

Political Society in Cumberland and Westmorland 1471-1537

By

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Abstract

The late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries have often been seen as a turning point in the development of the English state. At the beginning of the period the authority of the Crown was offset by powerful aristocratic interests in many regional areas. By the mid sixteenth century feudal relationships were giving way to a centrally controlled administration and government was reaching into regional political communities through direct connections between the Crown and local gentlemen.

This thesis will trace these developments in Cumberland and Westmorland. It will argue that archaic aspects of government and society lingered longer here than in regions closer London. Feudal relationships were significant influences on regional political society well beyond the mid sixteenth century. This was a consequence of the area's distance from the centre of government and its proximity to a hostile enemy. The strategies employed by the Crown to make its authority felt in the region will also be explored.

The sources utilised for this study are chiefly those preserved in the records of the central administration. Calendars of rolls reveal much about regional office holding, land tenure and administration. The reign of Henry VIII is well documented thanks to the multi-volume *Letters and Papers*. Some local sources are extant, such as the Clifford letters and collections preserved in Cumbrian records offices. A body of records relating to the barony of Kendal provides insights into administration and society in that area. These sources have been used to trace the roles of regional figures in political developments during the period.

The thesis contains four chapters, each dealing with a different aspect of government and society in the far northwest. Chapter one discusses landholding. It will show the degree of regional landed influence possessed by different groups and how landed influence translated into political power. Chapter two discusses office holding, describing the functions of regional officers and highlighting regional peculiarities. An examination of the personnel employed in regional offices will reveal the dominant influences on political society. Chapter

three a discussion of the role of the Church in administration and society and the reaction of the local population to changes introduced during the Reformation. Chapter four is focused on the frontier with Scotland. It will discuss the implications of almost constant warfare on political society and the region.

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I would gratefully like to acknowledge the support of my supervisors, Professor Michael Bennett and Dr. Elizabeth Freeman, for their insights into the period, the region and the practice of historical writing. Thanks go to Lauren Johnson for cheerfully proof reading endless drafts of chapters and to all my fellow post-graduates in the School of History and Classics, especially Nick Brodie, Rosalie Malham, Phil Caudrey, Anthony Ray, Bek McWhirter, Mishka Gora and Sarah Alger for providing a stimulating working environment. Most of all, special thanks must go to my parents and Gemma for their patience and moral support.

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Table of Abbreviations

<i>BIHR</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research.</i>
<i>CCR</i>	<i>Calendar of Close Rolls.</i>
<i>CIPM</i>	<i>Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem.</i>
<i>Clifford Letters</i>	<i>Clifford Letters of the Sixteenth Century</i> , ed. A. G. Dickens (Durham: Surtees Society, 1962).
<i>CPR</i>	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls.</i>
<i>CWAAS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological and Antiquarian Society.</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , ed. H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).
<i>EHR</i>	<i>English Historical Review.</i>
<i>Foedera</i>	T. Rymer, <i>Foedera, conventiones, litterae et cujuscunque generis acta publica</i> , 20 vols (London: Johnson, 1727-35).
<i>History and Antiquities</i>	J. Nicolson and R. Burn, <i>The History and Antiquities of the Counties of Westmorland and Cumberland</i> , vols. 1 & 2 (London: W. Strahan & T. Cadell, 1777).
<i>Kendale Records</i>	<i>Records Relating to the Barony of Kendale</i> , vol. 1 (1923). Electronic resource: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/source.aspx?pubid=400 . Date accessed: 8 January 2007. [First published by W. Farrer and J. F. Curwen in 1923]. Individual entries will be cited by their reference number, eg. http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=49276 .
'Letters of the Cliffords'	'Letters of the Cliffords, Lords Clifford and earls of Cumberland, c. 1500-1565', ed. Hoyle, R. W.,

	<i>Camden Miscellany XXXI</i> , Fourth Series, vol. 44 (London: Camden Society, 1992).
<i>LP Henry VIII</i>	<i>Letters and Papers Foreign and Domestic Illustrative of the Reign of Henry VIII</i> , 21 vols., ed. J. S. Brewer (London: HMSO, 1862-1932).
<i>NH</i>	<i>Northern History</i> .
<i>Rot. Parl.</i>	<i>Rotuli Parliamentorum</i> , 7 vols, ed. J. Starchey (London: Record Commission, 1767-1832).
<i>Rot. Scot.</i>	<i>Rotuli Scotiae in turri Londonensi et in domo capitulari Westmonasteriensi asservati</i> , 2 vols., ed. D. MacPherson (London: Records Commission, 1814-19),
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i> .

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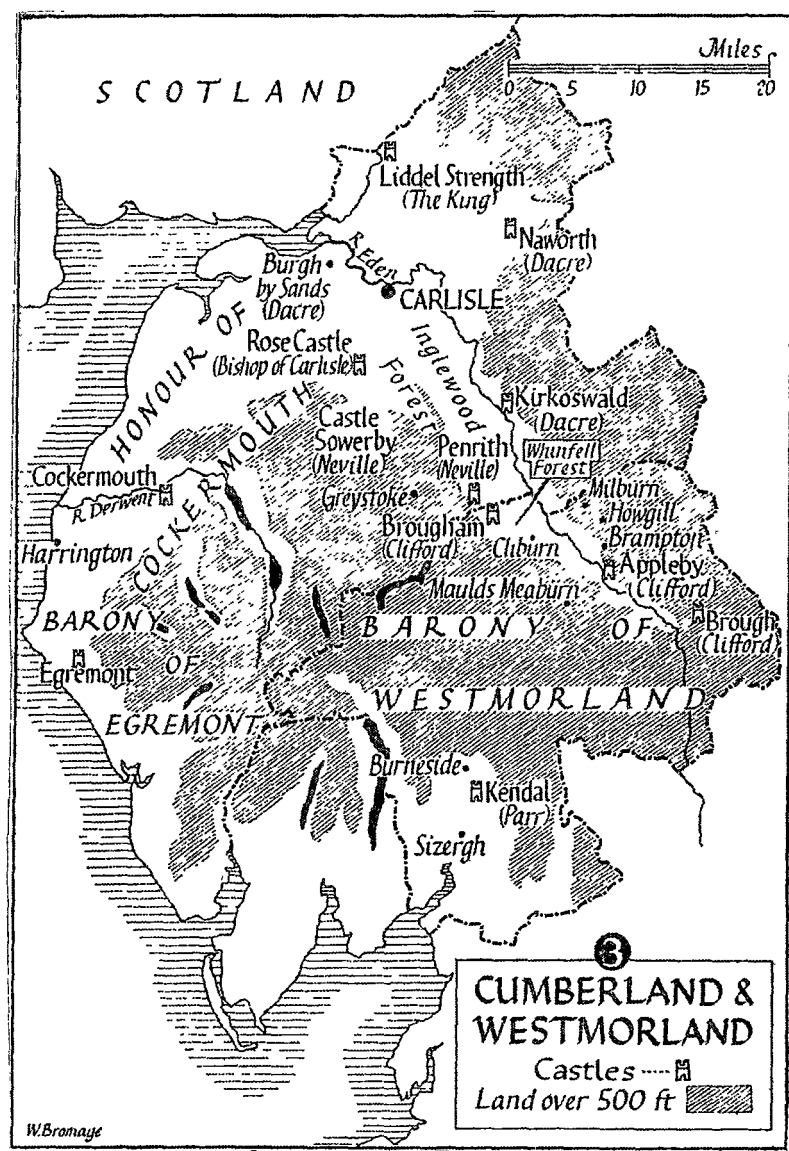
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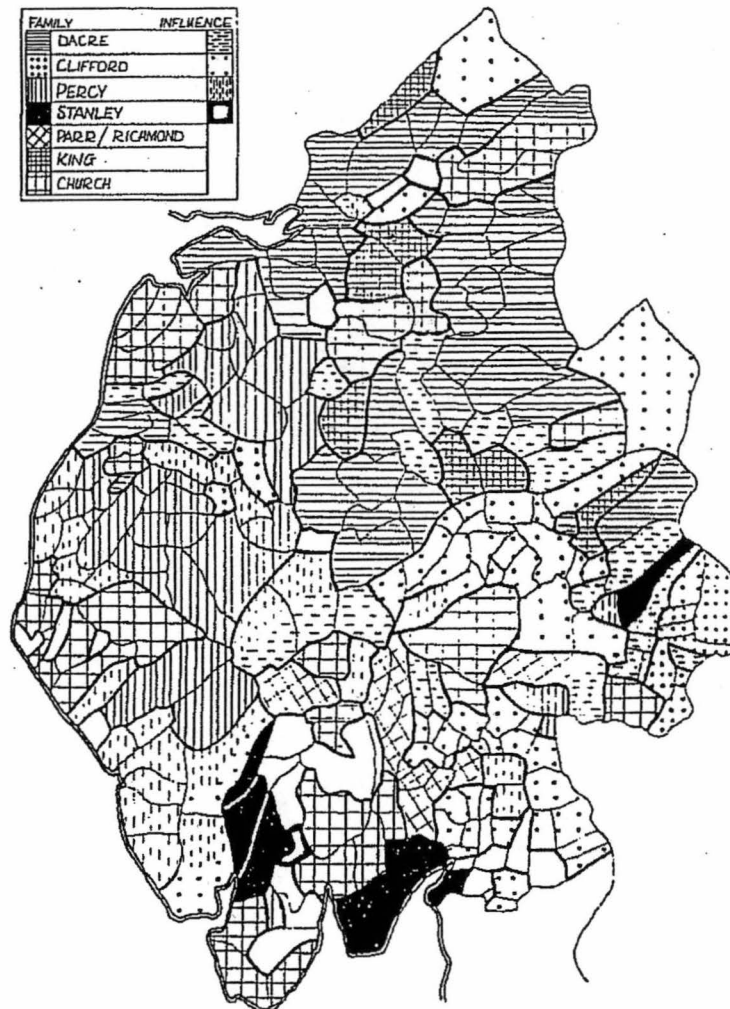
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Map 1: Cumberland and Westmorland¹



¹ Source: R. L. Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster* (Stroud: Sutton, 1966), p. 107.

Map 2: Landholding and Territorial Influence²

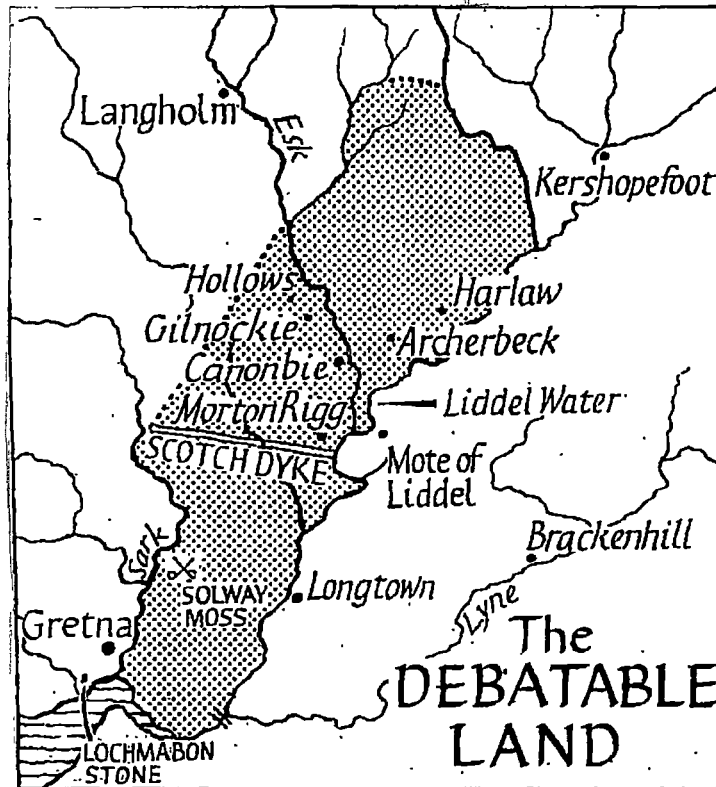


² Source: S. M. Harrison, *The Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1981), p. 29.

Map 3: Ecclesiastical Foundations



*Map 4: The Debatable Land*³



³ Source: G. M. Fraser, *The Steel Bonnets: the Story of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers* (London: Barrie Jenkins, 1971), fold out map at end of book.

Introduction

This thesis is intended as an exploration of the administrative and social structures that existed in political society in Cumberland and Westmorland between 1471 and 1537. It has been conceived as a counterpoint to the work of scholars who have undertaken similar research into the networks of authority and political communities in other periods and regions. It will examine the far northwest of England in the context of the upheavals that were occurring in government and society throughout the kingdom at this time and it will highlight degrees of change and continuity apparent in regional administrative and social networks. The thesis will discuss the impact of the region's distance from the capital and its position as a frontier zone with regards to the effectiveness of royal authority and the persistence of feudal administrative and tenurial structures.

Over the past thirty years a number of historians have undertaken to illustrate the social ties and networks of power and authority that operated in diverse English counties. The inspiration for this work on regional administration and political society arose during historical debates in the 1960s. The great medievalist K. B. McFarlane called into question the established 'royalist' view of English history developed by Victorian constitutional scholars such as William Stubbs and F. W. Maitland.¹ McFarlane rejected the view of a powerful, all-pervasive monarchy in England during the later medieval period and suggested that authority was much more devolved from the centre of government.²

Research has been done on regions as diverse as Cheshire and Lancashire, Warwickshire, Derbyshire, the Northeast, Gloucestershire, Leicestershire and East Anglia during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The study of individual localities has provided scholars with a tapestry of diverse social and administrative structures operating in different parts of the realm.

¹ W. Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1841); F. W. Maitland, *English Law and the Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1901).

² K. B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).

These range from regions which possessed a distinct and cohesive 'community' of local gentry who operated with a certain amount of regional autonomy in the conduct of their own affairs, to regions where powerful baronial retinues dominated political and social life. Michael Bennett has argued for the existence of a distinct community of local gentry in Cheshire and Lancashire that operated not only within the two counties as office holders and administrators but also outside the locality where connections with the court through the duchy of Lancaster and the earldom of Chester provided a wider arena for the furtherance of the region's trading and cultural links.³ The other end of the spectrum of regional social and political structures is apparent in Warwickshire, where Christine Carpenter argued that the presence of powerful baronial retinues was the dominant influence on political and social life.⁴ Here, professional and social advancement depended on connections with regional magnates and the scope for independent activity by the local gentry was limited. These situations represent the opposite sides of the debate and further studies of other localities have discovered that both models are discernable to varying degrees in other parts of the kingdom. Susan Wright's study of the gentry in fifteenth-century Derbyshire revealed the influence of magnate affinities in that county, as was the case in Anthony Pollard's research into regional society in Northeastern England.⁵ The work of Eric Acheson, Nigel Saul and Roger Virgoe on the other hand has argued for the presence of more autonomous communities of local gentry in Leicestershire Gloucestershire and East Anglia.⁶

³ M. Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism: Cheshire and Lancashire Society in the Age of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

⁴ C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society 1401-1499* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

⁵ S. Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry in the Fifteenth Century* (Chesterfield: Derbyshire Records Society, 1983); A. Pollard, *Northeastern England During the Wars of the Roses* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

⁶ E. Acheson, *A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century, 1422-1485* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981) and *Scenes from Provincial Life: Knightly Families in Sussex 1280-1400* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986); R. Virgoe, 'Aspects of the Local Community in the Fifteenth Century', in *Profit, Piety and the Professions in Late Medieval England*, ed. M. A. Hicks (Gloucester: Sutton, 1990), pp. 1-13.

Taken as a whole, such research has contributed to a greater understanding of government and society in late medieval England. The one clear point to have emerged from these dissections of different regions is that the structures of administration and society during this period displayed a great deal of diversity. This regional variety can be discerned in areas such as the quantities of land held by different social groups. Landholding influenced the balance of military and economic power between these groups and is a key factor in determining the political and social structures at work within a given region.⁷ The political and judicial administration of a region was the vehicle through which power could be manifested, and analysis of this aspect of the locality, through discussions of the composition of the commissions of the peace and local parliamentary representation, reveals the networks through which authority was disseminated.⁸ The social and professional relationships that existed between members of the political community, both on the regional level and within the realm at large, reveal networks of kinship and service that provide a counterpoint to the discussions of landholding and political activity.

Historical inquiry into the politics of the Tudor period is dominated by G. R. Elton and his work on the development of the nation state in the sixteenth century. Elton argued for a reinvigorated central authority under the administration of Thomas Cromwell in contrast to the weak governments of the later fifteenth century. He was certainly aware of the regional variation that existed in England during this period and deliberately restricted his area of study to the southeastern heartland of England around London. The administrative structures in operation here Elton termed the 'ordinary processes of government', and he made no attempt to impose his findings on other localities such as the

⁷ R. H. Tawney, 'The Rise of the Gentry, 1558-1640', *Economic History Review*, vol. 11 (1941), p. 38; J. P. Cooper, 'The Counting of Manors', *Economic History Review*, Second Series, vol. 8 (1956), pp. 377-89.

⁸ J. R. Lander, 'The Significance of the County in English Government', in *Regionalism and Revision*, ed. P. Flemming, A. Gross and J. R. Lander (London: Hambledon Press, 1998), pp. 15-28; J. H. Gleason, *The Justices of the Peace in England 1558-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), ch. 7.

north, Ireland or Calais.⁹ Recently scholars have called into question the Eltonian view that the 1530s were the most pivotal period in the making of the English state between the Norman Conquest and the reforms of the Victorian era and that these reforms were enacted with a specific agenda by a powerful central administration. Clifford Davies and David Starkey have emphasized elements of continuity throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. They argue that a reforming agenda can be discerned in the governments of the Yorkist kings, in the reign of Henry VII and in the administration of Cardinal Wolsey in the 1520s. These scholars also call into question the view of a determined and secure administration under Henry VIII. They would instead argue that factional intrigue at court and a deep sense of insecurity were the driving forces behind many of the government's policies towards administration and the Church.¹⁰ The factional nature of English politics at this time was not restricted to the court but extended into the localities through connections formed by courtiers such as the duke of Norfolk, Cardinal Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell with regional aristocrats and gentry.

In regard to socio-political structures, Julian Cornwall made a comprehensive analysis of assessments of the wealth of over 70,000 English subjects undertaken by the government in 1522. His work is useful in outlining the correlations between wealth and social status and he highlights that it was landed wealth in particular that determined a people's standard of living and their place in the social and political hierarchy.¹¹ Penry Williams has provided a general overview of Tudor government and society. He suggests that, as in the medieval period, noble households remained a nucleus of power from which regional authority disseminated well into the sixteenth century. Noblemen had to

⁹ G. R. Elton, *Policy and Police: The Enforcement of the Reformation in the Age of Thomas Cromwell* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), p. viii.

¹⁰ C. S. L. Davies, 'The Cromwellian Decade: Authority and Consent', *TRHS*, 6th Series, vol. 8 (1997), p. 177; D. Starkey, 'Which Age of Reform?', in *Revolution Reassessed*, ed. C. Coleman and D. Starkey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 13-27. See also S. Gunn, 'The Structures of Politics in early Tudor England', *TRHS*, 6th Series., vol. 5 (1995), pp. 59-90; J. Guy, *The Cardinal's Court: The Impact of Thomas Wolsey in Star Chamber* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1977).

¹¹ J. Cornwall, *Wealth and Society in Early Sixteenth-Century England* (London: Routledge, 1988), pp. 29-31.

augment their landed influence with royal office, however, to achieve true regional dominance.¹² This area of inquiry was pursued in more detail by G. W. Bernard in his work on the networks of power and influence commanded by the earls of Shrewsbury in the sixteenth century.¹³ Of course, as regional histories of the medieval period have shown, such generalizations do not apply equally to all parts of the kingdom. These arguments provide the backdrop for the discussion of the development of administration and political society in Cumberland and Westmorland that follows.

Some scholars have adapted the medieval style of regional history to the early modern period. Many of the arguments pertinent to a regional study in this period were framed by R. B. Smith who examined the interrelationships between landholding and political power in the West Riding of Yorkshire.¹⁴ Smith suggested that political power was directly connected to landed influence. His work focused chiefly on the Pilgrimage of Grace, where he argued that leading gentry and aristocrats were able to orchestrate the uprising through their landed connections. The time frame he chose to work with, however, did not allow him to observe elements of change and continuity over a broad period. Mervyn James' work on the northern nobility during the Tudor and early Stuart period has charted the development of regional society in Durham from a lineage-based society focused on the region's great households to a civil society where mercantile, governmental or ecclesiastical interests became more important to local families than the solidarity of the lineage.¹⁵

Cheshire, once again, has provided an interesting regional counterpoint to arguments relating to the development of the nation state under the Tudors. Tim Thornton has found a great deal of continuity in the autonomous administration of the county at a time when royal authority was seen to be encroaching more and more into the localities. He has demonstrated a distinct awareness on the

¹² P. Williams, *The Tudor Regime* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 1-6.

¹³ G. W. Bernard, *The Power of the Early Tudor Nobility: A Study of the Fourth and Fifth Earls of Shrewsbury* (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1985).

¹⁴ R. B. Smith, *Land and Politics in the Reign of Henry VIII: The West Riding of Yorkshire 1530-1546* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

¹⁵ M. E. James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society: A Study of Society, Politics and Mentality in the Durham Region 1500-1640* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 179.

part of the local gentry of the region's special status as a county palatine. He has also highlighted the willingness of government under Wolsey and Cromwell to use the administrative structures in place in the palatinate for the enhancement of central authority.¹⁶

Also pertinent to this study is Stephen Ellis' work exploring Tudor policy in regards to the frontiers of the kingdom. Ellis has made a comparison of aristocratic power and Tudor government policy on the west march against Scotland and the English lordship in Ireland. There are similarities, he argues, between the positions of the Lords Dacre in Cumberland and the FitzGerald earls of Kildare in Ireland which indicate a consistent Tudor policy towards the administration of outlying regions. Both Dacre and Kildare commanded a significant localized powerbase which made them the obvious, if not the only, practical choice to rule in their home region. Both were brought low by the government in the mid 1530s once it became apparent that their rule was detrimental to the exercise of royal authority in these regions. The point that Ellis makes is that the Irish Pale, like northern Cumberland, was English and was subject to the same tensions between magnate, Crown and community that existed in other frontier zones of the Tudor state.¹⁷

Cumberland and Westmorland are interesting counties in which to study the social and administrative mechanisms of late medieval and early modern England because of their position on the frontier of the realm.¹⁸ The region itself is geographically remote and isolated from the rest of the kingdom. News from the border could arrive in London within six days in summer and eight days in winter, which means that any government responses to developments in the region would take at least a fortnight to implement.¹⁹ In addition to this isolation, the northwestern counties also constituted part of the frontline in the conflict between England and Scotland that had, by the mid sixteenth century, been ongoing for over two hundred years. These factors set Cumberland and

¹⁶ T. Thornton, *Cheshire and the Tudor State 1480-1560* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000), ch. 9.

¹⁷ S. Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers and Noble Power* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 254-55.

¹⁸ See map 1, p. ix above.

¹⁹ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 3.2, no. 1986.

Westmorland apart from localities further south where difficulty of communication with the government or the prospect of an imminent Scots raid were not such pressing concerns. The two counties also possessed features that set them apart from their neighbours, Northumberland and the bishopric of Durham, which were also subject to the difficulties created by the Scottish war. These differences include variations in topography, social structures and administration.

The subject of the administration of the northern marches and the ability of the region's inhabitants to have a disproportionate effect on national politics has been fertile ground for historians. The medieval north has often been treated almost as a separate country by historians studying the mechanisms of government throughout the kingdom. Ruled, as it was, by powerful aristocrats with substantial military resources and judicial privileges, it was seen to be set apart from the more peaceful and settled parts of the realm. According to Rachel Reid, the north, 'as the home of feudalism, the centre of resistance to royal authority, and the natural refuge of lost causes, presented successive rulers of England with their most urgent and baffling problem.'²⁰ This is partly because that is how it was seen by contemporaries. Chroniclers from southern regions often displayed a marked anti-northern bias and portrayed the regions north of the river Trent as uncivilized and the people as barbarous.²¹ This impression has lingered for a long time in the history books as well as in the popular imagination.

²⁰ R. Reid, *The King's Council in the North* (London: Longmans, 1921), p. 1; C. Ross, *Richard III* (London: Methuen, 1981), p. 44.

²¹ Margaret of Anjou's march on London in 1461 incited a flurry of anti northern sentiment among southerners. *Crowland Chronicle Continuations 1459-1486*, ed. N. Pronay and J. Cox (Gloucester: Sutton, 1986), p. 422; *Registrum Abbatiae Johannis Whethampsted*, vol. 1, ed. H. T. Riley, (London: Rolls Series, 1872), p. 388. Much has been made also of Lord Hunsdon's comment in 1569 that Northumberland 'knows no prince but a Percy', which Anthony Pollard has identified as 'one of the most overworked quotations in English history; Pollard, *Northeastern England*, p. 402.

A more recent trend has been for historians to highlight the level of integration between the frontier and other parts of the country.²² Henry Summerson has postulated that the key reason why society on the northwestern border did not collapse into anarchy under the strain of three hundred years of constant strife was precisely because it was integrated into the mechanisms of royal government, ecclesiastical worship and the patterns of commerce that existed throughout the realm at large. The inhabitants of Cumberland and Westmorland could feel that they were a part of something greater than their own little corner of the kingdom, which gave them cohesion in adverse situations.²³ Stephen Ellis has also explored this theme and made the observation that the inhabitants of the marches nevertheless expected to be governed by the normal course of English law. Tensions were created between this principle and the constraints imposed by the reality of life on the border, where disruption caused by war and the decentralization of power rendered the methods for governing lowland England unsuitable.²⁴ The weight of the argument is now swinging towards a more integrated view of the peripheries of the kingdom. Although the vestiges of feudalism and decentralized administration may have lingered longer in the north than elsewhere, significant changes were taking place in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries as they were in other parts of the kingdom.

The period between 1471 and 1537 has been selected as it provides scope to chart the development of administration and society within the region at a key time in the formation of the English state. In 1471 Edward IV finally defeated his remaining Lancastrian rivals and established the uncontested rule of the Yorkist dynasty. In a regional context, this resulted in the destruction of Richard Neville, earl of Warwick, who was the dominant power in the northwest. Edward IV's brother Richard, duke of Gloucester, then acquired a substantial

²² B. W. Beckinsale, 'The Character of the Tudor North', *NH*, vol. 4 (1969), p. 67; R. L. Storey, 'The North of England', in *Fifteenth-Century England*, ed. C. Ross, S. B. Chimes and R. A. Griffiths (Stroud: Sutton, 1972), pp. 129-44.

²³ H. Summerson, 'Responses to War: Carlisle and the West March in the Later Fourteenth Century', in *War and Border Societies in the Middle Ages*, ed. A. Goodman and A. Tuck (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 162.

²⁴ Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, pp. 5-7, 15-16.

northern powerbase, centred on the Neville lands and offices.²⁵ This powerbase was instrumental in Richard's usurpation of the throne upon his brother's death in 1483 and, as king, Richard's new position had implications for the administration of the northwest where he retained key offices and estates in his own hands.²⁶ Henry Tudor's defeat of Richard III at Bosworth in 1485 led to further changes as the new king sought to establish his authority in a region where his predecessor had been much admired.²⁷ Henry's policy towards the north of the kingdom contained elements of continuity from his predecessors as well as his own innovations, particularly in regards to his attitude towards Scotland and the administration of cross-border justice.²⁸ Finally, the reign of Henry VIII saw a vigorous effort on the part of the central government to establish its control over all aspects of domestic life in England. This is discernable to some extent during the administration of Thomas Wolsey, who revitalized the King's Council in the North in 1525,²⁹ but achieved its fullest expression under Thomas Cromwell in the establishment of the English Church under the king and the efforts to reduce the power of great feudal lords in the localities.³⁰ It is the contention of this thesis, however, that these policies were enacted only in response to regional crises and met with limited success in the far northwest.

Several historians have focused on the apparent influence of northern aristocrats in national politics. There were practical reasons why the northern nobility were so powerful. In her work on the development of border administration, Cynthia Neville has highlighted the usefulness of a resident nobility in the region with the capability to independently resist incursions made

²⁵ Pollard, *Northeastern England*, ch. 13; M. A. Hicks, 'Richard, Duke of Gloucester and the North', in *Richard III and the North*, ed. R. Horrox (Hull: Centre for Regional and Local History, 1986), pp. 11-26.

²⁶ Reid, *King's Council*, p. 1; C. Ross, *Richard III* (London: Methuen, 1981), p. 44.

²⁷ R. L. Storey, *The Reign of Henry VII* (London: Blandford Press, 1968), p. 149.

²⁸ C. Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law: The Anglo-Scottish Borderlands in the Later Middle Ages*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1998), pp. 166-76.

²⁹ Reid, *King's Council*, pp. 101-5.

³⁰ G. R. Elton, *The Tudor Revolution in Government* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), p. 19; Thornton, *Cheshire and the Tudor State*, p. 204; S. Ellis, 'The Destruction of the Liberties, Some Further Evidence', *BIHR*, vol. 54 (1981), pp. 150-63.

by the Scots. The difficulties of north-south communication and lack of local knowledge on the part of the central government also made it necessary for local lords to have the authority to negotiate peace terms if needs be.³¹ Robin Storey and Ralph Griffiths have painted a picture of a society in the north dominated by great aristocratic families. During the later fifteenth century, families such as the Nevilles and the Percys exercised military power based on their feudal privileges as landlords in a militarized zone in order to affect politics at the centre of government.³² Anthony Pollard has shown that the dominating influence acquired by Richard of Gloucester was based on both his feudal power as a leading landowner and his acquisition of key offices from the crown.³³ In the Tudor period, the power of the Clifford family has attracted the attention of scholars. The first earl of Cumberland has become a textbook example of a greedy Tudor landlord, all too eager to increase rents, evict tenants and make enclosures, thanks to an influential paper by Mervyn James.³⁴ Richard Hoyle has more recently made a critique of James' article and resuscitated the earl's reputation in the context of his role in the outbreak and suppression of the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536-7.³⁵ The power of the Dacres has often been discussed in relation to their prominent role in the administration of the border in the Tudor period.³⁶

Historians of the Tudor period have examined the attempted solutions to the problems created by overmighty subjects in regional areas. These policies were aimed at the integration of outlying regions into the realm at large. Rachel Reid moved beyond the fifteenth century and argued in favour of increasing royal authority over the inhabitants of the north under the Tudors and the development of a more effective bureaucracy to administer justice in these

³¹ Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law*, p. 188.

³² Storey, *House of Lancaster*, ch. 7; R. A. Griffiths, 'Local Rivalries and National Politics: the Nevilles, the Percies and the Duke of Exeter 1452-55', *Speculum*, vol. 43 (1968), pp. 589-632.

³³ Pollard, *Northeastern England*, ch. 13.

³⁴ M. E. James, 'The First Earl of Cumberland and the Decline of Northern Feudalism', *NH*, vol. 1 (1966), pp. 43-69.

³⁵ R. W. Hoyle, 'The First Earl of Cumberland: A Reputation Reassessed', *NH*, vol. 22 (1986), pp. 62-94.

³⁶ Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*; H. Miller, *Henry VIII and the English Nobility* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), pp. 187-96.

regions.³⁷ The works of scholars such as Peter Gwyn and Bernard Beckinsale on the careers of Thomas Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell respectively have focused attention on the efforts of these statesmen to wrest power from local aristocrats and bring the region more firmly under the control of the Westminster government. This was attempted in the north through the crown's employment of the gentry classes in key offices at the expense of the dominant aristocratic interests.³⁸ Mervyn James has charted the career of one of these new gentry servants of the crown in a paper on the career of Thomas, first Lord Wharton who came to prominence on the west march in the aftermath of the Pilgrimage of Grace.³⁹

The view of these scholars has been called into question by Hoyle who has rejected the impression that change in the localities was driven by calculated government policy. Instead, Hoyle argues that government policy with regards to the frontiers of the realm changed in response to local developments. These changes were *ad hoc* responses to particular situations in which the usual methods of administration proved ineffective. Hoyle argues that the perceived government attack on the earl of Northumberland's position in the north during the 1530s was not motivated by the crown's wish to acquire the Percy lands for itself, but rather to provide stable administration during a period when there was no Percy heir capable of fulfilling the family's traditional role on the borders.⁴⁰ The government chopped and changed between the aristocracy and the gentry as its chief enforcers on the borders throughout the remainder of the sixteenth century as different situations presented themselves. Nevertheless, the theme that emerges from the scholarship pertaining to the administration of the north in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries is one of gradually increasing

³⁷ Reid, *King's Council*, ch. 3 & 4.

³⁸ P. Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal: The Rise and Fall of Thomas Wolsey* (London: Pimlico, 1992), ch. 7; B. W. Beckinsale, *Thomas Cromwell: Tudor Minister* (London: MacMillan, 1978), pp. 81-84.

³⁹ M. E. James, *Change and Continuity in the Tudor North: the Rise of Thomas, first Lord Wharton* (York: St Anthony's Press, 1965), pp. 3-50.

⁴⁰ R. Hoyle, 'Henry Percy, sixth earl of Northumberland and the fall of the House of Percy, 1527-1537', in *The Tudor Nobility*, ed. G. Bernard (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), pp. 180-209.

centralization, albeit sporadically and at a slower pace than tended to occur in more settled regions.

In contrast with many other localities, the sources available for a study of administration and society in Cumberland and Westmorland are, unfortunately, rather limited. Local sources can be quite difficult to locate, a result of the disturbed nature of the region during the period in question. Church records, often among the most carefully preserved medieval documents, are virtually non-existent for the bishopric of Carlisle during the late medieval and early modern period.⁴¹ The bishops' registers for the diocese are intermittent and the records of the probate court no longer exist. With the exceptions of one or two testaments by the great and good of the region preserved in the records of York or Canterbury, there are very few extant wills from Cumberland and Westmorland. Analysis of local wills, therefore, will not form a major part of this study. Manorial and estate records are also quite scarce. There is a substantial body of material relating to the barony of Kendal and collections of papers in local archives from families such as the Musgraves, Crackenthorpes, Aglionbys, Curwens, Penningtons and Lowthers.⁴² The collections of Clifford letters published by the Surtees and Camden societies contain relevant information relating to that family's position in Westmorland, the earl of Cumberland's tenure of the warden's office between 1525 and 1527 and his opposition to the Pilgrimage of Grace.⁴³ The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries also saw efforts by local antiquarians to record the extant documents and family traditions of the region, and useful information can be obtained from these sources.⁴⁴ Local sources pertaining directly to the period in question are, however, patchy in comparison with many other regions. What does exist is a

⁴¹ H. Summerson, 'Medieval Carlisle: Cathedral and City from Foundation to Dissolution', in *Carlisle and Cumbria: Roman and Medieval Architecture, Art and Archaeology*, ed. M. McCarthy and D. Weston, British Archaeological Association Conference Transactions 27 (London: Maney Publishing, 2004), pp. 29-38.

⁴² *Kendale Records*, Electronic resource.

⁴³ *Clifford Letters*; 'Letters of the Cliffords'.

⁴⁴ *History and Antiquities*, vols. 1 & 2; J. Denton, 'An Accompt of the most Considerable Estates and Families in the County of Cumberland from the Conquest unto the Beginning of the Reign of James I', ed. R. S Ferguson *CWAAS Tract Series 2* (1887).

large amount of material generated by the central administration relating to Cumberland and Westmorland. For the period up to 1509 information can be obtained from the calendars of rolls patent, close and fine, as well as inquisitions post mortem, regarding landholding and office holding in the region. Several late-fifteenth and early-sixteenth century recognizances involving Cumbrian gentlemen have come to light in the Chancery files which reveal social ties and incidents of lawlessness in the local community.⁴⁵ After 1509 the *Letters and Papers* of Henry VIII provide much fuller information about happenings in the far northwest and, as a result of this, the most detailed discussions in this thesis will relate to the reign of Henry VIII. The increase in correspondence between London and the northwestern frontier becomes particularly apparent following the resumption of hostilities with Scotland in 1513 after a decade of relative peace. The crown was keen to stay in close contact with its agents on the border and the volume of material generated at this time demonstrates the government's keen interest in the peripheries of the realm. The outbreak of open revolt in the region in 1536 also prompted increased communication between London and the region.

The thesis is divided into four chapters, each dealing with a different aspect of administration and society in Cumberland and Westmorland between 1471 and 1537. The first chapter is a discussion of the patterns of landholding and tenure in the locality. Using methodologies developed by scholars such as R. H. Tawney, Lawrence Stone and J. P. Cooper, it will establish how much land in the two counties was under the control of various social groups.⁴⁶ The amount of land held by the nobility, the gentry, the crown and the Church can give an indication of the balance of power in a feudal society where authority derived from landed influence. Land was also a key factor in determining social and service relationships between members of the landowning classes. The chapter

⁴⁵ London, The National Archives (TNA): Public Record Office (PRO), Chancery Files: C 54/376. I am indebted to Dr. Sean Cunningham for bringing these recognizances to my attention.

⁴⁶ Cooper, 'The Counting of Manors', pp. 377-89; L. Stone, 'The Elizabethan Aristocracy: A Restatement', *Economic History Review*, Second Series, vol. 4 (1952), pp. 302-21; Tawney, 'The Rise of the Gentry', pp. 1-38.

will also discuss the effects of war on the values of estates in the northwest and on the terms of tenure in the region.

Chapter two is a discussion of office holding and administration in the far northwest. It will discuss the functions of the various judicial and military officials in the region and how they interacted with each other. The implications of war and the presence of an international boundary on the administration of justice in the region will be examined. The main focus will be on how office holding can reveal networks of power and influence in the locality. The discussion will draw on the work of scholars such as J. R. Lander and Sean Cunningham on the mechanisms through which law and order were enforced in the region.⁴⁷ Through an examination of the personnel employed as justices of the peace- sheriffs, escheators, foresters and, of course, the wardens of the marches- we can gain an understanding of where power lay in the locality and how this changed over a period of time. An analysis of bonds and recognizances illustrates the practical outcomes of the maintenance of law and order in the region.

Chapter three is a discussion regarding the role of the Church in local spiritual and political life in Cumberland and Westmorland. Local attitudes towards the Church were influenced by factors such as the endemic violence and poverty of the region, and the development of saints' cults and the veneration of relics is revealing of these local attitudes.⁴⁸ The Church also played a significant role in the economic life of the local community, where it acted as a banker, as well as in the judiciary. It was a significant landlord in the region and could provide patronage and employment to all classes of people. This chapter will also draw on the work of scholars such as M. L. Bush, Hoyle and S. M Harrison in

⁴⁷ J. R. Lander, *English Justices of the Peace 1461-1509* (Gloucester: Sutton, 1969); S. Cunningham, 'Henry VII, Sir Thomas Butler and the Stanley Family: Regional Politics and the Assertion of Royal Influence in Northwestern England 1471-1521', in *Social Attitudes and Political Structures in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. T. Thornton (Gloucester: Sutton, 2000) pp. 220-41; S. Cunningham, 'Henry VII and Rebellion in Northeastern England, 1485-92: Bonds of Allegiance and the Establishment of Tudor Authority', *NH*, 32 (1996), pp. 42-74.

⁴⁸ Summerson, 'Medieval Carlisle', p. 123.

order to discuss the efforts of the central administration to reform the Church in the mid 1530s and the consequences of local resistance to government policy.⁴⁹

Chapter four examines the position of Cumberland and Westmorland as a frontier zone. It will explore the problems created by the close proximity of a hostile neighbour in terms of the administration of justice, particularly in regard to cross-border crime. This chapter will draw on the work undertaken by Cynthia Neville and Thomas Rae on the administration of the English and Scottish borderlands in the later medieval period. The work of these scholars is focused on the development of the laws of the marches and the officers who controlled the machinery of justice on the frontier.⁵⁰ The presence on the marches of large numbers of people who owed allegiance to neither England nor Scotland, but who made their living by pillaging both realms, will be examined in regard to its implications for Anglo-Scottish relations. This aspect of border life has received much attention from poets and romantics, but objective accounts are available from historians such as George MacDonald Fraser in his work on reiving clans of England and Scotland.⁵¹ The chapter will explore the often conflicting interests of the central government and regional political society in regards to the war with Scotland. The chapter will attempt to determine the consequences of two hundred and fifty years of war on the feudal structures in the locality and the attempts of the crown to wrest control of the marches from local aristocrats.

⁴⁹ R. W. Hoyle, *The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Politics of the 1530s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Harrison, *The Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*; M. L. Bush, *The Pilgrimage of Grace* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

⁵⁰ Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law*; T. I. Rae, *The Administration of the Scottish Frontier 1513-1603* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1966).

⁵¹ Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*.

Chapter 1: Landholding

A key aspect of political society in late medieval and early modern England was the fact that power was inextricably linked to landed influence. The territories controlled by the great regional magnates bestowed wealth, military power and influence in government. Lower down the social scale, manorial lordship gave control over a region at the village level, while wealth accrued from landholding conferred status and consideration for regional offices such as sheriff and justice of the peace. Stewardships and other offices in estate management were a valuable source of patronage as they conferred influence over the lord's tenants as well as providing employment and a wage.¹

In order to gain an insight into the structure of the political community in Cumberland and Westmorland, therefore, it is helpful to undertake an analysis of the patterns of landholding in the two counties. A sample of manors can be taken over a period of time and the proportions of estates under the control of different categories of landlord- gentry, aristocratic, ecclesiastic or royal- can be assessed. This will reveal several important details about regional political society in Cumberland and Westmorland: it will identify the leading landholders in the northwestern counties, reveal the rates of absentee landlordism in the locality, and highlight any significant shifts in the quantities of land, and consequently the amount of regional influence, possessed by different social groups. This information will underpin the discussions of regional politics and society in later chapters.

