN, KEEPER OF THE  
FOREIGN HOUSEHOLD OF SIR THOMAS DE NEVYLL,  
LORD DE FURNIVALLE, AND RECEIVER OF THE MANOR OF  
BLAKEMERE WITH DEMESNECharge

Arrears	0
Whitchurch tolls, rents, farms, farm of common bakehouse and mill	£121.18. 5
Dodington rents and farms	27.19. 0
Wrockwardine rents	21. 3. 4
Corfham rents	3. 1. 4
Culmington rents	5. 0. 0

Lineal rents	1. 8. 0
Marbury rents and tak	11. 2. 4
Bywell	7. 0. 0
Tithes and oblations of Whitchurch in lands of lord at farm	16.18.11
Foreign receipts (cash from lord, from receiver of Sheffield to the official)	76. 8. 4
Tilstoke (agistment and pasture)	<u>2.15. 7</u>

Summa      £294.15. 3

Discharge

Expenses of the lord's foreign household	£ 38. 6. 9
Wages for Welsh war	50.13. 4
Repair of manor buildings with maintenance of fencing	3. 9.10
Upkeep of the town mill	4.17.10
Purchase of wheat	7.19. 5
Carriage of wine	2.15. 0
Necessities	1. 4.11
Wardrobe	18. 9. 9
Fees, wages and salaries	15. 4. 8
Shoeing of the horses	12.11 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Scything the meadows	2.10. 1
Foreign payments	22.14. 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Annuities	2.17. 8
(illegible,...Debts repaid?)	61. 6. 4 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Debts for ale repaid	2. 5. 6 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Payments for the rectors of Whitchurch and Marbury	5.19. 3
Oblations	5.10
Purchase of hay	1. 8
Winnowing of grain with porterage	4. 3
Alms	6. 4
Gifts	5. 3.10
Fees of the lord's minstrels	3. 6. 8
Payments to the coffer of the lord and to the lady	8.13. 4
Cash payments for the lord's household	<u>29. 0. 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub></u>

Summa      £288.10. 0<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

<sup>1</sup> Editor's total of steward's sub-totals. Account unfinished.

1 August 1411 - 30 September 1412

THE ACCOUNT OF MASTER ROBERT SKYNNER, STEWARD OF THE  
HOUSEHOLD OF ANKARETTA LADY TALBOT

Charge

Arrears		0
Blakemere (goods, rents and fines)	£130.13.	6½
Culmington (value of oxen)	7. 1.	0
Wrockwardine (cash and goods)	9.18.	2
Cheswardine (goods)	8. 9.	2
Sutton (cash and goods)	16.10.	1
Eccleswall (purchase by bailiff)	1. 6.	2
Sale of corn and livestock	1.10.	4
Profits of the kitchen (flead)		3. 9
Sale of hides and skins	9. 0.	8
Foreign receipts	31.15.	2
Receipts from the lady's coffer	14.18.	7
Valuation of the lady's store	50.14.	9½
The lady's provisions	125.16.	11
Gifts valued	6.19.	2
Sales upon account	1. 4.	11
	<u>Summa</u>	<u>£416. 2. 5<sup>1</sup></u>

Discharge

Foodstuffs (from particulars in household papers)	£ 21.18.	5
Foodstuffs (from household book)	228.14.	1
Gifts	1. 3.	11
Payments for ale	47. 1.	1
Consumption by household	182. 6.	11½
Cash paid to lady	6. 5.	3
	<u>Summa</u>	<u>£487. 9. 8½<sup>2</sup></u>

<sup>1</sup> Editor's summa of steward's sub-totals.

<sup>2</sup> Editor's summa of steward's sub-totals. This draft account has not been totalled and there is no detailed account in the discharge of foodstuffs. The dorse is complete.

29 September 1417 - 29 September 1418

BLAKEMERE HOUSEHOLD: THE ACCOUNT OF JOHN WALSCH,  
STEWARD OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GILBERT LORD TALBOT AND  
THOMAS HEMMYNGBOURGH, CLERK OF THE KITCHEN OF THE  
SAME HOUSEHOLD BEING AT BLAKEMERE

Charge

Arrears	£ 35. 8. 4
Anglesey receipts	0
Blakemere	0
English receipts	0
Lord's manors in England and Wales	0
Blakemere manor (goods)	33. 3. 8½
Money receipts	196. 8. 4½
Charge of various foodstuffs from the remainder of the previous year's account	22. 4. 7
Provisions from gifts sent to the lord's household	1. 0. 0
Sale of grain and stock	0
Profits of the office of the larder and kitchen	4. 2. 1
Law office at Chester	0
Sale upon account	6. 5. 1
Further Blakemere receipts	2.10. 0
	<hr/>
<u>Summa</u>	£301. 2. 2

Discharge

Consumption of the lord's household	£ 19.11. 8
Allowances of various foodstuffs from the balance of the account of the previous year	22. 4. 7
Expenses of the lady's mounted company	2.12. 8½
Purchase of wheat	16. 1. 0
Purchase of wine	36. 3. 4
Purchase of ale	27.17. 6½
Purchase of malt	0
Purchase of maslin	10. 4
Purchase of barley	1. 8
Purchase of peas	18. 1½
Purchase of oats	6. 2. 0
Purchase of cattle	35.15. 6
Purchase of calves	1.10. 3
Purchase of wethers	10. 9. 8
Purchase of boars and pigs	2. 7.11
Purchase of herrings and fish	9.13.10½
Purchase of wax and chandlery items	1. 7. 6
Purchase of spices	0
Fees and stipends	22. 4. 0
Purchase of horses	1. 0. 0
Debts of the lord restored	0
Cost of necessaries	1. 9.11
Saucery	2. 0
Scullery	0
Purchase of salt	1. 7. 2
Purchase of vessels	0
Stables	9.12. 5
Purchase of livery	19.12. 4
Payments	4. 1. 2
Allowances for fish caught	2. 0. 0
Blakemere Manor additional	10. 0
Delivery of money to lady's receipt	0
	<hr/>
<u>Summa</u>	£255. 6. 8

	<u>Summa</u>	£255. 6. 8
	First <u>debet</u>	£ 45.15. 6
Allowed		5. 5. 1
Previous <u>Superplusagium</u> allowed		<u>26.15. 2½</u>
	Second <u>debet</u>	13.15. 2½
Creditors		<u>56. 4. 4½</u>
	Third <u>debet</u>	42. 9. 2
Respite <sup>1</sup>		<u>16.11. 2</u>
Remainder		<u>£ 25.18. 0</u>

1

When a sum is 'in respite' it means that a delay has been permitted in the discharge of the obligation. In this case the sum £16 11s 2d is the value put on ewes and their 'increase' or progeny which were devoured by dogs two years earlier. It is only at this audit that the lord decides that the holder of the steward's office is not to be held responsible for the disaster, that the sum need not be paid by him and that it can therefore be deducted from the superplusagium. The steward of the household at the time the loss occurred was not John Walsch but John Camvyle. See E.M. Myatt-Price, 'Examples of Techniques in Medieval Building Accounts', Abacus, Vol. 2, No 1, p.43, for a more puzzling example of respites. However, respites normally appear to refer to transactions with members of the same staff or individuals who have some connection with the overall organization, such as tenants, not to outside creditors.

