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The Palatinate of Durham and the Tudor State, *c.* 1485-1558

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Abstract

This thesis is an examination of several local families and their role shaping the palatinate of Durham's position within the early Tudor state. Histories of the late medieval and early Tudor bishopric have tended to treat the palatinate as either an intractable obstacle to the consolidation of the English state, or as a highly distinctive and autonomous seat of power in the North-East, free from any meaningful encroachment by the crown. This thesis reframes Durham within the wider context of advancements in the early Tudor state and, particularly, more recent discussions on the nature and efficacy of patron-client or patronage networks.

The central themes of this thesis are threefold. First, rather than see the history of Durham, its bishops, and landowners as a pitched battle against crown intervention, this thesis posits a new interpretation, one which foregrounds cooperation and mutual benefit. Early Tudor attitudes towards Durham were, for the most part, not grounded on a desire to abolish or undermine the bishopric and its political and administrative infrastructure. Where Durham's resources could be applied for the betterment of the national polity, successive governments sought to work with, not against, the region's landowners and officers, who in turn realised the benefits to be had from forging contacts with the court and other senior royal officials. Second, this increasingly pragmatic stance was nurtured through the formation and consolidation of patronage networks. It was through these symbiotic networks that both the crown and local landowners changed the nature of the bishopric's role within the national polity; much like neighbouring Yorkshire, patron-client networks had the effect of bringing Durham more closely into line with central government, but not necessarily to the detriment of local customs and ideas of government. Finally, by examining the role of local landowners from outside the bishopric, in conjunction with Durham's leading families and the bishops' episcopal households, this thesis argues that the palatinate formed part of what was a highly effective regional community.

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Abbreviations

Add. MS.	Additional Manuscripts
APC	<i>Acts of the Privy Council of England</i> , ed. J.R. Dasent (46 vols., 1890-1964)
BL	British Library
BM	British Museum
C	Chancery
CCR	<i>Calendar of Close Rolls</i>
CFR	<i>Calendar of Fine Rolls</i>
CPR	<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i>
CSP	<i>Calendar of State Papers</i>
DCM	Durham Cathedral Muniments
DULSC	Durham University Library Special Collections
DURH	Records of the Palatinate of Durham
E	Exchequer
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
Harl. MS.	Harleian Manuscripts
HJ	<i>Historical Journal</i>
HP	<i>The Hamilton Papers: letters and papers illustrating the political relations of England and Scotland in the XVIth century, formerly in the possession of the Dukes of Hamilton, now in the British Museum</i> , ed. Joseph Bain (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1890-1892)
HR	<i>Historical Research</i>
JBS	<i>Journal of British Studies</i>
LP	<i>Letter and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII</i> , ed. J.F. Brewer, ed. J.S. Brewer, R.H. Brodie, and J. Gairdner (21 vols., London, 1862-1932)

<i>NH</i>	<i>Northern History</i>
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>SCJ</i>	<i>Sixteenth Century Journal</i>
SP	State Papers
<i>SR</i>	<i>Statutes of the Realm</i> , ed. A Luders et al. (11 vols., London, 1810-1828)
SS	Surtees Society
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
<i>TRHS</i>	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>

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Finally, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family in England and in France. When I began this process nearly three years ago in October 2013, my father, an enthusiastic classicist and historian himself, tossed a copy of the Cambridge Latin coursebook onto my desk and said, with a wry smile, ‘*illegitimi non carborundum*’. Over the next three years, I encountered a number of obstacles and difficulties, familiar to most doctoral students, but it was with these words in mind that I have somehow managed to produce what I hope is a thesis that reflects the love and gratitude I bear to them.

INTRODUCTION

This PhD departs from previous works on late medieval and early modern Durham in its emphasis on the palatinate's gentry and regional landowners and office-holders. What follows is not an account of the formal political and administrative machinery within Durham, although landowners relied upon and monopolised these institutions and offices to cement reputations and bolster wealth. Of particular concern are the lives and careers of Durham's bishops and the North-East's gentry and minor nobility and how their interactions with regional and central authorities shaped the palatinate's role and status within the local and national polities. The nature of early Tudor government was highly personal and through an in-depth examination of 'Durham men' this thesis hopes to augment our understanding of the processes and informal character of centre-periphery relations between 1485 and 1569. In so doing, it fundamentally reinterprets the history of the palatinate of Durham's position within the Tudor state.

Having won the crown on the morning of 22 August 1485, Henry Tudor's ability to consolidate Tudor rule in the Durham palatinate and, indeed, throughout the North of England, was far from certain. Born in Wales and raised in exile at the French and Breton courts, the victorious Henry VII's claim to the throne was tenuous and his support base in the far North severely limited. Conversely, Henry's predecessor, the Yorkist King Richard III, had cultivated a substantial following in the region, which had been nurtured since his appointment as Edward IV's lieutenant in May 1471.¹ Meanwhile, in the bishopric of Durham, Bishop John Sherwood (*c.* 1484-94) continued to exercise his princely authority as a quasi-monarch cum feudal overlord. Sherwood and his predecessor bishops of Durham owed their translations to the crown, but derived their princely authority from St Cuthbert, the bishopric's patron saint. It was Bishop Ealdhum who in 995 had laid Cuthbert's body to rest in Durham, where it remained undisturbed until it was unceremoniously prised open by

¹ A.J. Pollard, 'St Cuthbert and the Hog: Richard III and the County Palatine of Durham,

Henry VIII's dissolution commissions in the late 1530s.² Instituted in the aftermath of the Norman Conquest, the Durham palatinate was created to strengthen English defences on the Anglo-Scottish border. It was thought that a semi-autonomous seat of power in the far North would do much to repel Scottish aggression, with a vetted ecclesiastic free to exercise authority unencumbered by lengthy administrative delays.

It is important to distinguish between the 'diocese' of Durham and the bishop's secular franchise, known as the 'palatinate' or 'county palatine', with the 'bishopric' at its heart. It was in the diocese of Durham that the bishop practised his spiritual, diocesan, authority between the rivers Tees and Tweed. The secular 'palatinate', however, was made up of considerable landholdings. These stretched from the eastern border with Scotland to the river Tees, and from the North-Eastern seaboard to the Pennines on the border with Cumbria. The palatinate included the city and bishopric of Durham and the three shires of Bedlington, Norham, and Island, all north of the river Tyne, and the manor of Crayke approximately twenty-five miles south of the river Tees. Bishops of Durham were also in possession of the manors of Northallerton in the Yorkshire North Riding and Howden in the East Riding. The strategically important border fortress at Norham lay in the bishop's hands, as did his London episcopal residence, Durham Place.³ According to the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*, compiled by Henry's dissolution officials in late 1535, the incumbent bishop of Durham, Cuthbert Tunstall (c. 1530-59), derived an annual income of £2,821 from his lands and the sale of justice and offices. Tunstall was among the wealthiest peers in the kingdom, second only among bishops to Stephen Gardiner, bishop of Winchester.⁴

The second largest landowner in the bishopric was the Benedictine cathedral monastery. Formed as a secular house of canons in the tenth century, the monastery held vast estates concentrated within, but not limited to, the bishopric.⁵ Towards the

² H.H.E. Craster, 'The Patrimony of St Cuthbert', *EHR* 69 (1954), pp. 177-99; N. Denholm-Young, *Seignorial Administration in England* (London, 1937), p. 88; R.B. Dobson, 'The Church of Durham and the Scottish Borders, 1378-88', in *War and Border Society in the Middle Ages*, ed. A. Goodman and A. Tuck (London, 1992), pp. 130-32; Christian Liddy, *The Bishopric of Durham in the Late Middle Ages: Lordship, Community and the Cult of St Cuthbert* (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 3, 175-76.

³ Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, p. 17; A.J. Pollard, *North-Eastern England during the Wars of the Roses; Lay Society, War and Politics, 1450-1500* (Oxford, 1990), p. 146; K. Emsley, 'The Yorkshire Enclaves of the Bishop of Durham', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 47 (1975), pp. 106-7. See appendix 1.

⁴ TNA, E 3/44; TNA, SP 10/15, f. 163.

⁵ R.B. Dobson, *Durham Priory, 1400-1450* (Cambridge, 1973), p. 280; Geoffrey Moorhouse, *The Last Office: 1539 and the Dissolution of a Monastery* (London, 2009), pp. 60-1; Richard

end of the late Middle Ages, numerous landholders controlled estates within the bishopric. The crown could count itself among Durham's most influential landowners. Whilst the manor of Barnard Castle belonged to the duchy of York, the castle itself represented one of the crown's many satellites in the North-East. With the wholesale confiscation of monastic lands in the late 1530s and the, albeit short-lived, dissolution of the bishopric between March 1553 and April 1554, the crown had managed to augment and oversee its estates in Durham by way of the court of augmentations.⁶ From the mid-thirteenth century the Nevilles of Raby had centred their Durham patrimony on the grand castles of Raby and Brancepeth; they held a further fourteen manors in the neighbouring North Riding, including Middleham and Sheriff Hutton.⁷ By the end of the fourteenth century, the distribution of manors among Durham lay landholders was relatively even: the nobility controlled 18.13 per cent of the palatinate's manors; 18.65 per cent was held by greater knights, whose landed income exceeded £100 per annum; lesser knights, with a yearly landed income of between £40 and £100, were in possession of 22.80 per cent; the squirearchy, whose landed revenues ranged from £20 to £40, accounted for the smallest proportion of Durham manors at 9.32 per cent; while the parish gentry, with assets of up to £20, owned 31.10 per cent of all lay landholdings.⁸ Durham and the North-East's greater knights and lesser nobles are of particular interest. Such clear cut divisions do not always fully account for informal influence and local prestige, but are nonetheless instructive when examining the composition and nature of palatinate society. Within this group of lesser nobles and knights were a group of families who appear regularly throughout the thesis, including the Bellasis of Henknowle, the Bowes of Streatlam, the Eures of Witton le Wear, and the Hiltons of Hilton, among several others.

Though concentrated in the hands of the bishop, the full extent of the county palatine's administrative autonomy was divided between a series of offices and institutions, which made up the formal machinery of palatinate government. Prior to

Lomas, 'Developments in land tenure on the Prior of Durham's estates in the late Middle Ages', *Northern History* 13 (1977), pp. 27-43; idem, 'The Priory of Durham and its Demesnes in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', *Economic History Review*, 2nd Series 31 (1978), pp. 339-53.

⁶ David Loades, 'Introduction', in *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham, 1494-1660* (Loughborough, 1987), p. 2.

⁷ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem: Volume 12, Edward III*, ed. M.C.B. Dawes and J.B.W. Chapman (London, 1938), pp. 136-43.

⁸ Categorisation taken from Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, p. 66.

the introduction of legislation in Henry VIII's Reformation Parliament, writs in Durham's chancery were issued in the name of the bishop, not the king. It was the bishop's peace, not the king's, that might be broken in the palatinate, and when those convicted of treason in Durham's largely independent courts forfeited possessions it was to the bishop that their land and goods reverted.⁹ Durham did not send men to sit in parliament until after the Civil War, although its bishop did sit in the house of lords and local landholders frequently sat for neighbouring shires, particularly Yorkshire and Northumberland.

In addition to the web of administrative institutions that legitimised the bishop's authority, it was the bishopric's distinctive cultural heritage – centred on the concept of the *Haliwerfolc* or 'people of the saint' (Saint Cuthbert) – that set Durham apart from its northern neighbours. Evolving from the pre-Conquest patrimony of St Cuthbert, Durham's almost mythical status and the supposedly protective power of its saint was not the preserve of the bishop, but a collective entity over which the *Haliwerfolc* could claim collective ownership. The bishop of Durham was the guardian of St Cuthbert's flock and the temporary custodian of the saint's patrimony. As such, he was expected to safeguard local privileges from external forces, including the crown and rival local authorities.¹⁰

By 1485 the Durham palatinate constituted a unique component within the English politico-administrative landscape. Among its closest counterparts was the county palatine of Cheshire. The crown had annexed the liberty at the beginning of the fourteenth century, however, meaning that while writs were issued in the name of

⁹ G.T. Lapsley, *The County Palatine of Durham: A Study in Constitutional History* (London, 1900), p. 2; C.M. Fraser, 'Prerogative and the Bishops of Durham, 1267-1376', *English Historical Review* 74 (1959), pp. 467-76; idem, *The Courts of the County Palatine of Durham from the Earliest Times to 1971* (Durham, 1971); R.L. Storey, *Thomas Langley and the Bishopric of Durham, 1406-1437* (London, 1961), p. 52; Christopher Kitching, 'The Durham Palatinate and the Courts of Westminster under the Tudors', in *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham, 1494-1660*, ed. David Marcombe (Loughborough, 1987), p. 49; C.J. Neville, 'The Courts of the Prior and the Bishop of Durham in the Later Middle Ages', *History* 85 (2000), pp. 216-31; Tim Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham and the problem of provincial liberties in England and the wider territories of the English crown', *TRHS* 11 (2001), pp. 84-85; P.L. Larson, 'Local Law Courts in Late Medieval Durham', in *North-East England in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. C.D. Liddy and R.H. Britnell (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 97-110; idem, 'Village Voice or Village Oligarchy?: The Jurors of the Durham Halmote Court, 1349 to 1424', *Law and History Review* 28 (2010), pp. 675-709.

¹⁰ For a discussion on the *Haliwerfolc* and the bishop of Durham's obligations, see Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, pp. 176-206.

‘earl palatine of Chester’, the earl and the king were the same person – which significantly diminished Cheshire’s status as an autonomous seat of power in the North-West.¹¹ Only in the Welsh Marches and the isles of Jersey and Guernsey did any lay subject enjoy a comparable degree of jurisdictional freedom to that of the bishops of Durham.¹² Durham was the only English franchise governed by an ecclesiastic. It is this idiosyncrasy, prompting comparisons with the prince-bishops of the Holy Roman Empire, that makes Durham such a compelling study for the effectiveness of early Tudor state formation.¹³

Historians of the Durham Palatinate

The antiquarian, topographer, and clergyman, James Raine (1791-1858), was among the first modern historians to examine the palatinate of Durham and its outlying regions, notably Northumberland and Holy Island, in his 1852 *History of North Durham*. Founder of the Surtees Society, Raine’s work on Durham, its cathedral, and Saint Cuthbert established the blueprint for the Whiggish histories of the county palatine that emerged after his death in 1858.¹⁴

Less than ten years later, Edward Augustus Freeman (1823-1892) published the first volume of his *History of the Norman Conquest*.¹⁵ As Regius Professor of History at Oxford University, Freeman devoted some of his attention to the delineation of the bishop of Durham’s temporal powers. Where Freeman’s work

¹¹ David Loades, ‘Introduction’, in *The Last Principality*, p. 1, 5.

¹² J.G. Edwards, *The Principality of Wales, 1267-1967: a study in constitutional history* (Caernarvon, 1969), pp. 15-31; Max Lieberman, *The Medieval March of Wales: The Creation and Perception of a Frontier, 1066-1283* (Cambridge, 2010), pp. 218-45; Tim Thornton, ‘The English King’s French Islands: Jersey and Guernsey in English Politics and Administration, 1485-1642’, in *Authority and Consent in Tudor England: Essays Presented to C.S.L. Davies*, ed. G.W. Bernard and S.J. Gunn (Aldershot, 2002), pp. 197-218; idem, ‘Jersey’s Royal Charters of Liberties’, *Jersey and Guernsey Law Review* 13 (2009), pp. 186-97; idem, *The Channel Islands, 1370-1640* (Woodbridge, 2012), pp. 56-78.

¹³ H.J. Cohn, *The Government of the Rhine Palatinate in the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford, 1965).

¹⁴ James Raine created the Surtees Society after the death of his colleague, Robert Surtees, in 1834. James Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham* (London, 1852); idem, *A Brief Account of Durham Cathedral* (Newcastle, 1833); idem, *Saint Cuthbert, with an Account of the state in which his Remains were found upon the opening of his Tomb in Durham Cathedral* (Durham, 1828).

¹⁵ E.A. Freeman, *The History of the Norman Conquest of England: Its Causes and Results*, 2nd edn. (6 vols. Oxford, 1867-1879).

departed from previous histories, however, was in his decision to analyse the county palatine within a wider European context. He likened Durham to the great cities of the Holy Roman Empire, namely Chur, Lausanne, and Sitten, whose bishops exercised quasi-regal power within their own territories. Perhaps Freeman's greatest contribution to the study of Durham lies in his coining the term 'prince-bishop' to describe how medieval bishops of Durham exercised authority without overt, external, interference from the crown. The term itself was not in use during the period of Freeman's study. Rather, as a literal translation of the German *Fürstbischof* – a compound used to describe a person invested with princely status – it is testimony to Freeman's desire to compare Durham with its continental counterparts.¹⁶ Despite his favourable comparison of Durham and the German archbishoprics, the teleologically-minded Freeman saw the palatinate's administrative autonomy and local customs as an obstacle to the formation and consolidation of an English nation state: 'had all Bishopricks possessed the same rights as Durham... England could never have remained a consolidated monarchy'.¹⁷

Freeman's predecessor at Oxford, Bishop William Stubbs (1825-1901) had been equally concerned with the development of the English state. In his 1891 *Constitutional History of England in its Origins and Development*, Stubbs foregrounded the crown's desire to uphold national uniformity, with the county palatines of Cheshire and Durham the two notable exceptions. On the one hand, that he devoted only four pages to the Durham palatinate in his three volumes is suggestive enough of the relatively minor importance he attributed to the bishopric's role in national politics. On the other, Stubbs argued that Durham and Cheshire's survival could be justified given their respective functions within the national polity. The preservation of Durham could be explained by its proximity to the Anglo-Scottish border and the need to keep good rule there; it was, as Stubbs explained, 'a sacred boundary between England and Scotland'. Cheshire, meanwhile, had helped to safeguard the Welsh Marches.¹⁸ Stubbs' Durham differed from Freeman's in two ways. First, he chose not to draw overt comparisons between Durham's autonomy and that of the German prince-bishops. Second, while Freeman believed that the county

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 291-92. For a discussion on Freeman's use of *Fürstbischof*, see Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, p. 2.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 291-92.

¹⁸ William Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England in its Origin and Development* (3 vols. Oxford, 1891), i, p. 295

palatine's administrative and political autonomy posed a threat to the English state's pre-ordained path, Stubbs saw Durham as a useful weapon in the crown's longstanding feud with Scotland. Providing the bishop of Durham used his power and resources to maintain and promote the royal prerogative on the border the palatinate's role in the consolidation of the national state would be more constructive than regressive.¹⁹

The turn of the century saw Gallard Thomas Lapsley (1868-1949) publish what remains one of the most significant works on the Durham palatinate. *The County Palatine of Durham: A Study in Constitutional History* owed much to Stubbs, charting the history of Durham from its creation after the Norman invasion to the palatinate's demise in the mid-nineteenth century.²⁰ Following the Whiggish examples of Freeman and Stubbs, Lapsley was concerned with the *long durée*, rather than the unfolding of everyday political and religious life in Durham. Where Lapsley moved away from Stubbs' teleological analysis was in the former's in-depth examination of palatinate administrative and political machinery. For Lapsley, the Durham palatinate served as a microcosm of the national state, its governmental structures replicated 'all the essential characteristics of central government'. The bishops of Durham could call upon an exchequer to collect revenues, a chancery to issue writs, and a network of local courts, similar to those at Westminster, to uphold palatinate jurisdiction.²¹ It is perhaps a little surprising then that Lapsley portrayed the county palatine in a negative light; no matter how forcibly the bishop of Durham might seek to enforce his authority, Durham could not hope to fully replicate the overwhelming superiority of the nation state. When the crown was no longer encumbered by the Yorkist-Lancastrian wars, Henry VII and his successors went about enacting a 'vigorous policy of centralisation', leaving only the 'form and dignity of the institution' to limp through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.²² Lapsley's work, notwithstanding his delineation of the instruments of palatinate government, ultimately reinforced the late nineteenth-century tradition of examining Durham as an acid test for effective national government. In spite of this, his seminal piece remains instructive for those historians seeking to understand Durham's political system.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 294-95, 392-93.

²⁰ G.T. Lapsley, *The County Palatine of Durham: A Study in Constitutional History* (London, 1990).

²¹ Ibid., p. 2.

²² Ibid., pp. 75-76.

Although predominantly concerned with the life and career of Cuthbert Tunstall, Charles Sturge's 1938 biography of Durham's forty-second bishop was among the first texts to foreground Durham within the wider politico-religious landscape of the North-East. Successive chapters address Tunstall's response to Henrician religious reforms and the Pilgrimage of Grace, his presidency of the council of the north in the late 1530s, the wars with Scotland, and his episcopate during the religious and political convulsions of Edward and Mary's reigns.²³ Sturge's portrait of Tunstall as bishop of Durham is a largely favourable one. He managed to navigate Durham through the religious controversies of Henry VIII's reign, helped to promote royal government in the North-East, worked alongside noblemen parachuted into the region during the mid-century wars with the Scots, and maintained cordial relations with several royal ministers, including John Dudley, duke of Northumberland, whom Sturge saw as the architect of the dissolution of the diocese in the spring of 1553.²⁴ Of especial importance, however, was Sturge's consideration of Tunstall's relations with the local gentry and how these shaped Durham's position vis-à-vis central government. Alongside his exhaustive examination of Tunstall's episcopate, Sturge touched upon the lives of men like Sir Robert Bowes, William, First Lord Eure, and Thomas Tempest, among others, and, in so doing, was able to showcase, albeit briefly, the interactions between the bishop, his episcopal household, local landowners, and central government.

By the mid-twentieth century, historians had begun to focus their examinations on the crown's ability to enforce centralising reforms in the county palatine. Helen Cam was among those who considered independent franchises injurious to the construction of a consolidated English state in the Middle Ages.²⁵ Political unease and the outbreak of hostilities on the Anglo-Scottish border had allowed Durham to exploit its strategic position on the east march, giving the bishop greater bargaining power over the authorities at Westminster. It was only with the accession of the Tudors that the crown was able to recapture its sovereignty and reassert its authority nationwide, or as Cam put it: 'resume regalities which, like the privileges and alien loyalties of the church, endangered the unique sovereignty of the

²³ Charles Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstall: Churchman, Scholar, Statesman, Administrator* (London, 1938), ch. 17-25.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 171-87, 188-203, 235-47, 284

²⁵ H.M. Cam, 'The Decline and Fall of English Feudalism', *History* 25 (1940), 216-33; *idem*, 'The Evolution of the Medieval Franchise', *Speculum* 32 (1957), pp. 427-42.

crown'.²⁶ This resumption of royal authority was achieved in two ways. First, Henry VII and his minister, Edmund Dudley, made a concerted effort to enforce a stricter version of Edward I's *quo warranto* policy, reinforcing the idea that the bishop of Durham's princely authority was dependant upon continued service on the crown's behalf. Second, Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell would use parliament to curtail the bishop's powers. It was through the 1536 Franchises Act that Henry managed to abolish or absorb 'those franchises which sheltered lawlessness or posed a barrier to the effective sovereignty of the crown'.²⁷

Writing in the 1960s, Jean Scammell picked up where Helen Cam had left off. In her 1966 article on 'The Origin and Limitations of the Liberty of Durham', Scammell suggested that Durham's inhabitants benefited little from the county palatine's fiscal exemptions, particularly its immunity from parliamentary taxation; the cost of upholding such a privilege amounted to more than the sums levied at Westminster.²⁸ Durham's courts and the bishop's ability to dispense justice were also called into criticism; litigants from Durham and surrounding counties were weary of corruption and favouritism and inclined to seek out justice elsewhere. Constance Fraser shared Scammell's scepticism about the palatinate's legal structures.²⁹ Durham's bishops proved unwilling to cede hard won legal authority to the crown and proved obstinate in the face of Henry II's overdue reforms.³⁰ It is on this point that Scammell's work has come in for particular criticism from Christopher Kitching and Tim Thornton, who have downplayed the suggestion that legal business had shifted away from Durham towards the Tudor equity courts in the early sixteenth century.³¹

Geoffrey Elton's work on independent franchises focused on Henry VIII and Thomas Cromwell's need to provide strong and effective government. Elton likened the disruptive autonomy of the bishopric to the alien and dogmatic influence of the

²⁶ Cam, 'English Feudalism', p. 232.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 226-27, quote at p. 226.

²⁸ Jean Scammell, 'The Origin and Limitations of the Liberty of Durham', *EHR* 81 (1966), p. 470.

²⁹ C.M. Fraser, 'Prerogative and the Bishop of Durham, 1267-1376', *EHR* 74 (1959), pp. 467-76.

³⁰ Scammell, 'Liberty of Durham', pp. 471-72.

³¹ Christopher Kitching, 'The Durham Palatinate and the Courts of Westminster under the Tudors', in *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham, 1494-1660*, ed. David Marcombe (Loughborough, 1987), p. 49-50; Tim Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham and the Problem of Provincial Liberties in England and the Wider Territories of the English Crown', *TRHS* 11 (2001), pp. 86-89.

papacy, both of which had seriously undermined the burgeoning Tudor polity; Durham, like Rome, Elton believed, was a hotbed of corruption, crime, and disorder.³² Building on Henry VII's suppression of Tynedale in 1504, a significant aspect of Cromwell's 'revolution in government' was the curtailing and abolition of ancient privileges enjoyed in Durham and elsewhere. The minister achieved this through parliament and the 1536 act 'for recontynuyng of [cer]tayne lib[er]ties and franchises heretofore taken frome the Crowne', the preamble of which, drafted by Cromwell, spelt out the harm caused by liberties and the reasons for their abolition:

Where dyvers of the most auncient [pre]rogatives and auctorities of Justice apparteynyng to [the Imp[er]iall] Crowne of this Realme have been severed and taken frome the same by sondrye giftes of the Kinges moost noble [pro]genitours... to the greate dymynucion and detriment of the Roiall estate and... greate delaye of Justice.³³

Despite the act's somewhat innocuous title, Elton believed that Cromwell's masterstroke had 'really meant to do away with all those franchises that prevented an effective dissemination of royal authority'.³⁴

Unpopular with the recalcitrant, Catholic, inhabitants of the North-East, the franchises bill, alongside other measures designed to remove papal authority, gave rise to popular discontent, which would continue to grip the region for much of the late 1530s. The collapse of the Pilgrimage of Grace, however, allowed Henry and his chief minister to bring the North more closely into line with national sentiments.³⁵ Cromwell's legislative assault delivered the final, decisive, blow to areas like Durham and Cheshire and paved the way for the shiring of Wales.³⁶ For the most part, Elton's conclusions on Cromwell's impact on parliament and local reform have been the subject of substantial, and at times fierce, revision.³⁷ Where Elton's work on the

³² G.R. Elton, *England under the Tudors*, 3rd edn. (Abingdon, 1991), p. 4, 175-76.

³³ *SR*, iii, p. 555.

³⁴ Elton, *England under the Tudors*, p. 175.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 176-79; S.J. Gunn, *Early Tudor Government*, p. 174.

³⁷ Most notably by Elton's own research student at Cambridge, David Starkey, in his 1986 'Which Age of Reform', in *Revolution Reassessed: Revisions in the History of Government and Administration*, ed. Christopher Coleman and David Starkey (Oxford, 1986), pp. 13-28.

Tudor North-East remains important, however, is his suggestion that the reconstitution of the council of the north in 1536, under the presidency of Bishop Tunstall, fostered greater collaboration between the palatinate's landed gentry and central government. This had the effect of providing Durham landowners with another means through which to enter royal service, whilst ensuring that Henry and his government could draw on a significantly bolstered local clientele. Elton overstepped the mark in concluding that the northern council had been erected to 'suppress independence' in the far North, but his argument that the administrative and judicial functions of the council could be used to extend royal practices into the provinces still holds true.³⁸ Versions of Elton's thesis on the disruptive nature of independent franchises were still being articulated in the late 1970s.³⁹

Mervyn James' approach to the study of the Durham region, particularly in his 1974 book *Family, Lineage and Civil Society*, was a novel one, employing the Marxist notion that capital served as the overriding centralising force in the North-East during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. James made a concerted effort to reverse the more procrustean aspects of Whiggish histories of the palatinate, adopting a framework more readily associated with social and cultural historians. The period from 1500 to 1640, James argued, saw market forces, particularly the rapid expansion of the North-East's coal trade, erode medieval customs and usher in a new age of fiscal collaboration.⁴⁰ James was eager, however, not to downplay the importance of Durham as a geo-political entity in its own right. The city was frequently used as a staging post for men and equipment on the hazardous, six hundred mile, journey from London to Berwick. Consequently, Durham and its inhabitants had extensive experience with royal agents, military commanders, and foreign politicians and clergymen.⁴¹

On the impact of the 1536 Franchises Act on local administration, James provided a more nuanced analysis. While Durham was theoretically subject to parliamentary legislation, its enforcement, in practice, was subject to the whim of individual bishops. Cromwell's statute did indeed encroach on Durham's privileges, but it did not bring about sweeping changes to the administration of criminal justice in

³⁸ Elton, *England under the Tudors*, p. 176.

³⁹ R.R. Davies, *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales, 1282-1400* (Oxford, 1978), p. 6.

⁴⁰ Mervyn James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society: A Study of Society, Politics, and Mentality in the Durham Region, 1500-1640* (Oxford, 1974), p. 3, 86-96.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

Durham's courts. Before the franchise bill was enacted the law interpreted and applied in Durham's courts was the same common law that governed the entire realm. What is more, the senior justices appointed to dispense common law in Durham were often selected from the royal courts of king's bench or common pleas.⁴² On the impact of centrist policies on Durham's bishops, James remained largely sceptical. Early Tudor bishops of Durham were not great feudal potentates, but glorified civil servants, or as James called them, 'Tudor-courtier bishops'. Far from undermining authority, an increased royal presence in the palatinate augmented the power of Bishops Ruthall, Wolsey, and Tunstall, all of whom owed their position to the crown.⁴³ Where James' account mirrored that of Elton was in his analysis of domestic unrest – the Pilgrimage of Grace and the 1569 rebellion – and the effects on local society. Both the pilgrimage and the revolt of the northern earls were seen as a manifestation of regional animosity towards the crown and its policies designed to incorporate Durham within the national polity.⁴⁴

James did not overlook the careers of Durham's senior gentry and their part forging more durable ties with central authorities. The Anglo-Scottish frontier served as the medium for establishing contacts with Westminster. Durham's influence on the border was exercised by a small, tight-knit, group of senior gentry families, whose lineage could be traced back to the thirteenth century. With the gradual decline of the earls of Westmorland, several ambitious palatinate landowners, eager to establish credentials as royal military agents, filled the void.⁴⁵ It was James' analysis of the palatinate's lay landowners that set his work apart from previous examinations. The expansion of the coal trade and service on the Scottish frontier meant that Durham could transition from a feudal or lineal society to a progressive 'civil society' fully incorporated within the English state.

By the 1990s, Mervyn James's work on the political relationships between Durham's bishops and the crown had been picked up by R.B. Dobson and A.J. Pollard. Both argued that if in theory the bishop of Durham was a powerful feudal magnate, then in practice this owed more than has previously been conceded to the crown. Those translated to England's second most lucrative see owed their

⁴² Ibid., pp. 41-42; Kenneth Pickthorn, *Early Tudor Government* (2 vols. London, 1949), i, pp. 53-54.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 42, 45.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 185-86.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 43-45.

appointments to the crown, and if these clerics were to be invested with a quasi-princely authority so the monarchy became increasingly interested in how that power was wielded. Medieval bishops of Durham were presented as little more than royal agents.⁴⁶

Pollard in particular has stressed the correlation between royal favouritism and translations to Durham; every bishop between 1333 and 1406 had held the office of keeper of privy seal. Durham's fourteenth-century bishops were not sent northwards to reinforce palatinate privileges, but rather to safeguard and promote royal interests. This pattern continued during the early Tudor period: Bishops Richard Fox (*c.* 1494-1501), Thomas Ruthall (*c.* 1509-1523), and Cuthbert Tunstall (*c.* 1530-1559) all served as keeper of the privy seal, while Bishop Thomas Wolsey (*c.* 1523-1529) served as Henry's chief minister and lord chancellor.⁴⁷ Pollard attached little significance to the bishop of Durham's franchisal obligations and went so far as to suggest that the bishopric was 'at one remove, an important extension of royal authority into the far north-east of the realm'.⁴⁸

Much of the research into Durham by the 1990s had focused on the crown's centralising policies, arguing that these represented genuine and long overdue attempts to align independent franchises more firmly under the aegis of a national polity. Such a unilateral emphasis prompted revision from Steven Ellis, Tim Thornton, and Christian Liddy, who have since reinterpreted the nature of early Tudor centre-periphery relations and championed the bishopric as a subject worthy of analysis in its own right.

Far from magnifying the strength of early Tudor government, Ellis sees the underdeveloped far North of England as a region that exposed and exacerbated the crown's inability to enforce its policies in outlying territories. A chronic shortage of

⁴⁶ R.B. Dobson, 'The Church of Durham and the Scottish Borders, 1378-88', in *War and Border Society in the Middle Ages*, ed. A. Goodman and A. Tuck (London, 1992), pp. 130-31; A.J. Pollard, 'The Crown and the County Palatine of Durham, 1437-94', in *The North of England in the Age of Richard III*, ed. A.J. Pollard (Stroud, 1996), pp. 71-72; idem, 'St Cuthbert and the Hog: Richard III and the County Palatine of Durham, 1471-85', in *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages: A Tribute to Charles Ross*, ed. R. Griffiths and J.W. Sherborne (Gloucester, 1986), p. 109; idem, 'Provincial Liberties in Lancastrian England: The Challenge to Bishop Langley's Liberty in 1433', in *People, Places and Perspective: Essays on Later Medieval and Early Tudor England*, ed. K. Dockray and P. Fleming (Nonsuch, 2005), p. 70.

⁴⁷ Richard Fox held the office of keeper of privy seal from 1487 to 1516; Thomas Ruthall between 1516 and 1523; and Cuthbert Tunstall from 1523 to 1530.

⁴⁸ Pollard, 'County Palatine of Durham', p. 72.

suitable gentry in Northumberland and Durham meant that Henry VII and Henry VIII's peace commissions were understaffed; commissions were significantly smaller than those issued by Edward IV and Richard III. Northern assizes were often hastily arranged, the appearance of royal justices in Newcastle and Durham doing little to resolve a prevailing air of unruliness and disorder on the border.⁴⁹ Henry VIII's appointment of a succession of poorly equipped border officials, including Thomas, Lord Dacre, and Sir William Eure, led to a 'decay of the borders', alleviated only with the elevation of Henry Percy, sixth earl of Northumberland, to the wardenship of the east and middle marches on 2 December 1527.⁵⁰

In his recent book, *Defending English Ground: War and Peace in Meath and Northumberland*, Ellis presents a sharp contrast between the Yorkist and early Tudor regimes' ability to exercise authority within the English Lordship in Ireland and the far North of England. In Meath and the wider Irish Pale, the local gentry had banded together to create at least a sense of political cohesion, which the crown could harness to enact its largely defensive military agenda.⁵¹ In the North-East, however, 'self government at the king's command' could not be replicated. Efforts to restore order through the duke of Richmond's northern council proved ineffectual and the condition of the region's major fortresses remained parlous by the mid-1530s.⁵² Westminster had, ultimately, expected too much from those left to govern England's northern frontier, with disastrous consequences. Although Meath and Northumberland are the primary subjects of the study, Ellis has made a concerted effort to situate his examination of these shires within a broader regional framework, one that considers their interplay with Durham, Tynedale, and Redesdale.

A thriving cultural identity and strong self-determination are the major themes advocated by Tim Thornton, whose research on Durham, Cheshire, and other

⁴⁹ S.G. Ellis, 'Civilizing Northumberland: Representations of Englishness in the Tudor State', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 12 (1999), pp. 109-13; idem, 'The limits of Power: the English crown and the British Isles', in *The Sixteenth Century*, ed. Patrick Collinson (Oxford, 2002), pp. 55-58, 60-64; Claire Etty, 'Neighbours from hell? Living with Tynedale and Redesdale, 1489-1547', in *Liberties and Identities in the Medieval British Isles*, ed. Michael Prestwich (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 123-24.

⁵⁰ S.G. Ellis, 'A Border Baron and the Tudor State: The Rise and Fall of Lord Dacre of the North', *HJ* 35 (1992), p. 256; idem, 'A crisis of the aristocracy? Frontiers and noble power in the early Tudor state', in *The Tudor Monarchy*, ed. John Guy (London, 1997), p. 332; idem, *Defending English Ground: War and Peace in Meath and Northumberland, 1460-1542* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 155-56.

⁵¹ Ellis, *Defending English Ground*, pp. 113-33.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 90, 153-54.

outlying territories firmly rejects the integrationist line.⁵³ Thornton has identified three areas in which Durham and its bishops managed to stave off encroachment from the centre. The palatinate's courts remained the principal outlet for local inhabitants to resolve civil and criminal disputes. The number of Durham cases heard in the Tudor equity courts, particularly chancery and star chamber, was extremely low. Christopher Kitching estimates that up to two hundred cases from the county palatinate had been brought before the king's justices in chancery during the sixteenth century; Thornton put the figure at 171, of which most were concerned with church lands and had little or anything to do with lay landed interests. The pattern was similarly underwhelming in star chamber: just six cases from Durham were heard between 1485 and 1547.⁵⁴ Thornton's work on the Channel Islands reinforces the argument that cases from peripheral zones were seldom heard in the equity courts; the local population had little appetite for surrendering their Norman-French traditions.⁵⁵ In Cheshire, where a large number of cases had been sent south, Cardinal Wolsey was forced to return cases to the county palatine or specially erected courts on the Welsh Marches.⁵⁶ One reason for the relatively small number of legal transfers from Durham to Westminster was the continued success and popularity of the bishop's chancery court. Repudiating Dobson and Pollard's claims concerning the pliancy of Tudor bishops of Durham, Thornton has stressed that it was during the episcopate of Henry VIII's chief minister, Thomas Wolsey, that the percentage of Durham cases at Westminster reached its lowest point since the 1470s.⁵⁷

⁵³ David Loades argued that Durham by the end of the sixteenth century was 'effectively defunct and the power of the center unopposed'. David Loades, *Power in Tudor England* (Basingstoke, 1997), p. 33; Tim Thornton, 'The Palatinate of Durham and the Maryland Charter', *The American Journal of Legal History* 45 (2001), pp. 235-55; idem, *Cheshire and the Tudor State, 1480-1560* (Woodbridge, 2000); idem, 'Cardinal Thomas Wolsey and the Abbot of Chester', *History Today* 45 (1995), pp. 12-17; idem, 'The English King's French Islands: Jersey and Guernsey in English Politics and Administration, 1485-1642', in *Authority and Consent in Tudor England: Essays Presented to C.S.L. Davies*, ed. G.W. Bernard and S.J. Gunn (Aldershot, 2002), pp. 203-6.

⁵⁴ Tim Thornton, 'Fifteenth Century Durham and the Problem of Provincial Liberties in England and the Wider Territories of the English Crown', *TRHS* 11 (2001), pp. 86-89; Christopher Kitching, 'The Durham Palatinate and the Courts of Westminster under the Tudors', in *The Last Principality*, p. 58.

⁵⁵ Thornton, 'Jersey and Guernsey', pp. 204-5.

⁵⁶ Thornton, *Cheshire and the Tudor State*, p. 182, 192-93; idem, 'Cardinal Wolsey and the Abbot of Chester', p. 15; John Guy, *The Cardinal's Court: The Impact of Thomas Wolsey in Star Chamber* (Hassocks, 1977), p. 48.

⁵⁷ Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham', p. 89.

Taxation and immunity from government levies was another means through which Durham continued to assert its self-determination. Whereas Cheshire and Wales were subjected to government subsidies by way of parliamentary statute in 1534 (25 Hen. VIII, c. 19) and 1540 (32 Hen VIII. c. 50), the bishopric was exempted.⁵⁸ Unrepresented in parliament, Durham's exemption from parliamentary subsidies and certain fiscal legislation was all but guaranteed until after the Civil War.⁵⁹ On a more personal level, Durham's early Tudor bishops made concerted attempts to safeguard ancient privileges. Even Bishop Richard Fox, a highly valued member of Henry VII's inner circle, has been characterised by Thornton as having placed the interests of his bishopric before the crown; his replacing Bishop John Sherwood was 'hardly an example of Tudor centralisation... at no point did he ever allow the priorities of Westminster to outweigh those of his bishopric'.⁶⁰ Fox's deployment of bishopric military resources in neighbouring Tyndale and Redesdale and one particularly personal letter addressed to Thomas Castell, prior of Durham, all point towards Henry's courtier-bishop as a staunch defender of Durham's privileges. Bishop Fox assured Castell, his 'broder', that he 'shall no thyng desyre you to doo that shall be hurt of preiudice to the mitre of that my church [in Durham]'.⁶¹ Thornton's overarching premise is that the early Tudor monarchy had not intended and certainly had not managed to incorporate independent franchises fully within the national polity: 'it is... hard to see the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries as a period of institutional centralisation weakening the Durham palatinate... If anything, the trend was towards a confirmation of its powers'.⁶²

Like Thornton, Christian Liddy's work – focused on the late medieval period – has foregrounded the bishopric's distinct political culture and local traditions, derived from the pre-Conquest patrimony of Saint Cuthbert and maintained by the bishop and the local community or *populus sancti Cuthberti* (people of the saint), known collectively as the *Haliwerfolc*.⁶³ Liddy is less concerned with the bishop of

⁵⁸ *SR*, iii, pp. 516-24, 824.

⁵⁹ Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham', pp. 92-94; A.W. Foster, 'The Struggle for Parliamentary Representation for Durham, 1600-41', in *The Last Principality*, pp. 176-201.

⁶⁰ Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham', p. 96, 99.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 99; *The Register of Richard Fox, Lord Bishop of Durham, 1494-1501*, ed. Marjorie Peers Howden, SS 147 (1932), pp. 80-84.

⁶² Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham', p. 94, 86.

⁶³ C.D. Liddy, *The Bishopric of Durham in the Late Middle Ages: Lordship, Community and the Cult of St Cuthbert* (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 186; *idem*, 'Land, Legend and Gentility in the

Durham's relationship with the crown than with his ability to exercise lordship within the palatinate and the surrounding areas. Vertical ties of lordship are presented as the best means through which to gain an understanding of palatinate landed society. In his 2008 book *The Bishopric of Durham and the Late Middle Ages*, Liddy concentrates his examination of local *manraed* on three aristocratic affinities: the retinue of the Neville earls of Westmorland; the influential priors of Durham Cathedral; and the networks of the late medieval bishops.⁶⁴ Durham's senior gentry families – the Bellasis, Bowes, Claxtons, Conyers, Eures, Strangways, and Tempests – exercised significant power within these affinities, with allegiances shifting according to the local political climate and by no means limited to one figurehead.⁶⁵ These highly adaptable and interchangeable networks are described as 'horizontal' ties, based on a strong sense of community and neighbourhood. It was these horizontal ties that facilitated the bishopric's development into a thriving political and administrative entity during the later Middle Ages.⁶⁶

Where Liddy tackles the bishop of Durham's position vis-à-vis the crown, a picture of greater collaboration and political cohesion presents itself. In an attempt to augment Bishop Thomas Hatfield's (c. 1345-1381) authority, in 1376 Edward III reinstated the term 'earl palatine'. The phrase had first been used in 1293 in reference to Bishop Anthony Bek (c. 1283-1311) and was seldom employed in the intervening years.⁶⁷ Moreover, not unlike the Neville earls of Westmorland or priors of Durham, the bishop of Durham had managed to extend his influence beyond the confines of his palatinate through the adoption of a regional affinity, whose members were active throughout the North-East.⁶⁸

Palatinate of Durham: The Pollards of Pollard Hall', in *North-East England in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. C.D. Liddy and R.H. Britnell (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 75-96; idem, 'The Politics of Privilege: Thomas Hatfield and the Palatinate of Durham, 1345-81', in *Fourteenth Century England IV*, ed. J.S. Hamilton (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 61-79; C.D. Liddy, Matthew Holford and Andy King, 'North-East England in the late middle ages: rivers, boundaries and identities, 1296-1461', in *Regional Identities in North-East England, 1300-2000* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 27-47. See also Margaret Harvey, *Lay Religious Life in Late Medieval Durham* (Woodbridge, 2006).

⁶⁴ Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, pp. 77-78

⁶⁵ Ibid., esp. ch. 3.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp. 117-18.

⁶⁷ C.M. Fraser, *A History of Anthony Beck, Bishop of Durham, 1283-1311* (Oxford, 1957), pp. 95-96; *CCR, 1374-7*, pp. 427-28.

⁶⁸ Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, pp. 104-5.

Recent histories of the Durham palatinate, then, have tended to promote one of two theses. The first, postulated by James, Pollard, and Dobson, among others, has downplayed the role of the bishop of Durham as a passionate defender of local privileges; Durham's courtier-bishops were crown pawns, acutely aware that their advancement rested on the crown. Tudor bishops of Durham were royal agents in the North-East, a vital link between Westminster and the Anglo-Scottish border. The second, revisionist, position, championed by Liddy, Thornton, and Ellis, has presented Durham as a unique, thriving, local politico-religious society, one in which the traditions and customs of the medieval period continued largely unabated in the 1500s. Out of this polarised discussion a more nuanced middle ground has begun to emerge. Collaboration and mutual benefit have been argued as the hallmarks of Durham's relationship with Westminster. Framing the bishopric within a more regional context, with a particular emphasis on its role during domestic crises and on the Anglo-Scottish border, Durham and the centre have been presented as mutually complementary structures of power.⁶⁹

This thesis builds on this recent, middleposition, scholarship. Indeed, Late medieval and Tudor centralisation should not be seen as especially disruptive or abrasive, or even to the detriment of local customs, but as a means of ensuring Durham's continued place with the burgeoning English polity, increasingly centred on the court but, to a great extent, still reliant upon effective government in the provinces. Not only in Durham but also in Cheshire and the marcher lordships of Wales, the adoption of franchisal jurisdictions has been presented as advantageous to both local governments and the Tudor monarchy's need to oversee aspects of regional administration. The gradual incorporation of franchises was brought about, as Steve

⁶⁹ Sean Cunningham, 'Henry VII and Rebellion in North-Eastern England, 1485-1492: Bonds of Allegiance and the Establishment of Tudor Authority', *NH* 32 (1996), pp. 42-74; idem, *Henry VII* (Abingdon, 2007), p. 192; M.J. Bennett, 'Henry VII and the Northern Rising of 1489', *EHR* 105 (1990), p. 55; James Lee, 'Urban policy and urban political culture: Henry VII and his towns', *Historical Research* 82 (2009), pp. 509-10; J.M. Becker, 'Armed conflict and border society: The East and Middle Marches, 1536-60' (Durham University PhD thesis 2006); Claire Etty, 'Tudor revolution?: Royal control of the Anglo-Scottish border, 1483-1530' (Durham University PhD thesis, 2005); idem, 'A Tudor Solution to the 'Problem of the North'? Government and the Marches Towards Scotland, 1509-1529', *NH* 39 (2002), pp. 209-226; Sean Cunningham, 'National War and Dynastic Politics: Henry VII's Capacity to Wage War in the Scottish Campaigns of 1496-1497', in *England and Scotland at War, c. 1296-1513*, ed. A. King and D. Simpkin (Leiden, 2012), pp. 297-328; Mark Arvanigian, 'The Durham Gentry and the Scottish March, 1370-1400: County Service in Late Medieval England', *NH* 42 (2005), pp. 257-273.