There has been some debate as to the value of counting manors in this way. A series of articles appearing in the *Economic History Review* during the 1950s addressed the issue with regards to landholding in the Elizabethan and early Stuart period. R. H. Tawney made a substantial study of some 2,547 manors in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Surrey, Worcestershire, Hampshire and the North Riding of Yorkshire based on

¹ Cornwall, *Wealth and Society*, p. 29; Smith, *Land and Politics*, ch. 4; Williams, *The Tudor Regime*, pp. 3-4; M. A. Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism* (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 48-54.

information obtained from the *Victoria County History* of those localities. He used his findings to argue for a decline in the number of lordships held by large landowners and a corresponding increase in the number of manors held by small to medium landowners in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.² Professor Tawney's figures were expanded upon by Lawrence Stone, who emphasized several difficulties attendant with this type of research. Particularly, he noted the problem that even to contemporaries in the sixteenth century what was and what was not a manor was never entirely clear. There are also errors that arise due to the incomplete nature of our modern sources and inconsistencies in the selection of information from such a vast body of material.³ Nevertheless, Stone was left in no doubt that these methods were valid when applied to defining broad trends. Tawney and Stone's arguments attracted strong criticism from H. R. Trevor-Roper and J. P. Cooper, both of whom felt that such statistical analyses were misleading.⁴ These scholars felt that too much weight was being placed upon the economic ramifications of a set of figures without regard for the inaccuracies inherent in the sample or factors such as shifts in the demographic between gentry and aristocratic families.

This type of research has also been applied to earlier periods than the Elizabethan. Anthony Pollard has helpfully enunciated the most significant difficulties of which the historian must be aware when undertaking a statistical analysis of manorial landholding in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. In addition to the complications regarding the precise definition of a manor, these include the problem that the right to hold a manorial court was not necessarily indicative of the actual ownership of land in a particular area. Also, difficulties arise due to the state of flux in a land market in which families were constantly buying and selling small holdings and alienating portions of estates. There is also the problem that analysis of the incomes from various estates does

² Tawney, 'The Rise of the Gentry', pp. 1-38, and 'The Rise of the Gentry: A Postscript', *Economic History Review*, Second Series, vol. 7 (1954), pp. 91-97.

³ Stone, 'The Elizabethan Aristocracy', pp. 302-21.

⁴ H. R. Trevor-Roper, 'The Elizabethan Aristocracy: An Anatomy Anatomized', *Economic History Review*, Second Series, vol. 3 (1951), pp. 279-98; J. P. Cooper, 'The Counting of Manors', pp. 377-89.

not necessarily reflect the true wealth of the landowners, especially with regards to ecclesiastical landlords whose landed wealth was augmented by tithes and other spiritual dues.⁵ There are also important qualifications in regard to residency. Non resident landlords such as regional aristocrats and the crown relied on local gentlemen to administer their estates. The influence of these lords was based on patronage rather than direct control of their estates.

Despite these qualifications, however, this type of statistical analysis remains a useful exercise. Before one becomes too discouraged, Pollard reminds us of a simple rule of thumb; the more manors held, the more land possessed and, to take it further, the more influential the landlord. Statistical analysis of land holding can help us understand the dynamic at work between the various sections of regional society in a particular group of counties, provided that the researcher is aware of the limitations of the sources.

There are several sources available for an analysis of landholding and tenure in Cumberland and Westmorland. Some are more useful than others. The *Victoria History of the County of Cumberland*, while possessing details pertaining to the various ecclesiastical institutions in that county, is sadly lacking when it comes to information regarding the descent of baronies and manors among the local aristocracy and gentry.⁶ More useful in regards to landholding are several works produced in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by local antiquarians such as John Denton, Sir Daniel Flemming and the partnership of Joseph Nicolson, esq. and Dr. Richard Burn.⁷ Denton's and Flemming's accounts are concerned solely with Cumberland while Nicolson and Burn's work contains a parish by parish account of the various manors, hamlets and townships in the two counties. Unfortunately, these accounts frequently remain frustratingly vague in regards to the dates when certain families died out or important land transactions took place, often merely narrowing the time frame to the reign of a particular monarch. More precise information can be obtained

⁵ Pollard, *Northeastern England*, pp. 81-84.

⁶ *Victoria County History: Cumberland*, 2 vols., ed. J. Wilson (London: Victoria County History, 1905).

⁷ *History and Antiquities*, vols. 1 & 2; Denton, 'Estates and Families'; D. Flemming, 'Description of the County of Cumberland', ed. R. S. Ferguson, *CWAAS Tract Series* 3 (1889).

from the inquisitions post mortem relating to the period in question, particularly with regards to the values of the estates of local lords and gentlemen. Cumberland and Westmorland were two of the 'remote and backward shires' which failed to return assessments in the muster of 1522 and therefore formed no part of Cornwall's study on wealth and society in Tudor England. With the exception of J. M. W. Bean's discussion of the Percy estates in Cumberland, information regarding the financial situation facing landholders in the northwest remains sparse and can only be dealt with on a case by case basis where such evidence exists.⁸ The conclusions that can be drawn from a statistical analysis of landholding in the northwest are therefore limited but will allow for broad trends in the proportion of lands under the control of landlords to become apparent. An analysis of landholding and tenure in Cumberland and Westmorland will then allow comparisons to be drawn between the northwest and other regions which have received similar attention from other scholars.⁹

At the outset, it is important to establish some parameters for this study. To attempt a comprehensive analysis of who held every single manor, moiety and parcel of land within the two counties would be a monumental undertaking and quite beyond the scope of this research. The sample used in this study will include those manorial lordships which were undivided and under the control of a single lord at the beginning of the period in 1471. A table summarizing the numbers of manorial lordships controlled by different groups at particular times is presented below.¹⁰

⁸ Cornwall, *Wealth and Society*, p. 5; J. M. W. Bean, *The Estates of the Percy Family 1416-1537* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), pp. 22-29.

⁹ Pollard, *Northeastern England*; Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*; Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism*; Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry*; Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England*; Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life*; Virgoe, 'Aspects of the Local Community'.

¹⁰ A full list of the manors included in this sample is presented in appendix 1.

	<i>1471</i>	<i>1485</i>	<i>1509</i>	<i>1537</i>
<i>Aristocrats</i>	46	53	61	49
<i>Gentry</i>	148	144	137	137
<i>Crown</i>	11	8	7	51
<i>Church</i>	32	32	32	- ¹¹

There were eleven baronial and honorial lordships in Cumberland and Westmorland as well as the royal forest of Inglewood.¹² Most of these were controlled by regional aristocratic houses. These lordships contained two-hundred and thirty-seven undivided estates clearly identified as being manorial in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Cumberland contained nine of these major lordships¹³ with one-hundred and forty undivided manors while Westmorland was comprised of two large baronies, Kendal and Appleby, containing ninety-seven undivided manors. It was a feature of the tenurial landscape in the northwest that the lands under the direct control of regional aristocrats tended to be located in two distinct areas of the lordship: the baron often held a core of demesne land in the immediate vicinity of the baronial seat to support the castle and household, and he also often held forests and chases more remote from the local castle for his own use.¹⁴

In Cumberland, the Percys controlled the vast honor of Cockermouth and barony of Egremont, which covered the western half of the county. They were the feudal overlords of sixty-six manorial estates (twenty-seven per cent of the sampled manors in both counties). Twelve of these manors the earl of Northumberland held to his own use (five per cent).¹⁵ Next came the Dacres who

¹¹ Most of the religious houses in the northwest were officially dissolved with the Act suppressing the smaller monasteries in 1536. The rest were surrendered over the next three years and all had gone by 1539. D. Knowles and R. N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales* (London: Longmans, 1971), *passim*.

¹² See map 2, p. x above, for a breakdown of regional landholding and territorial influence.

¹³ The county of Cumberland was composed of the Honor of Cockermouth, Inglewood forest and the baronies of Egremont, Burgh-by-Sands, Gilsland, Greystoke, Dalston, Levington and the large manorial lordship of Millom; Flemming, 'Description of Cumberland', *passim*.

¹⁴ A. J. L. Winchester, 'Regional Identity in the Lake Counties: Land Tenure and the Cumbrian Landscape,' *NH*, vol. 42 (2005), p. 34.

¹⁵ *History and Antiquities*, vol. 2, *passim*.

controlled the border baronies of Burgh-by-Sands and Gilsland, and, from 1507, the family also acquired the barony of Greystoke. The Dacres were the overlords of twenty-four estates at the beginning of the period (ten per cent), increasing to twenty-nine (twelve per cent) following the acquisition of the Greystoke lands. The Dacres also held twelve of these estates (five per cent) in demesne, with the rest occupied by gentry and yeoman tenants.¹⁶

In Westmorland the dominant aristocratic house was the Cliffords. This family controlled the barony of Appleby and was overlord of fifty-five manorial estates (twenty-three per cent), with ten manors held personally by the Lord Clifford (four per cent).¹⁷ The barony of Kendal was the only major lordship in the region not to be completely controlled by a single noble family during the period. The barony was divided into two fees. The largest portion was held by the Parr family of Kendal. The second portion had been part of the earldom of Richmond and by 1471 was in the possession of Lady Margaret Beaufort, mother of the future Henry VII. Lady Margaret was at that time married to Thomas, Lord Stanley.¹⁸ Upon her death in 1509 these lands passed to the crown and later in 1525 formed part of the endowment of Henry VIII's illegitimate son, Henry FitzRoy, duke of Richmond.¹⁹ The absence of a resident aristocratic overlord in these particular lands in Kendal had implications for the local gentry, which will become apparent in following chapters. The gentry here could afford to look further afield for patronage and several became associated directly with the crown as opposed to any of the regional aristocratic houses. The careers of the Parr brothers in the 1470s and later the Leybournes in the 1530s are good indicators of the connections between various administrations and the gentry of Kendal.²⁰

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, *passim*.

¹⁸ For Lady Margaret's involvement in the lordship of Kendale see M. Underwood and M. Jones, *The King's Mother* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 115-25.

¹⁹ 'Kirkby in Kendale: 1453-1530', *Kendale Records*, compid=49725.

²⁰ S. E. James, 'Sir William Parr of Kendal, part 2: 1471-83', *CWAAS*, vol. 94 (1994), pp. 105-20 and 'Sir John Parr of Kendal: 1434-1475', *CWAAS*, vol. 96 (1996), pp. 71-86; James, *Change and Continuity*, *passim*.

The persistence of feudalism in the far northwest is most clearly demonstrated in the high proportion of estates in the region under the direct control of regional aristocrats. Statistical analysis demonstrates the fluctuations in aristocratic landholding in the region between 1471 and 1537. Of the two-hundred and thirty-seven manors surveyed in the two counties for the period, forty-six (nineteen per cent) were held in demense by aristocratic families in 1471. This proportion increased after 1485 to fifty-three (twenty-two per cent). This sudden increase in aristocratic landholding upon the accession of Henry VII is due to rewards given by the new king to his supporters in the region. The most important of these Lancastrian supporters in the far northwest was Henry, Lord Clifford. Throughout the 1460s and 1470s the Clifford lands in Cumberland and Westmorland had been in the hands of the crown, with several estates given to Edward IV's followers. These were under the control of the earl of Warwick up to 1471 and then the brothers, Sirs William and John Parr between 1471 and 1485.²¹ Throughout this time the young heir of the Clifford family was forced into hiding on the estates of his stepfather, Sir Lancelot Threlkeld of Threlkeld in Cumberland.²² The accession of Henry VII allowed Lord Clifford to regain his title after Bosworth.²³ Clifford held ten manors in Westmorland to his own use and the return of these estates to their rightful lord represents one of the largest shifts in landholding during the period. The increase in the proportion of aristocratic landholding in the region resulting from the Clifford restoration must not be seen as a new situation, however. Rather, it is a return to a state of affairs that had existed prior to the Wars of the Roses. It was the increased number of estates controlled by the gentry in the period between 1471 and 1485, due largely to the Parr brothers' acquisition of the Clifford possessions mentioned above, that was an unusual situation.

²¹ James, 'Sir William Parr, part 1', pp. 99-114; 'Sir William Parr, part 2', pp. 105-20; 'Sir John Parr', pp. 71-86.

²² G. E. Cockayne, *The Complete Peerage*, vol. 3, ed. V. Gibbs (London: St Catherine's Press, 1953), p. 167.

²³ Henry Clifford appears on several commissions in late 1485 where he is styled as Henry Clifford, knight. By May 1486 he was styled as Lord Clifford. *CPR 1485-94*, pp. 39, 73, 91.

The proportion of lands under aristocratic control continued to increase throughout the reign of Henry VII. Further rewards of estates in Cumberland and Westmorland were offered by the king to his regional supporters. The northwest had been the heartland of support for Richard III and Henry's choices for regional advancement were limited. Obviously Henry's stepfather, Thomas, Lord Stanley and his family did rather well out of the fall of Richard III in which they had played such a prominent part. Not the least of his rewards was Stanley's elevation to the earldom of Derby.²⁴ The family also benefited from the destruction of several of Richard III's most committed followers. Prior to 1485 the Stanley family already held the manors of Eskdale and Ponsonby of the honor of Cockermouth. After Bosworth, Lord Stanley was immediately rewarded with the manor of Bethom in Westmorland, previously held by Edward Bethom, a prominent supporter first of the Nevilles and then of Richard III.²⁵ Stanley also acquired the manor of Farleton which was an appurtenance of Bethom and had previously been held by the family's great rivals in the northwest, the Harringtons of Hornby.²⁶ These new grants could be added to the lands already controlled by the Stanleys through Derby's wife, Lady Margaret Beaufort.

The failure of the uprising in favour of Lambert Simnel, in which many former northwestern supporters of Richard III became involved,²⁷ brought further windfalls to the Stanleys. In 1487 the family gained the manor of Witherslack and its appurtenances, the lordships of Methorp and Ulva in Westmorland.²⁸ These too had once belonged to the Harringtons but had been granted to Sir Thomas Broughton upon the Harringtons' disgrace in 1485. Broughton's involvement in the Lambert Simnel affair brought about his attainder and

²⁴ Cockayne, *Complete Peerage*, vol. 12.1, pp. 250-52.

²⁵ *History and Antiquities*, vol. 1, pp. 225-29.

²⁶ For the Stanley/ Harrington rivalry see I. Grimble, *The Harrington Family* (London: Johnathan Cape, 1957), pp. 56-61; B. Coward, *The Stanleys, Lords Stanley and Earls of Derby 1385-1672: The Origins, Wealth and Power of a Landowning Family* (Manchester: Chetham Society, 1983), p. 112.

²⁷ M. Bennett, *Lambert Simnel and the Battle of Stoke* (Stroud: Sutton, 1987) pp. 125-26; S. O'Connor, 'Francis Lovell and the Rebels of Furness Fells', *The Ricardian*, vol. 7, no. 96 (1987), p. 367.

²⁸ *CPR 1485-94*, pp. 270-1, *History and Antiquities*, vol. 1, p. 230.

forfeiture and his lands were granted to more committed supporters of the Tudor regime. While the Stanleys acquired Witherslack the manor of Broughton itself was granted to the Percys.²⁹ These lands brought regional influence to these families. An indication that the Stanleys had extended their area of influence beyond their Lancashire heartland and their two manors in Cumberland is the fact that in 1497 we see Sir Edward Stanley arbitrating a dispute over tenements in the manor of Whinfell in Kendal.³⁰

The landed power of the crown in the region was given a boost following the murder of the fourth earl of Northumberland in 1489. This left the fifth earl, a boy of eleven, a ward in the king's hands for the next ten years and, after the passage of a statute in Parliament regarding the status of the enfeoffed lands of tenants-in-chief who died intestate, allowed royal control over the Percy estates during the earl's minority.³¹ The fifth earl reclaimed his family's position ten years later; meanwhile, the government used its landed influence in the intervening period to make significant adjustments to regional administration. This included the acquisition by the crown of the wardenry of the east and middle marches and the employment of deputies to administer the earl's estates.³² Here we can see the capacity for patronage that landholding gave to absentee landlords.

Following these developments, at the time of Henry VII's death in 1509, the proportion of land under the direct control of aristocratic families had increased from twenty-three to twenty-six per cent of the total, largely at the expense of the gentry. In 1507 Thomas, Lord Dacre finally acquired the last of the Greystoke lands, over which he had been wrangling with the crown since 1501.³³ This was, of course, a transfer of land from one aristocratic landlord to

²⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 106. For Broughton's involvement with Lambert Simnel see M. Bennett, *Lambert Simnel and the Battle of Stoke* (Stroud: Sutton, 1987) pp. 125-26; S. O'Connor, 'Francis Lovell and the Rebels of Furness Fells', *The Ricardian*, vol. 7, no. 96 (1987), p. 367.

³⁰ 'Whinfell', *Kendal Records*, compid=49287.

³¹ Bean, *Estates of the Percy Family*, p. 135; S. B. Chrimes, *Henry VII* (London: Methuen, 1972), p. 182.

³² See chapter 4. Thomas, Lord Dacre was granted the keeping of lands belonging to Nicholas Featherstonhaugh and the wardship of his heir during Northumberland's minority. *CPR 1485-94*, p. 299.

³³ Cockayne, *Complete Peerage*, vol. 4, pp. 199-200; Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, pp. 85-88.

another and did not affect the equilibrium of landholding between the different social groups. The regional aristocrats did not have things all their own way, however. Henry VII maintained a level of control by rigorous enforcement of his feudal prerogatives, often involving important landowners in costly legal disputes with the crown.³⁴ This can be seen in the king's treatment of Thomas, Lord Dacre's mother, Lady Mabel, who was accused of ravishing a royal ward when she arranged the marriage of her daughter to the young heir of the Huddleston estates.³⁵

This proportion of aristocratic land remained stable for the first twenty-five years of Henry VIII's reign. There were no major revolts in the region during this period to bring forfeited estates to the crown or allow a reshuffling of regional landholding. The Pilgrimage of Grace was a rising dominated by the commons in which regional aristocrats were either loyal to the crown or remained strategically neutral³⁶ and it was not until 1537 that the opportunity presented itself once more for a change in the dynamic of aristocratic landholding in Cumberland and Westmorland. This opportunity came with the death of Henry Percy, sixth earl of Northumberland and the disgrace of his nearest male relatives during the Pilgrimage of Grace. There has been some debate as to the political capability as well as the mental capacity of this earl. Bean and James contend that the earl showed little interest in maintaining his inheritance, selling off vast tracts of land to fund an extravagant lifestyle. Percy had no heirs of his own and his relations with his younger brothers, Sir Thomas and Sir Ingram, were strained.³⁷ As many Percy lands were strategically located in the border regions, the crown was reluctant to allow the dissolution of these estates among the earl's favourites. The administration of Cardinal Wolsey had

³⁴ G. R. Elton, 'Henry VII: Rapacity and Remorse', *Historical Journal*, vol. 1 (1958), pp. 21-39; J. R. Lander, 'Bonds, Coercion and Fear: Henry VII and the Peerage', in *Florilegium Historiale*, ed. J. G. Rowe and W. H. Stockdale (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1971), pp. 328-67; Cunningham, 'Henry VII, Sir Thomas Butler and the Stanley Family', pp. 220-41.

³⁵ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 1, no. 131; S. E. James, 'Henry VII and Prerogativa Regis: the Case of Mabel Dacre', *CWAAS*, vol. 99 (1999), pp. 177-84.

³⁶ Hoyle, *The Pilgrimage of Grace*, p. 423.

³⁷ A. Rose, *Kings in the North: The House of Percy in British History* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2002), p. 488.

begun to apply pressure on the earl as soon as he succeeded his father in 1527. The Cardinal proposed to put the earl in ward and repeatedly interfered in the administration of his estates, which both Bean and James considered a foreshadowing of more stringent policies pursued by Cromwell in relation to the northern nobility.³⁸

Hoyle presented a different perspective suggesting that there was never a preconceived policy on the part of the government to seize control of the Percy estates in the north. He argued that immediate financial concerns prompted the earl to sell off lands that were peripheral to the Percys' main area of influence in the northeast. The earl did however retain a considerable pecuniary interest in these lands by retaining the rights to rents and also the reversion of the estates. This meant that there was a good chance that many of these estates would eventually return to the hands of the Percy family.³⁹ Northumberland's grants to Sir Thomas Wharton and his heirs of the lieutenancy of Cockermouth Castle and various other Percy assets in Cumberland was motivated by a perceived need to establish his supporters as independent forces on the borders, possibly to fulfill the earl's military functions during his frequent bouts of ill health.⁴⁰

That the government showed no particular interest in acquiring control over the Percy lands in Cumberland is demonstrated by the fact that, in 1531, Northumberland surrendered Cockermouth and Egremont to the crown to relieve himself of a significant financial debt. In 1535 these lands were returned in exchange for Percy lands in southern England. The government at this point admitted the domination of regional aristocrats in the far northwest when it acknowledged that the inhabitants of the borderlands were more naturally led by the earl and his family than by any crown appointed steward.⁴¹ However, Hoyle points out that this is misleading as, due to the grants made to Wharton which remained intact during the crown's control of the estates, the military apparatus

³⁸ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.2, nos. 3119, 4603, 4698; Bean, *Estates of the Percy Family*, p. 144; James, *Change and Continuity*, p. 11.

³⁹ R. W. Hoyle, 'Fall of the House of Percy', p. 186.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 191.

⁴¹ *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. 3, ed. T. E Tomlins (London: Records Office, 1817), pp. 591-55; Bean, *Estates of the Percy Family*, pp. 151-52.

of the Cumberland estates remained in the hands of Northumberland's appointee.⁴²

In 1537 the earl, by now almost financially destitute, entrusted the administration of his estates to the crown in return for a pension of £1,000 per year. Upon his death a few weeks later he left his entire patrimony to the king. This has been seen as an act of weakness on the part of a physically and mentally broken man, yielding to pressure from the crown and disinheriting his family.⁴³ With the benefit of hindsight, however, this act possibly saved the Percy dynasty from an ignominious end in the mid sixteenth century.⁴⁴ Hoyle argues that the idea for making the king his heir probably originated with the earl of Northumberland himself. The crown accepted the offer as a means to keep the patrimony intact which paved the way for the reinstatement of the sixth earl's nephew to the earldom of Northumberland under more favourable circumstances.⁴⁵

Whatever motivations lay behind the crown's acquisition of the earldom of Northumberland, the annexation of the Percy estates resulted in a decline in the number of manors under direct aristocratic control from sixty-one (twenty-six per cent) to forty-nine manors (twenty per cent) and a corresponding increase in the amount of land under royal control from seven manors (three per cent) to nineteen (eight per cent).

The crown's acquisition of the Percy estates is indicative of a trend in the early sixteenth century whereby, intentionally or not, the central administration increased its presence and authority in regional areas. This can be seen in an embryonic form in the administration of Cardinal Wolsey, with the resuscitation of the Council in the North, escalating to the more assertive measures taken under Thomas Cromwell.⁴⁶ Although, in theory, in a feudal society all authority

⁴² Hoyle, 'Fall of the House of Percy', p. 193.

⁴³ Bean, *Estates of the Percy Family*, p. 144.

⁴⁴ Northumberland's brothers and heirs apparent, Sir Thomas and Sir Ingram Percy, were both involved in the leadership of the Pilgrimage of Grace, following which the former was executed; Hoyle, *Pilgrimage of Grace*, p. 410.

⁴⁵ Hoyle, 'Fall of the House of Percy', p. 196.

⁴⁶ The administrative aspects of Wolsey and Cromwell's drive towards centralization will be discussed in the following chapter.

derived from the crown and the king ultimately owned all the land in the kingdom, nevertheless the king's capacity to directly influence a region was still dependent on the amount of land he personally controlled. The landed power of the crown in Cumberland and Westmorland fluctuated significantly throughout the period between 1471 and 1537. As we shall see, the effectiveness of the crown's policy of directly controlling land in order to increase royal authority in the far northwest was limited.

The mid fifteenth century had witnessed the erosion of royal authority in the far northwest as noblemen acquired a monopoly over royal offices and stewardships in the region. The later fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries has been seen as the period in which the crown attempted to recover this lost ground.⁴⁷ Edward IV acquired the forfeited possessions of the Percys and the Cliffords in 1461 and then the estates of the Nevilles ten years later, which gave him substantial landed resources in both northwestern counties. He continued to govern the region through his chosen representatives, however, and distributed these lands to his supporters rather than hold them to his own use. He restored the earl of Northumberland to his estates in 1470, pardoned several gentry families, including the Crackenthorpes of Newbiggin who had been under attainder since 1461, and allowed his brother and the Parrs to acquire large quantities of land in Cumberland and Westmorland respectively.⁴⁸

The king held eleven manors (five per cent) initially in 1471, located mainly in Cumberland. These included border forts such as the castles at Bewcastle and Liddle Strength, as well as several estates within the forest of Inglewood.⁴⁹ The chief use of these estates in the Lancastrian and Yorkist periods had been to provide landed support for the warden of the march. Offices such as the stewardships of Plumpton Park and other estates within the forest of Inglewood, and the constabularies of forts such as Bewcastle and Liddle

⁴⁷ Storey, *House of Lancaster*, ch. 7; G. R. Elton, *England Under the Tudors* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955); p. 6; R. Britnell, *The Closing of the Middle-Ages? England 1471-1529* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), p. 8.

⁴⁸ CPR 1467-77, pp. 264, 334; Cumbria Records Office, Kendal, Crackenthorpe of Newbiggin, WD/Crk/0-123; James, 'Sir John Parr', pp. 77-78.

⁴⁹ *History and Antiquities*, vol. 1, pp. 135, 491; vol. 2, pp. 320-26, 389-419, 439-41, 470-73.

Strength, were attached to the wardenry. As the government restructured the office of warden of the march, some of these estates were hived off and granted to other royal servants in the region.⁵⁰

In January 1483 the statute conferring the warden's office on the duke of Gloucester and his heirs removed all the crown lands in Cumberland from royal control. This represents the nadir of royal authority in the region. Edward IV sought to offset the cost of defending the northwestern frontier by granting his brother all the revenues of the county, both from landed sources, such as rents and farms, as well as from judicial proceedings, in exchange for a rent of £100 which the duke paid to the exchequer.⁵¹ In this way, Edward guaranteed a profit from a region which had previously cost more to defend than it had contributed to the royal coffers. To the government of Edward IV, curtailment of royal authority was of secondary consideration to economic rationalism and the maintenance of an acceptable level of public order. This situation was short-lived, however, as Gloucester's usurpation of the throne following his brother's unexpected death six months later, and his retention of the office of warden of the west march, returned these lands to crown control. Gloucester's ascent to the throne also brought the castle of Penrith in Cumberland to the crown, which castle had previously been part of the Neville patrimony. The king appointed gentry servants such as Sir Christopher Moresby to administer these estates.⁵² At the end of the reign of Richard III, therefore, with the addition of the duke of Gloucester's own lands, royal landholding was in a stronger situation than it had been in 1471.

During the reign of Henry VII, the number of royal manors in Cumberland and Westmorland decreased again to seven (three per cent). This was largely due to the restoration of Lord Clifford in 1485. As has been shown, this reign also saw the increase in landholding among Henry's aristocratic supporters at the expense of the gentry supporters of Richard III such as the Harringtons and the Broughtons. Such a situation does not necessarily indicate a

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 419, 473, 477.

⁵¹ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. 6, pp. 204-5.

⁵² *CPR 1485-94*, p. 91.

relaxation of royal control over the region. Henry VII was very keen to maintain strict control over the nobility through the employment of bonds and recognizances for loyalty and good behaviour.⁵³ We have seen how Henry VII gained control of the Percy estates for a number of years following the fourth earl of Northumberland's murder. This was transitory and the landed power of the crown in Cumberland and Westmorland at the accession of Henry VIII in 1509 was less than it had been under the Yorkist kings.

Such a situation was clearly unacceptable for the ministers of Henry VIII.⁵⁴ Most of this reforming zeal has been attributed to the administration of Thomas Cromwell but, as has been shown in the case of Wolsey's interference in the earl of Northumberland's estates, it had its origins in earlier administrations. Recent historiography has questioned the contention that this was an aspect of a coherent policy on the part of the government, but the fact remains that the 1530s did witness direct government intervention in the affairs of key members of the northern aristocracy. The brunt of government pressure fell on William, Lord Dacre. Dacre managed to survive his indictment for treason in 1534 with his patrimony intact but with crippling fines which almost ruined the family.⁵⁵ The cash strapped earl of Northumberland, as previously mentioned, signed over control of his estates to the crown in return for an annual pension of £1,000.⁵⁶ Further, he made the king his heir and upon his death the crown gained the entire Percy patrimony. The acquisition of the Percy estates in Cumberland increased the number of manors under royal control from seven to nineteen in 1537 (eight per cent). Nevertheless, the government was still left with the problem of making its authority felt in these regions previously dominated by regional aristocrats.

⁵³ Lander, 'Bonds, Coercion and Fear', pp. 328-67; Cunningham, 'Henry VII, Sir Thomas Butler and the Stanley Family', pp. 220-41. See chapter 2 below.

⁵⁴ James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society*, pp. 41-45; Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal*, p. 212; Beckinsale, *Thomas Cromwell*, p. 79.

⁵⁵ The Dacre trial of 1534 will be discussed in greater depth in chapter 4, as it relates to his governance as warden of the marches; Miller, *English Nobility*, pp. 51-57. Ellis observes that in spite of these heavy fines, Dacre's influence remained significant in the region throughout the remainder of Henry VIII's reign; Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, p. 233.

⁵⁶ Bean, *Estates of the Percy Family*, p. 144.

Ecclesiastical lordship was much more stable than royal, aristocratic or gentry landholding prior to the dissolution. Thirty-two manors (fourteen per cent) were held by various religious institutions and this proportion did not change at all throughout the period until the Act suppressing the lesser monasteries in 1536.⁵⁷ This act dissolved religious institutions worth less than £200 per year or with fewer than twelve inmates. This was in fact every institution in Cumberland and Westmorland except the abbey at Holm Cultram and the priory of Carlisle. Shap Abbey was given special consideration and made exempt from the first round of dissolutions in spite of possessing land and rents worth only £166.⁵⁸

The first round of dissolutions brought eleven estates in the region into the hands of the crown. These were the estates of the institutions at Armathwaite, Kirkoswald, Wetheral, Lanercost, St. Bees, Seaton, Calder, and Cartmel as well as some lands held by institutions from outside the region such as Connishead Priory in Lancashire.⁵⁹ Between this time and the passing of the Act dissolving the greater monasteries in 1539 the government cajoled, bribed and bullied the remainder of the great ecclesiastical landlords into surrendering their estates to the crown. By 1537, the remaining houses had all surrendered their lands, or their abbots had been implicated and attainted for their roles in the Pilgrimage of Grace.⁶⁰ The suppression of the greater houses brought the remaining nineteen ecclesiastical estates into the hands of the crown. This increased the proportion of royal estates in the region from nineteen (including the addition of the earl of Northumberland's estates) to fifty-one (twenty-two per cent) and finally tipped the balance of landed influence away from regional aristocrats in favour of the crown.

Although the redistribution of monastic lands lies beyond the strict time frame of this study, some discussion of what happened in subsequent years is

⁵⁷ 'An Act for the Dissolution of the Monasteries', in *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary*, ed. G. R. Elton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), no. 186.

⁵⁸ Knowles and Hadcock, *Religious Houses*, p. 191.

⁵⁹ *History and Antiquities*, vols. 1 & 2, *passim*.

⁶⁰ The Abbot of Furness surrendered his lands to the crown in April 1537; *LP Henry VIII*, 12.2, no. 832.

helpful in order to demonstrate the continuing development of government policy in regards to landholding in the northwest. The king did not keep these newly acquired estates in his own hands as he did the earl of Northumberland's patrimony. Instead they were sold off, particularly to supporters of the central administration. The commissioners who had assessed the wealth and conduct of the monastic institutions were able to purchase several choice estates at knock down prices, as were a number of ecclesiastics who had helped facilitate the surrender of their institutions. The crown used its newfound landed influence to patronize and increase the profile of those gentlemen on whom it relied in regional administration. The chief recipient of monastic lands in the region following the dissolution of the monasteries was Sir Thomas Wharton, who was created first Lord Wharton in 1542. Wharton acquired most of the lands previously belonging to the abbey of Shap in Westmorland as well as estates that had belonged to Byland Abbey, Watton Priory and St. Mary's in York.⁶¹ These lands cemented Wharton's local position and expanded his sphere of influence throughout the county of Westmorland and into the North Riding of Yorkshire.

The gift of monastic land was in the hands of the crown and it is an indication of royal favour that Wharton should be the chief recipient of these estates. This was not merely due to his spectacular defeat of the Scots at Solway Moss in 1542. Wharton had proved himself loyal to the government during the Pilgrimage of Grace and had been a willing agent of the crown in its acquisition of the earl of Northumberland's estates in the far northwest during the 1530s.⁶² His elevation to the peerage in 1542 challenges the argument of declining aristocratic power in the north during the reign of Henry VIII. Government efforts to find an alternative ruler of the northwestern frontier to replace the mutually antagonistic houses of Clifford and Dacre still centred on a nobleman

⁶¹ Wharton acquired the manors of Shap and Regill from Shap Abbey in 1544 and the manors of Bretherdale in 1545 and Ravenstonedale in 1546 from Byland Abbey and Watton Priory respectively. He also gained the manor of Kirkby Stephen from St. Mary's in 1546. *History and Antiquities*, vol. 1, pp. 473, 495, 505, 518, 533; James, *Change and Continuity*, p. 33.

⁶² *Ibid.*, *passim*.

with a significant amount of land in the region.⁶³ The difference was that Wharton was a creation of Henry VIII's and much more dependent on the continued support of the crown than those regional aristocrats who had traditionally had the rule of the borderlands.

Aristocrats relied on local gentlemen to administer their estates, which increased the influence of the gentry in regional society. One-hundred and forty-eight manors (sixty-two per cent) in 1471 were in the possession of eighty-one local gentry families. This figure had declined to one-hundred and thirty-seven (fifty-seven per cent) by 1537. Of these eighty-one gentry families, thirty-nine (forty-eight per cent) held more than one manor at some stage between 1471 and 1537. With regards to the proportion of manors held by the gentry in Cumberland and Westmorland, the figures presented in this sample of manors indicate less influence for that social group in the region compared to Bennett's figures for Cheshire and Lancashire in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries. Here it was discovered that over three quarters of the manors in the two counties were in the hands of the local gentry.⁶⁴ The figure of sixty-two per cent of manors in the hands of the local gentry in Cumberland and Westmorland in the period 1471-1485 is a lot less, and the discrepancy becomes even more pronounced during the early Tudor period when gentry landholding in Cumberland and Westmorland declined to only fifty-seven per cent. Cheshire and Lancashire were counties where small landholdings predominated and there were relatively few families who held more than one estate in the region. Susan Wright observed a similar pattern in Derbyshire throughout the fifteenth century where she notes that 'an exceptional few [gentry families] had several manors.'⁶⁵ She adds that these families usually had interests spread across several counties and operated more on a regional rather than a local level. Political society in Leicestershire was dominated by a small oligarchy of families whose power also

⁶³ M. L. Bush, 'The Problem of the Far North: A Study of the Crisis of 1537 and its Consequences', *NH*, vol. 6 (1971), pp. 40-63.

⁶⁴ Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism*, p. 81.

⁶⁵ Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry*, p. 14.

transcended county boundaries.⁶⁶ This is certainly not the case in Cumberland and Westmorland where almost half the gentry (forty-eight per cent) held multiple estates, yet only a handful out of the eighty-one gentry families in the two counties held land outside the region.

The geographical distribution of estates amongst various families in the northwest had been subject to hundreds of years of intermarriage, alienation, purchase, exchange, forfeiture and redistribution. As such, some holdings were distributed in a logical fashion, indicating a conscientious effort on the part of certain families to control estates in particular areas. Other family holdings seem to be more random and suggest a more opportunistic approach to the acquisition of estates. There were certain families in Cumberland and Westmorland whose concentration of lands would suggest influence in that particular part of the region while they held little else in other areas. There are also those with widely dispersed holdings throughout the region. For example, the Bellinghams of Burnside were a family whose lands were concentrated into a very small area. The family held the manors of Burnside, Patton, Whitwell and Lambrigg, all of which were situated on the north side of Kendal within a dozen miles of the town.⁶⁷ The Curwens were in a similar situation, though there were two areas in which they held more than one estate. The family held the manors of Workington, Cammerton and Seaton which were concentrated along the Cumberland coast. These estates formed the nucleus of the Curwen family's holdings, with the senior branch usually residing at Workington Hall. They also possessed some more remote holdings: the manors of Thornthwaite and Bampton Patrick formed a second Curwen enclave along the banks of the river Lowther in the barony of Appleby and the family held the manor of Old Hutton in the barony of Kendal.⁶⁸

The Threlkelds were in a very different situation from either the Bellinghams or the Curwens. This family possessed four manors very widely

⁶⁶ Acheson, *A Gentry Community*, p. 134.

⁶⁷ 'Skelsmergh and Patton', *Kendale Records*, compid=49290; 'Selside and Whitwell', *ibid.*, compid=49289; 'Lambrigg', *ibid.*, compid=49284.

⁶⁸ *History and Antiquities*, vol. 1, *passim*.

dispersed across the two counties. Yanwath was situated on the border between Cumberland and Westmorland, not far from the castles at Penrith and Brougham, while further to the south the family held the manor of Crosby Ravensworth. These estates in Westmorland were augmented by two more in Cumberland, again very remote from each other; the manors of Threlkeld in the barony of Greystoke and Melmerby on the edge of Alston Moor.⁶⁹ Lancelot Threlkeld is reported to have quipped in the early sixteenth century that his family possessed three noble houses, 'one for pleasure, Crosby in Westmorland, wherein he had a park full of deer, one for profit and warmth wherein to reside in winter, namely Yanwath nigh Penrith, and the third, Threlkeld, well stocked with tenants to go with him to the wars.'⁷⁰ This is a nice indication of the attitudes of regional landholders towards their estates: they saw land as a means to wealth, power and also enjoyment.

Cumberland and Westmorland, therefore, were a patchwork of different interests and influences. There were certainly areas where particular families had a significant presence. The tessellation of estate holding across the two counties must have necessitated a certain amount of co-operation between the regional aristocracy and local gentry to ensure the maintenance of public order. Evidence of such co-operation is extant in an early sixteenth-century letter to the escheator of Westmorland which requests the lawful appearance of the 'worshipful of the country' at Kendal.⁷¹ The cause of this meeting is unknown, as are the names of those who were to attend: it nevertheless indicates a level of communication and co-operation between the leading members of regional society.

It does not follow that the pattern of multiple estate holding in Cumberland and Westmorland means that gentry here were any more wealthy or powerful than in other counties where smaller holdings predominated. Lawrence Stone has written on the problems of the dispersion of values for manorial holdings and has made the observation that 'the manor was a variable economic unit... and attempts to classify individual peers or gentry by the number of

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 413, 498; vol. 2, pp. 373, 441.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 498.

⁷¹ Cumbria Records Office, Carlisle, Records of the Aglionby Family D/Ay1/176.

manors they held are bound to fail for this reason.’⁷² It seems likely that manors in Cumberland and Westmorland, for various reasons including a small and widely dispersed population, devastation due to war with Scotland as well as the poor quality of the land for agricultural production, were worth somewhat less than comparable estates in other parts of the realm. Bean suggested as much in his thorough account of the revenue raised by the earls of Northumberland from the estates in Cumberland.⁷³

Information regarding the value of manors in Cumberland and Westmorland is sparse. The inquisitions post mortem for the reign of Henry VII give values for sixty-seven lordships (twenty-eight per cent of the total) in the two counties. The Huddlestons’ lordship of Millom in Cumberland, the Musgraves’ seat at Heartly, the Blenkinsop’s lands at Helbeck and the Curwens’ manor of Bampton Knype in Westmorland are the only estates recorded with a value of £40 or more in both counties during the reign of Henry VII. Even then, Heartly declined in value by a third, from £40 to 40 marks between 1492 and 1506.⁷⁴ Taking into account the small size of the sample for which we have financial evidence, this compares quite unfavorably with Cheshire and Lancashire where there were about a hundred gentry lineages who possessed estates worth more than £40 in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.⁷⁵ More typical in Cumberland and Westmorland it seems were estates worth £10 or less, such as that held by the Huttons whose manor of Hutton-in-the-Forest in Cumberland had a total value of £9 2s in 1485 at a yearly rent of 33s, or the Pickerings’ estate at Brytby in Cumberland worth 10 marks in 1499.⁷⁶ The Moresbys’ manors of Torpenhow and Newbiggin-under-the-Fell in Cumberland were worth £4 16s and 13s 4d respectively on the inquisition post mortem of Sir Christopher Moresby in 1503, while their manors of Distyngton, Culgarth, Kirkland and Unthank combined were worth £20. The family also held several estates in this period that, it was claimed, were worth nothing at all due to

⁷² Stone, *Crisis of the Aristocracy*, p. 146.

⁷³ Bean, *Estates of the Percy Family*, p. 22.

⁷⁴ *CIPM Hen. VII*, vol. 1, nos. 693, 966; vol. 2, nos. 65, 807, 811; vol. 3, no. 213.

⁷⁵ Bennett, *Community Class and Careerism*, p. 84.

⁷⁶ *CIPM Hen. VII*, vol. 1, nos. 470, 471; vol. 2, no. 90.

devastation by the Scots.⁷⁷ The gentry of the far northwest might have controlled more acres of land than their counterparts elsewhere in the kingdom, but this did not necessarily translate into greater pecuniary wealth.