5

30 September 1419 - 30 May 1420

BLAKEMERE: ACCOUNT OF JOHN WENLOC, STEWARD OF THE  
HOUSEHOLD OF LADY TALBOT

Charge

Arrears	0
Fixed rents (Whitchurch)	£ 14. 6. 8
Farms (Whitchurch)	19. 9. 0
Farms of land in Whixall	2. 1. 6
Rents (Ash Magna and Parva, Burghall, Tilstock, Eddesley, New and Old Woodhouse, Holehurst and Chene, Alkington, Doddington, Lineal (and millfarm there), Cheswardine)	32. 0.11
Sale of chaff and straw	15. 4
Sale of grain and stock	20.18. 5
Sale of hides	3. 1. 3
Receipts from receiver	26.14. 8
Receipts from Blakemere bailiff	4.16. 8
Receipts from the lady	1. 0. 0
Charged upon account	<u>1. 4. 1</u>
	<u>Summa</u> £126. 8. 6

Discharge

Allowances and defects of rent	£ 1.15. 6
Necessities plus the cost of carriage	1.19. 7
Threshing and winnowing	12.11
Upkeep of the buildings of the manor	6. 8 <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Account mutilated and unfinished.

30 September 1424 - 12 September 1425

BLAKEMERE: THE ACCOUNT OF RICHARD KENLEYE, STEWARD OF  
LORD TALBOT'S HOUSEHOLD THERE

<u>Charge</u>		
Arrears		£140.19.11
Receipts from receiver-general (cash and small items)		101.14.10
From Richard Atticham (goods purchased by R. Atticham)		21. 5. 4½
From J. Stuard (lord's rents at Shifnal)		21.16.10
Sale of hides		8. 1. 6
Sale of woolfells and sheepskins		10. 2
Sale of calfskins		2. 6
Receipt from lord		10.13. 4
Sale upon account		<u>8. 6. 9½</u>
	<u>Summa</u>	<u>£313.11. 3</u>

<u>Discharge</u>		
Purchase of grain		£ 25.10. 0½
Purchase of wine		46.13. 1
Purchase of bread		1. 8.11
Purchase of ale		50. 1. 0
Purchase of meat, poultry, eggs, butter, cheese and fish		131.14. 7
Purchase of almonds, spices and sweetmeats		12.12. 8
Purchase of wax, resin, torches and candles		9. 5. 8
Purchase of fruit		13. 0
Purchase of oil		13. 0
Purchase of salt		1. 3. 5
Purchase of candles		9.4½
Purchase of linen, napery		2.10. 8
Keep for horses		13. 7. 4
Sundries		25.15. 0
Gifts		19. 8
(Expenses in Whitchurch)		3. 6. 7½
Funeral expenses		14. 3
Fees and stipend		<u>9.10. 3</u>
	<u>Summa</u>	<u>£336. 8. 6½</u>

First <u>Superplusagium</u>	£ 22.17. 3½
Respite	<u>7.19. 1½</u>
Second <u>Superplusagium</u>	30.16. 5
Creditors	<u>29. 9. 8</u>
Final <u>Superplusagium</u>	<u>£ 1. 6. 9</u>

1

In this case the 'respite' (a sum made up of the value put on small quantities of rye in the charge of the baker, wine in the charge of the butler and salt herrings and rabbitskins in the charge of the cook; items which cannot be accounted for and which are ultimately the responsibility of the steward of the household) is added to the superplusagium and the steward has to make good this loss.

PEDIGREES

The ultimate source for statements given may be found in The Complete Peerage and for this reason I have omitted references which are there cited. The volumes involved are, Furnivalle, vol. V, pp.589-91, Lisle, vol. VIII, pp.54-8, Norfolk, vol. IX, p.610, Shrewsbury, vol. XI, pp.698-705, Le Strange, vol. XI, pp.698-705, Talbot, vol. XII, pt 1, pp.614-20 and Warwick, vol. XII, pp.378-82. Where other material has been incorporated its source is indicated in brackets.

Notes to Pedigree I - The Le Strange Family of Blakemere

1. John, 2nd Baron was aged 18 at his father's death. On 1 August 1325 the wardship of his father's lands was committed to him upon payment of £400 yearly. On 26 February 1326 he had proved his age and done homage, and was to have seisin. He was summoned to Parliament from 23 October 1330 to 20 April 1344 by writs directed Johanni Lestraunge de Blakemere. In 1337 described as Blanmouster (Whitchurch) he was an executor of the will of his cousin Ebles Le Strange. He is described as of Whitchurch as often as of Blakemere. In 1332 and thereafter he was in commissions for Salop. In 1346 he accompanied the King to Normandy and was at Crécy and Calais. He married Anchoret daughter of William Boteler of Wem, sister and coheir of Edward Boteler. He died 21 July 1349. Anchoret married secondly Sir Thomas Ferrers. She died 8 October 1361.
2. Fulk, 3rd Baron was aged 18 on 2 February 1348/9. He married (contract dated 12 March 1346/7, she then being under 13) Elizabeth, daughter of Ralph 1st Earl of Stafford by his 2nd wife Margaret daughter and heir of Hugh de Audley, Earl of Gloucester. Fulk died 30 August 1349 and Elizabeth married secondly Sir John de Ferrers

and had issue, and thirdly Reynold de Cobham. She died 7 August 1375. The Complete Peerage, following The Visitation states Fulk had two daughters, Joan and Eleanor, but Morris (in his manuscript genealogies in Shrewsbury Borough Library) insists that these were children of a cousin and Fulk had no heirs.<sup>1</sup>

3. John, 1st or 4th Baron, brother of Fulk, born about Easter 1332 at Whitchurch, aged 17 years and 37 weeks at the inquisition after his brother's death. In 1354 he proved his age. On 30 October 1354 he had done homage and was to have his lands. He was summoned to Parliament 3 April 1360. In 1360 he was in a commission for Salop. He married Mary, originally believed to have been the daughter of Richard FitzAlan, 10th Earl of Arundel by his wife Isabel, daughter of Hugh (Le Despenser), Lord Le Despenser. However, M. Aston in Thomas Arundel (1967) in a footnote to the 'FitzAlan Family Tree' proves clearly that Mary Le Strange was the daughter of the 9th not the 10th Earl of Arundel. 'She is referred to in the latter's will (Reg. Sudbury, Lambeth, f.95<sup>v</sup>) as his sister, and is so described in a petition for plenary remission at the hour of death, granted in 1364: Cal. Pap. Reg., Petitions, i, 1342-1419, p. 484.' He died 12 May 1361. His widow who was known as the Lady of Corfham died 29 August 1396 after 35 years of widowhood. The Complete Peerage (vol. XII, p.344 and Appendix H, pp.18-21) states 'Undoubtedly John did succeed in a territorial sense; but according to modern doctrine he did not succeed to the alleged Parliamentary Barony and the writ by which he was summoned created a new Barony'.

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See account of Mr Joseph Morris by W. Phillips in T. Morris's article 'The Provosts and Bailiffs of Shrewsbury', Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological Society, pt. 1, 3rd series, vol. 1, 1901.