Gunn has argued, through negotiation and concession, not abolition.⁷⁰ It is within the historiographical debates outlined in this introduction that this thesis will outline a new approach not only for the study of Durham, but for independent franchises more generally. This new approach will take into consideration modern advances in the fields of centre-periphery relations and Tudor state formation and argue that the enforcement of political, administrative, and religious imperatives largely outweighed efforts to ensure constitutional neatness or preserve ancient privileges.

The Nature of Early Tudor Government and State Formation

The nature and development of early Tudor management in the localities, particularly the North-East, is a major theme in this thesis. Fourteenth- and fifteenth-century kings of England had managed to oversee the conduct of the localities only with the approbation of the realm's chief magnates, but as the period between 1399 and 1485 showed, such a system of government was liable to break down when competing noble factions jostled for possession of the crown. With the tumult of the Wars of the Roses at an end, the regimes of Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary I had, with varying degrees of success, established the crown as the fulcrum of political and military power; safeguarded the realm against the threat of domestic revolt from disgruntled noblemen and noblewomen; and, with the decision to break from Rome, made the king the supreme religious figurehead within his own realm, Mary's brief return to the Roman Catholic Church notwithstanding.

Examinations of Tudor government have undergone significant changes since A.F. Pollard and J.E. Neale discussed the crown's periodic conflicts with parliament.⁷¹ Though largely concerned with the machinery of government, G.R. Elton, writing in the mid-twentieth century, chose to move away from Neale's focus on puritanical resistance to Elizabethan parliamentary progress and concentrate his examinations on the evolving nature of English sovereignty, administrative institutions, and most notably, Thomas Cromwell's management of parliament and his

⁷⁰ S.J. Gunn, *Early Tudor Government, 1485-1558* (Basingstoke, 1995), pp. 173-75.

⁷¹ A.F. Pollard, *The Evolution of Parliament* (London, 1920), pp. 166-86; J.E. Neale, 'The Commons' Privilege of Free Speech in Parliament', in *Tudor Studies*, ed. R.W. Seton-Watson (London, 1924), pp. 257-86.

‘revolution in government’ during the 1530s.⁷² Political apparatus was the backbone of Elton’s work: ‘To me it seems that what matters most in the story is the condition, reconstruction, and gradual moulding of a state – the history of a nation and its leaders in political action and therefore the history of government in its widest sense’.⁷³ Elton’s accounts of the English state, however, left little room for any real analysis of political culture outside of Westminster; in his *England under the Tudors*, less than fourteen pages were devoted to the palatinate of Durham and the marcher lordship of Wales, hardly a reconstruction of ‘government in its widest sense’.⁷⁴

Where Elton’s emphasis on bureaucratic modernisation contained little in the way of individual agency or personal interactions, a noticeable shift in approach was already apparent in the writing and lectures of K.B. McFarlane. Despite publishing little during his own lifetime – his pupils and his pupils’ pupils hold the key to the McFarlane legacy – McFarlane was less interested in the components of late medieval government than in understanding how actors interacted with and drove the institutions of state.⁷⁵ Moving away from T.F. Tout and G.R. Elton’s administrative approach, in his 1953 Ford Lectures, later published as *The Nobility of Later Medieval England*, McFarlane put forward his argument for analyses of individual agency: ‘Institutions sometimes seem to have a life of their own, but this is only an appearance. They are born, develop, change, and decay by human agencies. Their life is the life of the men who make them’.⁷⁶ McFarlane’s impact on the study of late medieval politics was highly significant; not only did he create a mould from which two generations of medievalists have since emerged, his work also influenced those writing on the sixteenth century.⁷⁷

⁷² G.R. Elton, *The Tudor Constitution: Documents and Commentary* (Cambridge, 1960); idem, *The Tudor Revolution in Government: Administrative Changes in the Reign of Henry VIII* (Cambridge, 1948).

⁷³ Elton, *England under the Tudors*, p. vi.

⁷⁴ Ibid., Durham, pp. 14-15, 107, 175-76, 412; Wales, p. 4, 15-16, 65-66, 178-80.

⁷⁵ K.B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. G.L. Harriss (London, 1981); idem, *Letters to Friends, 1940-1966*, ed. G.L. Harris (Oxford, 1997); *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society*, ed. R.H. Britnell and A.J. Pollard (Stroud, 1995).

⁷⁶ T.F. Tout, *Chapter in the Administrative History of Medieval England: the Wardrobe, the Chamber and the small seals* (6 vols., Manchester, 1920-33); R.R. Reid, *The King’s Council in the North* (London, 1921); W.C. Richardson, *History of the Court of Augmentations* (Baton Rouge, 1961); K.B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England* (Oxford, 1973), p. xviii, 280.

⁷⁷ Penry Williams, *The Tudor Regime* (Oxford, 1973), p. vii.

Tudor historians had reached somewhat of an impasse by the 1980s, caught in a historiographical no man's land between the more rigid institutional model, promoted by Tout and Elton, McFarlane's call for enquiries based on personal agency, and increasingly popular socio-economic approaches, championed by S.T. Bindoff, W.G. Hoskins, and Keith Wrightson.⁷⁸ Presented as something of a standoff between diametrically opposed methodologies, more recent examinations of early Tudor government, at both a local and central level, have shown that the consolidation of authority was neither wholly reliant upon Cromwell's political astuteness, nor explicable in isolated, socio-economic, terms that forsake the actions of the realm's most significant players and their interactions with government. A more holistic approach was required to account adequately for regional diversity within what historians had presented as an increasingly centralised polity. In his inaugural lecture in November 1989, Patrick Collinson, Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, issued a call for a 'history with politics put back'.⁷⁹ Crucially, Collinson's call for re-politicisation went beyond Elton's focus on bureaucratic innovation; he was more concerned with regional dynamics and political processes, producing histories that were open to the ideas, social movements, and cultural trends that had, in varying ways and at different times, shaped the Tudor state.⁸⁰

Histories of Tudor state formation have come a long way since the 'revolution in government' thesis was first expounded in 1953. Widely acknowledged as too narrow in outlook, Elton's work on the nature of central and local government has been the subject of fierce criticism. Two of Elton's research students, David Starkey and Dale Hoak, have argued that the Henrician and Edwardian courts, particularly the privy chamber, were the arenas within which major political events unfolded. Ambitious courtiers and rival factions fought for access to and control of the privy chamber, hopeful of manipulating royal patronage for their own political ends.⁸¹ A

⁷⁸ S.T. Bindoff, *Tudor England* (London, 1950); W.G. Hoskins, *The Age of Plunder* (London, 1976), p. 121; Keith Wrightson, *English Societies, 1580-1680* (London, 1982), pp. 11-12.

⁷⁹ Patrick Collinson, 'De republica Anglorum; or, history with politics put back', in *Elizabethan Essays*, ed. Patrick Collinson (London and Rio Grande, 1994), pp. 1-29.

⁸⁰ Patrick Collinson, 'Introduction', in *The Sixteenth Century*, ed. Patrick Collinson (Oxford, 2002), pp. 1-17.

⁸¹ David Starkey, 'Court and Government', in *Revolution Reassessed: Revisions in the History of Tudor Government and Administration*, ed. Christopher Coleman and David Starkey (Oxford, 1986), pp. 29-58; idem, 'Intimacy and Innovation: the rise of the Privy Chamber, 1485-1547', in *The English Court: from the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, ed. David Starkey and others (London, 1987), p. 71; Dale Hoak, 'The King's Privy Chamber,

shift in emphasis from parliament to the royal court, coupled with Collinson's re-politicisation agenda, has engendered a renewed interest in the workings of early Tudor government, one that combines sound understanding of the principal institutions and machinery of state with an appreciation of how political actors operated within them.

Some of the most significant advances in the study of early Tudor government have originated from outside the confines of history departments. Insights from sociology and anthropology have been employed to further understanding of how political relationships played out at court and in the localities. Writing in the 1960s, G.E. Aylmer, in his study of Charles I's officials, was among the first British historians to adopt Lewis Berstein Namier's prosopographical approach.⁸² Where Namier and Aylmer's work differed from previous accounts was in their willingness to conduct examinations of the common characteristics of a certain group, whose individual biographies were largely untraceable, but who through a collective study of lives and careers could be shown to have had an impact on political management. The foregrounding of prosopography led to a surge in the number of publications concerned with the centre's relationship with local elites and how the English and French crowns went about extending their prerogative into the provinces through patronage networks.

The shift towards a prosopographical approach to the study of early Tudor control of the localities owed much to a group of historians, writing in the 1970s and 1980s, whose work focused on the political and military clienteles of the French monarchy, including the princes of the blood and the nobility. Moving away from Roger Doucét's work on the French *parlements*, Roland Mousnier and Robert Harding were among the first to argue that patronage networks, forged through personal loyalty or *fidélité*, were crucial to understanding the relationship between the *ancien regime* and the provinces.⁸³ Mousnier and Harding's examinations of political

1547-1553', in *Tudor Rule and Revolution*, ed. Delloyd J. Guth and John. W. McKenna (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 87-108.

⁸² Lewis Berstein Namier, *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III* (London, 1957; first published in 1929); G.E. Aylmer, *The King's Servants: The Civil Service of Charles I, 1625-42* (London, 1961).

⁸³ Roger Doucet, *Les Institutions de la France aux XVIe siècle* (2 vols., Paris, 1948); Roland Mousnier, 'Le fidélités et les clientèles en France aux XVIe, XVIIe, et XVIIIe siècles', *Histoire Sociale* 15 (1982), pp. 35-46; Robert Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite: The Provincial Governors of Early Modern France* (New Haven and London, 1978), *passim*.

clienteles later prompted Mack Holt, Mark Greengrass, and Sharon Kettering to conduct further investigations into the nature and role of patron-client relations, with particular attention to the composition and efficacy of political, economic, and military networks during the French Wars of Religion and during the reigns of Louis XIII and XIV.⁸⁴

In her seminal 1986 study of patronage ties in seventeenth-century France, Kettering outlined the nature and duties of patrons, clients, and brokers. Each role varied according to political conditions and the individual nature of a particular relationship, but could nonetheless be characterised by certain obligations. A patron's responsibilities included, but were not limited to, assisting and protecting clients, furnishing them with offices, arranging advantageous marriages, accommodating a client's offspring in royal or noble households, and providing economic aid.⁸⁵ Clientage is the term used to refer to a client's loyalty and service towards a patron in return for advancement. A client was a representative of their patron and had to act as a dependable, obedient subordinate. Clients were expected to assist patrons, particularly in local offices, provide information, take up arms, and, when deemed necessary, follow a patron into exile. Kettering's patron-client relationships were a direct, two-party exchange, grounded on mutual responsibilities and benefits.⁸⁶ A broker introduced a third, less direct element into the relationship. Acting as a middleman, a broker arranged the exchange of resources and services between a patron and client. Often significant figures in their own right, brokers fulfilled an important part within any patron-broker-client relationship. They helped monarchs

⁸⁴ Mack Holt, 'Patterns of Clientéle and Economic Opportunity at Court during the Wars of Religion: The Household of François, Duke of Anjou', *French Historical Studies* (1984), pp. 305-22; Mark Greengrass, 'Noble Affinities in Early Modern France: The Case of Henri de Montmorency, Constable of France', *European History Quarterly* 16 (1986), pp. 275-311; Sharon Kettering, 'Clientage during the French Wars of Religion', *SCJ* 20 (1989), pp. 221-39; idem, 'Patronage and Kinship in Early Modern France', *French Historical Studies* 16 (1989), pp. 408-35; idem, 'The Historical Development of Political Clientelism', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 18 (1988), pp. 419-47; Stuart Carroll, 'The Guise Affinity and Popular Protest during the Wars of Religion', *French History* 9 (1995), pp. 125-52; R.J. Kalas, 'Marriage, Clientage, Office Holding, and the Advancement of the Early Modern French Nobility: The Noailles Family of Limousin', *SCJ* 27 (1996), pp. 365-83.

⁸⁵ Sharon Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers, and Clients in Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1986), p. 3.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

and royal ministers to govern peripheral territories, serving as a gateway between the royal court and the localities.⁸⁷

Studies of French clientelism have shown how sociological and anthropological methods can be used to further understanding of political culture and how patronage networks drove state formation. Kettering's account drew heavily on the work of social anthropologists, including Marcel Mauss and Claude Lévi-Strauss, who put forward the argument that societies were, to a large extent, reliant upon networks of 'generalised exchange'.⁸⁸ Robert Kauffman went further, suggesting that patronage networks were the 'most important basis of social-political control'.⁸⁹ Indeed, where an incompletely centralised state hoped to enforce royal authority in outlying zones, patron-client ties helped to bridge the gap between the centre and a locality. Commenting on the importance of the social sciences to the study of sixteenth and seventeenth century England, Nadine Lewycky has argued that the 'influence of sociology and anthropology has re-located the process of increasing Tudor and Stuart crown authority from the institutions to the relations among political elites who exercised social power through patronage networks'.⁹⁰

Histories of the composition and interactions of socio-political networks in the British Isles were becoming more common by the turn of the twenty-first century.⁹¹ Following the lead of Margaret Condon, Steven Gunn and David Grummitt have both suggested that it was Henry VII's skilful distribution of patronage that enabled the first Tudor king to consolidate his authority after the Wars of the Roses.⁹² More

⁸⁷ Ibid, pp. 4-5. A greater understanding of the roles of patron, brokers, and clients can be gleaned from: James Scott, 'Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia', *American Political Science Review* 65 (1972), pp. 91-114; Carl Landé, 'The Dyadic Basis of Clientelism', in *Friends, Followers, and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientelism*, ed. Steffen Schmidt et al. (Berkeley, 1977), pp. xiii-xxvii; Adrian Mayer, 'Quasi-Groups in the Study of Complex Societies', in *The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies*, ed. M. Banton (New York, 1966), pp. 113-14; Alex Weingrod, 'Patrons, Patronage, and Political Parties', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 10 (1968), pp. 377-400.

⁸⁸ Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss*, trans. Felicity Baker (London, 1987), pp. 46-47, 58-59.

⁸⁹ Robert Kaufman, 'The Patron-Client Concept and Macro-Politics: Prospects and Problems', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16 (1974), p. 285.

⁹⁰ Nadine Lewycky, 'Serving God and King: Cardinal Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks and Early Tudor Government, 1514-1529, with special reference to the Archdiocese of York' (University of York PhD thesis, 2008), p. 13.

⁹¹ Michael Braddick and John Walter, eds. *Negotiating Power in Early Modern Society: Order, Hierarchy and Subordination in Britain and Ireland* (Cambridge, 2001), *passim*.

⁹² M.M. Condon, 'Ruling Elites in the Reign of Henry VII', in *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England*, ed. Charles Ross (Gloucester, 1979), pp. 109-42; S.J.

recently, Stephen Alford and Alan Bryson have shown how Edward Seymour, duke of Somerset, and John Dudley, duke of Northumberland, used local networks as a means to push through Edward VI's controversial social and religious reforms.⁹³

A series of prosopographical studies that examined the informal power networks of Henry VIII's principal ministers have cast further light on the nature of early Tudor statecraft. W.R.B. Robinson, David Grummitt, and Tim Thornton have demonstrated how Henry's government went about forging patronage networks with local landowners in the Welsh Marches, the Pale of Calais, and the county palatine of Chester, respectively. It was through these networks that the crown managed to extend its remit into regions traditionally considered outside of its purview. Local patronage networks were symbiotic in nature and maintained through the judicious distribution of royal offices, positions at the royal court or within a minister's household in return for service. A client's services took many forms, including, but by no means limited to, the oversight of political and military offices, serving on local commissions, opening up and maintaining channels of communication, conducting negotiations with foreign powers, and when these broke down, as was common on the Anglo-Scottish border, mustering men and taking up arms.⁹⁴

The crown's ability to manage outlying, peripheral, territories has been presented as the acid test of effective government.⁹⁵ In their respective studies, Nadine Lewycky and Mary Robertson have shown how Cardinal Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell went about forging clienteles with the leading lay landowners and civic officials from two such peripheral zones, namely York and the West Country. In spite

Gunn, 'The Courtiers of Henry VII', *EHR* 108 (1993), pp. 23-49; idem, 'New Men' and 'New Monarchy' in England, 1485-1524', in *Powerbrokers in the Late Middle Ages: Les Courtiers Du Pouvoir Au Bas Moyen-Age*, ed. Robert Stein (Turnhout, 2001), pp. 153-64; David Grummitt, 'The Establishment of the Tudor Dynasty', in *A Companion to Tudor Britain*, ed. R. Titler and N. Jones (Chichester, 2004), pp. 19-20; Idem, *Henry VII, 1457-1509* (Oxford, 2009), p. 28; Dominic Luckett, 'Patronage, Violence and Revolt in the Reign of Henry VII', in *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. R.E. Archer (Stroud, 1995), 145-60; Sean Cunningham, *Henry VII* (Abingdon, 2007), p. 192.

⁹³ Stephen Alford, *Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI* (Cambridge, 2002), p. 150; Alan Bryson, 'Edward VI's 'special men': crown and locality in mid-Tudor England', *Historical Research* 82 (2009), pp. 229-51.

⁹⁴ W.R.B. Robinson, 'Knighted Welsh Landowners, 1485-1558: a provisional list', *Welsh History Review* 13 (1987), pp. 282-98; David Grummitt, 'Calais, 1485-1547: A Study in Early Tudor Politics and Government' (LSE PhD thesis, 1997), pp. 118-24; Tim Thornton, 'The Integration of Cheshire into the Tudor Nation State in the Early Sixteenth Century', *NH* 29 (1993), pp. 40-63.

⁹⁵ Steven Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers and Noble Power: The Making of the British State* (Oxford, 1995).

of Wolsey's physical absence from his archbishopric, the cardinal succeeded in establishing patronage networks with York's elites through regional brokers – often the city's senior officials who doubled as members of the minister's archiepiscopal household – augmenting his own personal authority while simultaneously extending the reach of the royal prerogative.⁹⁶ In the West Country, unwilling to call upon the marquis of Exeter or the aging bishop, Cromwell turned to the local gentry, many of whom had sat alongside the minister in parliament during the 1520s. Like Wolsey, Cromwell managed to extend the reach of royal government into the notoriously volatile South-West through his adoption of patronage networks.⁹⁷ Both Wolsey and Cromwell were acutely aware that continued cooperation was contingent upon the distribution of rewards and promises of future assignments to favoured clients. A monopoly on crown patronage meant that Wolsey and Cromwell were well placed to secure fiscal exemptions, local offices, and positions at court for their clients.⁹⁸

In the same way that political networks were used to consolidate Tudor rule in peripheral territories, information and military clienteles proved important for defence at home and abroad. Crown ministers opened channels of communication with local officials and gentry in an attempt to relay information to and from regional authorities or the government in London.⁹⁹ Where peaceful resolutions could not be found, the crown relied on networks to muster and provision men. Henry VII made particularly productive use of military clienteles, calling upon his 'new men' at the battle of Stoke in June 1487 and for campaigns in France, Scotland, and Ireland.¹⁰⁰

Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the process of harnessing military networks had been refined. Simon Adams and Neil Younger have shown how Robert Dudley, first earl of Leicester, and Robert Devereux, second earl of Essex, managed

⁹⁶ Nadine Lewycky, 'Cardinal Thomas Wolsey and the City of York, 1514-1529', *NH* 46 (2009), pp. 43-60.

⁹⁷ M.L. Robertson, 'The Art of the Possible: Thomas Cromwell's Management of West Country Government', *HJ* 32 (1989), pp. 793-816.

⁹⁸ Lewycky, 'Wolsey and the City of York', pp. 43-45; Robertson, 'Cromwell's Management of West Country Government', pp. 795-99.

⁹⁹ Ian Cooper, 'Provincial news networks in late Elizabethan Devon', *Historical Research* 87 (2014), pp. 404-22; J.D.P. Cooper, *Propaganda and the Tudor State: Political Culture in the Westcountry* (Oxford, 2003), p. 29; F.J. Levy, 'How Information Spread among the Gentry, 1550-1640', *JBS* 21 (1982), pp. 11-34; Timothy Watson, 'Friends at Court: The Correspondence of the Lyon City Council, c. 1525-1575', *French History* 13 (1999), pp. 280-302.

¹⁰⁰ Grummitt, 'Tudor Dynasty', pp. 19-20; idem, 'Calais', pp. 112-19; Gunn, 'New Men', p. 157

to tap into existing military networks for their respective campaigns in the Netherlands and Cadiz.¹⁰¹ Essex had managed to circumvent the traditional method of mustering troops. Rather than rely on commissions sent to shire officials, ordinarily the lord lieutenants, who were not obliged to finance or equip retinues, Essex recruited followers on the promise of future rewards and favour. As England's foremost military patron and a royal favourite, local men had little reason to distrust the earl, whose willingness to recruit from his own followers and external networks significantly improved the crown's military capabilities.¹⁰²

The Importance of Studying Early Tudor Durham

Recent advances in the study of patronage networks, peripheral territories, and state formation can usefully be incorporated into an account of the palatinate. As one of the few remaining English franchises, but the only one controlled by a bishop, an examination of the Durham palatinate provides a unique window into the nature of early Tudor political management. Durham's unique administrative autonomy and religious heritage have often been presented as an obstacle to the consolidation of royal power. Jealously guarded medieval privileges barred the way for any meaningful collaboration between central government and the bishopric. Tim Thornton and, to a lesser extent, Christian Liddy have presented Durham as a largely anomalous political and administrative satellite, beyond the realm of the crown's orbit. An examination of Durham between 1485 and 1569, one that considers the work of its principal landowners and officers and its interplay with other regional power structures, demonstrates that those in control of Durham, from its bishops to its leading lay landowners, were not averse to strengthening ties with Westminster. On occasions these ties could be severely tested and, in extreme cases, compromised, but for the most part the authorities in Durham and Westminster sought to work in harmony with one another.

¹⁰¹ S.L. Adams, 'The Gentry of North Wales and the Earl of Leceister's expedition to the Netherlands, 1585-1586', *Welsh History Review* 7 (1974), pp. 129-47; Neil Younger, 'The Practice and Politics of Troop-Raising: Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex, and the Elizabethan Regime', *EHR* 127 (2012), pp. 567-70.

¹⁰² Younger, 'Practice and Politics of Troop-Raising', pp. 570-72.

The overarching contentions of this thesis are fourfold. First, it will argue that the palatinate's leading lay and ecclesiastical landowners and officials operated within a series of highly adaptable and fluid networks, similar to those traced by Robertson in the West Country and Lewycky in York. Durham families, many of whom had established ties with the crown and regional authorities before 1485, proved willing to switch allegiances after Henry VII's victory at Bosworth and so began a gradual process of increasing collaboration between the fledgling Tudor dynasty and some of the North-East's most influential players. As with other English shires, Durham and its patronage networks would over time evolve into an integral component of the early Tudor state's administrative fabric.

Second, just as Sharon Kettering has outlined in her account of seventeenth-century French brokerage, Durham's networks were not unilateral, but symbiotic, based on reciprocal ties of mutual benefit. On the one hand, the Tudor regimes' fostering of networks helped to extend the royal prerogative into a region with a chequered history of collaboration with the crown. On the other, membership of one of the royal networks in the North-East allowed the most influential members of local society the opportunity to further their careers alongside those in central government. For the region's landowners, collaboration with the largest source of national and local patronage, enhanced by the resumption of crown lands *en masse* and the wholesale confiscation of monastic property in the late 1530s, provided a gateway for future service and rewards.

Patronage networks were not without imperfections, however. Their very fluidity meant that clients, brokers, and patrons could be replaced, dispensed with altogether, or subject to the ebbs and flows of the ever-changing political and religious tide. It was distinctly possible that a royal client in Durham could seem to be a staunch supporter, advocate, and enforcer of the royal will, only to shift priorities in favour of palatinate privilege. This was especially true of Durham's bishops, who owed their appointments to the crown but had no desire to cede power or wealth unnecessarily or without suitable compensation. Moreover, lay members could be tasked with the implementation of crown policy at the beginning of a given year, only to rise up in opposition a few months later. While the North-East and Durham's landowners proved willing to work alongside the crown and its subordinates, when relations broke down local networks were severely tested and in some cases compromised.

Third, it was the very flexibility of the crown's networks with Durham that led to the palatinate's gradual and pragmatic integration into the national polity. Rather than see the history of Durham vis-à-vis central government as one of embittered opposition or piecemeal incorporation, a new interpretation will be put forward. This new approach argues that the need to ensure a large degree of political and religious uniformity, at a time of radical and often fiercely opposed change, was more important to the Tudor regime than any ideal of constitutional neatness. Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI, and, to a lesser extent, Mary I sought to work in tandem with Durham and its bishops rather than against them. The need to secure Henry VII's rule in the North-East, ensure a degree of stability on the Anglo-Scottish border, enforce change during the Reformation, and usher in a new fully fledged protestant polity under Edward (later reversed under Mary) produced a collaborative process of incorporation and mutual benefit. The history of Durham and the crown between 1485 and 1569 was not, by and large, one of diametrically opposed forces, but rather a gradual process of adjustment that would see Durham fulfil an important and varied role within an increasingly centralised, yet still highly diverse, national state.

The key dynamic this thesis seeks to identify is one that could be described as the 'pragmatic integration' of the Durham palatinate. While this was to a large degree contingent upon the crown creating new and harnessing previously established patronage networks, it could not have been achieved without the cooperation of the bishops of Durham. As one of the North-East's largest landowners the support of the bishop was inextricably linked to the extension of the royal prerogative there. Mervyn James' Tudor courtier-bishops, particularly Bishops Fox, Ruthall, Wolsey, and Tunstall, while not forsaking their obligations as guardians of Saint Cuthbert's flock, nonetheless helped to enforce parliamentary legislation and royal policies in their bishopric. Even the permanently absent Bishop Wolsey was able to promote the crown in Durham through his episcopal household and his overlapping clientele in York and the palatinate. It is testimony to the durability and efficacy of the crown's networks that the palatinate was able to emerge from national crises, vacancies, and a bishop's lengthy absenteeism strengthened and consolidated.

Finally, an examination of Durham's networks forces us to reinterpret our understanding of 'county communities'. How the subject of local political culture should be approached remains a vexed issue. Since Alan Everitt first expounded his 'county community' thesis in 1973 a number of examinations have sought to explicate

local politics through this model, including Christian Liddy's 2008 account of the late medieval bishopric.¹⁰³ English shires did not operate completely in isolation, however. Christine Carpenter has suggested that historians refocus their lenses towards a less rigid concept of 'regional elites'.¹⁰⁴ Carpenter's regional model is less restrictive, allowing examinations to chart the careers of a largely homogeneous group of families, whose landed and political interests spanned two or more counties.

By the late fifteenth century local societies had become increasingly fluid. Counties, including Durham, were interconnected by a number of aspirational gentry families and itinerant royal officials. Despite its rich history of administrative autonomy, Durham's gentry had often sought out opportunities to expand their political and personal horizons beyond the Tyne and Tees and the gradual centralisation of the English polity around the crown from the 1470s facilitated this. Durham's patron-client networks, then, were by no means limited to the county palatine itself. Rather, they operated within a broad regional network, involving men from neighbouring counties, particularly Yorkshire, Westmorland, and Northumberland, but as far south as Lincolnshire. It was this regional community, of which Durham was an integral member, that led to greater cooperation between royal authorities in the North-East and at Westminster.

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first seeks to understand how Henry VII went about cementing Tudor authority in Durham, which in 1485, like much of the North of England, formed an integral component of the old Yorkist polity. It will look at Henry's dispensation of rewards and his ability to garner the support of former Ricardians through a targeted but certainly not heavy-handed patronage policy. The chapter will then move towards an examination of local commissions and the regional nature of legal office-holding in the North-East. Henry coupled his recruitment of Yorkist sympathisers with a concerted effort to ensure political security through the imposition of financial exactions, notably financial bonds. Henry's bonds were not principally designed to bolster the royal coffers, though this may have been a by-

¹⁰³ Alan Everitt, *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion, 1640-60* (Leicester, 1973), p. 13; J.S. Morrill, *Cheshire, 1630-1660 County Government and Society during the English Revolution* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 330-33; Alan Hassell Smith, *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk, 1558-1603* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 107-9; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County* (Oxford, 1986), *passim*; Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, p. 17.

¹⁰⁴ Christine Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community in Medieval England', *JBS* 33 (1994), p. 350; S.J. Payling, *Political Society in Lancastrian England* (New York, 1991), p. 79.

product of a larger monetary policy, but to safeguard allegiances. The final part of the first chapter will look at the role of military networks and ‘new men’ on the northern frontier, with especial reference to the campaigns of mid-1490s.

The second chapter addresses Durham’s role during the Anglo-Scottish conflicts of the 1510s and 1520s. The absence of the Percy earls of Northumberland and Thomas, Lord Dacre’s ineffective attempts to restore order on the marches galvanised Durham’s gentry, who worked alongside a host of royal and regional authorities to enact Henry VIII’s foreign policies towards Scotland. The chapter will then move towards an examination of Bishop Thomas Wolsey’s episcopate, his part in re-establishing the council of the north in 1525, his local reform agenda in the North-East, and how the overlap between his networks in the archbishopric of York and the bishopric consolidated Durham’s position within a regional community of informers and clients.

The enforcement of Henrician religious change is the subject of the third chapter. Although not officially represented in parliament, the introduction of Reformation Parliament legislation from 1533 onwards fundamentally altered Durham’s position within the national polity. Measures designed to extirpate papal authority and promote the royal supremacy no matter how legally binding could only be realised in the localities with local support. The third chapter will examine how Henry and his chief minister, Thomas Cromwell, went about enforcing parliamentary changes in Durham, including the collection of the bishop of Durham’s first fruits and the visitation and subsequent dissolution of the North-East’s monasteries. The bishop of Durham’s obligation to Saint Cuthbert was now considered at odds with the ideas of the royal supremacy and an English realm united against the Roman Church. How Bishop Tunstall, his episcopal household, and local families went about implementing this cultural shift, in the wake of the Pilgrimage of Grace, is the focus of the final part of the chapter.

The penultimate chapter builds on research into Durham’s role during Henry VIII’s ‘rough wooing’ of Scotland. Warfare has long been presented as a driver of state formation and so the palatinate’s involvement in the mid-century wars helped to consolidate its standing with the crown. Durham’s military commanders, operating in tandem with royal officers and men from throughout the North, were able to equip and mobilise men for war by virtue of a well-oiled system of military networks; many

of those present during the mid-century wars had served under the then earl of Surrey at the beginning of Henry's reign.

The final chapter looks at regime change during the reigns of Edward VI and Mary I and how the uncertain politico-religious climate impacted the careers of the palatinate's gentry. During Edward's reign the Durham diocese was, albeit only for one year, abolished and annexed to the crown as the 'King's County Palatine'. Though the formal impact of the bishopric's status has been the subject of a recent study by David Loades, the effect on regional landowners and officers has received relatively little attention.¹⁰⁵ The longevity of local and national careers under the Catholic Mary I will also be addressed as a point of comparison.

In conclusion, this thesis will consider how Durham's networks helped to quash the 1569 rebellion of the northern earls. Although a number of the landowners and officers discussed throughout the thesis had perished by the late 1560s, it is testimony to the strength of the bishopric's networks and its reformed, largely integrated, status under Bishop James Pilkington (*c.* 1561-1576) that their sons, brothers, nephews, and other family members fought to preserve Durham's relationship with the Elizabethan regime. Throughout, this thesis attempts to situate developments in Durham and the actions of its leading landowners within the seismic political and religious upheavals of the early and mid Tudor period.

A Note on Source Material

The early Tudor palatinate of Durham has received relatively little attention from historians. Only recently have attempts been made to integrate the county palatine and its landowners into more mainstream accounts of the Anglo-Scottish frontier, the far North, and the Pilgrimage of Grace. Such works, however, have tended to relegate the Durham gentry and the bishops' episcopal households to a minor role within the national polity. This is in spite of a plethora of hitherto under-explored archival material, at the National Archives and in Durham, which offers avenues for study in keeping with recent advances in the fields of centre-periphery relations, state formation, and network analysis.

¹⁰⁵ David Loades, 'The Dissolution of the Diocese of Durham, 1553-54', in *The Last Principality*, pp. 101-16.

The single most important group of documents for this thesis has been the personal accounts and the correspondence of the bishops and priors of Durham, members of the bishops' households, leading lay landholders from within the palatinate and the surrounding counties, local government officials, and royal courtiers and ministers. Within the State Papers are a huge ream of letters and miscellaneous accounts that document the personal and political relationships of Durham's principal landed families, local officials, royal ministers, and, of course, the monarchs themselves.¹⁰⁶ These accounts shed light on the interactions between those in the North-East and the authorities in Westminster, the largely informal nature and fluidity of patron-client relationships, and, crucially, the language and conventions that bound such relationships together. Although, regrettably, gaps in correspondence do exist, the State Papers are nonetheless effective when used in tandem with other records that concern the interactions of those figures that helped to shape Durham's role in a regional and national polity.

By combing through the State Papers it is possible to reconstruct the crown's networks with Durham families and understand how these relationships played out at both a national and local level. Examinations of the original documents reveal the names and backgrounds of those operating as part of local affinities, those recommended as potential clients to royal ministers, and help to decipher the language and codes of patron-client interactions. Recent work on Cardinal Wolsey's patronage networks with the corporation at York has underlined the significance of personal correspondence to the reconstruction of local clienteles.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, Ruth Ahnert and James Daybell have emphasised the importance of letter writing and language in their respective examinations of English prison culture and female news networks.¹⁰⁸

Previous work on Durham's relationship with the Tudor polity has not placed the same degree of emphasis on the personal correspondence found within the State Papers. Mervyn James's 1974 account drew heavily on calendared material, while

¹⁰⁶ TNA, SP 1, 10-12, 15, 49-51, 58, 68.

¹⁰⁷ Lewycky, 'Cardinal Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks', p. 9; idem, 'Wolsey and the City of York', pp. 51, 60.

¹⁰⁸ Ruth Ahnert, *The Rise of Prison Literature in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2013), pp. 74-100; idem, 'Protestant Letter Networks in the Reign of Mary I: A Quantitative Approach', *English Literary History* 82 (2015), pp. 1-33; James Daybell, 'Gender, Politics and Diplomacy: Women, News and Intelligence Networks in Elizabethan England', in *Diplomacy and Early Modern Culture*, ed. Robyn Adams and Rosanna Cox (Basingstoke, 2011), pp. 101-19.

Tim Thornton's 2001 article made scant use of personal letters, focusing instead on a quantitative analysis of Durham cases catalogued within the records for star chamber and chancery and the periodic conflicts between Durham's bishops and the crown recorded in parliamentary proceedings.¹⁰⁹ While not seeking to downplay the importance of the material used by James and Thornton, any reconstruction of patronage networks in the Durham palatinate is incomplete without a thorough examination of the letters of the region's gentry and leading officials.

Network analysis using the State Papers has been supported by material from the British Library, particularly its Additional Manuscript and Cotton Manuscript series. Where manuscript material is either incomplete or no longer extant, calendared material – particularly the *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, and the materials for Richard III, Henry VII, Edward VI, Mary, and Elizabeth, including the close, fine, and patent rolls – has been marshalled. J.R. Dasent's *Acts of the Privy Council* supplements an understanding of how the political and religious convolutions of Edward and Mary's reigns impacted the careers of regional landowners. The complexion of palatinate commissions, particularly assize, gaol, and peace commissions, whose empanelling remained the preserve of the bishop for the duration of the period covered in this thesis, can be determined from the records of the bishop of Durham's chancery court, preserved in the National Archives at Kew.¹¹⁰ The patent and close rolls for Bishops Sherwood, Fox, Senhouse, Bainbridge, Ruthall, Wolsey, and Tunstall list those appointed to serve as the executors of the peace. The rolls also provide details of other major palatinate administrative appointments, including the chancellorship, receiver-generals, stewards, sheriffs, constables of palatinate castles, foresters, among several others. The bishop of Durham's chancery rolls have been used in conjunction with a variety of printed material, produced by the Surtees Society, including episcopal registers and quarter session rolls.¹¹¹ Durham's sheriff accounts reveal much about the maintenance

¹⁰⁹ James, *Civil Society*, *passim*; Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham', pp. 83-100.

¹¹⁰ TNA, DURH 3/56-58, 60-70, 72-80.

¹¹¹ Notably but not limited too: *The Registers of Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham, 1530-59, and James Pilkington, Bishop of Durham, 1561-76*, ed. Gladys Hinde, SS 161 (London, 1952); *Durham Quarter Sessions Rolls, 1471-1625*, ed. C.M. Fraser, SS 199 (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1991).

of law and order in the palatinate and, of course, those appointed by the bishop to serve as the region's chief legal officer.¹¹²

Aside from the archival material housed at Kew and the British Library, records from the Cathedral Priory not only reinforce our understanding of the bishops' appointments, but also shed light on the monastery's relationships with local landowners, lay and ecclesiastical, regional bodies such as the councils in the north, and royal minsters; Wolsey and Cromwell received letters and favours from the prior and his brethren.¹¹³ Examining the material at Kew and Durham in conjunction with one another allows for a greater appreciation of the regional dynamic. What emerges is a more holistic account of Durham's relationship with the early Tudor state, one that foregrounds the actions and at time frailties of the region's principal actors, who, to varying degrees, paved the way for Durham's increasingly pragmatic and symbiotic collaboration with the Tudor regime.

¹¹² TNA, 20/6, 8-57, 76.

¹¹³ DULSC, DCM, Reg. 4, 5, Specialia.

CHAPTER ONE

Henry VII and the Durham Palatinate

Henry VII's interactions with and management of local government has received long overdue scholarly attention in the last three decades. Moving away from the 'rapacity' debate of the late 1950s, historians have increasingly focused their enquiries on the consolidation of Tudor authority after the tumult of the Wars of the Roses.¹ A plethora of recent publications have charted Henry's attitudes towards and treatment of the localities and independent franchises and have suggested that the reign of the first Tudor king marked a fundamental turning point in centre-periphery relations. Henry Tudor's victory at Bosworth is hailed as having ushered in a distinctive and new national polity, built on closer ties between the crown and the provinces.² This process of Tudor centralisation was, to a large degree, achieved through what Steven Gunn has termed a breed of 'new men', royal retainers and agents whose loyalties and greatest chance of favour rested with the crown.³ Post-revisionist histories, meanwhile, notably those produced by Steven Ellis, James Lee, and Tim Thornton, have called for a more variegated approach to the study of Henry VII's management

¹ G.R. Elton, 'Henry VII: Rapacity and Remorse', *HJ* 1 (1958), pp. 21-39; R. Somerville, 'Henry VII's "Council learned in the law"', *EHR* 54 (1939), p. 427; J.R. Lander, 'Bonds of coercion and fear: Henry VII and the peerage', in J.R. Lander, *Crown and Nobility, 1450-1509* (1976), pp. 267-300; J.P. Cooper, 'Henry VII's Last Years Reconsidered', *HJ* 2 (1959), pp. 103-129. The debate concerning the nature of Henry's fiscal policy has been taken up more recently by Paul Cavill and Margaret McGlynn: Paul Cavill, 'The enforcement of the penal statutes in the 1490s: some new evidence', *HR* 82 (August 2009), pp. 482-492; Margaret McGlynn, 'Of good name and fame in the country': standards of conduct for Henry VII's chamber officials', *HR* 82 (2009), pp. 547-559.

² David Grummitt, *Henry VII, 1457-1509: The First Tudor King* (Oxford, 2009), p. 20, 28-30; *idem*, *The Calais Garrison: war and military service in England 1436-1558* (Woodbridge, 2008), *passim*; M.R. Horowitz, 'Contrary to the liberties of this city': Henry VII, English towns and the economies of law and order', *HR* 85 (2012), pp. 32-56; Dominic Lockett, 'Patronage, Violence and Revolt in the Reign of Henry VII', in *Crown, Government and People in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. R.E. Archer (Stroud, 1995), pp. 145-160; D.M. Palliser, 'Towns and the English state, 1066-1500', in *The Medieval State: Essays Presented to James Campbell*, ed. J.R. Madicott and D.M. Palliser (London, 2000), pp. 127-145.

³ S.J. Gunn, 'New Men' and 'New Monarchy', in *England, 1485-1524*, in *Powerbrokers in the Late Middle Ages: Les Courtiers Du Pouvoir Au Bas Moyen-Age*, ed. by Robert Stein (Turnhout, 2001), pp. 153-163; *idem*, 'The Courtiers of Henry VII', *EHR* 108 (1993), pp. 23-49; *idem*, 'Edmund Dudley and the Church', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 3 (2000), pp. 509-526.

of local government, downplaying the impact of royal intervention and emphasising the vitality of local customs and administrative anomalies.⁴

This chapter will examine how Durham's bishops and the North-East's landowners and officers helped to establish Tudor rule in a region famed for its Yorkist sympathies. The first part of the chapter will elucidate how Henry went about promoting and consolidating his authority in the aftermath of his victory at Bosworth. Procuring the allegiances of Durham's landed elites – previously loyal to the Yorkist regimes of Edward IV and Richard III, the Neville earls of Westmorland, or the Percy earls of Northumberland – represented an integral aspect of Henry's strategy of securing the North-East. This policy was made considerably easier through Henry's skilful distribution of local and royal patronage in and around Durham. The chapter will then move towards a discussion on the nature and composition of local commissions. It will explore how the bishops' and the king's empaneling of assize, goal, and peace commissions in Durham and the surrounding shires helped to extend the royal prerogative into the region, engendering closer relations between the palatinate and the court. The expansion of royal justice into Durham was made possible through a combination of harnessing existing palatinate resources, the strategic insertion of royal men into senior administrative and legal posts, and the enforcement of a concerted parliamentary programme, designed to facilitate a closer relationship between the new Tudor dynasty and outlying territories.

The use of financial bonds and other exactions constituted another fundamental aspect of Henry VII's consolidation policy in the Durham palatinate. Recognisances were used in Durham before Henry took the throne and were employed once again after 1485, with a noticeable increase in issuances after the mid-

⁴ C.D. Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance in Late Medieval English Towns: Bristol, York and the Crown, 1350-1400* (Woodbridge, 2005); Tim Thornton, 'Local Equity Jurisdictions in the Territories of the English Crown: The Palatinate of Chester, 1450-1550', in *Courts, Counties and the Capital*, ed. D.E.S. Dunn (Stroud, 1996), pp. 27-52; idem, *Cheshire and the Tudor State, 1480-1560* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 165-86; idem, 'The English King's French Islands: Jersey and Guernsey in English Politics and Administration, 1485-1642', in *Authority and Consent in Tudor England: Essays Presented to C.S.L. Davies*, ed. G.W. Bernard and S.J. Gunn (Aldershot, 2002), pp. 204-5; idem, *The Channel Islands, 1370-1640: Between England and Normandy* (Woodbridge, 2012); idem, 'Fifteenth-century Durham, and the problem of provincial liberties in England and the wider territories of the English crown', *TRHS* 11 (2001), pp. 83-100; idem, 'The Palatinate of Durham and the Maryland Charter', *The American Journal of Legal History* 45 (2001), pp. 235-255; S.G. Ellis, 'Civilizing Northumberland: Representations of Englishness in the Tudor State', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 12 (1999), pp. 103-127; James Lee, 'Urban policy and urban political culture: Henry VII and his towns', *HR* 82 (2009), 493-510.

1490s, as another means through which to safeguard Tudor interests in the North-East.⁵ The issuance of financial bonds in Durham, as elsewhere, was not grounded on rapacity or fiscal greed, but on a desire to consolidate the fledgling Tudor dynasty in the furthestmost parts of the realm.

The chapter will conclude with an examination of the palatinate's role on the Anglo-Scottish frontier, with particular focus on the campaigns and diplomatic wrangling of the mid-1490s. The contention here is that service on the border, combined with a patronage policy targeted at former Ricardian and Yorkist sympathisers in the palatinate, helped to strengthen ties between the bishopric's landed elites and the new Tudor regime. The Anglo-Scottish border provided local men with another avenue through which to enter royal service and establish patron-client contacts. These symbiotic networks were reinforced by a number of royal men, not least the royal favourite, turned bishop of Durham, Richard Fox (*c.* 1494 -1501), who had been inserted into the palatinate to promote Henry's rule there. Henry VII's policies towards Durham were not especially iron-fisted or rapacious, nor were they designed to curtail the bishopric's politico-religious autonomy. Rather, the regime's attitude towards independent franchises was driven by political and administrative necessity; the need to quickly establish and foreground Henry's authority in those areas that might have proven a hindrance to his reign. It will be argued here that Henry VII's reign should be seen as the beginning of a period of essentially pragmatic integration for the Durham palatinate.