As has been stated already, any general comparison between the financial situation facing inhabitants of Cumberland and Westmorland and other parts of the realm is beyond the scope of the surviving evidence for the two northwestern counties. Estimates of gentry wealth rely heavily upon information regarding the landed value of their estates. These estimates do not tend to take into consideration other sources of income such as office holding or financial activities not related to land. Some observations, however, can still be made. In his *Wealth and Society in Early Sixteenth-Century England*, J. C. K. Cornwall provides us with statistical information regarding the incomes of the local gentry in several counties (Sussex, Suffolk, Buckinghamshire, Rutland and Cornwall) drawn from assessments of taxation and feodary surveys.⁷⁸ These can be augmented by Susan Wright's figures for Derbyshire during the fifteenth century.⁷⁹ Cornwall's figures ranked the knights in the counties of Sussex, Buckinghamshire and Suffolk as possessing annual incomes of between £20 and £460, with the averages of £120 for Sussex, £130 for Suffolk and £160 for Buckinghamshire. The esquires possessed incomes between £5 and £200 per annum with an average of £50 to £60 in the five counties, while the mere gentlemen could command incomes of between £2 and £160 with an average between £10 and £20 over the five counties. Although she used evidence from an earlier period, Wright postulated an average income of £135 for a knight in Derbyshire, £33 6s 8d for a squire and £10 for a gentleman. An assessment of the wealth of those Cumbrians for whom records exist in comparison reveals that the yearly incomes of knights, esquires and gentlemen in Cumberland and Westmorland fitted into the average spread as proposed by Cornwall, but fell well short of the upper levels of wealth that certain people in these southern counties seem to have attained. Sir Thomas Strickland was recorded as

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 2, nos. 292, 294.

⁷⁸ Cornwall, *Wealth and Society*, p. 145.

⁷⁹ Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry*, p. 150 n. 26.

possessing land and rents in Westmorland worth £80 per annum on his death in 1500, which made him one of the more wealthy figures in the locality. Sir Christopher Moresby's lands in Cumberland and Westmorland on the other hand were worth only £32 7s 10d, which places him at the lower end of the spectrum of knightly wealth.⁸⁰ Great wealth did not necessarily confer social status; Richard Musgrave was styled an 'esquire' on his death in 1492, yet he held property in Cumberland and Westmorland worth well over £100, making him the richest gentry figure in the locality for whom we have records during the reign of Henry VII. Even simple 'gentlemen' such as Christopher Curwen and Thomas Blenkinsop, both of whom held estates worth £40 or more, were more wealthy than poor knights such as the Moresbys seem to have been at this period.⁸¹

As has previously been mentioned, there was a vibrant land market in England during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The ownership of lay estates was in a constant state of flux in Cumberland and Westmorland. Extant papers from families such as the Aglionbys, Crackenthorpes, Flemmings and Penningtons as well as the gentry of Kendal reveal a large number of land transactions through purchase, exchange or marriage in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.⁸² There were at least thirty-two manors (twelve per cent) which changed hands between families in Cumberland and Westmorland between 1471 and 1537. This figure does not include the sale or alienation of smaller portions of estates which litter the available sources for the period.

The reasons behind these transactions varied from case to case, but it is clear that local figures were motivated by more than a desire for purely financial gain. The influences of war, geography and dynastic aggrandizement are apparent. For example, the most active participants in this land market were the Lords Dacre who were involved in no fewer than ten separate transactions (not

⁸⁰ *CIPM Hen VII*, vol. 2, nos. 292, 294.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, nos. 693, 966; vol. 2, nos. 65, 807, 811; vol. 3, 213.

⁸² Cumbria Records Office, Carlisle, Records of the Aglionby Family, D/Ay/181, D/AY1/196; Cumbria Records Office, Kendal, Records of the Crackenthorpe Family WD/Crk/A1428/I/4; Cumbria Records Office, Kendal, Le Flemming MSS Rydal Hall, WD/Ry/Box 92/106, 107, 116, 118; Cumbria Records Office, Carlisle, Pennington Family of Muncaster, D Pen/Bundle 28/6, D Pen/Bundle 30/5. *Kendale Records*, *passim*.

including the family's acquisition of the barony of Greystoke).⁸³ These acquisitions occurred particularly during the lordship of Thomas Dacre (1485-1525). Stephen Ellis has made an intensive study of Thomas Dacre's lordship in Cumberland as part of a comparative study of the frontiers of the Tudor state in the northwest and Ireland. He suggests that the family's land transactions were aimed at strengthening their position on the border. This was a priority in order to more effectively manage the defence of the realm against the Scots, with which task Thomas Dacre as warden of the west march was entrusted.⁸⁴ Sometimes the acquisition of these northerly estates occurred in quite a roundabout way and at an expense. For example, sometime after 1485 Dacre acquired a one third-share of the manor of Bothil in the honor of Cockermouth by purchase from the Harrington family.⁸⁵ He did not keep this moiety long, however, as it was probably too remote from his main area of influence on the border. In 1497 he exchanged it with John Denton for the manor of Denton in the barony of Gilsland.⁸⁶ Dacre also bought out many of the customary tenants in his own baronies of Burgh and Gilsland. In this way he increased the family's demesne landholding in the two border baronies from eleven manors out of twenty-nine (thirty-eight per cent) to sixteen manors (fifty-five per cent) by the time of his death in 1525.⁸⁷ The proximity of these lordships to the border meant that their financial value was minimal; however, for Lord Dacre as warden of the west march the value of these estates lay in his ability to control the tenants adjacent to the border.

⁸³ Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, p. 86.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

⁸⁵ The Bothil moiety was in the possession of a cadet line of the Harrington family; *History and Antiquities*, vol. 2, p. 123.

⁸⁶ Relations between the Dentons and the Dacres had clearly improved by 1497. During the reign of Henry VI it was said that the Dacres had acquired the manor of Ainstable in Gilsland from the Dentons by 'extortion', which had caused the Dentons to attach themselves to the Yorkist cause; *History and Antiquities*, vol. 2, p. 123.

⁸⁷ Other land transactions that the Dacres were involved in included the family's acquisition of the manors, or moieties of the manors, of Gamelsby (a half share), Thursby, Kirkbampton and Rockcliffe in the barony of Burgh, Little Croglin, Stapleton (a half share) and Castle Carrock (a two-thirds share) in the barony of Gilsland and Kirklington in the barony of Levington, all of which acquisitions took place in the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII; *History and Antiquities* vol. 2, *passim*.

This brings us to one of the key features of landholding in Cumberland and Westmorland. Many of the smaller estates and tenements in the region were held of their overlords by customary tenure which was linked to military service.⁸⁸ In 1532 Sir Thomas Wharton, while acting as steward for the earl of Cumberland's estate at Mallerstang, mustered the tenants there for service against the Scots according to the indentures by which they held their lands.⁸⁹ This aspect of landholding was a consequence of the protracted hostilities with Scotland and was unfamiliar to contemporaries based in the south in the sixteenth century. The surveyor of the earl of Northumberland's estates in Cumberland, upon the acquisition of those lands by the crown in 1537, thought it necessary to remind Cromwell that he was 'serving in the confines of the realm where the tenants are bound by custom to furnish themselves with horse and armour at their own charges.'⁹⁰

This had consequences for the relationships between the aristocratic and gentry overlords and the lesser gentry and yeoman tenants. Customary tenure included the tenant's right to inheritance and therefore constrained manorial lords from acquiring tenanted lands on their estates, unless by purchase as Dacre had done. The impact of this feature in later ages has been discussed by Angus Winchester, who argues that as the baronial and gentry presence in the northwest declined in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries due to the acquisition of Cumbrian estates by absentee families, customary tenure gave rise to the independent yeoman class observed by Wordsworth in the northwestern dales in the nineteenth century.⁹¹ Most of the border tenements were held in this way and the value of the land determined whether the tenant was to serve on horseback or on foot.⁹² Richard III reached a particularly feudal arrangement with the men of Liddesdale who occupied the Bewcastle wastes in 1485. The borderers were granted the lands of the manor rent free in return for their service under the

⁸⁸ Winchester, 'Regional Identity', p. 37.

⁸⁹ 'Letters of the Cliffords', no. 73.

⁹⁰ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 12.2, no. 548.

⁹¹ Winchester, 'Regional Identity', pp. 33-41.

⁹² *History and Antiquities*, vol. 1, p. viii.

captain of the castle there.⁹³ The practice of customary tenure clearly extended into Westmorland, judging from the accounts produced by the Stricklands of Sizergh in 1450 and again in 1540 of the military capacity of their lands in that county.⁹⁴ These terms of tenure are indicative of the influence of war on regional structures of landholding and indicate that feudal and service relationships still meant something in the far northwest and were often more practical and effective than tenure for money rents.

Another very active family in the land market during this period was the Musgrave family, who were beneficiaries in five land transactions during the period. Unlike the expansion of the Dacre interest in northern Cumberland which was based on purchase and exchange, the Musgraves owed their rise to a series of advantageous marriages. The family was influential in both Cumberland and Westmorland and the acquisition of estates by the Musgraves illustrates the ties of neighbourhood and the influence of geography on regional landholding. Most notable of the Musgrave marriages was that between two sons of Richard Musgrave with the daughters and coheiresses of their neighbours, the Stapletons of Edenhall in Cumberland. The death of Sir William Stapleton in 1460 brought the lordships of Edenhall and Alston Moor to the sons of Richard Musgrave.⁹⁵ The Musgrave family subsequently moved their seat to Edenhall, probably due more to its central location and easier access to the population centre at Carlisle than to its monetary value.⁹⁶ Another valuable series of marriages for the Musgraves were the matches between William and Nicholas, sons of Thomas Musgrave, and the daughters and heiresses of William Colvil of Hayton. This match brought to the family the lordships of Crookdale, Hayton and Scaleby in Westmorland, though not without allegations of foul play on the

⁹³ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 13.2, app. no. 32; Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, p. 95.

⁹⁴ Sir Walter Strickland claimed he could raise one-hundred and forty-three horse and one-hundred and forty-seven foot in 1450 from his lands in Westmorland. In 1540 his descendent could raise fifty-five soldiers from his manor of Natland alone. *History and Antiquities*, vol. 1, pp. 96-97n. 'Natland', *Kendale Records*, compid=49280.

⁹⁵ *History and Antiquities*, vol. 2, p. 439.

⁹⁶ Edenhall was worth a modest 30 shillings per year, compared with the much more valuable estates at Hearly worth £40; *CIPM Hen. VII*, vol. 1, no. 695.

part of the Musgraves and their cronies.⁹⁷ Members of the family were active as feoffees for gentlemen in Kendal as well as playing a prominent role in the administration of the frontier, which no doubt derived from a landed presence which extended throughout both counties.⁹⁸

Only those at the very acme of gentry society held lands beyond their immediate sphere of influence. This stands in contrast to Christine Carpenter's Warwickshire where a great many gentry families possessed dispersed holdings that overlapped county boundaries.⁹⁹ In the more settled southern regions, income was the primary consideration of the leading gentry and it was not necessary to reside in a region to make a profit there. In the north, the needs of defence made residency a much more pressing requirement. A branch of the Musgrave family held the manors of Heton and Ryell of the Percys in Northumberland, the Moresbys held the manor of Wigington in York and the Redmans held a moiety of the castle of Harewood in the same county.¹⁰⁰ Still, these holdings outside of Cumberland and Westmorland tended to be located nearby in other northern counties.

The reign of Richard III brought increased opportunities for the gentry of Cumberland and Westmorland to broaden their horizons beyond their own home counties. Many of Richard's household knights were drawn from his following in Cumberland and Westmorland, including Sir Richard Salkeld, Sir John Musgrave and the young heir of Sir John Huddleston. In the aftermath of the

⁹⁷ Upon the death of William Colvil in 1481, William Musgrave took possession of Crookdale, while his brother acquired Hayton and Scaleby. However, Colvil's younger brother Robert claimed that his grandfather, Peter de Tilliol, had made a will whereby these estates should be entailed on the male heirs of his daughter (the mother of William and Robert Colvil), provided that they took the name de Tilliol. Unfortunately, Robert (who had changed his name from Colvil to de Tilliol in order to further his claim) could not produce this will. Two years later Sir William Martindale (most likely the son of Sir William Martindale of Newton in Allerdale, who was one of the members of Parliament for Cumberland in 1447) admitted in the court of York that he had indeed seen this will and that it did contain the entail as Robert Colvil claimed. Martindale and others had destroyed it in order to further the claims of the daughters of William Colvil. *History and Antiquities*, vol. 2, p. 458.

⁹⁸ *CCR 1476-85*, no. 707. The Musgrave family acquired a virtual monopoly over the captaincy of Bewcastle shortly after the accession of Henry VII. Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, p. 96.

⁹⁹ Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, *passim*.

¹⁰⁰ This was not the senior line of the Musgraves. An inquisition was held in Northumberland in 1492 for Richard Musgrave esq, the head of the family, but it was found that he held no lands there. *CIPM Hen. VII*, vol. 1, nos. 344, 696, vol. 2, no. 572, vol. 3, no. 79.

duke of Buckingham's rebellion in June 1483, Richard turned to his northern supporters and granted to them lands and offices in the southern counties in an attempt to maintain law and order in those rebellious shires. It was in this period that several of these household knights and esquires were drawn out of their frontier obscurity and given responsibilities in other parts of the realm. Musgrave was insinuated into Wiltshire society with the constabularies of Old Sarum castle and the stewardship of the king's lands at Clarendon. This was short lived and lasted only until the end of Richard III's reign, after which Musgrave returned to the north.¹⁰¹ Sir John Huddleston had had connections in Cambridge since at least 1481. He was given control of some of the earl of Oxford's lands in East Anglia and became sheriff of Cambridge in 1484, while his brother, Sir Richard Huddleston, was given responsibilities in north Wales, though once again these interests were transitory and did not outlast the return of those committed Lancastrian supporters with Henry Tudor in 1485.¹⁰² A more lasting migration involved the younger John Huddleston, who was granted several offices and lands in Gloucestershire, including the constabulary of Sudeley castle. Huddleston was resident in Gloucestershire from the mid 1480s and represented that county in Parliament in 1484 and 1495.¹⁰³ He demonstrated as much interest in his Gloucestershire connections as those in the northwest: in his will he left money for both the rebuilding of the parish church at Millom as well as to the church at Sudeley for new vestments.¹⁰⁴ Upon his father's death in 1492 he inherited the family seat at Millom and thereby became an absentee landlord, delegating responsibility for the management of Millom to his servants there. This was a situation that continued throughout the sixteenth century.¹⁰⁵ The Huddlestons were the most significant gentry family to have large interests

¹⁰¹ J. Wedgewood, *Biographies of the Members of the Commons House 1439-1509* (London: HMSO, 1936), p. 620.

¹⁰² *CCR 1476-1485*, nos. 780, 1168, 1445; Wedgewood, *Biographies*, pp. 476-77. Ross, *Richard III*, pp. 53-54.

¹⁰³ *CCR 1476-1485*, no. 1400; Wedgewood, *Biographies*, p. 477.

¹⁰⁴ London, TNA: PRO, Prerogative Court of Canterbury, PROB 11, Sir John Huddleston 1512, 21 Fetiplace.

¹⁰⁵ A. J. L. Winchester, 'The Castle and Demesne Farm at Millom in 1513-14', *CWAAS*, vol. 83 (1983), p. 85.

outside Cumberland and Westmorland at the end of the fifteenth century. Cadet branches of other northwestern families did acquire influence outside the region: Sir William Parr's second son inherited much of his stepfather's influence in Northamptonshire,¹⁰⁶ but the family's northwestern estates remained under the control of the senior branch of the family until the mid sixteenth century.

Huddleston's removal of his household from Millom to Gloucestershire is an unusual situation when compared to the typical pattern of lordship in Cumberland and Westmorland. The examination of landholding in the northwest reveals a rather low proportion of absentee landlords among the local gentry. Aristocrats on the other hand were much more likely to live outside the region, though most resided nearby. The duke of Gloucester's seat at Middleham was close enough for him to keep in touch with his followers in Cumberland and Westmorland; likewise the Lord Clifford's seat at Skipton was near enough to his Westmorland connection, though it was too far from the borders to allow Henry, earl of Cumberland to effectively govern the frontier from there during his stint as warden of the west march. Letters indicate that the earl of Cumberland occasionally came to Brougham castle in person and that a series of posts was established between there and Skipton to facilitate communication between the earl and his officers in Westmorland.¹⁰⁷ The earl of Northumberland was more remote and his gentry servants in the region tended to be quite powerful in their own right. Sir Thomas Wharton attracted the interest of the crown through his able performance as Northumberland's deputy in Cockermouth and Egremont.¹⁰⁸ In fact, the Lord Dacre was the only peer to permanently reside in either Cumberland or Westmorland.

There were twenty manors (eight per cent of the total) held in demesne by non-resident peers in 1471, chiefly the Percys who held twelve manors to their own use. This increased to thirty (thirteen per cent) following the restoration of the Cliffords after the battle of Bosworth to their lands in Westmorland, which

¹⁰⁶ Parr's wife Elizabeth, daughter of Henry Lord Fitzhugh, remarried Nicholas Lord Vaux of Harrowden in Northamptonshire; James, 'Sir William Parr (1480-1547)' *DNB*, vol. 42, p. 855.

¹⁰⁷ 'Letters of the Cliffords', no. 78.

¹⁰⁸ James, *Change and Continuity*, pp. 10-11.

included ten manors held to their own use. There were more absentee landlords among the church. There were thirteen lordships (six per cent of the total) held by religious foundations from outside the two counties, though the houses of Furness and Conningshead (which held one manor each) were geographically very nearby in Lancashire-north-the-Sands. There were, therefore, two-hundred and four manors (eighty-six per cent) in 1471, declining to one-hundred and ninety-four (eighty-two per cent) by 1534, held by families or institutions whose interests lay primarily in Cumberland and Westmorland. The vast majority of these were gentry families. Clearly, absentee lordship was not the norm in Cumberland and Westmorland in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries and only the most powerful lords would operate this way.

This analysis of landholding in Cumberland and Westmorland has demonstrated that the greatest proportion of land in the region was under the control of aristocrats. These great lords did not necessarily spend much time actually in either county, but most resided close enough to make their influence felt in the locality. The king's acquisition of Church lands in the northwest as well as the government's attempt to ruin William, Lord Dacre, were all aimed at increasing royal authority in a region which had for many years been beyond the authority of the crown. This was achieved to some extent through either the direct control of lands or an increase in the government's capacity to distribute patronage. The government's new landed power in the region allowed it to endow its own supporters in the region to challenge the dominance of the traditional aristocratic leadership. Nevertheless, the reality remained that political authority in the far northwest still derived from landed power.

The regional gentry often held multiple large estates, with interests that extended throughout the two counties. Only in very exceptional cases did this influence extend beyond the boundaries of the two counties, however. Landholding was fluid and portions of estates constantly changed hands between families as a result of purchase, marriage and exchange. The large amount of acres under the control of the regional gentry did not translate into great riches, as the quality of the land for agricultural production and the widely dispersed

population as well as war rendered estates less valuable per acre here than in other parts of the kingdom. The absence of aristocratic influence in certain parts of the region, notably the barony of Kendal, and long periods of minority for regional noblemen such as the fifth earl of Northumberland allowed the formation of direct networks between the gentry and the government. These gentry figures were the chief recipients of grants of royal lands in the region after the crown acquired a dominating influence over regional landholding following the dissolution of the monasteries. Men such as Sir Thomas Wharton became aristocratic landowners in their own right and merely displaced the Cliffords, Dacres and Percys who had previously dominated the regional administration.

Chapter 2: Office holding and Regional Administration

The preceding chapter has demonstrated broad trends in the patterns of landholding in the far northwest. It has revealed that a high proportion of land in Cumberland and Westmorland was under the control of the aristocracy and a small number of leading gentry. This situation changed in the 1530s as a result of developments such as the crown's acquisition of the earl of Northumberland's estates and the dissolution of the monasteries. The result of this was a shift in the balance of landed power in the region away from the aristocracy in favour of the king. The government used its newfound capacity for patronage to endow its own selected servants from among the county gentry who became the new generation of political leaders. The same problems remained in regards to regional administration, however, and the net result of political developments in the far northwest was the substitution of the traditional regional aristocrat for a newly created regional aristocrat with greater ties to the court.

The intention of this present chapter is to examine these fluctuations in regional influence in the context of the civil administration. While the possession of land in late medieval and early modern England brought wealth and power, landholding on its own was insufficient to secure regional dominance. In order to achieve true political control over an area, regional powers had to augment their landed influence with offices in local government.¹ This was true for all levels of society. R. B. Smith observed that 'the king was far from omnipotent and the real measure of his power was his ability to have his decisions executed at the level of the county or village.'² Political power required control over those who enforced policy at the regional and local levels. An examination of the personnel employed in different offices will demonstrate how far landed influence actually did translate into political power in the far northwestern counties. Other forces acting on the community, such as pressure

¹ Williams, *The Tudor Regime*, p. 3.

² Smith, *Land and Politics*, p. 123.

from the central government and the consequences of war with Scotland, can also be seen to have implications for the regional administration.

The particular offices under discussion are the shrievalties of Cumberland and Westmorland and the justices of the peace of the two counties.³ These were the workhorses of regional administration, with responsibility for the enforcement of government policy and the administration of justice.⁴ The justices adjudicated criminal cases at the Quarter Sessions and had the power to bind actual and potential law breakers to keep the peace. Leland reported that the shire courts in Westmorland were held at Appleby and all the notable men of that county repaired there at such times, which suggests a keen interest in the administration of justice among the county elite.⁵ Evidence from the Quarter Sessions in the far northwest during the period is almost non-existent, but certain episodes indicate a hardnosed and practical attitude towards the arbitration of local disputes. In 1531 a quarrel arose between Guy and Hugh Machel of Crackenthorpe in Westmorland, when Guy's pigs trampled Hugh's corn and grass. Hugh responded by killing the pigs and several local gentlemen were called in to arbitrate the dispute. It was decided that Hugh should compensate Guy 3s 4d for the loss of his pigs and, upon receipt of this money, Guy should then pay Hugh 3s 4d for the loss of his corn, meanwhile any unkindly words between the two, or their wives and children, were to be forgotten.⁶

The sheriff's duties included empanelling juries, enforcing the county court's decisions, leading the *posse comitatus* and supervising the county gaol. He was also the returning officer during parliamentary elections. In the far north the role of the sheriff was inextricably linked to regional defence.⁷ When the horse rustling activities of the Armstrongs caused a standoff between the clan and the men of Bewcastle, it was the sheriff who arrived with the Carlisle garrison to diffuse the situation. The sheriff was also responsible for holding

³ A full list of justices and sheriffs for Cumberland and Westmorland is presented in appendix 2.

⁴ M. A. Hicks, *English Political Culture in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 110-111.

⁵ J. Leland, *Itinerary in England and Wales*, ed. L. Toulmin-Smith, vol. 5 (London: Centaur Press, 1964), p. 64.

⁶ *History and Antiquities*, vol. 1, p. 348.

⁷ Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law*, p. 138; Reid, *King's Council*, pp. 10-12.

Scottish prisoners in the county gaols and executing those found guilty of cross-border offences.⁸ The commissions of the peace and shrievalties were generally bestowed at the discretion of the central government but, of course, patronage and regional influence as well as royal favour dictated who would, and who would not, be selected. Westmorland was an exceptional case as the shrievalty there was one of the hereditary possessions of Lord Clifford who exercised the office through local deputies.⁹ There were limitations on the scope of the sheriff's jurisdiction in the far northwest due to the presence of several franchised lordships, such as the barony of Kendal and the honour of Cockermouth in which the lord possessed almost complete judicial authority. Government responses to the limitations imposed on royal authority because of these lordships will be an important part of this chapter.

Parliamentary representation was also an important, if burdensome, role for the regional gentry. The knights of the shire were selected in the county courts at Carlisle and Appleby in the presence of the sheriff and between four and twenty-eight electors; the elections for the seats of Carlisle and Appleby themselves were supervised by the mayors of those towns.¹⁰ Selection for parliament in the far northwest was very much dependent on patronage, from either regional aristocrats or the crown. The warden dominated the elections in Cumberland while the Cliffords controlled those in Westmorland after 1485. The king himself designated the two representatives for Cumberland in 1523, in spite of the fact that one was already serving as sheriff, and in 1539 the duke of Norfolk could write to Henry VIII assuring him that the northern gentry sent up to the coming parliament would be men willing to do the king's bidding.¹¹ Election to parliament required that the representative travel to London, an arduous journey from the far northwest, but it allowed regional gentlemen to have a voice at the centre of government and promote the interests of their home counties. Sir Thomas Wharton was entrusted to relay news and requests from his

⁸ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.2, no. 4134; vol. 5, no. 1054.

⁹ J. W. Clay, 'The Clifford Family', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, vol. 18 (1905), p. 360.

¹⁰ S. T. Bindoff, *History of Parliament: The Commons 1509-1558*, vol. 1 (London: Secker & Warburg, 1982), pp. 61-63.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

friends and neighbours to Cromwell and the king during his many trips to London.¹² The influence of the northern gentry at parliament can be detected in certain acts, such as the exemption of the border shires from the statutes controlling the possession of crossbows and firearms.¹³

This chapter will argue that a measure of continuity can be identified in the selection of regional officers in the far northwest during the reign of Edward IV, through until the early part of Henry VIII's rule. The accession of Richard III brought increased royal oversight of the regional administration as the king maintained close links with his northern powerbase. The change of dynasty in 1485 and the unrest in the early years of the reign of Henry VII occasioned only minor adjustments in the personnel selected for regional office. Henry continued many of his predecessor's policies in regards to the administration of the far northwest. The major shift in government attitudes towards the administration of Cumberland and Westmorland began in the mid 1520s with the further development of the Council in the North. Devised by Richard III as a means of administering his lands in Yorkshire,¹⁴ this institution expanded its area of jurisdiction from Yorkshire into the marches during the reign of Henry VIII and became the hub of administration and government north of the Trent.¹⁵ The impetus for these developments arose from the resumption of hostilities with Scotland in 1513 following a decade of relative peace. The antipathy of regional aristocrats such as the Dacres and the Cliffords towards each other forced the government to seek alternative options in administration. This chapter will suggest that government policy in regards to the administration of the far northwestern counties under Wolsey and Cromwell was opportunistic, pragmatic and occasionally inconsistent with the development of government policy in other parts of the realm.

During the 1450s and 1460s the far northwest, like certain other regions north of the Trent, had been dominated by great aristocratic houses who acquired

¹² *Clifford Letters*, no. 33; *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 3.2, no. 3040.

¹³ Bindoff, *History of Parliament*, vol. 1, p. 62.

¹⁴ *Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Reigns of Richard III and Henry VII*, vol. 1, ed. J.

Gardiner, *Rolls Series* (London: HMSO, 1861), no. 20.

¹⁵ Reid, *King's Council*, pp. 108-109.

a monopoly over regional administration.¹⁶ In 1471 Edward IV was in a good position to implement more direct royal control over the locality. Several franchised lordships were in the king's hands: the Clifford barony of Appleby had been forfeited in 1461 which allowed the king to nominate the sheriff of Westmorland and, while Henry Percy had been recently reinstated to his lordships of Cockermouth and Egremont, this grant remained at the king's pleasure rather than to the heirs of the earl's body which gave the crown some influence over the earl's conduct.¹⁷ Relations had been reasonably good between England and Scotland since the sealing of a truce in 1464¹⁸ and, following the destruction of the earl of Warwick and the Lancastrians at the battles of Barnet and Tewkesbury, the king had little need to tread lightly to avoid ruffling the feathers of his more influential subjects. Yet, as we shall see, by the time of Edward's death in April 1483, the far northwest was further removed from the jurisdiction of the crown than it had been for many years previously. Clearly the imposition of direct royal authority over the localities was not a priority of Edward IV's government.

The logical place to begin a discussion of the regional administration in the far northwest is with an examination of the commissions of the peace issued for Cumberland and Westmorland.¹⁹ Justices of the peace were the lynchpins of regional administration during this period. They possessed the authority to enforce bonds and recognizances, to distrain goods for fines and to imprison felons before trial.²⁰ A seat on the local bench was considered a mark of status and was one of the chief aspirations of everybody who pursued a career in regional administration. Commissions were issued at irregular intervals depending on the political situation. In times of crisis change could be rapid, such as in the aftermath of the duke of Gloucester's usurpation of the throne and

¹⁶ Storey, *House of Lancaster*, ch. 7. Pollard, *Northeastern England*; ch. 10; James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society*, p. 35.

¹⁷ *CPR 1467-77*, p. 206.

¹⁸ *Rot. Scot.*, no. 412.

¹⁹ Appendix 2 contains full lists of each commission for Cumberland and Westmorland issued between 1471 and 1537.

²⁰ For the development of the office of justice of the peace see J. R. Lander, *English Justices of the Peace 1461-1509* (Gloucester: Sutton, 1969), *passim*; Gleason, *Justices of the Peace*, *passim*.

the duke of Buckingham's rebellion against the new king: three new commissions of the peace were issued for Cumberland and Westmorland at this time within the space of only a few months. This is not peculiar to the northwest, as the upheavals of 1483 necessitated a reassessment of regional offices throughout the kingdom.²¹ Henry VII on the other hand issued a commission for Westmorland within a month of his accession then paid no more attention to the county bench until nearly ten years later.²² This was in spite of the threat to his rule in 1487 posed by Lambert Simnel which emanated directly from the northwest and involved several prominent members of the regional community.

The commissions of the peace were composed of a cross-section of political society ranging from great magnates who operated on a national level, through noblemen of regional significance and down to knights and esquires of purely local importance. They included ecclesiastics and professional lawyers who provided knowledge of the processes of law to support the aristocrats and gentry who might not have received professional legal training. The composition of commissions of the peace can illuminate where power and influence lay in regional society. Regional lords would often seek to have their tenants and servants nominated to the bench as a means of acquiring influence over the judiciary.²³ Thus a commission dominated by the followers of one particular lord is an indication of regional preeminence. On the other hand, the presence of members of the royal family and large numbers of professional lawyers is indicative of increased government oversight of the regional judiciary.

A significant development in the politics of the northwest during the 'second reign' of Edward IV is the perceived rivalry between the duke of Gloucester and the earl of Northumberland for regional dominance. In July 1474 both magnates sealed an indenture whereby Northumberland promised his service to Gloucester while Gloucester undertook not to retain any Percy

²¹ *CPR 1483-85*, pp. 556-57, 576-77.

²² *CPR 1485-94*, pp. 484, 594.

²³ Virgoe, 'The Crown, Magnates and Local Government', p. 72.

followers or claim any Percy offices.²⁴ The spirit of this agreement was intended to safeguard the regional influence of both magnates, thereby avoiding a resumption of the Percy/Neville feud of the mid fifteenth century. This power-sharing arrangement is particularly apparent in Cumberland where the commission of the peace issued by Edward IV in June 1473 includes both peers as well as Percy followers such as William Bewley, Thomas Curwen and William Leigh and former Neville servants like Thomas Broughton, John Huddleston and Roland Thornburgh who had now transferred their loyalties to the duke of Gloucester.²⁵ The influence of these two aristocrats was less apparent in Westmorland where the commission was dominated by the gentry. This commission included Sir William Parr and Sir Thomas Strickland from Kendal as well as Richard Musgrave, John Wharton and Christopher Moresby whose landed interests spread across both counties.²⁶ Parr and Moresby are interesting cases as they are the only two gentlemen present on the bench in both Cumberland and Westmorland at this time. Parr had strong links with Gloucester and the court of Edward IV while Moresby became closely associated with the duke. Also present on both commissions were the lawyers Richard Nele and William Jenny, who both had a long history of service to the House of York.²⁷

Edward IV's strategy of governance in the far northwest was to delegate authority there to trusted lieutenants. He relied on Gloucester in Cumberland and the Parrs in Westmorland. This was not an isolated case as the king also allowed other followers, such as Lord Hastings and George, duke of Clarence, to acquire a considerable influence in the midlands while the Queen's family became powerful in Wales.²⁸ In July 1475 Edward appointed Gloucester as the titular sheriff of Cumberland with the right to nominate his own deputy, much like the Lords Clifford had done in Westmorland.²⁹ The first of Gloucester's selected

²⁴ Pollard, *Northeastern England*, pp. 326-27; M. A. Hicks, 'Dynastic Change and Northern Society: The Career of the Fourth Earl of Northumberland', *NH*, vol. 14 (1978), p. 82.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

²⁶ *CPR 1467-77*, pp. 634-35.

²⁷ Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 202.

²⁸ Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, ch. 13; M. A. Hicks, *False, Fleeting Perju'd Clarence* (Gloucester: Sutton, 1980), p. 112.

²⁹ *CPR 1467-77*, p. 556.

deputies was Sir John Huddleston, who acted as sheriff between 1474 and 1477. Huddleston was certainly one of the richest and most influential men in Cumberland and possessed a wealth of experience in the office, having been pricked as sheriff on three previous occasions in 1454, 1463 and 1468; he later sat in Parliament in 1484.³⁰ He was lord of Millom, an estate which possessed a considerable jurisdictional franchise, and custodian of the lordship of Egremont which was also beyond shrieval control.³¹ It was particularly important for the crown to win the support of the lords of these franchises. Appointing the lords of franchises to key offices within the civil administration also brought some measure of centralized control to lordships with jurisdictional liberties. Control of the administration in Cumberland during this period was nevertheless out of the king's hands and was the responsibility of the leading noblemen.

A similar situation developed in Westmorland with the grant of the shrievalty to Sir John and Sir William Parr. The two brothers were enormously influential in the far northwest; Sir William sat in each Parliament for either Cumberland or Westmorland between 1471 and his death in 1483 while Sir John sat for Cumberland between 1472 and 1475.³² Sir William Parr was steward of the barony of Kendal and became sheriff of Westmorland upon his brother's death in 1475.³³ The combination of these two offices allowed Parr to exercise the authority of sheriff throughout the entire county of Westmorland. A key difference between this situation in Westmorland and Sir John Huddleston's tenure as sheriff of Cumberland is that, through the forfeited rights of the barony of Appleby, the nomination of the sheriff of Westmorland remained with the crown rather than any regional magnate. Sir William Parr no doubt had a good

³⁰ *List of Sheriffs of England and Wales from the earliest times to A.D. 1831* (New York: Kraus, 1963), p. 27; J. Wedgwood, *History of Parliament: Register of the Masters and Members of both Houses, 1439-1509* (London: HMSO, 1938), p. 626.

³¹ Huddleston had been a Neville supporter and became custodian of Egremont after the grant of that lordship to the earl of Warwick. He joined Edward IV and Gloucester for the Barnet and Tewkesbury campaigns and retained his office in Egremont following the restoration of the earl of Northumberland. *Historie of the Arrival of Edward IV in England and the Final Recovery of his Kingdomes from Henry VI*, ed. J. Bruce, Camden Society, Old Series, vol. 1 (London: Camden Society, 1838), p. 7; *CPR 1467-77*, p. 312.

³² Wedgwood, *History of Parliament: Register*, pp. 626, 701.

³³ *List of Sheriffs*, p. 151.

working relationship with the duke of Gloucester, with whom he co-operated in both the civil and military administration of the region, but his connections went beyond his own local area of influence.

The return to parliament of such prominent royal and aristocratic servants at this time gives us some indication of the influence of these figures in the regional community. Sir John Parr resided for the most part in London, while Sir William occupied posts within the royal household.³⁴ Huddleston was one of the most important servants of Richard of Gloucester, both as duke and as king. Not only were these men connected with powerful figures within the government, they also traveled regularly to London on other business and were therefore the logical intermediaries between the centre and the peripheries of the kingdom.

The letters patent granting the shrievalty of Cumberland to the duke of Gloucester contained much more than a simple grant of office. In addition to the shrievalty and all its accustomed fees, Gloucester was granted virtually all the profits of the county for life, which included all fines and forfeitures ensuing from judicial proceedings as well as all the king's rents, farms and fisheries throughout Cumberland. The only incomes from Cumberland to remain in the possession of the crown were those from the forest of Inglewood. In return for all this, the duke was obliged to render only £100 yearly to the exchequer.³⁵ This extraordinary grant was certainly the forerunner of the parliamentary statute of January 1483 which gave Gloucester and his heirs control over the wardenry of the west march and the shrievalty of Cumberland in perpetuity. This, in conjunction with the other offices granted to the duke, such as keeper of forests north of the Trent, indicates that by July 1475 Edward IV had entrusted control of almost every aspect of regional administration in the far northwest to his brother. By 1475, therefore, the county of Cumberland was effectively excised from the administration of the rest of the kingdom and was on the way to becoming a private lordship for the duke of Gloucester.

³⁴ James, 'Sir William Parr, part 2', *passim*.

³⁵ *CPR 1467-77*, p. 556.

This may seem to contradict the theory of increasing centralization during the 'second reign' of Edward IV, but similar situations have been encountered during this period, notably by Steven Ellis in his work on Tudor Ireland. Ellis noted that Edward was keen to maintain the status of several Irish liberties that had come into the crown's possession during the 1460s. To the government of Edward IV, the maintenance of an acceptable level of public order and the availability of justice was of greater consideration than any circumspection of royal authority in remote corners of the kingdom.³⁶ In Ireland, constant hostility from the Gaelic peoples created insecurities for the Anglo-Irish in the Pale. A similar situation developed on the northern borders following Edward IV's French expedition of 1475. The Anglo-French war shattered the ten-year peace between England and Scotland, culminating in open war between the two kingdoms by 1480.³⁷ The development of Gloucester's power in the northwest was a consequence of the increasing insecurity of the border regions in the later 1470s and is entirely consistent with royal policy in other parts of the realm.

By 1483, Gloucester and his adherents dominated all levels of the local administration. Some historians have speculated that this concentration of power in the duke's hands could well have proved as detrimental to the interests of the crown as had the power of the dukes of Lancaster or the great lords of the Welsh marches in times past.³⁸ As it was, Gloucester's usurpation of the throne in June 1483 had the opposite effect and brought the north more firmly under royal authority than it had ever been before. Richard III took pains to maintain his connections with his northern powerbase once he became king and it was he who was responsible for the establishment of the King's Council in the North. This was the instrument through which royal authority was manifested north of the Trent until well into the seventeenth century.

Rachel Reid traced the origin of the Council in the North to a commission of oyer and terminer issued in March 1482 when both the duke of Gloucester and the earl of Northumberland were preparing to embark on a military expedition

³⁶ Ellis, 'Destruction of the Liberties', pp. 151-53.

³⁷ Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law* p. 160.

³⁸ Reid, *King's Council*, p. 46.

against the Scots.³⁹ This commission was issued for the county of York and included members of the seignorial councils of both lords.⁴⁰ This was the first time that the government of the region had been left in the hands of the private councils of the great magnates. Following the duke's usurpation of the throne the following year and his decision not to allow the earl of Northumberland the sole governance of the north, Gloucester's private council became the public institution through which the north was governed. It was headed first by Richard's son, Edward, Prince of Wales and, following his death in April 1484, by the king's nephew and heir, the earl of Lincoln. The authority of the Council was restricted to Yorkshire at this time. The earl of Northumberland was named as warden general in all three marches and became the chief officer in the regions adjacent to the border. His power was offset by the retention of Richard's man, Humphrey, Lord Dacre as deputy warden on the west march.⁴¹

The Council in the North was primarily an instrument of civil administration and as such remained separate from the military jurisdiction of the marches during Richard III's reign.⁴² It was in Yorkshire that Gloucester's councilors such as Lords Scrope and Greystoke and Sir James Harrington acted as justices of the peace while the commissions in the border counties remained in the hands of the local gentry, augmented by significant figures in the Ricardian administration such as Henry, duke of Buckingham and John, duke of Norfolk. The council's role in the government of the border counties was secondary to the military jurisdiction exercised by the wardens of the marches.

The composition of the benches in Cumberland and Westmorland remained relatively stable for the remainder of the Yorkist period. Changes included the introduction of Bishop Richard Bell of Carlisle in 1481, replacing Bishop Storey who had died a number of years before. Richard of Gloucester issued commissions for both northwestern counties as protector of the realm in

³⁹ Reid, *King's Council*, p. 44.

⁴⁰ The commission included Lords Greystoke and Scrope of Bolton, Sir Francis Lovell, Sir William Parr and Sir James Harrington who were members of Gloucester's council and Sir Guy Fairfax and Miles Metcalf who were associated with Northumberland. *CPR 1476-85*, p. 343.

⁴¹ *CPR 1476-83*, p. 399; Cockayne, *Complete Peerage*, vol. 4, p. 18.

⁴² Reid, *King's Council*, p. 243.

May 1483, then two more as king in June and December of the same year.⁴³ The changes he made were superficial, however. Thomas Broughton and Richard Huddleston were removed from the bench in Cumberland while James Pickering was dropped from the Westmorland commission. This does not indicate a lack of confidence in these figures; it is more likely that the king had other jobs for them. As we have seen, the Huddlestons were given responsibilities in other parts of the kingdom in the aftermath of Buckingham's rebellion. Direct control over the shrievalties in both counties allowed the king to nominate his own followers to those offices for extended periods of time. In Cumberland, Richard Salkeld took over from John Crackenthorpe in November 1483 and remained in office until the accession of Henry VII, and Sir Richard Radcliffe was employed in Westmorland during the same period.⁴⁴ Contacts between the centre of government and the northern fringes of the realm during Richard's reign were based on the king's personal connections with local figures.

The change of dynasty in 1485 did not result in wholesale restructuring of the regional administration in the far northwest. It did, however, alter the means employed by the crown to ensure regional obedience. The attitude of many of the northern aristocrats and gentry towards the new regime remained ambivalent in the years immediately following the battle of Bosworth.⁴⁵ Virtually all the significant figures in regional administration north of the Trent had served Richard III, when he was either duke of Gloucester or king, in some way or another and Henry was obliged to retain these men in positions of responsibility simply through the lack of any other options.⁴⁶ At least one of the justices of the peace not to have his commissions renewed when Henry made new provisions for Cumberland and Westmorland in March 1487 and September 1485 respectively was already dead. Humphrey, Lord Dacre, who had been a consistent feature on the commissions in both counties since 1471, had died at

⁴³ *CPR 1483-85*, pp. 556, 577.

⁴⁴ *List of Sheriffs*, pp. 27, 151.

⁴⁵ K. Dockray, 'The Political Legacy of Richard III in Northern England', in *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. R. A. Griffiths and J. Sherborne (Gloucester: Sutton, 1986), pp. 205-27.