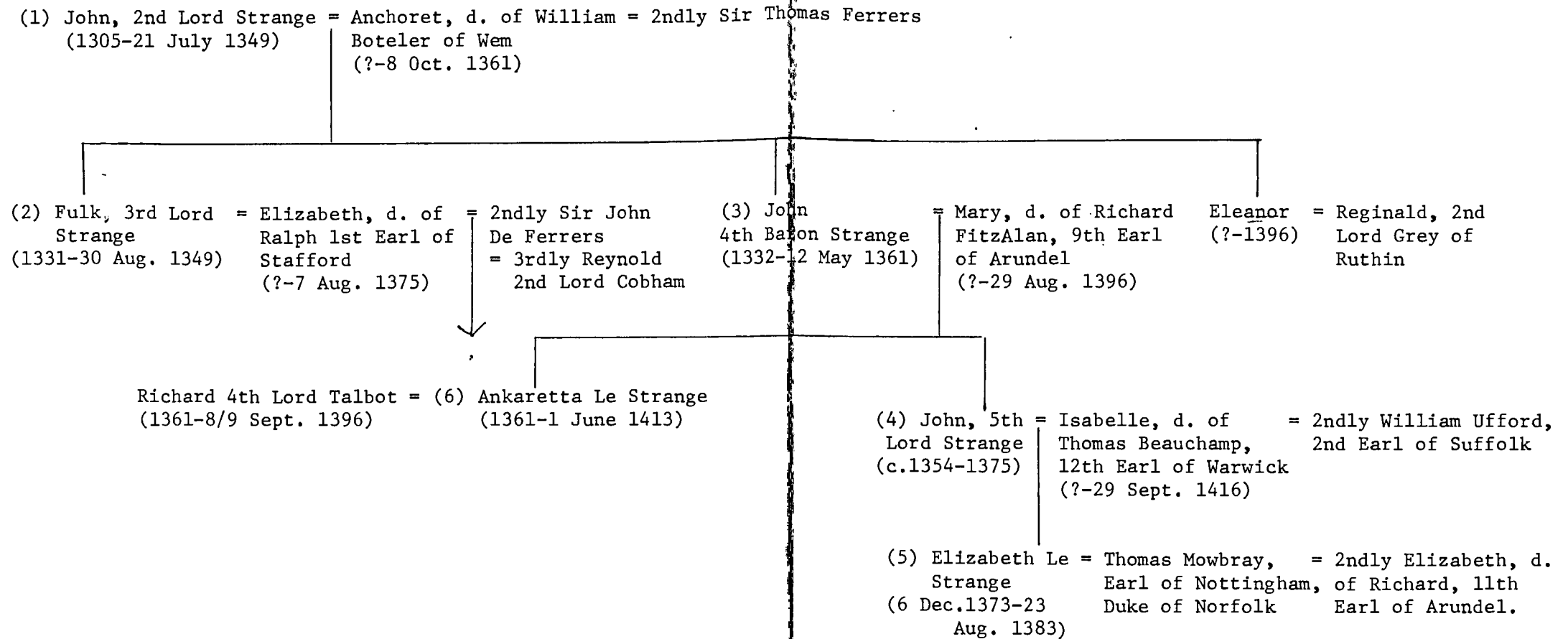
4. John, 2nd or 5th Baron, aged 7 on 15 August 1360 although this date of birth varies according to other records. On 3 November 1362 a grant was made to him and his heirs of a yearly fair at Whitchurch. He married Isabel almost certainly the daughter of Thomas Beauchamp Earl of Warwick. He died a minor without male issue 3 August 1375. His widow married secondly William de Ufford, 2nd Earl of Suffolk, who died without heirs 15 February 1381-2. They received a pardon for marrying without licence. She took the veil 21 March 1381-2 and died 29 September 1416 and was buried at Campsey Priory.

5. Elizabeth Le Strange, only daughter and heir of John 5th Baron and Isabel his wife. (She is called Joan in Cal. Fine Rolls, vol. viii, p.302 and vol. ix, p.63, and Elizabeth in vol. viii, p.308, vol. x, p.7, but in vol. xii, pp.158-9 is described as Joan recte Elizabeth.) Born 6 December 1373. On 20 February 1382/3 the king made certain grants to his kinsman Thomas de Mowbray, brother and heir of John de Mowbray late Earl of Nottingham if he should marry Elizabeth. After her death on 23 August 1383, he married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Earl of Arundel (pardon obtained for marrying without licence 1389) and 29 September 1397 was created Duke of Norfolk.

6. Ankaretta Le Strange. Aged 22 on 14 September 1383 (7RII). She is descended from Henry III through the FitzAlan and Plantagenet lines. The date of her marriage to Richard Talbot is not known but must have taken place as early as 1377, according to a deed dated 19 January 1377 (B144 B.M. Shrewsbury (Talbot) Collection, see p.292, Trans. Bristol and Glos. Archaeological Society, vol. LX, 1938) whereby Gilbert Talbot grants Eccleswall, in Herefordshire, and other property to Richard and Ankaretta his wife. Between 23 August and 26 September 1383, the

king had taken homage and fealty due from Richard by reason of his having had issue by Ankaretta. Richard Talbot died 7 or 8 September 1396. Ankaretta therefore was bereaved of her husband and mother in one week. For their children see Pedigree II. She married secondly Thomas Neville, Lord Furnivalle (see Pedigree II, no. 4). By him she had a daughter Joan, born when Ankaretta would have been 42. She died on Ascension Day (1 June) 1413.

PEDIGREE I - LE STRANGE OF BLAKEMERE



Notes to Pedigree II - The Talbot Family

1. Gilbert Talbot, 3rd Baron, aged 24 in 1356, summoned to Parliament 14 August 1362 (36 Edward III) to 8 August 1386 (10 Richard II). He married firstly (before 8 September 1352) Petronilla (Perine or Pernel), daughter of James Butler, 1st Earl of Ormonde, by Eleanor, daughter of Humphrey de Bohun, 4th Earl of Hereford and 3rd Earl of Essex, by his wife Elizabeth daughter of Edward I. She is believed to have died in 1368. He married secondly before 16 November 1379, Joan, widow of John Lord Cherleton, feudal lord of Powis, daughter of Ralph 1st Earl of Stafford and Margaret, daughter and heir of Hugh de Audley, Earl of Gloucester. She died before 1397. He died 24 April 1387 at Roales in Spain. For other details of his career see introduction, vol. 1, section II.

2. Richard Talbot, 4th Baron, aged 26 in 1386/7; he was knighted by Richard II at his coronation, 16 July 1377 and was in Ireland with Edmund Earl of March in January 1380. He was summoned to Parliament in consequence of his marriage to the heiress of Strange of Blakemere from 3 March 1383/4 (7 Richard II) to 17 December 1387 (11 Richard II) by writs directed to Ricardo Talbot de Blakemere whereby he is held to have become Lord Talbot of Blakemere. Having succeeded his father, 24 April 1387, he was summoned to Parliament 17 December 1387 by writ directed Ricardo Talbot de Godriche Castell and he continued to be so summoned until 13 November 1393 (17 Richard II). With his father he was summoned 13 June 1385 to be at Newcastle-on-Tyne, 14 July for service against the Scots. Orders were given for him 18 June 1387 to have full seisin of his father's lands, his homage being respited till Michaelmas following.

After the death of John de Hastings, 3rd Earl of Pembroke, 30 or 31 December 1389, Lord Talbot was awarded the Honor of Wexford in Ireland as coheir through Elizabeth Comyn, wife of the 2nd Lord Talbot. He was Commissioner of Array for Salop, 1 March 1391/2 (and also a commissioner, 5 December 1391, to enquire into the taking of salmon in the Severn in close time and to punish offenders). He married before 23 August Ankaretta, suo jure, according to modern doctrine, Baroness Strange of Blakemere, only daughter of John Le Strange by Mary FitzAlan, daughter of the 9th Earl of Arundel. He died 8 or 9 September 1396, in London aged about 35. His widow married, as his second wife, Thomas Neville, Lord Furnivalle.

3. Ankaretta Le Strange, aged 22 on 14 September 1383 (7 Richard II). She, descended from Henry III through the FitzAlan and Plantagenet lines, married firstly Richard Talbot descended from Edward I through the Bohun and Ormonde lines. The date of her marriage to Richard Talbot is not known but must have taken place as early as 1377 according to a deed dated 19 January 1377 (B.M. Shrewsbury (Talbot) Collection, see Trans. Bristol and Glos. Archaeological Society, vol. LX, 1938, p.292) whereby Gilbert Talbot grants Richard, and Ankaretta his wife, Eccleswall in Herefordshire and other property. Between 23 August and 26 September 1383, the king had taken homage and fealty due from Richard by reason of his having had issue by Ankaretta. Richard Talbot died 7 or 8 September 1396. Ankaretta therefore was bereaved of her husband and mother in a week. For their children see below. She married secondly Thomas de Neville, Lord Furnivalle (see below). By him Ankaretta had a daughter Joan, born when she would have been 42. She died on Ascension Day (1 June) 1413.