Establishing Tudor Rule in the Durham Palatinate

By the spring of 1483, the North-East and the Durham palatinate were firmly established Ricardian strongholds. As duke of Gloucester, Richard became the dominant magnate in the region. Durham's bishop, William Dudley (*c.* 1476 – 1483), was a confidante of Edward IV, who appears to have encouraged the pliant bishop to cooperate with his brother, Richard, who was made lieutenant of the north in May 1471. Gloucester's stranglehold on the North-East was strengthened with Edward IV's decision to extend the lieutenant's remit to include the Durham palatinate, a

⁵ Christian Liddy, *The Bishopric of Durham in the Late Middle Ages: Lordship, Community and the Cult of St Cuthbert* (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 148.

measure embraced by Bishop Dudley.⁶ Richard's position in Durham was hardly compromised with John Sherwood's (*c.* 1484 – 1494) translation to the bishopric in the spring of 1484. Pardoned by Edward IV in 1471 for his acquiescence at Henry VI's readeption, Sherwood served as Edward's personal chaplain, became England's apostolic protonotary by 1476, and was made proctor at the curia the following year, a position he would hold until the king's death in 1483. Under King Richard, Sherwood enjoyed continued favour: it was the king who appointed him to the bishopric on 30 January 1484; Sherwood remained in Rome as Richard's representative there; and it was Richard who recommended to Pope Sixtus IV that his bishop of Durham be made a cardinal.⁷ Sherwood owed the larger part of his elevation through the senior ranks of the church to the House of York.

As an absentee bishop, Sherwood spent the majority of his episcopate in Rome, the governance of the palatinate rested on the crown. Having taken the temporalities into his own hands (where they would remain until 6 August 1485), Richard was in a position to dictate the appointment of key Durham officials; Sherwood's bishopric council also came under the crown's remit. Consequently, Richard's retainers played a major role managing Durham's affairs. Thomas Middleton, a Percy client and steward of the bishopric's estates since 1474, was ousted and replaced by Richard Danby, a member of the king's northern affinity. Another member of Richard's northern affinity, Sir Richard Radcliffe – characterised as the 'ratte' by William Collingbourne – had begun to monopolise border offices by the mid-1480s, much to the dismay and detriment of the fourth Percy earl of Northumberland, the incumbent warden of the east and middle marches.⁸ Although born into a Cumbrian family, Radcliffe's lands were concentrated in north Yorkshire and Durham, furthering consolidating the king's presence in the region.⁹

⁶ A.J. Pollard, 'St Cuthbert and the Hog: Richard III and the County Palatine of Durham, 1471-85', in *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages: A Tribute to Charles Ross*, ed. R. Griffiths and J.W. Sherborne (Gloucester, 1986), pp. 111-16; Claire Etty, 'Tudor revolution?: royal control of the Anglo-Scottish border, 1483-1530' (Durham University PhD thesis, 2005), pp. 154-55.

⁷ A.J. Pollard, 'Sherwood, John (*d.* 1493), bishop of Durham', *ODNB*.

⁸ Pollard, 'St Cuthbert and the Hog', p. 109; Etty, *Anglo-Scottish border*, p. 156; *The Register of the Guild of Corpus Christi in the City of York*, ed. R. Scaife, SS 57 (Durham, 1842), p. 98.

⁹ A.J. Pollard, *North-Eastern England during the Wars of the Roses: Lay Society, War and Politics, 1459-1500* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 356-58; Claire Etty, '“Noo Man Indented for the Keping of the Borders”: Royal Administration of the Marches, 1483-1509', in *England and Scotland at War, c. 1296 – c. 1513*, ed. A. King and D. Simpkin (Leiden, 2012), p. 349.

Richard proved equally successful recruiting the services of some of Durham's most influential families. Sir John Conyers of Hornby (*d.* 1490), a former Neville retainer, was made a knight of the king's body and was a key figure in Richard's 'Middleham Connection'.¹⁰ Sir James Strangeways the younger of West Harlsey (*d.* 1521) was also made a knight of the body. He received the manor of Deighton, Yorkshire, in June 1484, and would later be awarded an annuity of £17 13s from Richard's Middleham lordship.¹¹

In the months preceding Bosworth, Henry Tudor had attracted little support from Durham; no palatinate landowners are noted as having been part of Henry's Bosworth entourage in the *Ballad of Bosworth Field*.¹² After the victory, his relationship with the incumbent Bishop Sherwood was, at first, strained. The decision to exclude Sherwood from Henry and Elizabeth of York's joint coronations would appear to have been a deliberate one, given the bishop's relationship with Henry's predecessor.¹³ Yorkist sympathies remained a potent force in Durham in late 1485 and would do so throughout the first decade of Henry's reign. The chronicler Edward Hall noted that the people of the north, including those residing in Durham, 'entirely loved and highly favoured' King Richard.¹⁴ A large number of northern families had turned out for Richard at Bosworth, and, upon taking the throne, Henry VII understood the problems he faced attempting to reform the palatinate's allegiance. That Henry was aware of Durham's Yorkist leaning is evident from a proclamation issued only a month after his claiming the throne: 'many and divers persones of the north parties of this our land, knyghts, esquires, gentilmen and other have done us now of late grete

¹⁰ BL, *Harleian Manuscript 433*, ed. R. Horrox and P.W. Hammand (4 volumes, Gloucester, 1979-83), i, 92, 253.

¹¹ BL, *Harleian Manuscript 433*, i, 191; *CPR, 1476-85*, p. 435; J.S. Roskell, 'Sir James Strangeways of Harlsey and Whorlton', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 34 (1958), p. 468.

¹² Colin Richmond has called the accuracy of the *Ballad* into question: Colin Richmond, 'Bosworth Field and All That' in *Richard III: Loyalty, Lordship and Law*, ed. P.W. Hammond (London, 1986), pp. 172-211.

¹³ *Rutland Papers: Original Documents Illustrative of the Court and Times of Henry VII and Henry VIII*, ed. William Jerden, Camden Society (London, 1843), pp. 11-12. Bishop Sherwood was not the only high-profile member of the clergy to be excluded from the coronation. Robert Stillington, bishop of Bath and Wells from 1465 to 1491, was not present. A noted Yorkist sympathiser, Stillington had served as Edward IV's chancellor and was responsible for organising Richard III's coronation service.

¹⁴ *Edward Hall's Chronicle*, ed. Henry Ellis (London, 1809), pp. 424-25.

displeaser being ageynst us in the feld with the adversarye of us, enemy of nature and puplique wele'.¹⁵

Exactly how Henry set out to pacify Durham and the North-East remains a topic of scholarly contention. On the one hand, Sean Cunningham, Keith Dockray, and David Grummitt have suggested that Henry had little choice but to rely on former Ricardians to govern the north.¹⁶ On the other, Claire Etty has argued that Henry could not hope to imitate Richard's direct control over the palatinate; the new Tudor king would have to rely on more traditional methods, including the appointment of Richard Fox to the bishopric in July 1494.¹⁷ In order to bring the palatinate into line with the new regime, Henry had to cultivate a larger affinity than his predecessor had managed. He achieved this through the distribution of patronage to local families and through the absorption of former Ricardian, Percy, and Neville retainers. Richard's allies were used with increasing regularity by Henry to govern Durham and the neighbouring counties. Sir John Conyers, who had served Richard Neville, the 'kingmaker' earl of Warwick, before entering Richard's service, was made a commissioner of array on 25 September 1486, alongside George, Lord Lumley.¹⁸ On 4 February, Sir John and his grandson and heir, William Conyers, were 'in consideration of good and faithful service to the king' made bailiff, steward, constable, and master forester of the liberty of Richmond; both were appointed constables of Middleham Castle, with fees and wages amounting to 200 marks per annum.¹⁹ Henry rewarded another member of the Conyers family shortly after his accession. In mid-May 1486, Richard Conyers was granted a lifelong annuity of £8 from the lands surrounding Middleham, which had passed to Henry with Richard's death.²⁰ Sir John had been made a knight of the body just one month before, but the

¹⁵ *York Civic Records*, ed. Angelo Raine, *Yorkshire Archaeological Record Series* 98 (1939), i, p. 125.

¹⁶ Sean Cunningham, 'Henry VII and the Rebellion in North-Eastern England, 1485-1492: Bonds of Allegiance and the Establishment of Tudor Authority', *NH* 32 (1996), p. 45; Keith Dockray, 'The Political Legacy of Richard III in Northern England', in *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages* (Gloucester, 1986), p. 207; Grummitt, *Henry VII*, p. 10.

¹⁷ Etty, 'Anglo-Scottish border', pp. 156-57; S.J. Gunn, *Early Tudor Government, 1485-1558* (Basingstoke, 1995), pp. 66.

¹⁸ *CPR, 1485-1494*, pp. 39-40.

¹⁹ *CPR, 1485-1494*, p. 84.

²⁰ *CPR, 1485-1494*, p. 92.

family's position was immeasurably heightened with William's elevation to the peerage in 1505 as Lord Conyers.²¹

Serving alongside Sir John Conyers and Lord Lumley on the September 1486 array commission was another local man, Ralph Bowes (*d.* 1512) of Streatlam, Durham. The Bowes family had long been a part of Durham's political fabric and their position in the palatinate was not adversely affected by Henry's seizing the throne.²² Ralph served as the bishopric's auditor and sheriff from 29 September 1486 to 29 September 1494.²³ The extent of Durham landowners' involvement with the new Tudor regime was by no means confined to the palatinate itself. Thomas Tempest of Holmside, another knight of the body, was awarded the office of steward of Thornton, Yorkshire, for life on 3 April 1486.²⁴

The dynamic of northern and palatinate society changed considerably in the years after Henry's accession. Richard's defeat at Bosworth and the absence of noble rule meant that the king was left virtually unopposed to consolidate his authority in Durham. The murder of the fourth Percy earl of Northumberland on 28 April 1489 – killed by his own retainers after a disastrous attempt to enforce the crown's fiscal policies in the North-East; succeeded by a minor, the Percy estates were placed temporarily in the custody of the crown – and the waning influence of Ralph Neville (*d.* 1499), third earl of Westmorland, left a power vacuum within which Henry could assert his prerogative.²⁵ Ralph Neville's father, John Neville, younger brother of Ralph Neville, second earl of Westmorland, died fighting for the Lancastrians at the battle of Towton on 29 March 1461. By October 1472, Ralph Neville (*d.* 1499) had managed to obtain the reversion of his father's attainder and was restored to much of his inheritance. Westmorland's restoration and his resumption of power under the

²¹ *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 420.

²² Adam Bowes (*d.* 1347) was a skilled lawyer and highly prized by the earl of Westmorland. He sat on numerous commissions on behalf of the crown and bishop during his lifetime, whilst also serving as steward for the Cathedral Priory. Liddy, *The Bishopric of Durham*, p. 80, 101-3.

²³ TNA, DURH 20/8.

²⁴ *CPR, 1485-1494*, p. 86.

²⁵ M.A. Hicks, 'Dynastic change and northern society: the career of the 4th earl of Northumberland, 1470-89', *NH* 15 (1978), pp. 78-109; idem, 'The Yorkshire Rebellion 1489 reconsidered', *Northern History* 22 (1986), pp. 39-62; M.J. Bennett, 'Henry VII and the northern rising of 1489', *EHR* 105 (1990), pp. 34-59; S.G. Ellis, 'Tudor state formation and the shaping of the British Isles', in *Conquest and Union: Fashioning a British State, 1485-1725*, ed. S.G. Ellis and S. Barber (London, 1995), pp. 48-49.

House of York meant that he was viewed with suspicion by Henry, who, shortly after claiming the throne, placed the earl into two financial bonds.²⁶

The recruitment of men allied to the deceased earl of Northumberland, combined with a targeted patronage policy, allowed Henry to establish his rule in the region, in the absence of any major noble figurehead. Old Percy retainers with interests in the county palatine began to enter royal service, in search of new opportunities for advancement and reward. Sir Robert Plumpton, Sir John Pickering, and Sir Marmaduke Constable all willingly switched allegiances in the first years of Henry's reign. Perhaps the best example of a former Percy client working on the crown's behalf, however, is that of Sir William Eure, a North Riding man with substantial landed interests in Durham. Eure had served as sheriff of Yorkshire from 1482 to 1483 and had been in receipt of a £10 annuity from Richard III before transferring his allegiance to the Tudor cause.²⁷ By May 1486, Eure was serving as receiver for Pickering; in February 1490, after Northumberland's death, he became steward of the lordship of Seamer; he also sat on numerous commissions in Durham, Northumberland, and Yorkshire.²⁸

Henry's grip on Durham was gradually strengthened by the support of a number of other palatinate families, including the Metcalfs of Nappa, particularly James Metcalf, who had been made an usher of the king's chamber by 1490.²⁹ One historian has suggested that the king's unwillingness to allow any one magnate, including the bishop of Durham, to exercise quasi-royal authority in the North-East enabled him to bring the region firmly under the crown's remit.³⁰ Yet, Henry's management of the local gentry calls for a more subtle understanding of the dynamics at play in the far North and the king's patronage policy. As with Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and other outlying areas including Calais and Cheshire, Henry sought to procure the support and services of the most influential members of local society; he was not in a position to browbeat those who would go on to become the cornerstone

²⁶ G.E. Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom: Extant, Extinct or Dormant* (14 vols., London, 1910-1998), xii, pp. 551-52.

²⁷ BL, *Harleian Manuscript 433*, i, 92.

²⁸ Dockray, 'Political Legacy of Richard III', pp. 207-8.

²⁹ *CPR, 1485-1494*, p. 299.

³⁰ A.J. Pollard, *North-Eastern England during the Wars of the Roses: Lay Society, War and Politics, 1450-1500* (1990), p. 392.

of the crown's relations with the peripheral territories.³¹ Henry's policy was one of adoption and pragmatic integration. The success of this operation in Durham and the North-East is evident in Henry's victory at Stoke on 16 June 1487, where a number of local families fought for the king. On his progress through the North in the summer of 1487, Henry was met by a number of Yorkshire and palatinate men, who accompanied the victor of Stoke towards Durham and Newcastle.³² That Henry was able to call upon Durham officers and landowners at Stoke is testimony to his willingness to work alongside local landowners, whose loyalties immediately after his accession could not be guaranteed.³³

As the only independent franchise in England governed by a clergyman, examinations of Durham's relationship with the early Tudor polity can be somewhat distorted, particularly where attempts are made to draw comparisons between the bishopric and other shires. Notwithstanding, it would appear that Henry's policy of recruiting local gentry previously loyal to Richard and his distribution of patronage in those areas that might have posed more of a threat were nationwide incentives designed to consolidate his rule. The stabilisation of the Durham palatinate, then, owes as much to Henry's ability to overlook previous allegiances and foster new political networks as it did to the use of parliament and financial bonds.

If political networks with the North-East's gentry served as the lifeblood of Henry's relationship with Durham, then the king was not averse to injecting royal servants and courtiers – some of Steven Gunn's 'New Men' – into the palatinate to further reinforce his position. The positions offered to royal men varied enormously, from senior legal and administrative appointments to presentations to local clerical benefices.³⁴ Sir John Cheyne, Edward IV's master of the horse and later Henry's bodyguard, was appointed steward and constable of Barnard Castle and master forester of the lands within the lordship of the same on 24 March 1488.³⁵ It would appear that Henry attached great importance to the management of Barnard Castle, a key stronghold and staging post on the Anglo-Scottish frontier, for he appointed a

³¹ Sean Cunningham, *Henry VII* (Abingdon, 2007), p. 192; Grummitt, *Henry VII*, (Oxford, 2009), p. 30; idem, *Calais, 1485-1547: a study in early Tudor politics and government* (LSE PhD thesis, 1996), p. 62; Thornton, *Cheshire and the Tudor State*, p. 167; Lockett, 'Patronage, Violence and Revolt', pp. 148-49.

³² *The York House Books, 1461-90*, ed. C.L. Attreed (2 vols., Stroud, 1991), ii, pp. 587-88.

³³ Thornton, *Cheshire and the Tudor State*, p. 167.

³⁴ *CPR, 1485-1494*, p. 87, 89, 176, 219, 317.

³⁵ *CPR, 1485-1494*, p. 222.

groom of his privy chamber, James Carr, as bailiff on 15 December 1493.³⁶ Within less than a year of claiming the throne, the king appointed one of his personal chaplains, Thomas Carlell, to the parish church of Middleton, on 30 April 1486.³⁷ Seven months later, Thomas Denham replaced Robert Saunders at Symondesbourn; Sherwood's absence meant that Henry had to direct his request to the temporary keeper of the bishopric's spiritualities.³⁸

Ordinarily, the distribution of ecclesiastical benefices in the bishopric was the preserve of the bishop, the exception being those offices in which the crown had a previous interest or when the temporalities of the see were diverted to the crown after the death or translation of the incumbent. It was during these periods of vacancy that the crown was in a better position to dictate the course of local patronage. This was by no means an uncommon feature of the crown's relationship with the bishopric or indeed other, unoccupied, benefices. Kings of England had controlled appointments in Durham during periods of *sede vacante* for centuries.

So it was that after Bishop Sherwood's death in early 1494 the guardianship of Durham's temporalities was entrusted to royal favourites thrust into the bishopric and a group of senior local officials and landowners. Henry's chancellor of the duchy of Lancaster, Sir Reginald Bray, was appointed chief custodian. He was accompanied by another royal client and northern landowner, Richard Cholmeley (*d.* 1521), who was also made the king's receiver and surveyor in Durham.³⁹ Originally from Nantwich, Cheshire, Cholmeley had established himself with the House of Tudor through his service in the household of Henry's mother, Lady Margaret Beaufort. By 1492 he was acting as bailiff of York and would later add the shrievalty of Northumberland to his list of northern offices. Richard Cholmeley would go on to distinguish himself as a dependable military advisor as a member of the earl of Surrey's force that fought against the Scots in 1497. Henry later rewarded Cholmeley's commitment to the fledgling Tudor dynasty by appointing him the receiver and surveyor of the royal lands in Durham; in the next reign he would be appointed deputy lieutenant of the

³⁶ *CPR, 1485-1494*, p. 422.

³⁷ *CPR, 1485-94*, p. 89.

³⁸ *CPR, 1485-94*, p. 37; *Materials for a History of the Reign of Henry VII from Original Documents Preserved in the Public Record Office*, ed. William Campbell (2 vols. Cambridge, 2012), i, p. 169. Presented on 20 November 1486.

³⁹ TNA, DURH 3/63, m. 2; TNA, DURH 3/63, m. 1,5; Claire Etty, *Anglo-Scottish Border*, p. 159, n. 747, incorrectly stated that 'there is no evidence that [Richard] Chomeley had any connection with the bishopric before 1508'.

Tower of London.⁴⁰ Joining Bray and Cholmeley as temporary custodians were three local lay landowners: Thomas Metcalf, William Claxton, and Richard Hansard. Hansard's appointment is another example of the king's willingness to reward former-Ricardians, for it was under Henry's Yorkist predecessor that he had risen to local prominence.⁴¹

The appointment of Metcalf, Claxton, and Hansard as joint-guardians of the bishopric demonstrates that Henry was aware of the need to balance the management of the vacant bishopric with a mixture of local men and royal servants. Ralph Bowes continued in his role as sheriff; Ralph Boothe, archdeacon of the Durham diocese, was made the king's chancellor and keeper of the great seal in the bishopric; while Robert Chambre, a clerk of the Durham treasury and chancery, was appointed as another royal surveyor in Durham.⁴² The crown's use of both local and royal men in the governance of peripheral territories was not unique to the largely autonomous palatinate: James Lee has shown that Henry adopted a similar policy in Bristol, Exeter, and York.⁴³ What is more, this policy is one that appears to have been implemented throughout the reign. During the vacancy between Bishop Fox's translation to Winchester in August 1501 and William Senhouse's assumption of the temporalities in October 1502, Henry left the management of the palatinate to a heterogeneous group of crown agents and local officials; Ralph Bowes was reappointed sheriff, while Robert Chambre was elevated to the chancellorship of Durham.⁴⁴

Henry recognised that the consolidation of his authority in Durham could be better served through the empowerment of local landowners and officials. This goes some way to explain why he voluntarily surrendered his right to appoint men to palatinate offices during the period between Bishop Senhouse's death in 1505 and Christopher Bainbridge's translation from Windsor on 27 August 1507, the longest vacancy during Henry's reign. The authority to select justices and other officers was relinquished to Thomas Castell, prior of Durham Cathedral, and William Bulmer (*d.* 1531), sheriff of Durham, whose lands were spread between North Yorkshire and the

⁴⁰ TNA, DURH 3/63, m. 1, 5; *LP*, i, 438.

⁴¹ Rosemary Horrox, *Richard III: A study in service* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 195.

⁴² TNA, DURH 3/63, m. 1, 2, 3.

⁴³ Lee, 'urban political culture', p. 493, 496, 506.

⁴⁴ TNA, DURH 3/64, m. 2.

bishopric.⁴⁵ Shortly before his death, Henry entrusted several major offices – which had come into royal hands following Bishop Bainbridge's translation to York in September 1508 – to Castell and Thomas Dalby, archdeacon of Richmond.⁴⁶ Both men were given the authority to appoint the king's chancellor, sheriff, and steward, until the temporalities were restored to a new bishop.

Despite his relinquishing a degree of authority when it came to the appointment of Durham officers, Henry had always maintained an ability to manipulate office-holding to his advantage.⁴⁷ Royal influence in Durham during vacancies extended to the dispensation of profitable marriages and wardships. The king used these lucrative rewards as another means of garnering support. Both William Bulmer and his son, John, were granted the wardships and marriages of local heiresses.⁴⁸ Towards the end of the reign, it would appear that the bishopric's assets were used as a political tool, even during periods when a subordinate was tasked with the governance of the palatinate on the king's behalf. On 11 May 1506, Henry made Pedro de Ayala, the Spanish ambassador, master of Sherburn Hospital.⁴⁹ The ambassador's presentation came at a time of intense diplomatic wrangling over the widowed Katherine of Aragon's marriage to Henry, duke of York. De Ayala had even intervened on Henry VII's part to persuade a reluctant Katherine to relinquish her residence at Durham House.

Henry's attitude towards Durham, during vacancies or when a bishop was in residence, was not predicated on a desire to undermine the bishopric or its bishop. The first Tudor king realised the benefits to be had from harnessing palatinate resources, both human and material, and the positive impact this would have on his ability to bring the North-East, with its record of support for the House of York, into line with the new Tudor polity. On the one hand, this could not have been achieved had it not been for Henry's willing to overlook prior allegiances. On the other, that a large number of local families were prepared to work on the new king's behalf almost immediately after his having claimed the throne is testimony to their part paving the way for closer relations between Durham and the court. Neither Henry nor the palatinate's leading men could countenance strained relations. Both parties stood to

⁴⁵ TNA, DURH 3/67, m. 1; TNA, DURH 3/64, m. 1; TNA, DURH 20/14-16.

⁴⁶ *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 596.

⁴⁷ *CPR, 1485-94*, p. 464; *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 272, 333, 403, 416, 462.

⁴⁸ *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 466, 522.

⁴⁹ *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 504.

gain more from cooperating with one another, even if this meant, on certain occasions, the appointment of royal favourites to senior administrative posts. In addition to relying on local families, Henry was prepared to exert a more overt royal influence in Durham through the appointment of household men and crown agents to senior lay and ecclesiastical positions in Durham. It was, as the continuer of the *Crowland Chronicle* observed, through the appointment of royal men in Durham and other shires that the king ‘may... know the disposition of the countries’.⁵⁰

The Nature of Palatinate and Northern Commissions under Henry VII

The selection of justices and other legal officials reveals much about Henry’s attitude towards Durham. An examination of the bishops’ patent and chancery rolls – from Bishop Sherwood to Bainbridge – allows for a better understanding of how the crown was able to exert a degree of influence in the franchise.⁵¹ Henry achieved this in two ways: first, through the appointment of royal officials to palatinate offices; second, by using regional landowners, men from neighbouring counties, as crown agents. Those listed within the rolls can be broadly defined as either: Durham landowners, with substantial assets within the bishopric; regional landowners, whose lands were centred outside Durham, but who nonetheless possessed landed or political interests in the county palatine; outsiders, with no landed interests in Durham; and those who cannot be defined within the first three categories. Fifty-two men are recorded on the rolls. Of those fifty-two, 57.7 per cent were Durham landowners; 19.2 per cent were from neighbouring shires; royal officials in the bishopric made up 9.6 per cent of the list; with the remaining 13.5 per cent being those who were neither obvious royal officials nor Durham landowners. Whilst the number of royal officials in Durham represents a comparatively small percentage of the overall figure, it is still important

⁵⁰ *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations: 1459-86*, ed. N. Pronary and J. Cox (London, 1986), p. 147.

⁵¹ Bishop Sherwood: TNA, DURH 3/56; DURH 3/58; Bishop Fox: TNA, DURH 3/60-63; Bishop Senhouse: TNA, DURH 3/64; *sede vacante, 1505 to August 1507*: TNA, DURH 3/67; Bishop Bainbridge: TNA, DURH 3/68. Looking at those appointed commissioners for gaol delivery, justices of assize, justices itinerant, justices of the peace, justices of oyer and terminer, and those sitting in the court of pleas for the crown in Durham from 1490 to 20 September 1508.

to consider who was appointed, the frequency with which they operated in Durham, and their impact on local justice.

Born in Worcestershire to a Lincolnshire family, Humphrey Conyngsby (*d.* 2 June 1535) was among the most prolific royal men to sit on Durham commissions. Conyngsby was made a benchet at Inner Temple sometime during the 1480s, a serjeant-at-law in September 1495, a king's serjeant by 1500, and went on to become the first justice of king's bench shortly after Henry's death.⁵² He is named on seventeen occasions within the bishops' patent rolls between August 1501 and September 1508, serving in a variety of legal capacities: he was made a justice for the Durham gaol, appointed as a justice of assize, itinerant, and of the peace, as well as operating within the Durham court of pleas.

Another lawyer with royal connections sitting in Durham at this time was John Vavasour (*d.* 1506). His legal career began under the Yorkist regimes of Edward IV and Richard III, yet it was during Henry's reign that he rose to become fourth, third, and eventually chief justice of the court of common pleas in 1489, 1494, and 1495, respectively. Henry knighted him in 1501.⁵³ Vavasour's name appears eleven times within the commissions issued during Bishop Fox and Senhouse's episcopates, from 1494 to 1504. His duties in Durham included serving as a justice for the delivery of the palatinate gaols and as one of the 'bishop's' justices of assize, of oyer and terminer, and as a royal official in the court of common pleas. In much the same manner as he recruited the services of local former-Ricardians, Vavasour's inclusion as a royal official in Durham is another example of the king and the bishop's ability to convert the allegiances of former Yorkist sympathisers. Steve Gunn emphasised Bishop Fox's willing to inject the 'priorities of the court directly into northern life' and it would appear that this extended to the appointment of favoured crown lawyers to the palatinate bench.⁵⁴ While the appointment of legal officials in Durham remained the preserve of the bishop, the use of crown agents in the bishopric's courts gave Henry, through his bishops, the opportunity to distribute assignments to those men who had previously served Richard III in Durham, but who now could be counted as clients of the Tudor regime.

⁵² *CCR, 1485-1500*, 875; J.H. Baker, 'Conyngsby, Sir Humphrey (*d.* 1535)', *ODNB*.

⁵³ E.I. Carlyle, 'Vavasour, Sir John (*d.* 1506)', rev. R. Horrox, *ODNB*.

⁵⁴ Gunn, *Early Tudor Government*, p. 66.

The names of three other royal lawyers appear frequently within the rolls. Sir James Hobert (*d.* 1517), William Cutlerd (*d.* 1506), and Sir John Cheyne served on sixteen, eight, and three different commissions, respectively. Cheyne had also been made steward and constable of Barnard Castle in the spring of 1488.⁵⁵ The approach taken by those royal officials serving in Durham was by no means a unilateral one. The likes of Conyngsby and Vavasour worked alongside, rather than against, Durham's authorities and made a concerted effort to balance the extension of royal justice with the maintenance of the bishopric's legal privileges. Conyngsby's legal business in Durham frequently saw him working alongside palatinate lawyers and justices of the bishops' courts.⁵⁶ After declaring in Bishop Sherwood's favour in a fractious dispute with John Auckland, prior of Durham Cathedral from 1484 to 1494, John Vavasour wrote to Auckland's successor, Thomas Castell, to ask for his forgiveness. Vavasour sent the new prior a gift of 40 shillings as a token of his sincerity.⁵⁷

The employment of royal men in the localities was not a phenomenon unique to the palatinate. This Fortescuan principle was seized upon by Henry, who appointed a number of his clients in Durham to commissions in neighbouring shires.⁵⁸ Legal officials like Conyngsby and Vavasour sat in various guises in several counties across the North of England, helping to extend royal justice to the furthestmost parts of the realm. The pattern in Durham – crown lawyers operating alongside local landowners – was one replicated throughout the entire polity, from Yorkshire to Calais.⁵⁹ Some historians have seen independent franchises like Durham as 'outside of the king's justice altogether', but the appointment of royal officials to local courts must surely be seen as a very real extension of royal law and order into Durham and the North-East.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ *CPR, 1485-1494*, p. 222.

⁵⁶ DCM, Specialia. 1.4. Spec. 94a; DCM, Specialia. 1.4. Spec. 95a; DCM, Specialia. 1.4. Spec. 96; DCM, Specialia. 1.4. Spec. 99.

⁵⁷ DCM, Specialia. 1.6. Spec. 10. 8 April 1494.

⁵⁸ Sir John Fortescue, *On the Laws and Governance of England*, ed. S. Lockwood (Cambridge, 1997), ch. 17.

⁵⁹ Grummitt, 'Calais, 1485-1547', p. 113; Condon, 'Ruling Elites', p. 112; S.J. Gunn, *Early Tudor Government*, p. 73; Cunningham, *Henry VII*, p. 159; Christopher Kitching, 'The Durham Palatinate and the Courts of Westminster under the Tudors', in *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham, 1494-1660* (Loughborough, 1987), p. 58.

⁶⁰ Thornton, 'Fifteenth-century Durham', pp. 86-89; idem, 'The Palatinate of Chester', p. 32; Grummitt, *Henry VII*, p. 22.

That nearly sixty per cent of the men who served on the bishops' commissions could be considered 'Durham landowners' is testimony to the importance of the local gentry in the administration of justice. A large number of those who were willing to shed their Yorkist credentials in the mid-1480s continued to operate in Durham for the duration of Henry's reign. Ralph Bowes, William Bulmer, William Eure, William Hilton, Thomas Metcalf, John Raket, James Strangeways, and Thomas Tempest appear regularly within the bishops' commissions; Raket is listed on no fewer than twenty-seven commissions between 1494 and 1508.⁶¹ Recent research on Tudor Cheshire and Northumberland has emphasised the difficulties faced by the crown attempting to control outlying regions. In Cheshire, it has been argued, local men played a significantly more important role in local society than those from Westminster, while in Northumberland, the crown was forced to rely on a small pool of men, owing to a shortage of available and suitable gentry.⁶² In Durham, it is important to bear in mind that while the greatest percentage of those serving on the bishops' commission were bishopric landowners, many of these same men had established reputations with the crown and its ministers as effective regional clients; Durham families were increasingly seen by the crown as a viable channel through which royal influence in the region could be expanded.

By creating and harnessing local networks the crown was not only able to strengthen its grip on palatinate administration and the wider political landscape of the North-East, it also reinforced bonds with influential regional families, who would, over the course of the early Tudor period, begin to form the core of royal support in the county palatine. What emerged was a kind of 'high political culture', a group of families prepared to work for both bishop and crown, whose joint endeavours helped to forge closer connections between the bishopric and the new Tudor state.⁶³

⁶¹ Ralph Bowes (13); William Bulmer (11); William Eure (10); William Hilton (10); Thomas Metcalf (11); James Strangeways (3); Thomas Tempest (6).

⁶² Thornton, 'The Palatinate of Chester', p. 39; Ellis, 'Civilizing Northumberland' pp. 109-10.

⁶³ Robert Titler, 'Political culture and the built environment of the English country town, c. 1540-1620', in *Tudor Political Culture*, ed. Dale Hoak (Cambridge, 1995), p. 137; J. Barry, 'Bourgeois Collectivism? Urban association and the middling sort', in *The Middling Sort of People: Culture, Society and Politics in England, 1550-1800*, ed. J. Barry and C.W. Brooks (Basingstoke, 1994), p. 87; Steve Hindle, *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, c. 1550-1640* (Basingstoke, 2000), pp. 228-30.

The inclusion of Durham landowners and local officials within royal commissions issued for neighbouring counties is indicative of their involvement within a regional network of crown servants.⁶⁴ Durham landowners fulfilled an important role in the administration of justice across the North-East. William Eure, junior, sat on nine commissions of the peace for the North Ridings between December 1485 and March 1504; his brother, Sir Ralph, was active in Northumberland.⁶⁵ James Strangeways served as a North Riding JP on two occasions in October 1489 and February 1493 and sat on a further seven commissions between February 1495 and November 1507.⁶⁶ Another former Ricardian, Thomas Metcalf, was included within six North Riding commissions from February 1495 to November 1504.⁶⁷

Palatinate gentry sat on a variety of royal commissions during Henry's reign. On 26 February 1505, William Conyers, alongside William Bulmer, Richard Bowes, and William Hilton, was tasked with enquiring into concealed lands, wardships, forfeitures, and fugitives in Northumberland and Westmorland.⁶⁸ By the spring of 1507, Henry had called upon Durham landowners – William Conyers, William Bulmer, and Richard Danby – to determine who was in possession of the castle at Richmond and by what authority.⁶⁹ Danby's inclusion could well have stemmed from his reputation as an effective servant of the bishops of Durham. He was made head steward of the bishopric on 20 December 1491 and had served on no fewer than thirty-seven bishopric commissions between 1490 and 1508.⁷⁰ Just as with commissions of the peace, the crown did not possess the authority to select commissioners for the sewers in Durham, although a number of palatinate men, including its bishop, sat on commissions in neighbouring counties.⁷¹

⁶⁴ Condon, 'Ruling Elites', p. 124.

⁶⁵ *CPR, 1485-1494*, pp. 506-7; *CPR, 1494-1509*, pp. 667-68; *CPR, 1494-1509*, pp. 652-53.

⁶⁶ *CPR, 1485-1494*, pp. 506-7; *CPR, 1494-1509*, pp. 667-68.

⁶⁷ *CPR, 1494-1509*, pp. 667-68.

⁶⁸ *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 420.

⁶⁹ *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 562.

⁷⁰ TNA, DURH 3/58, m. 1, 5; TNA, DURH 3/60, m. 2, 3, 4, 5; TNA, DURH 3/61, m. 1, 3, 4, 5, 13, 14; TNA, DURH 3/63, m. 2, 3; TNA, DURH 3/64, m. 2, 7, 8, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21; TNA, DURH 3/67, m. 2, 5; TNA, DURH 3/68, m. 1, 2; DCM, Reg. 5, f. 17r.

⁷¹ *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 358.

Henry VII's attempts to stabilise the palatinate were reinforced through a concerted parliamentary programme.⁷² The first parliament of the reign opened on 7 November 1485, just six weeks after Henry Tudor had defeated Richard at Bosworth. While the county palatine remained unrepresented in the commons until after the Civil War, the Durham bishopric, the marches and principality of Wales, the lordship of Ireland, Channel Islands, Isle of Man, and the Calais Pale were, to varying degrees, all bound by parliamentary legislation, except where explicitly exempted; the enforcement of Westminster legislation in Durham was also left to the bishop.⁷³ Where legislation could be enforced in Durham it had the effect of bringing the region more closely into line with royal sentiments. Indeed, Mark Horowitz and Steven Gunn have suggested that the notion of a 'whole polity' developed during Henry's reign, held together by parliament, local officials, and urban elites.⁷⁴ Durham was increasingly seen as an integral aspect of this nationwide polity and it was through parliament, as much as informal networks or local commissions, that Henry hoped to achieve this.

Attempts to bring the palatinate more closely into line with the new Tudor national framework began almost immediately. One of Henry's first laws gave bishops, including Durham's, the authority to imprison priests, clerks, and other religious personnel found guilty of sexual crimes.⁷⁵ Of especial importance was the need to ensure that royal and palatinate justices conducted themselves efficiently. A series of measures were introduced to enforce higher standards on England's justices of the peace. The number of JPs operating throughout the realm had increased steadily from the fourteenth century, yet this increase did not necessarily lead to a swift and more equitable dispensation of justice. Concerns over law and order in the localities had reached their height by the end of the fifteenth century; incidents of

⁷² Henry VII's parliaments have received much needed scholarly attention in recent years: Paul Cavill, *The English Parliaments of Henry VII, 1485-1504* (Oxford, 2009); idem, 'The problem of labour and the parliament of 1495', in *Of Mice and Men: Image, Belief and Regulation in Late Medieval England*, ed. L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 143-55; idem, 'The enforcement of the penal states in the 1490s: some new evidence', *HR* 82 (August 2009), pp. 482-49.

⁷³ Cavill, *Parliaments of Henry VII*, p. 105.

⁷⁴ Horowitz, 'Contrary to the liberties of this city', pp. 34-35; S.J. Gunn, 'Henry VII in context: Problems and Possibilities', *History* 92 (2007), p. 315.

⁷⁵ *SR*, ii, pp. 500-1. The act applied to 'all Archebishops and Bishops'.

armed trespass and acrimonious disputes had gripped local societies across England.⁷⁶ To remedy these problems, parliament formulated a coherent legislative programme, one designed to bring the management of local JPs more closely under the crown's purview. One such measure gave JPs the power to bail over prisoners until the next assize or gaol session. Sheriffs and bailiffs were now expected to keep records of any prisoners held in their custody.⁷⁷ While Durham's sheriffs, bailiffs, and JPs were selected by the bishop, there is evidence that these injunctions were adhered to by those operating in the bishopric and its surrounding enclaves: the act, after all, applied to 'the justices of the peas in ev[er]y Shire Cite and Towne... aswell within Fraunches as without'.⁷⁸ The third parliament of Henry's reign, which sat from 13 January 1489 to 27 February 1490, made it compulsory for a local peace commissioner to attend a minimum of four county sessions. Again, this included those JPs appointed by the bishop to serve in Durham. Those who failed to comply would face a fine of 20 shillings.⁷⁹ The statutes passed in Henry's parliaments provided another important avenue through which the crown was able to punish negligent legal officers. Crucially, this applied to Durham in exactly the same manner as other English shires. At one particular quarter session in the county palatine, convened after Henry's death on 20 October 1511, it is quite possible that the jurors responsible for indicting four bailiffs who had failed to removed vagabonds from their townships acted with the 1504 vagrancy statute firmly in mind.⁸⁰

Henry's legislative programme was not designed to undermine or abolish the palatinate. Rather, it should be seen as an attempt to help consolidate the king's position in a peripheral territory, one renowned for its Yorkist leaning, by remedying those grievances that had made governing the localities increasingly problematic. This was by no means a policy targeted solely at Durham. Parliament passed laws that helped to ensure that the county palatine of Lancaster, the Isle of Wight, and the liberty at Tynedale were all brought under the royal remit. While provisions had been

⁷⁶ The letters of the Paston family provide perhaps the best insight into local law and order during the fifteenth century. *The Paston Letters, 1422-1509*, ed. James Gairdner (2 vols., London, 1904); Richard Barber, ed. *The Pastons: The Letters of a Family in the Wars of the Roses* (London, 1981).

⁷⁷ *SR*, ii, p. 513.

⁷⁸ *SR*, ii, p. 513; TNA, DURH 20/8; TNA, DURH 20/14.

⁷⁹ *SR*, ii, p. 536.

⁸⁰ Cavill, *Parliaments of Henry VII*, p. 181; *SR*, ii, p. 656; *Durham Quarter Session Rolls, 1471-1625*, ed. C.M. Fraser, SS 199 (Newcastle upon Tyne, 1991), p. 71.

put in place previously to ensure that those in Lancashire who forfeited goods did so to the county authorities, an act of February 1491 stipulated that all forfeited possessions would pass to the crown.⁸¹ The passage of the 1495 Tynedale Act meant that Henry's writ now ran in the franchise and that those officials working for the crown in Northumberland could legally operate within the liberty. This change was not motivated by a desire to do away with northern franchises, but rather, according to the bill, to safeguard the inhabitants of Durham and the neighbouring counties, who had been plagued by unruly border reiver families and the troublesome Scots.⁸²

Henry's response to independent franchises, including Durham, would appear to confirm Horowitz and Gunn's notion that parliament was used to envelop outlying shires within the national polity. Yet, the longer-term impact of this was to strengthen local communities like Durham; the enforcement of national incentives encouraged local authorities to revise their own regulations, ensuring that they matched the standards set out by Westminster. The impact of Henry VII's legislation in regards to Durham and other franchises, then, was symbiotic, enhancing the state's ability to assert an essentially pragmatic influence in the region, while at the same time strengthening the palatinate to the point where it could now function effectively as an integral component of the Tudor state. This was in large part made possible by the crown's decision not to exclude former Yorkists from the political fold in the North-East after 1485 and by forming mutually beneficial patron-client networks with some of the region's leading gentry families. The legislative programme designed to incorporate Durham within the national polity could not have been achieved without the acquiescence and backing of Durham's bishop and gentry.

Safeguarding Durham through Financial Exactions

Arguably the most controversial method employed to cement Henry's authority, in Durham as elsewhere, was the use of financial bonds. Recounting a conversation between Henry and the Spanish ambassador, Pedro de Ayala, the royal historian Polydore Vergil commented on the king's policy: he hoped to 'keep all Englishmen obedient through fear... whenever they gave him offence... All of his subjects were

⁸¹ SR, ii, p. 567.

⁸² SR, ii, p. 575.

found guilty of whatever fault he harshly fined in order by a penalty'. Vergil went on to add that this was done 'to make the population less well able to undertake any upheavals and to discourage at the same time all offences'.⁸³ Francis Bacon accused the king of 'being a little poor in admiring riches'. This view was largely based on the chronicle tradition that had labelled Henry as the parsimonious, money-grabbing miser, a man determined to 'crush treasure out of his subjects'.⁸⁴ More recently, the debate over Henry's fiscal policy reached its climax in the late 1950s, with Geoffrey Elton and John Cooper trading blows over the legitimacy and use of recognisances on a national level.⁸⁵ Chief among Elton's arguments was that the use of recognisances was neither a new concept nor excessive; he challenged the chronicle tradition, later espoused by Bacon, that Henry's use of bonds from 1503 and 1504 onwards was unjust.⁸⁶

The extent of Henry's use of bonds and its impact on Durham's relationship with and proximity to the crown is less clear. Recognisances had been used in the bishopric long before Henry took the crown at Bosworth. The rolls of the palatinate chancery, which survive in a continuous series from the mid-fourteenth century, reveal that the bishops themselves had used bonds as a means of maintaining order within Durham.⁸⁷ By the mid-fifteenth century, the crown had begun to use recognisances in the county palatine. Concerned about the state of the borders, Edward IV entered Bishop William Dudley and Laurence Booth, archbishop of York, into a joint-bond of 8000 marks, pending the successful refortification of several castles within the bishopric.⁸⁸ Revisionist histories have largely come down on Elton's side; recognisances constituted a fundamental aspect of Henry's policy of cementing Tudor rule in the localities.⁸⁹ Sean Cunningham recognised the importance of Henry's bondage policy to the stabilisation of the north; he has referred to recognisances and obligations as 'bonds of allegiance', a means through which the

⁸³ *The Anglica Historia of Polydore Vergil, 1485-1537*, ed. D. Hay, Camden Society 3rd series, 74, (London, 1954), pp. 127-29; *CSP Spain*, i, pp. 177-8.

⁸⁴ Francis Bacon, *History of the reign of King Henry VII*, ed. J.R. Lumby (Cambridge, 1885), p. 213; *Edward Hall's Chronicle*, ed. Henry Ellis (London, 1809), p. 499.

⁸⁵ Elton, 'Rapacity and Remorse', pp. 21-39; Cooper, 'Henry VII's Last Years', pp. 103-29.

⁸⁶ Elton, 'Rapacity and Remorse', pp. 22-4, 32.

⁸⁷ Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, p. 20, 130-31.

⁸⁸ *CCR, Edward IV, Edward V and Richard III*, nos. 371, 395. Dudley and Booth bound over on 2 May 1477.

⁸⁹ Cavill, 'Enforcement of penal statutes', p. 488; Grummitt, *Henry VII*, p. 10; Horowitz, 'Contrary to the liberties of this city', pp. 38-40; Lander, 'Bonds of coercion', pp. 267-300; McGlynn, 'Henry VII's chamber officials', pp. 547-59.

new Tudor king was able to safeguard his authority following the dynastic struggles of the fifteenth century and in the aftermath of Northumberland's murder in the spring of 1489.⁹⁰

Historians remain divided on the issue of when Henry and his ministers began to escalate the use of recognisances. Contemporary accounts saw the period from roughly 1503-4 or 1505-6 as the time that witnessed the most discernible increase in financial exactions.⁹¹ Recent research has concluded, however, that the seven-year period from 1485 to 1492 witnessed the greatest issuance of bonds in the North of England, particularly in Yorkshire and among those from the North-East with ties to the northern capital. Recognisances were employed systemically in the region to co-opt the support and allegiances of the North-Eastern landed elite.⁹² Within Durham, however, it will be shown that recognisances were issued throughout the reign – with an escalation after certain episodes – as part of Henry's broader strategy to quash potential resistance.

In the same way that he had bound members of Yorkshire's urban elite during the first seven years of his reign, Henry employed similar measures in the Durham palatinate. In response to a series of events that seriously jeopardised Henry's throne, recognisances were used to safeguard the allegiances of leading members of Durham's landed elite. Following the Lovell Rebellion of Easter 1486, the first armed rebellion since Henry had taken the crown, the king bound over a number of palatinate figures whom he thought might have been complicit in the uprising. Chief among them were Sir John Conyers, his grandsons, John and Christopher, and his brother, Sir Richard Conyers. Sir John Conyers was bound over to pay £2000 on 11 July 1486; his grandsons, 1000 marks; while Sir Richard entered into a bond worth 2000 marks on 27 July.⁹³ In the aftermath of the earl of Lincoln's conspiracy and the subsequent battle at Stoke in June 1487, Henry once more entered leading palatinate figures into heavy recognisances. In August, John Tempest entered into a bond worth £1000 for his continued good behaviour. Tempest received a royal pardon that same month, though Henry's decision to pardon the Durham man did not mean a release

⁹⁰ Cunningham, 'Bonds of Allegiance', p. 47; idem, *Henry VII*, p. 193.