⁴⁶ Cunningham, 'Henry VII and Rebellion in Northeastern England', p. 45.

about the same time as Bosworth, though probably of old age rather than as a result of the battle. His son Thomas took over his duties as both justice of the peace and deputy warden of the west march.⁴⁷ Christopher Moresby was removed from the bench in Cumberland soon after Bosworth because he was employed as sheriff of that county. He also appeared on the Westmorland commission where he served until 1503.⁴⁸ Percy retainers such as William Leigh and Thomas Curwen were replaced, though whether this was due to their Percy connections is unclear as one of their replacements was John Pennington, a man with an equally long record of service to the earls of Northumberland, while another Percy adherent, William Bewley, was allowed to continue as justice for Cumberland, a position he or someone else of that name held constantly from 1473 until 1524. The north had been dominated for generations by the great aristocratic houses of the region and there were really no gentry of any significance who did not have a tradition of service to either the Nevilles or the Percys. Henry VII was forced to accept the services of men he may not have considered completely trustworthy simply through the lack of practical alternatives in the region. While Edward IV's and Richard III's contacts with the northwestern gentry were largely amicable, Henry VII often utilized more coercive measures.

This might suggest that Tudor control over the northwest was rather shaky. While Henry VII's accession to the throne had brought him all of Richard III's northern lands and offices, the country beyond the Trent had been the heartland of support for the previous king and there was considerable resentment against the new regime.⁴⁹ While it may be that the new king had little choice in his selection of personnel, Henry's policy of maintaining continuity in regional offices is reminiscent of a similar policy adopted by Edward IV towards

⁴⁷ *CPR 1485-94*, p. 213; G. E. Cockayne, *Complete Peerage*, vol. 4, p. 18.

⁴⁸ *List of Sheriffs*, p. 27.

⁴⁹ Tudor chroniclers such as Hall attribute Ricardian sympathies to many of the northern gentry and highlight this as a key motivation for their acquiescence to the earl of Northumberland's murder in 1489. *Hall's Chronicle containing the History of England, during the reign of Henry VI and succeeding monarchs to the end of the reign of Henry VII*, ed. H. Ellis (London: HMSO, 1809), pp. 442-43.

influential Lancastrians upon his first acquisition of the crown in 1461.⁵⁰ In spite of this, some northerners were clearly just waiting for an opportunity to join a revolt which had a realistic chance of success. This opportunity came in the form of the pretender, Lambert Simnel, who attracted considerable support among disaffected Yorkists, particularly in the peripheries of the realm. Simnel and his followers established a base in Ireland and from there recruited some significant figures in northwestern political society to their cause. These included several members of the Harrington family who had been attainted after Bosworth yet still held out against the Tudor regime from Hornby Castle in Lancashire. Sir James Harrington, previously a key member of Richard's Council in the North, was heavily involved in the 1487 uprising.⁵¹ As has been shown, this family had suffered for their support of Richard III and lost most of their northwestern estates to their great rivals the Stanleys. Also involved with Simnel was Sir Thomas Broughton. Broughton had escaped attainder as a Ricardian supporter in 1485, then acquired some of the Harrington lands as a reward from Henry VII and was even appointed as a justice for Cumberland in March 1487, before rising in revolt along with his brother John. Other northwesterners attainted following the failure of the uprising included Clement Skelton, Richard Middleton and Thomas Blannerhasset, the former from Cumberland and the latter two from Westmorland, which indicates a level of support for the revolt throughout the region as a whole.⁵²

That a more widespread uprising did not occur in the far northwest would suggest that regional aristocrats and gentry were circumspect, preferring political stability to dynastic rebellion. Simnel's landing in Furness in June 1487 exposed the unpopularity of the Tudor regime in the far northwest through the support it received from influential figures such as the Harringtons and defection of the Broughtons. The rebels also received a certain level of support from religious

⁵⁰ M. A. Hicks, 'Edward IV, the Duke of Somerset and Lancastrian Loyatism in the North', *NH*, vol. 20 (1984), pp. 23-37.

⁵¹ Bennett, *Lambert Simnel*, p. 73; S. O'Connor, 'Francis Lovell and the Rebels of Furness Fells', *The Ricardian*, vol. 7 no. 96 (1987), pp. 366-67.

⁵² *Rot. Parl.*, vol. 6, pp. 397-98.

institutions, such as Shap Abbey and possibly Cartmel Priory as well.⁵³ The rising demonstrated who could be relied upon by the new king. The Tudors had no reason to doubt the loyalties of the Cliffords and Lord Clifford played a prominent role in tackling the rebels.⁵⁴ Several northwestern gentlemen had positions in the royal household, while others, perhaps of more suspect loyalties, the king kept close by for observation: Roger Bellingham was a squire of the body while Roland Thornburgh served as usher of the chamber.⁵⁵ Bellingham in particular served his king well: he took Lambert Simnel on the field at Stoke and was knighted after the battle. He may well have felt that the rewards for his service were insufficient, however, as he took the opportunity on the king's return journey to abduct a wealthy Warwickshire heiress, for which offence he was briefly imprisoned.⁵⁶ Robert Broughton and John Musgrave were also knighted after the battle, in spite of the fact that members of their own families were present in the rebel host.⁵⁷

The upheavals of 1487 flushed out the last die-hard Yorkists in the region. Yet even in the aftermath of the Lambert Simnel affair, Henry VII's appointments to the bench were remarkably consistent with the policies of his predecessors. The commissions were still dominated by the regional gentry, though those to remain had by now proved their loyalty to the Tudor regime, and there were usually still the same numbers of professional lawyers. Gentlemen such as William Bewley and Sir Thomas Strickland and the judge Richard Neele maintained their positions in spite of the change of regimes and the unrest of 1487, as did Bishop Bell of Carlisle who served as a justice for Cumberland between 1481 and 1499. Roland Thornburgh did not have his commission renewed in 1487, possibly as his duties at court drew him away from the region,

⁵³ Bennett, *Lambert Simnel*, pp. 72-74; *Materials for a History of the Reign of Henry VII*, vol. 2, ed. W. Campbell (London: Rolls Series, 1877), p. 184.

⁵⁴ Clifford was involved in a nighttime skirmish with the rebels at Tadcaster and later joined the king's host for the battle at Stoke. *York Civic Records*, vol. 2, ed. A. Raine (York: Archaeological Society, 1941), p. 23.

⁵⁵ *CPR 1485-94*, pp. 173, 357.

⁵⁶ Bennett, *Lambert Simnel*, p. 129; *CPR 1485-94*, p. 239.

⁵⁷ Robert was the son of John Broughton and received livery of his father's lands after Stoke. John Musgrave's relationship to Edward and Nicholas Musgrave, who made bonds to the king after the rebellion, is unclear. Bennett, *Lambert Simnel*, p. 129; *CPR 1485-94*, p. 168.

but his son William was appointed and remained a justice in Cumberland until 1510.⁵⁸ Henry VII had been initially forced to rely on those local notables who had experience of administration in the locality in spite of any suspect loyalties to the new regime. The uprising of 1487 had demonstrated to the Tudor government who could be trusted to continue in regional offices. The regime was still insecure, however: Yorkist sympathizers put forward the cause of a second pretender, Perkin Warbeck, who received particular support from James IV of Scotland.⁵⁹ It was not until the resolution of these matters the Henry could afford to be more forthright in his selection of regional officials.

Henry VII's attitude towards the rebels of 1487 was lenient and again indicative of the insecurity of the new regime in the region. While ardent Yorkists like the Broughtons and the Harringtons were attainted for their role in the 1487 uprising, several others were allowed to continue to enjoy their position in regional society.⁶⁰ Henry VII took direct measures to secure the loyalty of suspect subjects through his widespread use of bonds and recognizances for good behaviour. Precedents existed from the fifteenth century for the use of bonds as a means of enforcing loyalty.⁶¹ Under Henry VII the policy reached its peak in the years after 1500. Financial exaction against his leading subjects became a hallmark of Henry's reign and was responsible for later perceptions of the king as a rapacious miser.⁶² Whether or not Henry VII's subsequent reputation is deserved, the effectiveness of this policy was no doubt demonstrated following the Lambert Simnel affair, as several bonds from the northern counties show.⁶³ In August 1487 bonds were imposed on Thomas Radcliffe and Thomas Sandford that they would not leave the king's presence without licence and on Nicholas and Edward Musgrave that they would be of good and true bearing to the king

⁵⁸ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 1, no. 664.

⁵⁹ I. Arthurson, *The Perkin Warbeck Conspiracy, 1491-99* (Gloucester: Sutton, 1994), p. 2; N. Macdougall, *James IV* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1989), pp. 118-19.

⁶⁰ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. 6, pp. 397-98.

⁶¹ P. M. Barnes, 'The Chancery Corpus Cum Causa File, 10-11 Edward IV', in R. F. Hunnisett and J. B. Post, *Medieval Legal Records* (London: HMSO, 1978), pp. 430-76; Lander, 'Bonds, Coercion and Fear', pp. 327-67.

⁶² Elton, 'Rapacity and Remorse', p. 21.

⁶³ Cunningham, 'Henry VII and Rebellion in Northeastern England', p. 45.

and all his subjects.⁶⁴ Sir John Pennington was also bound not to depart from the king's presence. These bonds were an effective tool for the maintenance of order in regional areas and a key aspect in the establishment of Tudor authority in the north. In a society where the law enforcement officers were, as often as not, law breakers themselves, these bonds encouraged members of the regional community to police themselves. Sureties were taken from neighbours and friends of those bound, which could involve entire networks in financial punishment as a consequence of even one member's misdeeds. It was not necessarily requisite for the sureties to be above reproach either, as suggested by the example of Thomas Sandford, who was himself under a bond of good behaviour, and yet still stood surety for the Musgraves. The presence at court of regional gentlemen such as Sandford and Pennington, albeit under pain of financial penalty, nonetheless served as an important link between the crown and the regional community.

The first Tudor king took the imposition of bonds and recognizances to new heights later in his reign. The petition of Henry VII's tax collector, Edmund Dudley, composed shortly before his execution by Henry VIII, reveals several dubious fines imposed upon northwestern gentlemen: Sir Thomas Parr paid 9,000 marks for what Dudley considered 'a very light ground' and Dudley also thought that Lord Clifford, John Huddleston and Roger Bellingham had been unfairly treated. Dudley even revealed that Sir John Pennington had been fined 200 marks for leaving the king without licence, though Dudley himself had been present when Henry took Pennington by the hand and gave him leave to go.⁶⁵ It is little wonder, then, that the taxman's execution was greeted warmly by most of the population.

The use of bonds was not confined to ensuring loyalty to the government but was also an effective weapon in containing disputes between influential figures in political society. D. J. Clayton's examination of peace bonds in Cheshire during the late medieval period identified five different sorts of bonds,

⁶⁴ London, TNA, PRO, Chancery Files, C 54/376; m. 2, C 54/376; m. 3; C 54/376; m. 5.

⁶⁵ C. J. Harrison, 'The Petition of Edmund Dudley', *EHR*, vol. 87, no. 342 (1972), pp. 88-90.

each with a different purpose: acknowledgement of a debt, a promise to abide by an arbitration award, a guarantee of allegiance to the king, to keep the peace and to appear in court.⁶⁶ Of the ten extant bonds from the northwestern counties enrolled in Chancery during the reign of Henry VII, two stipulated that the bondes should not depart from the king's presence without licence,⁶⁷ two were general pledges of loyalty to the king,⁶⁸ one was a pledge of loyalty combined with a promise to appear before the king and his council⁶⁹ and one was to ensure the effective execution of office.⁷⁰ The remaining four bonds were aimed at keeping the peace between members of the regional community rather than ensuring loyalty to the crown. Thomas, Lord Dacre was bound under £200 in July 1500 that his brothers, Christopher and Ralph, would keep the peace towards John Bristow and appear before the justices of assize in Cumberland.⁷¹ A dispute between Thomas Middleton and Thomas, earl of Derby over the manor of Bethom in Westmorland was also contained by the use of sureties for good behaviour. Middleton and Derby were bound under £200 and £400 respectively that they would keep the peace towards each other.⁷² As Clayton argued for Cheshire, these bonds were not necessarily indicative of a high level of disorder in the far northwest: while indicating some tension between certain members of the regional community, the bonds themselves were often used pre-emptively as instruments to prevent the escalation of small disputes into larger issues threatening public order.

Such use of bonds as a supplement to regular legal channels was necessitated by judicial inefficiency and corruption. This was a problem throughout the kingdom and the far northwest was no exception. The far north was peculiar in that there were additional branches of government beside the civil administration which could be employed to maintain order. In an undated

⁶⁶ D. J. Clayton, 'Peace Bonds and the Maintenance of Law and Order in Late Medieval England: the Example of Cheshire', *BIHR*, vol. 58 (1985), p. 142.

⁶⁷ London, TNA, PRO, Chancery Files, C 54/376, m. 2, C 54/376, m. 3.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, C 54/376, m. 5; C 54/376, m. 23.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, C 54/376, m. 16.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, C 54/376, m. 35.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, C 54/376, m.28.

⁷² *Ibid.*, C 54/376, m. 28.

letter from the reign of Henry VII to the warden of the march, the king complained of the lack of effective justice in the region.⁷³ The warden was to take an oath from those selected as justices of the peace that they would do equal justice to rich men as well as poor men and that any fines, forfeitures or sureties taken by the justices would be properly enrolled at the quarter sessions. The warden himself was placed under considerable strictures for the proper execution of his office. Dacre and his deputies were bound under a grand total of 7,000 marks for their responsibilities.⁷⁴ This is in line with the Tudor policy of ensuring that office holders were accountable as servants of the crown.⁷⁵ The existence of such instructions is indicative of the overlap between the military powers of the warden of the march and the civil administration. In order to effectively carry out his military responsibilities, the warden had to take a leading role in the civil administration of the region. The members returned to the parliament of 1491-2 reflect the influence that Thomas, Lord Dacre acquired over the civil administration through his occupation of the warden's office in this period. Lord Dacre's brother, Sir Christopher was returned for Cumberland and he was joined by Henry Huddleston, while the members for Westmorland were Sir Edward Musgrave and John Blenkinsop.⁷⁶ Lord Thomas' relationship with Sir Christopher needs no explanation and Musgrave also had strong connections with the warden.⁷⁷

In the 1490s, in the aftermath of Northumberland's murder and following the successful resolution of the Perkin Warbeck affair, other lawyers and ecclesiastics more closely associated with the Tudor regime began to appear on the commissions of the peace, not only in the north but throughout the realm. These developments would indicate a greater confidence within the government

⁷³ Cumbria Records Office, Carlisle, Records of the Aglionby Family, D/Ay/1/175.

⁷⁴ Dacre himself was bound under 2000 marks while his mainpernors, Roger Bellingham, Thomas Parr, Edward Musgrave, Thomas Laybourne and William Hansard were bound under 1000 marks each. London, TNA: PRO, Chancery Files, C 54/376, m. 35.

⁷⁵ D. Luckett, 'Henry VII and the South Western Escheators', in *The Reign of Henry VII: Proceedings of the 1993 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. B. Thompson (Stamford: Paul Watkins, 1995), pp. 54-64.

⁷⁶ Wedgewood, *History of Parliament: Register*, p. 626.

⁷⁷ For a full discussion of the Dacre connection in the far northwest see James, *Change and Continuity*, appendix 1.

that it could begin to assert its own authority against entrenched regional interests. Northumberland's murder in 1489 was the catalyst for a shake-up of the regional administration north of the Trent. The rising was plebeian in character, though it did have the potential to feed into lingering dynastic discontent in the region. Henry raised an army and marched north following this event, intending to force obedience on the unruly northerners. The king was joined at York by Lords Clifford, Dacre, and Greystoke, which would indicate that the latter two former Yorkist peers had found some common ground with the new regime.⁷⁸ Among those appointed to the bench at this time were Dr John Morton, Henry VII's chancellor and archbishop of Canterbury, and John Fisher, later bishop of Rochester and Cardinal.⁷⁹ Both of these men had connections with Lady Margaret Beaufort who, in addition to being the king's mother, was also one of the leading landowners in Westmorland. This might suggest that their presence on the northwestern commissions was slightly more than nominal. Sir James Hobart, who had been closely associated with Richard III, appeared on the benches in Cumberland and Westmorland in 1499. As attorney-general to Henry VII, Hobart oversaw all the courts of law and was one of the chief architects of the king's stringent fiscal policies.⁸⁰ He is recorded as being very active in the pursuit of cases involving royal rights in his home county of Suffolk, where he sat as justice more often than anyone else. His role in the far northwest was certainly more limited but his presence there on the commission of the peace suggests a measure of royal oversight of the local bench.

Like the Yorkists, Henry VII also insinuated members of his own family into positions of responsibility in the localities. The Council in the North, which Henry retained from his predecessor, required the supervision of trusted lieutenants and was placed under the charge of the king's relatives. Henry's son,

⁷⁸ M. Bennett, 'Henry VII and the Northern Rising of 1489', *EHR*, vol. 105, no. 414 (1990), pp. 36, 47.

⁷⁹ Fisher must have been young indeed at his appointment to the Cumberland bench, about eighteen or nineteen years old. He completed his BA at Cambridge in 1488 and his MA in 1491 and was ordained as a priest at York that same year. A. B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500* (Cambridge: University Press, 1963), pp. 229-30; R. Rex, 'Fisher, John [St John Fisher] (c. 1469-1535)', *DNB*, vol. 19, pp. 685-93.

⁸⁰ E. W. Ives, 'Hobart, Sir James (d. 1517)', *DNB*, vol. 27, pp. 374-75.

Arthur, Prince of Wales, appeared on the bench in Cumberland and Westmorland between 1495 and 1503 as did his uncle, Jasper, duke of Bedford, between 1495 and 1499.⁸¹ The influence of these figures in Cumberland and Westmorland, like that of many of the lawyers from regions closer to the centre of government, was probably minimal. They could be called upon if needs be to provide advice or judgment in particularly sensitive matters or cases that closely touched royal interests, yet it is likely that the run of the mill work of the justices in these regions was left in the hands of those locals present on the commissions who regularly attended the sessions of the peace. By the end of his reign, Henry VII had at least brought the far northwest under as much royal control as it had been under his predecessor. The Tudor regime had been able to overcome a good deal of latent unpopularity in the region stemming from the fall of Richard III by a combination of conciliation with the local notables and the imposition of mechanisms such as the use of bonds and recognizances to ensure some measure of loyalty in the region.

It is ironic, considering Henry VII's efforts to eliminate corruption among the local justices mentioned above, that the Council in the North came to be associated with the extortionate fiscal policies of the latter years of that king's reign.⁸² The Council was disbanded upon the death of Henry VII in 1509. The destruction of the great northern families during the Wars of the Roses and the crown's annexation of a large number of their estates diminished the need for a special commissioner in the northern parts. Additionally, the council under Henry VII had become associated with the hugely unpopular Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley, both of whom Henry VIII had executed upon his accession.⁸³ While the disbanding of the council and the executions of Empson and Dudley may have been popular moves for a new monarch, there still

⁸¹ Prince Arthur was only a child and his responsibility was largely nominal and yet he appeared on all commissions of the peace for every county issued between 1491 and his untimely death in 1502. Bedford's chief responsibility was on the Welsh marches where he headed the King's Council in that area. Chimes, *Henry VII*, p. 249.

⁸² Reid, *King's Council*, p. 243.

⁸³ *Ibid*, p. 92.

remained significant problems of law and order in the north generally, and particularly on the borders.

At the beginning of Henry VIII's reign the government of the north was once more back in the hands of regional notables. The role of the great aristocrats such as the earl of Northumberland was reduced in northern affairs compared with the heyday of aristocratic power in the fifteenth century; nevertheless, it was still significant. The first half of the reign of Henry VIII saw an intense rivalry develop between the Dacres and the Cliffords for control of key regional offices such as the wardenry of the west march. This rivalry was detrimental to public order in the region and was the catalyst for the development of a new government policy in regards to the regional administration. Instead of relying on noblemen, the governments of Wolsey and Cromwell sought to entrust the leading roles in the civil administration to lesser figures whose loyalty to the crown was more assured. As Hoyle argued in relation to the sixth earl of Northumberland, it was probably not the intention of the government to bypass the regional aristocrats completely.⁸⁴ The Clifford/Dacre feud and Tudor mistrust of the Percys meant that the government had no other option but to entrust regional administration to gentlemen. These developments were *ad hoc* responses to immediate crises.

Thomas, Lord Dacre still remained as chief justice in the northwestern counties. His fellow justices of the peace appointed on Henry VIII's selection were local men such as his own brother, Sir Christopher Dacre, Thomas Clifford (son of Henry, Lord Clifford), Hugh Hutton, Christopher Pickering and Edward and John Radcliffe. Those whose commissions were not renewed included Percy retainers such as Christopher Curwen (though Thomas Curwen was pricked as sheriff of Cumberland in November 1509) and the lawyers Thomas Beauchamp and Sir James Hobart. Only William Danvers and Humphrey Coningsby remained as professional lawyers on a commission dominated by local interests.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Hoyle, 'Fall of the House of Percy', p. 180.

⁸⁵ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 1, no. 664.

The outbreak of hostilities with Scotland in 1513 necessitated the central government's renewed concentration on strengthening the northern administration. Initially the government was content to allow the northern frontier to remain under the control of the wardens. That Thomas Dacre was entrusted with custody of the east and middle marches in 1511 indicates a relinquishing of control of the frontier to men on the spot in a time of crisis. This is reminiscent of Edward IV's entrusting of the frontier to his brother's servants during the French expedition of 1475. Dacre was supervised in his offices by the duke of Norfolk, who was the victor of Flodden, an influential courtier and probably the greatest soldier in the realm. Norfolk had extensive experience of northern affairs, having been made King's Lieutenant in the region following the uprising which resulted in the murder of the earl of Northumberland in 1489.⁸⁶ It was the duke and Wolsey, through the latter's occupation of the bishopric of Durham, who provided the link between the court and the northern frontier during the early part of Henry VIII's reign.

In March 1525 Wolsey revived the Council in the North which had lapsed following the death of Henry VII in 1509. Unlike its previous incarnations, though, the council's authority at this time was extended into the border counties, illustrated by the appearance of its members on the commissions of the peace in Cumberland and Westmorland.⁸⁷ The development of the Council in the North in the mid 1520s and its intrusion into the borderlands saw a marked increase in both the numbers of people appointed to the local bench and the proportion of outsiders and professional lawyers. The commission of the peace in Cumberland grew from eleven members appointed in April 1524 to twenty-four in August 1525, while its equivalent in Westmorland grew from fifteen members in February 1524 to thirty-five in August 1525. Those appointed reflect the growing influence in the region of Norfolk and Wolsey, and were men who certainly seemed to be of a different breed than their predecessors in the northern administration. The new appointees were orientated towards the centre, with

⁸⁶ *CPR 1485-1494*, p. 314.

⁸⁷ Reid, *King's Council*, p. 244.

their connections to people at court rather than regional nobles. Among those to take their place on the bench in the far northwest at this time were northern gentlemen such as Sir Thomas Tempest and Sir Robert Bowes. The influence of these men operated on a regional level and was greatly enhanced by their connections with Norfolk and Wolsey.⁸⁸ These soldier-administrators were joined by others with connections to Wolsey as bishop of Durham or archbishop of York, such as William Franklyn, who had been the diocesan chancellor in Durham since 1514, and Sir Richard Page a gentleman from Surrey or Middlesex whose service to Wolsey as his chamberlain led to his involvement with the Council in the North.⁸⁹

That the government in Westminster resuscitated the Council in the North at this time is unsurprising. It must have been plain to Wolsey in 1525 that Dacre's declining health would soon necessitate a rearrangement of the government of the border shires. In October 1525 the Council in the North wrote to the Cardinal requesting that letters be sent with the authorization of the earls of Cumberland and Westmorland to the offices of the wardens of the marches before there were serious disorders in the region.⁹⁰ Such letters were sent to Cumberland in early November with authorization for him to command the tenants of Lord William and Sir Christopher Dacre as well as those of the bishop of Carlisle and the captain of Bewcastle.⁹¹ Unfortunately, rather than relieve the regional tension, this reorganization of personnel only increased the antipathy that existed between the leading members of the local community and prompted an increase in local disorder.

It would be fair to say that William, Lord Dacre and Henry, earl of Cumberland thoroughly detested one another. Cumberland's grant of the wardenry of the west march upon the death of Dacre's father was the occasion

⁸⁸ Tempest had been knighted by Norfolk at Jedburgh in 1523, while Bowes had formed an association with Wolsey while the latter was Bishop of Durham between 1523 and 1529. R. W. Hoyle, 'Tempest Family (*per c.*1500-1657)', *DNB*, vol. 54, pp. 39-41; C. M. Newman, 'Bowes, Sir Robert (1493?-1555)', *DNB*, vol. 6, pp. 941-42.

⁸⁹ C. F. Knighton, 'Franklyn, William (1480/81-1556)', *DNB*, vol. 20, pp. 800-1; C. Davies, 'Page, Sir Richard (*d.* 1548)', *DNB*, vol. 42, p. 330.

⁹⁰ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.1, no. 1727.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, no. 1763.

for a significant escalation of tension between the two families. The latter half of the 1520s saw each level niggling complaints against the other to the Council in the North as well as to the central administration at Westminster. Dacre complained that the earl and his tenants were hunting in his parks, while Cumberland complained of riot and trespass done to him by Dacre's servants. The earl of Northumberland, brother-in-law to both Cumberland and Dacre, was called in to mediate the dispute and ordered that the two 'lay aside all grudges and be familiar'.⁹² The situation continued to worsen between the two families, particularly after Dacre's disgrace and trial for treason in 1534. The earl of Cumberland was personally selected by Cromwell to search Dacre's houses for incriminating evidence and the jury which indicted Lord Dacre was composed chiefly of Clifford tenants and servants.⁹³ Bad feeling lingered for years between the two after the trial: Dacre demanded restitution of all his goods and livestock that Cumberland had acquired while the trial was ongoing and the two quibbled over the number of sheep Cumberland had taken. The two houses were prepared to co-operate in moments of crisis, such as during the Pilgrimage of Grace when Dacre and Sir Thomas Clifford, at that point Captain of Carlisle, agreed to come to each other's aid if needs be. However, the factional conflict did erupt during the rising while Lord Dacre was absent in London. Richard Dacre attacked Cumberland's son, Henry, Lord Clifford, and Sir William Musgrave outside the church at Carlisle in December 1536 and called out the Dacre supporters in the town, forcing Clifford, Musgrave and the mayor to take refuge in the castle.⁹⁴ The government did not take sides in this quarrel, but delivered a stern rebuke to all parties in the region, not just Dacre and Cumberland, but also the Parrs and the Musgraves as well demanding reconciliation.⁹⁵ The point here is that the regional administration could not deal effectively with a dispute between such powerful members of the community and other remedies had to be sought. Rather than launching an assault against these entrenched local interests, attempts

⁹² *Ibid.*, vol. 4.2, no. 3971; *Clifford Letters*, no. 32.

⁹³ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 7, no. 962.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 11, no. 1331; 'Letters of the Cliffords', no. 21.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 22.

at conciliation and mediation between the leading parties in the far northwest were the hallmark of the central government's response to regional disorder at this point.

There were complicating factors facing the government in its efforts to make its authority felt in regional areas. Chief among these in the far northwest is that many of the lordships in Cumberland and Westmorland were under the direct control of their lords and remained beyond the jurisdiction of regional officers such as the county sheriffs. The presence in the northwestern counties of several lordships with extensive jurisdictional privileges represented a significant restriction of the exercise of central government authority in the locality. The western half of Cumberland was dominated by the earl of Northumberland's great liberties of Cockermouth and Egremont and the Huddlestons' lordship of Millom, all of which possessed the right of return of writ. The border baronies of Burgh and Gilsland were also beyond the jurisdiction of the sheriff and even the small lordship of Alston, which had once been attached to the bishopric of Durham, retained many of its judicial liberties.⁹⁶ In the county of Westmorland, the steward of the barony of Kendal possessed the powers of sheriff within that particular lordship,⁹⁷ and while the barony of Appleby was subject to the sheriff's jurisdiction, the baron himself claimed the office as one of his hereditary feudal privileges.⁹⁸ These liberties dated back to the Norman conquest of the region and had been conceived as an expedient means by which a distant government could more directly involve the most powerful inhabitants of the border regions in the defence of the realm. Though the liberties were anachronistic by the fifteenth century, the great lords who controlled these franchises were keen to maintain these privileges through which they gained so much regional power.

A theme in the historiography of the development of the integrated nation state in late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century England has been the response of various administrations to the presence of franchised lordships which limited

⁹⁶ *History and Antiquities*, vol. 2, pp. 31-35, 65-67, 216-22, 438-41; Denton, *Estates and Families*, p. 9.

⁹⁷ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 5, no. 951.

⁹⁸ Cockayne, *Complete Peerage*, vol. 3, p. 290.

the capacity of government to intervene in regional affairs. Lordships of this type were particularly prevalent in Wales and the North.⁹⁹ It has been argued that the Yorkist and early Tudor monarchs sought to increase royal authority in regional areas through the restriction of the legal privileges possessed by these lordships and by bringing direct pressure to bear on the holders of franchises.¹⁰⁰ Henry VII launched Quo Warranto proceedings against Lords Clifford and Dacre touching their rights in Appleby and Gilsland respectively.¹⁰¹ While the notion of jurisdictional franchise was present in local administration until the nineteenth century, the period from the commencement of Edward IV's second reign in 1471 to the parliamentary legislation of 1536 which brought the liberties under the jurisdiction of the county sheriffs has been seen as the period in which royal authority was firmly established in the localities. With regards to the northwest, however, practical considerations dictated that the attack on franchised lordships was of secondary importance to border security and the government was obliged to delay its reforms until a suitable opportunity presented itself.

The reign of Henry VIII saw renewed efforts on the part of the government to bring private lordships under the influence of the crown. Thomas Wolsey as bishop of Durham and archbishop of York possessed a number of northern liberties in his own right and, as we have seen, the Cardinal was keen to acquire control of the earl of Northumberland's estates for the crown as well. Mervyn James has demonstrated how Wolsey and his successors to the bishopric of Durham forged alliances with the leading gentry in the region in an effort to break the hold of entrenched aristocratic interests over the offices of the palatinate.¹⁰² These servants of Wolsey's, men such as Sir Robert Bowes, Sir Thomas Tempest and Sir William Eure, became prominent administrators in the Council in the North which the cardinal revived in 1525. They were willing servants of the crown and, through their possession of regional office, allowed

⁹⁹ Storey, 'The North of England', p. 142.

¹⁰⁰ Ellis, 'Destruction of the Liberties', p. 150; H. M. Cam, 'The Decline and Fall of English Feudalism', *History*, vol. 25 (1921), pp. 227-28; Chrimes, *Henry VII*, pp. 245-57.

¹⁰¹ H. Summerson, 'Carlisle and the English West March in the Later Middle Ages' in *The North of England in the Age of Richard III*, ed. A. Pollard (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), p. 110.

¹⁰² James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society*, p. 45.

royal authority to be executed by proxy in the palatinate even before the statute of 1536 extinguished many of the bishop's jurisdictional rights.

This phenomenon was not isolated to Durham. Wolsey was able to build relationships in the far northwest with the Dacres through his employment of Lord Thomas and Sir Christopher Dacre as his officers in Hexham¹⁰³ but it was the connections between the gentry of Kendal and the Council in the North which were to have the most impact on northwestern political society. The endowment of Henry VIII's illegitimate son as duke of Richmond and president of the Council in the North brought the lordship of Kendal into the council's sphere of influence. The council's response to developments in the barony of Kendal in the early 1530s gives a good indication of the government's standpoint in relation to private lordships at this time. Problems arose in relation to the barony's status in regards to the Clifford family's hereditary possession of the shrievalty of Westmorland. This gave the Cliffords judicial authority within the northern portion of the county. In the past, the family had often sought to nominate one of their supporters among the leading gentry of Kendal, preferably the steward, as under-sheriff and thereby extend their authority into the south of the county. Upon the duke of Richmond's coming to the north, and with the encouragement of Cromwell, the gentry there began to resist Clifford influence in the region.

Several scholars have cited instances of disorder in the region related to conflict between the Cliffords and a developing court party in Kendal.¹⁰⁴ William Parr complained to Cromwell in April 1532 that a certain servant of the earl of Cumberland had been apprehended attempting to poach game from his parks in Kendal.¹⁰⁵ This 'insolent person' was subsequently beaten by Parr's game keeper who broke his arm and cut off his ear. With the support of the earl of Cumberland, however, the would-be poacher then caused trouble for Parr and the steward of Kendal, Sir James Laybourne, in the London courts. Parr was

¹⁰³ *LP Henry VIII*, 2.1, no. 64.

¹⁰⁴ See Hoyle's commentary in, 'Letters of the Cliffords', no. 9; Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, pp. 39-40.

¹⁰⁵ 'Kirkby in Kendale 1532-60', *Kendale Records*, compid=49726.

annoyed that 'sundry wealthy and malicious people' (i.e. Cumberland) were maintaining trivial cases against him in the London courts because of his support of the duke of Richmond in the barony of Kendal. The Clifford camp, in contrast, claimed that Sir William had intended to have his servant murdered and he could get no redress at law due to Parr's close relationship with Laybourne who was the chief judicial officer of Kendal.

Further tensions between the parties developed when the earl of Cumberland attempted to make his authority as sheriff felt in the barony. Less than a week after Parr had written to Cromwell, servants of the earl, led by his under-sheriff and tenant, Sir John Lowther, attempted to hold the sheriff's turn at Kendal and distrained several of the inhabitants there for fines, something which violated Kendal's status as a liberty. Laybourne complained to the king, citing Kendal's status as a franchised lordship, and the king wrote to Cumberland demanding that he cease 'meddling in my lord of Richmond's liberties.'¹⁰⁶ This is indicative of a very pragmatic attitude towards the presence of franchises on the frontiers of the kingdom. In contrast to those liberties which were held by the great lords of the region and posed a threat to royal authority, the status of the barony of Kendal, connected as it was to the duke of Richmond and the Council in the North, actually enhanced the influence of the central administration. Tim Thornton documented a similar situation in the palatinate of Cheshire during the Tudor period. He argued that there was awareness on the part of the Cheshire gentry of their palatinate rights and privileges as well as a willingness on the part of the crown to respect those rights that contributed to the good governance of the region. Cromwell's ideal, argues Thornton, 'was not a vision of uniformity but of supreme sovereignty projected into varied jurisdictions.'¹⁰⁷ As there was no resident lord, the gentry of Kendal were free to look beyond the region for their support. The government was willing to support the status of franchises that increased its own influence at the expense of regional magnates.

¹⁰⁶ 'Letters of the Cliffords', no. 9; *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 6, no. 1620.

¹⁰⁷ Thornton, *Cheshire and the Tudor State*, p. 242.

Almost immediately upon Cromwell's rise to power at court the central administration's greater interest in the affairs of gentlemen in the far northwest is evident. At the same time that tension was growing between the earl of Cumberland and the gentry of Kendal, several Dacre followers were also seeking the good graces of the king's first minister. Sir William Musgrave replaced Lord Dacre as keeper of Bewcastle and also received the Cumberland foresterships pertinent to the warden's office.¹⁰⁸ Dacre was the patron of Sir William's father, Edward Musgrave, who, as we shall see, did not appreciate his son's actions. Another Dacre follower, John Leigh of Isel, wrote to Cromwell asking for the shrievalty of Cumberland in October 1532.¹⁰⁹ Sir Thomas Wharton also wrote effusively to Cromwell, thanking him for his 'constant goodness'.¹¹⁰ Others to have direct dealings with Cromwell included Sir Thomas Curwen, who was granted the stewardship of Sheriff Hutton in Yorkshire, and Sir John Lamplugh, who was commissioned to enquire into the violent death of John Curwen and the murder of the abbot of Holm Cultram by one of the brethren there.¹¹¹ Communication between the government and the peripheries was facilitated by the sending of courtiers to regional areas with instructions. Sir William Brereton, Robert Leighton and Thomas Wriothesley arrived in the far northwest in June 1530 with news of the king's impending divorce from Catherine of Aragon.¹¹² Cromwell fostered these relationships and had soon developed a cadre of local gentlemen who were willing to act in the interests of the central government against regional powers. It is important to remember that the government's use of these gentry in an assault on aristocratic power on the borders was in response to the perceived inadequacies of the current system rather than a preconceived policy of reform. The first target of Cromwell's drive to make royal authority felt in the northwest was William Lord Dacre.

¹⁰⁸ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 5, no. 220.

¹⁰⁹ Leigh's letters were to no avail, however, as the shrievalty that year was granted to William Musgrave. *Ibid.*, vol. 5, nos. 1375, 1598.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 367.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, nos. 506, 1317.

¹¹² 'Letters of the Cliffords', no. 6.

As has been mentioned already, in 1534 William Lord Dacre was indicted for treason stemming from his conduct as warden of the west march. Stephen Ellis has observed that the moves against Dacre occurred at a time when the family was politically isolated both from the northern peers and the court. Lord William's relationship with the earl of Cumberland was generally poor and tension had also developed with the earl of Northumberland stemming from their joint conduct in the recent war. Moreover, Dacre had become associated in the eyes of the king with a conservative court party opposed to the royal divorce.¹¹³ Evidence against Dacre was supplied largely by Cromwell's man, Sir William Musgrave. The indictment was read at Carlisle in June 1534 before a grand jury composed mainly of Clifford servants or figures associated indirectly with Cromwell.¹¹⁴ The nature of the charge related to Dacre's conduct as warden of the march and will be discussed in chapter 4. It is pertinent here to point out that the possibility that charges could be laid against Dacre is indicative of Cromwell's advancement of central government influence in the northwest. Nonetheless, Sir William Musgrave realised that he was exposing himself to hostility from those locals who were associated with Dacre.¹¹⁵ Indeed, although the government may have been able to act in the region through its new instruments, the consequences of this action on Musgrave's reputation in his home region were significant. After the trial, Sir William Musgrave seems to have been treated as something of an outcast in the region: his own father confiscated all the horses that Sir William had left at his house and was keeping Sir William's son in ward against his will. Musgrave wrote to Cromwell complaining that 'all the country misreports of me' and, more importantly in terms of his future prospects outside the locality, he had fallen foul of the duke of

¹¹³ S. Ellis, 'A Border Baron and the Tudor State: the rise and fall of Lord Dacre of the North', *Historical Journal*, vol. 35 (1992), pp. 270-71.

¹¹⁴ Of the fifteen jurors, Gilbert Wharton was associated with Cromwell through his connections with Sir Thomas Wharton, while Sir John, Lancelot and Hugh Lowther, Thomas Blenkinsop, Robert Warcop and Guy Machel came from families traditionally associated with the Cliffords. Sir Edward and Mungo Musgrave were probably sympathetic towards Dacre. *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 7, no. 962.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 829.

Norfolk.¹¹⁶ Dacre was acquitted of treason, an unusual occurrence in the England of Henry VIII. He did, however, confess to the lesser charge of misprision of treason. This was enough for the king and Cromwell to impose heavy fines upon him and bind him not to depart more than ten miles from London without permission. Although Cromwell had failed in his intention to take Dacre's head and break the family's power on the northwestern borders for good, he had been able to curb the influence of one of the unruly northern magnates. The influence of the central government was therefore becoming more apparent in far northwestern political society in the mid 1530s. The trial of Lord Dacre represents one of the early manifestations of the shift away from lineage based society on the borders towards the gentry dominated civil society which was coming to the fore in regions further south.¹¹⁷ Such a development could not be easily reconciled with the inherent problems of the border regions which necessitated strong local leadership. The imposition of more stringent government caused some consternation among the inhabitants of the far northwest which manifested itself in the revolt of 1536-7.

The characteristics of the Pilgrimage of Grace in Cumberland and Westmorland were a combination of grievances between the commons and the leaders of regional political society. The suppression of the monasteries certainly was a concern but increasing rents and border security were also key issues for the commons in the far northwest.¹¹⁸ The pilgrims were very keen to ensure the support of those gentry associated with Cromwell or, failing that, to have them killed. Sir Thomas Wharton, Sir Thomas Curwen and Sir James Laybourne were all targeted by the rebels and were forced to evacuate the region.¹¹⁹ Wharton in particular had a reputation as a harsh landlord: the king's surveyor of the earl of Northumberland's estates, Robert Southwell, informed Cromwell in August 1537 that he had ordered Wharton not to gressom his tenants in Egremont until he had

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 1647.

¹¹⁷ Ellis, 'A Border Baron', pp. 254-55.

¹¹⁸ Hoyle, *Pilgrimage of Grace*, p. 234; Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, p. 44.

¹¹⁹ Laybourne was actually sworn to the rebels and advanced on Lancaster with them before going into hiding. *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 12.1, no. 914; Hoyle, *Pilgrimage of Grace*, p. 236.

received the king's instructions. Southwell knew that Wharton would charge steep entry fines, which at that particular time would do more harm than good.¹²⁰ Sir William Musgrave remained in the region but was powerless to intervene due to his unpopularity and strained relationship with his family stemming from his role in the Dacre trial three years before. Some of Sir William's relatives were in fact prominent leaders of the risings in Cumberland and Westmorland.¹²¹ The earl of Cumberland and his family remained steadfastly loyal to Henry VIII. Cumberland himself was besieged in Skipton Castle by the rebels, but refused all demands to surrender, which greatly pleased the king.¹²² Henry, Lord Clifford held out in Carlisle and denied the rebels access to the administrative hub of the region, while Sir Thomas Clifford was enthusiastic in rounding up the ringleaders after the initial rising had died down. In this he was aided by Sir Christopher Dacre who turned out to help Sir Thomas in routing the rebels from the walls of Carlisle in February 1537.¹²³

The most pertinent detail of the rising in relation to regional office holding comes in the aftermath of the revolt. Henry VIII demanded stringent punishment upon his rebellious subjects in the region and he relied on those gentry who had remained loyal throughout the revolt. The depositions of William Collins, bailiff of Kendal who was deeply involved in the uprising, were heard before his former master Sir James Laybourne.¹²⁴ A total of fourteen individuals were executed in the far northwest following the Pilgrimage of Grace and the king ordered that their bodies be hung in chains in their home towns. Problems arose when several of the wives and mothers of those executed in Cumberland cut down their bodies for burial. The duke of Norfolk quickly ordered Sir Thomas Wharton and Sir Thomas Curwen to find those responsible

¹²⁰ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 12.1, no. 548.