4. Thomas de Neville, 2nd son of Sir John de Neville Raby, Co. Durham, by his first wife Maud, daughter of Sir Henry Percy of Alnwick, Northumberland. He married first Joan de Furnivalle, heiress and daughter of William Lord Furnivalle before 1 July 1379. On 22 June 1383, Thomas and Joan had livery of her father's lands, her age having previously been proved and John de Neville of Raby being ordered to take her husband's fealty. On 12 February 1384-5 they had livery of the knights' fees and advowsons of her inheritance. Thomas de Neville was summoned for military service against the Scots, 13 June 1385 and to Parliament from 20 August 1383 to 9 February 1405/6 by writs directed Thome de Nevill', or Nevill', de Halumshire. On 9 February 1393/4 he was appointed a commissioner to treat of peace with the Scots. As one of the Lords temporal, he swore on the altar of the Shrine of St Edward at Westminster, 30 September 1397, to maintain all the statutes, etc., made in the preceding session of Parliament. He gave his assent, in Parliament 1399, to the secret imprisonment of Richard II. On the same day, 23 October, he was appointed Keeper of Annandale, and Constable of Lochmaben Castle in the Western Marches of Scotland, both for life; and, 3 December 1403, Keeper of the castles of Berwick-on-Tweed, Alnwick, and Warkworth, until further orders. In 1404 (March or April) he was one of the twenty-two persons whom the King ordained to be de son grant et continuel conseil. On 12 November 1404, he and Sir John Pelham were appointed, in Parliament, Treasurers of War: they held office till 19 June 1406. He was one of the Lords temporal who sealed the exemplifications of the Acts settling the succession to the Crown, 7 June and 22 December 1406. He was Treasurer of England, July to November 1406 and probably till his death. He married, secondly,

(pardon for marrying without royal licence, 4 July 1401) Ankaretta, widow of Sir Richard Talbot, of Goodrich, Co. Hereford [Lord Talbot] (who died in London, 8 or 9 September 1396), and daughter and eventually heiress of Sir John Le Strange, of Whitchurch, Salop [Lord Le Strange]. He died without male heirs, 14 March 1406/7 and was buried, with his first wife, in Worksop Priory. Will dated at London, 12 March 1406/7 (8 Henry IV), proved at Maidstone, 17 March 1406/7, and at York, 28 March 1407. On 11 May 1407 his widow obtained possession of the lands of her own inheritance and of those which she held in dower from her first husband, Richard Talbot.

5. Joan de Neville. Morris (Manuscript pedigrees in Shrewsbury Borough Library) states that according to one pedigree Joan was not the daughter of Ankaretta, but of Joan Furnivale and therefore a full sister to Maud. He also states that she died unmarried. Morris would put Sir Hugh Cooksey, reputedly Joan's husband, as the eventual husband of her step sister Elizabeth Talbot. Pollard states Elizabeth entered a convent, and was not married. Joan died without heirs.

6. Gilbert (Talbot), 5th Lord Talbot, first son and heir of Richard Talbot, was born 1383; he was a ward of the King till 9 September 1403, when, though still under age, he was granted livery of his lands. On 9 March 1400/1 he received a grant of 100 marks yearly from the Exchequer for his maintenance during his minority. He was in the service of the Prince of Wales on the Welsh border from April 1403, and drew pay from the Controller of the Prince's household for 17 esquires and 80 archers, 18 April - 15 May 1403 (Wylie, History of England under Henry IV, vol. iv, pp.242-46) and received £200 for his great expenses in the service of the King and the Prince,

13 February 1405-6. He was summoned to Parliament from 25 August 1404 to 5 October 1417 by writs directed Gilberto Talbot. He defeated the insurgent Welsh, who were in superior numbers, at Grosmont 11 March 1404-5; was nominated K.G. between April 1408 and April 1409; and accompanied Thomas of Lancaster to Ireland, 2 August 1408. With his brother and eventual successor John he besieged and took Harlech Castle, December 1408 - January 1408/9; and he was in command of a force of 300 men-at-arms and 600 archers on the borders of Wales in 1410. He claimed, as heir of the Earls of Pembroke, to carry the golden spurs at the Coronation of Henry V, 9 April 1413. He succeeded his mother as Lord Strange (of Blakemere), 1 June 1413; Chief Justice of Co. Chester, 27 October 1413; entered into a recognisance for £4,000, to be levied in Co. Salop, to be of good behaviour, 16 November 1413. Commissioner to arrest and imprison Lollards, Co. Hereford, 11 January 1413. Joint Captain of the fleet to resist the expected invasion, 18 February 1414/5, and was appointed to treat with Owen Glendower and to receive him and other Welsh rebels to the King's obedience and grace, 5 July 1415. While waiting at Southampton to accompany Henry V to France in 1415 (with a retinue of 30 men-at-arms and 90 archers) he was one of the peers who took part in the trials of Richard, Earl of Cambridge, and Lord Scrope, 5 August 1415. He was at Sandwich with Henry V, before the King sailed for Calais, 4 September 1416; was present at the siege of Caen, August 1417, and, with Gilbert de Umfreville, empowered to attack enemy strongholds, 20 August; Captain-General of the Marches of Normandy, 1 October 1417-28 January 1417/8 during which winter he led a successful raid into the Cotentin with some 500 men, but suffered heavy loss on his return, being attacked by the Captain of Cherbourg at



the mouth of the Vire, while entangled in the shifting sands; Captain of Caen Castle, 1418. In April 1418 he and the Earl of Warwick laid siege to Domfront, which surrendered on 22 July; and in September following Caudebec capitulated to them after a six days' siege. He was betrothed, about 20 May 1392 to Joan 2nd daughter and coheir of Thomas (of Woodstock), Duke of Gloucester (6th and youngest son of Edward III), by Eleanor, elder daughter and coheir of Humphrey (de Bohun), 6th Earl of Hereford, 5th Earl of Essex, and 2nd Earl of Northampton, Constable of England. She died without heirs 16 August 1400, apparently before the marriage was consummated, aged about 16. He married (about 1415) Beatrice, a Portuguese lady, perhaps of the family of Pinto. He died without male heirs 19 October 1418 at the siege of Rouen. His widow married, before 1423, Thomas Fettiplace, of East Shefford, Berks.

7. Joan, first wife of Gilbert, 5th Lord Talbot, 1384-1400. See entry under 6. Morris, giving no authority states 'she had a daughter Ankaret, died young'.

8. Beatrice, Lady Talbot. It is stated by The Complete Peerage : 'It is possible that she was of the Pinto family, said to be the only house in Portugal that bears the five crescents in saltire, as displayed on her seal (Coll. Top. et Gen., vol. i, p.405). This does not explain, however, why she also bore the ancient arms of Portugal, both on her seal and impaled with those of her husband, Gilbert Talbot, as formerly displayed in the church of Whitchurch, Salop, viz. quarterly, 1st and 4th, silver, five escutcheons in cross azure, each charged with five silver plates in saltire, for Portugal; 2nd and 3rd, azure, five crescents in saltire gold. So it has been suggested that she was a daughter or granddaughter of Lope Diaz Souza, grandson of an illegitimate son of King Alfonso III of

Portugal (Christopher Hussey in Country Life, 27 July 1945, referring to an article by J.R. Planche in the Journal of the Archaeological Association, 1860). This would explain the Royal arms of Portugal. Planche says that Alfonso III (died 1279) had two illegitimate sons, the first of whom, Alphonso Denis, married Maria Perez de Ribeyra e Souza, daughter and finally heir of Constance Mendez de Souza, coheir of Mendez Garcia de Souza and his wife Theresa de Ribeyra, and "became the progenitor of one branch of the great family of Souza, whose ancient arms were, gules five crescents in saltire argent...." She was born in Portugal, but it is stated in an order to the eschaetor in Salop and the March of Wales adjacent, 23 October, 1419, that the King has granted to her "that she shall be his liege woman, and further that in all causes, matters and complaints ecclesiastical and temporal she shall be held, entreated and ruled as his true liege born within the realm,..." The King mentions her good service about the person of his consort the Queen, 12 March 1421/2. In 1428 she, described as "Beatrix, que fuit uxor Gilberti Talbot, militis", held of Sir John Talbot certain lands in Broughton, Wilts, which had been assigned to her for dower.' After the death of Gilbert Lord Talbot, she married before 1423 Thomas Fettiplace. She died 25 December 1447 and was buried at East Shefford (see V.C.H. Berks, vol. vi, p.237).