⁹¹ Hall, *The Union*, p. 499; *The Great Chronicle of London, 1189-1512*, ed. A.H. Thomas and I.D. Thornley (London, 1938), p. 334.

⁹² Cunningham, 'Bonds of Allegiance', pp. 47-50.

⁹³ TNA, C 255/8/4, no. 172; Cunningham, 'Bonds of Allegiance', p. 55.

from his bond.⁹⁴ Durham men were also used as sureties. The murder of the fourth earl of Northumberland brought with it a spurt of violence across the North-East. Sir Ralph Bigod was bound over for £500 on 10 June 1489, most probably for failing to mobilise the military resources at his disposal during the Northumberland tax revolt. Acting as guarantors for Bigod's loyalty were Sir William Eure and William Tunstall, who had been appointed constable of Scarborough Castle on 30 April 1486.⁹⁵ In a similar set of circumstances following Northumberland's murder, Sir James Strangeways was made surety for the good behaviour of another influential palatinate figure, William Bulmer.⁹⁶ Some of Durham's leading players, then, were bound over to the king in a manner similar to their northern counterparts. When it came to securing the loyalties of Durham's gentry through financial pressure, little account was given to the bishopric's history of political and administrative autonomy.

The period after 1492 saw an escalation in the issuance of bonds in Durham. Little credence was paid to previous good service on the king's behalf. Richard Fox, a member of the king's inner circle who had been translated to the see on 30 July 1494, was entered into four recognisances with the king between December 1495 and his departure from Durham in the autumn of 1501.⁹⁷ On one such occasion, Bishop Fox stood as a surety for Thomas Overary (who was bound by 2000 marks for the safeguarding of Mont Orgueil Castle in Jersey). As Overary's surety, Fox himself entered into a bond with Henry worth £100.⁹⁸ As a leading provisional magnate, keeper of the privy seal, and a member of the king's inner-circle, Fox was also employed in the judicial process of monitoring and enforcing Henry's exactions. On 26 February 1498, a merchant from Newcastle, George Byrde, had entered into a bond of £200 with the king, the conditions of which stipulated that payment could be avoided should Byrde find four sureties to attest to his good behaviour. Byrde and his sureties were ordered to appear before Bishop Fox on pain on forfeiting the sums owed to the king.⁹⁹ That Fox oversaw the conditions attached to this recognisance is not only a reflection of his standing within Henry's regime; it sheds light on the new role bishops of Durham were expected to play as leading members of the Tudor polity

⁹⁴ TNA, C 255/8/5, no. 57; *CPR, 1485-1494*, p. 171

⁹⁵ TNA, C 255/8/4, nos. 122-23; *CPR, 1485-94*, p. 87.

⁹⁶ TNA, C 255/8/4, no. 130.

⁹⁷ TNA, E 101/415/3, f. 181r, 183r, 189v.

⁹⁸ *CCR, 1485-1500*, no. 942.

⁹⁹ *CCR, 1485-1500*, no. 1105.

in the North-East. A nationwide policy designed to co-opt the support of regional elites had to include the most prominent landowners in local society, including those who had previously claimed immunity from royal intervention. As some of the leading lay magnates in the North, bishops of Durham were forced to extend their spheres of influence across the region: Bryde, after all, was a merchant from Newcastle, a town which throughout the middle ages had fought tirelessly against bishops of Durham in matters concerning civic governance and the possession of Gateshead.¹⁰⁰ A change of dynasty meant a change of role for Durham's bishops; the bishopric's figurehead could no longer hide behind the veil of Saint Cuthbert's protection, he was expected to contribute to the upkeep of the national polity. To achieve this, bishops of Durham had to ensure that certain measures thought out in Westminster were adhered to in those areas under their jurisdiction. Bishop Fox responded to Henry's use of financial bonds by issuing them systematically within his bishopric.¹⁰¹

Recognisances were used in Durham to guarantee the good faith of those serving in the region; others were attached to the performance of offices, while members of Durham's gentry stood as sureties for men serving in offices as far afield as the Pale of Calais. The entire spectrum of Henry's bond policy was applied to those residing and serving in the county palatine. Among those leading figures to be entered into financial bonds with the king was Sir Robert Eure, second son of Sir William Eure (*d.* before 19 June 1484). Sir Robert's landed interests were concentrated around Bradley, Durham, though the Eure family estates extended into Yorkshire and their influence throughout the North-East. It would appear that Sir Robert's behaviour had come to the crown's attention, for on 6 February 1497, Sir Thomas Darcy was bound over to stand as a surety for Eure's future good conduct; Eure himself had entered into a recognisance worth a hefty £1000.¹⁰² Sir Robert's elder brother and head of the family, Sir Ralph Eure of Witton-le-Wear, Durham, was among those leading palatinate men who stood as sureties for the behaviour of those outside the bishopric. By mid-November 1504, Eure, alongside Thomas, earl of Arundel, stood as a surety for William Blount, who had himself been bound over to safeguard Hampnes Castle

¹⁰⁰ Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, pp. 182-84.

¹⁰¹ TNA, DURH 3/61, m. 7.

¹⁰² CCR, 1485-1500, no. 982.

(now Hames-Boucres) in southern Calais.¹⁰³ Sir Ralph later entered into two recognisances of his own, the first on 28 November worth £20, the second in late February 1505 amounted to the more considerable sum of £683 6s 8d.¹⁰⁴

Exactions of this sort reveal much about Henry's attitude towards and treatment of the Durham palatinate. They demonstrate that those residing within the confines of Saint Cuthbert's patrimony were subjected to Henry's financial policy in exactly the same manner as those from other English shires. The enforcement of financial bonds in Durham also sheds light on the palatinate's position within the national polity relative to other shires. Landowners whose primary interests lay outside the palatinate's borders acted as sureties for those residing in Durham, while the bishopric's landed elite were called upon to serve as sureties in counties across the country. The use of financial bonds, then, reinforced the interconnectivity between Durham's gentry and other English shires, cementing the palatinate's position within the increasingly centralised Tudor polity. At the heart of this policy was Henry's desire to consolidate his authority in the furthestmost parts of the realm, those outlying regions like Durham and Calais that had proved so instrumental to the outcome of the dynastic struggles of the fifteenth century. Avarice was not the chief motivation behind Henry VII's decision to use recognisances and other financial obligations in the county palatine; the enforcement of bonds in Durham formed part of a nationwide policy that, despite not being universally popular at the time, was designed to pacify those counties that might have destabilised the fledgling Tudor dynasty.

The conduct of border officials and those serving the king in the North-East, including Durham, was regulated through the use of recognisances. Thomas, Lord Darcy, played a major role on the borders during Henry's reign: in the summer of 1498, he was appointed constable and steward of Bamburgh Castle in Northumberland; Darcy served as captain of Berwick from 1498 until he surrendered the office in 1509, when he became vice-chamberlain of the royal household. From 12 June 1503, he was also acting as the town's receiver-general. At the same time, Darcy's remit on the border had been extended; he was made captain and receiver-general of Sheriff Hutton, Middleham, and Richmond. His most significant appointment on the borders came in either September 1504 or 1505, when he was

¹⁰³ *CCR, 1500-1509*, no 428.

¹⁰⁴ *CCR, 1500-1509*, nos. 418, 454.

created warden of the east march.¹⁰⁵ It was in his capacity as captain of Berwick that the crown used monetary sanctions to regulate Darcy's efforts. Two years after his appointment, Darcy entered into an indenture with the king concerning the governance and safeguarding of the town and its troops.¹⁰⁶ By the summer of 1503, Henry was sufficiently concerned with the state of affairs at Berwick that he forced Darcy into another indenture, but this time the agreement was consolidated by two recognisances. His predecessor, Richard Cholmeley, had left Berwick and its garrison in substantial financial arrears; Cholmeley was expected to pay £428 to cover the wages and fees of his office, though had only managed to reimburse Henry a little over a third of the total value. This meant that when Darcy assumed the office he did so inheriting huge debts. Henry cancelled the debt owed by Cholmeley but the conditions set out in the latest indenture stipulated that he was bound to pay the full wages to the garrison and any profits that might be had to the king. To ensure that these conditions were met, Henry bound Lord Darcy in two recognisances worth a staggering £4000.¹⁰⁷ The severity of Darcy's bonds attest to the high level of importance attached by Henry to the management of border strongholds and the defence of the marches. The policy of placing the captains of Berwick in indentures and financial bonds remained consistent throughout the second half of Henry's reign.

Lord Darcy's replacement, William, Lord Conyers (*d.* 1524), entered into a similar arrangement with the king in late 1508. Conyers' responsibility as captain, among other tasks, was to defend the town 'against the Scots and all other the king's enemies and rebels', for which Henry would provide additional sums of money and men if required. Like Lord Darcy, the fulfilment of Conyers's obligations was reinforced through a recognisance worth 10,000 marks.¹⁰⁸ He had entered into a similar arrangement two years previously, when he was bound over to pay 2000 marks for the safekeeping of the liberty of Richmond.¹⁰⁹ This sum was paid to Edmund Dudley on 11 November 1507.¹¹⁰ Conyers had been made bailiff of Richmond some years before – on 14 February 1493 – for which he received an

¹⁰⁵ *Rotuli Scotiae in Turri Londenensi et in Domo Capitulari Westmonasteriensi asservati* (2 vols., London, 1819), ii, 531; *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 312; *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 442; TNA, E 403/2558, f. 142.

¹⁰⁶ TNA, DURH 3/206. Indenture dated 8 March 1500.

¹⁰⁷ *CCR, 1500-1509*, nos. 215, 210.

¹⁰⁸ *CCR, 1500-1509*, no. 958, 958.

¹⁰⁹ *CCR, 1500-1509*, no. 814. 4 November 1507.

¹¹⁰ BL, MS. Lansdowne 127, f. 49s.

annuity worth 100 marks from the profits of his office.¹¹¹ The safeguarding of royal interests on the border represented a fundamental aspect of Henry's bond policy in and around Durham; this was realised through the attachment of recognisances to indentures between the king and his officials.

The activities of the council learned in the law helped to strengthen Henry's financial grip on the Durham palatinate. The nature of the council's work and its two most infamous officials, Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley, have divided the opinions of contemporaries and generations of historians.¹¹² For Francis Bacon, Empson and Dudley had 'turned Lawe and Iustice into worme-wood and Rapine'; both men did not 'obserue so much as *the* halfe-face of Iustuce'.¹¹³ The council's operations in Durham, however, shed an altogether more favourable light on the king's notorious financial body and on the nature of Henry's kingship itself. Inaugurated to cement the king's position as a feudal lord in his own right, the council's judicial work and debt collection extended into the county palatine. At least two families with substantial palatinate interests are listed among the council's judicial papers. In December 1502, William and Robert Lawson were bound to appear before the council to pay 200 marks as sureties for one John Mytford.¹¹⁴ In the same month, William and John Heron were similarly bound to pay £200 to the king as sureties for John Swynborne, who 'hath aperid and hath iniunccion to give attendance and dep[ar]t w[i]t[h]out licens'.¹¹⁵ Durham and regional landowners also appear within Edmund Dudley's notebook concerning bonds paid to him and later transferred to the king's chamber. Henry, seventh Lord Scrope of Bolton, is noted on 22 December 1506 as having paid £20 for 'certeyn landis in the Byshoprich of Durham'. Interestingly, the payment was first settled in the Durham exchequer before being transferred to the king: 'the wch xxli the kingis grace must be answered at the

¹¹¹ *CPR, 1485-1494*, p. 427. At the same time, Conyers was made steward, master forester, and constable for the castles at Middleham and Richmond.

¹¹² D.M. Brodie, 'Edmund Dudley, Minister of Henry VII', *TRHS* 4th series (1932), p. 133; R. Somerville, 'Henry VII's "Council learned in the law"', *EHR* 54 (1939), p. 427; idem, *History of the duchy of Lancaster* (2 vols., London, 1953), i, p. 264; Elton, 'Rapacity and Remorse', p. 26; Cooper, 'Henry VII's Last Years', p. 106. S.B. Chrimes, *Henry VII* (London, 1972), p. 133; Penny Tucker, 'Reaction to Henry VII's style of kingship and its contribution to the emergence of constitutional monarchy in England', *HR* 82 (2009), p. 521.

¹¹³ *The Historie of the raigne of King Henry the seventh and others works of the 1620s*, ed. Michael Kiernan (Oxford, 2012), p. 146.

¹¹⁴ TNA, DL 5/2, f. 50r.

¹¹⁵ TNA, DL 5/2, f. 51r.

Eschequier at Durham'.¹¹⁶ Dudley's debt collection encapsulated those at the very top of regional society. The earl of Northumberland is listed on two occasions between February 1507 and February 1508, while Bishop Bainbridge had entered into an 'indenture wherby he is bounden to paie to the kingis highness twentie thousand poundis'.¹¹⁷

The inclusion of Durham men within the council's financial papers should not be seen as representative of a policy designed to undermine the palatinate. Recent research into Dudley's dealings with the church has suggested that the minister's actions, in Durham and across England, were by no means especially corrupt, not when judged against the prevailing standards of the time.¹¹⁸ Dudley's affiliation with the palatinate stretched back to his uncle William's nomination to the see in the summer of 1476. Edmund Dudley himself went on to enjoy a healthy relationship with the bishopric authorities long after the bishop's death in late 1483. On 20 September 1508, he was made chief steward of the bishopric for life, for which he drew an annual fee of £20.¹¹⁹ Shortly before his imprisonment in April 1509, Dudley had managed to secure letters of confraternity from the priory, 'prompted by the devotion of mind and affection of a sincere heart which he has towards their monastery of Durham'.¹²⁰ Dudley's partner on the council, Richard Empson, had obtained similar letters of goodwill.¹²¹ What emerges is an essentially workmanlike relationship between Henry's financial agents and the palatinate – certainly no worse than those with other shires – grounded on the premise that the use of financial obligations could help to reinforce the king's position in a once Yorkist stronghold.

An assessment of Henry's use of financial bonds in Durham casts doubt on the notion that the policy was motivated by rapacity. Rather, it was born out of the need to ensure that the once Ricardian palatinate would submit to Tudor rule and that those serving on the Anglo-Scottish border would do so with greater efficiency. Though grounded in financial coercion, the use of recognisances in Durham was motivated by a need to safeguard the support of the local elite. It helped to create what one historian

¹¹⁶ BL, MS Lansdowne 127, f. 34b.

¹¹⁷ Earl of Northumberland: BL, MS Lansdowne 127, f. 37a, 58b; Bishop Bainbridge: BL, MS Lansdowne 127, f. 56b. 13 February 1508.

¹¹⁸ S.J. Gunn, 'Edmund Dudley and the Church', p. 526.

¹¹⁹ DCM, Reg. 5, f. 102r.

¹²⁰ DCM, Reg. 5, f. 114v-115r.

¹²¹ DCM, Reg. 5, f. 115r.

of Henry's reign has dubbed a 'network of shared responsibility'.¹²² In the aftermath of the Yorkist-Lancastrian Wars, Henry VII's nationwide network slowly began to incorporate the county palatine and its leading ecclesiastical and lay players, including Durham's figurehead, Bishop Richard Fox. Ultimately, recognisances were used, as Polydore Vergil remarked, to ensure that potentially troublesome subjects could not rebel against the king. Moreover, much like Henry's willingness to garner the support of Richard's old palatinate affinity, it would seem as though his use of financial bonds in Durham was largely successful. It helped to ensure the support of Durham landowners and officials both during and after the battle of Stoke, in the immediate aftermath of Northumberland's murder, and more generally throughout the second half of his reign. It was during this period that Henry began to enforce bonds in Durham with greater frequency; the period after 1492 brought about an escalation in the use of obligations and recognisances in the palatinate. This formed part of a long-term strategy designed to stabilise Durham and the North-East. A policy that, at its core, sought to bind regional landowners to the king and so increase cooperation between Durham and Westminster.

Durham and the Anglo-Scottish Border

By 1485, the palatinate of Durham had a long history of service on the Anglo-Scottish frontier. The bishopric's establishment in the aftermath of the Norman Conquest had been justified in terms of military service on the border; for the Whig historian, Bishop William Stubbs, the palatinate represented a 'sacred boundary' between the realms of Scotland and England, a neat solution to the crown's on-going problems with its Scottish counterpart.¹²³ More recently, debate has centred on the local gentry's involvement on the border and its impact on relations between the palatinate and the royal court.¹²⁴ In their respective examinations both Mark Arvanigian and Claire Etty have stressed the relationship between border service and the

¹²² Cunningham, 'Bonds of Allegiance', p. 57.

¹²³ William Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England in its Origin and Development* (3 vols. Oxford, 1891), i, pp. 294-95, 392-93.

¹²⁴ R.L. Storey, 'The North of England', in *Fifteenth Century England, 1399-1509*, ed. S.B. Chrimes, C.D. Ross and R.A. Griffiths (Stroud, 1972), pp. 129-44; A.J. Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community of Gentry in the Wars of the Roses', in *Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England*, ed. C.D. Ross (Gloucester, 1979), pp. 37-59.

establishment of political networks with regional power bases and central authorities in London.¹²⁵ These networks were facilitated by those members of the gentry who held positions on the border, individuals parachuted into the palatinate to ensure the crown's objectives were met, and through the efforts of the bishops themselves, not least Bishop Richard Fox.¹²⁶ The contention here is that efforts to establish security on the border in the mid-1490s represented another aspect of Henry's broader policy to stabilise Durham and the North-East. Sean Cunningham has suggested that service on the marches and the subsequent rewards to be had from fighting on the crown's behalf helped to engender closer ties between the provinces and London; the recruitment of men from Durham for the 1496-97 campaign brought the northern gentry increasingly into line with the new Tudor administrative model.¹²⁷ Indeed, historians of sixteenth-century England and France have recognised how the creation of military networks helped to foster relations between the centre and the localities.¹²⁸

Men from the palatinate had followed the banner of Saint Cuthbert into battle with the Scots since the end of the thirteenth century, a tradition that was continued during the Yorkist campaigns of the early 1480s. In September 1480, Richard, as the king's lieutenant, requested that the York authorities send troops to meet him and his contingent in Durham, in anticipation of the raids to be led by himself and the earl of Angus. The palatinate played an equally important part provisioning troops: Durham's bakers responded to Edward IV's request for flour in the build up to the

¹²⁵ M. Arvanigian, 'The Durham Gentry and the Scottish March, 1370-1400: County Service in Late Medieval England', *NH* 42 (2005), p. 260; Etty, *Anglo-Scottish border*, pp. 154-61.

¹²⁶ Etty, 'Anglo-Scottish border', pp. 157-60. Tim Thornton has been more sceptical of Fox's role in Durham; his appointment was 'hardly an example of Tudor centralisation'. Thornton, 'Fifteenth-century Durham', p. 96.

¹²⁷ Sean Cunningham, 'National War and Dynastic Politics: Henry VII's Capacity to Wage War in the Scottish Campaigns of 1496-1497', in *England and Scotland at War, c. 1296-1513*, ed. A. King and D. Simpkin (Leiden, 2012), pp. 297-328; David Grummitt, 'The Establishment of the Tudor Dynasty, in *A Companion to Tudor Britain*, ed. R. Tittler and N. Jones (Chichester, 2004), pp. 19-20; Gunn, 'New Men', p. 153.

¹²⁸ S.L. Adams, 'The Gentry of North Wales and the Earl of Leicester's expedition to the Netherlands, 1585-1586', *Welsh History Review* 7 (1974), pp. 129-47; N. Younger, 'The Practice and Politics of Troop-Raising: Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex, and the Elizabethan Regime', *EHR* 127 (2012), pp. 566-91; Robert Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite: The Provincial Governors of Early Modern France* (London, 1978), pp. 71-80; M.P. Holt, 'Patterns of *Clientèle* and Economic Opportunity at the Court during the Wars of Religion: The Household of François, Duke of Anjou', *French Historical Studies* 13 (1984), pp. 305-22; S. Kettering, 'Clientage during the French Wars of Religion', *SCJ* 20 (1989), pp. 232-4; David Potter, *War and Government in the French Provinces: Picardy, 1470-1560* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 115-17; James B. Wood, *The King's Army: Warfare, Soldiers and Society during the Wars of Religion in France, 1562-1576* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 40-44.

spring 1481 campaign.¹²⁹ With the shift of political allegiances that accompanied Henry's victory in August 1485, Durham's major landowners proved equally willing to assist the new regime on the border. Foremost among those was Durham's figurehead, Bishop Richard Fox, who, perhaps unsurprisingly given his political proximity to the king, was instrumental throughout the military and diplomatic activity of the 1490s. The declining influence of the region's traditional military leaders, notably the Percy earls of Northumberland and Neville earls of Westmorland, drastically altered the palatinate's position on the border. Durham's landowners were no longer bound to serve on behalf of a regional magnate. With greater royal influence and the ability to distribute patronage, local landowners came to see service on the border as another means of achieving royal recognition. While the bishop of Durham still commanded huge influence as one of the region's largest landowners, this had become diluted somewhat with the resumption of crown lands, creating a reservoir of patronage from which the crown and its agents could recruit directly. This was reinforced by Bishop Fox's status as royal favourite-cum-bishop of Durham.¹³⁰ It was during Bishop Sherwood's and particularly Bishop Fox's episcopates that communications concerning the border reached their peak. The security of Berwick was deemed a serious enough issue in January 1488 to have been heard before the king's council, who ordered that Ralph Bowes, sheriff of Durham, and his Northumberland counterpart, prepare five hundred soldiers for the defence of the town. Bowes was to provide three hundred men, at a cost of £300, while the sheriff of Northumberland was expected to supply two hundred men.¹³¹

A close supporter of Henry, Richard Fox was perhaps the obvious candidate to replace the absentee Bishop Sherwood and oversee the crown and Durham's affairs on the border. In March and May 1495, Fox was included alongside the earl of Surrey, vice-warden of the west and middle marches, within the commissions of array for the east and middle marches, which included Northumberland, the bishopric, and

¹²⁹ *York House Books*, ii, p. 695, 699.

¹³⁰ Ellis, 'Civilizing Northumberland' pp. 106-7; Pollard, *North-Eastern England*, p. 172, 392; S.J. Watts, *From Border to Middle Shire: Northumberland, 1586-1625* (Leicester, 1975); Mervyn James, *Society, Politics and Culture: Studies in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 48-90; R. Newton, 'The Decay of the Border: Tudor Northumberland in Transition', in *Rural Change and Urban Growth, 1500-1800: Essays in English Medieval History in Honour of W.G. Hoskins* (London, 1974), pp. 2-31.

¹³¹ *Selected Cases in the Council of Henry VII*, ed. C.G. Bayne and W.H. Dunham, Seldon Society 75 (London, 1958), p. 16.

the liberties of Tynedale and Redesdale.¹³² In May 1495, Fox was also appointed co-deputy warden of all three marches.¹³³ It was in this guise that Fox organised a raid into Teviotdale in 1497, accompanied by two prominent palatinate landowners, William Conyers and William Bulmer.¹³⁴ It is also apparent that Fox's fortification of marcher strongholds left a lasting impression. Commenting on the bishop's castle at Norham, Polydore Vergil, called it the 'strongest castle on the Anglo-Scottish Border'.¹³⁵

It would seem as though Fox had struck up a healthy working relationship with Thomas, Lord Darcy, a prominent border magnate during the reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII, until his execution for treason in the summer of 1537. The extant evidence cannot reveal the full extent of Fox's relationship with Lord Darcy, although it is possible to glean an understanding from the few documents that do survive. As captain of Berwick, Darcy offered his services to Bishop Fox, whom he later called his 'special good lord'.¹³⁶ When he had reason to believe that marcher officials were not conducting themselves efficiently, Darcy had no scruples about the bishop's ability to resolve the problem. On one occasion in August 1500, Darcy informed Fox that the current lieutenant of the east march, Sir Ralph Grey – a retainer of the bishop since 1499 – could do more to serve the king. Darcy was confident enough in Fox's judgement to allow the matter to be resolved by the bishop.¹³⁷ Fox worked with another prominent northern magnate during the mid-1490s. Both Fox and Thomas, Lord Dacre, Henry's warden-general of the marches, were sent commissions on 30 August 1497 to ensure that northern men aged between sixteen and sixty were suitably arrayed and prepared for an impending war against the Scots.¹³⁸ Dacre later attested to Fox's ability to manage the marches (including those reiver families that had plagued the northern counties for nearly two centuries) in a letter to the earl of Surrey.¹³⁹ Moreover, the bishop's diplomatic overtures were an integral part of the negotiations with Scotland for the handing over of the Yorkist pretender, Perkin

¹³² *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 32; Etty, 'Anglo-Scottish border', p. 157.

¹³³ *Rotuli Scotiae*, ii, 522

¹³⁴ *Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Reigns of Richard III and Henry VII*, ed. James Gairdner (London, 1863), ii, p. 57.

¹³⁵ *Anglica Historia*, p. 99.

¹³⁶ *Materials for a History of the Reign of Henry VII*, i, p. 283.

¹³⁷ *Letters of Richard Fox*, ed. P.S. Allen and H.M. Allen (Oxford, 1929), p. 22.

¹³⁸ *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 144.

¹³⁹ *LP*, iv, 10. 8 January 1524.

Warbeck. On 5 July 1497, Henry sent the bishop secret instructions to negotiate with James IV's commissioners for Warbeck's surrender.¹⁴⁰ To what extent Fox's actions had an influence on Scottish policy towards Warbeck is unclear; Warbeck's fleeing Scotland in the same month as the negotiations took place and his capture three months later is, perhaps, an indication of Fox's successes.

Array commissions issued by Bishops Sherwood and Fox show that palatinate men worked alongside royal officials in Durham to help stabilise the borders. Those appointed were selected by the bishop, who divided the commissions into five wards or districts: Chester, Darlington, Easington, Stockton, and finally the Wapentake and Sadberge. Ralph, third earl of Westmorland, was made nominal head of all the commissions for the years 1491 and 1495. Westmorland was joined on the 1491 and 1495 commissions by another prominent landowner from the North-East, George, Lord Lumley.¹⁴¹ Comparing both the 1491 and 1495 commissions emphasises the degree of continuity among Durham landowners serving in a military capacity. Ralph Bowes, who served as Durham's sheriff from 29 September 1486 to 29 September 1494, was appointed to all five commissions held in Sherwood's first year and all five commissions empanelled by Fox in 1495.¹⁴² Bowes was joined by a number of local families, who over the course of the period would begin to form the nexus of Tudor royal support in the palatinate. Roger and Christopher Conyers, William Eure, William Hilton, and Robert Tempest all sat alongside Bowes on various commissions of array for Durham in 1495, while Christopher Conyers, Hilton, and Tempest were listed within the 1491 commissions.¹⁴³ Another Durham landholder, Ralph Eure, was included within a royal commission to repair a number of fortresses on the east and middle marches.¹⁴⁴

The regional nature of border society meant that Durham landowners were not limited to operating solely within the palatinate's boundaries. An analysis of the Yorkshire array commissions for November 1495 reveals that a number of Durham men were appointed to commissions outside the county palatine, at the same time as they were serving Bishop Fox. William Bulmer, James Strangeways, William Tunstall, and Richard and William Conyers were appointed by the king to serve on

¹⁴⁰ TNA, SP 58/1/22, ff. 108-11.

¹⁴¹ TNA, DURH 3/58, m. 7; TNA, DURH 3/60, m. 1.

¹⁴² TNA, DURH 3/58, m. 7; TNA, DURH 3/60, m. 1.

¹⁴³ TNA, DURH 3/60, m. 1; TNA, DURH 3/58, m. 7.

¹⁴⁴ *CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 327.

the array commission issued for the North Riding.¹⁴⁵ Meanwhile, Ralph Bygot, William Eure, and his brother, Ralph, were among those Durham landowners serving in the East Riding.¹⁴⁶ Durham landowners had a history of sitting on neighbouring commissions. At the height of Yorkist-Lancastrian tensions in autumn 1455, the Strangeways and Conyers were working for Henry VI to restore law and order in Lancaster.¹⁴⁷ As with Cunningham's 'bonds of allegiance', service on the border created a 'network of shared responsibility', within which the palatinate fulfilled an integral role. This coincided with a tightening up of the *quo warranto* formula, which emphasised Durham's commitment to marcher defence in return for certain privileges.¹⁴⁸ The involvement of Durham landowners in the Yorkshire array commissions would appear to validate Christine Carpenter's 'regional gentry' model. Everitt's 'county community' thesis does not sufficiently account for the fluidity of North-Eastern society; the palatinate represented part of a larger 'regional community', where landowners and officers from several counties were called upon by the king to serve on the border and by the bishop to operate within the bishopric and its northernmost enclaves.¹⁴⁹ That Durham formed an essential part of the North-Eastern community has been emphasised by those working on the palatinate's involvement on the border in the late fourteenth century.¹⁵⁰ This process was continued and, in several ways, advanced during Henry's reign.

Royal control of the borders and the bishopric's role within a regional community was reinforced through the strategic insertion of crown officials into the area. Henry's ministers and servants were in a position to mobilise large retinues to defeat the Yorkist pretender, Lambert Simnel, at Stoke in 1487; ten years later, the king was able to rely on his favourites to neutralise the Cornish rebels at Blackheath; royal officials were also employed in the Calais garrison. The reach of Henry's officials at times of unrest extended to peripheral territories: Sir Edward Ponysings commanded troops in Ireland in 1494-95 and in two campaigns in the Netherlands in 1492 and 1511. Another of Henry's inner circle, Thomas Lovell, led a contingent of

¹⁴⁵ CPR, 1494-1509, p. 52.

¹⁴⁶ CPR, 1494-1509, p. 52.

¹⁴⁷ CPR, 1452-1461, pp. 219-20.

¹⁴⁸ Cunningham, 'Bonds of Allegiance', p. 57; H.M. Cam, 'English Feudalism', *History* 25, p. 219.

¹⁴⁹ Everitt, *Community of Kent*, p. 13; Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community', p. 350.

¹⁵⁰ Arvanigian, 'Durham Gentry and the Scottish March', p. 260.

493 men in the 1497 campaign against the Scots.¹⁵¹ John Cheyne was equally prominent; he was included in all five of Bishop Sherwood's 1491 array commissions.¹⁵² One objective of royal officials like Cheyne was to cement the regime's authority in outlying regions and politically sensitive areas. Much like David Potter's Picardy, the North-East was the gateway to the South, its security paramount to the longevity of Henry's reign and the king proved willing to place his own men into the county palatine when deemed necessary.¹⁵³ This policy was not only largely unopposed, it was welcomed and facilitated by those at the top of palatinate society. This is in stark contrast to the treatment royal officials received shortly after the palatinate's inception in the late eleventh century. When a tax collector of William I was sent to Durham in the early 1070s - he was sent to force the local residents to pay tribute to the king - the *Haliwerfolc* (people of the saint) prayed to Saint Cuthbert for an intervention. Their request was seemingly answered when the official awoke with a serious illness, which the saint assured could be resolved upon his leaving the bishopric. Miraculously, when the official left, promising to advocate Durham's right to self-determination, he recovered.¹⁵⁴ Cheyne's service on the border and his being named on Bishop Sherwood's commissions is a sign of Durham society's changing attitude to royal officials. There was no large-scale opposition, but rather a sense among its elites that Durham and those operating on the border could benefit from working alongside the crown.

A legislative programme designed to make the mustering and provisioning of troops more efficient helped to consolidate these military networks. Henry's fourth parliament, which sat from 17 October 1491 to 5 March 1492, passed two bills that meant the king could conduct his foreign wars with greater efficiency. The first, known as the Soldiers' Act, made captains responsible for the mustering and equipping of troops; wages were to be distributed within six days of receiving sums from the crown. Non-adherence to the act was punishable by imprisonment or the forfeiture of property. This included those residing in Durham under royal leadership; the palatinate received no exemption.¹⁵⁵ The second, the Act Concerning War

¹⁵¹ Grummitt, 'Calais, 1485-1547', pp. 116-7; Gunn, 'New Men', p. 157.

¹⁵² TNA, DURH 3/58, m. 7.

¹⁵³ Potter, *Picardy, 1470-1560*, p. 115-17.

¹⁵⁴ Symeon of Durham, *Libellus de Exordio atque Procursu istius, Hoc est Dunhelmensis, Ecclesie*, ed. D. Rollason (Oxford, 2000), pp. 216-19; Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, p. 188.

¹⁵⁵ SR, ii, pp. 549-50.

Service, protected the lands and goods of those serving in the king's wars abroad.¹⁵⁶ By late 1495, another measure had been enacted that made royal office-holders liable to forfeit property should they not serve the king on campaign.¹⁵⁷ It is evident from Durham's inclusion within these statutes that Henry not only regarded the palatinate as part of a regional community, but that he sought to redress the relationship between Westminster and regional authorities, particularly during moments of domestic or foreign unrest. One historian has postulated that Henry used the Scottish campaigns of the mid-1490s to garner support in the North-East through the distribution of patronage to loyal servants.¹⁵⁸

Durham's involvement on the Anglo-Scottish border during the 1480s and 1490s has shown that the consolidation of the Tudor state was, in part, facilitated by a need to respond to national crises. At times of internal and international uncertainty, Durham's bishops and landowners contributed to the broader policy of securing the realm and were able to do this by working alongside, rather than against, the central authorities. The willingness with which Durham landowners formed connections with the crown and its officials would suggest that they were happy to escalate Durham's national contribution. Bishops Sherwood and Fox, and a good number of gentry families, saw service on the border and within the neighbouring shires as a viable means through which to establish and cement contacts with the royal court and members of Henry's inner circle. The nature and role of the crown's authority in Durham evolved when Henry Tudor took the throne. Local families were aware that their greatest chance of future advancement rested with the crown and its bishops. This was not a new phenomenon. Durham landowners had profited from service on behalf of successive Yorkist kings. The foundations for Durham's role on the border, then, had been laid well before 1485, but it was under Henry VII and, particularly Richard Fox, that the scale of Durham's involvement was heightened, paving the way for greater collaboration on the marches between the palatinate and the regimes of Henry VIII and Edward VI. Far from a process of browbeating the bishopric into submission, Henry sought to maximise Durham's human and material resources. The height of English success on the border, Henry VIII's victory at Flodden in September

¹⁵⁶ *SR*, ii, pp. 550-1.

¹⁵⁷ *SR*, ii, p. 582.

¹⁵⁸ Cunningham, 'Scottish Campaigns of 1496-1497', p. 301.

1513, could, arguably, not have been achieved without Henry VII's having garnered the support of Durham landowners.

Conclusion

Henry VII's reign brought about significant change in the Durham palatinate and its relationship with central government. Whereas Edward IV and, particularly, Richard III, had been able to call upon Durham's resources from the outset of their reigns, Henry faced the obstacle of attempting to convert the allegiances of palatinate landowners and senior officials, without whose support his ability to secure the North-East would have been compromised. Stabilising Durham and the North-East in the aftermath of Bosworth was initially achieved through a skilful dispensation of patronage to a group of former Ricardian, Percy, and Neville retainers, many of whom would go on to form the nexus of Tudor support in the region. Henry was willing, and on occasions compelled, to accept Durham men with Yorkist sympathies into his wider northern affinity. The majority of Durham landowners were equally prepared to transfer their loyalties to the new Tudor regime. Local men realised the benefits to be had from working alongside central government, rather than against it. In this regard, Henry's treatment of Durham landowners was little different from that of landed elites across the country.¹⁵⁹ The establishment of these symbiotic networks was reinforced by the efforts of Tudor-courtier bishops like Richard Fox, whose episcopate helped to strengthen ties between Durham and London. Additional reinforcement was provided by a number of royal officials or 'new men' who had been inserted into palatinate offices.

The crown's growing influence in Durham did not necessarily undermine the role and importance of the bishops of Durham. Henry's policy in the bishopric was designed to increase levels of cooperation, and was, in large part, received favourably by those in the palatinate. The somewhat recalcitrant attitude towards royal encroachment in earlier centuries had slowly given way to a perception of a mutually beneficial relationship based on increased cooperation and symbiotic patronage networks. At its core, this new attitude was founded on a willingness among Durham

¹⁵⁹ Luckett, 'Patronage, Violence and Revolt', pp. 148-49, 154.

landowners to work alongside royal officials inserted into the bishopric and to serve on crown commissions in neighbouring counties. Henry might not have been able to select commissioners of the peace in Durham, but he was in a position to work alongside the bishops to ensure that a number of his trusted servants, including members of his household, were appointed to palatinate commissions and senior legal offices. Henry had taken Sir John Fortescue's notion of distributing the 'king's offices' to another level. By working with the authorities in Durham, he ensured that a number of his officials were appointed to the *bishop's* offices, extending royal authority to new regions on a scale that had not previously been possible. This policy was reciprocated through the appointment of palatinate landowners to royal commissions outside of Durham.

Looking at the wider North-Eastern political landscape at the turn of the fifteenth century, it would be fair to say that the Durham palatinate formed an integral part of not only the regional community, but also the national polity. That is not to say that Henry VII had forsaken or intended to abolish the county palatine's privileges, quite the contrary. He sought to harness Durham's human and material resources and in order to achieve this had to ensure that the bishopric remained a healthy institution in its own right. At the same time, Henry made those in Durham aware of their obligations as integrated members of the Tudor state. This increasingly pragmatic stance towards the palatinate was legitimised by parliament and a concerted legislative programme designed to bring outlying regions more firmly under the umbrella of national government. Much like his patronage policy, Henry's parliamentary programme formed part of a wider, nationwide, policy; it was not targeted at Durham and other outlying regions, but at all those territories that might have proven a threat to the longevity of the fledgling Tudor dynasty. Far from a legislative assault, parliament was used out of political necessity.

It was much the same with the use of financial bonds, which helped to consolidate the king's position in the bishopric. Polydore Vergil was among the first commentators to observe that recognisances might have been employed 'to make the population less well able to undertake any upheavals and to discourage at the same time all offences'.¹⁶⁰ Recognisances might well have led to crown profit, but the primary motivation behind their use in Durham was safeguarding the support of the

¹⁶⁰ *Anglica Historia*, pp. 127-29; *CSP Spain*, i, pp. 177-78.

region's most influential players. The vexed topic of Henry's use of bonds in the localities requires reassessment. Sean Cunningham has suggested that the North-East saw an increase in the use of bonds and other financial exactions in the years between Henry's victory at Bosworth in 1485 and 1492.¹⁶¹ Cunningham was correct to point out that this policy was based on the need to stabilise the region, but a closer inspection of bonds issued in Durham suggests that they were employed consistently throughout the reign, with a slight escalation after 1492. The notion that financial bonds were used to safeguard loyalties is supported by the involvement of Durham society in the enforcement of recognisances. Durham's bishops and major landowners acted as sureties and officials responsible for the implementation and collection of bonds.

Participation in foreign campaigns and internal defence has long been presented as a key driver of European state formation. Henry's campaigns against the Scots in the mid-1490s were no different, facilitating Durham's gradual integration within the national polity. Much like the distribution of patronage to Yorkist sympathisers or the use of bonds, military activity on the Anglo-Scottish border presented the crown and Durham families with the opportunity to forge new and consolidate existing networks. That warfare could be harnessed as a means of fostering political networks in early modern Europe has been well documented and Durham at the turn of the fifteenth century further illustrates this trend. As bishop of Durham, Richard Fox played an instrumental role on the marches, not simply through the safeguarding of English interests but in his willingness to facilitate closer relations between his subjects in Durham and those at court. Fox, a trusted member of Henry's inner circle, was in a unique position to use his proximity to the king to both Durham and Westminster's advantage. Crises on the border proved equally important to the recruitment of Durham landowners. With the decline of the North-East's traditional power structures, the regional gentry now turned to the crown and its agents for future assignments and rewards. Henry and his northern officials welcomed the interest and participation of the palatinate's gentry and used this as a means of establishing a foothold in the region. In sum, the foundations laid during Henry's reign meant that the Durham palatinate could continue to serve as a vital component of the crown's military apparatus on the border in the next reign.

¹⁶¹ Cunningham, 'Bonds of Allegiance', pp. 47-50.

CHAPTER TWO

Early Henrician Durham, c. 1509 – 1529

The question of how, and how effectively, Tudor government managed the far North during the 1510s and 1520s has polarised scholarly opinion over the past forty years. Historians have suggested that the obstacles posed by the northern marches were either indicative of the state's burgeoning authority in peripheral territories or its severe limitations responding to foreign and domestic crises. Writing in the late 1960s, B.W. Beckingsale suggested that Westminster's responses to problems in the North were similar to those encountered in lowland England; the North-East was not an especially turbulent region and was capable of defusing tensions through the local gentry.¹ Anthony Goodman, Maureen Meikle, and Richard Lomas have all likewise downplayed the violent nature of northern and marcher society.² At the same time, Mervyn James has demonstrated that royal favour began to migrate away from the region's traditional, magnate, authorities towards those gentry prepared to enforce the royal prerogative.³

The regime's successful use of the gentry in the far North has been challenged by those who argue that the crown saddled local landholders, who lacked the necessary *manraed* to govern the region effectively, with unrealistic demands.⁴ Not all frontier territories fared as badly as the northern marches, however. The English Pale in Ireland was strengthened through a collective sense of responsibility amongst the gentry; the successes achieved in local administration in County Meath could not

¹ B.W. Beckingsale, 'The Characteristics of the Tudor North', *NH* 4 (1969), pp. 71-5, 80.

² Anthony Goodman, 'The Anglo-Scottish Marches in the Fifteenth Century: A Frontier Society?' in *Scotland and England, 1285-1815*, ed. R.A. Mason (Edinburgh, 1987), pp. 18-33; Maureen Meikle, 'Lairds and Gentlemen: A Study of Landed Families on the Anglo-Scottish Border, 1540-1603' (University of Edinburgh PhD, 1986); Richard Lomas, 'The Scots and South Tweedside: The Impact of Border Warfare, c. 1290-1520', *Scottish Historical Review* 75 (1996), pp. 143-67.

³ Mervyn James, *Family, Lineage and Civil Society: A Study of Society, Politics, and Mentality in the Durham Region, 1500-1640* (Oxford, 1974), p. 45; idem, *Society, Politics and Culture: Studies in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 91-147; idem, 'Change and Continuity in the Tudor North', *Borthwick Papers* (1965), pp. 3-16; idem, 'The First Earl of Cumberland (1493-1542) and the Decline of Northern Feudalism', *NH* 1 (1966), pp. 43-46.

⁴ James, *Civil Society*, p. 45; idem, *Society, Politics and Culture*, pp. 91-147; idem, 'Change and Continuity in the Tudor North', pp. 3-16; idem, 'Decline of Northern Feudalism', pp. 43-46.

be replicated in the North of England.⁵ More recently, Sean Cunningham, Claire Etty, and Mark Arvanigian have emphasised the relationship between border service and the creation of politico-military networks with local and national authorities.⁶ Yet, despite a plethora of research on border warfare and early Tudor governance in the far North, few studies have considered the palatinate's position within a regional society and how Durham's involvement in North-Eastern, national, and international affairs spearheaded political integration.

The chapter will open with an exploration of the roles of senior palatine figures – Bishops Thomas Ruthall (*c.* 1509-1523) and Thomas Wolsey (*c.* 1523-1529), the Cathedral Priory, and local landowners and officers – during the Anglo-Scottish campaigns of the 1510s and 1520s. During the twenty-year period from Henry VIII's accession on 9 April 1509 to the demise of Cardinal Wolsey in the autumn of 1530 England's relationship with Scotland was characterised by a series of military campaigns, interspersed by unstable truces and cross-border raiding. The far North was coming to terms with the waning influence of the Percy earls of Northumberland and Neville earls of Westmorland and Thomas, Lord Dacre's largely unsuccessful attempts to restore relative law and order.

The contention here is that the Durham palatinate operated within what was a regional political, military, and informational network to help enforce royal policies on the border. These policies ranged from conducting offensive raids in Scotland to the coordination of defensive efforts and provisioning. While Steven Ellis remains critical of the northern gentry's activities on the border, it will be argued that the increased involvement of these families actually led to a closer and more effective management of England's northernmost frontier by the crown and its ministers.⁷ Moreover, the nature of the palatinate's participation forces historians to reassess our understanding of Alan Everitt's county communities model. Durham's lay and

⁵ S.G. Ellis, *Defending English Ground: War and Peace in Meath and Northumberland, 1460-1542* (Oxford, 2015), pp. 113-34, 90.

⁶ Mark Arvanigian, 'The Durham Gentry and the Scottish March, 1370-1400: County Service in Late Medieval England', *NH* 42 (2005), p. 260; Claire Etty, 'Tudor revolution?: royal control of the Anglo-Scottish border, 1483-1530' (Durham University PhD, 2005), p. 154-61; Sean Cunningham, 'National War and Dynastic Politics: Henry VII's Capacity to Wage War in the Scottish Campaigns of 1496-1497', in *England and Scotland at War, c. 1296-1513*, ed. A. King and D. Simpkin (Leiden, 2012), pp. 297-328.

⁷ Ellis, *Defending English Ground*, pp. 153-54; idem, 'Civilizing Northumberland: representations of Englishness in the Tudor state', *Journal of Historical Sociology* 12 (1999), pp. 109-10.

ecclesiastical landowners and officials operated within a larger regional network, their political and administrative responsibilities circumvented traditional county boundaries.