¹²¹ M. L. Bush, *The Pilgrimage of Grace* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), p. 371.

¹²² 'Letters of the Cliffords', no. 20.

¹²³ Sir Thomas Clifford's ill-advised use of border thieves to try to remove Nicholas Musgrave from the church at Kirkby Stephen incensed the commons and incited the subsequent risings of February 1537. *LP Henry VIII*, 12.1, nos. 448, 492.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 914.

and punish them as well.¹²⁵ This episode gives some indication of the tensions between being a dutiful royal servant and a member of the regional community. Wharton and Curwen's reputations among the commons in the far northwest at this time must have been quite low following their flight from the region during the rebellion. Their reply to Norfolk, who had imputed some remissness to them in the investigation, suggests that the two men were not willing to risk further unpopularity in their home region through a vigorous pursuit of these grieving relatives.

The image that emerges from this analysis of regional administration in Cumberland and Westmorland is of a rather insular regional political community. The degree of continuity apparent in the commissions of the peace and other regional offices suggests that a limited number of leading figures qualified for positions in the administration of the two counties. The influence of great noblemen such as the duke of Gloucester and earl of Northumberland, and later the Dacres and Cliffords, is apparent in the selection of regional officers throughout the period. Major shifts in the political landscape, such as the usurpation of Richard III in 1483 and the change of dynasty in 1485, did not radically alter the administration in either of the two counties. The efforts of Wolsey and Cromwell to increase government authority in the region during the reign of Henry VIII were undertaken in a pragmatic manner, as is shown by the government's attitude towards the liberties of Kendal. The government did acquire greater control over the administration during the 1530s through its patronage of regional gentlemen, although this could not entirely erase the old loyalties towards the nobility in the region held by many of the people there. These new royal servants had to be circumspect in the execution of their office and take regional feeling into consideration.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 1246.

Chapter 3: The Church and the Reformation

This chapter is concerned with the role of the Church in government and regional society. The Church occupied a prominent position in late medieval and early modern social and political life and this analysis is integral to a broader understanding of the development of the centralised state during the early sixteenth century. The role of the Church and the clergy in this period went well beyond spiritual ministrations to the population or the provision of alms and welfare to the poor. Ecclesiastical institutions in the far northwest were major landholders and economic powerhouses with all the political and military responsibilities that those things entailed. Churchmen were deeply involved in politics at all levels of society, from acting as emissaries between kings and emperors to arbitrating the pettiest local disputes.

This chapter will explore the nature of the Church's influence in Cumberland and Westmorland during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. The main focus will be a discussion of the role of ecclesiastical institutions and clergymen in regional administration as well as an examination of the impact of religious reform in the far northwest. The Reformation added a new dimension to social and political relationships in the region. Those who supported government policy could make great gains in the acquisition of monastic estates and church goods. This would of course bring them into conflict with those who, for ideological or political reasons, sought to preserve the traditional position of the Church. These developments will be examined regarding the enhancement of royal authority in the region and the popular uprisings that swept the two counties in 1536 and 1537.

First and foremost, religion in this period was an important part of people's everyday existence. The local clergy possessed enormous influence over the lives of the people, monasteries were spiritual centres which provided support for the God-fearing inhabitants of the border regions and supplied many of the parish priests in the two counties. Monasteries also served an important role as shelter for travellers traversing the hostile country

in the region and in supporting the local poor.¹ In 1520 Henry VIII's court poet, John Skelton, could write about 'So hot hatred against the Church' and yet, while anti-clerical attitudes had always been common among the population of late medieval and Early modern England, irreligion was not.² Instructional religious texts were among the best-selling works from the London publishing houses during the 1520s and 1530s. They advocated a conventional, Catholic form of piety that gave no indication of the impending shake-up of religious practice and institutions.³ In the north, the inhabitants of the borderlands took the spiritual solace offered by the Church very seriously: it proved effective for Thomas, Lord Dacre to threaten the inhabitants of Tynedale with excommunication in 1524 should they break their oaths to Henry VIII, adding that the withdrawal of spiritual services 'will be a fearful thing to them.'⁴ Border clans that were placed under interdict by the English authorities were known to import priests from Scotland to minister to their spiritual needs.⁵ There was genuine enthusiasm for religion in the far northwest, which is demonstrated by the building work undertaken on several parish churches in the region. Between 1500 and 1536 reconstruction and additions were made at the churches of Keswick, Bethom, Burton, Morland, Newbiggin, Ormside, Orton, Kendal, Hawkshead, Kirkby Ireleth, Kirkby Lonsdale, Heversham, Kirkby Stephen, Brough, Crosby Ravensworth and Ulveston.⁶

Unlike the continental incarnations of the Reformation, there was no widespread popular movement for ecclesiastical reform in England during the Henrician period. There was little need either, early in the reign, for the king to try to exert more political influence over the Church. By the 1520s control over the administration of Church and state were combined under the person of Thomas Wolsey, papal legate and Chancellor of England. The Church

¹ These were the reasons that Robert Aske gave in his interrogation for his support of the monasteries in defiance of the king. 'Kirkby in Kendal: 1532-60', *Kendale Records*, compid=49276.

² J. Skelton, *The Complete English Poems*, ed. J. Scattergood (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), no. 18.

³ C. Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society Under the Tudors* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 26.

⁴ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.1, no. 10.

⁵ James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society*, p. 54.

⁶ Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, p. 17.

itself had recognized the need for some kind of action in response to complaints about the quality of local clergymen and monastic decadence. Under Wolsey, measures had been taken to improve the quality of priests and enforce stricter adherence to religious observance in the monasteries.⁷ The drive for reform in the 1530s came from government and was motivated by a number of concerns facing the administration at that time. The impetus for the break with Rome stemmed from Henry's need to divorce Catherine of Aragon, which was impossible while her nephew, the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, controlled the papacy. Also the sorry state of royal finances in the early 1530s made an attack on the wealth of the Church an attractive option.⁸ Ecclesiastical reform was to have a significant impact in Cumberland and Westmorland once the efforts of the government to impose its authority over the Church began to take effect. The Reformation in the two counties reached into the everyday lives of people of all stations through changes to the liturgy and processes of worship. In the space of a generation, pilgrimage and relic veneration were prohibited and the number of holy days was reduced.⁹ The Reformation also marked the end of ecclesiastical landlordship and the destruction of the monasteries as a political force in the region. Reform of the Church created a new range of problems for figures in regional political society: activities associated with government service might now contradict their own deeply held views on spiritual matters or undermine the credibility of regional leaders in the eyes of their supporters. This was an additional source of division in a society already fractured by political dissension between the leading regional families during the 1530s.

The Henrician Reformation has generated a vast body of scholarship, with discussions focusing on the spiritual and ecclesiastical consequences of these events as well as the regional and international political ramifications.

⁷ R. Swanson, 'Problems of the Priesthood in Pre-Reformation England', *EHR*, vol. 105, no. 417 (1990), p. 863; D. Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), p. 159.

⁸ The early 1530s had seen the government spending large amounts of money on defence on the northern border and at Dover and Calais. The Geraldine revolt of 1534 in Ireland had also cost a great deal to suppress. The French paid no more pensions to the English kings and the value of currency was in decline. J. D. Mackie, *The Earlier Tudors 1485-1558* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), pp. 370-71.

⁹ R. Whiting, 'Local Responses to the Henrician Reformation', in *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety*, ed. D. MacCulloch (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), p. 203.

Nineteenth-century historians such as Cardinal Gasquet and S. R. Maitland pined over the destruction of the monasteries and were highly critical of Thomas Cromwell's policies, a view echoed more recently by scholars such as Eamon Duffy.¹⁰ Their work has been influential and has done much to colour our modern view of these developments as the callous destruction of age-old traditions on the whim of an imperious monarch and his slippery chief adviser. While not delving too deeply into the political aspects of the period, A. G. Dickens argued that respect for traditional religion was in decline in sixteenth-century England. Consequently, Thomas Cromwell's policy regarding the Church received rapid acceptance among the population.¹¹ Elton, meanwhile, suggested that the movements against papal authority in England were inextricably linked to Cromwell's notion of the realm as an 'Empire', free from all outside jurisdictions.¹² This reforming agenda was made possible through Cromwell's ability to utilize existing laws and precedents in order to centralize the administration of both Church and state under the crown.¹³ David Knowles highlighted the attitude of submission to the king, which was a characteristic of English society at the time, as a key factor in popular acceptance of government reforms.¹⁴ The examination of churchwardens' accounts undertaken by Ronald Hutton led him to a similar conclusion that, no matter if the English were Protestant or Catholic at any particular time, they were always *governed*. Changes to religious practice at the parish level occurred in response to government action or statute rather than popular pressure.¹⁵ Certain issues more than others attracted opposition among the general population. Concern for the position of the pope was never a real grievance anywhere except in some of the religious houses. Most people were quite happy that they were no longer

¹⁰ F. A. Gasquet, *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries*, vols. 1 & 2 (London: John Hodges, 1888); S. R. Maitland, *The Reformation in England* (London: Rivingtons, 1849); E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England 1400-1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

¹¹ A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (Glasgow: Fontana Press, 1967), p. 161.

¹² Elton, *England Under the Tudors*, p. 160.

¹³ Beckinsale, *Cromwell*, ch. 7; C. S. L. Davies, 'Authority and Consent', p. 178. In relation to the dissolution of the monasteries Cromwell was able to extend the feudal doctrine that land given by the crown in return for military service escheated when that service was no longer rendered. Knowles, *Religious Orders*, vol. 3, p. 291.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

¹⁵ R. Hutton, 'The Local Impact of the Tudor Reformations', in *The English Reformation Revised*, ed. C. Haigh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 115.

required to pay taxes to Rome. On the other hand, the destruction of images and the confiscation of Church goods could incite localized resistance.¹⁶

In contrast to the later Reformations in England such as those under Edward VI and Elizabeth, which were carried out with true protestant reforming zeal, the reform of the Church under Henry VIII was carried out with a political agenda. Henry was a religious conservative, clearly shown by his writings against Lutheran doctrines, for which the pope had awarded him the title 'Defender of the Faith'.¹⁷ Knowles believed that the king's vision of reform was more limited than that which eventually transpired. In 1536 it is apparent that Henry envisaged the survival of at least some of England's monastic institutions. In the far northwest, the abbey of Shap in Westmorland was made exempt from the first round of dissolutions, despite failing the qualifications of income specified in the act.¹⁸ The king was nevertheless satisfied with the final result and suggested to James V that he would do well to follow Henry's lead and dissolve the religious houses in Scotland.¹⁹ The act of Supremacy was therefore undertaken with a clear political agenda and the dissolution of the monasteries, commencing in 1536, removed the chief source of opposition for the king's break with Rome and was also a means for the crown to acquire the wealth of the Church and increase its capacity for patronage in regional areas.

On a regional level, scholars have undertaken to analyse the Henrician Reformation in the context of local disorder in the mid sixteenth century. R. B. Smith suggested that the opposition of regional aristocrats and gentry, such as Lord Darcy, to the royal supremacy and the king's divorce led to their active involvement in the Pilgrimage of Grace in 1536-7.²⁰ R. W. Hoyle argued a contrary position: while it is impossible in the case of the Pilgrimage to separate discontent at ecclesiastical reform from economic and political issues, he believed that the 'dynamic heart' of this rising lay with the common people rather than the gentry or aristocracy. Hoyle highlights

¹⁶ Whiting, 'Local Responses', pp. 204-5, 216-17.

¹⁷ Elton, *England Under the Tudors*, p. 150; D. MacCulloch, 'Henry VIII and the Reform of the Church', in *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety*, ed. D. MacCulloch (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), pp. 161-62.

¹⁸ Knowles and Hadcock, *Religious Houses*, p. 191.

¹⁹ Knowles, *Religious Orders*, vol. 3, pp. 203-4.

²⁰ Smith, *Land and Politics*, p. 168.

reaction against religious reform as a key motivating factor behind popular unrest at this time.²¹ S. M. Harrison has addressed the issues surrounding changes to religious practice and the dissolution of the monasteries in the far northwest. He claims that scholars have focused too much attention on the political and economic aspects of the rebellion here and have been rather dismissive of religious discontent in the risings in Cumberland and Westmorland.²² Wherever the main impetus lay, discontent at ecclesiastical reform was an important motivating factor during the uprisings of 1536-7.

As in most other historical discussions regarding Cumberland and Westmorland at this time, an analysis of the Reformation in these counties must rely heavily on official sources recorded by the central administration. Local ecclesiastical sources are pitifully sparse. There are no bishops' registers from the diocese of Carlisle extant from the period, nor are there churchwardens' accounts from any of the parishes within the two counties. Monastic chartularies are also few and far between.²³ Some idea of the attitudes towards religious reform articulated during the Pilgrimage of Grace can be obtained from the *Letters and Papers* and the estate records of the barony of Kendal. These are the confessions of individuals involved in the rising and may not, therefore, be the most reliable sources of information. As such, we tend to see the situation in the far northwest from the point of view of the central administration and its agents.

The far northwest possessed distinct features in ecclesiastical administration which had implications for regional politics and society. There were one-hundred and twenty-eight parishes within the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, all of which were under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the diocese of Carlisle.²⁴ The bishop possessed the small barony of Dalston south of the city but, apart from that, he was not a major landholder in the locality. War, of course, exerted an influence over the role of clergymen in the region. Due to the threat posed by the Scots to their

²¹ Hoyle, *Pilgrimage of Grace*, p. 17

²² Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, p. 2.

²³ Summerson, 'Carlisle Cathedral', p. 29; M. Clark, 'Northern Light? Parochial Life in a 'Dark Corner' of Tudor England', in *The Parish Life in England 1400-1600*, ed. K. L. French, G. G. Gibbs and B. A. Kumin (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 58.

²⁴ *History and Antiquities*, vols. 1 & 2, *passim*.

holdings, bishops of Carlisle often resided in their diocese and contributed to the defence of the border. Henry VIII sent specific instructions to Bishop Kite in 1522 that he was to remain in Carlisle and supervise the warden's administration of the frontier.²⁵ Unlike the bishops of Durham who exercised civil as well as ecclesiastical authority in their diocese and held a large amount of land to themselves, the authority of the bishop of Carlisle within the far northwestern counties was based on his ecclesiastical position rather than his power as a local landholder or judicial officer.

Henry Summerson has demonstrated the strong cultural and economic links that existed between the cathedral and the priory at Carlisle and the life of the city itself.²⁶ These institutions were established following the Norman occupation of the region in 1092 as part of a strategy to secure control over newly conquered territory. The monks and canons at Carlisle were often local people, notably Prior Salkeld who presided over the institution's dissolution, and many of the industries in the town developed to cater for the needs of the clerics who lived there. Central to this connection between church and city was the local cult of St. Mary. The cathedral was dedicated to the Virgin, and St. Mary was believed to have a particular interest in the welfare of the town.²⁷ Bequests to the priory and other regional churches indicate that the cult of the Virgin was well established and patronized by people in the far northwest.²⁸ Mervyn James highlighted the deep-seated traditional spirituality common among the inhabitants of the bishopric of Durham, centred around the sacraments and the veneration of relics. These attitudes were clearly present in the far northwest as well and had significant repercussions for government attempts to impose its authority over the Church.²⁹

²⁵ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 3.1, no. 2075.

²⁶ Summerson, 'Carlisle Cathedral', pp. 29-38.

²⁷ In 1385 a besieging Scottish army was driven away from the walls of Carlisle when a woman, said to have been the Virgin herself, appeared and told them an English army was nearby. *Knighon's Chronicle, 1377-1396*, ed. G. Martin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 337.

²⁸ Cumbria Record Office, Kendal, Le Flemming MSS., Rydal Hall, WD Ry/Box 92/109; *Wills and Inventories from the Registry of the Archdeaconry of Richmond*, ed. J. Raine, Surtees Society, 26 (Durham: Surtees Society, 1853), pp. 6-8.

²⁹ James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society*, pp. 52-55.

In spite of the dangers posed by the frontier, the far northwest was a popular destination for pilgrims. Carlisle priory held relics such as a portion of the True Cross and the sword that slew St. Thomas the Martyr, as well as a bejewelled statue of St. Mary. Leland recorded a well at Brough in Westmorland which was associated with the Virgin and attracted visitors from all over the kingdom.³⁰ There was, in fact, an established pilgrimage trail in the far northwest which passed through Carlisle to the shrines of St. Ninian at Whithorn and St. Kentigern at Glasgow.³¹ The former saint was particularly popular in the far northwest and inspired devotion from Richard III, who was keen to involve himself in the ecclesiastical life of a region with which he had so many connections.³² Travel to shrines in Scotland could still be a dangerous business, even with letters of safe conduct and the little pilgrims' badges distributed to the faithful. One of Lord Dacre's kinsmen was kidnapped and held to ransom on his way back from St. Ninian's shrine in 1527, so one may also wonder about the saint's power of intercession.³³

The rugged and remote nature of the countryside in the far northwest made it attractive for the establishment of monastic houses. There were thirteen religious institutions of varying size and importance situated in Cumberland and Westmorland, representing most of the major medieval monastic and mendicant orders.³⁴ Most of these institutions had been established and endowed by regional aristocratic notables in the heyday of monastic expansion in England during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.³⁵ The majority of Cumbrian institutions were male houses: there were Benedictine priories at St Bees and Wetheral and Cistercian abbeys at Holm Cultram and Calder in Cumberland. The Augustinians had a presence at Carlisle and Lanercost priory while a Premonstratensian house existed at Shap in Westmorland. The major towns possessed houses of friars: there were Dominicans and Franciscans at Carlisle, Austin Friars at Penrith and

³⁰ Leland, *Itinerary*, vol. 5, p. 47.

³¹ Summerson, 'Carlisle and the English West March', p. 93.

³² J. Hughes, 'True Ornaments to know a Holy Man: Northern Religious Life and the Piety of Richard III', in *The North of England in the Age of Richard III*, ed. A. Pollard (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), p. 158.

³³ *Calendar of State Papers*, vol. 4 (London: Records Commission, 1836), pp. 503-4.

³⁴ See map 3, p. xi above.

³⁵ *VCH Cumberland*, vol. 2, pp. 127-30.

Carmelite Friars at Appleby. There were also two Benedictine nunneries in Cumberland at Seton and Armathwaite. There were several large institutions situated nearby in Lancashire-north-the-sands. While not technically belonging to the medieval counties of Cumberland and Westmorland, the Cistercian abbey of Furness and the Augustinian priories of Cartmel and Conishead nevertheless exerted considerable influence across the county boundary.³⁶ Evidence does suggest that enthusiasm for monastic institutions was in decline in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. There were no new foundations of abbeys or priories after 1450 and only three friaries were established in the eighty-odd years prior to the dissolution. Bequests to monasteries were also in decline from the early sixteenth century.³⁷

By the late fifteenth century, English monasticism was free from almost all of its continental affiliations. Knowles noted a system of centralized national control over Cistercian houses in England, Wales and Ireland. The abbots of Fountains, Stratford Langthorne and St. Mary Graces in London continually acted as abbots-commissary with full powers of visitation and reform over all the Cistercian houses in the realm. In 1485 English abbots were granted a general leave of absence from the annual General Chapter at Cîteaux.³⁸ The Premonstratensian Order was also centrally controlled from within the kingdom. Between 1459 and 1505 Richard Redman, abbot of Shap and a younger son of the Redmans of Levens in Westmorland, acted as commissary-general for the order in England. Redman's career is an excellent example of how a position in the Church could bring great advancement for people of obscure background. In addition to maintaining his incumbency as abbot of Shap, Redman was created bishop of St. Asaph, Exeter and Ely concurrently through his service to no fewer than three monarchs. He was an energetic monastic visitor and served the crown as a councillor and diplomat.³⁹

Thomas Langton was another northwesterner who had a successful career in the Church. A member of a minor Westmorland family, Langton

³⁶ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 10, no. 364; Knowles and Neville-Hadcock, *Religious Houses*, *passim*.

³⁷ Whiting, 'Local Responses', pp. 205-6.

³⁸ Knowles, *Religious Orders*, vol. 3, pp. 29-30.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 39-41; J. A. Gribbin, 'Richard Redman: The Yorkist Years', *The Ricardian*, vol. 12 (2001), pp. 350-365.

was educated at Cambridge through the patronage of the monks at Appleby, and became bishop of St. Davids, Salisbury and Winchester concurrently. Upon the death of Cardinal Morton he was nominated as archbishop of Canterbury but died of plague six days after his election. Langton had acquired an interest in humanism during diplomatic missions to the continent and was a keen patron of learning. He sponsored Richard Pace to study at Padua, founded a private school at his palace in Winchester and, most significantly for his home region, provided for the education of his relatives. This established a tradition of learning within the family and was important in the transmission of the latest knowledge and ideas into the far northwest.⁴⁰ The careers of these men highlight the close relationship between government, the Church and regional society that existed in England prior to the Reformation.⁴¹ The centralized nature of English monasticism and the connections between churchmen and the government greatly facilitated the efforts of the crown to acquire control over the monasteries during the 1530s and 1540s.

Holm Cultram was the largest and richest monastic house in either of the two counties, with twenty-four inmates and an annual income in 1536 of 700 marks. It was followed by the Augustinian house at Carlisle which had twenty-three canons and an income of £482 in the same period.⁴² The remaining houses were mainly small institutions: at the time of the dissolution, most of the monastic houses in Cumberland or Westmorland contained fewer than ten inmates and were worth less than £100 per year. The nunneries at Armathwaite and Seton were particularly impoverished; Armathwaite was inhabited by four nuns and had an income of £18 in 1536, while at the same time Seton had two nuns and an income of only £12.⁴³ All of the houses in both Cumberland and Westmorland paled in comparison to the abbey of Furness in Lancashire. This was by far the largest and richest house in the region: with an income of £946 it was worth twice as much per annum as Holm Cultram. The poverty of many of the smaller houses in the

⁴⁰ R. P. Brown, 'Thomas Langton and his Tradition of Learning', *CWAAS*, vol. 25 (1925), pp. 150-245.

⁴¹ MacCulloch, 'Henry VIII and the Reform of the Church', pp. 160-61.

⁴² *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 10, no. 364; Knowles and Hadcock, *Religious Houses*, pp. 120, 152.

⁴³ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 10, no. 364; Knowles and Hadcock, *Religious Houses*, pp. 253, 255, 256, 265.

region meant that of the thirteen institutions in the northwest only Holm Cultram, Carlisle priory and the abbey of Furness possessed incomes greater than £200 or had more than the twelve inmates required to avoid the first round of dissolutions aimed at the smaller houses.⁴⁴

These institutions filled a multi-faceted role in northwestern society and moves by the government to shut them down must have been viewed with some suspicion by the traditionally minded folk of the far northwest. The monasteries provided for the spiritual well being of the regional community as well as supporting the local poor: Furness Abbey kept thirteen paupers and eight widows; Connishead Priory gave doles to seven poor men; Holm Cultram traditionally gave £3 in alms on Maundy Thursday and £7 annually to support five paupers; and Shap, Seaton and Wetheral also donated a portion of their income for the alleviation of local poverty.⁴⁵ Tenants who performed services on monastic land received great gifts of beer, bread, dung and iron, while public works funded by local monasteries included the maintenance of coastal defences and the draining and reclaiming of land for pasture.⁴⁶

Monastic institutions controlled the advowson of a large number of parish churches in Cumberland and Westmorland and were therefore able either to nominate their own brethren as parish priests or donate the nomination to someone else as a form of patronage.⁴⁷ Grants of offices such as steward or bailiff of monastic estates were also employed to patronise local aristocrats and gentlemen. Several of the houses were intimately linked with local aristocratic families: generations of Dacres were buried at Lanercost Priory while Shap housed the tomb of Robert, Lord Clifford, killed at Bannockburn in 1314 and one of the most illustrious members of that

⁴⁴ 'An Act for the Dissolution of the Monasteries', in G. R. Elton, *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), no. 186.

⁴⁵ *Valor Ecclesiasticus Tempore Henrici Octavius Institutus*, vol. 5, ed. J. Caley and J. Hunter (London: Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1825), pp. 272-83.

⁴⁶ Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, pp. 21-22.

⁴⁷ In 1511 the Abbey of St. Mary's, York gave the nomination to Grasmere parish Church to Henry VIII, see below. Cumbria Records Office, Kendal, Le Flemming MSS., Rydal Hall, WD Ry/Box 92/121.

family.⁴⁸ The influence of these institutions, therefore, extended throughout all levels of society from the richest aristocrat to the poorest beggar.

Enthusiasm for monasticism in the 1530s, however, was waning in the far northwest as in other parts of the kingdom. Hoyle suggests that the relationship between monastic institutions and the population in the far northwest was business-like and lacked genuine affection.⁴⁹ The prior of Connishead certainly dealt with his neighbours in a less than pastoral manner: in 1533, John Bardsey, a Furness gentleman whose father had been involved in a long running dispute with the monastery, was hacked to death by several persons at the instigation of the prior.⁵⁰ The conduct of certain monks in the region also suggests a degree of moral decline. In addition to the incidents of sexual misbehaviour recorded by the royal commissioners, several ecclesiastics were implicated in the murders of their brethren. In 1532, a monk at Holm Cultram, Gawain Borrowdale, was investigated for his role in the poisoning of the abbot, while Abbot Banke of Furness was also implicated in a plot to murder one of his rivals for monastic office.⁵¹ These incidents were investigated by the local secular authorities and such events did little to endear monastic institutions to the regional population.

Due to the widely dispersed population in the northwest, parishes tended to be geographically larger than elsewhere in the kingdom. This is particularly apparent in Westmorland, which contained only thirty-two parishes in contrast with the ninety-six in Cumberland. The parishes of Greystoke and Crossthwaite in Cumberland and Kirkby Kendal in Westmorland were some of the largest in the realm, encompassing many scattered hamlets over an area of several thousand acres. Leland noted that there were about thirty chapels that belonged to the head church at Kendal which were required to service the population dispersed over such a wide area.⁵² Christopher Haigh has made a study of the enforcement and

⁴⁸ *Selections from the Household Books of Sir William Howard*, Surtees Society, vol. 68 (Durham: Surtees Society, 1878) pp. 515-16; J. Whithead, *Shappe in Bygone Days* (Kendal: Titus Wilson, 1904), p. 142.

⁴⁹ Hoyle, *Pilgrimage of Grace*, pp. 46-50.

⁵⁰ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 6, no. 1124.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, no. 1317; vol. 6, nos. 1124, 1557; Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, pp. 19-20.

⁵² *History and Antiquities*, p. 65; Leland, *Itinerary*, vol. 5, p. 47; Clark, 'Northern Light?', p. 57.

consequences of the Reformation in Lancashire where he argues that Cromwell's efforts to enforce ecclesiastical reform met with little success due to the region's remote and sparsely populated nature, a set of circumstances that are certainly repeated in the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland.⁵³ Observations made in the course of studying large parishes in Lancashire reveal that geographically large benefices produced substantial incomes for the incumbent. Indeed, Harrison has calculated that the average income from rectories and vicarages in Cumberland and Westmorland was £8. 15s. 8d. and £14. 5s. 2d. respectively.⁵⁴ This is not necessarily indicative of a large number of wealthy parishes, however. The results are affected by a small number of very rich benefices. According to Harrison's figures, twenty-four percent of the parishes in Cumberland and Westmorland were worth over £20 per annum. This is twice the proportion of such wealthy benefices than in the dioceses of Lincoln and Lichfield, but means consequently that the remaining seventy-six percent of parishes were quite impoverished.

Peter Heath cited examples of keen competition among clerics for preferment to benefices, particularly to well endowed parishes. He also noted that there were some benefices which excited no interest at all.⁵⁵ The far northwest clearly contained examples of both types. Rich benefices did not necessarily attract good priests. They were just as likely to attract a well connected pluralist who would then delegate responsibility for the parish to a curate. Notable pluralists in the far northwest included Parson Threlkeld, who held the vicarages of Lazonby and Dufton; Prior Slee of Carlisle, who held Sowerby; John Clifton, rector of Clifton and Bromfield; John Greystoke who was the schoolmaster at Brough as well as vicar of Warcop; John Herryng, rector of Kirkoswald and Dacre and vicar of Crossthwaite; and Barnard Towneley, chancellor to the bishop of Carlisle and rector of Caldbeck.⁵⁶ Poor parishes often had to be serviced by anyone who could be found to fill the vacancy. Archbishop Lee of York noted the lack of quality priests in his see and complained that 'they that have the best benefices be not

⁵³ Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance*, p. 99.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23; Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, p. 15.

⁵⁵ Heath, *The English Parish Clergy on the Eve of the Reformation* (London: Routledge, 1969), pp. 27-28.

⁵⁶ Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, p. 16.

here resident.⁵⁷ This occurred in the diocese of Carlisle as well. Henry VIII nominated John Frost, a man with no local connections whatsoever, to the incumbency of Grasmere in 1511, while other notable absentee clerics included Thomas Magnus, who was the incumbent of Kirkby Kendal during his association with the Council in the North.⁵⁸ The association of Magnus with Kendal must have been quite beneficial to the parish: we have seen already how the inhabitants of the barony received solid support from the Council against the earl of Cumberland's attempts to control the local administration.

In addition to contributing to political and social instability in the far northwest, the Reformation brought additional pressures to bear on the local clergy. Problems arose during the Reformation when court-appointed incumbents attempted to enforce government ecclesiastical policy in opposition to their parishioners' wishes. Robert Swanson has investigated the problems confronting the clergy on the eve of the Reformation in the context of secular expectations of priestly behaviour.⁵⁹ Parishioners expected their priests to set a good example of holy living, while priests were expected to follow Church doctrine. Once Henry VIII assumed control of the English Church and changes became apparent in the liturgy, it was no longer possible to satisfy both requirements in areas where people held on to their traditional beliefs. Those priests without strong affiliations with the court or government often chose to side with their parishioners. These men were not necessarily poor: Barnard Towneley, as the bishop's chancellor, was certainly no backwater cleric, but the attentions of these priests were focused on their home region rather than the capital.⁶⁰

The incumbents of the richest benefices tended to have closer links with the court and often worked to enforce government policy in opposition to their own parishioners. Parson Threlkeld attracted particular hostility from his flock and was forced to flee the region. This was due to his absentee

⁵⁷ H. Ellis, *Original Letters Illustrative of English History*, series 3, vol. 2 (London: R. Bentley, 1846), p. 338.

⁵⁸ Cumbria Records Office, Kendal, Le Flemming MSS., Rydal Hall, WD Ry/Box 92/121; C. A. McGladdery, 'Thomas Magnus, 1463/4-1550', *DNB*, vol. 36, pp. 136-37.

⁵⁹ R. Swanson, 'Problems of the Priesthood in Pre-Reformation England', *EHR*, vol. 105, no. 417 (1990), pp. 845-69.

⁶⁰ Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, pp. 102-3.

pluralism as well as his position as one of Cromwell's chaplains.⁶¹ The inhabitants of Kendal threatened to throw their own curate into the river Kent if he did not acknowledge the Pope as head of the Church.⁶² In these cases the priests' attempts to implement changes to liturgical practice alienated their traditionally minded parishioners. The quality of local clerics was, therefore, an important factor leading to the rebellions of 1536-37.

As mentioned above, many of the parish churches in the far northwest had been appropriated to the use of various ecclesiastic institutions. These included large regional houses such as St. Mary's at York, as well as some more distant foundations such as Queen's College, Oxford.⁶³ It is important not to overstate the influence of such remote institutions over their parishes, but other institutions, closer to home, were in a position to oversee parochial life. The abbey of St Mary's and the priory of Carlisle were the largest patrons of churches in Cumberland and Westmorland, controlling the advowson of twelve local churches each. The bishop of Carlisle possessed the advowson of eight churches, Lanercost Priory possessed six and the abbeys of Holm Cultram and Calder possessed five each. There were a further twenty-two churches in the gift of other monastic institutions.

The fifty-eight churches known to have been in the gift of monasteries, priories and colleges far outweigh the eighteen in which secular figures, mainly local aristocrats and gentry, controlled the advowson.⁶⁴ Appropriation gave the monasteries control over the income of the benefice and the nomination of the priest. The priest would not draw the entire income from his living, but his responsibilities would be shared with the controlling house.⁶⁵ Monasteries were continuing to appropriate local churches even at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Connishead Priory, for example, gained control of the parish church at Overton in 1508 or 1509.⁶⁶ These advowsons could be exchanged or leased out in turns to local gentry or

⁶¹ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 12.1, no. 687.

⁶² *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 11, no. 1080; 'Kirkby in Kendal: 1532-60', *Kendal Records*, compid=49276; *LP Henry VIII*, 12.1, no. 384; S. M. Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, p. 76.

⁶³ *History and Antiquities*, vol. 1, p. 570.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, vols. 1 & 2, *passim*.

⁶⁵ Heath, *Parish Clergy*, pp. 147-48.

⁶⁶ Cumbria Records Office, Kendal, Le Flemming MSS, Rydal Hall, WD Ry/Box 92/120.

aristocrats in return for cash or favours. Such was the case when the abbey of St. Mary's allowed Henry VIII to nominate Frost to Grasmere, mentioned above. The same abbey also granted Sir Thomas Wharton the presentation to the vicarage of Kirkby Stephen once his growing regional influence became apparent.⁶⁷ In theory, the bishop had the authority to refuse a candidate, but in practice the Church was so deeply involved in the webs of patronage that dominated the secular political world that candidates were almost always accepted.⁶⁸

The remoteness of some of these institutions from the parishes they controlled caused some concern at the village level. As has been shown, rich benefices tended to attract clergymen who were pluralists and absent from their parish. While an incumbent with court connections might be beneficial to the parish in some situations, in the context of the far northwestern counties during the Reformation such connections often set the priest at loggerheads with his congregation. Harrison has identified six clergymen in the Lake Counties who held more than one benefice in the region in 1536, while Margaret Clark identified the incumbents of Kirkby Stephen and Great Musgrave as being absentees with positions at court with the king and Cromwell.⁶⁹ This is certainly a similar situation to that discovered by Haigh in the archdeaconry of Chester, where he noted: 'the size of administrative areas made a devolution of power essential, but it then became difficult to superintend the work of possibly unreliable local officers.'⁷⁰ This seemed to be precisely the situation that developed in Cumberland and Westmorland where the chaplains of several large parishes led their congregations in revolt.

The monasteries were an important component in the political administration of the two counties: abbots, priors and other senior churchmen regularly acted on government commissions or as witnesses to agreements and arbitrators of quarrels between local aristocrats and gentlemen. The bishops of Carlisle had on previous occasions been nominated as wardens of the marches and, while the days of the warrior-bishops might have been over

⁶⁷ Cumbria Records Office, Kendal, Le Flemming MSS, Rydal Hall, WD Ry/Box 92/121; *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 8, no. 167; James, *Change and Continuity*, p. 19.

⁶⁸ R. Swanson, 'Problems of the Priesthood', pp. 852-53.

⁶⁹ Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, p. 16; Clark, 'Northern Light?', p. 60.

⁷⁰ Haigh, *Reformation and Resistance*, p. 4.

by the sixteenth century, many ecclesiastical figures remained involved in both border administration and the military apparatus in the two counties.⁷¹ The bishop of Carlisle was a fixture on the commission of the peace in Cumberland throughout the period, although it was only after the expansion of the bench that occurred upon Wolsey's resuscitation of the Council in the North in 1525 that he appeared on the commissions in Westmorland as well.⁷² Ecclesiastical figures and institutions were deeply involved in both the administration of the northwestern counties and in keeping the peace between members of the local community. In 1473 Richard Redman arbitrated a settlement in a long-running land dispute between the Curwens and the Salkelds.⁷³ In 1524 the prior of Carlisle was named in a commission along with Lord Dacre, Richard Salkeld and Sir Christopher Moresby to resolve the differences between Englishmen and Scots arising from the long-running conflict over the fishgarths in the river Esk.⁷⁴ Senior churchmen in Cumberland and Westmorland filled the role of authority figures in the regional administration and it is inconceivable that the dissolution of monastic institutions and wholesale changes to the administration of the Church would not have had an impact on regional society on many different levels.

Like the secular institutions on the borders, the role of the church on the northern frontiers of the kingdom was, by necessity, of a different character than that in more stable regions. The medieval Church played the part of a major landowner, and in Cumberland and Westmorland the role of major landowner was deeply entwined with military affairs. There were at least thirty-two manorial lordships in Cumberland and Westmorland in the possession of ecclesiastical institutions before 1536, which is fourteen percent of the total number of lordships in region.⁷⁵ As landlords, these spiritual institutions were expected to array their tenants for border service on the

⁷¹ Bishop Lumley of Carlisle had served as warden of the west march between 1436 and 1443. R. L. Storey, 'The Wardens of the Marches of England towards Scotland, 1377-1489', *EHR*, vol. 72 (1957), p. 614.

⁷² *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.2, no. 1527.

⁷³ A. D Salkeld, 'Lancelot Salkeld: Last Prior and First Dean of Carlisle 1490-1560', *CWAAS*, vol. 98 (1998), p. 146.

⁷⁴ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.1, no. 968.

⁷⁵ See chapter 2.

warden's request. There is evidence that, as with some secular landlords, ecclesiastical institutions sought to preserve feudal bonds of service with their tenants to better provide for the defence of their holdings. The abbot of Fountains in Yorkshire, for example, was taking homage from his tenants in as late as 1517 and there is no reason to suppose that this practice was not continued among other northern institutions until the dissolution.⁷⁶ Likewise, abbots and priors were keen to take advantage of feudal relationships with regional secular lords. Prior Salkeld of Carlisle appealed to the earl of Cumberland in 1537 for his 'good lordship' in relation to the earl's payment of rent for the Kirkland tithes, while in the same year Abbott Bagot of Shap requested the earl's intercession in favour of one of the abbey's tenants who was threatened with eviction by certain gentlemen.⁷⁷ The Church was enmeshed within the fabric of local society at all levels and attempts by the government to impose its authority upon it were bound to cause consternation in some circles.

As such an important part of society, the Church could not remain aloof from local politics. We have seen how the local secular authorities became involved in monastic disputes which ended in murder. As enthusiasm for monasticism declined, institutions sought to form connections with local aristocrats and gentry in order to help protect their interests.⁷⁸ Ecclesiastical institutions entered into 'bastard feudal' relationships with important figures in regional political society through the distribution of offices such as the stewardships of monastic estates. Tithes and other dues to the Church could be leased by ecclesiastical institutions to regional aristocrats and gentry. This provided an important source of patronage for abbeys and monasteries in the locality. As the amount levied in tithes could vary from year to year, it also allowed local priests to stabilize their income over a period of time. This made good sense in a region such as the far northwest where a poor harvest or Scots' raid could wipe out a parish's income for a whole year. These connections with the secular world involved the church in some of the less savoury aspects of regional politics and the central

⁷⁶ *The Fountains Abbey Lease Book*, ed. D. J. H. Michelmores (York: Archaeological Society 1981), p. 16.

⁷⁷ *Clifford Letters*, no. 2; Salkeld, 'Lancelot Salkeld', p. 147.

⁷⁸ Knowles, *Religious Orders*, vol. 2, pp. 283-87.

government was often forced to intervene. Local rivalries played themselves out in conflicts over the nominations to particular ecclesiastical offices in the two counties and the farming of church lands.

Prior to its dissolution, Furness Abbey was involved in several disagreements with local landholders. In 1477 there was discord between the abbey and several members of the Huddleston family who were bound to keep the peace towards the abbey's tenants in Dalton, Cumberland. Another dispute between the abbey and John Flemming of Rydal was submitted to the arbitration of local gentlemen in 1512.⁷⁹ That the abbot was willing to accept the arbitration of laymen in this case is indicative of the close links between the monastery and secular society. In 1514 a squabble arose between the earl of Derby and the abbot over the stewardship of the monastery's lands. Derby possessed patents to the office, probably in reversion upon the death of the previous incumbent Sir John Huddleston. Huddleston died in 1512 and it seems that Abbot Banke denied Derby the office. Derby gathered a force of some 2,000 of his followers and besieged the monks within a room in the monastic building for two days. The monks eventually acceded to the earl's demands and deposed Banke and installed Derby's own candidate, John Dalton. Letters were sent from the king, which Derby ignored. Further attempts by the government to dislodge Derby from the abbey resulted in several royal servants being beaten by the earl's followers. The earl was later summoned before the King's Bench and fines and restrictions were imposed upon him for his defiance of the king's orders. Significantly, the stewardship of the abbey's lands was then assigned to Sir William Compton, Henry VIII's groom of the stool, an example of the government installing its own candidates to regional office in order to act against overbearing local influence.⁸⁰

Further examples of ecclesiastical involvement in secular politics exist: in 1536 the earl of Cumberland was attempting to extort from the abbot of Furness a lease for the manor of Winterburn in Craven using forged

⁷⁹ *CCR 1476-1485*, 129; Cumbria Records Office, Kendal, Le Flemming MSS., Rydal Hall, WD Ry/Box 92/123, 124.