9. Thomas Fettiplace of East Shefford, Co. Berks had been appointed by Lord Talbot 13 September 1413, steward of the Manor and Hundred of Bampton, Oxon. See also Introduction, vol. 1, Section I, p.16. He died between 1442 and 1446, leaving, by his wife Beatrix, a son William.

10. Anchoret Talbot, daughter and only child of Gilbert and Beatrice, de jure, according to modern doctrine, Baroness Strange and Baroness Talbot, was aged two on her father's death. Her marriage and the custody of two parts of her lands were granted to her mother, 14 February 1419-20. She died 13 December 1421, aged about five.

11. John Talbot, second son of Richard (Talbot), Lord Talbot, by Ankaretta, according to modern doctrine suo jure Baroness Strange (of Blakemere), born about 1384; by his first marriage, before 5 April 1407, with Maud, according to modern doctrine suo jure Baroness Furnivalle, he acquired the great family estates of the family of Furnivalle in Hallamshire. On 3 May 1407 escheators in the counties of York, Stafford, Bucks., Salop and Hereford were ordered to cause him and his wife to have seisin of lands held by her father in her mother's right. 4 September 1409 the escheators in the counties of York, Leicester, Wilts., Notts. and Derby were ordered to cause him and his wife to have full seisin of land which Thomasia, late wife of William and grandmother of Maud held in dower, of which the castle of Sheffield was the caput (the castle and manor of Sheffield were held of the King in chief by homage and by a rent of two white greyhounds yearly at the Nativity of St John the Baptist). In consequence thereof, he was summoned to Parliament as Lord Furnivalle or Lord Talbot (of Hallamshire), from 26 October 1409 (11 Henry IV) to 26 February 1420-1 (8 Henry V), by writs directed to Johanni Talbot, with the additions: domino de Furnyvall, or de Halomshire. He witnessed, as Johannes, Dominus de Farnevale, the agreement between Henry, Prince of Wales, and Rees ap Llewelyn for the surrender of Aberystwyth, 12 September 1407. He was King's Esquire, before 25 April 1407, when

he was granted the keeping of the castle and lordship of Montgomery during the minority of Edmund, Earl of March; he was on the Commissions of the Peace for Derbyshire, 7 February 1407-8; for Salop and for Staffordshire, 14 March 1409-10; knighted before 15 July 1413. He was committed to the Tower, 16 November 1413, and at the same date he and his elder brother Gilbert entered into recognisances for £4,000 each, to be levied in Salop, to be of good behaviour. The Dictionary of National Biography suggests that his imprisonment may have been connected with the rising of Sir John Oldcastle, but his appointment as a Commissioner to arrest Lollards, 11 January 1413-4, and to enforce the Statute of Leicester, 28 July 1414 makes this improbable. He may have been committed to the Tower and subsequently appointed Lieutenant of Ireland to stop a feud between him and the Earl of Arundel arising from a dispute about some land in Shropshire (Wylie, op. cit., vol. i, pp.63-4. On the day on which he was committed to the Tower, Arundel entered into a recognisance for 10,000 marks to be of good behaviour and Edmund, Earl of March, John, Earl Marshall, and Sir William de Roos, entered into like recognisances for Arundel's good behaviour. He was appointed King's Lieutenant of Ireland for six years, with power to nominate a Deputy, 24 February 1413-4, being sworn in 13 November. He left Ireland, 7 February 1415-6, was present at the reception of Sigismund, King of the Romans (afterwards Emperor), at Dover, May 1416, returned to Ireland, April 1418, but left again, July 1419. By the death, 13 December 1421, of his niece Ankaretta, according to modern doctrine suo jure Baroness Talbot, and the consequent failure of the issue of his elder brother, Gilbert, Lord Talbot, etc., he became Lord Talbot and Lord Strange (of Blakemere).

He was also, by inheritance from his great-grandmother, Elizabeth, wife of Richard, 2nd Lord Talbot, lord of the Honor of Wexford, in Ireland. He was with Henry VI at Windsor 28 September 1422, ordered to prevent riots on the Welsh Marches, 3 October 1422, nominated K.G. 6 May 1424. His military career in France will not be detailed but for further information see Complete Peerage, vol.XI, pp.698-704. He married firstly, before 12 March 1406/7, Maud, according to modern doctrine suo jure Baroness Furnivalle, elder daughter of Thomas (Neville), Lord Furnivalle, and only child and heir of (his first wife) Joan, according to modern doctrine suo jure Baroness Furnivalle, only daughter and heir of William (de Furnivalle). She died about 1423. He married, secondly, probably a year earlier than the date (6 September 1425) given by the Complete Peerage, at Warwick Castle, Margaret, daughter of Richard (Beauchamp), Earl of Warwick, by his first wife, to whom she was coheir, Elizabeth, only child and heir of Thomas (Berkeley), Lord Berkeley, which Elizabeth was, according to modern doctrine, suo jure Baroness Lisle and Baroness Berkeley. He died, as stated above, 17 July 1453, and was buried at St Alkmund's, Whitchurch, Salop. His will dated 1 September 1452, at Portsmouth, was proved 18 January 1453-4.

12. Richard Talbot, date of birth not known, was on 6 June 1401 collated to the prebend of Putston Major in Hereford Cathedral, and on 9 June 1407 appointed precentor. In October 1412 he held the prebend of Fridaythorpe in York Cathedral, and he is also said to have had some benefice in St David's diocese. In 1415 he was elected dean of Chichester. His brother's position as Lord-deputy of Ireland opened the way for Richard's preferment in that country. In 1416 he was elected archbishop of Armagh, but, failed to obtain confirmation in time.

In the following year, however, Talbot was consecrated archbishop of Dublin.

In this capacity Talbot took an active part in the government of Ireland. In 1419, during his brother's absence, the archbishop was appointed his deputy, and on 19 May 1423 he was made Lord Chancellor of Ireland. In April 1426 he was removed from the chancellorship, but secured his reappointment on 23 October following. In 1429 he was charged with abetting disorder and rebellion, and was summoned to England to answer for his conduct. Apparently he gave satisfaction, for he retained the chancellorship. In 1431 he instituted a new corporation within St Patrick's Cathedral, consisting of six minor canons and six choristers. He renewed the claim of the archbishops of Dublin to independence of the primatial see of Armagh.

During the absence of the viceroy, Sir Thomas Stanley, in 1436, the archbishop again acted as deputy; and when James Butler, 4th Earl of Ormonde, was appointed viceroy in 1440, Talbot began a systematic opposition to his government. In the Parliament which met at Dublin on 16 November 1441 a petition was drawn up requesting Henry VI to appoint an English peer as viceroy instead of Ormonde. Talbot was selected to lay the petition before the King, and he took the opportunity to describe the ill effects of Ormonde's rule. Ormonde, however, was not removed, and the dissensions between him and Talbot forced the English government to summon them both in 1442 and again in 1443 to answer for their conduct, which was leading to disastrous results in Ireland. No effect was produced, both rivals retaining their offices of deputy and chancellor. In 1445, however, and again in 1447-8, Talbot held the post of

deputy during his brother's absence. In 1443 he declined election to the see of Armagh. He died at Dublin on 15 August 1449, and was buried in St Patrick's Cathedral (from Dictionary of National Biography, sub. Richard Talbot).