The second part of the chapter will examine the composition of the North-East's peace and assize commissions during Bishop Ruthall and Wolsey's episcopates. It will elucidate the continuities in nature and practice adopted from the previous reign and look at how both bishops and Durham's priors were able to exert a greater degree of royal control in the region through the appointment of crown servants to local commissions and other palatinate posts. The chapter will conclude with an analysis of Cardinal Wolsey as bishop of Durham and the distinguishing features of his episcopate. The cardinal was permanently absent from his bishopric, but was nonetheless capable of exerting a strong degree of royal influence in the far North through his reforms to local government, the extension of Tudor equity jurisdiction to the palatinate, and his establishment of the council of the north in August 1525, under the nominal headship of Henry Fitzroy, duke of Richmond. Wolsey's ability to dictate the course of palatinate affairs from a distance was also significantly strengthened by his entrusting the management of the region to a select group of men who doubled as members of his archiepiscopal affinity at York and his staff in Durham.

The Palatinate and the Anglo-Scottish Border, c. 1513-1526

The palatinate's position within marcher society in the 1510s and 1520s has, hitherto, been relatively under-explored. Early histories of Durham suggested that royal intervention in the North-East transformed border society into a functional component of the national state.⁸ More recently, Christian Liddy's work on the late medieval bishopric has argued for the existence of a flourishing gentry community, a group of palatinate landholders and officers whose allegiances were divided between, though

⁸ George Ridpath, *The Border History of England and Scotland* (Berwick, 1848); James Raine, *The History and Antiquities of North Durham* (Newcastle, 1852), *passim*; William Stubbs, *The Constitutional History of England in its Origin and Development* (3 vols. Oxford, 1891), i, pp. 294-95, 392-93; G.T. Lapsley, *The County Palatine of Durham: A Study in Constitutional History* (London, 1900), p. 2; D.L.W. Tough, *The Last Years of Frontier* (Oxford, 1928), p. 278

not necessarily exclusive to, the Nevilles of Raby and Brancepeth, the Cathedral Priory, successive bishops of Durham, and, increasingly, the crown.⁹ Few studies have considered the impact of Durham's bishops, its priory, and gentry on marcher society from Henry VIII's accession to Cardinal Wolsey's demise in 1530. This twenty-one-year period in border history saw repeated outbreaks of conflict interspersed by fragile truces between Henry VIII and his Scottish counterparts, with England's parlous relationship with Scotland constantly threatened by the inhabitants of northern liberties, particularly Tynedale and Redesdale, and reiver families on both sides of the frontier.

Durham's bishops had fulfilled a historic role on the border as some of the North-East's most powerful feudal magnates.¹⁰ Bishops Ruthall and Wolsey, although the latter never visited his bishopric in person, ensured that the precedent set by their predecessors continued during Henry VIII's early years. In the weeks immediately prior to the Scottish invasion of Northumberland and the subsequent battle of Flodden on 9 September 1513, Bishop Ruthall had made provisions for the defence of the palatinate.¹¹ By mid-July, Ruthall requested that Thomas, Lord Darcy, warden of the east march since September 1505, inform his constable at Norham of 'such thinges as you shalt llyrant [learn] of Scotland so that he [Ruthall] may loke... accordyndly'. The warden was also asked to provide 'two lynys' of information on the conditions at Norham Castle.¹² Palatinate landowners were also aware of the mounting tension and the need to petition central authorities for the provision and defence of Berwick. On 15 July, Sir Ralph Eure and Thomas Strangeways, alongside other northern landholders, implored the council to 'send oon of the kinges [ser]vantes to remayne

⁹ Christian Liddy, *The Bishopric of Durham in the Late Middle Ages: Lordship, Community and the Cult of St Cuthbert* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 76-123; idem, 'Land, Legend and Gentility in the Palatinate of Durham: The Pollards of Pollard Hall', in *North-East England in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. C.D. Liddy and R.H. Britnell (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 75-95.

¹⁰ Etty, 'Anglo-Scottish border', pp. 157-60; A.J. Pollard, 'St Cuthbert and the Hog: Richard III and the County Palatine of Durham, 1471-85', in *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages: A Tribute to Charles Ross*, ed. R. Griffiths and J.W. Sherborne (Gloucester, 1986), pp. 111-16.

¹¹ Thomas Howard, second earl of Surrey, formally responded to James IV's declaration on 7 September 1513: BL, Cotton Caligula B/VI, f. 82; BL, Harley MS. 289, f. 16 (*LP*, i, 2229). Surrey's later was countersigned by fourteen northern landowners, including Durham's sheriff, William Bulmer, senior.

¹² In addition to his wardenship of the east march, Darcy had been made captain of Berwick, steward of Bamburgh Castle, and steward of lands in the bishopric, which had belonged to the fourth Neville of Westmorland and Sir Ralph Grey: *LP*, i, 94 (63-9, 77); TNA, SP 1/4, f. 107 (*LP*, i, 2111).

here... for the defens of this towne'. Strangeways had already taken measures to victual the garrison, which, he insisted, was in urgent need of repair and men.¹³ Just six weeks after the English victory, Ruthall was once again writing to royal authorities in London of the parlous state of Norham Castle; he informed Wolsey of his intention to write to the king for permission to have repairs made 'agenst the time of year for redifying of the castle'. If the work was not hindered by Scottish aggression or administrative delays, the bishop reassured Wolsey that the palatinate stronghold could be restored to its full capabilities.¹⁴

Shortly after Flodden, Ruthall wrote at length to Wolsey, providing accounts of Scottish preparations and the efforts of palatinate men during the battle. James IV's army had amassed a stockpile of ordinance and an 'adundaunce of vitails, wyne of all sortes... tentes and pauvlions'. The English forces under Surrey, by contrast, were 'destitute of vitails and having no thing to drinke but oonely watere... of three daies'. With a large proportion of Henry's military capabilities deployed in France, Ruthall reported that England's northern frontier had been in 'moche daunger'; had the Scots emerged victorious they could have 'commyn veray farre in to the lande without resistance'.¹⁵ If Ruthall's report is to be believed, 'the hole retynewe of the bisshoprike', under Surrey's command, 'toke moste payn'.¹⁶

Several Durham landowners and office-holders fought at Flodden. William Hilton is recorded on 16 July 1513 as having entered into an indenture with Prior Thomas Castell, who had lent Saint Cuthbert's banner to the bishopric's forces for the duration of the battle.¹⁷ Among the bishopric's forces, Sir William Bulmer, Durham's sheriff, is singled out for special praise: 'my shreif had discomfaytid the Scottis with a good nombre of my mene'.¹⁸ He is noted as having killed the chamberlain of Scotland, whose company of ten thousand soldiers was defeated by Bulmer's considerably smaller contingent; he had also captured some four or five hundred Scottish prisoners and seized large amounts of ordnance. Bulmer's efforts at Flodden Field made an impression on Ruthall, who later wrote to Wolsey that 'he hathe...

¹³ BL, Cotton Caligula B/II, f. 302 (*LP*, i, 2096).

¹⁴ BL, Cotton Caligula B/VI, f. 17 (*LP*, i, 2394).

¹⁵ TNA, SP 1/5, ff. 47-9 (*LP*, i, 2283).

¹⁶ TNA, SP 1/5, f. 47 (*LP*, i, 2283).

¹⁷ Ralph Bowes, Thomas Conyers, Thomas Strangeways and John Bulmer were all knighted in the field by the earl of Surrey after the battle: *LP*, i, 2246; DCM, Reg. 4, f. 195v.

¹⁸ TNA, SP 1/5, f. 42 (*LP*, i, 2279); TNA, DURH 20/22-23.

de[ser]vyd s[o]mme honerabe rewarde for hys valiannt actes'.¹⁹ Ruthall's request is synonymous with the language employed within patron-broker-client relationships; Ruthall, in his dual role as bishop of Durham and royal intimate, acted as a broker for his provincial client and would continue to do so for the duration of his episcopate. Such was Ruthall's regard for Bulmer that when the former left his diocese for court in October 1513, Bulmer was entrusted with the defence of the bishopric. Moreover, Ruthall's letter of 24 October provides an interesting insight into his perception of Durham and Bulmer's role during his absence: Sir William 'shalbe alwayes redy w[ith] the power of the byshoprike to do the kyng[es] grace substanciaie [ser]vyse'.²⁰ Ruthall's biographer, Margot Johnson, has commented on the bishop's preference for gentry to rule in his stead during his prolonged absences.²¹ The bishop's letter also points to his intention that Durham and its principal office-holders should serve as part of a wider national effort on the border.

In the years after Flodden, Bishop Ruthall continued to work alongside royal authorities in the North, particularly Thomas, Lord Dacre, now warden of the east and middle marches.²² By the time the bishop had returned to his see in September 1513, he began transmitting news between Westminster and the warden; Ruthall forwarded the king's instructions to Dacre on when and where to conduct raids in Scotland and sent reports back to Henry on the number of men and supplies required.²³ Dacre, too, confided in the bishop; he kept Ruthall abreast of potential forays into Scotland and was reluctant to 'show his mind' to anyone else.²⁴ When rumours began to circulate that Dacre had made a secret pact with the chamberlain of Scotland, it was to Ruthall that he turned for advice.²⁵ In an attempt to seize the initiative after Flodden, Ruthall encouraged both Dacre and Surrey to conduct raids against the Scots. He was quick, however, to accept that any offensive campaigns stood little chance of success: 'suche capytayns and souldiers as wer at his businese in mervoulouse fowle wethyre,

¹⁹ TNA, SP 1/5, f. 45 (LP, i, 2284); TNA, SP 1/5, f. 47 (LP, i, 2283).

²⁰ BL, Cotton Caligula B/VI, f. 17 (LP, i, 2394).

²¹ Margot Johnson, 'Ruthall, Thomas (d. 1523)', *ODNB*.

²² Bishop Ruthall and Lord Dacre had been in communication on border matters since late August 1512, at around the same time at Ruthall had replaced Lord Darcy as the crown's agents on the East March: BL, Cotton Caligula B/III, f. 2 (LP, i, 1342); Etty, 'Anglo-Scottish border', p. 162.

²³ BL, Cotton Caligula B/VI, f. 45-6.

²⁴ TNA, SP 1/5, f. 69.

²⁵ LP, i, 4522.

lackynge mete and drynke... also lost thayr horses and goodes'.²⁶ Dacre, Lord Conyers, and Sir William Bulmer were equally unsure about the North-East's ability to mount raids at short notice.²⁷ Ruthall, then, had been acting as an effective royal agent during his early years in Durham, both directly and indirectly, coordinating offensive raids in Scotland and through the distribution of information to local lords and gentry.

Ruthall's installation as keeper of the privy seal on 18 May 1516 – an office he held until his death in February 1523 – would no doubt have bolstered his influence at court and augmented his ability to circulate information between the North-East and London. Ruthall's relationship with the ascendant Wolsey helped to ensure the palatinate's place within regional society. Ruthall and Wolsey's shared opinions on foreign policy were, according to the Venetian ambassador, Sebastiano Guistiniani, akin to the bishop 'singing treble to the Cardinal's bass'.²⁸ As bishop of Durham and a royal agent on the border, Ruthall was a vital component of the crown's political and administration machinery in the region, but not at the expense of the bishopric. His chaplain, William Frankeleyn (*d.* 1556), originally from Bledlow in Buckinghamshire, wrote that the bishop's efforts to restore order in and around the city of Durham had 'wonne the harts of all the contrie'.²⁹ Ruthall was no mere royal pawn; he balanced the needs and responsibilities of border management with those of his bishopric. Palatinate business and border management were seldom mutually exclusive, however; the crown relied on Durham on the northern frontier in the same manner as Ruthall was reliant upon the crown to provide financial and material support for defence.

Bishop Ruthall's episcopal household and palatinate affinity fulfilled a similar task, working alongside regional authorities and on the crown's behalf on the Anglo-Scottish border. William Frankeleyn, whom Ruthall created chancellor of the palatinate and archdeacon of Durham in 1514 and 1515 respectively, often acted as an intermediary between the bishop and the court.³⁰ Central government appears have acted on Frankeleyn's warning that Dacre had attempted to seize the lands of the minor Thomas Grey and on the worsening situation in Tynedale and Redesdale. In a

²⁶ TNA, SP 1/5, ff. 47-9 (*LP*, i, 2283).

²⁷ *LP*, i, 2282.

²⁸ *CSP Venice*, ii, 751. [*che cantava in consonantia*]

²⁹ TNA, SP 1/16, f. 310 (*LP*, ii, 4258).

³⁰ TNA, DURH 3/70, m. 19; DCM, Reg. 5, f. 158r-v.

draft letter written in 1518, Wolsey, now a cardinal and firmly ensconced as the king's chief minister, warned Dacre that the king and his council had been made aware of his 'remiss dealing' in matters concerning the king's wards.³¹ Custody of the Grey lands had previously been awarded to Hugh Ashton, a man familiar to Ruthall, Frankeleyn, and Wolsey. Ashton had served as Ruthall's chancellor in Durham from 1509 until Frankeleyn succeeded him five years later; he sat on several peace and miscellaneous commissions in Durham and Sedbergh alongside Frankeleyn during Ruthall's episcopal reign; Ashton was also in receipt of several ecclesiastical benefices and was no doubt well known to Wolsey while serving as archdeacon of York from 18 August 1516 until his death in late 1522.³² Given his connections, it is not surprising that Frankeleyn would have thought it necessary to inform Wolsey of Dacre's activities. Frankeleyn's role as a regional intermediary was particularly important during Bishop Ruthall's frequent absences from Durham. He ensured that the absentee bishop of Durham was kept informed of bishopric affairs; Frankeleyn communicated Ruthall's displeasure concerning the 'dispaylis co[m]myttid wtin the bishopric by Tyndale and Redysdale men' to Roger Lumley, Thomas Tempest (*d.* 1543/44), and his brother, Roland, whom, Frankeleyn attested, would to 'thuttrest of their powers' ensure that justice was administered and a degree of order restored in the two ancient liberties.³³

Frankeleyn's brief as a royal agent extended to liaising with local landowners, who would in turn transmit messages between the chancellor and other military authorities in the region. His high standing with the cardinal bolstered his credentials as a crown informer. Frankeleyn was an established member of the cardinal's archiepiscopal household at York, acting as Wolsey's chaplain while concurrently serving as Bishop Ruthall's chancellor in Durham.³⁴ By the autumn of 1522 renewed tensions with Scotland had erupted, prompting the mustering of men on the east march. In a letter dated 10 September 1522, Frankeleyn informed the bishop that

³¹ BL, Cotton Caligula B/VI, f. 209.

³² *LP*, i, 969 (1); TNA, DURH 3/70, m 1; TNA, DURH 3/70, m. 11; *Borthwick Institute for Historical Research York*, York, Archbishop's Rolls and Registers, Reg. 27. Thomas Wolsey (1514-1529), f. 106v; Nadine Lewycky, 'Serving God and King: Cardinal Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks and Early Tudor Government, 1514-1529, with special reference to the archdiocese of York' (University of York PhD thesis, 2008), pp. 315-16; Nadine Lewycky, 'Cardinal Thomas Wolsey and the City of York, 1514-1529', *NH* 46 (2009), p. 54.

³³ TNA, SP 1/16, f. 310 (*LP*, ii, 4258).

³⁴ BL, Cotton Caligula B/III, f. 134 (*LP*, ii, 861); Lewycky, 'Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks', p. 329.

William Eure (c. 1483-1548), of Witton, Durham, had delivered Dacre's letters to him, which he would send to Ruthall in London. Frankeleyn had sent commissions to Hugh Whitehead, prior of Durham, and William Hilton, requesting them to march north with a contingent of soldiers and make raids into Scotland. Some two thousand men had been mustered by William Eure, Durham's sheriff, and Thomas Tempest.³⁵ Frankeleyn assured the bishop that 'yor bishopricke men be very joyous & glad in this & all other busyness... to do the king[es]... and yor lordship the best plesur & [ser]vice that have in theyr power'. Frankeleyn was, however, realistic about the palatinate's readiness to launch offensive campaigns across the border: more than four thousand of the bishopric's residents had perished during the previous two years; some three thousand from the town of Durham and Darnton parish, of which a good number were the bishopric's more experienced military captains. This chronic shortage of suitable men was compounded by a large proportion of military provisions being stored in houses infected by plague, which few people were prepared to enter.³⁶

The speed with which William Frankeleyn was able to keep Ruthall and those at court abreast of developments in the bishopric proved crucial for coordinating movements and provisioning fortresses on the border. That patronage networks doubled as provincial news and military networks was not an uncommon feature of the early Tudor political machine; Durham's networks operated on a similar level to those in York, the West Country, and the Pale of Calais.³⁷ The dissemination of information pertinent to border warfare should not be overlooked. Durham's late medieval bishops made a concerted effort to uphold Edward I's *quo warranto* policy through service on the marches and it would appear this continued into the sixteenth century, albeit in a manner that placed greater emphasis on provincial intelligence networks. Both Bishop Ruthall and those at court, particularly Wolsey, did act upon reports from their clients in the North-East.

Palatinate landowners and office-holders fulfilled a crucial, if hitherto overlooked, part on the Anglo-Scottish frontier. John Anesley (or Anislow) acted as

³⁵ TNA, DURH 20/30.

³⁶ TNA, SP 1/26, f. 21 (*LP*, iii, 2531).

³⁷ Lewycky, 'Wolsey and the City of York', pp. 43-60; R.W. Hoyle, 'Urban Decay and Civic Lobbying: The Crisis in York's Finances, 1525-1536', *NH* 34 (1998), pp. 94-96; M.L. Robertson, 'The Art of the Possible': Thomas Cromwell's Management of West Country Government', *HJ* 32 (1989), pp. 793-816; David Grummitt, 'Calais, 1485-1547: A Study in Early Tudor Politics and Government' (LSE PhD thesis, 1997), p. 123.

an intermediary between Bishop Ruthall and other crown agents in the North. Anesley, who had been appointed steward of Norham Castle under Bishop Bainbridge in October 1508 and elevated to constable by Ruthall, relayed messages between Ruthall and Lord Darcy.³⁸ As sheriff of Norhamshire and Elandshire, he was also in a position to inform Ruthall of diplomatic overtures made towards the Scots.³⁹ William Bulmer was among a group of northern landowners chosen to escort the recently widowed Margaret Tudor back to England in June 1517. Thomas Magnus, archdeacon of the Yorkshire East Riding and Wolsey's confidant in York, wrote that 'few men doe better at this... thenne... Sir Willi[a]m bulmer commyng from the furthest parte of yorkeshire w[i]th a goodly company'. Bulmer had his servants wait upon Margaret at York and 'doe all the honor... and [ser]vice that they canne'.⁴⁰ Bulmer was later listed alongside other bishopric men as having received rewards from the crown for conducting raids into Scotland. Henry decreed in 1519 that Bulmer, Robert Bowes, and Sir William Hilton be rewarded for their part in the ransacking of Cessford Castle and other Scottish fortresses near Jedburgh; Bulmer was placed in charge of the retinues belonging to the prior and chancellor of Durham. Bulmer, Bowes, and Hilton's commanding of bishopric forces formed part of a wider regional effort to launch campaigns across the border; the 1519 contingent included men from Northumberland and Cumberland.⁴¹ Hilton's name appears once again in 1520 as having received an award of £10 for his part in the raids at Blackater. As in 1519, Hilton's Blackater campaign was bolstered by a group of men whose landed and political interests spanned several northern counties.⁴²

Palatinate officers operated alongside royal commanders in the far North when tensions erupted once again in summer 1522. Heightened anxieties on the border prompted the appointment of George Talbot, fourth earl of Shrewsbury, as the king's lieutenant in July 1522. Henry VIII's instructions to Shrewsbury reaffirmed the palatinate's role as part of a larger national effort. The bishopric was compelled to

³⁸ DCM, Reg. 5, f. 104r; TNA, SP 1/4, f. 107 (*LP*, i, 2111).

³⁹ TNA, DURH 3/70, m. 1; BL, Cotton Caligula B/VI, f. 24 (*LP*, i, 1380).

⁴⁰ BL, Cotton Caligula B/II, f. 301 (*LP*, ii, 3336).

⁴¹ Sir William Bulmer, for his commanding the retinues of the prior and chancellor of Durham, received £81 4s; Robert Bowes £20 8s; and Sir William Hilton £49. *LP*, iii, 573.

⁴² BL, Cotton Caligula B/I, f. 134. 'Account of rewards given to divers men of Northumberland, Cumberland, and Durham for raids in Scotland': men of Berwick, £6, 13s 4d; Sir William Heron, £10; Sir Edward Grey, £10; Robert Collingwood, £4; Sir William Ellerker, £5; Sir John Heron and his retinue, £4.

provide men to serve alongside the recently appointed Shrewsbury.⁴³ One month after Shrewsbury's appointment, royal writs were sent to a host of northern sheriffs – including William Eure in Durham, where, ordinarily, the bishop's writs superseded those of the crown – ordering that musters be taken to repel a suspected Scottish invasion.⁴⁴ On 29 June 1523, William Bulmer, Richard Tempest, and William Eure joined Lord Dacre in an operation to sack the town of Kelso and its surrounding fortresses.⁴⁵

Bulmer was among those listed by the earl of Surrey as having taken part in a raid at Gedworth, 'whiche towne is soo surely brent that noo garrysons... shalbe lodged there'. The burning, Surrey reported to Wolsey on 27 September 1523, had been conducted by 'twoo sure men Sir Willi[a] bulmer and thomas tempest'.⁴⁶ Bulmer and Tempest were not the only Durham landowners to have taken part in the raid at Gedworth. Overall command of the offensive had been entrusted to Robert and Richard Bowes, whose influence in Durham would increase with Wolsey's translation to the see in April 1523. The Boweses were accompanied by a contingent of 285 men from the bishopric. Additional palatinate forces were provided by Sir John Bulmer, with a retinue of one hundred men, and a contingent from the bishop's enclave of Howdenshire, comprising forty-two men. Sir Ralph Bulmer led a group of one hundred men; Richard Tempest was joined by 227 of his followers; while Lord Conyers' retinue of 400 soldiers was led by Anthony Brakenbury.⁴⁷

Much like Flodden ten years previously, the Gedworth campaign saw bishopric forces operate in tandem with those assembled from across the North-East: Lord Darcy, notwithstanding his limited landed base in the region, provided a contingent of ninety-six men under the command of Robert Ellerker; Roger Lassells, a Yorkshire man, came equipped with one hundred soldiers; Sir Thomas Clifford's retinue was the largest at 468 men; Thomas, Lord Darcy's 200 followers were

⁴³ 'certificat to be made unto hym [Shrewsbury] of such nombre as may be made in the bisshoprich of duresme to attende upon hym when he shall procede agenst the the Scott[es]'. TNA, SP 49/1, f. 140. Wolsey was instrumental in the decision to appoint Shrewsbury: Etty, 'Anglo-Scottish border', p. 54.

⁴⁴ Writs were sent to sheriff in Staffordshire, Nottingham, Derby, York, Northumberland, Westmorland, Lancaster, Chester, and Durham: *Tudor Royal Proclamations: The Early Tudors, 1485-1553*, ed. P.L. Hughes and J.F. Larkin (3 vols. New Haven and London, 1964), i, p. 138.

⁴⁵ BL, Add. MS. 24,965, f. 3135 (LP, iii, 3135).

⁴⁶ BL, Cotton Caligula B/II, f. 33 (LP, iii, 3364).

⁴⁷ TNA, SP 1/28, ff. 275-76, 277, 278, 279, 301-4, 315-17.

entrusted to Cuthbert Conyers; an unnamed member of the Scrope family is listed as having contributed 112 men; the garrison at Wark contributed 131 spears, archers, gunners, and mariners to the campaign; Sir Marmaduke Constable provided 324 men.⁴⁸ The English contingent at Gedworth comprised 2,585 men from several counties, of which 1,154 or forty-five per cent were provided by the bishopric or its surrounding enclaves.

Service on the border enabled senior palatinate figures to augment their credentials as dependable, if under-resourced, royal clients. Writing to Wolsey on 19 October 1523, Surrey, now serving as the king's lieutenant-general, referred to William Bulmer and William Eure as 'two good Knightes'.⁴⁹ Writing to Wolsey one year after he had been provided with the temporalities of the bishopric, William Bulmer informed the cardinal of how his son, William, had led a raid into Scotland on 8 June 1524, accompanied by men from Norham and Berwick, taking over 140 prisoners, eighty horses, and one thousand sheep. Bulmer senior, who had been reappointed sheriff of Durham and escheator of Norhamshire and Elandshire on Wolsey's translation to Durham, beseeched the bishop to accept his son into his favour: 'if itt wolde pleas yor grace too wryt a ltre of thank[es] untoe the said Sir William with yor further pleasor... the saym... wold be greatly to his comfirth'. The far North, Bulmer assured Wolsey, had been in considerable 'quietnes' since the cardinal had involved himself more readily in northern affairs.⁵⁰ Bulmer's letter is suggestive of a healthy patron-client relationship with Wolsey. Bulmer, familiar with the authorities in Westminster, must have been confident enough of his standing with the cardinal to act as a broker for his son and it would appear that Wolsey acted on Bulmer's letter; Bulmer, junior, was made sheriff and escheator of Norhamshire and Elandshire later that year.⁵¹ Wolsey was equally quick to reward William Bulmer, senior, who in rapid succession received the wardship and marriage of George Bowes, son and heir of Sir Ralph Bowes of Streatlam, a lease to the manor of Sockburn for forty marks per annum, and a sixty-year lease of the manor of Morton, near Houghton.⁵²

⁴⁸ TNA, SP 1/28, ff. 280-81, 282, 284-93, 294-97, 298-99, 300, 305-313.

⁴⁹ TNA, SP 49/2, f. 39 (*LP*, iii, 3445).

⁵⁰ TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 3; TNA, SP 1/31, f. 112 (*LP*, iv, 409).

⁵¹ TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 14.

⁵² TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 15, 22; *LP*, iv, 1196.

Richard Bellasis of Henknowle, near Bishop Auckland, was another member of Wolsey's northern affinity to benefit from his service on the marches. During Wolsey's episcopate Richard established himself as leading administrative figure in the palatinate. His first recorded appointment under Wolsey was as bailiff of Stockton and keeper of the bishop's manor there on 10 February 1523 or 1524.⁵³ It was in this guise that Bellasis wrote to Wolsey's chancellor in Durham, William Frankeleyn, about his having captured and examined a female Scottish spy, 'be fore dyv[er]s honest [per]sons.... wherby I subpose yor mrshippe schalt [per]ceyve the most part of all thing[es]... wt in Scotland'. He had also conducted searches and laid ambushes to apprehend a Scottish felon who was thought to be evading capture near Durham. Bellasis reassured his 'frand' that upon capturing the Scot 'I shall put hym in the gaole at duram for sure sure keypyng... until I may knowe yor pleyasure'.⁵⁴

Wolsey's permanent absenteeism from the bishopric meant that intelligence gathering from trusted local officials was of the utmost importance. Wolsey, his episcopal staff in Durham, and the authorities at Westminster were acutely aware of the need to place loyal informants on the border. This is reflected by the rewards provided to men like Bellasis, who served as intermediaries or brokers between the marches, the provincial capital at York, and London. On 10 December 1525, Bellasis was provided with a joint lease to Wolsey's coal pits near Bishop Auckland for a term of thirty years; two years later, he was made constable of Durham Castle for life, with a fee of twenty marks per annum.⁵⁵ Wolsey's biographer, Peter Gwyn, recognised the significance of the cardinal's employing local or household men on the east and middle marches.⁵⁶ Much like his predecessor, Wolsey made effective use of subordinates to oversee Durham's part on the border.

Of those royal subordinates serving on the border, Sir William Eure was among the most ubiquitous. The Eure family had a rich history of service in the far North, dating back to the mid-fourteenth century; Sir William's father, Sir Ralph, and

⁵³ TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 12; DCM, Reg. 5, f. 205r-v; DULSC, *Church Commission Deposit of Durham Bishopric Estates Records: Enrolment Books, Registers of Leases and Patents*, ff. 2v-3r.

⁵⁴ TNA, SP 1/34, f. 82 (LP, iv, 1207).

⁵⁵ DCM, Reg. 5, f. 216r-v, 225r; TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 42.

⁵⁶ Peter Gwyn, *The King's Cardinal: The Rise and Fall of Thomas Wolsey* (London, 1990), p. 214.

grandfather, Sir William, had both worked as royal agents during Henry VII's reign.⁵⁷ Eure's first appointment on the border came on 21 March 1521, when Wolsey entrusted him with the lieutenantship of the middle march. Eure's letter of acknowledgement to the cardinal contains all the hallmarks of a flourishing patronage relationship. He thanked Wolsey for his 'right comfortable lettre' and for 'all yor graciouse favours shewyd unto me'. Eure, in turn, promised his patron that he 'shall have my [ser]vice as long as I leyff to the uttermost of the power'. He went on to reiterate the importance of his connection with Wolsey and his desire for their mutually beneficial relationship to continue:

I... have but lytell to leve uppone but oonely the favor of the king[es] grace & yor grace I humble beseche yor grace to contynew yor graciouse favours toward[es] me for I shalbe ev[er] redy to [ser]ve the king[es] g[ra]ce and yor grace in any part of the world wher yor grac[es] will co[m]mand.

Having reassured Wolsey of his reliability, Eure moved on to more practical matters; he requested an additional residence on the middle march and that the cardinal secure the wages for a hundred horseman to be placed under his charge.⁵⁸ With confirmation of his translation to Durham, Wolsey saw that his 'trusty & right welbelovyd' Eure was made escheator of the bishopric; his position on the border was consolidated as lieutenant deputy of the middle march. In a similar manner to Eure's 21 March letter, the language employed in Wolsey's dispatch to Eure, dated 6 March 1523, is suggestive of an essentially pragmatic bond. Eure's appointment was the result of the 'good repute we here of you'. Notwithstanding, the cardinal was quick to remind Eure of his obligations: 'in considerac[i]on we have thus done for yow... ye will so deligently & lovingly [ser]ve us in our besynness'. It is also worth noting that Eure's patents were delivered by 'our right welbelovyd [ser]vant & counsaillor Sir Willi[a]m

⁵⁷ Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, p. 79, 87; M. Arvanigian, 'Landed Society and the Governance of the North in the Later Middle Ages: The Case of Sir Ralph Eure', *Medieval Prosopography* 22 (2001), pp. 117-26; idem, 'Henry V, Lancastrian Kingship and the Far North of England', in *Henry V: New Interpretations*, ed. Gwilym Dodd (Woodbridge, 2013), p. 93.

⁵⁸ TNA, SP 1/27, f. 126 (*LP*, iii, 2902).

bulmer', another palatinate office-holder within the cardinal's wider affinity.⁵⁹ That Wolsey appointed Eure to major palatinate and royal offices should come as little surprise given the latter's ascendancy within the cardinal's wider archiepiscopal affinity.⁶⁰

Shortly after Eure's appointment, Surrey informed Wolsey that since his arrival – with the assistance of Lord Dacre, William Bulmer, and William Eure – the northernmost parts of the realm had been restored to relative calm: Surrey had 'taken suche ordre for thob[ser]v[a]nce of good ordre... that I trust that thefte and robereys that was... before my co[m]myng hither shallbe... extincted'.⁶¹ Much like Bulmer, Frankeleyn, and Bellasis, Eure made sure that Wolsey and his subordinates were kept up to date with developments on the border. On 19 June 1525, Eure sent details of felonies committed on the middle march to Thomas Magnus, privy councillor and a member of Wolsey's York following, who was at Rothbury conducting peace negotiations with the Scots. Magnus in turn implored Eure to prevent any hostilities from erupting that might undermine his diplomatic efforts.⁶² Eure held several march days during his tenure as lieutenant and in August 1526 was deputed to conduct warden courts on both the east and middle marches; the earl of Cumberland received similar orders for the west march.⁶³ Wolsey reinforced Eure's authority on the border, appointing him vice-warden of the middle march on 13 May 1526; his authority was further strengthened in November when Henry personally appointed him sheriff of Northumberland.⁶⁴ Eure's reply to Wolsey is littered with sycophantic overtones of his commitment to the cardinal. It also outlined Eure's reforms of Tynedale and Redesdale, which he assured Wolsey had been restored to order.⁶⁵ It was as vice-warden of the middle march that Eure, accompanied by Sir Ralph Fenwick, keeper of Tynedale, led a raid into Scotland in early July 1526, accompanied by 300 men from the bishopric.⁶⁶

One of Eure's principal roles as vice-warden was to act as a royal informant, communicating messages and instructions from the marches to Wolsey's men on the

⁵⁹ TNA, SP 1/27, f. 116 (*LP*, iii, 2877).

⁶⁰ Lewycky, 'Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks', p. 273.

⁶¹ TNA, SP 49/2, f. 59.

⁶² BL, Cotton Caligula B/III, f. 114.

⁶³ Etty, 'Anglo-Scottish border', p. 46; BL, Cotton Caligula B/III, ff. 45-46.

⁶⁴ *LP*, iv, 2672.

⁶⁵ BL, Cotton Caligula B/VI, f. 470 (*LP*, iv, 2176).

⁶⁶ TNA, SP 1/35, f. 55 (*LP*, iv, 1482).

council of the north; Eure had himself been appointed to Richmond's council in August 1525. After receiving the vice-wardenship, Eure continued to compile regular reports on the state of the borders for Magnus and his fellow councillors, which were subsequently forwarded to Wolsey in London.⁶⁷ Claire Etty has suggested that the high number of dispatches sent to Wolsey is indicative of the cardinal's standing at the royal court.⁶⁸ Wolsey was certainly well placed to dictate border patronage, but his influence in London should not obscure the importance of his position and ability to control appointments as bishop of Durham; his absenteeism placed even greater importance on those left to govern the borders and the bishopric on his behalf. For those operating on the east and middle marches, Wolsey's attractiveness as a *de facto* royal patron was augmented by his ability to dispense both royal and palatinate patronage.

The manner and success with which Wolsey, as bishop of Durham and chancellor, used local men on the marches has divided scholarly opinion. On the one hand, Rachael Reid, J.M.W. Bean, and Mervyn James, among others, argued that the appointment of northern gentry formed part of a legitimate Tudor policy designed to take the management of the frontier away from the nobility.⁶⁹ On the other, revisionists including Michael Bush, Peter Gwyn, and Steven Ellis have voiced concerns about Eure's ability to effectively control the region. His relatively small landed base and limited following, compared to the Percy earls of Northumberland and Neville earls of Westmorland, meant that Eure was unable to police the marches with the same degree of authority as his noble predecessors.⁷⁰ Eure's inability to capture Sir William Lisle and his son, who had fled to Scotland after releasing prisoners from Newcastle gaol, has been seen as indicative of the gentry's unsuitability to govern the marches. Eure was powerless to arrest the Lisles, mourning that 'he could not... rule the said myddle marches and soe he confessed by his

⁶⁷ BL, Cotton Caligula B/II, f. 123; BL, Cotton Caligula B/VI, ff. 484-86; *LP*, iv, 2885.

⁶⁸ Etty, 'Anglo-Scottish border', p. 53.

⁶⁹ Reid, *King's Council in the North*, pp. 92-93; Bean, *The Estates of the Percy Family*, p. 151-52; James, 'Change and Continuity in the Tudor North', pp. 3-16.

⁷⁰ Bush, 'Problem of the Far North', pp. 42-43; Gwyn, *King's Cardinal*, pp. 212-37; Ellis, *Defending English Ground*, pp. 153-54; idem, 'A crisis of the aristocracy? Frontiers and noble power in the early Tudor state', in *The Tudor Monarchy*, ed. John Guy (London, 1997), p. 331; Etty, 'Anglo-Scottish border', p. 58.

writing'.⁷¹ Jeffrey Becker has since nuanced the discussion on the local gentry's role. Neither the crown nor regional landowners were strong enough militarily to rule the far North effectively. Rather, both parties were mutually dependent upon one another for defence.⁷² It is also important to bear in mind that Durham's experience was different from that of Northumberland; cooperation between palatinate office-holders and the crown helped to cement existing and forge new networks in the North-East. Durham and the North-East operated on a level similar to the West Country and Calais, where news networks helped to shape military strategy, serving as a driver for increased cooperation between the centre and provinces.⁷³ Through the relaying of vital correspondence, as much as engaging in direct conflict with Scotland, Durham landowners formed a crucial component of the region's military infrastructure. Indeed, Henry VIII and Cardinal Wolsey's ability to contain crises on the east and middle marches owes more than has previously been conceded to those operating within these networks.

Local Commissions under the New Henrician Regime

Henry VIII's accession on 9 April 1509 saw a continuation of his father's patronage and network policy in the palatinate. Durham landowners were appointed to royal commissions outside the bishopric, crown agents were provided with palatinate offices by bishops who ultimately owed their appointments to the crown, and a number of regional families monopolised Durham's major political and administrative posts. An examination of Bishop Ruthall's patent rolls reveals that Henry VII's policy of selecting royal justices and recruiting local men to sit on the Durham bench was adopted after April 1509. Humphrey Conyngsby, who by 21 May 1509 had been made first justice of the king's bench, featured heavily on Ruthall's earlier

⁷¹ TNA, SP 1/45, f. 103, (*LP*, iv, 3629); Ellis, *Defending English Ground*, pp. 153-54. Some three months after the Lises had escaped, the council in the north declared that 'the said Sir William Eure... Vicewardayne and Lieutenant... yet we doo not see that he can or maye serve the Kinges Highness so substancially as he ought to doo'.

⁷² J.M. Becker, 'Armed conflict and border society: The East and Middle Marches, 1536-60' (Durham University PhD thesis, 2006), pp. 13-14.

⁷³ Grummitt, 'Calais, 1485-1547' p. 123; Steven Gunn, David Grummitt and Hans Cools, 'War and the State in Early Modern Europe: Widening the Debate', *War in History* 15 (2008), p. 383.

commissions. He was appointed to all three of Ruthall's assize commissions and both Durham peace commissions in 1509, having served on seventeen Durham assize, gaol, and peace commissions during the previous reign.⁷⁴ Conynsby was not the only crown lawyer to serve on Ruthall's first commissions; William Fairfax, who served as a king's justice of common pleas from 26 June 1510 to 11 May 1514, sat alongside Conynsby at one of Ruthall's 1509 assize sessions; he was later appointed a Durham JP in 1513. A Yorkshire man, Fairfax's record of service on palatinate peace and assize commissions dated back to 1501; he served on six commissions in the palatinate during Henry VII's reign.⁷⁵ Brian Palmes, whose brother Guy had sat as a Durham assize justice under Bishop Senhouse, was another of the king's lawyers to sit on the palatinate bench: he is listed alongside Conynsby and Fairfax in Ruthall's 1513 peace commission.⁷⁶

Thomas Ruthall's 1509 and 1513 commissions contained a considerable number of palatinate landowners and office-holders, many of whom had served in similar capacities under Henry VII's bishops. Ralph Eure, Ralph Bowes, William Bulmer, Thomas Tempest, John Batesmason, John Raket and John Bently served on all four of the 1509 commissions. They were joined by Hugh Ashton (who had been made Durham's chancellor and receiver-general on Ruthall's assuming the temporalities), Thomas Castell, and Richard, Lord Lumley.⁷⁷ Ashton would later be appointed archdeacon of York, a position he held from 18 August 1516 until his death in 1522. Of those included within Ruthall's four 1509 commissions, five were called upon once again to serve as JPs in 1513, namely Thomas Kaye, William Frankeleyn, William Hilton, and William Hansard were added to the commission.⁷⁸ Ruthall reappointed Castell, Conynsby, Palmes, Frankeleyn, Ralph Eure, Hilton, Hansard, Tempest, and Bently in 1517. This core group was bolstered by the inclusion of John, Lord Lumley, who had succeeded his father Richard; Robert Brudenell, serjeant-at-law and justice of the king's bench; Anthony Fitzherbert, serjeant-at-law since November 1510; William Eure, senior; and Thomas Fairfax.⁷⁹

⁷⁴ TNA, DURH 3/70, m. 1, 2, 6.

⁷⁵ TNA, DURH 3/70, m. 6, 11; TNA, DURH 3/64, m. 2, 3, 7, 18, 21.

⁷⁶ TNA, DURH 3/70, m. 11; TNA, DURH 3/64, m. 16, 18, 21.

⁷⁷ TNA, DURH 3/70, m. 1; TNA, DURH 3/70, m. 1, 2, 6.

⁷⁸ Hugh Ashton, Thomas Castell, Ralph Eure, John Raket, and John Bently: TNA, DURH 3/70, m. 11.

⁷⁹ TNA, DURH 3/70, m. 20.

Just as Henry VII had employed palatinate men in neighbouring shires, Henry VIII appointed Durham office-holders to commissions throughout the North-East, where they sat alongside crown lawyers. Four peace commissions were issued for the Yorkshire North Riding between 22 March 1511 and 18 October 1514. Humphrey Conyngsby, Thomas Fairfax, William Bulmer and Thomas Tempest sat on all four, while William Fairfax and Ralph Eure sat on two occasions.⁸⁰ Bishop Ruthall was himself appointed to two peace commissions for neighbouring Northumberland; William Hilton served alongside Ruthall on the second commission.⁸¹ Hilton was also included on the 14 March 1515 peace commission for Northumberland; Sir Ralph Bowes was also listed among the JPs.⁸² Royal commissions of sewers followed a similar pattern: the Northumberland and Newcastle commission dated 16 March 1517 included John, Lord Lumley, William Bulmer, William Eure, and Thomas Tempest.⁸³

The composition of Durham's peace and assize commissions remained largely constant after Wolsey received the temporalities in April 1523. Anthony Fitzherbert, William Frankeleyn, and John Bently were reappointed as assize justices in Wolsey's first year as bishop.⁸⁴ At the same time, John, Lord Lumley, Anthony Fitzherbert, Frankeleyn, Hilton, William Eure, Thomas Tempest, and John Bently were made JPs. New among the appointments were the earl of Westmorland, Thomas, Lord Dacre, Hugh Whitehead, who had succeeded Thomas Castell as prior in January 1520, and Thomas Strangeways.⁸⁵ It is worth noting that all but one – Thomas, Lord Dacre – of those listed as JPs in 1523 served in the same capacity during the vacancy following Wolsey's downfall in 1529; Dacre's removal was buttressed by the inclusion of another senior crown lawyer, John Spelman, and three men who were well known within the bishopric and among those at Westminster: Richard Bellasis, Robert Bowes and William Strangeways.⁸⁶

It has been suggested that the appointment of the same men to several Durham and neighbouring commissions between 1509 and 1529 was symptomatic of a chronic shortage of gentry across the North-East; peace sessions were understaffed and assize

⁸⁰ *LP*, i, appendix, 1.

⁸¹ The first commission was dated 29 November 1512, the second 18 October 1514: *LP*, i, appendix, 1.

⁸² *LP*, ii, 249.

⁸³ *LP*, ii, 3017.

⁸⁴ TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 5.

⁸⁵ TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 4.

⁸⁶ TNA, DURH 3/76, m. 5.

sessions too infrequent to be of any tangible benefit.⁸⁷ Moreover, one historian has claimed that the relationship between those officially registered as the king's servants (according to a 1519 record prepared by the earl of Worcester) and appointments to local peace commissions was strongest in the lowland English shires surrounding London.⁸⁸ More recently, however, David Grummitt has argued that a select few were left to oversee Calais commissions upon Henry VIII's accession; stability in the Pale was achieved through the deployment of a core group of men that had served under Henry VII.⁸⁹ The crown and Bishops Ruthall and Wolsey appear to have adopted a similar policy in the bishopric, which, as part of an English militarised frontier, shared a number of common characteristics with Calais. The appointment of the same families to Durham commissions, then, is best elucidated in pragmatic terms: the crown and its bishops had little to gain from altering a system of government in Durham that had served both parties well and engendered closer cooperation with Westminster for over two decades.

The distribution of palatinate offices and benefices to royal servants was another major factor in the crown's growing influence in Durham. At the highest level, this was achieved through the successive appointments of Bishops Ruthall and Wolsey. While by no means forsaking their obligations as the guardians of Saint Cuthbert's patrimony, both men helped shape the nature of Durham's increasingly pragmatic and cooperative relationship with London. One of Henry VIII's first acts in Durham was to issue a general pardon. Shortly thereafter, the recently appointed Bishop Ruthall appointed James Carr, a groom of the chamber, and Robert Warcop, a gentleman usher in Henry's chamber, bailiffs of Barnard Castle and Gateshead, respectively.⁹⁰ By 14 July 1510, Thomas Castell, prior of Durham, received a request from Henry that John Hasylyby, a clerk of Queen Katherine's council, be awarded the parsonage of Kirby, Lincolnshire, a benefice in the prior's patronage. The incumbent, Henry informed Castell, was an elderly man, willing to relinquish his office. In return, the king promised that 'he shall be glad to do anything, when he can, for the prior's pleasure'. Castell replied to Henry, some five years after the king's initial request, confirming that he was willing to grant the benefice to Hasylyby, but that the necessary

⁸⁷ Ellis, 'Civilizing Northumberland', pp. 109-10.

⁸⁸ Guy, 'Wolsey and the Tudor Polity', pp. 68-69.

⁸⁹ Grummitt, 'Calais, 1485-1547', p. 119.

⁹⁰ DCM, Reg. 4, f. 173r-v; *LP*, i, 414 (11), 1662 (4).

letters patent could not be sealed until the position had fallen vacant, according to the priory's ancient custom.⁹¹

On 14 June 1511, Henry asked the prior to bestow another benefice on a crown client, Robert Marshall, whose patron, Christopher Willoughby, a squire in Henry's chamber, had written to the king informing him that the provostship of Hemingbrough, Yorkshire, would shortly fall vacant. Castell wrote directly to Willoughby reiterating the priory's inability to grant offices while an incumbent was still alive or in possession. He assured Willoughby, however, that once the position became available it would be presented to Marshall. By March 1515, the next recipient of the provostship remained uncertain; Henry had written to Castell on 2 March requesting that his chaplain, Richard Wilson, be appointed. Castell was forced to remind the king of his previous request on Willoughby and Marshall's behalf; at the same time, he informed Willoughby of Henry's new request. When the benefice eventually fell vacant, Henry wrote once more to Castell on 22 April 1515 to reiterate his desire that Richard Wilson receive the post, which he duly did upon the incumbent's resignation.⁹² That Durham was seen as a fertile ground, no less than other shires, for royal favourites is evident in Katherine of Aragon's letter to Castell on 8 September 1515, in which she requested that one of her chaplains be appointed to a post within the collegiate church of Howden. On this occasion, however, Katherine's plea could not be accommodated; the benefice had already been promised to another candidate.⁹³

Accepting petitions from royal patrons was a common feature of patron-client relationships. Recent research has shown that local authorities saw the appointment of a patron's candidate to local lay and ecclesiastical positions as a means of consolidating advantageous ties, gaining immunity from crown levies, and ensuring continued royal favour.⁹⁴ Durham's bishops and priors, notwithstanding the bishopric's history of administrative autonomy, were acutely aware of the need to cultivate similar relationships. The intention was not to undermine the bishopric's ancient customs governing local appointments, as Prior Castell's letters demonstrate.