⁸⁰ R. W. Hoyle and H. Summerson, 'The Earl of Derby and the Deposition of the Abbot of Furness', *NH*, vol. 30 (1994), pp. 184-92.

documents (in this he had the support of Thomas Cromwell).⁸¹ One aspect of the quarrel which arose between the houses of Dacre and Clifford in the 1520s and 1530s was over the grant of the stewardship of Holm Cultram abbey's estates in Cumberland and Westmorland to Lord Dacre in place of the earl of Cumberland. Upon receipt of this grant, a large number of Dacre's servants, supported by tenants of the abbey, went to Holm Cultram and broke open the chamber of Thomas Dalston, who was acting as deputy steward for the earl, and 'cast him and all his stuff out.'⁸² Margaret Clark has taken disputes such as this as being largely faction fights between rival secular interests in which the Church played only a passive role,⁸³ yet the involvement of the abbey's tenants in this event would certainly suggest that Dacre acted with the support of the abbot and that, like in Furness previously, local ecclesiastical institutions were actively taking sides in regional politics. Conflicts over rights to ecclesiastical properties continued between Clifford and Dacre. In 1534 the farming of the church at Kirkland in Cumberland was a source of contention between the two. The earl of Cumberland complained to Cromwell that the prior of Carlisle had granted him the lease of the church for that year, but that servants and tenants of Sir Christopher Dacre had broken down the doors of the tithe barn and carried away the corn to Kirkoswald castle.⁸⁴ Cumberland eventually received the tithe corns for this parish at the king's request to the prior, but similar incidents were reported at Bolton in Westmorland, which Cumberland farmed from the abbey of St. Mary's at York, and elsewhere.⁸⁵ The monasteries behaved like any other large landholder in the region: they were keen to defend their own and use what regional influence they possessed in order to maintain their integrity and security. This occasionally involved religious houses in conflicts and feuds with their neighbours.

⁸¹ 'Letters of the Cliffords', no. 93.

⁸² *Clifford Letters*, no. 310.

⁸³ Clark downplays the role of the Church in disputes such as those that arose during the Pilgrimage of Grace when the commons sacked several tithe barns, arguing that this was aimed not at the church but at the gentry and aristocratic farmers of those tithes. Clark, 'Northern Light?', p. 71.

⁸⁴ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 7, no. 1365.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 1549, vol. 8, no. 310.

The dissolution of the monasteries required that detailed inventories be made of monastic lands and goods. We therefore possess a more complete picture of the values of monastic estates in Cumberland and Westmorland than we do for many secular lordships. The king's commissioners, Layton and Legh, compiled a large document recording the annual incomes of all ecclesiastical institutions in the kingdom, their relics and any cases of moral misconduct that were discovered or even simply alleged.⁸⁶ The results of their findings for the religious institutions in Cumberland and Westmorland revealed that the annual income of monastic institutions in the northwest was quite meagre in many cases. It is interesting to note also that no cases of moral misconduct are reported from the abbey of Shap, which was closely connected with Henry VIII's friend, the earl of Cumberland and was made exempt from the first round of dissolutions despite its not meeting the requirements specified in the act.⁸⁷

While undoubtedly a controversial issue in the minds of the local population, it is important not to place too much emphasis on the part played by the threat of dissolution of the smaller monasteries in stimulating the risings that occurred in the region in 1536-37. Historians who have claimed the dissolution of the monasteries as the single most important motivating factor behind the popular uprisings of 1536-37 have based this assumption on a reading of the letters of Robert Aske and other leaders of the rebellion. William Collins, bailiff of Kendal and one of the leaders of the revolt in Westmorland, was certainly concerned with the fate of the monasteries in the region, as his letter summoning the commons to muster at Hawkshead shows.⁸⁸ These leaders did hold up the defence of monastic institutions as one of the reasons for the rebellion, but it is important to remember that the risings in Cumberland and Westmorland were very distinct from the rising dominated by Aske in East Yorkshire. Support for the monasteries played a much smaller part in the rebellion here than did alterations to the people's familiar patterns of worship.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 10, no. 364.

⁸⁷ Knowles and Hadcock, *Religious Houses*, p. 191.

⁸⁸ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 11, no. 892.

As can be seen from the document compiled by Layton and Legh, the king's commissioners were at pains to discredit the religious houses in the eyes of the population. Incidents and allegations of incontinence and sodomy within the monastic houses were gleefully recorded in order to erode any support these institutions might gather among the people. It is important to bear in mind, however, that Layton and Legh were acting under instructions from the crown and therefore had a vested interest in finding cases of moral misconduct within monastic houses. Certainly their assertion that five of the monks of Connishead were incontinent, one with six and another with ten women, must be treated with some scepticism.⁸⁹ This attempt at libel clearly had very little effect, as the houses of Conishead and Cartmel were among those that did enjoy the wholehearted support of the rebels. Ten tenants of the latter house were hanged along with several of the canons for continuing the rebellion in February 1537 after the king's pardon had been read.⁹⁰ This is not to say that all the ecclesiastical institutions in the region enjoyed the same level of support. Certainly, the popular view of Furness Abbey casts doubt on the level of support enjoyed by the monasteries amongst the rebels in the far northwest. Furness Abbey was one of the most ruthless exponents of harsh landlordship in the region, evicting customary tenants, making enclosures and charging extortionate entry fines. In 1519 Abbot Banke had been responsible for the eviction of the entire population of the village of Sellergarth in Furness and the destruction of all the houses there.⁹¹ These were exactly the practices that had contributed to the rising in the first place and certain monasteries were as guilty in that regard as the gentry and aristocrats who bore the brunt of popular discontent in the region. These issues were much more important in the minds of the local population than the possibility of monastic dissolution, as letters to and from the rebels in Kendal show. These letters highlight the malpractice of landlords more than royal policy regarding the Church as their chief motivation.⁹² The monks of Furness were denounced by many of their tenants after the Pilgrimage of

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 10, no. 364.

⁹⁰ 'Kirkby in Kendal: 1532-60', *Kendale Records*, compid=49276; Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, p. 74.

⁹¹ Hoyle and Summerson, 'Deposition of the Abbot of Furness', p. 187.

⁹² 'Kirkby in Kendal: 1532-60', *Kendale Records*, compid=49276; Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, p. 74.

Grace. It was claimed that tenants of the abbey were forced to join the rebellion in support of their landlord. In this case, the crown's acquisition of monastic estates may well have been welcomed by the population if it curbed some of the excesses of certain monastic institutions.

The act dissolving the lesser monasteries was passed in the Reformation Parliament of 1536. It therefore required the consent of the regional knights and burgesses returned to parliament. Unfortunately it is not known who was returned for any of the far northwestern seats at this time. The parliamentary elections of the 1520s and 30s in the region were subject to governmental intervention to ensure that those returned were amenable to the royal will. In 1539, the duke of Norfolk assured the king that the gentlemen returned for the parliament of that year would be willing to do his bidding.⁹³ In this way the government could be certain that its controversial reforming agenda would receive the blessing of parliament and pass into law. The return of Sir Christopher Dacre and Sir John Pennington for Cumberland in 1523 was organized by the crown, in spite of the fact that Pennington was already serving as sheriff while Dacre was urgently needed on the borders.⁹⁴ The Dacre interest was again represented in Cumberland in 1529 with the return of Sir Christopher Dacre and John Lee.⁹⁵ William, Lord Dacre's fall in 1534, however, renders it unlikely that Dacre followers were returned for the parliaments later in the decade. In Westmorland, Sir William Musgrave sat for the county in 1529 while Sir Thomas Wharton was returned for the borough of Appleby. These two remained high in the crown's favour in 1536 and Wharton's association with the regime made him one of the prime targets of the rebels in the Pilgrimage of Grace.

Getting the act of Supremacy passed into law and dissolving the monasteries was only the first stage of the process of ecclesiastical reform. It was much more difficult to have these new statutes enforced in regional areas. Again, we see the government executing unpopular policies through control of key figures in the regional administration. The dissolution of the monasteries did not necessarily mean the end of a career for many of the

⁹³ Bindoff, *The History of Parliament*, vol. 1, pp. 61-62, 214-16.

⁹⁴ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 3, no. 2931.

⁹⁵ James, *Change and Continuity*, appendix 1.

former inmates of those institutions. Indeed, in several instances the promise of future employment seems to have been the key inducement for high ranking clergymen to surrender their monastic office. Gawayn Borrowdale, for example, was elected abbot of Holm Cultram in the aftermath of the Pilgrimage of Grace, in spite of his being implicated in the murder of the previous incumbent of that office.⁹⁶ It is clearly more than a coincidence that upon his surrender of the monastery to the commissioners in 1537, he was nominated as the first rector of Holm Cultram. Likewise was the situation with Lancelot Salkeld who surrendered Carlisle Priory to the government and was subsequently installed as the first Dean of Carlisle in 1541.⁹⁷ This echoes the situation observed by James in Durham where he remarked on the level of continuity apparent in the personnel involved in the new rectories immediately after the dissolution of the monasteries.⁹⁸ Parallels can be drawn here with aspects of political activity undertaken by Cromwell's administration. As in the case of William, Lord Dacre's indictment for treason in 1534, the government was able to enact unpopular policy in the face of regional opposition by controlling key personnel in the local or ecclesiastical administration.

With regards to the impact of the Reformation on people's lives in Cumberland and Westmorland, changes made at the parish level were more significant than the dissolution of the monasteries. People resented the interference of government in their own spiritual lives much more than the government's attack on the institutions of religion. These examples of government interference in religious devotion were much more immediate than other reforms such as the dissolution of the smaller monastic houses. The motivations of the rebels articulated during the Pilgrimage of Grace are revealing of the ordinary inhabitants' attitudes towards the Church. Unlike the risings that began in Louth in October 1536, which were a direct consequence of a perceived attack by the government on local religious institutions and customs, the subsequent risings in Cumberland and Westmorland were motivated by broader concerns. These included the

⁹⁶ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 6, nos. 985, 986, 988, 1557; Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, p. 19.

⁹⁷ Salkeld, 'Lancelot Salkeld', p. 148.

⁹⁸ James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society*, p. 58.

general poverty of the region, the failure of the regional administration to adequately defend the borderlands against the Scots, increasing rents and entry fines demanded by landlords and the increasing rate of enclosure of common land by aristocrats and gentry.⁹⁹ Focusing instead on tenant rights and entry fines, the rebellion here seems to have been directed more against the local gentry.¹⁰⁰ Nevertheless, religious issues were still clearly in the minds of the rebels, particularly in Westmorland. Harrison has argued that many historians have overlooked the religious aspects of the rebellion in the far northwest, dismissing the spiritual aspects of the rebels' manifesto as merely conventional piety, and focused instead on the political and economic grievances of the population.¹⁰¹ Evidence shows that there were concerns among the common people about the changes introduced to religious observance in the mid 1530s, particularly regarding issues such as prayers for the pope, the saying of the rosary and the observance of holy days. The vicar of Brough claimed that he was forced under threat of violence to offer prayers for the pope and cardinals.¹⁰² The rising in Kirkby Stephen in 1536 was triggered when the curate neglected to call the holy day of St Luke and changed the form of the rosary.¹⁰³ More traditionally minded parish priests were deeply involved in the risings. Those who disagreed with the new ecclesiastical policies became ringleaders and figureheads of revolt, while supporters of the new practices became unpopular targets of violence. The vicar of Clapham, a Yorkshire parish south of Kirkby Lonsdale, convinced the commons of Kendal that those who died in the revolt would go straight to heaven.¹⁰⁴ These were the basic everyday concerns of the common people. It was changes to the familiar patterns of worship, in combination with other political and economic complaints that provided the most impetus for the religious aspects of the rebellion, rather than the pending dissolution of the smaller monastic houses. The parish priest was best placed to manipulate the

⁹⁹ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 12.1, no. 687.

¹⁰⁰ 'Kirkby in Kendal: 1532-60', *Kendale Records*, compid=49276; 2007; James, *Change and Continuity*, p. 24.

¹⁰¹ Harrison, *The Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties*, pp. 71-79.

¹⁰² 'Kirkby in Kendal: 1532-60', *Kendale Records*, compid=49276; *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 2.1, no. 687.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*, vol. 12.1, no. 687.

¹⁰⁴ 'Kirkby in Kendal: 1532-60', *Kendale Records*, compid=49276.

anxieties of his parishioners and he was also likely to be the first target for reprisal if his own views about ecclesiastical reforms diverged from those of his flock.

A final point to be made about the influence of the Church in the far northwestern counties is the persistence of Catholicism in the region throughout the remainder of the sixteenth century. Protestant doctrines did not really take hold in Cumberland and Westmorland, even during the reigns of Edward VI or Elizabeth. Where they did, it was a consequence of the influence of leading members of the regional community who became true believers in the new doctrines. Henry VIII's last queen, Katherine Parr, was a protestant, as was the lord of Kendal, the now absentee William Parr, Marquis of Northampton. The township of Kendal became an island of Protestantism that maintained its ideals even through the reign of Mary, although Catholicism lingered in outlying areas of the barony. Thomas Wharton, now a peer, was happy to enforce the will of the government until he revealed his Catholic tendencies in the reign of Elizabeth. Margaret Clark has argued that the persistence of traditional religious practice in the region occurred as a result of the absence of strong clerical leadership in the region and a positive lay interest in the church.¹⁰⁵ The ignominious Revolt of the Northern Earls in 1569 appealed to the traditional sensibilities of the people in the north. Leonard Dacre's involvement in this rising was no doubt motivated as much by a desire to preserve his family's regional position as by respect for the old religion, but discontent at religious change could still stir the population to revolt.¹⁰⁶ Under the direction of the leading members of regional society, the inhabitants of the far northwest were resistant to change in religious observance. It was not until the conservative leadership had died away that reform could begin in earnest. In this way, the politics of the Reformation in the far northwest were influenced by the power and influence of regional noblemen.

Ecclesiastical reform in Cumberland and Westmorland was bound up with the efforts to centralise the authority of the state and enhance the power of the crown in regional areas. The Reformation in the far northwest altered

¹⁰⁵ Clark, 'Northern Light?', p. 63.

¹⁰⁶ Macdonald Fraser, *The Steel Bonnets*, pp. 298-300.

the balance of power between different social groups in the area in a number of ways. It is important to bear in mind, however, that the dissolution of the monasteries did not have an immediate effect on the balance of power in the locality: the redistribution of monastic estates was an ongoing process that continued into the reign of Queen Mary. Firstly, the acquisition of monastic estates vastly increased the king's capacity to distribute patronage in the region. These lands were granted out amongst royal supporters in the locality over the next few years in order to bolster the authority of the king's chosen officials. The main recipients of monastic estates were gentry families who had demonstrated a willingness to support the reforms of the central administration. Sir Thomas Wharton received the lion's share of former Church lands in Westmorland when he was granted most of the possessions of Shap Abbey as well as the manors of Langdale and Bretherdale, previously belonging to Watton Priory and Byland Abbey respectively.¹⁰⁷ Other gentry families to benefit from these developments included the Penningtons, the Pickerings and the Huddlestons, though no family apart from the Whartons seems to have acquired more than one manor. Clark noted a general reluctance to take former Church lands among the border gentry, particularly chantry land which may have been endowed to secure the saying of mass for the soul of a dead ancestor.¹⁰⁸ The Dacres and Cliffords gained lands from Lanercost Priory and Shap Abbey respectively, while the estates of the priory of Carlisle were transferred to the new dean and chapter. This had the obvious effect of enhancing the power of the crown in the region through its patronage of local agents. The Church had lost a huge amount of patronage in terms of advowsons, stewardships and other estate offices that had previously given it some measure of influence over important members of the regional community.¹⁰⁹ The regional clergy were now subservient to the king with the promotion of royal lackeys like priors Borrowdale and Salkeld to key positions in ecclesiastical administration. The combination of the dissolution of the monasteries and the acquisition of the earl of Northumberland's estates in 1537 had made Henry VIII the leading

¹⁰⁷ *History and Antiquities*, vol. 1, pp. 472, 491, 495, 505; James, *Change and Continuity*, p. 33.

¹⁰⁸ Clark, 'Northern Light?', p. 63.

¹⁰⁹ Dickens, *The English Reformation*, p. 208.

tenant in chief in the northwestern counties, surpassing even Richard III in terms of his influence in the region. However, it must be noted that while the redistribution of monastic estates raised government servants such as Wharton to pre-eminence in the local community, the very fact of his increased influence meant that Wharton was now a regional aristocrat much like Dacre or Clifford. Although Henry VIII might have written to the duke of Norfolk claiming he 'would not be bound to be served by none but lords' on the border,¹¹⁰ his endowment of Wharton with so much of the influence previously held by the Church had, in effect, merely created a new border magnate upon whom the government relied heavily. Wharton remained a gentleman until he was ennobled after his victory over the Scots at Solway Moss in 1542. Even as a mere knight, however, his landed power and capacity for patronage rivalled the entrenched regional aristocrats. It would be incorrect to assume, therefore, that 1537 marked a watershed year in which regional influence passed from the aristocracy to the gentry and the crown.

¹¹⁰ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 12.1, no. 636.

Chapter 4: War and the Frontier

Preceding chapters have discussed landholding, office holding and the influence of the Church in the far northwest. We have seen how resident aristocrats and gentry were the dominant influence on regional political society. This chapter is concerned with the key feature distinguishing northern England from areas further to the south: the region's proximity to a hostile enemy. With the exceptions of the Irish Pale and the Pale of Calais, the north was the only region in the kingdom to have an exposed land frontier. As we have seen in the preceding chapters, the difficulties posed by the border had implications for landholding, civil administration and the role of the Church in the far northwest. This chapter will focus on the consequences of Anglo-Scottish hostilities for political society and regional administration in Cumberland and Westmorland. The presence of the frontier acted both to isolate the area by encouraging an attitude of self-reliance on the part of the inhabitants, as well as to promote further integration with the rest of the realm through government concerns over the security of the kingdom.¹

Interesting comparisons have been made between the attitudes of the Tudor government to the administration of frontier zones in both northern England and Ireland. The same problems are apparent in both regions: the disturbed state of the frontier and its remoteness from the capital required successive administrations to entrust regional government to powerful figures who were resident in the area. Attempts by different regimes to break the power of the great magnates in northern England or in the Anglo-Irish Pale were always offset by the necessity of providing security in those regions.² Central to this topic in relation to the far northwest is the development of the key military office in the region, the wardenry of the west march. This office, along with its counterparts on the east and middle marches, posed particular problems for the crown as it allowed the holder to command significant military resources.

¹ Beckinsale, 'The Character of the Tudor North', p. 67; Storey, 'The North of England', pp. 129-44; Summerson, 'Responses to War', p. 162.

² Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, p. 258.

Ostensibly these resources were to provide for the defence of the region and prosecution of wars against Scotland, but, all too often, they were marshaled in private quarrels or against the crown itself.³

The frontier also raised a host of other difficulties in regards to relations between the subjects of the two kingdoms. During times of truce, localized bickering between English and Scots could jeopardize the fragile peace and provoke an international incident. In times of war, crimes such as murder, robbery and arson were effective tools against the enemy. As such, cross-border justice was administered inconsistently and selectively. The inhabitants of the borderlands were accustomed to seek their own remedies for wrongs committed against them, which often gave rise to deadly feuds between family or clan groups that might persist for generations. This necessitated the development of a system of law peculiar to the borderlands based on co-operation between regional officials of both kingdoms and presided over by the wardens of the marches.⁴

It is helpful in this chapter to begin with a brief discussion of the borderlands themselves. The Anglo-Scottish border was a political boundary, not a natural frontier. The borderline was negotiated by governments in Westminster and Edinburgh with little regard for either the geography or the ethnic and social make-up of the region. The inhabitants of the English and Scottish marches were a distinct group of people who shared similar lifestyles and customs which set them apart from their compatriots.⁵ Geoffrey Barrow has shown that, in the (relatively) peaceful years before the reign of Edward I, patterns of settlement were largely uninfluenced by the presence of the frontier. Rather than being a firm line dividing two kingdoms, the border ebbed and flowed with the extent of land exploitation and settlement in individual lordships along the frontier.⁶ In 1296 this situation changed forever when Edward I attempted to impose English overlordship on the Scottish crown. For the next

³ R. Reid, 'The Office of Warden of the Marches, its Origin and Early History', *EHR*, vol. 32 (1917), p. 20; Bush, 'The Problem of the Far North', p. 41.

⁴ Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law*, p. x.

⁵ Rae, *Scottish Frontier*, p. 4.

⁶ G. S Barrow, 'Settlement on the Anglo-Scottish Border', in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, ed. R. Bartlett and A. MacKay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 4-6.

three hundred years the region was the scene of almost constant hostilities between the subjects of both kingdoms.

During this time large scale invasions of either realm were comparatively rare. Low intensity warfare, raiding and feuding became the day to day occupations of the inhabitants of the marches. Such was the scene observed in the mid fifteenth century by Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II, who spent an uncomfortable night on the borders on his return from an embassy in Scotland. He wrote in his memoirs that after dinner the men of the village in which he stayed took refuge in a tower for fear of the Scots who were accustomed to make raids upon them by night.⁷ Throughout the sixteenth century, letters from the marches reveal many incidents of small-scale conflict regardless of whether the two kingdoms were technically at war.⁸

The marches in both England and Scotland were divided into three administrative areas, each with its own warden. Even to contemporaries, the exact extent of the frontier was unclear. In 1453 the English Parliament passed a statute that the wardens had no authority to arraign people from outside the marches in cases under march law. This was in response to several cases of people from Yorkshire, well beyond the warden's jurisdiction, being indicted for march treason in the warden's courts.⁹ Thomas, lord Dacre regarded the extent of the west march to run forty-five miles southwest to northeast, from Millom in the southwestern corner of Cumberland to Liddesdale.¹⁰ The depth of the marches north to south is more difficult to ascertain. It was rare, but not unheard of, for Scots raids or invasions to penetrate almost as far as Cockermouth and Penrith, as they did in 1436 and 1450 respectively, and the Clifford tenants of northern Westmorland were certainly expected to answer the warden's call to

⁷ *Memoirs of a Renaissance Pope: the Commentaries of Pius II*, ed. L. C. Gabel (London: Allen & Unwin, 1959), p. 35.

⁸ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 1, no. 380; vol. 2.1, no. 2293; vol. 3.1, nos. 1091, 1171; vol. 4.1, nos. 25, 278, 346; vol. 4.2, nos. 2374, 4020; vol. 5, no. 477; vol. 7, no. 319; 'Letters of the Cliffords', no. 74.

⁹ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. 5, p. 267; Reid, *King's Council*, p. 26.

¹⁰ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 1, no. 4520.

arms.¹¹ The fortification of buildings shows that large houses on the border and along the Eden valley were well protected and often set within sight of each other. This was also the case along the coast, which was often attacked by seaborne raiders.¹² Houses in the valleys of the Kent and the Lune were largely unfortified, however, which would suggest that the barony of Kendal was not as militarized as Cumberland or the barony of Appleby and that it represents the southern-most extent of the march.

The far northwest was also exposed to Ireland and Scotland by sea, which could have important strategic implications for the region. Chester was the hub of the northwestern shipping lanes and Leland reported that Workington was a 'lytle prety fysshier town... wher as shyppes cum to.'¹³ The duke of Gloucester, as warden of the west march, was particularly concerned to secure the coastline when he was given command of three-hundred men retained by the king to serve at sea against the Scots.¹⁴ In 1487 Lambert Simnel crossed from Dublin and landed in Cumbria, a region in which the rebels could expect to find considerable Yorkist sympathies. We have seen in preceding chapters how several leading gentlemen from the far northwest became involved in this uprising, but it is also likely that many of the sailors who transported the would-be king from Ireland to Furness had likewise been in service to Richard III. During the sixteenth century Irish Kern were stationed on the borders, while in 1530 Edward Aglionby and Leonard Musgrave were ordered to prepare ships and men for service in Ireland.¹⁵

The disrupted state on the borders had consequences for the local economy in the northern counties. In a region often devastated by forays from across the frontier, the growing of cereal crops was impractical as these could easily be destroyed by raiders. The combination of poor soil in the upland areas

¹¹ Summerson, 'Responses to War', p. 157; Summerson, 'Carlisle and the West March in the Later Middle Ages', p. 97; *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.1, no. 278; *Clifford Letters*, no. 26; 'Letters of the Cliffords', no. 74.

¹² Bouch and Jones, *The Lake Counties*, p. 33.

¹³ Leland, *Itinerary*, vol. 5, p. 54.

¹⁴ Summerson, 'Carlisle and the West March', p. 99.

¹⁵ Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle, Records of the Aglionby Family, D/Ay/1/199; G. Phillips, *The Anglo-Scottish Wars 1513-1550* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999), pp. 158-59.

and the unstable political situation meant that cattle, sheep and the tough little ponies bred in the region were the mainstays of the local economy. These could be pastured on the steep hillsides and driven into the woods to hide when raiders approached.¹⁶ The market at Carlisle was the economic centre of the region, attracting visitors from all over northern England and southern Scotland. The English government made prohibitions against trade with Scotland but there is evidence for a flourishing black market, particularly in horses, across the border. It was the warden's responsibility to ensure that government decrees were enforced in regards to cross-border trade and Thomas, Lord Dacre, as warden, denied the Armstrongs of Bewcastledale access to Carlisle market in response to the clan's reputation as notorious horse thieves.¹⁷

The frontier had both negative and positive implications for the local economy in the far northwest, particularly in those areas directly adjacent to the dividing line. Obviously the devastation caused by marauding bands of raiders had a detrimental effect on the economy, as is clearly shown by estimations of the values of border lordships during times of war. The inquisition into Humphrey, Lord Dacre's lands in 1486 reveals that many of his estates and possessions in northern Cumberland suffered a reduction in value on account of the war with Scotland.¹⁸ Economic recovery was slow and even in times of relative tranquility on the border, such as in the years following the sealing of the Treaty of Perpetual Peace in 1502, income from border lordships was meager. In 1507 the Musgraves' lordship of Solport in northern Cumberland was still worth nothing and had lain waste for the past sixty years.¹⁹ All this indicates that a wide tract of land near the border was economically unproductive during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Although the havoc caused by warfare had crippled the traditional aspects of a rural economy, war itself provided economic stimulation to the region. In addition to the profits that could be made through pillage and rustling livestock,

¹⁶ A. J. L. Winchester, *Landscape and Society in Medieval Cumbria* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1987), p. 3.

¹⁷ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.2, no. 2374.

¹⁸ *CIPM Hen. VII*, vol. 1, no. 157.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 3, no. 70.

vast sums of money were invested by the central government for the upkeep of garrisons, bribes and payments to the border clans or disaffected Scottish subjects and the gathering of intelligence. In 1517 the crown's expenses for the defence of the northern border totaled £14,253 14s. 5d. On the west march alone in March 1524 Dacre requested £2,000 from the abbot of St Mary's for the payment of garrisons and in July the same year the bishop of Carlisle handed over more than £4,200 to the warden for the defence of the northwestern frontier.²⁰ The construction and repair of fortifications provided employment for artisans from all over the kingdom, though this could be a dangerous task as workmen proved a tempting target for ransom by border raiders.²¹ Edward Aglionby was employed in the rebuilding of Carlisle Castle and was subsequently appointed captain of the new citadel in 1542.²² Garrison soldiers spent their wages in the inns of Carlisle and were the major stimulus in the development of a service industry in the city.²³ In a region where agriculture produced little more than a subsistence crop, war and its related industries provided the chief source of profit for the inhabitants of the northwest.

These benefits, as with the detrimental effects of war, were focused on the frontier itself. When it came to agriculture, the same difficulties existed in the southern part of the region as on the frontier with regards to climate and topography. Although the prospect of the destruction of one's livelihood by raiders was more remote in Westmorland than in northern Cumberland, there was also less opportunity for profits to be made from wages or plunder.²⁴ The distribution of offices and commands on the border was not the sole preserve of the Cumberland gentry, however. The profits as well as the personal risks were shared among the leading gentry and aristocrats from both counties in the far northwest.

In the context of the Anglo-Scottish wars themselves, the west march possessed characteristics that made it distinct from the east and middle marches.

²⁰ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 2.2, no. 2949; vol. 4.1, nos. 161, 448.

²¹ *Ibid*, vol. 3.1, nos. 1091.

²² Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle, Records of the Aglionby Family, D/Ay 1/207, 208.

²³ Summerson, 'Responses to War', p. 161.

²⁴ James, *Change and Continuity*, p. 24.

The topography of the far northwest had implications for the type of military operations that could be conducted there. The coastal plains of Northumberland and the southeastern Scottish shires presented easier access for large invading armies. Scottish invasions during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries were often aimed at Berwick, while the English could strike at Edinburgh from Northumberland.²⁵ It is no surprise then that most of the major engagements of the Anglo-Scottish wars took place in Northumberland or County Durham.²⁶

The topography of the west march, by contrast, was more suited to a war of small raids and cattle lifting. George Macdonald Fraser saw the western borders as the 'tough end of the frontier' and he described Liddesdale as the home of the most predatory clans of thieves and raiders.²⁷ The region was hemmed in by natural obstacles which made the mustering and supply of large forces impossible. This required the inhabitants of the west march to be more self-reliant in terms of their own defence. There were notorious problems involved in the payment and supply of armies in the late medieval and Early modern periods. Clifford Davies has written on the difficulties involved in provisioning military forces and, in relation to troops deployed against Scotland, observed that most of the supplies came from the south by ship, a journey which could take up to two months in unfavourable conditions.²⁸ Davies was focusing on armies deployed on the east and middle marches for whom meat could be provided on the hoof from pastures in Durham and Yorkshire. The rough country made the victualling of large armies in the northwest far more difficult. Even a modest army of 2,000 men was equivalent to the population of Carlisle and the likelihood of feeding that number of troops for any length of time from the resources available in the region was slim. In 1482 supplies had to be

²⁵ Rae, *Scottish Frontier*, pp. 2-3.

²⁶ Solway Moss (1542) was the only major engagement of the Anglo-Scottish wars fought on the western borders. W. Seymour, *Battles in Britain*, vol. 2 (London: Seymour & Sedgewick, 1975).

²⁷ Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*, p. 39.

²⁸ C. S. L. Davies, 'Provisions for Armies, 1509-1550; a Study in the Effectiveness of Early Tudor Government', *Economic History Review*, vol. 27, no. 2 (1964), p. 236.

imported into the region owing to the 'increasing dearth and scarcity of victuals' caused by large numbers of troops stationed on the west march.²⁹

It was more convenient in that case to rely on the local population to provide for the defence of the region. The presence of soldiers from other areas put a strain on resources and had caused problems in the past. In 1380 the streets of Carlisle had been disrupted by running battles between the castle garrison and the inhabitants of the town who resented the presence of 'foreigners' and had refused to provide them with victuals.³⁰ Billeting and supply were not such pressing concerns if the men could go home when off duty. In March 1524 the king issued letters under the great seal instructing Edward Aglionby to raise a hundred men for service as a border garrison. The commission stipulated that Aglionby was to first attempt to raise the whole complement from his own tenants and servants.³¹ This would ensure that the soldiers were local men and personally connected with their commander.

The English west march was well fortified with a string of castles and presented a difficult proposition for Scottish raiders. Garrisons lay at Carlisle, Bewcastle and Rockliffe, the Dacres maintained a personal presence at Naworth and Kirkoswald and Brougham Castle even contained guns by 1534.³² Fraser suggested that English raiders from the west march inflicted more damage on the Scots than they received in return during the sixteenth century, and the correspondence of Thomas, Lord Dacre detailing his activities following the battle of Flodden seems to bear this out. Dacre's letters contain accounts of villages burnt and livestock acquired by small bands that could pass by moonlight through the hills and dales of the border country. No doubt he was anxious to portray his efforts in a favourable light, yet the difficulties involved in

²⁹ *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland 1377-1509*, vol. 4, ed. J. Bain (Edinburgh: Scottish Record Office, 1888), no. 1472; Summerson, 'Carlisle and the English West March', p. 91.

³⁰ Summerson, 'Responses to War', p. 160.

³¹ Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle, Records of the Aglionby Family, D/Ay/1/180.

³² Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle, Records of the Lowther Family, earls of Londale, D/Lons/L C61; *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 3.2, no. 1986; H. M. Colvin, D. R. Ransom and J. Summerson, *History of the King's Works*, vol. 3.1 (London: HMSO, 1975), pp. 271-72; H. Summerson, 'Brougham Castle NY 537290', *Archaeological Journal*, vol. 155 (1998), p. 361.

military operations in the region were clearly not appreciated by Henry VIII. The king became frustrated at Dacre's apparent inability to launch major incursions from the west march, which prompted a flurry of defensive letters from the warden explaining that lots of little raids were doing as much hurt to the Scots as the great expeditions launched by the duke of Gloucester or earl of Northumberland had in times past. Under pressure from the crown, Dacre eventually managed to muster 1,200 men from the west march for a raid which penetrated fourteen miles into Scotland.³³

A further peculiarity of the west march was the presence, several miles north of Carlisle, of an area of land claimed by both kingdoms. This had become known by the mid fifteenth century as the 'debatable land' and comprised the parishes of Kirkandrews-on-Esk and Cannonbie.³⁴ Particular customs governed the status of this area which stated that it was to be kept clear of habitation and used as common pasture for both English and Scots. Animals could graze there during the day, but any beasts left on that ground after sunset were not protected by law from theft. Certain episodes suggest that the interpretation of these customs was subtle. For example, the lifting of cattle from the debatable ground was a constant bone of contention between the English and Scottish wardens. In 1517 Dacre complained to his counterpart on the Scottish west marches, Lord Maxwell, that Scots had driven cattle off the debatable ground. Maxwell disagreed and claimed that the animals had been taken according to the custom of the marches.³⁵ Later, in 1531 Ambrose Armstrong was killed attempting to remove horses belonging to the Musgraves. The resulting conflict caused the men of Bewcastledale and Gilsland to assemble until the sheriff arrived to diffuse the situation.³⁶ Particular issues could create tension between the inhabitants of the region for long periods of time: rights to the revenues of the lucrative fish garths on the river Esk were a source of irritation for decades and became the

³³ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 1, nos. 4518, 4520; vol. 4.1, no. 278.

³⁴ J. M. Todd, 'The West March on the Anglo-Scottish Border in the Twelfth Century and the Origins of the Debatable Land', *NH*, 43 (2006), p. 12. See map 4, p. xii above.

³⁵ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 2.2, nos. 3328, 3393.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 5, no. 477.

focal point for the competing claims of sovereignty in the debatable land by both crowns.³⁷

Lawless clans, particularly the Armstrongs and the Grahams, often made their homes in this area and attracted the ire of both kingdoms. Such men might also be brought into the allegiance of the kings of England or Scotland when the need arose. The warden's commission gave him the capacity to swear rebels from the opposing realm as the king's lawful subjects. We have seen how the duke of Gloucester received the service of the Liddesdale men in exchange for their tenure of lands in Bewcastledale.³⁸ Such links could provide a valuable addition to the warden's military forces in times of war and also gave him the capacity to incite unrest across the border. Thomas, Lord Dacre was particularly active in stirring up trouble for the Scottish government.³⁹ His connections with the border clans, many of whom were considered 'Scots' by people outside the Dacre circle, brought him into conflict with his neighbours, however. In 1524 Dacre advised Sir Thomas Musgrave not to pursue his feud with Jasper Noble, who 'was always true to Dacre.'⁴⁰ In 1528 a series of accusations was leveled against William, Lord Dacre that his tenants and servants were aiding and abetting known Scottish felons whom he had allowed to settle on the debatable ground.⁴¹ The continuing hostilities with Scotland at this time meant the government could do little since Dacre's cooperation was so vital to the defence of the frontier. Six years later, however, the situation was more stable and the accusations leveled against Dacre in his indictment for treason centred round his relations with the border clans.

It would be a mistake to view the Anglo-Scottish conflicts of the later Middle Ages as purely a contest between two neighbouring kingdoms. At times, certainly, the conflict did develop into something resembling a national struggle, but this situation was not permanent, as is demonstrated by the regular treaties of

³⁷ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.1, no. 968; Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law*, pp. 165-66.

³⁸ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 13.2, app. no. 32.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 2.1, no. 779.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 4.1, no. 2.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 4.2, nos. 4420, 4421.

peace that were concluded between the two kingdoms throughout the period.⁴² Much more detrimental to public order on the marches was the general mistrust that existed among the inhabitants of the region. While the crowned heads of the two kingdoms might find it convenient to make peace from time to time, it was much more difficult for the inhabitants of the marches to put aside hostilities that might date back a hundred years or more. Cross-border feuds were a constant irritation for the governments of both England and Scotland. We have seen evidence of conflict between the Musgraves and the Nobles. In 1524 Dacre also wrote to the earl of Surrey informing him of 'the great variance' between the Horselys, Claverings and Kerrs.⁴³ Among the border clans, allegiance to either crown was fickle and largely determined by which kingdom supported the clan's traditional enemies rather than by geography. The propensity of the borderers for feuding with each other and their complete disregard for the national frontier necessitated the development of a particular sort of law that was capable of prosecuting cross-border offences. This required the cooperation of officials on both sides of the border.

Cynthia Neville has charted the development of a system of border law from the mid thirteenth century, a law ostensibly based on the immemorial custom of the marches. The irony here is that the 'immemorial custom' cited by the regional inhabitants was in a state of constant flux, being revised as often as the situation required.⁴⁴ These constant revisions are indicative of a flexible attitude on the part of the regional political community to the problems of administering justice in the borderlands. The border laws were agreed upon by the commissioners of both kingdoms and covered violent crimes such as murder, arson and theft, as well as activities such as sowing corn, pasturing cattle or hunting in the opposite realm which caused tension between the subjects of each kingdom. Cases of cross-border crime were tried before a mixed jury of Englishmen and Scotsmen at 'days of march' organized at regular intervals by

⁴² Truces were called between the two kingdoms in 1464, 1465, 1474, 1482, 1484, 1486, 1489-91, 1493 and 1497, culminating in the Treaty of Perpetual Peace in 1502 which collapsed in 1513; Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law*, p. 225.

⁴³ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.1, no. 25.

⁴⁴ Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law*, p. 195.

the wardens. The law code allowed for the 'hot pursuit' of raiders across the border and required each warden to deliver any persons in his jurisdiction indicted for cross-border offences to the days of march for trial. The system also provided for the taking of sureties to control regional feuding.⁴⁵

As the functioning of the border courts required the co-operation of officials from both realms, the courts were severely affected by changes in relations between the two kingdoms. In times of open war cross border raiding became acceptable and indictments for murder, arson and theft were correspondingly rare. At these times the chief judicial function of the warden was primarily to prosecute those suspected of spying for the enemy.⁴⁶ In times of peace there could be a remarkable level of cooperation between the two kingdoms. In 1504, Thomas, Lord Dacre joined forces with James IV when the latter came to burn the houses of the outlaw clans who had settled on the debatable ground. Dacre took the opportunity to fleece the Scottish monarch of a substantial sum at cards which might seem a trivial detail, but which shows the level of cordiality which could exist between representatives of two often hostile governments.⁴⁷ That representatives of the English and Scottish governments could work together against the most disreputable elements of border society in times of peace demonstrates how diplomatic relations between the two nations, and the great powers of Europe, could directly influence the lives of the political community on the frontier.

The functioning of cross-border justice was hampered by the connections that existed between figures within the administrative system and the reiving clans that inhabited the marches.⁴⁸ The dual function of the warden as both a military leader and judicial officer created a conflict of interest: in order to secure the support of the border clans in times of war, the warden and his officials were often required to 'wink' at these clans' misdemeanors in times of peace. This was often undertaken with the full knowledge of the government: in 1532,

⁴⁵ *History and Antiquities*, vol. 1, pp. xv-xx.

⁴⁶ Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law*, p. 161.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 172; *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland*, vol. 2, pp. 451-55.

⁴⁸ James, *Change and Continuity*, p. 8.

William Dacre received instructions from Henry VIII that he was to 'entertain those of Liddesdale so that they may be more willing to serve the king', while the duke of Norfolk was concerned that many of the borderers pensioned by the crown in 1537 were notorious thieves and murderers.⁴⁹ It was the extent of these relationships that might cause problems. Dacre was charged with treason in 1534 when it was alleged that, as warden, he had made alliances with certain families in Scotland who would be allowed to plunder the lands of Dacre's enemies in England with impunity.⁵⁰ As we have seen, the efforts to discredit Dacre were motivated by a desire on the part of the central government to break the family's control over the border region. Nevertheless, the accusations are indicative of the fine line trod by regional officials in the borderlands: the effective execution of public office often required questionable dealings with the criminal element in the region. Without the generous salary granted to previous wardens, the Dacres were forced to rely on their own resources. The family's greatest resource was its access to the manpower offered by the border clans which could be persuaded to follow the warden for inducements other than financial.

The conflict of interest between the judicial and military aspects of frontier administration presented a problem for the government in that the defence of the marches could most effectively be undertaken by powerful nobles who resided near the frontier, yet it was difficult to get impartial justice from these same figures. In delegating responsibility for the administration of the marches to the leading families of the region, the government ran the risk of creating overmighty subjects who were capable of utilizing their military power against the crown itself. An attempt to resolve the conflict between providing security on the northern border and controlling the northern nobility and gentry was one of the main driving forces behind government policy with regards to the frontier.

Different administrations had different responses to this situation. Edward IV, as we have seen, was in a good position to attempt some

⁴⁹ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 5, no. 1079; vol. 12.1, nos. 319, 332; Bush, 'The Problem of the Far North', p. 46.

⁵⁰ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 7, no. 962.

restructuring of the government of the northern marches. The destruction of the Nevilles had removed one of the dominant players from the region and the deaths of Henry VI and his son had removed the obvious rallying point for those disaffected with the Yorkist regime. As we have seen in preceding chapters, Edward IV allowed his brother, Richard, duke of Gloucester to acquire a commanding influence over the civil government in the region. Gloucester's power was not based on landholding; rather it was his position as warden of the west march and control of the estates and patronage belonging to that office which gave the duke such a high level of regional influence.⁵¹ This, added to the duke's position as chief justice, keeper of forests and the domination of the county benches by his servants and followers, gave him control over all aspects of both civil and military administration in the far northwest.