13. Sir Thomas Talbot of Wrockwardine, Salop. He died 17 April 1419 without heirs.

14. Sir William Talbot, date of birth unknown, was slain by the servants of John Beauchamp, Lord Bergavenny, 1419. He married Eleanor, daughter and coheir of Thomas Pearethe, and died without heirs.

PEDIGREE II - TALBOT

Petronilla, d. of = (1) Gilbert Talbot = 2ndly, Joan, widow of  
 James Butler, 3rd Baron Lord Cherleton, Lord  
 Earl of Ormonde (1332-24 April 1387) of Powis, d. of 1st  
 (?-1368) Earl of Stafford  
 (?-ante 1397)

(2) Richard Talbot = (3) Ankaretta Le Strange = 2ndly (4) Thomas Neville,  
 4th Baron (1361-8/9 Sept 1396) (1361-1 June 1413) 5th Lord Furnivalle  
 (?-14 March 1406/1407)

[Sir Hugh Cooksey = (5) John De Neville]

(7) Joan, d. of = (6) Gilbert = 2ndly (8) Beatrix = 2ndly (9) Thomas  
 Thomas Woodstock, 5th Baron (?-25 Dec. 1447) Fettiplace Maude, d. of  
 Duke of Gloucester (?1383-19 Oct. 1418) (10) Anchoret William (1432-?) Lord Furnivalle  
 (c.1384-16 Aug. 1400) (11) John, 6th Baron, 1st Earl of Shrewsbury  
 (?1384-20 Feb. 1453) 2ndly Margaret, d. of Richard Beauchamp, 13th  
 Earl of Warwick (1404-1467) (12) Richard, Archbishop of Dublin  
 (?-18 Aug. 1444)

(13) Thomas (?-17 Sept 1419) (14) William = Eleanor, d. of Thomas Pearethe  
 (?-1419) Anne = Hugh Courtney, Earl of Devon Mary = Sir Thomas Green,  
 of Boughton Norton, Co. Northants = 2ndly John of Notyngnam  
 Alice = Sir Thomas Barre Elizabeth = ?Sir Hugh de Cooksey,  
 Co. Worcs



Notes to Pedigree III - The First Earl of Shrewsbury  
and family

1. Maud, according to modern doctrine suo jure Baroness Furnivalle, elder daughter of Thomas Neville, Lord Furnivalle and only child and heir of his first wife Joan according to modern doctrine suo jure Baroness Furnivalle, only daughter and heir of William, Lord Furnivalle. She, who was born circa 1392, married John Talbot 2nd son of Richard and Ankaretta Talbot before 12 March 1406/7. She sat at Queen Catherine's Coronation banquet in Westminster Hall, 21 February 1420-1. She died about 1423, and was buried in Worksop Priory.
2. John Talbot, first Earl of Shrewsbury. See Table II.
3. Margaret, the eldest coheir of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, was born at Goodrest, in Wedgnoock Park, near Warwick, in 1404. She married, probably a year earlier than the date 6 September 1425 given by The Complete Peerage, at Warwick Castle, as second wife, John (Talbot), Earl of Shrewsbury. She and her husband violently resisted the succession of James Berkeley (Lord Berkeley), the male heir, to Berkeley Castle and its appurtenances. They seized and imprisoned him till he signed certain disadvantageous deeds, and later imprisoned his third wife, Isabel, at Gloucester, where she died in 1452. They took as hostage a younger son, who fell at the battle of Castillon where John, Earl of Shrewsbury, his captor, was also slain, 17 July 1453. Margaret was reconciled to James, Lord Berkeley, shortly before his death in 1463, but renewed her claims against his son William. She died 14 June 1467, and was buried in Jesus Chapel in St Paul's.

4. Richard Beauchamp, 13th Earl of Warwick, also hereditary Sheriff of Worcestershire and Chamberlain of the Exchequer, was born 25 or 28 January 1381/2 at Salwarpe, Co. Worcester. He was knighted, 11 October 1399, at the Coronation of Henry IV; served in Wales against Owen Glendower in 1402; had livery of his lands, 13 February 1402/3; took part in the battle of Shrewsbury, 21 July 1403, and was nominated K.G., probably on the following day. He was made Joint Keeper, with Lord Audley, of Brecknock Castle, 24 October 1403 to 19 February 1403-4; was with the Prince of Wales at Worcester, June 1404; a Commissioner for the trial of Archbishop Scrope and the Earl Marshall, June 1405, receiving a grant for life of Swansea Castle and the lordship of Gower, forfeited by the Earl Marshall, 29 August following; and was at the siege of Aberystwyth, September 1407. Under licence of 5 April 1408 he travelled abroad for two years, making pilgrimages to Rome and to the Holy Land. On his return he was appointed a member of the Council, 9 May 1410; a Commissioner to treat with the Scots, 23 May 1411; Steward of England for the Coronation of Henry V, appointed 2 April 1413, and Deputy Steward (for the Duke of Clarence) at that of Queen Katherine, 23 February 1420/1; Commissioner to treat with Burgundy and France, 14 July 1413; Captain of Calais and Governor of the Marches of Picardy, 3 February 1413/4; Joint Ambassador to the Council of Constance and to the Emperor, 20 October 1414, and Chief Commissioner to treat with Burgundy, 7 August 1415; Chief Warden of the Marches of Wales adjoining counties Hereford and Gloucester, 16 June 1415. Though present at the siege of Harfleur, August-September 1415, he is said to have gone to Calais, with the Duke of Clarence, in charge of prisoners

after its capture, 22 September, and (despite Shakespeare) he did not fight at Agincourt, 24 October 1415. The following year he received the Emperor Sigismund at Calais, April, and took part in the naval victory off Harfleur, 15 August 1416; Commissioner to treat with Burgundy, 5 August, and with the French Ambassadors at Calais, 31 August 1416. Accompanying Henry V to France, July 1417, he was at the siege of Caen, August-September following, and himself besieged and captured Domfront and Caudebec, in 1418, before returning to the siege of Rouen, for whose surrender, 19 January 1418-9, he was appointed Chief Commissioner (Wylie and Waugh, *Reign of Henry V*, vol. iii, pp.58, 60, 107, 129, 131-39). He was made Captain of Beauvais, 2 February 1418-9, and forced La Roche Guyon to capitulate after a two months' siege, 1 May following (Reign of Henry V, vol. iii, pp.176-7). On 19 May 1419, while the King was at Vernon, he received a grant of the comté of Aumale, with remainder to the heirs male of his body, whereby he became Count of Aumale, in Normandy. For the next year he was continually employed in the negotiations for a truce which lead to the treaty of Troyes, 21 May, and the marriage of Henry V to Katherine of France, 2 June 1420. Later he took part in the sieges of Melun, July-November 1420, and Meaux, October 1421; for whose surrender 10 May 1422, he was a Commissioner. He himself besieged and forced the surrender of Gamaches, 12 June 1422, and St Valéry-sur-Somme, 4 September following, and he was present at the death-bed of Henry V, 30-31 August 1422, to whom he was an executor. Under Henry VI he was present in Council, 5 November, and was made a Councillor of Regency, 9 December 1422; Captain of Rouen, before 31 January 1422/3, and again of Calais, 10 July (as from 4 February) 1423 and