⁹¹ DCM, Reg. 4, f. 185v, 203v, 204r-v.

⁹² DCM, Reg. 4, f. 189r, 189v, 190r, 199v, 200r, 200v, 201v.

⁹³ DCM, Reg. 4, ff. 202v-203r.

⁹⁴ Hoyle, 'Civic Lobbying', pp. 94-96; Lewycky, 'Wolsey and the City of York', p. 52, 59-60; Grummitt, 'Calais, 1485-1547', pp. 118-23; Robertson, 'West Country Government', pp. 798-801.

Rather, Ruthall and Castell saw cooperation through the granting of bishopric posts to royal men as another means to advance Durham's regional and national prosperity.

Bishop Wolsey's Management of the Palatinate and the Council in the North

Recent debate on Wolsey's impact on local administration has centred on the nature of his legal reforms and the effect these had on the position of independent franchises vis-à-vis Westminster. While some have suggested that the growth of Tudor equity courts brought peripheral territories more closely into line with national sentiments, others, particularly Tim Thornton, have claimed that local identities and administrative practices benefited little from Wolsey's legal agenda.⁹⁵ If Cheshire was left largely unaffected by star chamber in the long term, the cardinal's court was even less successful in the Durham palatinate.⁹⁶ While the number of Durham cases heard before the king's equity courts remained relatively low compared to other lowland counties, the cardinal did manage to achieve local reform in other, less formal, ways. As bishop of Durham, archbishop of York, and Henry's chief minister, Wolsey was in a uniquely advantageous position to dictate the governance of the North-East. As Wolsey and Henry had recognised the importance of employing local landowners on the marches, so too did the cardinal seek to recruit local men to implement domestic government reforms in the region. The construction of provincial affinities, including those in Durham, was not a new phenomenon. Lancastrian kings and the Yorkist regimes of Edward IV and Richard III took steps to cultivate royal networks in the

⁹⁵ Christopher Kitching, 'The Durham Palatinate and the Courts of Westminster under the Tudors', in *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham, 1494-1660* (Loughborough, 1987), p. 54; David Loades, *Power in Tudor England* (Basingstoke, 1997), p. 33; S.J. Gunn, *Early Tudor Government, 1485-1558* (Basingstoke, 1995), pp. 173-75; John Guy, *The Cardinal's Court: The Impact of Thomas Wolsey in Star Chamber* (Hassocks, 1997), p. 48; Tim Thornton, 'Local Equity Jurisdiction in the Territories of the England Crown: The Palatinate of Chester, 1450-1540', in *Courts, Counties and the Capital*, ed. D.E.S. Dunn (Stroud, 1996), p. 44; idem, *Cheshire and the Tudor State, 1480-1560* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 187-93; idem, 'The English King's French Islands: Jersey and Guernsey in English Politics and Administration, 1485-1642', in *Authority and Consent in Tudor England: Essays Presented to C.S.L. Davies*, ed. G.W. Bernard and S.J. Gunn (Aldershot, 2002), p. 204.

⁹⁶ Tim Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham and the Problem of Provincial Liberties in England and the Wider Territories of the English Crown', *TRHS* 11 (2001), p. 89.

localities, particularly in the far North.⁹⁷ Henry VII relied on Durham landowners to consolidate his authority in the North-East after Bosworth, and a number of those families who had worked to ease Henry Tudor's transition were called upon once again by Wolsey.

By 1519, Wolsey had embarked upon a series of measures designed to ameliorate the administration of local justice. Central to these reforms were new instructions issued for the annual swearing-in of county sheriffs. Wolsey's directive clarified the roles and expectations of sheriffs, established new rules for the empaneling of juries, and outlined the penalties for those who failed to adhere to the new regulations. Wolsey's instructions extended to all English shires, including liberties like Durham and Cheshire: the articles were to be 'put in effectuall execut[i]on by ev[er]y sehref thorout this... reame for the truw and indiffrent admistracion of hys lawys and Iustice'.⁹⁸ By December, Wolsey had compiled a 'privy remembrance', designed to identify the king's servants 'in every shire'; it echoed Edward IV's policy of recording the names and livelihoods of a large number of royal servants scattered across the country.⁹⁹ The cardinal's remembrance was the catalyst for a book that recorded 'the names of the king[es] [ser]vants of alle Shyres of Englund sworne to the kyng by therle of Worcestor lord Chambleyne'.¹⁰⁰ Henry's servants are listed by county, although there are some notable exceptions; a number of former liberties or royal peculiars are not included. Durham, too, is absent, although it is possible to identify some men with considerable landed, family, or political interests in the bishopric under neighbouring shires. For York, Ralph Eure, John Bowes, and Richard Bowes were recorded as knights; William Eure and William Conyers as squires; James Metcalf, Roger Cholmeley, Thomas Tempest and William

⁹⁷ D.A.L. Morgan, 'The house of policy: the political role of the late Plantagenet household, 1422-1485', in *The English Court: From the Wars of the Roses to the Civil War*, ed. David Starkey et al. (London, 1987), pp. 64-67; A.J. Pollard, 'St Cuthbert and the Hog: Richard III and the County Palatine of Durham, 1471-85', in *Kings and Nobles in the Later Middle Ages: A Tribute to Charles Ross*, ed. R. Griffiths and J.W. Sherborne (Gloucester, 1986), pp. 111-16; R.A. Griffiths, *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1981); idem, *King and Country: England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1991). Henry VI's minority council was the notable exception to this rule: Bertram Wolffe, *Henry VI* (London, 2001), p. 93.

⁹⁸ TNA, SP 1/14, ff. 112-5 (*LP*, ii, 2579).

⁹⁹ BL, Cotton Titus B/I, f. 184 (*LP*, iii, 576); Morgan, 'Plantagenet household', pp. 64-67; John Guy, 'Wolsey and the Tudor Polity', in *Cardinal Wolsey: Church, State and Art*, ed. S.J. Gunn and P.G. Lindley (Cambridge, 1991), p. 66.

¹⁰⁰ TNA, E 36/130, f. 165r.

Bulmer as gentleman ushers.¹⁰¹ Sir William Hilton was recorded as one of the king's knights in Northumberland.¹⁰²

At least two of those recorded in York and Northumberland were also recognised as members of Wolsey's northern affinity. Both William Bulmer and William Eure are referred to as the cardinal's servants in future correspondence.¹⁰³ That men like Bulmer and Eure are recorded as having sworn their allegiance to Henry, as well as forging careers within Wolsey's Durham and York households, is suggestive of their positions within a broader royal network in the localities; a network that could look towards two patrons, the king and Wolsey. The inclusion of Durham landowners and office-holders within other county lists is also instructive; it points towards a regional community of gentry and office-holders, whose work as royal agents extended beyond traditional county lines. Wolsey had built on Henry VII's policy of selecting men from one county and embedding them into neighbouring shires. Securing a region, particularly one comprised of independent franchises, with the constant threat of Scottish encroachment, was seen as a more productive exercise in local administration. Wolsey's policy ensured that the crown maximised the local gentry's expertise and resources. This was not atypical to the North-East: Cheshire was included within reforms targeted at the Welsh Marches, and the counties of Cornwall and Devon provided a platform for increased royal authority in the West Country.

The palatinate's involvement within a regional community is perhaps best epitomised by the appointment of senior Durham landowners and office-holders to the duke of Richmond's council in the north.¹⁰⁴ Instituted on 11 August 1525, the council was created to extend the reach of royal justice into the far North, where a lack of suitable justices, Lord Dacre's shortfalls as a military leader, and infrequent peace sessions had meant the region had become vulnerable to domestic unrest and Scottish aggression.¹⁰⁵ With the duke of Norfolk's departure, Frankeleyn informed Wolsey

¹⁰¹ TNA, E 36/130, f. 172v, 173v.

¹⁰² TNA, E 36/130, f. 219v.

¹⁰³ TNA, SP 1/27, f. 116 (*LP*, iii, 2877).

¹⁰⁴ Rachel Reid's monograph remains the most comprehensive history of the council of the north: R.R. Reid, *The King's Council in the North* (London, 1921).

¹⁰⁵ BL, Cotton Caligula B/I, f. 39 (*LP*, iii, 2328); PRO, SP 1/27, f. 144 (*LP*, iii, 2930); BL, Cotton Caligula B/III, f. 159 (*LP*, iv, 1239); TNA, SP 1/35, f. 55 (*LP*, iv, 1482); Reid,

that his ‘poore’ subjects in Durham were ‘daly oppressed with greate and huge Robboryes’ and ‘other mysdemeanor[es] co[m]mytted... by thenhabitant[es] of Tyndall and Ryddisdall’. To prevent the region falling into ‘extreme Rewyne and desolac[i]on’, Frankeleyn dispatched William Bulmer, William Eure, and Thomas Tempest to consult with the cardinal.¹⁰⁶

The decision to send ‘new men’ to London to consult with Wolsey is reflective of a wider shift in the governance of the North. Richmond’s council, whose appointments were authorised by Wolsey’s sign manual, was largely composed of clergymen who were members of the cardinal’s archiepiscopal affinity and ‘new men’ from across the region. Bulmer, Eure, and Tempest were all appointed to the council. Bulmer and Tempest were appointed to both the duke’s council and his household: Bulmer, captain of Norham Castle and lieutenant of the east march, was made steward; Tempest, steward and comptroller of Durham and a graduate of Wolsey’s household, served as comptroller.¹⁰⁷ Accompanying these men on the council were a group of lawyers, local gentry, and clergy, who boasted landed and political interests in the bishopric. It is hardly surprising that William Frankeleyn was among those selected by Wolsey; Robert Bowes, deputy-steward of Barnard Castle, had begun to forge a career under the cardinal; George Lawson, appointed cofferer of Richmond’s household, would go on to play an important role on the border during the Wars of Rough Wooing.¹⁰⁸

Sadly, the council’s papers are no longer extant, though it is possible to gain an insight into the nature and perimeters of its work. A crucial distinction between Richmond’s council and its predecessors was the inclusion of the borders within its operational remit; Richmond was presented with Neville lands in the North and created warden-general upon the council’s formation. His authority was bolstered when he was made captain of Berwick and keeper of the city and castle of Carlisle.¹⁰⁹ Council members were also in a position to procure offices from the cardinal. Writing to Wolsey on 26 March 1527, Magnus and Tempest requested that William Bulmer, junior, be appointed marshal of Berwick. The office had fallen vacant with the death

Council in the North, p. 94-95; Etty, ‘Anglo-Scottish border’, p. 38; Ellis, ‘Civilizing Northumberland’, pp. 109-12; idem, *Defending English Ground*, p. 90. 109.

¹⁰⁶ TNA, SP 1/32, f. 198 (*LP*, iv, 893).

¹⁰⁷ Richmond’s household had already been created prior to his arrival at Sheriff Hutton: *LP*, iv, 1512; Guy, ‘Wolsey and the Tudor Polity’, p. 70.

¹⁰⁸ *LP*, iv, 1512.

¹⁰⁹ *LP*, iv, 2241, 1431.

of Sir Thomas Foster on 18 March, leaving the town without one its most important officials. Magnus and Tempest pleaded with Wolsey ‘to advance hym to the said... marshall if soo the king[es] said highness and youre grace shall thinke hym convenyent’, which the men assured him he was given that Bulmer was the ‘king[es] [ser]vente and hathe... good... experience upon the... borders... and myended to contynue and tarie at Berwick’. If Wolsey required any more in the way of persuasion, Magnus and Tempest wrote that Bulmer’s appointment would be of ‘moche comforte to his fathir’, William Bulmer, senior, an influential client of the cardinal.¹¹⁰

Officially, the jurisdiction of the council in the north did not extend into Durham. In practice, however, the council exercised a high level of influence in the palatinate. The duke of Richmond, as well as being appointed nominal head of the council, was made high steward of the bishopric. Senior Durham landowners had been appointed to the council and so ensured that Durham was represented at its meetings. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, it was Wolsey, transferred to Durham two years before, who was ultimately, if unofficially, responsible for council appointments.¹¹¹ One of Wolsey’s principal objectives reconstituting the council was to extend the reach of crown justice into the far North, not unlike the council in the Welsh Marches. One method through which Wolsey was able to achieve this was through the appointment of council members to peace commissions across the region. Durham office- and land-holders, alongside other council members, were listed on the August 1525 commissions for Cumberland, Northumberland, Westmorland, and the East, West, and North Ridings of Yorkshire. William Bulmer sat on peace commissions in Cumberland, Northumberland, Westmorland, and in the East, West, and North Ridings. William Eure joined Bulmer on all the northern commissions issued in 1525, as did William Frankeleyn. Thomas Tempest sat on all the northern peace commissions, except for the North Riding, while Robert Bowes was present in every shire, but not in the East Riding.¹¹²

One of the council’s first steps towards reforming the far North, including Durham, was to take precautionary recognisances from the region’s nobles and gentry, which were later cancelled by royal writ on 26 July 1529. Frankeleyn, Bulmer,

¹¹⁰ TNA, SP 1/41, f. 104 (*LP*, iv, 2994).

¹¹¹ *LP*, iv, 1510; Reid, *Council in the North*, p. 102, 108.

¹¹² *LP*, iv, 1610 (11).

Eure, and Tempest, among others, were charged by Henry to cancel the bonds.¹¹³ Criminal matters were heard before council members, equipped with special commissions of oyer and terminer in August 1529. Proclamations of the forthcoming sessions had been made at Newcastle prior to the king's instructions arriving at Sheriff Hutton; Bowes, Bulmer, Eure, and Tempest had left the duke's residence eight days previously to organise and hear sessions in Northumberland.¹¹⁴ The council also acted as a mediator in local disputes and it was in this capacity in particular that the crown was able to exercise its judicial authority in the bishopric. In one case, concluded in December 1528, the council successfully resolved a dispute concerning the amount of relief to be paid by a Yorkshire landowner upon inheriting land from his father, which had initially been awarded to the family by the priory. Richmond's councillors, sadly not named, ruled that Thomas Meteham, of Metham in the Yorkshire East Riding, was to pay £3 6s 8d for all reliefs which were due to be paid to the priory from lands in Yokefleet and elsewhere in Yorkshire. Thomas' heirs were also liable to pay five marks to the prior upon their inheriting the lands.¹¹⁵

That a variety of legal business, including land disputes in the bishopric, was heard before the council is not particularly surprising. Of its seventeen members, ten were lawyers. Robert Bowes had practised in chancery and was well versed in equity jurisdiction. Five were clerics familiar with canon law; Brian Higden, head of the council and dean of York, was a doctor of civil law. For Reid, the extension of Tudor equity justice to the provinces was one of the fundamental aims of the council. Reid showed how the council had managed to apply a variant of central equity jurisdiction in Northumberland, Yorkshire, and Westmorland.¹¹⁶ Yet, this was by no means confined to these three shires. The council's role mediating disputes involving Durham's second largest landowner, the Cathedral Priory, is firm evidence of its having administered equitable justice in the bishopric.

If the council had succeeded in implementing a variant of royal justice in the North-East, its ability to control the borders was less marked.¹¹⁷ Richmond's inability to govern England's frontier with Scotland led to his replacement as warden

¹¹³ *LP*, iv, 5749, 5815 (26).

¹¹⁴ *LP*, iv, 1596.

¹¹⁵ DCM, Reg. 5, ff. 227v-228r.

¹¹⁶ Reid, *Council in the North*, pp. 106-7, 110.

¹¹⁷ Reid, *Council in the North*, p. 109; Ellis, 'Limits of Power', p. 60; Gwyn, *King's Cardinal*, pp. 227-28; J.M. Sybil, 'Wolsey, Thomas (1470/71-1530)', *ODNB*.

of the east and middle marches on 2 December 1527 by Henry Percy, sixth earl of Northumberland. A number of Richmond's council were subsequently appointed members of Percy's border council. Wolsey ordered that Frankeleyn, Tempest, and Bowes be selected; William Eure also offered his services to the new warden, who was joined by a group of men from across the region, including Sir George Lawson, Sir Ralph Ellerker, and Sir Thomas Clifford.¹¹⁸ Northumberland evidently valued the experience and contacts of his palatinate members. He wrote to Wolsey on 26 December 1527:

Syr Thomas Tempest and maist[er] Bowes to whom most humbly I besech youre grace to gyff thank[es] for accordinge unto youre co[m]mandemente sith my comynge into this contrey they have contynewid with me in taking asmuch paynes to devyse and studye whatt may be best for the well of this contrey and reformac[i]on of justice.¹¹⁹

Wolsey's insistence that certain Durham men be appointed to Northumberland's council suggests that the cardinal thought highly of his palatinate clients. Northumberland, too, was impressed. He wrote to Henry, only a short time after his letter to Wolsey, in praise of Bowes, Frankeleyn, Eure, and Tempest, beseeching 'yor highness to gaffe theme thank[es] for ther labor'.¹²⁰ Northumberland's sentiments suggest that the failures attributed to the council of the north on the border had more to do with Richmond's inexperience, rather than a failure on the part of regional office-holders, who continued to serve the crown after the young duke's forfeiture of the wardenship. Indeed, these same men continued to serve as information brokers between Wolsey and Northumberland. In one such instance, Tempest and Bowes relayed news to Northumberland concerning plans by a group of men from a small town called Felton – which belonged to the fugitive Sir William Lisle – to launch raids into Northumberland. Roger Lassells acted upon Tempest and Bowes'

¹¹⁸ BL, Cotton Caligula B/III, f. 65 (*LP*, iv, 3789); TNA, SP 1/45, f. 101 (*LP*, iv, 3629); TNA, SP 1/46, f. 93 (*LP*, iv, 3796); Reid, *Council in the North*, p. 109.

¹¹⁹ TNA, SP 1/45, f. 240 (*LP*, iv, 3689).

¹²⁰ TNA, SP 1/46, f. 93 (*LP*, iv, 3796).

intelligence, arresting Alex Crawhawe, Lisle's chief councillor, and thirteen other men affiliated with William and Humphrey Lisle.¹²¹

While some historians remain critical of Wolsey's local government reform agenda – arguing that his plans to ameliorate government at Westminster proved more successful than his local policies – it is important not to underestimate the significance of his recruitment of palatinate landowners and office-holders and the impact these men had on the governance of the far North.¹²² Despite a notable lack of funds and military provisions, Wolsey's Durham men, as royal informants or as members of Richmond and Northumberland's councils, continued to disseminate vital information back to the authorities in York and Westminster, helped implement a form of Tudor equity jurisdiction in areas where previously the crown had remained a distant presence, and made the transition of government from Richmond to Northumberland a relatively smooth and uncomplicated process.

The involvement of men like Bowes, Bulmer, Eure, Frankeleyn, and Tempest on both councils forces historians to reassess our understanding of county communities and the role of local gentry within them. Durham office-holders operated in several counties, in the same way that men from Yorkshire, Northumberland, and Westmorland exercised influence in the palatinate. Durham, then, formed part of a regional society, one in which gentry with multiple landed and political interests were not confined to a single county. Wolsey's agenda to improve local management in the far North shared a number of characteristics with his successful reforms at the centre and the two should not be seen as mutually exclusive. Measures enforced by the cardinal at the centre were not designed to undermine local administrative structures, but to reinforce them. This was by no means especially innovative; the cardinal had adopted a number of the policies from Henry VII and his ministers in the bishopric. The intention to involve the palatinate in national affairs was spearheaded by Henry VII and his Yorkist predecessors and reinforced by Wolsey, who, much like Bishop Fox, exploited his position as bishop of Durham and royal minister to implement local reform.

¹²¹ TNA, SP 1/46, f. 91 (*LP*, iv, 3795).

¹²² Guy, 'Wolsey and the Tudor Polity', pp. 73-74; Thornton, *Cheshire and the Tudor State*, pp. 188-93; idem, 'Cardinal Wolsey and the Abbot of Chester', *History Today* 45 (1995), pp. 12-17; idem, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham', p. 89.

In Wolsey's absence the bishopric was primarily managed by a group of subordinates, many of whom belonged to the cardinal's archiepiscopal affinity centred around York. A number of Durham landowners and office-holders, who were members of Wolsey's York affinity, served concurrently in the bishopric, York, and surrounding northern shires. William Frankeleyn's dual career in York and Durham is illustrative of the regional nature of Wolsey's network. Frankeleyn was serving as the cardinal's chaplain in York by 29 August 1515 and had amassed a number of clerical benefices in the palatinate: he was appointed rector of Easington, master of St Giles Hospital, Kepyner, and archdeacon of Durham in 1515; on 5 October 1518, Durham Priory decreed that Frankeleyn receive the canonry of Saltmarsh, part of Bishop Ruthall's collegiate church at Howden; by 1522 he was installed as rector of Houghton-le-Spring.¹²³ Frankeleyn's first major appointment in Durham came under Bishop Ruthall, who entrusted him with the chancellorship and keeper of episcopal revenues; he was confirmed as chancellor by Henry VIII for the intervening period between Ruthall's death in February 1523 and Wolsey's appointment two months later.¹²⁴ He was also among those deputed by the king in 1524 to seize the assets of a foreign ship that had run aground off the coast of Tynemouth.¹²⁵

Frankeleyn effectively operated as Wolsey's adjutant in the bishopric for the duration of the latter's episcopate. His experience under Bishop Ruthall qualified him to inform the cardinal of civil and military matters in Durham during his permanent absence. A renewed threat of Scottish invasion in spring 1525 prompted Frankeleyn to write to Wolsey about the risks to Durham: 'many Scott[es]... contneye too within eght myles of newcastle... Hexhamshire, Wardale with other countrys of the bishoppriche adioynne... be every howre in danger'.¹²⁶ Frankeleyn was duly rewarded with a £60 annuity from the Cathedral Priory. By 14 May 1528, Wolsey himself provided his chancellor with three parcels of land in Houghton-le-Spring, and

¹²³ *LP*, ii, 861; Lewycky, 'Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks', p. 329; DCM, Reg. 5, f. 176v, 177r, 215r-v, 215v-216r.

¹²⁴ TNA, DURH 3/70, m. 19; TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 1.

¹²⁵ Frankeleyn was accompanied by William Bulmer, senior, and William Eure. As was still the bishop of Durham's prerogative the seized goods were to be made available to Wolsey: TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 2.

¹²⁶ TNA, SP 1/27, f. 144 (*LP*, iii, 2930); BL, Cotton Caligula B/III, f. 159 (*LP*, iv, 1239).

a plot of land called Greve Acre, and it is possible that the cardinal might have had a hand in Frankeleyn's election as provost of Queen's College, Cambridge.¹²⁷

Miles Forest, John Wuley, and Richard Redeman were among those serving concurrently in Wolsey's York household and the palatinate. Forest was serving as an usher in the royal household by December 1516 and as a groom in Wolsey's chamber by 17 February 1524. He is recorded as having received the keepership of Barnard Castle on 22 May 1528.¹²⁸ Forest was endowed with a number of palatinate offices during Wolsey's episcopate. On 29 June 1523, he was made keeper of the bishop's woods at Birtley, with a fee of 1 pence per day; his most significant appointment soon followed when he was appointed keeper of Bishop Auckland, an office that was granted for life and came with a salary of 40s.¹²⁹ From 5 June 1523, John Wuley (*d.* 1540/41) of Alford, Lincolnshire, while serving in Wolsey's archiepiscopal household, held the position of keeper of Durham Place, the bishop of Durham's residence in London.¹³⁰ Richard Redeman, an usher in Wolsey's chamber, was provided with the keepership of the bishop's park near Frankland.¹³¹ Even Wolsey's illegitimate son, Thomas Wynter, was furnished with palatinate offices: he was presented with a 'great house' and lands near Gateshead, as well as rights to all the bishop's mines in Durham and Weardale on a thirty years lease.¹³²

Membership of both Wolsey's archiepiscopal household at York and his staff in Durham meant that a select group of men were better placed to petition the cardinal for future assignments or offices. By early October 1527, two of Wolsey's clients William Frankeleyn and William Bulmer, petitioned the cardinal for the preferment of their candidate, Peter Lee, to the priory of Tynemouth, after learning that Wolsey had intended to remove the incumbent. Both Frankeleyn and Bulmer were in a good position to solicit the cardinal's favour, but were aware of the need to situate their request within the wider context of good management in the bishopric. They beseeched Wolsey 'to take no displeasour w[i]t[h] us for this writing which only for

¹²⁷ DCM, Reg. 5, f. 228r-v; *Alumni Cantabrigienses: a biographical list of all known students, graduates and holders of office at the University of Cambridge, from the earliest times to 1990*, ed. John Venn and J.A. Venn (Cambridge, 1922-1954), pt. 1, i, p. 176.

¹²⁸ *LP*, ii, 2735; *LP*, iv, 107; Lewycky, 'Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks', pp. 274-75.

¹²⁹ DCM, Reg. 5, ff. 201v-202r; TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 7; DCM, Reg. 5, f. 202r, 205r; TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 8.

¹³⁰ DCM, Reg. 5, f. 204r-v; DCM, Reg. 5, ff. 204v-205r.

¹³¹ TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 9.

¹³² TNA, DURH 3/73, m. 2.

the [pro]fett of the said monastarie and inhabitant[es] of the countre'.¹³³ Sir Thomas Strangeways' request for the captaincy of Norham in September 1528 followed a similar pattern. Strangeways' service on the border qualified him for the position: 'in consideracione of the true and faithful [ser]vice... I have doon... unto your grace... as also for the experience that I have... to grante unto me the captainship of your castell of Norh[am]'.¹³⁴

Those belonging to Wolsey's York and Durham affinities were often in communication with one another, with senior members acting as brokers of the cardinal's patronage. By the late 1520s, Thomas Cromwell had emerged as one of Wolsey's most capable agents and palatinate men quickly became aware of his ability to procure offices and assignments from the cardinal. William Frankeleyn wrote to Cromwell on 24 January 1528 to introduce himself and have an intermediary deliver Cromwell a barrel of salmon.¹³⁵ Richard Bellasis, whose brother, Anthony, would go on to establish a career in Cromwell's service, requested that Cromwell intercede with Wolsey for the preferment of John Richardson as the next master of the Durham mint. Bellasis suggested that John Richardson, son of the deceased Roger Richardson, assume the responsibilities of the father's office: 'I besech you to be his good lord... and helpe [that] he may have grante and auctoritie... to contenewe & be in the said mynt of durh[a]m'. Bellasis' request was sweetened somewhat by the guarantee that Cromwell would shortly receive a promised gelding.¹³⁶ Although uncertainty surrounds the date of Roger Richardson's death, and Bellasis' subsequent letter, it appears that Rogers' executors and John Richardson were liable for equal shares of the mint's rents from 11 November 1528 to 24 June 1529. It is perhaps a sign of the changing tide at the royal court that Henry, towards the end of July 1529, ordered that the revenues from the temporalities be transferred to Anne Boleyn's father, Viscount Rochford.¹³⁷ As Wolsey's authority gradually diminished palatinate men were forced to seek out alternative patrons and even the up-and-coming Cromwell was at times unable to ensure that Wolsey's clients in the North received certain offices.

¹³³ TNA, SP 1/44, f. 135 (*LP*, iv, 3478).

¹³⁴ TNA, SP 1/50, f. 84 (*LP*, iv, 4711).

¹³⁵ TNA, SP 1/46, f. 141 (*LP*, iv, 3836).

¹³⁶ TNA, SP 1/47, f. 222 (*LP*, iv, 4201).

¹³⁷ C.E. Challis, 'The ecclesiastical mints of the early Tudor period: their organization and possible date of closure', *NH* 10 (1975), p. 91; M.R. Allen, 'The Durham mint: the control, organization, profits and out put of an ecclesiastical mint' (Durham University PhD thesis, 1999), p. 34.

Even at the height of his power, the cardinal was not always in a position to accede his northern clients' requests or shelter them from the fallout of court politics. In his archdiocese, Wolsey was on occasions forced to privilege national interests above those of his York clients.¹³⁸ The same was true in the palatinate. When William Bulmer was hauled before star chamber in 1519 for wearing the livery of the disgraced duke of Buckingham – Bulmer had already been sworn as one of the king's servants by the earl of Worcester – Wolsey forced Bulmer to accept a £100 fine and pledge his allegiance to the king. Bulmer had been incarcerated, albeit temporarily in the Fleet Prison during the case.¹³⁹ Those instances where Wolsey was unable to privilege his local clients over national interests should not be construed as undermining the importance and vitality of his regional networks in the North-East. As chief minister, Wolsey was forced to prioritise the king's interests, for it was Henry who provided Wolsey with many of the offices that could in turn be distributed to his clients in the palatinate.

The overlap between Wolsey's archiepiscopal affinity and household in York and his office-holders in the bishopric is indicative of the regional nature of gentry and clerical networks in early Tudor England. The politically active gentry and clergy in the North-East were seldom confined to a single county. The nature of Wolsey's York and Durham affinities also provides an insight into contemporary perceptions of the bishopric's role within the national polity, certainly among the upper-echelons of the landed gentry and clergy. Incentivised by future rewards and assignments (both royal and those issued by the bishop), a number of Durham's leading families were prepared, temporarily at least, to overlook Durham's history of autonomy in favour of cooperation with the crown and its agents. At other times, of course, these same families would prioritise local matters above national matters. Moreover, Durham's bishops were far from reneging on their palatinate obligations. Rather, Bishop Wolsey helped to engender a viable and fruitful relationship between the bishopric and the crown, one that was founded on pragmatism and a desire to foster symbiotic connections between the two loci of power. This process had been initiated by Henry VII and continued to thrive under Henry VIII and Bishops Ruthall and Wolsey, who were both well placed to petition the crown on behalf of their clients in the North-East.

¹³⁸ Lewycky, 'Wolsey and the City of York', pp. 49-50, 51-52.

¹³⁹ Guy, *Cardinal's Court*, p. 32, 74; idem, *Wolsey and the Tudor Polity*, p. 68.

Conclusion

The palatinate of Durham's position within a regional society and the national polity was consolidated during the successive episcopates of Thomas Ruthall and Cardinal Wolsey. Durham fulfilled a varied and crucial role on the border during the periodic conflicts with Scotland between Henry's accession and Wolsey's fall from power. Both bishops directed concerns and requests from the marches to the king at Westminster and advised those operating in the far North of the crown's policies. At the same time, local landowners and office-holders – many of whom had served under Henry VII and his courtier-bishops – conducted or participated in offensive raids across the border, petitioned the crown for further defensive provisions and funding, and oversaw the day-to-day management of the bishopric. With Ruthall's departure from Durham following the English victory at Flodden Field, Sir William Bulmer was among a group of local men entrusted with the running of palatinate business on the bishop's behalf; Ruthall later lauded Bulmer for his part defeating the Scots at Flodden, but his role as *de facto* manager of the bishopric should not be overlooked and merits equal praise. It was much the same after 1523, except Wolsey's permanent absence placed even greater responsibility on those left to oversee the palatinate's conduct on the marches. It is important to bear this in mind when evaluating the success of local families. Lord Dacre's attempts to govern the marches proved underwhelming and in the absence of the region's traditional, magnate, military leaders, Durham men stepped in to fill the administrative void and did so with a degree of success that has previously been overlooked.

Sir William Bulmer exemplified a group of local men whose duties as intermediaries and intelligence gatherers not only served to solidify an increasingly cooperative relationship between the bishopric and Westminster, but also bolstered Henry VIII's military capabilities and his ability to restore order on the border. Despite a number of recent publications on the importance of provincial news networks, the role of bishopric men and their impact on Anglo-Scottish relations has

received relatively little attention.¹⁴⁰ This all the more surprising given the significance apportioned to information networks in early Tudor York, Calais, and the West Country.¹⁴¹ Gauging the success of regional networks on the Anglo-Scottish frontier is not always easily quantifiable, but their impact should not be underestimated. The dissemination of news between Westminster and the marches was crucial to the effective mobilisation of men and equipment.

Local men operating within information networks played a no less influential role ensuring that Bishops Ruthall and Wolsey were kept abreast of developments in their bishoprics. The benefits of such a system were mutual. On the one hand, it allowed Ruthall and Wolsey to manage the bishopric by proxy during absences. On the other, it provided up-and-coming local men, like Richard Bellasis, with the opportunity to establish careers in Ruthall and particularly Wolsey's service. It also meant that those who had a reputation for service on the border or in the North-East could reaffirm their loyalty to the regime and so increase their chances of obtaining future reward. For the crown it meant the consolidation and expansion of a support base, one augmented by the appointment of a number of crown lawyers to palatinate commissions and the use of royal clients on county commissions throughout the region.

The palatinate's inclusion within Wolsey's local reform agenda is also suggestive of its new, largely incorporated, position in the early Tudor state. While previous research on the unilateral movement of Durham cases to the Tudor equity courts has downplayed the cardinal's efforts to reorient peripheral jurisdictions, Wolsey's reform of local government had far reaching consequences in Durham.¹⁴² New regulations for sheriffs and other incentives designed to improve the execution of local administration coincided with the reconstitution of the council in the north in August 1525, providing the crown with another medium through which to extend its prerogative into the provinces. The council largely comprised the cardinal's palatinate favourites, those men that had worked on the crown's behalf on the border, and members of his archiepiscopal affinities at York and his episcopal staff in Durham.

¹⁴⁰ Levy, 'How information spread among the gentry', pp. 11-34; Cooper, 'Provincial news networks', pp. 404-22.

¹⁴¹ Hoyle, 'Civic Lobbying', pp. 94-96; Lewycky, 'Wolsey and the City of York', p. 52, 59-60; Grummitt, 'Calais, 1485-1547', pp. 118-23; Robertson, 'West Country Government', pp. 798-801.

¹⁴² Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham', p. 89; idem, 'The Palatinate of Chester', p. 44.

Despite being disbanded shortly after its inauguration, the council's longer-term impact on local society was the consolidation of relations between regional landowners and central government. Many of those who had served under Richmond were subsequently appointed to the earl of Northumberland's marcher council.

The implementation of a variant of Westminster equity jurisdiction in Durham was another important by-product of the council's formation, enabling Wolsey to extend the reach of the central equity courts to those areas where the crown had seldom exercised any real judicial authority. In this respect, Wolsey's translation to the see in 1523 marked a more noticeable turnaround in Durham's legal position. Crown lawyers had been appointed to the Durham bench as early as the 1480s, a process continued by both Ruthall and Wolsey, but it was the council's administration of an equity-based jurisdiction in Durham which meant that cases did not need to be transferred to Westminster. Much like the erection of special courts on the Welsh marches and in the county palatine of Chester, the extension of royal justice to the Durham palatinate was deemed more suitable than the wholesale transfer of disputes to London.

Another important distinction between the episcopal reigns of Ruthall and Wolsey was the latter's ability to forge a more consolidated regional clientele. That is not to say that Bishop Ruthall did not call upon the services of men from outside the bishopric. It was in Wolsey's permanent absence, however, that the management of the bishopric was left to a group of clients who could claim affinity to both the cardinal's staff in York and in Durham. It was this combination of two local affinities that gave Wolsey's North-Eastern network a greater sense of legitimacy and importance. Nadine Lewycky has shown how the cardinal's men in York governed the archdiocese on his behalf, using their local influence as a means of procuring future rewards.¹⁴³ Those families operating in Durham fulfilled an almost identical task and exploited their positions as Wolsey clients to secure royal and local patronage. The overlap between Wolsey's York and Durham affinities – epitomised by William Frankeleyn and Sir William Eure – is further evidence, then, of a

¹⁴³ Lewycky, 'Wolsey and the City of York', pp. 43-60. Rosemary Horrox has argued that townsfolk readily took advantage of influential members of local society in York and members of the royal household in close proximity to the city to secure a monopoly on crown patronage: Rosemary Horrox, 'Urban Patronage and Patrons in the Fifteenth Century', in *Patronage, the Crown, and the Provinces in Later Medieval England*, ed. R.A. Griffiths (Gloucester, 1981), pp. 147-49.

flourishing regional society. Local landowners were incentivised to work for Wolsey and the crown in several counties. The crown, meanwhile, was acutely aware of the advantages to be had from having royal agents scattered throughout the North. In sum, while much of Durham's formal administrative infrastructure remained intact between 1509 and 1529, the establishment of new, and fostering of old, networks across the North-East helped to ensure a degree of mutually advantageous cooperation which has hitherto been unrecognised.

CHAPTER THREE

The Enforcement of the Henrician Reformation in the Durham Palatinate

Geoffrey Elton postulated that the 1536 Franchises Act meant ‘to do away with all those franchises that prevented an effective dissemination of royal authority’.¹ The obstacles posed by the Durham palatinate could only be resolved by Henry’s chief minister, Thomas Cromwell, whose ‘revolution in government’ brought about the complete destruction of all franchisal liberties.² Revisionists, particularly Steven Ellis and Tim Thornton, have since advocated an alternative approach to the history of the early Tudor palatinate: the continuance of Durham’s independent courts, coupled with new thinking concerning the nature of sovereignty, represented a form of ‘limited integration’.³ Significantly, historians have begun to recognise the importance of patron-client or informal political networks and their integral role throughout the Tudor polity.⁴ In spite of a number of recent publications examining the role of political networks in York and the West Country, no such study has been conducted for Durham during the Reformation period.⁵

¹ G.R. Elton, *England Under the Tudor* 3rd edn. (Abingdon, 1991), p. 175.

² Ibid., pp. 4, 107, 175-76.

³ S.G. Ellis, ‘The Destruction of Liberties: Some Further Evidence’, *BIHR (York)* 54 (1981), p. 161; David Loades, ‘Introduction’, in *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham, 1494-1660* ed. David Marcombe (Nottingham, 1987), pp. 1-3; Christopher Kitching, ‘The Durham Palatinate and the Courts of Westminster under the Tudors’, in *The Last Principality*, ed. Marcombe, pp. 49-70; Tim Thornton, ‘Fifteenth-Century Durham and the Problem of Provincial Liberties in England and the Wider Territories of the English Crown’, *TRHS* 11 (2001), pp. 83-100; Tim Thornton, ‘The Integration of Cheshire into the Tudor State in the Early Sixteenth Century’, *NH* 29 (1993), pp. 40-63.

⁴ Steven Gunn, ‘New Men and New Monarchy in England, 1485-1523’, in *Powerbrokers in the Late Middle Ages: Les Courtiers Du Pouvoir Au Bas Moyen-Age*, ed. Robert Stein (Turnhout, 2001), pp. 153-63; Nadine Lewycky, ‘Serving God and King: Cardinal Thomas Wolsey’s Patronage Networks and Early Tudor Government, 1514-29, with special reference to the Archdiocese of York’ (University of York PhD thesis, 2008); idem, ‘Cardinal Thomas Wolsey and the City of York, 1514-1529’, *NH* 46 (2009), pp. 43-60; Mary L. Robertson, ‘The Art of the Possible: Thomas Cromwell’s Management of West Country Government’, *HJ* 32 (1989), pp. 793-816.

⁵ Margaret Harvey, Mervyn James, Christopher Kitching, David Marcombe and Tim Thornton do not discuss political networks in their respective works: Margaret Harvey, *Lay Religious Life in Late Medieval Durham* (Woodbridge, 2006); Mervyn James, *Family, Lineage, and Civil Society: A Study of Society, Politics, and Mentality in the Durham Region, 1500-1640* (Oxford, 1974); Kitching, ‘Durham Palatinate and the Courts of Westminster’, pp. 49-70; Thornton, ‘Fifteenth-Century Durham’.

This chapter will explore Durham's political, administrative, and religious position relative to Westminster during the English Reformation and examine to what extent the palatinate was regarded as an integral component of the state by parliament. The Reformation Parliament, which sat intermittently from 3 November 1529 to 14 April 1536, passed a series of highly innovative measures during the break with Rome. The contention here is that Durham was not treated differently from other English shires when it came to implementing these seismic changes. Of equal importance are the processes through which Westminster and Durham were able to forge and maintain a practical working relationship with one another. This chapter will explain how this was achieved during the Reformation, from the early 1530s to the mid-1540s, and, in so doing, suggest a third approach to the history of the integration of the Durham palatinate. This new approach, unlike Elton's institutional argument or the revisionists' 'limited integration' thesis, sees political and religious imperatives, rather than constitutional idealism, as the driving force behind central government's management of the palatinate and its leading landowners. In the first instance this chapter will explore how parliament helped to ensure the acceptance of the royal supremacy throughout the realm by not distinguishing medieval franchises from the other English counties. I will then discuss how Reformation policies – the extirpation of papal authority, the reversal of annates, monastic reform, and the suppression of Durham's religious houses – were implemented within Durham and how this impacted the bishopric's standing with central government. In so doing, it will be shown that the enforcement of the Reformation in the Durham palatinate was reliant upon Westminster's effective mobilisation of symbiotic, informal, politico-religious networks.

The Palatinate of Durham and the Reformation Parliament

The absorption of the county palatine of Durham into the national political and administrative fold is commonly thought to have taken place with the passage of the Franchises Act on 1 July 1536. An extension of the Henrician concept of empire enunciated in the 1533 Act of Restraint of Appeals, the Franchises Act – introduced in parliament under the somewhat innocuous title of the 'Acte for recontynuyng of

certayne liberties and franchises heretofore taken frome the Crowne' - was designed to bring about fundamental change to the political and administrative freedoms enjoyed by England's remaining liberties, including Durham and the Welsh Marches.⁶ Henceforth, the bishop of Durham would be unable to grant pardons to felons and outlaws; the king had full discretion to appoint justices of the gaol and peace (though the bishop continued to appoint peace commissioners throughout the early Tudor period), where previously this had been the preserve of the franchisal lord; writs were to be issued in the king's name; and the bishop of Durham's peace, exercised in the palatinate's largely independent courts, was now the king's peace. Moreover, the cathedral's ancient privilege to grant sanctuary – even to those considered felons by the crown's court – was removed.⁷ In spite of Geoffrey Elton's claim that the act presaged the fundamental decline of ancient liberties – an argument taken up more recently by M.A.R. Graves and Peter Roberts – there remains uncertainty as to what extent the passage of the bill limited the palatinate's powers.⁸ Before the act received royal assent, the enforcement of criminal law in the county palatine closely mirrored the model implemented across England; the crown was officially responsible for appointing local magistrates in Durham, while the prerogative of the bishop in criminal matters extended little further than issuing warrants for circuit judges.⁹ In fact, more immediate and long-lasting change to the crown's relationship with Durham occurred in the sessions of the Reformation Parliament before the franchises bill was passed.

Durham was not formally represented in England's national assembly until the mid-seventeenth century. The palatinate was, however, not totally immune from parliamentary legislation. While certain bills did contain exemption clauses for Durham and other ancient liberties, it was, in theory, expected to adhere to the

⁶ *SR*, iii, p. 555-58; *LP*, x, 254.

⁷ *SR*, iii, p. 555-58.

⁸ Elton, *England under the Tudors*, p. 175; M.A.R. Graves, *The Tudor Parliament: Crown, Lords and Commons, 1485-1603* (Abington, 2013), p. 78; Peter Roberts, 'Tudor Wales, national identity and the British inheritance', in *British consciousness and identity: The making of Britain, 1533-1707*, ed. Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 8-9; Peter Rushton, 'Law in North-East England: Community, Country and Region, 1550-1850', in *Regional Identities in North-East England, 1300-2000*, ed. A.G. Green and A.J. Pollard (Woodbridge, 2007), p. 74; Kitching, 'Durham Palatinate and the Courts of Westminster', pp. 49-70.

⁹ Kitching, 'Durham Palatinate and the Courts of Westminster', p. 49; Rushton, 'Law in North-East England', p. 9.

decisions of Westminster's lawmakers.¹⁰ In practice, the degree to which English laws passed at Westminster were enforced in Durham was largely at the discretion of the bishop. Moreover, while the county palatine remained officially absent from parliamentary representation in the house of commons, Wales and the other outlying territories, including the West Country and Cheshire, became increasingly involved with the Westminster legislative process.¹¹ During the early Tudor period there is no evidence that Durham formally petitioned for representation in parliament. Yet, despite its official absence, Durham nonetheless achieved a degree of parliamentary involvement through those palatinate landowners who sat for neighbouring shires, particularly Northumberland and Yorkshire; Robert Bowes, William Bulmer, Richard Cholmeley, Ralph Eure, Thomas Hilton, and Richard and Thomas Tempest all sat in parliament at one time between 1531 and 1558, representing a host of northern constituencies, including Yorkshire, Newcastle, Westmorland, Northumberland and Scarborough. At the height of his career in central government, Robert Bowes was elected to serve as an MP as far south as Middlesex.¹²

Historians have long debated the reasoning behind and impact of the 1533 Act of Restraint of Appeals. While the Henrician government had previously introduced policies to institute the break with Rome, the Act of Restraint of Appeals gave binding force to earlier measures; the act constituted a fundamental break of England's formal ties to the papacy.¹³ In spite of the act's centrality to the formation of the Henrician state – now ostensibly free from papal influence and decisions made in the curia, matters of matrimony and financial payments to Rome would henceforth

¹⁰ *SR*, iii, pp. 368-72. In the 1531 Act Concerning the Commission of Sewers, the bishop of Durham was able to appoint two commissioners to serve alongside those selected by Westminster, though this decision owed as much to political pragmatism as it did to a desire to honour the palatinate's medieval privileges.