Richard of Gloucester was nominated as warden of the west march following his brother's return to the throne in 1471.⁵² The warden's office at this time included the captaincy of Carlisle and the nomination to the constabulary of the border fort at Bewcastle as well as a considerable salary. The duke selected his own followers to key positions in the administration of the frontier. Sir John Huddleston added the office of deputy warden to the shrievalty of Cumberland in 1475. Humphrey, Lord Dacre, Ralph, Lord Greystoke, Sir William Parr and Sir Richard Radcliffe were also prominent in the administration of the frontier at this time.⁵³ Dacre was a particularly useful adherent as his lands were directly adjacent to the border and he had many connections among the clans of the region. Cynthia Neville has downplayed the duke's role in the day to day business of the administration of the frontier, suggesting that his servants deferred to the earl of Northumberland in matters of compensation and redress for injuries done on the marches.⁵⁴ While ably supported by servants with knowledge of the region, the duke himself was a relative novice when it came to

⁵¹ Hicks, 'Richard, Duke of Gloucester and the North', p. 20.

⁵² Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law*, pp. 155-56.

⁵³ *Rot. Scot.*, vol. 2, pp. 430-31, 433, 434, 438, 438-39; *Foedera*, vol. 5.3, pp. 33-34.

⁵⁴ Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law*, p. 156.

the intricacies of border politics in comparison with Northumberland, whose family had ruled the marches for generations.

While the earl of Northumberland may have taken the lead in the administration of the border courts, Gloucester was at the forefront of military operations against the Scots.⁵⁵ Edward IV and James III had sealed a truce in 1464, but relations deteriorated in the late 1470s and 1480s following Edward's invasion of France in 1475. This situation provided the duke with the opportunity to increase his already significant influence in the border region. Alexander Grant has argued that the ultimate aim of Gloucester's warlike attitude was the acquisition of territory for himself in southwestern Scotland.⁵⁶ The atmosphere of tension between the two kingdoms is apparent as early as June 1477 when there were reports of bands of Scotsmen and women active in Yorkshire burning houses and buildings.⁵⁷ The situation continued to worsen and in May 1480 Edward IV named his brother as lieutenant-general in the North with the power to call out all of the king's lieges in the marches and the adjacent counties.⁵⁸ The duke led devastating raids into Scotland in 1482 which resulted in the return of Berwick to English hands and the occupation of some lands on the Scottish west march.⁵⁹ During these campaigns the duke knighted several of his followers from among the northwestern gentry who later became prominent servants in his household.⁶⁰ No doubt his military success against the Scots was one of the reasons for Richard's continuing popularity in the north. It also worked to vindicate Edward IV's policy of administration by delegation on the marches, although the actual achievements of the campaign may have fallen well short of the king's aspirations.

⁵⁵ Pollard, *Northeastern England*, pp. 232-37.

⁵⁶ A. Grant, 'Richard III and Scotland', in *The North of England in the Age of Richard III*, ed. A. Pollard (New York: St Martin's Press, 1996), p. 125.

⁵⁷ *CPR 1476-1483*, p. 50.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 205.

⁵⁹ *Cely Letters, 1472-88*, ed. R. Hanham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 164; *Rot. Parl.*, vol. 6, pp. 204-5; A. Grant, 'Richard III and Scotland', p. 125.

⁶⁰ Gloucester dubbed William Redman, Richard Radcliffe, Thomas Broughton, Robert Harrington and Richard Huddleston; Hicks, 'Dynastic Change', pp. 103-7.

As we have seen already, the culmination of Gloucester's power in the far northwest was the grant of an hereditary interest in the crown lands in Cumberland and the right to appoint the county sheriff, as well as the captaincy of Carlisle Castle and the office of warden of the west march for himself and his heirs. The duke was to rule any lands he conquered in southwestern Scotland with palatine authority. This grant secured complete control over all aspects of both the civil and military administrations in the region for Gloucester and his heirs. The duke was obliged to pay only £100 per year in return for all the king's revenues in Cumberland.⁶¹ In this way Edward IV sought to guarantee a profit from a region that was costing more money to defend than it was generating. That this policy was considered feasible is indicative of the isolation of the west march. Richard was no doubt seen as a more reliable agent for the crown than many other northern noblemen and the king had no qualms at all about allowing his brother to acquire a commanding influence in the far northwest. This policy is indicative of the ties of personal loyalty that were a feature of the government of Edward IV.⁶² Edward could afford to delegate virtually every aspect of government north of the river Trent to his brother without feeling that this threatened his own position as king. The great failure of Edward IV's reign was that he could not foresee that the edifice of royal government he had created with himself as the hub could not survive his own unexpected death. Within months of Edward's demise, Gloucester and Northumberland's northern armies had marched south and secured the duke's accession as Richard III.

As king, Richard continued his aggressive stance towards Scotland. In February 1484 he planned to personally lead a campaign against the Scots, commencing in the summer.⁶³ These grandiose ambitions were scaled down in the face of growing opposition both at home and abroad; nevertheless, the prosecution of hostilities with the Scots by land or sea remained a high priority

⁶¹ *Rot. Parl.*, vol. 6, pp. 204-5; R. Horrox, *Richard III: A Study in Service* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 71.

⁶² Ross, *Edward IV*, p. 299.

⁶³ *Letters of the Kings of England*, ed. J. O. Halliwell (London: HMSO, 1848), pp. 156-57.

throughout the reign.⁶⁴ Richard immediately implemented reforms aimed at maintaining his own influence on the borders. Far from being excised from the central administration, the region was now under closer supervision by the crown than at any time before. The king retained the warden's office in his own hands and appointed Humphrey Dacre as his deputy. Dacre performed all the day to day duties of the warden and was responsible for the defence of the march just as the Nevilles had been, yet the terms of his commission were much more stringent than those issued under previous administrations. His salary was slashed from the £1,250 per annum in peace time offered to the earl of Salisbury in 1454 to £100 per year and he was given no special consideration for expenses incurred during times of war.⁶⁵ The truce agreed in 1484 between Richard III and James III required that its provisions be upheld in ordinary law courts rather than at the days of march and that royal councillors become involved in the adjudication of border disputes. This left the warden with much less scope for independent action than the truce of 1473.⁶⁶ This was a turning point in the development of the office, bringing it firmly under royal supervision and diminishing its standing as a basis for regional noble influence.⁶⁷ The reign of Richard III saw increased royal interest in the north generally and these developments on the marches occurred at the same time as the development of the Council in the North provided increased royal oversight of regional government in Yorkshire. While the Council in the North may have remained separate from the administration of the marches at this time, many of the same personnel were involved in both organizations. Dacre, Sir William Parr and Sir Richard Radcliffe were involved in both the council and the administration of the frontier, while Richard's heir and president of the Council in the North, John de la Pole, earl of Lincoln, appeared as a conservator of the truce in 1484.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Grant, 'Richard III and Scotland', pp. 134-35.

⁶⁵ R. L. Storey, 'The Wardens of the Marches of England Towards Scotland', *EHR*, vol. 72 (1957), p. 606.

⁶⁶ *Foedera*, vol. 12, p. 237; Grant, 'Richard III and Scotland', p. 142.

⁶⁷ Storey, 'The Wardens of the Marches', p. 608.

⁶⁸ *Foedera*, vol. 12, p. 243; Reid, *King's Council*, p. 59.

In contrast to Richard III, Henry VII was not popular in the north and for this reason he had to tread carefully in his dealings with both northern political society and the Scots.⁶⁹ Stephen Ellis has observed two distinct phases in the attitudes of Tudor governments towards the administration of the peripheries of the kingdom. Henry VII was more concerned to secure his position in lowland England and protect himself from the reemergence of overmighty subjects in the north and was therefore prepared to continue the policies of his predecessor.⁷⁰ We have seen how the change of dynasty in 1485 did not radically alter the personnel involved in the civil administration of the region. The same is true of the military apparatus in the far northwest. Henry maintained Richard III's policy of holding the wardenry of the west march in his own hands and he continued to employ Richard's servants as his deputies. Thomas, Lord Dacre took over the deputy wardenship from his recently deceased father in 1485 and began a career as the chief regional officer on the borders that would last for the next forty years.⁷¹ The terms of Dacre's office were similar to those offered to his father by Richard III. The effectiveness of this policy was apparent to Henry VII and the murder of the earl of Northumberland in 1489 provided the king with the opportunity to acquire personal control over the wardenry of the east and middle marches as well. While these offices were nominally in the hands of the king's sons, their functions were carried out by another former Ricardian supporter, Thomas Howard, earl of Surrey.⁷²

The reign of Henry VII witnessed a steady improvement in relations with Scotland. Like England, Scotland experienced internal unrest in 1488, which resulted in the death of James III. The subsequent period of political uncertainty turned the attention of the Scottish leadership inwards and prevented it from seeking any advantage from the instability in England.⁷³ Once secure on his throne, James IV was happy to see unrest south of the border from which he

⁶⁹ E. Cavell, 'Henry VII, the North of England and the Provincial Progress of 1486', *NH*, vol. 39 (2002), p. 188.

⁷⁰ Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, p. 260.

⁷¹ Cockayne, *Complete Peerage*, vol. 4, pp. 20-21.

⁷² *CPR 1485-94*, p. 314.

⁷³ Macdougall, *James IV*, p. 62.

might make gains like the recovery of Berwick. This attitude is indicated by his support of Yorkist pretenders in the early 1490s.⁷⁴ Following the resolution of the Perkin Warbeck affair and a brief period of open hostility in 1496-7, diplomatic relations began to improve. This *détente* culminated in the signing of a treaty of perpetual peace between the two kingdoms, sealed by the marriage of James to Henry's daughter Margaret.⁷⁵ The treaty also included new provisions agreed to by the English and Scottish commissioners relating to the prosecution of cross-border felonies which were to become a blueprint for the continuing development of march law for the rest of the century.⁷⁶ The peace endured for the remainder of Henry VII's reign and ushered in a hitherto unknown period of co-operation between officials of the two kingdoms. We have seen how James IV and Lord Dacre were able to work together in a punitive expedition into the debatable land at this time. Incidents of cross-border crime still occurred during this period, but the cordial relations between the two kingdoms meant that localized disputes were not allowed to escalate into open war: even the murder of one of the Scottish wardens at a day of march was not allowed to seriously jeopardize the relationship.⁷⁷

The Treaty of Perpetual Peace fell apart in the early years of Henry VIII's reign. The resumption of open hostilities between England and Scotland in 1513 was a consequence of a shift in international politics rather than a product of local issues. Like his grandfather, Edward IV, Henry VIII's continental ambitions led to an English invasion of France. This in turn involved France's ally, Scotland, in hostilities with England.⁷⁸ The renewed conflict required the rethinking of government policy in relation to the marches. The commissions of array issued for the northwestern counties in July 1511 were primarily local in character. In Cumberland the commissioners included Lord Dacre and his brother as well as John Pickering who was sheriff, John Musgrave, John

⁷⁴ Arthurson, *The Perkin Warbeck Affair*, p. 2; Macdougall, *James IV*, pp. 118-19.

⁷⁵ M. Perry, *Sisters to the King: The Tumultuous Lives of Henry VIII's Sisters- Margaret of Scotland and Mary of France* (London: André Deutsch, 1998), p. 52.

⁷⁶ *Rot. Scot.*, vol. 2, pp. 548-51.

⁷⁷ Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law*, p. 172.

⁷⁸ D. Head, 'Henry VIII's Scottish Policy: A Reassessment', *Scottish Historical Review*, vol. 61 (1982), pp. 1-24; McDougall, *James IV*, p. 257.

Radcliffe and Ambrose Crackenthorpe, while in Westmorland Lord Clifford, Henry Bellingham, Thomas Parr, Thomas Warcop and Edward Musgrave were involved.⁷⁹ The commissions issued the next year were indicative of the heightened state of tension on the borders as the two kingdoms geared up for war. These commissions were much more inclusive, containing certain regional figures whom the government may not have considered completely reliable under other circumstances. Most of those from the previous year's commission were still present, but they were joined by the earl of Derby and Sir Edward Stanley in Westmorland and Sir William Percy in Cumberland. Both of these new commissions were headed by the earl of Surrey who was dispatched to the north to oversee the defence of the region as Henry embarked for France.⁸⁰

The presence of the Stanleys and the Percys indicates that the government did not take lightly the seriousness of the threat posed by the Scots while the king was absent. The government wanted to ensure that every available man could be mobilized in the event of a Scottish invasion, and the Stanley and Percy tenants in the far northwest were much more likely to respond positively to their own lords than to a summons from the warden or even the earl of Surrey. This was clearly demonstrated during the battle when the Stanley followers under the command of Surrey's son fled rather than risk their lives under an unfamiliar leader. The balladeers of Cheshire and Lancashire tried hard to lay this conduct at the feet of Lord Howard rather than their countrymen, 'because they knew not their captain.'⁸¹ The poems composed in this region highlight the role of the Stanleys in the English victory. They focus a great deal on the martial traditions of certain northwestern families⁸² and the connections that existed between

⁷⁹ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 1, no. 1799. The presence of Musgrave family members on both commissions is indicative of that family's landed influence in both counties, as discussed in chapter 2.

⁸⁰ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 1, no. 3358. Derby's uncle Sir William Stanley had been executed for involvement with Perkin Warbeck and the Tudors seem never to have completely trusted the Percies. Chrimes, *Henry VII*, pp. 85, 215.

⁸¹ 'Scottish Field', in *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*, ed. J. W. Hales and F. J. Furnivall, vol. 1 (Detroit: Singing Tree Press, 1968), p. 225.

⁸² *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 199-234; and 'Flodden Field', in *ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 313-40.

nobles and gentry and their tenants and followers. No doubt such a mentality would also be present among the gentry in Cumberland and Westmorland.

Evidence suggesting that the borders remained less developed than regions further south can be drawn from the military organization of the region. Military historians have pinpointed the sixteenth century as a turning point in the development of warfare. The advent of increasingly effective fortifications required the development of modern, professional armies, paid by the state, which could remain on campaign for several years at a time, long enough to reduce these forts by siege. These forces gradually superseded the baronial retinues and local levies that composed medieval armies and led to the development of a more sophisticated and centrally controlled military machine.⁸³ These standing armies evolved from the royal household troops and permanent garrisons of the medieval period and in wealthy states with exposed frontiers, such as the Italian cities and France, these developments were well underway at the beginning of the sixteenth century.⁸⁴ Contemporary theorists believed England's position as an island militated against the need to raise a permanent standing army for defence, and it has been argued that military development occurred more slowly here than on the continent.⁸⁵ Certainly this seems to have been the case on the borders during the reigns of the Yorkist and early Tudor monarchs. Border defence in this period was, in practice if not in theory, still based around the personal following of a lord. The warden of the march was the chief military officer on the frontier and had the authority to raise at the expense of the crown all the 'fencible men' between the ages of sixteen and sixty in his jurisdiction in order to wage war against the Scots. The capacity of the wardens to command this manpower, however, was dependent on feudal factors such as

⁸³ M. Roberts, 'The Military Revolution', pp. 195-223; M. Duffy, 'Introduction: The Military Revolution and the State, 1500-1800', in *The Military Revolution and the State 1500-1800*, ed. M. Duffy, Exeter Studies in History No. 1 (Exeter: Joseph Banks and Son, 1980), pp. 1-9; G. Parker, *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West 1500-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 17.

⁸⁴ Phillips, *The Anglo-Scottish Wars*, p. 43.

⁸⁵ C. Oman, *A History of the Art of War in the Sixteenth Century* (London: Greenhill Military Paperbacks, 1991), pp. 285-87. Phillips takes issue with this view, citing the influence of mercenaries, which kept English military developments up to date with what was taking place on the continent. Phillips, *The Anglo-Scottish Wars*, p. 42.

their personal connections and landed influence in the locality rather than the strength of their commission from the crown.

In terms of the methods used to raise these armies in 1513, Scotland remained possibly even more feudal than northern England. James IV, however, had made in-depth preparations for his invasion of England. The army he mustered in 1513 was the largest, most well equipped and most expensive host ever assembled by a Scottish monarch. The Scots had received training in the very latest tactics employed by the incredibly successful Swiss mercenaries on the continent and were well supplied with artillery.⁸⁶ The earl of Surrey, on the other hand, fought the Flodden campaign with an army raised from the shire levies of the northern counties and those borderers who were allied, for the time being at least, with the English. Even the weapons utilized by the English in this theatre of operations reveal the region's attachment to a passing era. The English met the modern Scottish pike formations with an army largely equipped with bills and bows, the same weapons that had proved so devastating in the French wars a hundred years before.⁸⁷ The point to be made here is that Surrey's army, in terms of both weaponry and the means employed to raise the force, was virtually obsolete in comparison with those employed on the continent at the time of the Flodden campaign.

Identifying with any degree of certainty those men from the far northwest who were present at the battle is not easy. Henry, Lord Clifford, with men from Westmorland and the Yorkshire dales, is reported by Hall as being in the forward battle of the army under the command of Surrey's son, Thomas, Lord Howard.⁸⁸ No indication is given as to the numbers of his tenants who accompanied him there. Clifford's son Sir Henry, the future earl of Cumberland, was already serving in France with sixty men so it is possible the Clifford contingent was somewhat diminished, but William Warcop from Westmorland was certainly

⁸⁶ Phillips, *The Anglo-Scottish Wars*, p. 111; N. Barr, *Flodden 1513: Scotland's Invasion of Henry VIII's England* (Gloucester: Tempus, 2001), pp. 40-47.

⁸⁷ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 1, no. 5090.

⁸⁸ E. Hall, *Henry VIII* (London: T. C. & E. C. Jack, 1904), p. 100.

present as he was killed during the battle.⁸⁹ Lord Dacre held an independent command of some 3,000 light cavalry that were positioned on the right flank of the English army. Of those recorded to have been present in his company were Dacre's brothers Christopher and Phillip. The former was among the forty gentlemen knighted by Surrey after the battle, while the latter was captured during the initial contact between the two armies and subsequently ransomed. Also serving with Dacre and knighted on field was Sir Edward Musgrave.⁹⁰ Of the men under the warden's command, approximately half were his own tenants from Gilsland and Eskdale.⁹¹ Making up the other half of Dacre's force, however, were Lord Darcy's men of Tynedale and Bamburgh, who, like the Stanley tenants under Lord Howard, fled at the outset of the battle.

The conduct of the borderers during this engagement indicates the problems involved in relying on these men in battle, particularly when they were supposed to fight their friends and neighbours who might be present in the opposing army. The men of the east marches fled almost immediately from Dacre's command and later returned to pillage the baggage trains of both the English and the Scottish armies. Dacre himself was later subject to allegations that his own men had been reluctant to engage the troops of Lord Home during the battle due to some private arrangement between the two.⁹² Such allegations continued to dog English and Scottish armies throughout the sixteenth century. This indicates the close-knit and porous nature of society on the frontiers and the connections that existed between the inhabitants of the region regardless of the presence of the frontier. The borderers were perfectly happy to raid and kill each other for their own private reasons but they were less inclined to risk their own lives, or those of their neighbours, at the behest of the government in London or Edinburgh.

These connections were not just apparent among the border clans, but also among leading members of regional political society. Over the preceding

⁸⁹ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 1, no. 4307; 'Scottish Field', p. 225.

⁹⁰ D. Laing 'A Contemporary Account of the Battle of Flodden', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol. 7 (1867), pp. 141-52; *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 1, no. 5090.

⁹¹ C. Bates, 'Flodden Field', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, vol. 16 (1892), p. 358.

⁹² *LP Henry VIII*, vol.1, no. 4520.

decade, Thomas Dacre had formed good personal relationships with several members of the Scottish court including the Treasurer and the bishop of Glasgow. He was in regular contact with Lord Home and his brother the abbot of Kelso, who held lands adjacent to Dacre's on the Scottish west march, as well as with Gawain Douglas, postulate of Arbroath who intrigued with the English in the hope of being raised to the archbishopric of St Andrew's.⁹³ In the prelude to James IV's invasion Dacre used these contacts to good effect in acquiring intelligence and attempting to delay any Scottish action by diplomatic means until the English were better prepared.⁹⁴

These contacts proved just as important in the years following the Flodden campaign. The death of James IV created a political crisis in Scotland as different factions vied for control of the government during the long minority of James V. Dacre was able to foment dissension within the Scottish government between those lords who favoured peaceful relations with England and those who preferred to maintain the alliance with France. This split in the polity of the Scottish lords was largely the result of the actions of the Queen. Following the death of her husband, Margaret had married Archibald Douglas, earl of Angus.⁹⁵ Angus was deeply unpopular in Scotland and instead of allowing him to have the rule of the country many Scottish nobles preferred to support the pro-French duke of Albany, who took control of the government in 1514.⁹⁶ The English were keen to support the claims of Angus to the regency and to this end fomented unrest on the borders to destabilize Albany's rule. Dacre made payments to Lord Home, who had been outlawed by Albany's administration, and offered to outlaw his own brother so that Sir Christopher Dacre and Home could unite and raise havoc in Scotland without violating the truce that was in place between the two kingdoms.⁹⁷ The Dacre brothers also entered into a pact with Home and the earl of Arran to support Queen Margaret

⁹³ *Ibid.*, no. 4403; vol. 2.1, no. 43.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, nos. 4951, 5438, 5641.

⁹⁵ Perry, *Sisters to the King*, p. 77.

⁹⁶ Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*, p. 219.

⁹⁷ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 2.1, no. 850.

and Angus against Albany.⁹⁸ Dacre was in frequent contact with Queen Margaret, through whom Henry VIII hoped to acquire control over his nephew, the infant James V.⁹⁹ Dacre conveyed the Queen to safety at Harbottle Castle in Northumberland when the situation in Scotland deteriorated and seems to have been considered as something of a sympathetic ear by Margaret when her attempts to control the political situation went terribly wrong and angered her brother Henry.¹⁰⁰

Albany desperately wanted peace with England in order to secure his own position in Scotland. Henry had less interest in peace, though he seems to have given Albany the impression that he was receptive to Scottish overtures. Albany was under the impression that it was Dacre and the borderers who were keen to continue hostilities. He wrote on several occasions to Henry in 1515 that the inhabitants of the marches prevented the English monarch from knowing his desire for peace.¹⁰¹ Letters from the English government suggest that Dacre was operating with the full knowledge and encouragement of the king, however.¹⁰² Here we see an example of the central government actively encouraging disruption on the frontier. This stands in marked contrast to Henry VII's efforts in promoting an atmosphere of co-operation on the borders. A certain level of cross-border raiding and feuding was always present on the marches: governments sought to either control or escalate this situation depending on the state of diplomatic relations between the two kingdoms. Diplomatic relations between England and Scotland, as we have seen, were often determined by large-scale developments in the relations between the major continental powers.

The hostilities following the Flodden campaign were eventually concluded with a truce negotiated in October 1516.¹⁰³ There was a resumption of negotiation for redress for damages done on both sides of the border, although

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 1044.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, nos. 48, 51, 62.

¹⁰⁰ Perry, *Sisters to the King*, p. 126.

¹⁰¹ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 2.1, nos. 1024, 1026.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, no. 2293.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, no. 2494.

these seem to have been conducted with a certain air of acrimony.¹⁰⁴ Good relations between the wardens of the marches were imperative for the effective functioning of the border tribunals. Dacre and Home had evidently got along very well, but evidence of tension emerges when Albany's government replaced the unreliable Home as warden of the Scottish west march. Home's replacement was Lord Maxwell whose relations with his English counterpart were a little strained.¹⁰⁵ Dacre was annoyed when Maxwell did not show up for his first meeting as warden with Dacre's son, Sir William. Maxwell was very active against the lawless clans in the debatable land and later on the pair disagreed over the lifting of several hundred head of cattle from that area. Maxwell wrote to Dacre saying that he marveled greatly at Dacre's unkindness towards him, and later Dacre complained of raids against his own lands by Maxwell, which resulted in the abduction of several workmen.¹⁰⁶

The truce of 1516 was, from the English perspective at least, merely a brief respite from hostilities. Dacre wrote to Wolsey in March 1517 that he had negotiated an extension of the truce for another month and suggested that the peace be maintained until winter. By that time the warden hoped to have gathered enough strength to destroy a great part of the border.¹⁰⁷ The terms of the truce required the English to hand over Scottish fugitives, yet Dacre pleaded ignorance of the whereabouts of members of the Home family, who were considered traitors by Albany's regime.¹⁰⁸ The Homes were in fact at Cawmills on the middle march, and Dacre asked Wolsey if he could send them £100 to fund their activities against Albany.¹⁰⁹ Dacre was a continuing annoyance for Albany's government in Scotland; on one occasion the duke is reported to have

¹⁰⁴ Colourful insults were directed at Sir Robert Grey by the Kerrs at a day of march in December 1516. The Scottish wardens promised to enforce their obedience on the condition that the English make restitution for damage done at Cessford. *Ibid.*, no. 2711.

¹⁰⁵ Rae, *Scottish Frontier*, p. 240.

¹⁰⁶ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 2.1, no. 834; vol. 2.2, nos. 3328, 3393; vol. 3.1, no. 1091.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 2.2, no. 3028.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, nos. 3124, 3139.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 3385.

made oblique references suggesting the possible assassination of the English warden at a day of march.¹¹⁰

While Dacre may have been effective as a military leader and spymaster, the state of conflict on the borders following Flodden had revealed to the central administration the problems of relying on regional powers to conduct the defence of the marches. The English government sought to increase its supervision of northern affairs and in March 1522 the king instructed John Kite, bishop of Carlisle to reside in his diocese and act as Dacre's councillor. Kite was a newcomer to the north, but had experience in both international diplomacy and frontier administration, having served in Spain and Ireland. Dacre was required to consult with the bishop on any decisions he made as warden.¹¹¹ This was a stop-gap measure as the letter indicates that Henry was already considering sending a great nobleman to reside in the north to act as king's lieutenant. The bishop's reports to the government were less encouraging than Dacre's own version of events over the previous few years. Kite requested that the king instruct the Lord Clifford to reside on his northern estates in order to better contribute to the defence of the marches. The bishop noted that English thieves were particularly active on the west march, that the countryside was unsafe until one came to within about eight miles of Carlisle and, that because of the conduct of English subjects, this was the worst peace ever observed in the region.¹¹²

The initial response of the government to this situation was to send George, earl of Shrewsbury into the north with a commission to act as lieutenant-general of the army against Scotland.¹¹³ Dacre was eventually removed from the wardenry of the west march shortly before his death in 1525. This action was part of the government's general restructuring of the administration of the north in this period. We have seen how the development of the Council in the North at this time brought increased royal oversight of the civil administration in the far northwest. The government also tried to employ a more accountable figure in the

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 3.2, no. 1883.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, no. 2075; P. Gwyn, *King's Cardinal*, p. 226.

¹¹² *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 3.2, nos. 2271, 2328.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, no. 2439.

warden's office. Dacre's replacement was Henry Clifford, the newly created first earl of Cumberland. Cumberland had been raised at the court of Henry VII and was a close personal friend of Henry VIII. He was without doubt seen as a more reliable servant of the crown than William Dacre whose interests were purely local.

The fact that restructuring of the regional administration in the north could be attempted at this time was a consequence of improved relations with Scotland. A shift in the political situation on the continent meant that France was keen to avoid further hostilities with England. The duke of Albany returned to France and the pro-English faction headed by Angus and Queen Margaret came to power in Scotland.¹¹⁴ Peaceful relations did not greatly reduce regional disorder, however. The induction of the earl of Cumberland as warden of the west march in November 1525 created a host of new problems for the central administration. In times past, squabbles over the warden's office had led to widespread disorder on the marches.¹¹⁵ Thomas Dacre's forty year tenure of the office had been a period of relative stability on the west march at least. Dacre's only real rival for the office, the tenth Lord Clifford, seemed to have had no particular interest in the administration of the frontier.¹¹⁶ The change of personnel in 1525 did stir up resentment between the two families. Thomas Dacre's heir had received a long education under his father in the realities of border politics and inherited all his father's contacts in Scotland and among the lawless border clans. William Dacre was reluctant to hand over those lands and offices his father had controlled as warden without specific instructions from the king.¹¹⁷

Clifford power was based further to the south than Dacre's and problems arose when the earl of Cumberland tried to assert his authority as warden of the

¹¹⁴ The French king Francis I had been captured at the battle of Pavia in February 1525. Under pressure from Spain, France was desperate to avoid confrontation with England as well. Rae, *Scottish Frontier*, p. 157.

¹¹⁵ Griffiths, 'Local Rivalries and National Politics', pp. 589-632.

¹¹⁶ Clifford's reputation suggests he was more interested in alchemy and astrology than war and politics; *The Diaries of Lady Anne Clifford*, ed. D. J. H. Clifford (Gloucester: Sutton, 1990), p. 93.

¹¹⁷ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.1, no. 1762; *Clifford Letters*, no. 27.

northwestern borders.¹¹⁸ Unlike the Dacres, the Cliffords had little influence over the lawless border clans who inhabited the no-man's land between England and Scotland. William Dacre had no interest in restraining the activities of these clans while his rival was in office and in December 1526 the Council in the North wrote to Wolsey complaining that the present truce with Scotland was in fact worse than open war because of the depredations caused by the borderers.¹¹⁹ Dacre power on the borders was augmented by the family's connections with these border thieves, which gave the Dacres a unique advantage over the government's appointed representatives whose power was not so locally based. Of course, these connections also involved the family in the Gordian knot of feuds that were such a characteristic part of border society and, without the added resources of the wardenry at their disposal, Dacre lands and servants were vulnerable to attack from their enemies among the border clans. The earl of Cumberland too could use his influence to make his rival's life difficult. In August 1526 William Dacre complained to Wolsey that the warden's garrisons at Carlisle and the border fort of Bewcastle had not come to his assistance when he had been ambushed by the men of Liddesdale.¹²⁰

Carlisle was the nerve centre of government in the region and control over the town was the key to power on the northwestern border. Most of the leading families in Cumberland held property in the city and it was an important place of refuge in times of trouble.¹²¹ Noble families were keen to ensure the favour of leading citizens: in 1464 John Neville, then warden of the east and middle marches paid an annuity of 15s. to John Aglionby, and later between 1528 and 1534 the earl of Northumberland allowed Edward Aglionby to take a buck and a doe yearly from the forest of Westward.¹²² William Dacre at first refused to relinquish the castle and town to the earl of Cumberland without a

¹¹⁸ Cumberland's tenure as warden is thoroughly discussed in James, 'The First Earl of Cumberland', pp. 43-69, and R. W. Hoyle, 'The First Earl of Cumberland: A Reputation Reassessed', *NH*, vol. 22 (1986), pp. 63-94. See also James, *Change and Continuity*, p. 8; Bush, 'The Problem of the Far North', p. 44.

¹¹⁹ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.2, no. 2729; Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, p. 166.

¹²⁰ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.2, no. 2374.

¹²¹ Carlisle Records Office, Records of the Aglionby Family, D/Ay/1/174.

¹²² *Ibid.*, D/Ay/1/146; D/Ay/1/191; D/Ay/1/200.

specific order from the king and further letters had to be sent reminding Dacre that his tenants were now to obey the earl in his capacity as warden of the march.¹²³ The earl of Cumberland himself took a rather heavy-handed approach to establishing his power in the city. Upon his acquisition of crown lands previously held by the Dacres, he promptly evicted the old tenant and installed his own man. Additionally, when Lord William's uncle, Sir Christopher Dacre was nominated as sheriff of Cumberland in November 1525, the earl refused to grant him access to the lands in Carlisle that were appurtenant to the office.¹²⁴ Needless to say such an abrupt change after forty years of Dacre rule caused some consternation among the inhabitants of the west march which contributed to the apparent regional disorder in this period.

In 1527 the situation changed again when war broke out once more with Scotland. At such a time the borders had to be put in their best defence and there was no room for political maneuvering among either the local aristocracy or the central government. Dacre found himself reinstated as warden of the west march and the recognizances made between him and the crown for his good behaviour were cancelled.¹²⁵ Dacre was busy over the next few years burning and pillaging in Scotland. It appears, however, that his hold over several of the gentry in Cumberland was beginning to loosen at around this time. The Dacres had always been on good terms with the Musgraves in the past, employing them as keepers of the fort at Bewcastle. In April 1528, however, Sir William Musgrave was implicated in the escape from Carlisle Castle of a notorious border thief whom Dacre was holding for trial. Musgrave was ordered by Wolsey to hand over Bewcastle to Dacre, which he did, but not before he had broken all the windows in the place and removed the lead from the roof, making the castle uninhabitable.¹²⁶ The conflict with Sir William Musgrave was annoying to Dacre, but so long as he maintained the support of the Cardinal it was never going to be a significant threat. Shortly after this though Wolsey fell from favour

¹²³ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.1, no. 1763; *Clifford Letters*, no. 27.

¹²⁴ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 4.2, nos. 2052, 2483.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 3747.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 4134.

with Henry VIII and within a year he was dead. His replacement as chief minister, Thomas Cromwell, had rather different ideas about how the borders should be governed than his predecessor.

In 1534 the government decided again that it would attempt to break Dacre power on the northwestern borders. Under Thomas Cromwell, the central administration had been cultivating direct links with local gentry, bypassing the aristocrats who usually served as middle men between the crown and the county knights and squires. Some of the gentry in the far northwest recognized that Cromwell was the dominant influence in the king's council at this time and the Chancellor received ingratiating letters from Sir Thomas Wharton, Sir John Lowther and Sir John Lamplugh.¹²⁷ One of Cromwell's men in northwestern England was Sir William Musgrave, who, as has been seen, needed no prompting to act as the chief instrument of government policy in breaking Dacre influence in the region. Cromwell used the hostility between Dacre and Musgrave and encouraged the latter to make reports to the council of Dacre's questionable activities. Musgrave knew that this would damage his own standing in the region and requested Cromwell's continued support.¹²⁸ By June 1534 Musgrave had gathered or invented enough evidence against Lord Dacre that the government was able to indict the latter for treason and commit him to trial before his peers. Musgrave's evidence claimed that Dacre had used his connections with the border clans to prosecute his feuds against his neighbours, including against Sir William himself. This may well have been true, but the indictment also claimed that Lord Dacre was at the centre of a vast conspiracy involving various Scottish lords, aimed at the complete destruction of the earls of Cumberland and Northumberland. The indictment was thrown out and Dacre was acquitted, largely due to the support he received from influential peers such as his father-in-law, the earl of Shrewsbury, and the duke of Norfolk.¹²⁹ This was surprising to

¹²⁷ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 5, nos. 367, 477, 1317.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. 7, no. 829.

¹²⁹ Shrewsbury had appealed for leniency in the Dacre matter on behalf of his daughter, while Norfolk threatened Musgrave with ruin if he proceeded with his charges. *Ibid.*, nos. 727, 897, 1013; Miller, *Henry VIII and the English Nobility*, pp. 51-57.

contemporaries who knew that those accused of treason at this stage of Henry VIII's reign seldom kept their heads.

Even though Dacre survived, the treason trial achieved its aims in severely weakening the family's influence on the west march. Under pressure from the king, Dacre later confessed to the lesser charge of misprision of treason. The financial penalties he suffered as a result of this were almost enough to ruin him and, added to that, he was forced to reside in London for a long time.¹³⁰ This facilitated the further erosion of his powerbase in the northwest by the gentry servants of Cromwell who were beginning to acquire the reins of power in the locality at the expense of the local aristocracy.

The government was now confronted with the problem of whom to install in the office of warden of the west march. A succession of letters between March and May 1537 between the king and the duke of Norfolk, who was in the north, sum up the issues involved. Norfolk believed that only a nobleman had sufficient authority to rule the border gentry. He acknowledged that Cumberland lived too far from the region and was possibly more concerned with making money from his estates than administering the frontier. The earl of Westmorland was too impulsive to entrust with a military command, especially against the Scots whose tactics relied on stealth and ambush. This left only Dacre, and Norfolk agreed that Dacre could not be reinstated so soon after his treason trial. The king, on the other hand, was convinced that a royal commission should be enough to make the 'meanest man' respected by the northern gentry.¹³¹ Mervyn James concluded that Norfolk's insistence on a nobleman to rule the borders was motivated by a desire to secure his own nomination and thereby create a northern powerbase based on the wardenries and a grant of the Percy estates now in the king's hands. Such ambitions were unacceptable to the king and Cromwell and it was for this reason that the substance of power in the marches was bestowed on the gentry. This view is disputed by M. L. Bush, who suggests that the prospect of spending too many winters on the border was frightening to the aging duke,

¹³⁰ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 7, no. 1601; Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers*, p. 236.

¹³¹ *LP Henry VIII*, vol. 7, nos. 595, 636, 667, 916, 919.

who wished only to return to the south. Bush contends that the employment of the border gentry as deputy wardens under the king was only a stop-gap measure until a suitable nobleman could be found to occupy the office.¹³² The wardenry was again granted to the earl of Cumberland, although this time the actual duties of the office, therefore the real power, were exercised by the earl's deputies Sir Thomas Wharton and Sir John Lamplugh along with thirty-two gentry of the west march.¹³³ These two were under the influence of Cromwell and so, through its patronage of regional gentlemen, the government at this time exercised increased control over the machinery of border administration.

There was resentment in the regional community regarding the government's efforts to install 'new men' to administer the marches. It was one of the particular grievances of the rebels in the far northwest during the Pilgrimage of Grace that the new rulers of the marches, men such as the earl of Cumberland and Sir Thomas Wharton, did not reside themselves on the borders as the Dacres had done.¹³⁴ The government held its nerve, however, and after the defeat of the Pilgrimage opposition to its policies was more subdued. R. W. Hoyle has illustrated the extent of hostility that existed between the leading members of regional political society as a consequence of government intervention in regional politics. Dacre and Cumberland were deeply hostile to one another, and both detested Wharton's growing power in their traditional spheres of influence in Westmorland and on the border. It required the mediation of outside parties, such as the king himself and the earl of Shrewsbury, to diffuse tensions between the leading regional figures.¹³⁵ Wharton's acquisition of the warden's office was by no means the end of aristocratic power on the marches. Wharton himself received large grants of monastic land in the region and was ennobled following his triumph over the Scots at Solway Moss in 1542. William, Lord Dacre was reinstated as warden in 1547 and other leading regional aristocrats, such as the Scropes of Bolton, held the office into the reign of

¹³² Bush, 'The Problem of the Far North', p. 41.

¹³³ James, *Change and Continuity*, p. 28.

¹³⁴ Harrison, *Pilgrimage of Grace*, p. 83; Hoyle, *Pilgrimage of Grace*, p. 251.

¹³⁵ 'Letters of the Cliffords', no. 22; R. W. Hoyle, 'Faction, Feud and Reconciliation amongst the Northern English Nobility, 1525-1569', *NH*, vol. 84 (1999), p. 597.

Elizabeth.¹³⁶ Lord Dacre's trial in 1534 had proved that even the most powerful border lord was not beyond the reach of the crown. The restructuring of frontier administration in the aftermath of the Pilgrimage of Grace had provided the government with more accountable servants in the region than previously. This policy had its drawbacks, however, as these figures were less likely to be obeyed by the fractious inhabitants of the border country. It is no accident that the mid to late sixteenth century became the heyday of the reiving activities of the border clans.¹³⁷

In conclusion, war and the frontier were possibly the most significant forces acting upon the local community in the northwestern counties during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. They affected all aspects of daily life and administration in the region from landholding to the particular legal code that governed the lives of the region's inhabitants. The frontier dictated that aristocrats and gentry had to reside in the border region in order to defend their holdings. War affected the economy in that it determined the types of farming and trade that could be conducted in the region. These effects were not all negative, as might otherwise be assumed. The frontier provided opportunities for figures such as Thomas, Lord Dacre or Sir Thomas Wharton, whose families' fortunes were so intertwined with the wardenry of the march. Conflict brought vast sums of money into the region from outside for the payment of wages to garrison soldiers and the maintenance of fortifications. War and the presence of the frontier were the key factors which made the integration of Cumberland and Westmorland into the system of administration operating throughout the rest of the kingdom a matter of necessity for the central government in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

¹³⁶ Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*, ch. 8.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Conclusions

This thesis has charted the development of political society in Cumberland and Westmorland between 1471 and 1537. The conclusions reached tend to confirm the broad historiography of political society in northern England during the period, with some regional idiosyncrasies. Current scholarship suggests that during the period, the far north of England was a part of the country in which the authority of the crown took second place to the influence of regional aristocrats.¹ Residency and the capacity to defend one's holdings were the key prerequisites for regional influence. This regional influence was linked to landholding which bestowed wealth and reserves of manpower and allowed noblemen to raise private armies of tenants and paid retainers. The king's authority, manifested through a royal commission, was insufficient unless the holder possessed regional influence in his own right.

By virtue of their vast landed resources, the great houses of Neville and Percy had controlled nearly all aspects of administration on the northern frontier since the late fourteenth century. Leading members of both families acquired a virtual monopoly over the military apparatus on the borders, while their followers and adherents dominated positions in local government and the judiciary. Aristocratic influence was enmeshed in the very fabric of society through patronage of monastic institutions and aristocratic involvement in the ecclesiastical life of the region. Distance from the centre of government and close proximity to a hostile enemy made it essential that power devolved to people resident in the area.² The inhabitants of the marches looked towards the resident nobility to defend them from the Scots, rather than to a remote central government. The militarized nature of the frontier encouraged the persistence of feudal customs of tenure and service and it was in service to aristocratic masters that most regional gentlemen sought to make a career. The great lords provided

¹ Beckinsale, 'Characteristics of the Tudor North', pp. 67-83; Dobson, 'The Northern Provinces in the Later Middle Ages', pp. 49-60; James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society*, *passim*.

² Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers and Noble Power*, p. 7.

the link between the court and the regional community and royal authority was disseminated through them.

The existence of powerful aristocratic interests in Cumberland and Westmorland set the region apart from other areas, such as Cheshire and Lancashire, Nottinghamshire, East Anglia and Gloucestershire. These were areas in which there were no powerful resident noblemen and political society was dominated by the local gentry who controlled most of the land as well as key offices in regional administration.³ The far northwest had more in common with regions such as Warwickshire, Derbyshire and the northeastern counties where regional noblemen with vast landed resources dominated political offices and exercised control down to the level of manor and village through their patronage of the local gentry.⁴ There were some local variations to this general theme, however. The barony of Kendal was one area within the far northwestern counties where the gentry could act with a certain degree of autonomy. This was due to the absence of a resident aristocratic overlord in the barony. The government became directly involved in the affairs of Kendal through the Council in the North and links were formed between the crown and the gentry in the barony that contributed to the increase of government control over the region in general.