1 March 1424-5; Joint Guardian of the truce with Scotland, 28 March 1424, and again in 1426 and 1430. As Captain and Lieutenant General of the King and the Regent in the field, 1426-7, he besieged and captured Pontorson, in Brittany, January-May 1427, but, with the Earl of Suffolk, was completely defeated by the Bastard of Orleans before Montargis, 5 September following. For further details of his military activities see The Complete Peerage, vol. XII, pt II, pp.381- 2. From 1 June 1428 till 19 May 1436 he was Tutor and Governor to the young King, whom he bore to Westminster Abbey for his Coronation, 6 November 1429, and whom he accompanied to France, April, for his Coronation in Notre Dame, Paris, 16 December 1430. He was, 16 July 1437, made Lieutenant General and Governor of France and Normandy, setting sail thereto, 29 August (Rymer, vol. x, pp.674-75), where, within two years' time, he died, his position being one of great peril and anxiety. He married firstly (covenant September 1392), before 5 October 1397, Elizabeth, de jure suo jure (according to modern doctrine) Baroness Berkeley, also Baroness Lisle (of Kingston Lisle) and Baroness Teyes, only daughter and heir of Thomas (de Berkeley), fifth Lord Berkeley, by Margaret, de jure suo jure (according to modern doctrine) Baroness Lisle (of Kingston Lisle) and Baroness Teyes. She, who was under 7 in 1392, died without male heir 28 December 1422 and was buried in Kingswood Abbey, County Gloucester. On her death the Baronies of Berkeley, Lisle and Teyes fell, according to modern doctrine, into abeyance between her three daughters and coheirs. He married, secondly, 26 November 1423, at Hanley Castle, County Worcester, Isabel, de jure suo jure (according to modern doctrine) Baroness Burghersh, widow of his cousin Richard

(de Beauchamp), Earl of Worcester (who died without male heirs March 1422), posthumous daughter and eventually sole heir of Thomas (Le Despenser), Earl of Gloucester and Lord Le Despenser (who was beheaded, January 1399/1400, and afterwards attainted), by Constance, daughter of Edmund, 'of Langley', Duke of York, fifth son of Edward III. He died 30 April 1439 at Rouen, aged 57, and was buried 4 October in St Mary's, Warwick, being afterwards removed to the Lady Chapel (built by his executors), where is a superb monument to him. Will dated at Caversham, Oxon., 8 August 1437, proved 1439 and 1447.

5. Elizabeth Berkeley, according to modern doctrine suo jure Baroness Lisle of Kingston Lisle and Baroness Teyes, succeeded to these baronies on the death of her mother in 1392. On the death of her father in 1417, when she was aged 30 she succeeded him, according to modern doctrine, as Baroness Berkeley. She opposed the succession of James Berkeley her cousin, heir male of her father, to the Berkeley estates. She married, before May 1397, as first wife, Richard (Beauchamp), Earl of Warwick, who styled himself 'Comes de Warrewyk et de Aumale, seigneur L'Isle et capitayne de Rouen'. She died without male heirs, 28 December 1422, and was buried in Kingswood Abbey, Wiltshire. At her death the Baronies of Lisle, Teyes and Berkeley fell, according to modern doctrine, into abeyance among her three daughters and coheirs: (i) Margaret; see No. 3 of this Pedigree, (ii) Eleanor, born September 1408, at Walthamstow in Essex, married, firstly, Thomas, Lord Ros, secondly, Edmund (Beaufort), Duke of Somerset, and thirdly Walter Rokesley; her father's inquisition post mortem (1439) states her to have been aged 25, (iii) Elizabeth,

born in Warwick Castle, married George (Nevill), Lord Latimer; she is said to have been aged 22 in her father's inquisition post mortem.

6. John (Talbot), 2nd Earl of Shrewsbury, Lord Talbot, also Earl of Waterford, born about 1413; served in France 1434 and 1442; on the Commission of the Peace, County Derby, 23 November 1441; County York (West Riding) 16 March 1441/2; Herts, 18 May 1443; Notts, 27 November 1443; Chancellor of Ireland, 12 August 1446; Commander to treat for a loan to maintain the war, counties Derby, Notts, Salop, 25 September 1449; Commission of Oyer and Terminer, Kent, 2 February 1449/50; P.C. before 21 November 1453; one of the Lords who undertook to keep the sea for three years, April 1454; Commissioner to raise money for the defence of Calais, 14 May 1455; summoned to Parliament 26 May 1455 to 26 May 1458; Joint Farmer of the subsidy and alnage of cloths, county and city of York and Kingston upon Hull, 5 August 1455. He was Treasurer of England, 5 October 1456 till October 1458; nominated K.G. before 13 May, installed 14 May 1457; Joint Keeper of the King's mews and falcons, 20 October 1457; Chief Butler for life, 6 May 1458; Chief Justice of Chester, 24 February 1458-9; Steward of Wakefield 1459; Steward of Ludlow, 20 June 1460. He married before March 1444/5 Elizabeth, daughter of James (Butler), 4th Earl of Ormond by his first wife, Joan, daughter of William (Beauchamp), Lord Avergavenny. He died 10 July 1460, being slain at the battle of Northampton, fighting on the Lancastrian side, and was buried (with his mother) in Worksop Priory aforesaid. Will dated at Sheffield, 8 September 1446, proved at York, 24 November 1461, by his widow (Testamenta Eboracensia, Surtees Soc., vol. xxx, p.252-4). Inq. p.m. 26 September 1460. His widow appears to have intended to take the veil after his death, but she had a

Royal licence to marry whom she pleased without impeachment or hindrance, 6 February 1463-4. She died 8 and was buried 11 September 1473, in Shrewsbury Abbey. The inscription on her tomb read 'Heere lyeth Elizabeth Countesse of Shrewsbury, which was Daughter, Sister, Wife, Grand-mother and Kinswoman of the Earles of Arundell, Wynton, Ormond, and Shrewsburie.'

7. Sir Christopher Talbot, slain with his brother the Earl of Shrewsbury at the battle of Northampton, fighting on the Lancastrian side.

8. Thomas Talbot, born 19 June 1416 at Fingles near Dublin died two months later on 10 August, 1416 and was buried in the Church of the Black Friars, Dublin (Ware, *Annals of Ireland*, p.69, in History and Antiquities of Ireland, 1745).

9. John Talbot, fourth son of John (Talbot), 1st Earl of Shrewsbury, being son and heir of his second wife, Margaret abovenamed, was born circa 1426. In 1444 and later he was a justice and commissioner in Salop and other counties, being distinguished from his half-brother as 'John Talbot of Lisle, Knt.' He was created, 26 July 1444, 1st Lord and Baron of Lisle, with remainder to his heirs being lords of the manor of Kingston Lisle, Berks, the charter reciting that the grantee's ancestor Warin de Lisle and his ancestors, by reason of possessing the lordship and manor of Kingston Lisle, had from time whereof the memory of man was not to the contrary the name and dignity of Baron and Lord Lisle, and by that name had seat in Parliament, etc., as other Barons of the Realm had. This assertion respecting the tenure of the manor of Kingston Lisle has been proved to be wholly untrue. The charter further declares that, to avoid all scruple, John is created Lord and Baron of Lisle, Etc.,