¹¹ Roberts, 'Tudor Wales', pp. 8-19; idem, 'The union with England and the identity of "Anglican" Wales' *TRHS*, 5th Series, 22 (1972), pp. 61-4; idem, 'The "Henry VIII Clause": delegated legislation and the Tudor Principality of Wales', in *Legal Record and Historical Reality*, ed. T.G. Watkin (London, 1989), pp. 37-49; Brendan Bradshaw, 'The Tudor Reformation and the Revolution in Wales and Ireland: The Origins of the British Problem', in *The British Problem, c. 1534-1707*, ed. Brendan Bradshaw and John Morrill (London, 1996), p. 47; J.D.P. Cooper, *Propaganda and the Tudor State: Political Culture in the Westcountry* (Oxford, 2003), pp. 185-86.

¹² 'Bowes, Robert', 'Bulmer, Sir William', 'Cholmley, Sir Richard', 'Eure (Evers), Sir Ralph', 'Hilton, Sir Thomas', 'Tempest, Sir Richard', 'Tempest, Sir Thomas', S.T. Bindoff, ed. *The House of Commons, 1509-1558* [online edition: <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/research/members/members-1509-1558>]

¹³ *SR*, iii, p. 427.

be decided in the king's courts – historians have not considered how this legislation affected those residing in the county palatine and how Durham's deliberate inclusion within the terms of the statute signified the bishopric's integration into the Tudor regime. Indeed, much analysis on the Act of Restraint of Appeals has focused on Thomas Cromwell's invoking the historic title of empire; spiritual matters could now legitimately be resolved in the king's courts.¹⁴ Closer examination, however, reveals much about Westminster's seemingly pragmatic attitude towards national and local administration at a time of intense political and religious change. According to Cromwell's preamble, the curia's distance from London meant that England's subjects, not least Henry VIII himself, were often the victims of drawn out and costly legal proceedings.¹⁵ The Restraint of Appeals Act sought to rectify this by declaring that all matters previously tried in Rome would now be determined in the royal courts.¹⁶ This expansion of royal justice included those residing in Durham and other medieval peculiarities. The Act stipulated that all matters 'allredy commensed... or hereafter coming in contencion... within the Realme or within any the Kinges Dominions or Marches... shalbe... det[er]myned within the Kinges Jurisdiccion and Auctoritie and not elleswhere'.¹⁷

The first, definitive, component of the break with Roman Church, then, saw the Durham palatinate treated in the same manner as other English counties. The Reformation Parliament had previously honoured Durham's historic right to self-determination. Certain matters of local governance were immune from parliamentary influence. The 1531 act concerning the empanelling of sewer commissions, for example, did not encroach on the bishop of Durham's freedom to appoint local officials. Bishop Tunstall was free to appoint two commissioners to serve on the palatinate's commissions alongside those selected by Westminster. Though perhaps a confirmation of the bishopric's ancient privileges the act had just as much to do with

¹⁴ Elton, *England under the Tudors*, pp. 132-34; idem, *Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-1558* (London, 1978), p. 169; J.J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (London, 1968), pp. 272-73; John Guy, 'Thomas Cromwell and the intellectual origins of the Henrician revolution', in *The Tudor Monarchy*, ed. John Guy (London, 1997), pp. 213-33.

¹⁵ Peter Clarke has challenged the idea of the papal courts exercising an overbearing influence in England more generally and has commented on the importance of papal dispensations in matters concerning close kin: Peter Clarke, 'English royal marriages and the papal penitentiary in the fifteenth century', *EHR* 120 (2005), pp. 1014-1029; idem, 'Canterbury as the New Rome: Dispensations and Henry VIII's Reformation', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 64 (2013), pp. 20-44.

¹⁶ *SR*, iii, p. 428.

¹⁷ *SR*, iii, p. 428.

ensuring a degree of political and governmental pragmatism in a region that had experienced problems with flooding in previous years.¹⁸ On matters concerning England's separation from Rome, however, no such flexibility could be permitted. The enforcement of the Act of Restraint of Appeals had to be seen as being adhered to throughout the realm. This should not be regarded as an attempt by Westminster to undermine palatinate authority as a matter of principle. Rather, Durham's inclusion within and the enforcement of the act should be seen as an essentially pragmatic measure, introduced at a time of seismic political, administrative, and religious change.

The First Succession Act, passed in March 1534, had a similar impact on the palatinate's position vis-à-vis Westminster. In addition to legitimising Henry's second marriage and new heir, the bill made provision for the government to introduce a corporal oath, to be sworn by all subjects, recognising Henry's new marriage and the investiture of the succession on Elizabeth. It went on to stipulate that proclamations of Elizabeth's new status were to be made on the first day of May, after the bill received royal assent. That the Act took the palatinate to be a component of the national polity can be deduced from the language: 'And be it further enacted... that on this side the first day of Maij next coming [pro]clamacions shalbe made in all shires within this Realme'.¹⁹ No exception was made for the Durham palatinate and no distinctions would be made when it came to punishing those who might question the act's contents: all subjects, including those in Durham, would be found guilty of treason for slandering any element of the act.

Further evidence that Durham could claim no exemptions on matters concerning religious change can be seen with the passage of the Supremacy and Second Succession Acts in November 1534. A confirmation of convocation's acceptance of Henry's titular headship of the English Church, both statutes differed from the March Succession Act in that they required all subjects to swear an oath recognising the king as supreme head of the English Church and the investiture of the succession on Elizabeth.²⁰ Moreover, the Second Succession Act stipulated that additional proclamations were to be made throughout England; the Durham clergy

¹⁸ *SR*, iii, pp. 368-72.

¹⁹ *SR*, iii, p. 473.

²⁰ *SR*, iii, p. 493.

were required to promulgate the supremacy and the revised succession in the same manner as their northern counterparts.²¹

Bishop Tunstall himself and his episcopal household made a concerted effort to preach the supremacy in the palatinate. Prior to receiving instructions for the setting forth of the supremacy, the bishop wrote to Cromwell in July 1535 to confirm that ‘I not only my self before the recepte of the said lres [letters] had done my dewty on setting forth his tytyle of supreme hede but also raised other to do the same’.²² Upon receiving Henry’s instructions, Tunstall reported that he had immediately ‘repaired to duresme and ther preached... agayne... setting further the kings title’.²³ Despite his wavering convictions, Durham’s bishop continued to advocate the royal supremacy throughout the mid- to late-1530s. On Palm Sunday 1539, Tunstall delivered arguably his most famous sermon, denouncing the immense sums previously paid to the see of Rome and Cardinal Reginald Pole’s treasonous activities on the continent.²⁴

Whereas the Second Succession Act stated that those who refused the oath could be found guilty of treason, the November 1534 Treasons Act made this provision legally binding. Again, the language provides evidence of Westminster’s attitude towards independent franchises: no exceptions were made for the palatinate or any other liberty. The act stipulated that ‘if any [per]sone or [per]sonnes... within this Realme or els where within the Kynges Domynyons’ refused the oath, then they would have committed treason.²⁵ Not only were all *men* required to take the oath, the penalty for refusing to do so was uniform, irrespective of where a subject resided.²⁶ Indeed, Anthony Heron, a Durham landowner, was indicted for treason on 30 September 1535 for refusing the oath. Another local man, Roger Lassells, conducted the initial interrogation of Heron, who maintained: ‘that the king[es] hyhnes is not sup[re]me hede of the churche... but [he] expressly sayeth that the bishoppe of

²¹ SR, iii, p. 492.

²² BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/VI, f. 252 (LP, viii, 1082).

²³ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/VI, f. 252 (LP, viii, 1082).

²⁴ *A sermon of Cuthbert Bysshop of Duresme made vpon Palme sondaye laste past, before the maiestie of our souerayne lorde kyng Henry the. VIII. kynge of England [and] of France, defensor of the faith, lorde of Ireland, and in erth next vnder Christ supreme heed of the Churche of England.* [Londini: In aedibus Thomae Bertheleti typis impress. Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum, Anno. M.D. XXXiX]; LP, xiv, 628.

²⁵ SR, iii, p. 508.

²⁶ It would appear that only lay *men* were sworn. Stephen Gardiner wrote to Cromwell in early May 1534 asking the minister to clarify that his commissioners had interpreted the word ‘man’ correctly to apply ‘only for men and not women’. See J.A. Muller, ed. *The Letters of Stephen Gardiner* (Cambridge, 1933), p. 57.

Rome... is the hede of the church and so he will take hym of his conscience during his lyffe'.²⁷ Subsequently questioned by Tunstall, alongside the earls of Westmorland and Northumberland, Heron remained resolute.²⁸ Concern over the nature of Northumberland's authority to hear the case led to the conviction being disputed; Heron was later released after a stint in York Castle.²⁹

What is of real importance here is that Heron, in spite of the procedural error, was reprimanded for refusing the oath. Moreover, that local men like Lassells and Sir Thomas Wharton (who had examined Heron while in custody at York) were charged with questioning the defendant demonstrates that members of Durham and North-Eastern society took part in the judicial process of enforcing the Reformation. Equally significant, that Tunstall cooperated with the earls of Westmorland and Northumberland suggests that the bishop was willing to overlook, temporarily at least, Durham's history of judicial autonomy in favour of enforcing national directives.

Those at the very top of the bishopric's political establishment were not exempt from taking the oath. Tunstall's attitude towards the divorce and supremacy has always been somewhat uncertain, but, after a great deal of vacillation on his part, the bishop finally took the oath by 2 March 1535.³⁰ It is possible that he had taken the oath previously or on two separate occasions. According to John Hussee, writing to Lord Lisle on 20 April 1534, Tunstall, Stephen Gardner, bishop of Winchester, and Edward Lee, archbishop of York, had been summoned to court, possibly to swear their allegiance to the king.³¹ Bishop Tunstall's nephew, Sir Marmaduke Tunstall, later acknowledged Henry's supremacy, at a particularly sensitive time for the regime: in the wake of the Pilgrimage of Grace. This added degree of sensitivity meant that Tunstall, in addition to recognising the supremacy, was bound to report any incidents of people advocating the pope's authority to Cromwell, now Henry's vicegerent in spiritual affairs.³² Bishop Tunstall's role as an enforcer of the oath was not confined to the bishopric, however. By the summer of 1535 he was working

²⁷ TNA, SP 1/97, f. 57 (*LP*, ix, 491).

²⁸ TNA, SP 1/109, f. 196 (*LP*, xi, 878).

²⁹ G.R. Elton, *Policy and Police: The Enforcement of the Reformation in the Age of Thomas Cromwell* (Cambridge, 1972), p. 299.

³⁰ TNA, E 25/20/2 (*LP*, viii, 311, i).

³¹ *The Lisle Letters*, ed. Muriel St Clare Byrne (6 vols. London and Chicago, 1981) ii, 129-30 (*LP*, vii, 522); J.M. Gray, *Oaths and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 65-66, 140.

³² TNA, SP 1/241, f. 247.

alongside the archbishop of York to take oaths from local clergymen and from those in the North-East's religious communities. Tunstall fulfilled an important role in the process of getting John Wilson, prior of Mount Grace in North Yorkshire, to accept that the 'kinges Majestie was supreme heed immediately vnder Christ of this Church of England'.³³ Archbishop Lee had sent Richard Langridge, archdeacon of Cleveland, to preach Henry's new title and distribute books on the royal supremacy within and around Yorkshire. Prior Wilson received the texts graciously enough, but warned that 'none of [his] broderne [brethren] wolde alowe anie suche thinges'.³⁴ It was after an interview with Tunstall and Lee that the prior acquiesced, took the oath, and began circulating the books among his brethren.³⁵

The bishopric of Durham's relationship with Westminster during the Middle Ages was characterised by a series of disputes concerning the former's temporal and ecclesiastical liberties. One such conflict centred on the rights of those in Durham to claim indefinite sanctuary in the priory and evade royal justice.³⁶ Like the Succession and Supremacy Acts, the Treasons Act made no exception for Durham's inhabitants. That the act was meant to be enforced in the palatinate was once again covered by the term: 'all those within this Realme or yn any other the Kynges Domynyons or Marches'.³⁷ Prior to the introduction of the treasons bill, those found guilty of serious offences in Durham's ostensibly independent courts saw their possessions revert to the bishop.³⁸ The bishop of Durham's right to claim the lands and goods of those convicted of treason, even those from within the bishopric, remained a vexed issue throughout the Middle Ages. Crown acknowledgment of the bishop of Durham's right to forfeiture was given in 1267, later confirmed in 1275, only to be contested in 1306. Following the murder of John Comyn by Robert de Brus, Edward I granted the Brus

³³ *LP*, xv, 125.

³⁴ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/VI, f. 240 (*LP*, viii, 963).

³⁵ E.M. Thompson, *The Carthusian Order in England* (London, 1930), p. 468; Gray, *Oaths and the English Reformation*, pp. 74-75.

³⁶ Helen Cam, 'The Decline and Fall of English Feudalism', *History* 25 (1940), p. 219; Jean Scammell, 'The Origin and Limitations of the Liberty of Durham', *EHR* 81 (1966), pp. 449-73.

³⁷ *SR*, iii, p. 508.

³⁸ C.M. Fraser, *The Courts of the County Palatine of Durham from the Earliest Times to 1971* (Durham, 1971); G.T. Lapsley, *The County Palatine of Durham: A Study in Constitutional History* (London, 1900), pp. 1-2; P.L. Larson, 'Local Law Courts in Late Medieval Durham', in *North-East England in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. C.D. Liddy and R.H. Britnell (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 97-109; C.J. Neville, 'The Courts of the Prior and the Bishop of Durham in the Later Middle Ages', *History* 85 (2000), pp. 216-31; G.V. Scammell, *Hugh du Priset, Bishop of Durham* (Cambridge, 1956), p. 189.

estates at Hartlepool to Robert de Clifford, paying only a cursory reference to the bishop's claims. After a series of further royal grants of confiscated land in and around Durham, Bishop Louis de Beaumont (*c.* 1318-1333) all but surrendered his right to distribute the estates of forfeited lands in the palatinate.³⁹ With the passage of the treason bill, however, the crown's right to prerogative forfeitures of treason in the bishopric was made mandatory. Shortly after Henry's titular headship of the English Church was confirmed, parliament's passing the bill was timely; those convicted of treason, including those in Durham who refused the oath, forfeited possessions to the king. It would appear as though this was the case with Anthony Heron. A local rival, Anthony Brakenbury, implored Cromwell in October 1535 to 'speke unto the kings mstee ffore me ffore the [pre]fferment of the lethes [lands]... anthony heron had... whe[n] he com[m]yttyd treysson'.⁴⁰ Whether Brakenbury's requests was acted upon is unclear; that he wrote to Cromwell, however, indicates that the crown controlled the land and property forfeited by those in Durham who committed treason.

The tradition of sanctuary had been maintained in England since the seventh century. When an alleged felon approached Durham Cathedral Priory to claim sanctuary they were sheltered, dressed in a distinctive black gown (with the yellow cross of Saint Cuthbert emblazoned on the left shoulder), fed, and watered for thirty-six days, at no charge. Attempts had been made to remove wanted persons from the priory, but these were met with fines, imprisonment, and, in the most extreme cases, death; after thirty-seven days, however, the culprit was handed over to the bishop's courts. By the early 1480s, Edward IV endorsed Durham's right to offer sanctuary, even to those wanted by the crown's legal officers.⁴¹ In spite of this, even before the Treasons Act received royal assent, Cromwell had taken measures to prevent suspected criminals from claiming sanctuary in Durham. On 20 July 1534, the minister ordered the arrest of four convicted murderers who had fled to Scotland before taking sanctuary in the bishopric. Cromwell was concerned that the felons might evade royal prosecution by remaining in Durham and use the priory as a means of escaping across the border for the second time. Where an offence had been committed outside the county palatine, however, it was not uncommon for crown

³⁹ Neville, 'The Courts of the Prior and the Bishop of Durham', pp. 474-75.

⁴⁰ TNA, SP 1/109, f. 196 (*LP*, xi, 878).

⁴¹ Geoffrey Moorhouse, *The Last Office: 1539 and the Dissolution of a Monastery* (London, 2009), pp. 40-42.

officials to seek redress in the royal courts: the crime in this case had taken place in Yorkshire. Cromwell's concern was that the four men might set a precedent for future criminals to take refuge in Durham. To prevent this, the minister circumvented the bishopric's history of judicial autonomy, ordering that these '[per]sons... be attachyd' and detained in 'pryson untyll suche tyme as thei shallbe by the... lawe arynyted or otherwise dyscharged'.⁴² While Cromwell was prepared to circumvent tradition with the removal of offenders from the Cathedral Priory, he did not completely forsake legal process; the perpetrators were questioned and justice administered according to national legal requirements. In this regard, it would appear as though the minister was willing to break the palatinate's legal traditions but not England's: as an integral component of the national polity, Durham's legal administration had to be brought more closely into line with that of the Henrician state. That Cromwell and the local authorities took measures to remove offenders from Durham suggests that the Tudor regime was willing to exert a controlled and essentially pragmatic influence concerning matters of high justice in the bishopric.

The Treasons Act, then, should not be seen as a principled legislative assault. Rather, like the Succession and Supremacy Acts, it represented a utilitarian measure, introduced at a time of politico-religious uncertainty, designed to bring the Durham palatinate into line with national priorities. Furthermore, just as Roger Lassells and Thomas Wharton had played an important part during Anthony Heron's interrogations, Durham's landowners proved themselves willing to cooperate with Westminster on matters concerning sanctuary. It is likely that Sir Francis Bigod acted as an intermediary between Cromwell and the palatinate authorities throughout the episode. A copy of Cromwell's letter, addressed to the authorities in the far North, can be identified as the work of Sir Francis. Ethan Shagan has emphasised the importance of local networks during the implementation of religious reform in the provinces; it would appear that the enforcement of royal initiatives in the bishopric was similarly contingent upon the crown's mobilisation of local men like Bigod, Lassells, and Wharton.⁴³

Historians have argued that the decision to suspend the payments of annates to Rome, divert these sums to the crown, and increase the amount of clerical taxation paid to

⁴² TNA, SP 1/85, f. 57 (*LP*, vii, 990).

⁴³ Ethan Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2003), *passim*.

Westminster exacerbated the clergy's already desperate financial position.⁴⁴ In spite of a wealth of research, the extent to which the reversion of annates affected the county palatine's standing with Westminster and what this says about early Tudor policy towards independent franchises is less clear.⁴⁵ The decision to suspend payments to Rome and introduce what amounted to a parliamentary levy on the clergy - much like the Succession, Supremacy and Treason Acts - hastened Durham's integration into the early Tudor polity. Once again, the endeavours of Bishop Tunstall and the local gentry would help to ensure that directives passed in Westminster took hold in the bishopric, strengthening political ties in the process.

Before the introduction of the First Fruits and Tenths Act in 1534, parliament had passed measures designed to cajole the pope into granting an annulment of Henry's first marriage. In the spring of 1532, parliament passed the Act in Conditional Restraint of Annates, which suspended the payment of annates to Rome.⁴⁶ It is worth noting that no special provision was made for the palatinate or any other independent franchise; annates arising from appointments to benefices within the bishopric were to be withheld in the same manner as those from neighbouring counties.⁴⁷

Two statutes passed in 1534 reinforced the initial suspension of annates. The first, known as the 'Act restraynyng the payment of Annates', reiterated those measures put in place two years previously. Papal bulls were no longer deemed requisite for appointments to archbishoprics and bishoprics and no sums were to be paid to Rome. Yet again, the language of the statute reveals much about early Tudor policy towards independent franchises. The payment of annates and use of papal bulls 'shall utterly cease and no longer be used within this Realme or within any the Kynges Domynyons'.⁴⁸ The phrase 'or within any the Kynges Domynyons' is easily

⁴⁴ G.R. Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-1558* (London, 1977), p. 215; idem, *England Under the Tudors*, p. 136; Felicity Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes: A Study of the Economic and Social Position of the Tudor Episcopate* (Cambridge, 1980), pp. 193-97; idem, 'Clerical tax collection under the Tudors: the influence of the Reformation', in *Continuity and Change: Personnel and Administration of the Church of England, 1500-1642*, ed. R. O'Day and F.M. Heal (Leicester, 1976), pp. 97-122; J.J. Scarisbrick, 'Clerical Taxation in England, 1485-1547', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 11 (1960), p. 50.

⁴⁵ Margaret Harvey, *Lay Religious Life in Late Medieval Durham* (Woodbridge, 2006), pp. 185-97; Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham', pp. 83-100.

⁴⁶ The average payment to Rome between 1485 and 1532 amounted to £4816. Gunn, *Early Tudor Government*, p. 142.

⁴⁷ *SR*, iii, p. 385.

⁴⁸ *SR*, iii, p. 463.

overlooked, but its significance should not be undervalued. It provided the necessary legal authority through which Westminster was able to extend its remit into Durham and other outlying territories, including Ireland. Much like the legislation discussed previously, the suspension of annates applied to the entire realm. No exceptions could be made by a regime seeking to project an image of national solidarity.

The 1534 First Fruits Act reinforced this notion of English unity.⁴⁹ Whereas previous legislation had only accounted for revenues accruing from archbishoprics and bishoprics, the First Fruits Act included those elected to any spiritual benefice. What is more, revenues were now to be made payable to the monarch, not the pope. The wording of the First Fruits Act is explicit in its recognition of Durham as constituting an integral component of the Henrician polity. First fruits and tenths were to be made available to the crown, irrespective of ‘what nature of qualytie so ever they be or to whose... patronage or gyfte so ever they belonge’.⁵⁰ For the most part, patronage within the bishopric and its surrounding enclaves fell under Bishop Tunstall’s prerogative; in practice, however, those appointed to benefices within the bishopric were now liable to hand over what amounted to a one-off payment of a single year’s income and an annual ten per cent income tax surcharge. Tim Thornton has cited Durham’s exemption for national subsidies in the 1530s and 1540s as evidence of its fiscal immunity and preservation of the bishopric’s financial autonomy.⁵¹ Yet the bishop of Durham and those appointed to bishopric benefices were by no means wholly immune from national taxation; the payment of first fruits and the annual tenth effectively amounted to a parliamentary levy. Within a year of the act’s passing through the commons, those in possession of ecclesiastical posts in Durham were recorded as having paid the required sums to the crown.⁵²

The palatinate was not the only county to see its medieval traditions curtailed by the 1534 Act. Traditionally, first fruits and tenths from Norwich and Richmond had been paid to the bishop of Norwich and archdeacon of Richmond, respectively. After the act had passed, those appointed to any benefice within the bishop and archdeacon’s gift were liable to transfer these sums to the king.⁵³ The regime’s stance

⁴⁹ *SR*, iii, p. 494. The Act concerning the paiment of First Fruites of all dignities benefices and [pro]mocyons spiritual’ (26 Hen. VIII, c. 3).

⁵⁰ *SR*, iii, p. 494.

⁵¹ Thornton, ‘Fifteenth-Century Durham’, pp. 89-94.

⁵² DULSC, Mickleton and Spearman Manuscript 10, f. 337r-v.

⁵³ *SR*, iii, p. 495.

towards those shires that had previously held immunities was largely uniform during the Reformation. All counties were considered integral and equal components of the state on matters concerning the break with Rome. The 1534 Act should not necessarily be viewed as a money-grabbing exercise on the part of a repressive government; the transferal of annates and additional clerical taxation did go some way to augment royal revenues, however. Rather, the decision to withhold payments to Rome should be seen as part of a broader legislative programme designed to showcase a degree of English political and fiscal solidarity during Henry's high profile confrontation with the papacy. The First Fruits Act not only reveals much about how central government saw the county palatine, it also sheds light on Westminster's broader attitude towards and treatment of medieval franchises.

At a time of intense politico-religious upheaval, Westminster sought to project an image of national unity and administrative control in opposition to the divisive corruption that clouded the papacy in Rome. Those statutes that underpinned the supremacy represented a deliberate ploy by parliament to emphasise this sense of unity.⁵⁴ The most obvious example of this is Cromwell's preamble to the 1533 Act of Restraint of Appeals, which triumphantly asserted the realm of England to be an 'Empire'.⁵⁵ A similar message can be detected in the opening section of the First Fruits Act. Notions of 'commonweal' or 'public weal', often associated with political actors during the Wars of the Roses, were employed to instil a sense of obligation on the king and his subjects to repudiate foreign influences. The payment of first fruits and tenths to the crown was in the best interest of the entire realm, a measure designed to '[pro]vyde not only for the publike weale of theire natife contry, but also for the defence of the royall estate of their... Soveraign Lorde, upon whom... dependith all their joye and welthe'.⁵⁶

Humanism offered a fresh perspective on governance by the mid-fifteenth century. Notions of 'commonweal' were employed with increasing familiarity to justify an individual, group, or party's actions against incumbent ruling orders, whose regimes were presented as inadequate and incapable of ensuring effective and judicious government. Richard, duke of York (*d.* 1460), and the Yorkist chroniclers of

⁵⁴ John Guy, 'Thomas Cromwell and the intellectual origins of the Henrician revolution', in *The Tudor Monarchy*, ed. John Guy (London, 1997), pp. 213-32; Walter Ullmann, "'This Realm of England is an Empire'", *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 30 (1979), pp. 175-203.

⁵⁵ *SR*, iii, p. 427.

⁵⁶ *SR*, iii, p. 493.

the 1460s and 1470s, made much of the term in denouncing Henry VI's feeble attempts to govern the realm.⁵⁷ At the beginning of Henry VIII's reign, the concept of safeguarding the 'commonweal' was well entrenched within political circles. With the advent of the Reformation, however, it has been suggested that a subtler notion of obedience to the crown had developed, replacing ideas of common or public service.⁵⁸ This would appear to have been the case, but it is important not to completely disregard the value attached to the preservation of the 'public weal'. The opening passage of the First Fruits Act demonstrates that the regime understood the value of combining the two; 'commonweal' and obedience to the monarch were not mutually exclusive. Henry's subjects were responsible for maintaining the 'publike weal' and the 'royall estate'. Since the 'tranquylite peace... and welthe' of the state was dependant on the king, the act necessitated subjection to the monarch; by the time the bill received royal assent, Henry's will was that those subjects who received ecclesiastical positions should pay annates to him, rather than the pope, and in doing so contribute to England's prosperity.⁵⁹

It is important to bear this in mind when examining the bishop of Durham's position relative to national government. Sir John Fortescue was among the first political theorists to apply Ciceronian principles to the governance of the English polity, including the idea that the body politic could only be managed by one head.⁶⁰ Fortescue's adage can be applied to Henry's subjects and their dual obedience to the king and pope. Parliament was the arena in which the confrontation between Henry and the pope took shape; it was within parliament that legislation was implemented to ensure the loyalty of English subjects, notwithstanding a few high profile exceptions, including John Fisher, bishop of Rochester, and Sir Thomas More. In the same way that Henry's subjects were expected to swear an oath accepting the supremacy, the

⁵⁷ David Starkey, 'Which Age of Reform', in *Revolution Reassessed: Revisions in the History of Tudor Government and Administration*, ed. Christopher Coleman and Starkey (Oxford, 1986), pp. 13-27; David Grummitt, *A Short History of the Wars of the Roses* (London, 2012), p. 123-29, 131; Chris Skidmore, *Bosworth: The Birth of the Tudor* (London, 2013), p. 255.

⁵⁸ Grummitt, *Wars of the Roses*, p. 131.

⁵⁹ *SR*, iii, p. 493.

⁶⁰ In chapter 17 of his *On the Laws and Governance of England*, Fortescue used passages from the bible to illustrate this point. Matthew 6:24 states that 'No one can serve two lords. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other'. See Sir John Fortescue, *On the Laws and Governance of England*, ed. S. Lockwood (Cambridge, 1997), p. 119.

First Fruits Act, like the Supremacy Act, was another means through which the regime set out to test the allegiance of the nation's clergy.⁶¹

The Henrician regime could no longer tolerate alien or foreign influences if it was to successfully go about securing politico-religious uniformity. This applied to the bishop of Durham's patrimony in the same manner as it did to the pope in Rome, albeit to a lesser extent. As the pope was the natural successor to Saint Peter, those translated to the see of Durham in the Middle Ages saw themselves as the guardians of Cuthbert's patrimony. Like the pope in Rome, Durham's medieval bishops were obliged to defend their church; the rights and possessions associated with the church in Durham were dedicated and belonged to Saint Cuthbert.⁶² Such a conflict of interest explains why the bishopric had to be included within legislation concerning the separation from Rome. At a time when England's allegiance to one foreign ruler, the pope, was placed under increasing scrutiny, Westminster made a concerted effort to ensure that alien jurisdictions in England were seen as part of a consolidated Tudor state. George Bernard has spoken of the king's decision to dissolve the abbeys as Henry's 'Erasmian impulse'.⁶³ The decision to reverse the payment of annates could be seen as a fundamental component of the regime's 'Ciceronian' or 'Fortescuean' moment. Humanistic principles such as 'common' or 'public' weal were used to justify, and parliament to legitimise, the crown's reversal of annates, the payment of clerical sums from Durham, and a greater degree of fiscal collaboration between the bishopric and Westminster.⁶⁴

Informal Political Networks in Durham and Westminster

Parliamentary legislation and concepts of government, no matter how persuasive or legally binding, are devoid of real value without the ability to enforce them. This was achieved through the use of informal networks – the backbone of the early Tudor polity - that ran throughout the country. As part of the reversal of annates, Henry, or

⁶¹ Technically, the laity swore to the succession and the clergy to the king's supremacy.

⁶² Christian Liddy, *The Bishopric of Durham in the Late Middle Ages: Lordship, Community and the Cult of St Cuthbert* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 176-77.

⁶³ G.W. Bernard, 'The Dissolution of the Monasteries', *History* 96 (2011), pp. 397, 403.

⁶⁴ John Guy has also spoken of the influence of humanism and the intellectual origins of Henry's religious reforms: Guy, 'Intellectual origins of the Henrician revolution', pp. 213-32.

anyone deputed by the king, could empower commissions to ascertain the value of payments accruing from elections to spiritual benefices, in addition to the annual tenth.⁶⁵

The commissioners began their work in January 1535 and were expected to report on sums collected within six months. Crucially, the king had the authority to appoint commissioners for the bishopric and other medieval peculiarities. Ten men were commissioned to assess Durham. Tunstall was to head the commission, alongside Thomas Tempest, William Frankeleyn, William Blytheman, Robert Hyndmer, Robert Bowes, and Robert Meynell. The remaining men – John Metcalf, James Rokesby, and Richard Crosby – served as auditors.⁶⁶ The responsibility of these Durham landowners and officials was not confined to the bishopric; their remit included the counties of Cumberland, York, Northumberland, and Westmorland, the archdeaconry of Richmond, as well as the towns of Berwick and Newcastle.⁶⁷ The council of the north was forced to write to Cromwell in early May in order to request more time, given the commissioners' high workload.⁶⁸ Some ten weeks after their first letter, Tunstall explained to Cromwell that the delayed assessment of the bishopric was the result of the auditors being occupied with matters in York; the assessment for Yorkshire and Durham was eventually returned on 21 July.⁶⁹

That the council thought it prudent to write to Cromwell suggests that the commissions for the northern counties could have been deliberately undermanned, owing to lack of suitably qualified men, or, that the local knowledge and expertise of palatinate landowners and officers were highly regarded by Westminster and so negated the need for larger commissions. A comparison with commissions issued in other franchises suggests that the size of the commission for Durham was comparatively small, particularly if one considers that a large number of those responsible for the bishopric were also charged with assessing other counties. In North Wales, seventeen commissioners were selected for the bishopric of St Asaph and eighteen for the bishopric of Bangor. Meanwhile, seventeen men were

⁶⁵ *SR*, iii, p. 494.

⁶⁶ *LP*, viii, 149 (65).

⁶⁷ *LP*, viii, 149 (56, 64, 68, 72, 73, 82).

⁶⁸ The letter was signed by Bishop Tunstall, Thomas Tempest, William Franklin, Robert Hyndmer, Robert Bowes, Robert Meynell, John Metcalf and Richard Crosby. TNA, SP 1/92, f. 137 (*LP*, viii, 696).

⁶⁹ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/VI, f. 252 (*LP*, viii, 1082).

empowered to assess Cheshire, compared to Durham's ten.⁷⁰ It is possible that a shortage of available or suitable men explains why the commission for Durham was so small. Contemporary evidence, however, would suggest that Westminster deemed the number sufficient and was confident that those selected would conduct their business efficiently; palatinate landowners certainly took their responsibilities towards the crown seriously. On 11 May, Sir Thomas Tempest informed Cromwell that he and his fellow commissioners had already acted upon the king's request for the assessment of spiritual taxation in Durham and Northumberland. He went on to ask that his brief be extended to include a visitation of two chantry priests in Farnacres, who fell under the jurisdiction of Bishop Tunstall. This, he explained, was 'not... for... lucre or advantage', but a desire to see the 'prest[es] kepe the trewe order and constitutions of ther foundaary'.⁷¹

There are two additional points in Tempest's letter that warrant further consideration. First, it would appear as though Sir Thomas was attempting to consolidate his patron-client relationship with the minister: 'praying you... accepte me as one of yor loving friend[es], as gladde to do you [ser]vice as any man is in thes partris'.⁷² Durham landowners, then, like their counterparts in Yorkshire and the West Country, recognised the importance of nurturing strong relations with those at the top of central government. Second, these relationships were facilitated by intermediaries or what Sharon Kettering has called 'brokers'.⁷³ In this instance, William Blytheman acted as the broker between Tempest and Cromwell; Tempest referred to Blytheman as 'yor [ser]vant' in his letter to the minister. That Blytheman was able to serve in this capacity is reflective of his high standing with those in Westminster. By the mid-1530s, he appears to have been one of Cromwell's most trusted adherents in the North-East – often relaying dispatches between the minister and the bishopric authorities – and his rise to prominence was rapid. By October 1528, Sir George Lawson acknowledged that Blytheman was well known by Cromwell.⁷⁴ Two years later, a Durham priest, William Strangeways, wrote that Blytheman had procured Cromwell's assistance in obtaining the reversion of the position of registrar for the

⁷⁰ *LP*, viii, 149 (66, 67, 70).

⁷¹ TNA, SP 1/92, f. 138 (*LP*, viii, 700).

⁷² TNA, SP 1/92, f. 138 (*LP*, viii, 700).

⁷³ Sharon Kettering, *Patron, Brokers and Clients in Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 40-68; idem, 'Clientage during the French Wars of Religion', *SCJ* 20 (1989), pp. 221-39.

⁷⁴ *LP*, iv, no. 4877.

archdeaconry of Richmond.⁷⁵ What is more, Blytheman is recognised as having formed an integral part of Cromwell's national network of informants by early 1535. He was appointed to four commissions for the assessment of first fruits and tenths and was later listed within the minister's remembrances for the comptrollership of Newcastle, which he duly received by mid-October.⁷⁶

A willingness to enforce directives concerning the extirpation of papal power helped to reinforce Durham's standing with central government. On 9 June 1535 the proclamation for 'Enforcing Statutes Abolishing Papal Authority in England' was delivered at Westminster; the pope's name was to be removed from all major ecclesiastical and local government documents.⁷⁷ These instructions were sent to all local authorities: Durham was in no way exempt. Tunstall wrote to acknowledge that he had received 'the king[es]... most honourable letters off admonition' on the same day the proclamation was made, and it would appear that the bishop made a concerted effort to comply with Henry's demands.⁷⁸ His episcopal register for the bishopric contains a number of leaves in which the pope's name has been crossed out, most likely on receipt of Henry's injunction.⁷⁹ It is noteworthy that the pope's name was removed from Tunstall's Durham register, but not the register used for the northern convocation held at York.⁸⁰ Either Tunstall himself, or more probably a member of his episcopal household – possibly Christopher Chaytor, who served as registrar to Bishops Tunstall and Pilkington, as well as registrar for the palatinate's consistory court – removed the pope's name from the bishopric register.⁸¹

Tunstall wrote on two separate occasions – on 9 June and 21 July – to confirm his receipt and subsequent execution of Henry's instructions.⁸² Moreover, Sir Francis Bigod, the man responsible for delivering the decree to Tunstall on 9 June, informed Cromwell two days later that the bishop of Durham and archbishop of York had

⁷⁵ TNA, SP 1/65, f. 130 (*LP*, v, 96).

⁷⁶ TNA, SP 1/98, f. 10 (*LP*, ix, 617).

⁷⁷ *Tudor Royal Proclamations: Volume 1. The Early Tudor (1485-1553)*, ed. Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin (London and New Haven, 1964), pp. 229-32. (*LP*, viii, 848).

⁷⁸ TNA, SP 1/93, f. 34 (*LP*, viii, 849).

⁷⁹ *The Registers of Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of Durham 1530-59, and James Pilkington, Bishop of Durham 1561-76*, ed. Gladys Hinde, SS 161 (London, 1952), p. xxix.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 99; *The Records of the Northern Convocation*, ed. G.W. Kitchin, SS 113 (Edinburgh, 1907), p. 220.

⁸¹ *Registers of Cuthbert Tunstall*, ed. Hinde, p. xiv.

⁸² TNA, SP 1/93, f. 34 (*LP*, viii, 849); BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/VI, f. 252 (*LP*, viii, 1082).

received the instructions with ‘great humility’.⁸³ Tunstall’s willingness to implement the directive, Bigod assured the minister, was evident in his setting his chaplain to work preaching the supremacy.⁸⁴ Tunstall himself later wrote to Cromwell on 21 July to reiterate that he and others in the bishopric had already executed the instructions.⁸⁵ As with the implementation of parliamentary statutes, Durham could not be seen as unique when it came to the enforcement of decrees concerning the extirpation of papal authority. The instructions delivered to and executed by Tunstall were the same as those given to the bishop’s counterpart in York, Archbishop Edward Lee.

The speed with which the correspondence was relayed between Westminster and Durham, and the time it took Bishop Tunstall and his staff to enact the king’s instructions, is further evidence of an essentially pragmatic relationship. Just six weeks had elapsed from the original proclamation being issued in Westminster to Tunstall’s report that it was being implemented in the bishopric. Given the six-hundred mile round trip from London to Durham this was a considerable effort; it could take four or five days for an official to travel from the capital to the North-East.⁸⁶ This makes the speed with which the instructions were received and implemented all the more impressive. It is possible, of course, that Tunstall felt the need to reaffirm his loyalty to the regime in the wake of the controversy that surrounded his recent unenthusiastic sentiments towards the supremacy. The processes through which Westminster initiatives were implemented in Durham are equally significant. Those intermediaries who operated on the crown and the bishop’s behalf held the fabric of central government’s relationship with Durham together, making the enforcement of the Reformation in the franchisal liberty possible. Durham was not unique, however, in employing political clienteles: patron-client networks represented the backbone of the early Tudor polity. The corporation at York and the West Country’s relationships were equally dependent on the mobilisation of informal networks.⁸⁷

⁸³ TNA, SP 1/93, f. 40 (*LP*, viii, 854).

⁸⁴ TNA, SP 1/93, f. 40 (*LP*, viii, 854).

⁸⁵ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/VI, f. 252 (*LP*, viii, 1082).

⁸⁶ By the seventeenth century, if post-horses were stationed at regular intervals, and the rider possessed the necessary stamina, the journey could be reduced significantly. James, *Civil Society*, p. 1.

⁸⁷ Lewycky, ‘Thomas Wolsey’s Patronage Networks’; idem, ‘Wolsey and the City of York’, pp. 43-60; Robertson, ‘Management of West Country Government’, pp. 793-816; J.H. Bettey, *The Suppression of the Monasteries in the West Country* (Gloucester, 1989), pp. 57-69.

By the summer of 1535, Bishop Tunstall and his episcopal household in Durham had taken steps to curtail the circulation of texts that undermined the king and the new succession. Writing from Stockton on 7 July 1535, Tunstall informed Cromwell that he had seized a ‘litill booke printed in englysshe’, which had found its way into Durham via Newcastle.⁸⁸ The bishop suspected the text was being circulated throughout the country, particularly in London and the major port towns. Having seized a copy of the text, the bishop informed Cromwell of its inflammatory content: ‘Whiche bookes if they may be suffered to goo abrode be like to do great harm emonge the people, for ther is in them a manyfest declaracyon agaynt the effecte of the acte of [par]lement late made for the establysshement of the kinges highness succession’.⁸⁹ While Tunstall’s opinions on the divorce were at times hard to fathom, the bishop was nonetheless concerned that the circulation of the text within England, Scotland, and on the continent might undermine the king’s reforms. Durham’s willingness to assist the crown is further illustrated in Tunstall’s recommendation that Cromwell write to the authorities in those areas in which he suspected the book was being distributed; Tunstall went on to suggest that stringent measures be put in place to prevent further circulation. Not prepared to wait for delayed instructions from London, Durham’s bishop had already written to Robert Brandling, mayor of Newcastle, ordering him to seize the books ‘in the kinges name and to gett knowlege if he can who were the bringers in of them’.⁹⁰

It would appear as though Tunstall had little concern that Westminster should exercise influence within the bishopric in matters of heresy. Where Westminster’s standing could be harnessed to augment his own authority, Tunstall was willing to overlook Durham’s administrative autonomy; the bishop implored Cromwell to write to the mayor of Newcastle so that the authorities there might conduct their investigations with greater care. Moreover, Cromwell was asked to send instructions to various parts of the palatinate to ensure that those responsible for distribution were apprehended.⁹¹ The bishopric’s authorities were best placed logistically to resolve the problem, but that did not deter Tunstall from requisitioning the reputation and superior resources of Westminster to achieve his objective. Given his earlier efforts to

⁸⁸ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/V, f. 388 (*LP*, viii, 1005).

⁸⁹ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/V, f. 388 (*LP*, viii, 1005).

⁹⁰ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/V, f. 388 (*LP*, viii, 1002).

⁹¹ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/V, f. 388 (*LP*, viii, 1002).

suppress heresy as bishop of London, this should come as no great surprise.⁹² A far cry from the pitched battles between Durham's bishops and the crown which characterised the late medieval palatinate, Tunstall was more than prepared to draw on the superior resources of the state to repress heresy in the North-East.

By the autumn of 1535, Cromwell had cultivated a good working relationship with two of Durham's most significant authorities: Bishop Tunstall and his episcopal household, and the Cathedral Priory. At this time, the prior of Saint Cuthbert's monastery was Hugh Whitehead, an able administrator who rose to prominence during the successive episcopates of Bishops Foxe, Senhouse, Bainbridge, Ruthall and Wolsey. Whitehead's aptitude for learning saw him head south to Durham College, Oxford, where he emerged with a degree in theology in 1509, by which time he had been appointed Prior Thomas Castell's domestic chaplain. By 1520, Whitehead returned to the priory, where he served as *terrar* and *hostillar*, two roles that equipped him with a sound knowledge of the priory's estates and financial management. Elected prior of the monastery on 3 January 1520, Whitehead was later appointed the cathedral's first dean on 12 May 1541, a position he held until his death in late 1551.⁹³

With his knowledge of diocesan administration, Whitehead was the obvious candidate for the deanery of Durham Cathedral, but his appointment could equally have been a result of his good relationship with the crown and Cromwell. The lenient treatment of Durham Cathedral during the dissolution owed a great deal to Whitehead's standing with Westminster.⁹⁴ By late 1534, Whitehead had written to Cromwell twice on matters concerning palatinate governance. In his first letter, dated 21 August, the prior informed the minister that he and his brethren would do all they could to advance the king's affairs on the Anglo-Scottish border. It was hoped that

⁹² Charles Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal: Churchman, Scholar, Statesman, Administrator* (London, 1938), pp. 119-43.

⁹³ Founded by the Benedictine monks of Durham in the late thirteenth century, Durham College, Oxford, had been endowed to educate promising young religious in anticipation of their return to a senior office in the monastery. Re-endowed by Bishop Thomas Hatfield in 1387, the college was surrendered to the crown in March 1545, and re-founded in 1553 as what is now Trinity College. Moorhouse, *The Last Office*, pp. 68-69; C.S. Knighton, 'Whitehead, Hugh (d. 1551), prior then dean of Durham', *ODNB*; William Page, 'Priory of St Cuthbert, Durham (later Durham Cathedral)', in *A History of the County of Durham: Volume 2*, ed. William Page (London, 1907), pp. 86-103; A.B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford, A.D. 1501 to 1540* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 624-25.

⁹⁴ Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal*, p. 262.

border service would encourage the minister 'to countynue your favorable kyndenes toward[es] saint Cuthbert[es] monasterie'.⁹⁵ To ensure Cromwell's good graces, Whitehead thought it expedient to provide the minister with an annuity of £5.⁹⁶

Securing Cromwell's support was of the utmost importance to Whitehead and the priory. Just two months after his first letter, Whitehead penned another letter to the minister, who had been absent from London when Richard Crosby, one of the bishop's auditors, went to deliver the £5 annuity. Hearing that Cromwell was unable to accept the gift, Whitehead believed the initial sum to be unsatisfactory; he informed the minister that he was 'willing to... enlarge the same [annuity] w[i]th other V li[vre] yerelie for the conti[n]ance of you m[aste]rshipps favorable kindeness'.⁹⁷ Not long after, the minister was informed of another gift from Durham, the first presentation to the hospital of St James in Northallerton.⁹⁸ Cromwell was not the only member of the royal court, however, to receive an annuity from the priory. By late 1537, Thomas Wriothesley was in receipt of a £5 annuity from the priory's lands in Wingate.⁹⁹ Whitehead's decision to offer money to royal officials was by no means a unique phenomenon. The corporation at York spent large sums and appointed a number of Wolsey's servants to local positions in order to procure the cardinal's services. Following Wolsey's demise, the York authorities employed similar methods to enlist Cromwell's support, albeit with less success.¹⁰⁰ That Whitehead was prepared to increase Cromwell's annuity from £5 to £10 suggests that the priory was keen to procure the favour of leading royal ministers, adopting techniques that had been used by other local authorities. Equally significant are the channels through which Durham's religious authorities were able to conjure royal favour. The priory made effective use of intermediaries, established local players with contacts at court: in this case, Richard Crosby, the man sent by Whitehead to deliver Cromwell's annuity, had previously been appointed a royal commissioner for the assessment of first fruits and tenths.

⁹⁵ TNA, SP 1/85, f. 117 (*LP*, vii, 1079).

⁹⁶ TNA, SP 1/85, f. 117 (*LP*, vii, 1079).