The period in question saw the gradual devolution of power in the far northwestern counties to men of meaner station. The destruction of the Nevilles in 1471 and the murder of the earl of Northumberland in 1489 brought lesser peers, such as Lord Dacre, to the fore. This occurred as much through necessity as through any conscientious policy on the part of the central administration: there was simply no one else available in such an isolated region who could manage the task effectively. The same problems were apparent in the early sixteenth century as had existed throughout the preceding two hundred years: the defence of such a remote area relied upon a resident figure with a localized

³ Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism*, *passim*; Saul, *Knights and Esquires*, *passim*, and *Scenes from Provincial Life*, *passim*; R. Virgoe, 'Aspects of the Local Community in the Fifteenth Century', pp. 1-13.

⁴ Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, *passim*; Wright, *Derbyshire Gentry*, *passim*; Pollard, *Northeastern England*, *passim*.

powerbase. The difficulty in ousting the region's traditional leaders was brought home to the government by the failure of the earl of Cumberland to effectively govern the northwestern borders in the 1520s and 1530s in the face of Dacre opposition.

In response to the arguments relating to the nature of Tudor government,⁵ this thesis contends that the development of royal authority in Cumberland and Westmorland was opportunistic and pragmatic, rather than the result of a clearly defined policy on the part of the central administration. Government policy developed in the far northwest in response to local stimuli rather than on the initiative of the king and council. Wolsey and Cromwell were able to cultivate direct links with the regional political community and launch attacks on entrenched interests such as the Lord Dacre. These gains were always offset by the perennial problem that only resident noblemen could effectively defend the border regions. Only once it had been made clear to the government that neither Dacre, Clifford nor Percy could govern the region with the crown's interests at heart did the central administration seek alternatives.

The crown was greatly aided in its restructuring of regional administration in the late 1530s by its acquisition of monastic estates. Again it was land at the root of political power. The crown's capacity to directly patronize the regional gentry, not only with grants of office but also with grants of estates and stewardships, brought key figures, such as Sir Thomas Wharton, directly under the influence of the king and council. At the same time these gentry acquired landed estates which gave them control over the manpower in the region. Government attempts to rule the far northwest through meaner men only succeeded when those men were given sufficient landed influence to contend with the resident nobility.

The opening chapter of this thesis has demonstrated the patterns of landholding in Cumberland and Westmorland. The amount of land under the control of different groups in regional political society has been analysed in the

⁵ Davies, 'The Cromwellian Decade', pp. 177-95; Gunn, 'The Structures of Politics', pp. 59-90; Starkey, 'Which Age of Reform?', pp. 13-27.

context of developments in government policy regarding the administration of the peripheries of the kingdom. The analysis demonstrated a strong aristocratic presence in the region which fluctuated in response to developments on both a regional and national level. Events such as the usurpation of Richard III and his subsequent defeat by Henry VII, the murder of the fourth earl of Northumberland, the crown's acquisition of the sixth earl of Northumberland's estates and the dissolution of the monasteries all had an impact on regional landholding in the far northwest; nevertheless, aristocratic influence in the region remained a powerful force long after 1537, as is demonstrated by the government's continued reliance on noblemen in regional administration.

Analysis of landholding also revealed a small cadre of local gentry lineages in the far northwest who tended to control more acres of territory than their counterparts in other regions such as Derbyshire or Cheshire and Lancashire.⁶ These groups of estates were often located in close proximity to each other and suggest areas in which one particular gentry family or another was predominant. Gentry families in the far northwest would often hold multiple estates in both Cumberland and Westmorland, but unlike the gentry of the midlands, only those at the highest level of political society held any lands beyond their little corner of the kingdom.⁷ These large gentry holdings were often worth comparatively less than might be found further to the south. This was due to a number of factors, including the unsuitability of the land and climate for agricultural production as well as the problems created by the region's proximity to Scotland. Feudal relationships bound many tenants to their lords, and tenures based on military service were often sought in preference to money rents, particularly in lordships adjacent to the frontier. Due to the pressures of defence, the gentry in Cumberland and Westmorland were much more likely to be resident in their home region than the gentry in other parts of the kingdom.

⁶ Wright, *The Derbyshire Gentry*, p. 14; Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism*, p. 81.

⁷ Acheson, *A Gentry Community*, p. 134; Carpenter, *Locality and Polity*, *passim*.

The implications of these social and tenorial systems upon regional administration have been explored in chapter two. This chapter has demonstrated that the small number of wealthy gentlemen and their landed and service connections to regional aristocratic houses severely limited the options of the central government when it came to the selection of officials in the civil administration. In spite of dynastic struggles, popular uprisings and the disgrace of regional noblemen, there is a high level of continuity apparent in the personnel selected for regional office throughout the period. The influence of great noblemen such as Gloucester, Northumberland, Dacre and Clifford is evident at all times through the presence of their servants and tenants on the commissions of the peace. The crown might augment these commissions with members of the royal family or trusted servants, but the day to day administration of justice in the region was largely in the hands of local people.

The means employed by the crown to promote its influence in the far northwest varied. Edward IV trusted the continuing loyalty of the duke of Gloucester and was content to allow his brother to dominate offices in regional administration. Richard III maintained his direct links with the regional nobility and gentry as king and ushered in a period of in-depth royal involvement in the affairs of the far northwest. This worked both ways and several northwestern gentlemen with connections to the crown found themselves employed in regions well beyond their normal sphere of influence. Henry VII continued many of his predecessor's policies in relation to the administration of the region. In spite of any latent hostility to the new regime, many former supporters of Richard III retained their positions in regional administration. Most seem to have preferred political stability to dynastic allegiance and only the most die-hard Ricardians or those with particular gripes against the Tudor government became involved with the Yorkist pretenders in the 1480s and 1490s. The use of bonds and recognizances is a hallmark of Henry VII's administration and these were widely employed to ensure the obedience of many northwestern nobility and gentry. In 1509, however, the regional administration was still dominated by regional aristocratic interests.

Efforts aimed at increasing government influence in the region during the reign of Henry VIII centred on the cultivation of direct links between the court and the regional community. This policy is apparent throughout the far north, particularly in the palatinate of Durham, where Cardinal Wolsey used his position as bishop to establish relationships with the county gentry.⁸ Wolsey developed a relationship with the Dacres, and upon the resuscitation of the Council in the North brought several of his gentry clients from the bishopric of Durham into the administration of Cumberland and Westmorland. The expansion of the commissions of the peace at this time is indicative of an increased government involvement in regional affairs. Cromwell employed much the same strategy using different people. The involvement of the Clifford interest, the Whartons and Sir William Musgrave in the indictment of William, Lord Dacre for treason in 1534 is indicative of the capacity of the government to intervene in regional affairs against entrenched local interests. Cromwell's administration exhibited a pragmatic attitude towards the jurisdictional franchise claimed by many northwestern lordships: where these rights worked in favour the crown, the government was content to maintain the status quo, as is shown by Cromwell's response to Clifford encroachments in Kendal.

Chapter three analysed the influence of the Church on regional political society and the consequences of ecclesiastical reform in the far northwest. This chapter has demonstrated a vibrant spiritual life in the region centred around aspects of traditional, Catholic worship such as the sacraments, pilgrimage and the veneration of relics. Far from withdrawing from the world in such an isolated location, churchmen in Cumberland and Westmorland were deeply involved in all levels of political society. The bishop of Carlisle usually resided in his diocese and acted as a link between the court and the region. The Church played an important role as a banker, distributing royal funds to the warden of the march for the defence against the Scots. On a lower level, clergymen filled an important role in the arbitration of local disputes. Such involvement in regional

⁸ James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society*, p. 45.

politics also brought certain monastic institutions in the region into conflict with figures in secular society.

The violent reaction of the regional population to ecclesiastical reform in the 1530s stemmed mainly from their respect for traditional processes of worship rather than support for the pope or regional monastic institutions. Religious grievances in the far northwest intersected at this point with purely secular concerns such as the government's policies with regard to the administration of the frontier as well as the practices of particular landlords in relation to increasing rents and entry fines. The rising was dominated by the lower orders of society who sought the participation of their social superiors, with varying degrees of success. The chief concerns of these people were changes to the liturgy, the veneration of saints and holy days. Parish priests were caught between enforcing government policy in regards to the new forms of worship and angering the traditional sensibilities of their parishioners. Evidence suggests that priests with connections to the government often chose to side with their patrons at court and attempted to enforce the king's wishes in regards to religion. Poorer clergy, who were less well connected, elected to side with their parishioners and many became leaders in the uprising.

The government achieved success in the implementation of its reforms in Cumberland and Westmorland through establishing direct connections with key figures in the regional administration. This was apparent in regards to the Church when Priors Salkeld and Borrowdale meekly handed over control of their institutions to Henry VIII in return for continuing employment in the new order. The redistribution of monastic estates in the late 1530s and 1540s was aimed at enhancing the regional authority of the crown's agents in the far northwest, such as Sir Thomas Wharton. While the act of supremacy might have made Henry VIII the titular head of the English Church, Wharton's large grant of monastic estates indicates that regional political authority in the far northwest still rested with landed influence rather than with the strength of a royal commission.

The final chapter centred on a discussion of the far northwest as a frontier region and highlighted the problems this entailed for regional political society.

This chapter has shown that the status of Cumberland and Westmorland as border shires encouraged a keen interest in the region on the part of the central administration. Large amounts of cash from the royal treasury came into the region to pay for troops and fortifications. In the interests of international relations, the government took pains, when required, to ensure effective processes of complaint and redress between English and Scottish subjects. Likewise, in times of conflict, the central administration sought to harness the warlike and feuding tendencies of the borderers to its own ends.

The execution of royal policy, however, had to be constantly balanced against the requirements of defence. The close relationship between regional aristocratic houses and their servants and tenants, and the mistrust among the regional population for any but their traditional lords, has been a key theme of this thesis. This attitude was clearly demonstrated during the battle of Flodden: neither Dacre nor Howard could control men in battle with whom he had no connection. This close association with regional nobles had significant consequences for the development of royal authority in Cumberland and Westmorland. Government was continually hamstrung by the limited number of choices for regional office present in the far northwest. Reliance on local aristocrats to defend the region was always the central administration's first choice. The duke of Gloucester took over and expanded the role of the Nevilles in border defence with the consent of his brother, the king. Upon the duke's accession as Richard III, the burden of regional defence fell upon his deputy, Lord Dacre. This situation continued throughout the early sixteenth century: Clifford replaced Dacre in 1525, Dacre replaced Clifford in 1527, then Clifford returned again in 1534. 1537 represents a departure point in the policy when responsibility for regional defence was given to a number of gentleman pensioners of the crown under the direction of Sir Thomas Wharton. This thesis does not suggest that this was a deliberate attempt to employ local gentlemen at the expense of regional noblemen, however. The gentry receiving fees from the crown were selected due to their residence on the border, and this indicates that the government was still exercising its power through localized connections

rather than establishing a rival political network. It is evident from Wharton's subsequent elevation to the peerage and the later reinstatement of the Dacres to the warden's office that local aristocratic power remained the dominant influence on political society in the far northwest until well beyond 1537.

In 1537, therefore, the far northwest remained a region in which the power of the resident nobility still outweighed that of the crown. The same needs for local defence still existed in 1537 as were present in 1471. Wharton's generous grant of monastic land and crown stewardships gave him a regional influence equivalent to the regional aristocrats, a fact reflected in his elevation to the dignity of a peer in 1542. William, Lord Dacre was reinstated to the warden's office as well and throughout the remainder of the sixteenth century the administration of the frontier continued to be entrusted to regional aristocrats. By a process of accident and design, the crown had certainly increased its authority in Cumberland and Westmorland in the years between 1471 and 1537. The government had established wider connections within northwestern political society, connections not filtered through the patronage of regional noblemen. Reliable government agents had been installed in key positions in the civil, military and ecclesiastical administrations. Until the problems created by the region's position as a frontier zone were resolved, however, there would always be a strong dependence on the regional nobility for governance and leadership.

Appendix 1: Manorial Lordships in Cumberland and Westmorland¹

Manor:	Overlord:	Tenant:	Rent/service:
Helsington	Lumley	Bindlose	
Natland	Parr	Strickland	Knight Service.
Skalthwaitrigg	Parr		
Hay	Parr		
Hutton	Parr		
Old Hutton	Richmond	Curwen	Socage.
Docker		St. Leonard's	
Lambrigg	Parr	Bellingham	Knight Service.
Greyrigg	Parr	Ducket	
Whinfell	Parr	Redman, Strickland	Knight Service.
Fawcett Forest		Byland Abbey	
Whitwell	Parr	Bellingham	Cornage, wardship and relief.
Selside	Parr	Thornburgh	
Skelsmergh		Laybourne	A pair of gilt spurs.
Patton	Parr	Bellingham	
Burnside	Parr	Bellingham	
Long Sledale	Parr	Thornburgh	Socage, fealty and 6d.
Kentmere	the king	Stapleton	
Staverly	Parr	Hotton	
Rydal		Flemming	
Little Langdale		Pennington	
Windermere	Richmond		
Heversham	Richmond	St. Mary's, Strickland.	
Levins	Parr	Redman.	
Nether Levins	Parr	Levins, Preston	
Stainton	Richmond	Strickland.	
Preston Richard	Parr	Pennington, Huddleston.	
Bethom	Richmond	Bethom, Stanley.	
Witherslack		Harrington, Broughton (1485), Stanley (1487).	
Burton	Parr	Harrington, Middleton.	£1 11s
Preston Patrick	Parr	Preston.	
Kirkby Lonsdale		St. Mary's	
Hutton Roof	Richmond	Moresby	
Lupton	Lumley	Redman, Bellingham (1513).	
Middleton		Middleton	
Killington	Parr	Pickering	
Colby	Clifford	Warcop	6s 10d cornage, wardship, marriage, relief and suit to the county court.
Barwise	Clifford	Roos (1497).	
Hoff	Clifford	Dacre	9s 2d
Crackenthorpe	Clifford	Machel	

¹ The following information is drawn from Denton, 'Estates and Families'; Flemming, 'Description of the County of Cumberland'; Nicolson and Burn, *History and Antiquities*, vols. 1 and 2.

Manor:	Overlord:	Tenant:	Rent/service:
Helton Bacon Murton	Clifford Clifford	Helton Musgrave	£1 12s 4d cornage, £42 wardship.
Langton Dufton	Clifford Clifford	Greystoke, Dacre (1487).	
Marton	Clifford	Anne Plantagenet, the king (1527)	
Brampton	Clifford	Greystoke	Knight service. (homage, fealty, 20s scutage).
Knock Newbiggin Kirkby Thore Temple Sowerby Millburn Brougham Bougham Castle Barton Hartsop Martindale Yanwath Clifton	Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford Parr Parr Parr Clifford Clifford	Lancaster Crackenthorpe Wharton Knights Hospitaller Crackenthorpe Crackenthorpe Fynes Fynes Threlkeld Wyburgh	21s 8d cornage. Homage, fealty, 16s 4d cornage.
Askham Helton Flecket Lowther Whale	Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford	Sandford Sandford Lowther Vernon	20s 4d cornage. 33s cornage, 40s wardship.
Hackthorpe Morland Great Strickland Thrimby Newby Meburn Regis Bolton Cliburn Talbois Cliburn Hervy Bampton Patrick	Parr Richmond Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford	Strickland Wetherall Abbey Fallowfield Harrington Vernon Radcliffe Fraunceys Cliburn Curwen	 Knight service, homage, fealty and scutage.
Bampton Cundal	Clifford	Cliburn	Homage, fealty, £10 10s scutage, 15s 3d cornage.
Shap Rosgill Thornthwaite Hardendale Orton Langdale Tebay Bretherdale Crosby Ravensworth Maud's Meburn Regill Winderwath Asby Cottesford	Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford the king Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford Clifford	Shap Abbey. Salkeld. Curwen Byland Abbey Dacre Watton Priory Wharton Byland Abbey Threlkeld Vernon Shap Abbey Moresby Cottesford	 Fealty, 5s rent. 5s rent. 33s cornage. Homage, fealty 4s 2d.

Manor:	Overlord:	Tenant:	Rent/service:
Little Asby	Clifford	Sandford	2s 10d cornage
Garthorn	St. Leonard's		
Ormside	Clifford	Radcliffe	13s 6d cornage.
Ravenstondale		Watton Priory	
Crosby Garret	Clifford	Musgrave	8s 6d cornage.
Kirkby Stephen	Clifford		
Heartly	Clifford	Musgrave	
Winton	Clifford		
Kaber	Clifford	Fulthorpe	Homage, fealty, 17s 8d cornage, 40s scutage.
			11s 4d cornage.
Soulby	Clifford	Musgrave	13s 4d cornage.
Smardale	Clifford	Warcop	
Waitby	Clifford	Blenkinsop	
Nateby	Clifford	Wharton	
Wharton	Clifford	Wharton	6s cornage
Mallerstang forest	Clifford		
Brough	Clifford		
Stanemore	Clifford		
Sowerby	Clifford		
Helbeck	Clifford	Blenkinsop	
Musgrave	Clifford	Musgrave	Homage, fealty, 4s 2d cornage.
Warcop	Clifford	Latimer	
Sandford	Clifford	Warcop	Homage, fealty, 3s 4d cornage.
			Homage, fealty, 13s 4d cornage.
Burton	Clifford	Helton	
Bleatarn	Clifford	Byland Abbey	
Millom	Huddleston		
Ulpha	Huddleston		
Thwaites	Huddleston		
Whitcham	Huddleston		
Whitbeck	Huddleston	Connishead Priory	
Lekeley	Huddleston	Holm Cultram Abbey	
Munkforce	Huddleston	Furness Abbey	
Corney	Percy	Pennington	
Wayburgthwaite	Percy	Pennington	
Mulcaster	Percy	Pennington	
Eskdale	Percy	Stanley	
Wasdale	Percy		
Irton	Percy	Irton	
Dregg	Percy	Harrington	
Gosforth	Percy	Leybourne	
Bolton	Percy	Kirkby	10s cornage, seawake, homage, suit of court, witnessman.
Ponsonby	Percy	Stanley	
Calder	Percy	Calder Abbey	
Beckermest	Percy	Flemming	
Hale	Percy	Ponsonby	
Egremont	Percy		
Cleator	Percy		
Ennerdale	Percy	Calder Abbey	
Lamplugh	Percy	Lamplugh	
Moresby	Percy	Moresby	52s 7d cornage.
Disington	Percy	Moresby	10s cornage, 11d seawake.
Harrington	Curwen	Grey	

Manor:	Overlord:	Tenant:	Rent/service.
Workington	Percy	Curwen	45s 3d cornage, 4s seawake, puture of two sergeants.
Dean	Percy		
Branthwaite	Percy	Skelton	24s cornage, suit of court, homage, fealty, witnessman.
Loweswater	Percy		
Brackenthwaite	Percy		
Wythorpe	Percy		
Whinfell	Percy	Eglisfield	Knight service, 6s 8d cornage, homage, fealty, seawake, puture of sergeants.
Mosergh	Percy	Salkeld	homage, fealty, suit of court, 13s 4d cornage, puture of sergeants.
Cockermouth	Percy		
Crossthwaite	Percy	Radcliffe	
Castlerigg	Percy	Radcliffe	
Bassinthwaite I	Percy	Matindale	6s 8d cornage, 8d seawake, suit of court.
Bassinthwaite II	Percy	Irton	2s cornage, 8d seawake, suit of court.
Isel	Percy	Leigh	46s 8d cornage.
Bridekirk	Percy	Gisburne Priory	
Tallentire	Percy	Tallentire	
Dovenby	Percy	Lamplugh	
Papcastle	Percy	Dacre	
Broughton	Percy	Broughton	
Ribton	Percy	Ribton	2s 8d cornage, 8d seawake.
Cammerton	Percy	Curwen	
Seaton	Percy	Curwen	
Filmby	Percy	Holm Cultram Abbey	
Deerham	Percy	Calder Abbey	
Gilcrux	Percy	Calder Abbey	
Wardhole	Percy	Calder Abbey	
Parsonby	Percy	Rector of Plumland	
Plumland	Percy	Orfeurs	
Blannerhasset	Percy	Moresby	
Kirkland	Percy	Rosedale Priory	
Bothil	Percy	Dacre/Denton	
Torpenhow	Percy	Moresby	24s cornage, 6½d seawake.
Whiterigg	Percy	Skelton	
Bowaldeth	Percy	Highmore	
High Ireby	Percy	Barwise	
Low Ireby	Percy	Musgrave	2s 3d cornage, 6d seawake, puture of sergeants, witnessman
Uldale	Percy		
Caldbeck	Percy		
Bolton	Percy		
Whitehall		Salkeld	
Harby Brow		Highmore	
Aspatria	Percy		
Outerby	Percy	Orfeurs	
Hayton	Percy	Colvil/Musgrave	

Manor:	Overlord:	Tenant:	Rent/service:
Cross Canonby Birkby Alanby West Newton	Percy Percy Percy Percy	Senhouse Blanerhasset Martindale	Knight service, 13s 4d cornage, seawake, suit of court.
Langrigg Crookdale	Percy Percy	Osmunderly Musgrave	Knight service, 2s cornage.
Bromfield Holm Cultram Blencogo	Percy Percy Percy	Holm Cultram Abbey Holm Cultram Abbey Cholmeley	Knight service, 13s cornage, 7s 6d puture for the bailiff, 2s seawake, witnessman suit of court, 50s relief
Wigton Aikton Gamelsby Wathinpool Thursby	Percy Dacre Dacre Dacre Dacre	Highmore Warwick Ogle	Knight service, 25s 8½d cornage.
Crofton Orton Kirkbampton Kirkbride	Musgrave Musgrave Dacre Percy	Brisco Brisco Stapleton Dalston	13s 4d cornage, 22s puture of sergeants, 16d seawake, suit of court.
Bowness Burgh-by-Sands Rocliffe Beaumont Kirk Andrews Grinsdale Rose Castle Little Dalston Cardew High Head	Dacre Dacre Dacre Dacre Dacre bp of Carlisle bp of Carlisle bp of Carlisle the king	Curwen Radcliffe Denton Dalston Denton Restwold	2s or a sparhawk. One red rose on the feast of John the Baptist.
Serbingham Warwick Aglionby Warwick Wetheral Corby Armathwaite Hutton John Threlkeld Little Blencow Dacre Dalamaine Skelton Hutton	the king Dacre Dacre Dacre the king Greystoke/Dacre Greystoke/Dacre Greystoke/Dacre Greystoke/Dacre the king the king	Denton Aglionby Warwick St. Mary's York Salkeld Skelton Hutton Threlkeld Blencow Fynes Layton Denton Hutton	Keeping the forest, holding the king's stirrup as he mounts in Carlisle, 33s 4d to the Exchequer.

Manor:	Overlord:	Tenant:	Rent/service:
Newton Regny	the king	Lowther	One horseman for forty days border service, 2s cornage.
Penrith	the king	warden of the march	
Bishop's Row	the king	bp of Carlisle	
Hutton Hall	the king	Hutton	
Carleton Hall	the king	Carleton	
Edenhall	the king	Musgrave	
Salkeld	the king	Salkeld	
Lazonby	the king	Fynes	
Plumpton Park	the king	keeper of Bewcastle	
Kirkoswald	Dacre		
Little Croglin	Dacre		
Haresceugh	Dacre	Lanercost Priory	
Ainstable	Dacre		
Croglin		Wharton	
Renwick		Queen's College, Oxford	
Alston Moor	the king	Musgrave	
Melmerby	the king	Threlkeld	13s 4d cornage.
Kirkland		Flemming	
Skirwith		Middleton	4s 4d cornage.
Culgarth	Neville	Moresby	
Langthwaitby	the king		
Little Salkeld		Prior and convent of Carlisle	
Glassonby	Latimer		
Linstock		Prior and convent of Carlisle.	
Rickerby		Pickering	
Terraby		Aglionby	
Cargo		Parr	
Scaleby		Musgrave	
Kirklington	Dacre		
Arthuret	the king		
Bewcastle	the king		
Stapleton	Dacre	Moresby	
Walton	Dacre	Lanercost Priory	
Brampton	Dacre		
Cumwhitton	Dacre		
Kirk-Cambock	Dacre	Stapleton	
Farlam	Dacre		
Denton	Denton/Dacre		
Cumrew	Dacre		
Castle Carrock	Dacre	Salkeld	
Carlatton	Dacre		
Hayton	Dacre		
Talkin	Dacre		

Appendix 2: Office holding in Cumberland and Westmorland

These commissions of the peace have been drawn from the relevant calendars of patent rolls and the *Letters and Papers of Henry VIII*. Each commission is divided into 1. noblemen, 2. clergymen, 3. non-resident gentry/ professional lawyers and 4. resident gentry.

Cumberland commissions issued,

20 June 1473:	10 November 1475:	28 April 1481:
1. Richard of Gloucester. George of Clarence. Henry, Northumberland. Humphrey, Lord Dacre.	1. Richard of Gloucester. George of Clarence. Henry, Northumberland. Humphrey, Lord Dacre.	1. Richard of Gloucester. Henry Northumberland Humphrey Lord Dacre.
2. Edward, bp of Carlisle.	3. William Jenny. Richard Nele.	2. Richard, bp of Carlisle.
3. William Jenny. Richard Nele.	4. William Bewley. Thomas Curwen. Chirstopher Moresby. William Leigh. Christopher Moresby. William Parr. Roland Thornburgh.	3. William Jenny. Richard Nele.
4. John Appleby. William Bewley. Thomas Broughton. John Crackenthorpe. John Huddleston. Richard Huddleston. William Jenny. John Lamplugh. Christopher Moresby. William Parr. Roland Thornburgh.		4. William Bewley. Thomas Curwen. Richard Huddleston. William Leigh. Christopher Moresby. William Parr. Roland Thornburgh.
24 May 1483:	26 June 1483:	5 December 1483:
1. Richard of Gloucester. Henry, Northumberland. Humphrey, Lord Dacre.	1. Henry, Northumberland. Humphrey, Lord Dacre.	1. Henry Northumberland Humphrey, Lord Dacre
2. Richard, bp of Carlisle.	2. Richard, bp of Carlisle.	2. Richard, bp of Carlisle.
3. Richard Nele. Roger Townsend.	3. Richard Nele. Roger Townsend.	3. Richard Nele. Roger Townsend.
4. William Bewley. Thomas Broughton. John. Crackenthorpe. Thomas Curwen. Richard Huddleston. Thomas Leigh. Christopher Moresby. William Parr. Richard Radcliffe. Roland Thornburgh.	4. William Bewley. Thomas Broughton. John Crackenthorpe. Thomas Curwen. Richard Huddleston. Thomas Leigh. Christopher Moresby. William Parr. Roland Thornburgh.	4. William Bewley. John Crackenthorpe. Thomas Curwen. Thomas Leigh, Christopher Moresby. Roland Thornburgh.

Cumberland Commissions cont.

24 March 1487:

1. Thomas, Lord Dacre.
2. Richard, bp of Carlisle.
3. William Danvers.
John Eglisfield.
John Fyssher.
Roger Townsend.
4. William Bewley.
Thomas Broughton.
John Huddleston.
John Pennington.
Richard Salkeld.
William Thornburgh.

22 October 1489:

1. Thomas, Lord Dacre.
2. Richard, bp of Carlisle.
3. John Eglisfield.
John Fyssher.
4. William Bewley.
John Huddleston.
William Musgrave.
John Pennington.
Richard Salkeld.
William Thornburgh.

18 February 1495:

1. Thomas, Lord Dacre.
Thomas earl of Surrey.
Arthur Prince of Wales
Jasper duke of Bedford
2. John abp of Canterbury
Richard bp of St Asaph
Richard bp of Durham.
Richard bp of Carlisle.
3. John Cheney.
John Eglisfield.
John Fyssher.
Thomas Keeble.
4. William Bewley.
John Pennington.
Edward Redman.
William Thornburgh.

14 July 1499:

1. Thomas, Lord Dacre.
Thomas, earl of Surrey.
Arthur, Prince of Wales.
2. John abp of Canterbury.
Richard, bp of Durham.
3. James Hobart.
Thomas Keeble.
4. William Bewley.
Thomas Curwen.
John Musgrave.
John Pennington.
Edward Redman.
Richard Salkeld.
William Thornburgh.

10 February 1503:

1. Thomas, Lord Dacre.
3. Thomas Beauchamp.
Thomas Beverly.
Humphrey Coningsby.
James Hobart.
4. William Bewley.
Thomas Curwen.
Henry Denton.
John Musgrave.
John Pennington.
Edward Redman.
William Thornburgh.

12 May 1510:

1. Thomas, Lord Dacre.
2. John, bp of Carlisle.
3. Humphrey Coningsby.
4. William Bewley.
Ambrose C'kenthorpe.
Christopher Dacre.
Henry Denton.
Hugh Hotton.
John Musgrave.
John Pennington.
Christopher Pickering.
Edward Radcliffe.
John Radcliffe.
Edward Redman.

Cumberland Commissions cont:

18 October 1514:

1. Thomas, Lord Dacre.
2. John, bishop of Carlisle.
3. Humphrey Coningsby.
John Erneley.
Thomas Fairfax.
Brian Palmes.
4. William Bewley.
Ambrose Crackenthorpe.
Thomas Curwen.
Christopher Dacre.
Hugh Hotton.
John Musgrave.
Christopher Pickering.

November 1520:

1. Thomas, Lord Dacre.
2. John, bp of Carlisle.
Cardinal Wolsey.
3. Anthony Fitzherbert.
John Neuport.
4. William Bewley.
Thomas Curwen.
Christopher Dacre.
Hugh Hotton.

April 1524:

1. Thomas, Lord Dacre.
2. John, bp of Carlisle.
Cardinal Wolsey.
3. William Bentley.
Anthony Fitzherbert.
William Hiton.
John Porte.
4. Christopher Curwen.
Christopher Dacre.
Geoffery Lancaster.
William Lancaster.

August 1525:

1. Henry, Cumberland.
Christopher, Lord Conyers.
Thomas, duke of Norfolk.
2. John, bp of Carlisle.
Brian Higdon.
Cardinal Wolsey.
3. William Bentley.
Robert Bowes.
William Bulmer.
William Eures.
Thomas Fairfax.
Anthony Fitzherbert.
William Franklin.
Godfrey Fuljambe.
William Hiton.
Walter Luke.
Robert Page.
William Tate.
Thomas Tempest.
4. Christopher Dacre.
Geoffery Lancaster.
William Lancaster.
William Parr.

1532:

1. Henry, Cumberland.
Christopher, Lord Conyers.
William, Lord Dacre.
Thomas, duke of Norfolk.
Henry, Northumberland.
Thomas, earl of Wiltshire.
Charles, duke of Suffolk.
2. John, bp of Carlisle.
Thomas Magnus.
3. Thomas Audeley.
John Baldwin.
Robert Barwys.
William Bentley.
Robert Bowes.
William Fitzwilliam.
Richard Ireton.
John Spelman.
Thomas Tempest.
4. Thomas Clifford.
Geoffrey Lancaster.
William Lancaster.
John Lowther.
William Musgrave.
William Parr.
Thomas Wharton.

January 1535:

3. Robert Berwys.
William Bently.
Edward Edgar.
Richard Ireton.
Thomas Tempest.
4. Thomas Clifford.
Richard Bewley.
John Lamplugh.
John Lowther.
William Lancaster.
Thomas Wharton.

Westmorland Commissions:

6 May 1474:	10 November 1475:	27 October 1476:
3. William Jenney. Richard Nele. Nicholas Taverner.	1. Humphrey, Lord Dacre. 3. William Jenney. Richard Nele. Nicholas Taverner.	1. Humphrey Lord Dacre. 3. William Jenney. Richard Nele. Nicholas Taverner.
4. Thomas Bate. William Gylpyn. Christopher Moresby. Richard Musgrave. William Parr. Thomas Strickland. John Wharton.	4. Thomas Bate. Thomas Middleton. Richard Musgrave. William Parr. Thomas Strickland. John Wharton.	4. Thomas Bate. Christopher Bate. Thomas Middleton. Richard Musgrave. Thomas Strickland. John Wharton.
28 April 1481:	14 May 1483:	26 June 1483:
1. Humphrey, Lord Dacre.	1. Humphrey, Lord Dacre.	1. Humphrey Lord Dacre.
3. William Jenney. Richard Nele. Nicholas Taverner.	3. Richard Nele. Roger Townsend.	3. Richard Nele. Roger Townsend.
4. Thomas Bate. Christopher Bate. Thomas Middleton. Richard Musgrave. William Parr. Thomas Strickland. John Wharton.	4. Anthony Crackenthorpe. Christopher Moresby. Richard Musgrave. James Pickering. Edward Redman. Thomas Strickland.	4. Anthony C'kenthorpe. John Crackenthorpe. Richard Musgrave. James Pickering. Edward Redman. Thomas Strickland.
5 December 1483:	20 September 1485:	18 February 1495:
1. Humphrey, Lord Dacre.	1. Henry, Lord Clifford.	1. Henry, Lord Clifford. Thomas, Lord Dacre.
3. Richard Nele. Roger Townsend.	3. Leonard Knyght. Richard Nele. Roger Townsend.	3. John Fyssher. Thomas Keeble. John Rygge.
4. Anthony Crackenthorpe. John Crackenthorpe. Richard Musgrave. Thomas Strickland.	4. Christopher Bate. Robert Bellingham. Anthony Crackenthorpe. Christopher Moresby. Richard Musgrave. Thomas Strickland. William Thornburgh.	4. Ambrose C'kenthorpe. William Lancaster. Hugh Lowther. Christopher Moresby. Edward Redman. Lancelot Threlkeld. Henry Wharton.

Westmorland Commissions cont:

2 January 1496:

1. Henry, Lord Clifford.
Thomas, Lord Dacre.

3. Thomas Keeble.
John Rygge.

4. Ambrose Crackenthorpe.
William Lancaster.
Hugh Lowther.
Christopher Moresby.
Edward Musgrave.
Edward Redman.
Lancelot Threlkeld.
Henry Wharton.

November 1511:

1. Thomas, Lord Dacre.
Richard, Lord Latimer.

3. William Bevyale.
John Enerley.
William Fairfax.

4. Roger Bellingham.
Ambrose Crackenthorpe.
Geoffrey Lancaster.
Edward Musgrave.
Thomas Parr.
Christopher Pickering.
Edmund Sandford.
Edward Stanley.

14 June 1499:

1. Henry, Lord Clifford.
Thomas, Lord Dacre.

3. James Hobart.
Thomas Keeble.
John Rygge.

4. Ambrose Crackenthorpe.
William Lancaster.
Geoffrey Lancaster.
Hugh Lowther.
Christopher Moresby.
Edward Musgrave.
Edward Redman.
Richard Salkeld.
Thomas Sandford.
William Strickland.
Lancelot Threlkeld.

10 February 1524:

1. Henry, Lord Clifford.
Thomas, Lord Dacre.

2. Cardinal Wolsey.

3. Anthony FitzHerbert.
John Lambert.
John Porte.

4. Christopher Dacre.
Richard Ducket.
Geoffrey Lancaster.
John Lowther.
Edward Musgrave.
Lancelot Salkeld.
Walter Strickland.
Gilbert Wharton.
Thomas Wharton.

8 December 1503:

1. Henry, Lord Clifford.
Thomas, Lord Dacre.

3. Humphrey Coningsby.
John Rygge.

4. Roger Bellingham.
Thomas Blenkinsop.
Ambrose C'kenthorpe.
William Lancaster.
Geoffrey Lancaster.
Hugh Lowther.
Edward Musgrave.
Thomas Parr.
Edward Redman.
Walter Strickland.
Lancelot Threlkeld.
Thomas Wharton.

5 March 1531:

1. Charles d. of Suffolk
Thomas e. of Wiltshire
Henry, Cumberland.
William, Lord Dacre.
Thomas d. of Norfolk.
Ralph, Westmorland.

2. John, bp of Carlisle.
Thomas Magnus.

3. Robert Bowes.
Humphrey Broune.
William Bulmer.
William Eures.
William FitzWilliam.
John Lambert.
John Spelman.
Thomas Tempest.

4. Robert Bellingham.
Thomas Blenkinsop.
Thomas Clifford.
Christopher Dacre.
Richard Ducket.
Geoffrey Lancaster.
William Lancaster.
John Lowther.
Lancelot Lowther.
Ambrose Middleton.
Geoffrey Middleton.
Christopher Moresby.
Thomas Musgrave.
Edward Musgrave.

Westmorland Commissions cont:

5 March 1531, cont:

4. William Parr.
Richard Redman.
Lancelot Salkeld.
Thomas Sandford.
Thomas Tempest.
Richard Thornburgh.
Gilbert Wharton.
Thomas Wharton.

1532:

1. Charles, duke of Suffolk.
Thomas, earl of Wiltshire.
Henry, Cumberland.
William, Lord Dacre.
Thomas, duke of Norfolk.
Ralph, Westmorland.
Henry, Northumberland.

2. John, bp of Carlisle.
Thomas Magnus.

3. Thomas Audeley.
John Baldwin.
Robert Bowes.
Christopher Darcy.
William FitzWilliam.
John Lambert.
John Spelman.
Thomas Tempest.

4. Robert Bellingham.
Thomas Blenkinsop.
Thomas Clifford.
Richard Ducket.
William Lancaster.
Geoffrey Lancaster.
John Lowther.
Lancelot Lowther.
Ambrose Middleton.
Geoffrey Middleton.
Thomas Musgrave.
Edward Musgrave.
William Parr.
Richard Redman.
Lancelot Salkeld.
Thomas Sandford.
Roland Thornburgh.
John Warcop.
Gilbert Wharton.
Thomas Wharton.

1 March 1535:

1. Charles, d. of Suffolk.
Henry, Cumberland.
Thomas, d. of Norfolk.
Ralph, Westmorland.
Henry, Cumberland.

2. John, bp of Carlisle.

3. Robert Bowes.
William FitzWilliam.
Christopher Jenney.
John Lambert.
John Spelman.
Thomas Tempest.
Thomas Audeley.

4. Robert Bellingham.
Thomas Blenkinsop.
Thomas Clifford.
Richard Ducket.
William Lancaster.
John Lowther.
Ambrose Middleton.
Geoffrey Middleton.
Thomas Musgrave.
Edward Musgrave.
Richard Redman.
Lancelot Salkeld.
Thomas Sandford.
Roland Thornburgh.
John Warcop.
Gilbert Wharton.
Thomas Wharton.

***Sheriffs of Cumberland:*¹**

Sir Christopher Moresby (June 1471).
Sir William Parr (Nov 1472).
Sir William Leigh (Nov 1473).
Sir Richard Curwen (Nov 1474).
Richard, duke of Gloucester (Feb 1475).
Sir John Huddleston (Feb 1475).
John Crackenthorpe (Nov 1475).
Richard Salkeld, esq (Nov 1483).
Sir Christopher Moresby (Sept 1485).
Richard Kirkby (Nov 1486).
Sir Christopher Moresby (Nov 1487).
Thomas Beauchamp (Nov 1488).
Sir John Musgrave (Nov 1489).
Henry Denton (Nov 1490).
Lancelot Threlkeld (Nov 1491).
Edward Redman (Nov 1492).
Sir John Musgrave (Nov 1493).
Sir Richard Salkeld (Nov 1494).
Sir Christopher Moresby (Nov 1495).
Thomas Beauchamp (Sept 1496).
Sir Christopher Dacre (Nov 1497).
Sir John Huddleston (Dec 1505).
Hugh Hutton, esq (Nov 1506).
John Radcliffe (Dec 1507).
Hugh Hutton, esq (Dec 1508).
Sir Thomas Curwen (Nov 1509).
Sir John Pennington (Nov 1510).
John Skelton (Nov 1511).
John Crackenthorpe, esq (Nov 1512).
Sir Edward Musgrave (April 1514).
Sir John Radcliffe (Nov 1514).
Sir John Lowther (Nov 1515).
Sir Thomas Curwen (Nov 1516).
Gawain Eglesfield (Nov 1517).
Sir John Radcliffe (Nov 1518).
Sir Edward Musgrave (Nov 1519).
Thomas Fairfax (Nov 1520).
Sir Christopher Dacre (Nov 1521).
John Pennington, esq (Nov 1522).
Sir John Radcliffe (Nov 1523).
Christopher Curwen, esq (Nov 1524).
Sir Christopher Dacre (Jan 1526).
Sir John Radcliffe (Nov 1526).
Sir Edward Musgrave (Nov 1527).
Sir William Pennington (Nov 1528).
Thomas Wharton, esq (Nov 1529).
Richard Ireton, esq (Nov 1530).
Sir Christopher Dacre (Nov 1531).
Sir William Musgrave (Nov 1532).
Sir Christopher Curwen (Nov 1533).

Cuthbert Hutton, esq (Nov 1534).
Sir Thomas Wharton (Nov 1535).
Sir Thomas Curwen (Nov 1536).
Sir John Lamplugh (Nov 1537).

Sheriffs of Westmorland:

Sir John Parr (for life since 1462).
Sir William Parr (June 1475).
Sir Richard Radcliffe (Nov 1483).
Roger Bellingham (12 Sept 1485).
Richard Clifford (29 Sept 1485).
Henry, Lord Clifford (Sept 1486).
Roger Bellingham (Sept 1491).
John Fleming, esq (Sept 1498).
Henry, Lord Clifford (in person Sept 1500).
Henry, earl of Cumberland (Nov 1526-
June 1569).

¹ This table is drawn from *List of Sheriffs of England and Wales from the earliest times to A.D. 1831* (New York: Kraus, 1963) pp. 27-8, 151. Under sheriffs appear in italics.

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