to him, his heirs and assigns. The charter in effect created a new Barony with a new limitation, but was intended to bestow the old Barony created by the writ of 1357, for it contained a clause granting the precedence held by 'the said Warine or any other person heretofore having the aforesaid Barony'. He was summoned to Parliament from 13 January (1444/5) 23 Henry VI to 5 September (1450) 29 Henry VI, by writs directed Johanni Talbot de Lysle, militi. On 23 August 1450 he was appointed Keeper of Fulbrook park and manor, County Warwick, for life and in the same year he was sent to suppress a rising in Wales. On 30 October 1451 he was created Viscount Lisle, with remainder to the heirs male of his body, and was summoned to Parliament 30 January (1452/3) 31 Henry VI, by writ directed Johanni Talbot vicecomiti de Lisle militi. In November 1451 he was associated with his father, the Earl of Shrewsbury, in the custody of the castle of Porchester and survey of Portsmouth. In July 1452 he was a commissioner of oyer and terminer touching treasons, rebellions, lollardies, etc., in eleven western counties. About October 1452 he took considerable reinforcements to his father, who had recaptured Bordeaux. In January 1452/3 he bound himself to serve in Guienne under the Earl of Shrewsbury with 80 horsemen (including himself, 2 bannerets, and 4 knights), all duly harnessed and arrayed, and 800 soldiers on foot. He attended the Parliament at Reading, 6 March 1452/3 and soon afterwards crossed into Guienne. He accompanied his father in the attempt to raise the siege of Castillon in Périgord, where they were defeated by the French and both were slain, 17 July 1453. He married Joan, aged 18 in 1443, widow of Richard Stafford, and daughter and coheir of Thomas Chedder, by Isabel, youngest daughter and coheir of Robert Scobhull. He



died as aforesaid, 17 July 1453, it is said while trying to save his father. His will, dated March 1452-3, was made at 'Warwick's ynne' in the parish of St Sepulchre outside Newgate, when he was going to Europe in the King's service. He left all his goods to his mother whom he made executrix; the will was proved 18 January 1453-4. His widow died 15 July 1464.

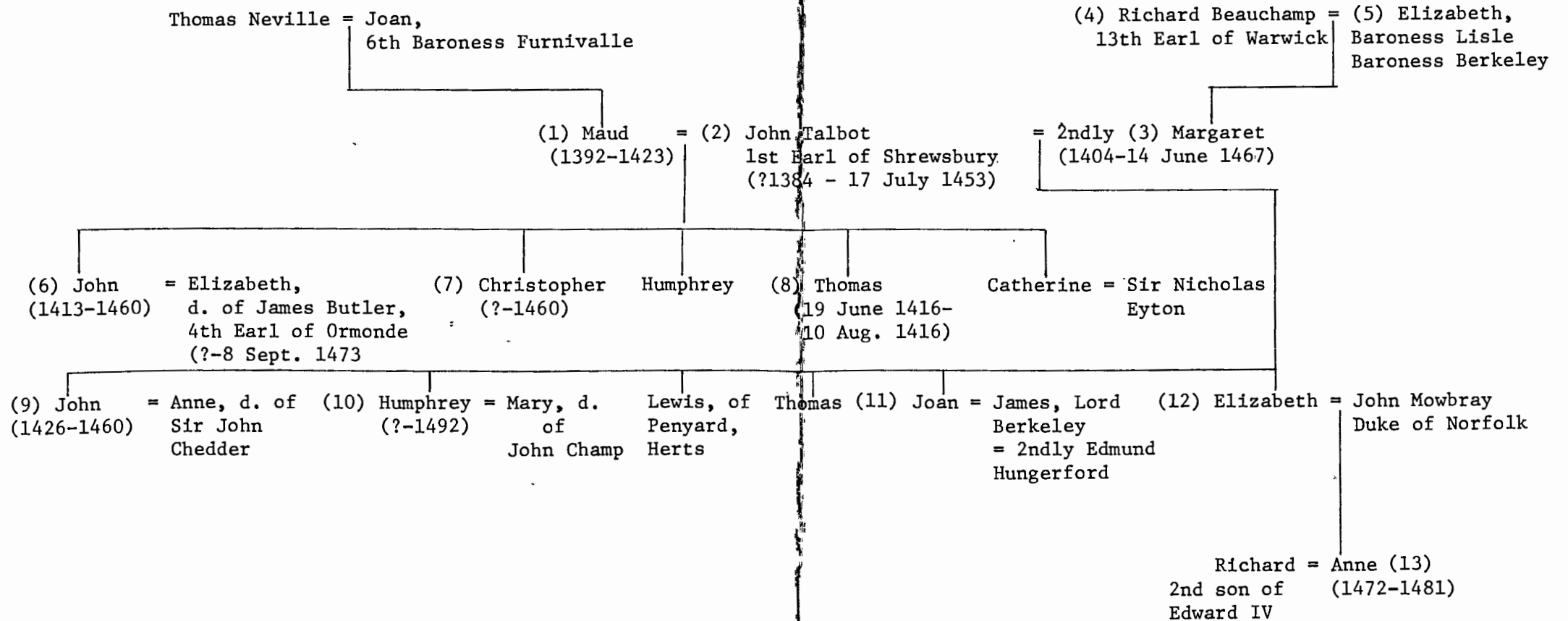
10. Humphrey Talbot, Marshal of Calais (D.N.B., sub. Humphrey Talbot) died at Mount Sinai in 1492.

11. Joan married James Lord Berkeley in 1457. She is termed 'sister' of the 2nd Earl of Shrewsbury in The Lives of the Berkeleys, ii, p.81, but it is more likely, on the grounds of age that she was his half-sister, as is stated by Morris in his genealogies and in Burke's Peerage (1904), p.1412.

12. Elizabeth, daughter of John (Talbot), Earl of Shrewsbury, by his second wife, Margaret, daughter and coheir of Richard (Beauchamp), Earl of Warwick, married (by 27 November 1448) John (de Mowbray), 4th Duke of Norfolk, 14th Earl of Norfolk, Earl of Nottingham, Earl Marshal, Earl of Surrey and Warenne, and Lord Mowbray and Segrave, born 18 October 1444. He was created, 24 March 1450-1, by girding him with the sword, Earl of Surrey and Warenne, in tail male. K.B. 27 June 1461, at the Coronation of Edward IV. He accompanied the King on his Scottish expedition, December 1462; and had livery of his lands, without proof of age, 23 March 1464-5. He was summoned to Parliament 28 February 1467. He took the Yorkist side in the civil war, and was commissioner of array in the Eastern counties 1469-72. After the battle of Tewkesbury, 4 May 1471, he sat with the Constable, the Duke of Gloucester, to try the prisoners. K.G. 24 April 1472. He was one of the captains for the

invasion of France on behalf of the Duke of Burgundy in 1475. He died suddenly, without male heirs 16-17 January 1475/6 at Framlingham Castle, Suffolk, and was buried at Thetford. On his death the Dukedom of Norfolk and the Earldoms of Nottingham, Marshal, and Surrey and Warenne became extinct. His widow, who attended the Princess Margaret to her marriage with the Duke of Burgundy in 1468, and received a gown for the Coronation of Richard III's Queen in 1483, died between 6 November 1506 and 10 May 1507.

13. Anne, suo jure Countess of Norfolk and according to modern doctrine Baroness Mowbray and Segrave, only daughter and heir. She was born 10 December 1472 according to her father's inquisition post mortem. She married at the age of 5 years, 15 January 1477-8, at St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster, Richard, Duke of York, 2nd son of Edward IV. He, in contemplation of the marriage ('for the maintenance of his high estate') was created 12 June 1476, Earl of Nottingham, and, 7 February 1476/7, Earl of Warenne and Duke of Norfolk. She died a minor and without heirs in the lifetime of her husband, between 25 January and 10 November 1481, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. At her death the Earldom of Norfolk presumably became dormant, and the Baronies of Mowbray and Segrave are held, by modern doctrine, to have fallen into abeyance between her coheirs (who were the representatives of her great-grand-aunts the two daughters of Thomas de Mowbray 1st Duke of Norfolk). The young Duke was murdered (in his 10th or 11th year), with his brother Edward V, in 1483. At his death the Dukedoms of York and Norfolk, and the Earldoms of Nottingham and Warenne, became extinct.

PEDIGREE III - SHREWSBURY

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Dr Pollard used the then box numbers plus anno domini date, but as this will not be the permanent reference number with the approval of the County Archivist I have chosen the method outlined above.

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