⁹⁷ TNA, SP 1/86, f. 118 (*LP*, vii, 1493).

⁹⁸ DCM, Reg. 5, f. 257r.

⁹⁹ DCM, Reg. 5, f. 265r-v.

¹⁰⁰ Lewycky, 'Wolsey and the City of York', pp. 45, 52-54.

Between July 1535 and February 1536, a comprehensive survey of England and Wales' religious houses was undertaken. Conducted, in large part, by laymen, members of the local gentry with contacts at court, the product of the royal visitation was a series of reports – the *Compendium Compertorum* – examining the standards of behaviour within the realm's religious communities. For the first time, a secular authority was placed in charge of assessing the spiritual and temporal affairs of monastic communities; previously, the local bishop or a member of his episcopal staff would have conducted a visitation.¹⁰¹ Those writing in the mid- to late-twentieth century questioned the authenticity of the visitation, arguing that Henry's commissioners set out to demonise the monasteries in order to confiscate their assets during the dissolution.¹⁰² Anthony Shaw's 2003 doctoral thesis has challenged the argument concerning the commissioner's workload and the suggestion that their reports were exaggerated. Shaw's analysis of a hitherto unexplored manuscript – Corpus Christi College Cambridge Manuscript 111 – has enabled historians to track the progress of the visitation, proving that the nationwide investigation was not a series of uncoordinated events, but a well-orchestrated operation.

The questions of who was responsible for planning the visitation, and the impact it had on the regime's ability to control the provinces, remain contested among historians. Elton suggested that it formed another aspect of the minister's 'revolution in government', while, more recently, Steven Gunn and Anthony Shaw, among others, have downplayed Cromwell's involvement, arguing that Henry was responsible for the finalisation of suppression policy.¹⁰³ Most persuasive is the argument championed by George Bernard, and later adopted by Lucy Wooding and Alex Ryrie, that the visitation was planned and conducted with the promulgation and

¹⁰¹ Anthony Shaw, 'The *Compendium Compertorum* and the Making of the Suppression Act of 1536' (University of Warwick PhD thesis, 2003), p. 24.

¹⁰² P. Cunich, 'The Dissolution', in *Monks of England: The Benedictines in England from Augustine to the Present Day*, ed. D. Rees (London, 1997), p. 156; C. Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics and Society under the Tudors* (Oxford, 1993), p. 337; R.W. Hoyle, 'The Origins of the Dissolution of the Monasteries', *HJ* 38 (1995), p. 295; P. Hughes, *The Reformation in England, I, the King's Proceedings* (London, 1956), p. 286; Knowles, *Religious Orders*, iii, p. 286; G.W.O. Woodward, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (London, 1966), p. 32.

¹⁰³ Elton, *Reform and Reformation*, p. 234; Gunn, *Early Tudor Government*, pp. 115-16; Shaw, 'Compendium Compertorum', p. 28, 33.

widespread acceptance of the supremacy firmly in mind.¹⁰⁴ A desire to present an image of Henrician political control helps to explain why the bishopric of Durham, alongside other independent franchises, was included within the visitation itinerary. This was not the pitched battle between the Tudor state and bishops of Durham portrayed by Whig historians and the likes of Cam and Scammell.¹⁰⁵ No such struggle took place when the visitation party arrived in Durham; Tunstall and his episcopal household participated willingly in the survey. The suggestion that Henry was ultimately responsible for the suppression policy in Durham is less certain. The visitors wrote to Cromwell for advice and instructions, and were frequently accompanied by members of the minister's household. The visitation, much like the enforcement of Reformation Parliament legislation, owed a great deal to the local gentry and Cromwell's political networks.

The northern visitation commenced in the final days of 1535 and was led by two of Cromwell's agents, Richard Layton and Thomas Legh. Both Layton and Legh saw themselves as the most suitable men to conduct the survey. The former wrote to Cromwell in early June 1535 outlining his credentials, intimate knowledge of the area, and willingness to take charge of the operation:

ye shalbe well and safe assuryde that yo shall nother fynde nonke chanon frear prior abbott or any other of what degree so ev[er]... that shall do the kyng[es] hyghnes so goode [ser]vyc in this matter for thos [per]sense nother be so trusty trewe and faithfull to yowe in the same, doynge all thing[es] so diligently for yor purpose and yor discharge.¹⁰⁶

New research into Wolsey's patronage networks in York has shown that letter writing and cordial language played an important part cementing patron-client

¹⁰⁴ G.W. Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church* (London and New Haven, 2005), pp. 243-46; idem, 'Dissolution', p. 394; Lucy Wooding, *Henry VIII* (London, 2009), pp. 201-14; Alec Ryrie, *The Age of Reformation: The Tudor and Stewart Realms, 1485-1603* (Harlow, 2008), pp. 135-37.

¹⁰⁵ E.A. Freeman, *The History of the Norman Conquest of England: Its Causes and Results*, 2nd edn. (6 vols. Oxford, 1867-1879), i, pp. 291-92; G.T. Lapsley, *The County Palatine of Durham: A Study in Constitutional History* (London, 1900), pp. 75-76; H.M. Cam, 'The Evolution of the Medieval Franchise', *Speculum* 32 (1957), pp. 427-42; Scammell, 'Origins and Limitations', pp. 449-52.

¹⁰⁶ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/IV, f. 13 (*LP*, VIII, 822).

relationships.¹⁰⁷ Layton's letter to Cromwell contains all the hallmarks of this type of political affinity. The language employed throughout would suggest that Layton saw himself as one of Cromwell's clients; after all it was Cromwell who had preferred both Layton and Legh to the king's service. It also reveals that the minister was the contact within Westminster to whom the northern commissioners appealed for assistance.

The visitation route was to 'begyn in lincoln northward[es] fro[m] london, chester dioces, yorke and so furthe to the borders of scotlande to ryde... one syde and co[m] up the other'.¹⁰⁸ Both Layton and Legh were to be accompanied by a team of approximately twelve to fifteen men, one of which was Cromwell's servant, William Blytheman, who joined the party as registrar and notary.¹⁰⁹ Given his administrative skills, intimate knowledge of the northern counties, and proximity to Cromwell, it is unsurprising that the forty-one-year old Blytheman was appointed a member of the visitation team.¹¹⁰

Those selected to oversee the northern visitation possessed a wealth of administrative experience and a comprehensive understanding of the local politico-religious landscape. Layton informed Cromwell in June 1535 that the religious communities in the North-East were accustomed to 'sup[e]stit[ious]... fantacies & ceremonys'. To rectify this, Layton suggested that the king 'bete his authoritie into ther hedes', so that the 'rude pople in the northe' might 'plainely see howe his grace being supreme hede intendithe nothing rather than refomacion... of religion'.¹¹¹ This dispatch raises questions as to whether Cromwell's agents set out to collect or fabricate tainted evidence. It would appear that the visitors sought to instruct the monasteries on England's new religious allegiance, albeit with a firm approach and a preconceived notion of what constituted good religious practice. Moreover, Layton's recommendations suggest that the visitors and the minister were working towards a mutual goal: politico-religious uniformity and the wholesale acceptance of the supremacy.

¹⁰⁷ Lewycky, 'Wolsey and the City of York', p. 51.

¹⁰⁸ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/IV, f. 13 (*LP*, viii, no. 822).

¹⁰⁹ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/IV, f. 163 (*LP*, ix, 1005); The Parker Library, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College Cambridge Manuscript 111, f. 346; BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/IV, f. 56 (*LP*, VIII, 955).

¹¹⁰ TNA, DL 3/40, f. 78.

¹¹¹ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/IV, f. 56 (*LP*, viii, 955).

After the Richmond visitation had been completed in January 1536, the visitors journeyed the twenty miles north to Tunstall's chief episcopal residence at Bishop Auckland. Layton and Legh were met some three or four miles from Auckland by the bishop and a large 'co[m]pany of his servant[es]' and received a welcoming reception.¹¹² Having stayed with Tunstall at Auckland for at least one night, the visitors left for Durham Priory with a 'gretter co[m]panye conductyng us... more half the waye from his house'.¹¹³ Historically, not all royal officials received this level of hospitality. Crown agents at various points after the Norman Conquest had been barred from entering the bishopric and refused permission to conduct investigations there.¹¹⁴ The attitude of Durham's leading inhabitants towards royal officials could now not be more contrasting. Providing safe conduct to Henry's agents was a politically invested action, one that was as much about delimiting boundaries as it was about hospitality. The Reformation completed the gradual disintegration of Durham's Anglo-Saxon heritage, allowing the regime to replace Saint Cuthbert's rule with the royal supremacy.

This shift in the politico-religious landscape owed a great deal to the attitudes of Durham's bishop towards central government. The notion that bishops of Durham were ardent defenders of Saint Cuthbert's patrimony had worn thin by the beginning of the sixteenth century; Bishops Ruthall, Wolsey, and Tunstall, in large part, were more concerned with preserving their standing with Westminster than with fighting to maintain the palatinate's medieval privileges.¹¹⁵ Indeed, A.J. Pollard and R.B. Dobson have suggested that the reversion of the bishops' loyalty had begun much earlier than Henry VIII's reign. Late medieval bishops of Durham were little more than royal pawns in the North-East.¹¹⁶ This argument is a credible one, but it was only with the

¹¹² TNA, SP 1/101, f. 153 (LP, x, 182).

¹¹³ TNA, SP 1/101, f. 153 (LP, x, 182).

¹¹⁴ Symeon of Durham, *Libellus de Exordio atque Procursu istius, Hoc est Dunhelmensis, Ecclesie*, ed. D. Rollason (Oxford, 2000), pp. 216-19; Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, p. 188.

¹¹⁵ Mervyn James referred to the early Tudor bishops of Durham as 'courtier-bishops', gifted clergymen whose reputation owed a great deal to their advancement under the crown. James, *Civil Society*, p. 42, 45.

¹¹⁶ R.B. Dobson, 'The Church of Durham and the Scottish Borders, 1378-88', in *War and Border Society in the Middle Age* ed. A. Goodman and A. Tuck (London, 1992), pp. 130-31; A.J. Pollard, 'The Crown and the County Palatine of Durham, 1437-94', in *The North of England in the Age of Richard III* ed. A.J. Pollard (Stroud, 1996), pp. 71-72; idem, 'Provincial Politics in Lancastrian England: The Challenge to Bishop Langley's Liberty in 1433', in *People, Places and Perspectives: Essays on Later Medieval and Early Tudor England*, ed. K. Dockray and P. Fleming (Nonsuch, 2005), p. 76.

accession of the Tudors and Henry VIII's religious reforms that pragmatic measures designed to incorporate the county palatine within the wider polity could be realised. By the mid-1530s a concerted effort was made to ensure that Durham was seen to be an integral part of a consolidated English state. This was made possible by a restored monarchy, which, after the tumult of the Wars of the Roses, possessed the necessary political and financial security to extend its prerogative into medieval franchises. Pliant bishops, new notions of imperial monarchy, an improved dialogue with the local gentry, and the formation of symbiotic patronage networks (the crown was the principal source of patronage in Durham by the late 1530s) all helped to facilitate the bishopric's integration within the Tudor state during the break from Rome.

Increasingly favourable attitudes towards royal officials operating in Durham contributed to the success of the visitation. Not only were these men seen as useful contacts with court, they were now considered to be tangible extensions of the royal person. The use of propaganda, pageantry, and ceremony all contributed to Westminster's ability to project an image of effective governance.¹¹⁷ While Henry VIII did not visit Durham in person during the 1530s, his commissioners frequently did, and were not only considered representatives of the crown: they were viewed as embodiments of the king himself and his new authority. David Starkey has postulated that members of the privy chamber served as royal representatives at court and in the localities, presiding for the king when he could not be there in person; this select group personified the royal person.¹¹⁸ The contention here, for neither Starkey nor Sharpe discuss commissioners, is that royal officials, like their counterparts in the privy chamber, were seen as personifying the royal will in the localities. This explains why Tunstall and his household made a concerted effort to treat the visitors as favourably as possible. Meeting the visitors on their journey to Bishop Auckland accorded a similar level of reverence to that which would have been expected if the king himself had entered the bishopric.

When the visitors arrived in Durham in late January efforts had already been made to enforce Henry's new religious authority. The commissioners commented on

¹¹⁷ Cooper, *Propaganda and the Tudor State*, pp. 210-47; Kevin Sharpe, *Selling the Tudor Monarchy: Authority and image in Sixteenth-Century England* (New Haven and London, 2009), pp. 157-76, 177-82; David Starkey, 'Representation through intimacy: A study in the symbolism of monarchy and Court office in early modern England', in *The Tudor Monarchy*, ed. John Guy (London, 1997), pp. 52-65.

¹¹⁸ Starkey, 'Representation through intimacy', pp. 52-55.

the positive state of affairs in the county palatine. Legh informed Cromwell that ‘Duresme is substancially stablisshe in thabolisshe ment of the bisshope of Rome... and surely confirmed to the king[es]... autoritie’.¹¹⁹ This religious harmony, the commissioner added, could not have been achieved without Bishop Tunstall and his episcopal household. Layton and Legh were so convinced of Tunstall’s support for the supremacy that they implored Cromwell to commission the bishop to write a book on the subject.¹²⁰ Notwithstanding, the visitors did take the opportunity to examine the lay members of Tunstall’s household and the inmates of the Cathedral Priory. Philip Dacre was found guilty of incest with his wife’s daughter: ‘*Philippus Dacre in manifesta incest cum filia uxoris*’. Cuthbert Conyers had repeatedly engaged in sexual relations with a single woman named Layton: ‘*Cuthbertus Conyers in manifesta fornicatione cum quadam Layton soluta*’. Tunstall had admonished both men on several occasions, to no effect.¹²¹

The reports on the Cathedral Priory made for more positive reading. Layton informed Cromwell that ‘yor iniuctions can take none effecte... for therwas nev[er] yet woman wthin thabbey further than the church, nor they [the monks] nev[er] came wtin the towne’.¹²² Nowhere in the *Compendium Compertorum* did the visitors feel obliged to defend the practices of religious institutions and their leaders. That Layton and Legh thought it necessary to write about Tunstall’s endeavours, while acknowledging the comparatively few misdemeanours that occurred within his household, suggests that there was no hidden agenda behind the visitor’s reports.¹²³ Where poor standards of behaviour were identified they were recorded, but, as with Durham, where efforts had been made to reform monasteries and advocate the supremacy these too were noted. Not only did the visitors go about their work with due care, it would appear that their workload has been somewhat understated. The desire to enforce the supremacy throughout the realm is supported by the number of institutions surveyed. The diocese of Durham contained twenty-one religious houses or cells, of which eighteen (including five that had previously not been accounted for)

¹¹⁹ TNA, SP 1/101, f. 154 (LP, x, 183). Richard Layton informed Cromwell that ‘no part of the realm be so well stablysshed in thabolishment of the said usurped power as this quarter’. TNA, SP 1/101, f. 153 (LP, x, 182).

¹²⁰ TNA, SP 1/101, f. 154 (LP, x, 183).

¹²¹ TNA, SP 1/102, f. 99 (LP, x, 364: 1, 2, 3).

¹²² TNA, SP 1/101, f. 154 (LP, x, 183).

¹²³ Shaw, ‘*Compendium Compertorum*’, p. 217.

were visited.¹²⁴ Combine this number with those houses examined in Carlisle and York and the average coverage across the three areas amounts to ninety per cent.¹²⁵

Much of the debate on the Durham visitation has centred on the credibility of the visitors' reports and Tunstall's distribution of palatinate offices to Layton and Legh.¹²⁶ It is possible that Tunstall bribed officials to cover up malfeasances in Durham's religious houses, not only to safeguard his own reputation, but also to protect those under this charge. We know that the bishop was concerned about the security of his position in Durham.¹²⁷ It is important to bear in mind that familial affinity (Layton was Tunstall's nephew) or the promise of future reward would not necessarily have overshadowed an official's responsibilities to the crown.¹²⁸ Layton and Legh had been appointed to lead the northern visitation by Cromwell, and it was to Westminster that both men would appeal for future assignments and patronage. Equally, the distribution of offices to the visitors could reflect Westminster and Durham's desire to forge contacts with one another. This was not atypical for the period. Religious and secular authorities in the localities were aware of the benefits to be had from appointing those with contacts at court to local positions. The crown, too, recognised the importance of placing agents in more remote areas. The expansion of royal power through the appointment of crown officials to local offices was a major theme in late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century texts on political control, and provided the foundation that allowed the fledgling Tudor dynasty to cement its authority after 1485. The longevity of the Tudor state owed as much to local political networks as it did to the supremacy and parliament. Without these networks the supremacy and other measures conceived in England's national assembly would not have taken hold. Tunstall's decision to appoint Layton and Legh to offices in Durham, then, was not motivated by nepotism or a desire to safeguard reputations. Rather, it

¹²⁴ CCCC MS 111, f. 348. The five additional houses visited in Durham are: Farane, Holystone, Lindisfarne, Newcastle nunnery and Wearmouth.

¹²⁵ Shaw, *'Compendium Compertorum'*, p. 192.

¹²⁶ Cunich, 'The Dissolution', pp. 156-57; Hoyle, 'Origins of the Dissolution', p. 295; Haigh, *English Reformations*, 337-38; Hughes, *Reformation in England*, p. 286-87; Joyce Youings, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries* (London, 1971), p. 37; Shaw, *'Compendium Compertorum'*, pp. 185-86, 215. Tunstall made Thomas Legh master of Sherborne hospital in September 1535 and granted his nephew, Richard Layton, the rectory of Sedgfield in November 1535. *Registers of Cuthbert Tunstall*, ed. Hinde, no. 121; Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstall*, p. 202.

¹²⁷ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/IV, f. 249, 250 (*LP*, x, 202).

¹²⁸ Mervyn James, *Society, Politics and Culture: Studies in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 332-38.

represented a common feature of early Tudor politics, one that enabled both local authorities and central government to prosper.

The Dissolution of the Monasteries in the Bishopric and the North-East

The dissolution of the monasteries in Durham and the neighbouring counties created a reservoir of crown patronage, through which Westminster was able to requisition and consolidate support in the localities by way of a careful distribution. The suppression of the bishopric's religious houses was not so much a case of financial gain or fervent religious reform, as it was a part of the government's incorporation agenda, a policy that on the most fundamental level had to be seen as encompassing all English territories. More recent research on Durham has largely ignored the impact of the dissolution; efforts to understand the motives behind monastic seizure in the West Country and Lancashire have been more forthcoming, however, and shed light on the nature of the crown's policies and its effect on the local landscape.¹²⁹ The debate on the suppression has tended to focus on short-term economic incentives, a genuine desire on the part of the government to reform religious communities, and the widespread confiscation of land as a means of guaranteeing political security.¹³⁰ The contentions here are twofold. First, the suppression of the bishopric's and the North-East's monasteries constituted another aspect of Henrician policy in which the state demanded absolute uniformity and obedience from *its* subjects. In those areas where large-scale resistance took hold and threatened to upset the balance of local society, the crown enacted a conscious strategy of granting or leasing (for significantly lower

¹²⁹ Thornton, 'Fifteenth-century Durham', pp. 83-100; Harvey, *Lay Religious Life*, pp. 185-97; Susan Keeling, 'The Dissolution of the Monasteries in the Border Country', in *The Last Principality*, ed. Marcombe, pp. 33-48; David Loades, 'The Dissolution of the Diocese of Durham, 1553-54', in *The Last Principality*, ed. Marcombe, pp. 101-16; A.L. Rowse, *Tudor Cornwall* (London, 1957), pp. 162-222; Bettey, *Suppression of the Monasteries in the West Country* (Gloucester, 1989); Christopher Haigh, *The Last Days of the Lancashire Monasteries and the Pilgrimage of Grace* (Manchester, 1969).

¹³⁰ A summary of these debates can be found in: Youings, *The Dissolution of the Monasteries*, p. 13; Elton, *Reform and Reformation*, p. 238; Heal, *Of Prelates and Princes*, pp. 102-7; John Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford, 1988), p. 148; Gwyn, *King's Cardinal*, pp. 464-69, 477-78; R.W. Hoyle, 'The Origins of the Dissolution of the Monasteries', *HJ* 38 (1995), pp. 275-305; Bernard, 'Dissolution', pp. 390-96, 400.

sums) confiscated lands to amenable lay landowners as a means of consolidating its position in the region.

Second, local landowners and those royal officials inserted into Durham played a pivotal role during the suppression. The realisation of Westminster's agenda was contingent upon the cooperation of local elites and government officials. In his work on the dissolution in the West Country, J.H. Bettey emphasised the importance of the local gentry and their symbiotic relationship with London; the likes of Sir Thomas Arundell were not only instrumental during the dissolution, they also served as receivers and auditors for the court of augmentations. The dissolution in the West Country, in large part, was not a battle of local traditions holding out against the superior might of the Henrician state; instead, a good portion of the region's leading actors proved themselves willing to assist the crown, in the hope of future recognition and reward.¹³¹ It will be shown here that Bettey's thesis can be applied to the Durham palatinate also.

Passed in the seventh session of the Reformation Parliament, the First Suppression Act came into force in late March 1536. The crown's efforts to reform standards of behaviour and worship in the smaller monasteries had come to no avail. To combat what was perceived to be 'manifest synne', 'all & syngler' religious houses with an annual income of less than £200 were to be surrendered to the crown.¹³² In the same vein as previous legislation, the inclusion of 'all & syngler' made no provisions for medieval peculiars. Eight houses in Durham, and nine in Newcastle, were liable for confiscation.¹³³ As cells of Durham Cathedral, however, the houses of Farne, Finchale, Holy Island, Jarrow, and Wearmouth were exempt. Two cells belonging to Durham Priory in Lincolnshire and Lancashire were exempt on the same grounds.¹³⁴ Letters patent issued on 4 July 1537 ensured that the nunnery of St Mary at Neasham was initially spared.¹³⁵ No religious communities in the bishopric were forfeited under the provisions set out in the First Suppression Act. This poses an interesting set of questions, not least why the commons in Durham took up arms against Westminster some seven months after the bill came into force?

¹³¹ Bettey, *West Country*, pp. 57-69.

¹³² *SR*, iii, p. 575.

¹³³ BL, Cotton Cleopatra E/IV, f. 347 (*LP*, x, 1238).

¹³⁴ St Leonard's Priory, Stamford, Lincolnshire, and the Benedictine Priory at Lytham, Lancashire.

¹³⁵ *LP*, xii, ii, app. no. 29.

Some 372 institutions fell within the financial parameters of the First Suppression Act. By late 1538, Cromwell had embarked on a systematic campaign of confiscation; the remaining 202 religious houses yielded within sixteenth months.¹³⁶ The palatinate's landowners would play a pivotal role throughout the suppression of the larger houses. Of those who served as commissioners and brokers at this time, Anthony Bellasis and his brother, Richard, were among the most active. The family's landholding in Durham, principally in and around Henknowle, dated back to the fourteenth century, yet it was during the early Reformation years that the family was able to really assert itself on a national stage. Accompanied by William Blytheman, Robert Bowes, and George Lawson, Anthony Bellasis was responsible for the surrender of one of the most lavish houses in the region: the abbey of Jervaulx in May 1537. The outgoing president of the council in the north, Thomas Howard, duke of Norfolk, informed Cromwell that the commissioners had seized the abbey's lead, which was to be transported to London; Bellasis had been unable to sell the bells for the sum the minister had requested. The commissioners would remain at the dissolved abbey to await Cromwell's instructions.¹³⁷

The surrender of Jervaulx is an apt example of the essential continuity of palatinate personnel operating on Westminster's behalf during the 1530s. A large proportion of those men who had served as commissioners or intermediaries during the visitation of 1535-36 were once again engaged on crown business during the dissolution of the larger monasteries. Blytheman's ties with the minister ensured his place on the visitation and dissolution commissions. Robert Bowes and George Lawson had worked for the crown during the visitation, while Anthony Bellasis's inclusion within the dissolution commissions should come as no surprise given his relationship with Cromwell. Anthony had entered the minister's service by 1536 and in summer 1538 was a resident member of his household. At this time, it was widely acknowledged that he was operating as one of Cromwell's chief patronage agents. On 26 October 1536, Thomas Sparke, bishop of Berwick and Tunstall's deputy in Durham, asked Bellasis if he might be willing to provide him with the vicarage of Giggleswick, Yorkshire, for a fee of £10. Sparke outlined the confusion surrounding its ownership: the benefice had first been awarded to him by Prior Whitehead, before

¹³⁶ The abbey at Waltham was the last to surrender on 23 March 1540. See Guy, *Tudor England*, p. 147.

¹³⁷ TNA, SP 1/120, f. 233 (*LP*, xii, i, 1307).

he was forced to relinquish it in favour of one of Cromwell's servants. That Bellasis was in a position to procure and advise Cromwell on the distribution of offices is evident in Sparke's request and is testimony to his central role within the minister's national network.¹³⁸

Bellasis's influence on proceedings did not wane during the dissolution. In early 1539, it would appear that Cromwell's agent was in line to receive the dissolved site at Byland, north Yorkshire, which had been surrendered the previous year. Sir Nicholas Fairfax intimated Cromwell's regard for Bellasis in a letter to the minister, written on 22 January 1539. Fairfax implored Cromwell to award him the dissolved abbey if 'Master Bellasse do leve the [pre]ferment of Bylande for anye other'.¹³⁹ This request fell on deaf ears, and while Bellasis did not receive the dissolved abbey, he did receive lands that consolidated the family's position near Byland. A grateful Cromwell procured the tenements and granges of Great Morton and Cold Morton in Hanby for Richard Bellasis in April 1539. On Richard's death the following March, his brother was provided with an annuity of £20 from the estates.¹⁴⁰ Recognition of Anthony's work did not end there: on 29 June 1540, he was granted the site of Newburgh Priory, for a fee of £1,062 14s 2d, and lands across north Yorkshire formerly in Newburgh's possession.¹⁴¹

Although his contacts with those at court were not as prolific as his brother's, Richard Bellasis fulfilled a similar role to his sibling. Richard Bellasis, Blytheman, Lawson, Rokesby, and Brandling seized five houses in Northumberland and Durham (including the priories of Newburgh and Tynemouth) by February 1539.¹⁴² Only two months before, Richard was jointly responsible for the confiscation of fifteen monasteries in Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire, further proof that Durham men were not confined to operating within the bishopric.¹⁴³ When the dissolution of the larger monasteries had come to a close by early 1540, Richard Bellasis had helped to suppress no fewer than twenty-six houses across four counties.¹⁴⁴ Durham's

¹³⁸ TNA, SP1/109, f. 195 (*LP*, xi, 877).

¹³⁹ TNA, SP 1/142, f. 141 (*LP*, xiv, i, 124).

¹⁴⁰ *LP*, xiv, i, 904 (22); *LP*, xvi, 947 (64).

¹⁴¹ *LP*, xv, 831 (84). The lands formerly in Newburgh's possession produced a rental income of £5 4. 7½d.

¹⁴² BL, Harl. MS. 604, f. 104 (*LP*, xiv, i, 394).

¹⁴³ BL, Harl. MS. 604, f. 106 (*LP*, xiv, i, 394).

¹⁴⁴ Richard Bellasis dissolved at least twenty-six religious houses in Durham, Northumberland, Staffordshire and Yorkshire. Yorkshire: Cistercian abbey at Fountains,

landowners, then, were not simply willing to help the crown implement its dissolution policy in the county palatine; they actively went about projecting the state's authority throughout the North. The insular and often isolated nature of political discourse that characterised late medieval Durham had given way to a more integrated form of politics, forged in parliament and implemented by those members of the local gentry anxious to involve themselves in national affairs.

The significance of Durham's once sacred geo-political boundaries was largely eroded by those members of the northern gentry who worked alongside palatinate men to suppress houses within the bishopric and its surrounding enclaves. Robert Collingwood of Eslington, Northumberland, was among those charged with the suppression of Hexham Abbey in late September 1536. The commissioners had been forewarned of the inmates' willingness to defend the abbey; the local inhabitants had prepared a stockpile of weapons to help drive off Collingwood and his team. The commissioners were met by a hostile reception: the gates were shut and the officials denied entrance by the canons, who proclaimed that they would rather die than surrender. No religious community, however, was capable of withstanding the wholesale dissolution. In spite of the initial obstacles, Hexham was seized just one year later (those monks who had resisted Collingwood's attempted suppression were later executed for their involvement in the Pilgrimage).¹⁴⁵

Collingwood had not acted alone at Hexham. He was joined by a group of commissioners, including James Rokesby, who had served as an auditor during the northern visitation and had dissolved no fewer than fifteen religious houses by December 1538. The enforcement of the Reformation, from the implementation of parliamentary legislation to the suppression of religious houses in Durham and across the North-East, saw unprecedented levels of cooperation between palatinate men and those from neighbouring counties. In times gone by, those from outside the bishopric would have been unable to conduct such an undertaking within the bishop's jurisdiction; a desire shared by the crown and Durham's leading lay landowners to showcase England's politico-religious harmony helped to facilitate Durham's

Selby abbey, and Meaux; Northumberland: Alnwick, and Blachland; Bishopric of Durham: Neasham Priory and Durham Cathedral Priory. *LP*, xiv, ii, 521; 551; 557; 566; 576; 577; 587; 588; 603; 636; 641; 653; 662; 663; 670; 671; 683; 700; 701; 715; 721; 722; 755; 772; 773. See TNA, SP 1/139, f. 147 (*LP*, xiii, ii, 900) for account of suppression of the Benedictine abbey of Burton-on-Trent.

¹⁴⁵ TNA, SP 1/106, f. 222 (*LP*, xi, 504).

integration. The willingness of Durham landowners and officials to operate within this new geo-political structure suggests that traditional notions of obedience to Saint Cuthbert had been replaced by a predilection among senior bishopric landowners to contribute towards national business.

The establishment of the court of augmentations in April 1536 further consolidated Durham's position within the Henrician state. Created to ascertain and manage revenues accruing from dissolved religious houses, it was headed by a chancellor – the first being Sir Richard Rich – who was accompanied by a treasurer, king's attorney, seventeen receivers, and ten auditors.¹⁴⁶ The duties of the court's receivers and auditors are of especial concern. Both were charged with the collection of the king's rent from monastic lands. Collection areas were divided into 'districts', typically composed of three or four counties; where fewer receivers were appointed, districts were made up of one or two shires. The bishopric formed part of a district alongside the archdeaconry of Richmond. It is worth noting that the palatinate was not recognised as a separate entity here. For the most part, those appointed to receiverships had previously established contacts with political elites in Westminster. William Blytheman, no stranger to central government, served as the first receiver for eight years, from the court's inception on 24 April to 15 February 1544. He was succeeded by another local man, Cuthbert Horsley, who held the position from 20 September 1544 to 16 March 1546.¹⁴⁷

An auditor's sphere of influence was also divided geographically, with counties grouped into 'circuits'. As with receiverships, no provisions were made on account of Durham's history of financial independence; it formed part of the northern circuit with Cumberland, Northumberland, Westmorland, and the archdeaconry of Richmond. Accounting expertise was not the only prerequisite for the court's auditors; a thorough knowledge of the local landscape was imperative, as were contacts with central government. James Rokesby, another familiar face with those at Westminster, was once again called upon to do the crown's bidding. Rokesby was appointed auditor for the northern circuit on 12 May 1536, a position he held in

¹⁴⁶ *SR*, iii, pp. 570-3; Walter C. Richardson, *History of the Court of Augmentations, 1536-1554* (Baton Rouge, 1961).

¹⁴⁷ *LP*, xx, i, 1336; Richardson, *Court of Augmentations*, pp. 48-9, 93.

isolation until 13 August 1542, when Richard Hutchinson joined him. Both men remained in office until the court's dissolution on 1 January 1547.¹⁴⁸

The court's geographical parameters reveal much about early Tudor attitudes towards and treatment of medieval franchises. No exceptions were made for Durham in the parliamentary act that legitimised the court's existence and the bishopric was included in those districts and circuits assessed by augmentation officials. It would appear that receivers and auditors conducted their business in Durham in the same manner as those operating elsewhere. Like the visitation commissioners, the receivers and auditors for augmentations faced little, if any, objection. At least three Durham landowners worked for the court between April 1536 and January 1547. Bishop Tunstall, court officials, and Durham's leading inhabitants, for the most part, did not share the same objections as their medieval forebears; the Reformation had opened the door to new forms of collaboration between the authorities in Durham and those at Westminster.

The inclusion of Durham within the court's remit would suggest that the regime regarded the palatinate as fiscally incorporated within the wider polity. This was not a unilateral process. Tim Thornton has shown that the eagerness of the Cheshire gentry to include the county in wider economic affairs helped to engender closer ties with London.¹⁴⁹ Reformation Parliament legislation, including the institution of augmentations, had a similar effect on Durham. The offices of receiver and auditor helped to facilitate closer politico-economic networks. The court of augmentations had a bilateral impact on relations between Durham's landowners and Westminster: first, it provided those already known to central government with the chance to further their careers as royal agents; second, it allowed those on the periphery of regional society to involve themselves in national business for the first time. Before his appointment as a receiver, Cuthbert Horsley's influence in the North-East was overshadowed by other family members. For the twenty-seven year old Cuthbert, the receivership served as a platform from which he could further his local

¹⁴⁸ *LP*, xviii, i, 982; Richardson, *Court of Augmentations*, pp. 54-55.

¹⁴⁹ Tim Thornton, 'The integration of Cheshire into the Tudor nation state in the early sixteenth century', *NH* 29 (1993), pp. 40-63.

ambitions under Edward VI and Elizabeth I; he would go on to forge a career in Newcastle, working in tandem with the town's mayor, Sir Robert Branding.¹⁵⁰

Four degrees of integration followed from the court's establishment: legislative, judicial, economic, and political. The act formalising the court followed a pattern set in previous Reformation Parliament legislation by making no provisions for the county palatine. Durham's legislative autonomy was replaced by the regime's efforts to ensure uniformity during the break with Rome. On judicial matters, the inclusion of Durham within the court's remit reflects the wider shift away from local jurisdictions to the equity courts at Westminster.¹⁵¹ Financial matters in Durham would previously have been heard in the bishop's courts and managed in the bishopric's exchequer at Palace Green.¹⁵² Economic integration came with the crown's seizure and strategic distribution of monastic assets. All dissolved property in the bishopric was now subject to the management of central government. Fiscal integration was not just a matter of whether Durham was subject to parliamentary taxation.¹⁵³ Fourthly, the introduction of the augmentations court brought about political incorporation. The court and its agents can be seen as another tangible extension of the supremacy in institutional form, much like the faculty office of the archbishop of Canterbury and the vicegerency. What is more, those Durham landowners and officers who served as receivers and auditors proved willing, yet again, to work on Westminster's behalf.

The Palatinate and the Pilgrimage of Grace

Despite a concerted effort to implement centralising policies and the consolidation of a burgeoning patron-client network between the North-East and Westminster, it is important to bear in mind that the allegiances of certain palatinate landowners were severely tested, and in some cases compromised, by a wave of popular unrest in late

¹⁵⁰ His father, John, had served as captain of Bamburgh Castle and sheriff of Northumberland during Henry VIII's reign. 'Horsley, Cuthbert (by 1517-by 1586)', *House of Commons, 1558-1603*, ed. P.W. Hasler [<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/horsley-cuthbert-1517-1586>]

¹⁵¹ Kitching, 'Durham Palatinate and the Courts of Westminster', pp. 49-70; Gunn, *Early Tudor Government*, pp. 76-89.

¹⁵² Lapsley, *County Palatine of Durham*, p. 2, 128.

¹⁵³ Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham', pp. 89-94.

1536. The largest rebellion since the Peasants' Revolt in 1381, the Pilgrimage of Grace, its causes and impact, remains a fiercely contested topic among historians. The first modern narratives focused on religious grievances and the shock of the dissolution, while revisionists have placed greater emphasis on socio-economic factors and Thomas Cromwell's disruption of England's 'social orders'.¹⁵⁴ Historians have also recognised the localised nature of the Pilgrimage; Penry Williams postulated that the rebellion's roots could be traced back to increasing central involvement in regional affairs.¹⁵⁵ As these debates have illustrated, the motivations for rebellion varied enormously from person to person, with certain grievances more prevalent in different areas.

Individual motivations for embarking on the Pilgrimage ranged from a genuine desire to reverse some of the more procrustean reforms introduced in the Reformation Parliament, a need to defend the old religion and its centrality in the North of England, to a means of vilifying Henry's chief minister, Thomas Cromwell, and his inner-circle at court. Equally, it would appear that some of those who took part in the Pilgrimage of Grace did so out of coercion.¹⁵⁶ Among Durham's landed elite, Robert Bowes' motivations for joining and his actions during the Pilgrimage perhaps best illustrate the political tightrope encountered by many across the North-East in late 1536.

¹⁵⁴ M.H. Dodds and R. Dodds, *The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Exeter Conspiracy* (Cambridge, 1915); Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal*, p. 152; Christopher Haigh, *The Last Days of the Lancashire Monasteries and the Pilgrimage of Grace*, Chetham Society 17 (1969), pp. 53-60; D.M. Palliser, *Tudor York* (Oxford, 1979), p. 49, 80; S.M. Harrison, *The Pilgrimage of Grace in the Lake Counties, 1536-7* (London, 1981), pp. 60-66; R.W. Hoyle, 'Crown, parliament and taxation in sixteenth century England', *EHR* 109 (1994), pp. 1174-96; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy and Piety* (1995), pp. 5-6, 82-3; Michael Bush, *The Pilgrimage of Grace: A Study of the Rebel Armies of October 1536* (New York, 1996), p. 408; idem, *The Pilgrim's Complaint: A Study of Popular Thought in the Early Tudor North* (Farnham, 2009), *passim*; Shagan, *Popular Politics*, pp. 89-129. Margaret Harvey's 2006 analysis of religious life in Durham has placed greater emphasis on the disruption to the bishopric's monastic communities and their importance to local society: Harvey, *Lay Religious Life*, pp. 185-86.

¹⁵⁵ Penry Williams, *The Tudor Regime* (Oxford, 1979), p. 321.

¹⁵⁶ M.L. Bush, 'The Tudor polity and the Pilgrimage of Grace', *HR* 80 (2007), p. 64; idem, *A Study of the Rebel Armies of October 1536*, pp. 42-55; Christine Newman, 'The Bowes of Streatham, County Durham: A Study of the Politics and Religion of a Sixteenth Century Northern Gentry Family' (University of York PhD thesis, 1991), pp. 87-105; C.S.L. Davies, 'Popular Religion and the Pilgrimage of Grace', in *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England*, ed. A. Fletcher and J. Stevenson (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 75-76; R.W. Hoyle, *The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Politics of the 1530s* (Oxford, 2001), p. 217.

Historians have questioned Bowes' motives from the outset of the Pilgrimage. Christine Newman has cited Bowes' surrender of Barnard Castle 'without a stroke' – the palatinate fortress boasted a contingent of eight hundred soldiers – as evidence of his essential sympathy with the wider pilgrim cause.¹⁵⁷ The recruitment of a man of Bowes' stature, coordinating the rebellion in and around Durham and West Riding, proved crucial. The pilgrim leader, Robert Aske, emphasised Bowes' importance and, somewhat misleadingly, estimated that nearly one half of the entire force – twenty-two thousand of Aske's suggested forty-seven thousand strong army – were recruited by Robert Bowes. Recent research has put Bowes' contingent at the still sizeable figure of ten thousand.¹⁵⁸ Despite Bowes' possible reservations, the rebels welcomed his added experience within their ranks.¹⁵⁹ It was Bowes' contingent that was responsible for the sacking of Bishop Tunstall's episcopal palace at Auckland.¹⁶⁰ His part commanding the rebel army certainly bolstered the reputation and bargaining power of Aske and his fellow commanders; shortly after the main pilgrim force had assembled near Spennymoor, Bowes rode to Brancepeth to recruit the earl of Westmorland.¹⁶¹ Although Westmorland did not commit to the rebels personally, he did permit – it is possible he was coerced – his heir, Lord Neville, to travel; such was Bowes' stature within the rebel ranks, he and another local landowner, Sir Ralph Ellerker, journeyed south to present the rebel petition to the king and Cromwell.¹⁶²

Having helped to convene the Doncaster conference between the rebel leaders and the royal negotiating party headed by the duke of Norfolk, it would appear that Bowes had begun to make serious strides to appease tensions and bring about a genuine peace settlement; upon returning to the North-East, he was at pains to stress the 'goodness of my Lord Privy Seal [Cromwell] to the commons'.¹⁶³ Notwithstanding Bowes' effort to restore order in the region after the collapse of the

¹⁵⁷ Newman, 'Bowes of Streatlam', p. 111; idem, *Robert Bowes and the Pilgrimage of Grace* (Middlesbrough, 1997), *passim*; *LP*, xii, i, 789.

¹⁵⁸ Bush, *Study of the Rebel Armies of October 1536*, pp. 136-7; Hoyle, *Pilgrimage of Grace*, p. 217.

¹⁵⁹ *LP*, xii, i, 786, 789.

¹⁶⁰ A comprehensive survey of events in Durham during the Pilgrimage can be found in Michael Bush, *Durham and the Pilgrimage of Grace* (Durham, 2000).

¹⁶¹ *LP*, xii, i, 1025; Bush, *Study of the Rebel Armies of October 1536*, pp. 136-7.

¹⁶² *LP*, xi, 945; R.W. Hoyle, 'Thomas Master's Narrative of the Pilgrimage of Grace', *NH* 21 (1985), p. 71; 'Bowes, Robert (by 1497-155)', *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff [http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/bowes-robert-1497-1555]

¹⁶³ *LP*, xii, i, 392, 901, 1022.

Pilgrimage, a palpable air of residual tension abounded within Durham and its neighbouring enclaves. Thomas Tempest wrote to Norfolk on 5 February 1537 outlining the instability in the region: ‘Northumbreland is hole owt of rewle and w[ith] owt order betakyn w[i]th Tyndale and Redesdale... The Baroyne of Langley and hexhamshire... be almost as eveyll... I was never so trowbled in my lyfe as I am to stey this north side of the bishopryche’.¹⁶⁴ It was at this moment that Francis Bigod, a former agent of Cromwell, conspired to reignite unrest in the East Riding of Yorkshire and the bishopric. Doubtful of whether Henry would honour his promises to the disbanded pilgrim army, Bigod’s rebellion centred on the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland and, to a lesser extent, the palatinate of Durham. Whilst a large proportion of Durham’s landed families chose not to align with Bigod and his followers in ealy 1537, the Bulmer family, with its history of loyal service towards crown and bishop, was among those in the region who did attempt to reignite the Pilgrimage of Grace.¹⁶⁵

Francis Bigod’s inability to garner support from those residing in Durham owes a great deal to the endeavours of the local gentry, many of whom had embarked upon a campaign to restore order across the region. Prominent among those operating on Westminster’s behalf was Robert Bowes, who, after his role in the October 1536 rising, was seeking to reestablish his credentials with the crown. By late January 1537, Bowes was dispelling rumours that Henry planned to renounce the December truce, reiterating the promise that a special parliament would be held at York.¹⁶⁶ Ralph Sadler, a client of Cromwell who had been sent north to keep the minister abreast of developments, wrote in early January that he had rendezvoused at Durham with Bowes, ‘who... ceases not to go from place to place... and hathe brought the people in good stay and quyetnes’. He added that had Bowes taken steps to nullify tensions before October then no insurrection would have occurred.¹⁶⁷ Bowes’ praises were sung once again, this time by Norfolk, in mid-April 1537: he was ‘very moche esteemed’ and ‘hath no felow in these... [par]tres of his degre’. The duke added that Henry would benefit enormously from nurturing Bowes’ services, and it would

¹⁶⁴ TNA, SP 1/115, f. 196 (*LP*, xii, i, 345).

¹⁶⁵ Newman, ‘Bowes of Streatlam’, p. 108; Bush, *Study of the Rebel Armies of October 1536*, p. 194.

¹⁶⁶ Bush, *Pilgrimage of Grace*, p. 48.

¹⁶⁷ BL, Cotton Caligula B/II, f. 361 (*LP*, xii, i, 259).

appear as though this was taken on board, for Sir Robert is listed among Cromwell's remembrances for the following month.¹⁶⁸

Efforts to restore peace in the bishopric were bolstered by other members of the local gentry.¹⁶⁹ Sir Thomas Tempest, who had forged a strong relationship with Norfolk (then earl of Surrey) during the Scottish campaigns of the early 1520s, made a concerted effort to restore calm in Durham, in spite of his failing health and diminishing resources.¹⁷⁰ It was Sir Thomas Tempest who, alongside Robert Bowes, escorted a host of Bigod's failed rebels – including Sir John Bulmer – to London for imprisonment and interrogation.¹⁷¹ Ralph Eure played an equally pivotal role, defending Scarborough Castle for nearly three weeks with only a small company of his household.¹⁷² Cromwell later wrote to his 'loving fraend', promising that Eure's defence of Scarborough would be made known to the king.¹⁷³ Both men were noted alongside Bowes in the minister's remembrances for May 1537.¹⁷⁴

The crown was undoubtedly left shaken by the Pilgrimage and the possibility of further unrest in the North-East in the form of Francis Bigod's attempted revolt. A considerable number of previously loyal landowners and officers joined the pilgrim force, which outnumbered that of the king, temporarily upsetting the dynamic of regional society. Whether the Pilgrimage should be seen as a fundamentally negative turning point in Durham's long-term relationship with Westminster is less clear. The latter did take exemplary measures to ensure that those in the North-East would not rebel in the future; major and minor protagonists, including Bigod and the canons of Hexham, were executed for their involvement, as were a number of other rebels from the palatinate. The council in the north was reconstituted to oversee local government (several palatinate men, including Robert Bowes, were appointed to the council).¹⁷⁵

Moreover, Durham's experience in the aftermath of the uprising was not atypical.¹⁷⁶ For the most part, the northern gentry worked to restore calm in the

¹⁶⁸ TNA, SP 1/118, f. 115 (*LP*, xii, i, 919); *LP*, xii, i, 1106.

¹⁶⁹ Sir Marmaduke Tunstall, the bishop's nephew, provided a company of sixty-one men to assist the earl of Derby in early December 1536. TNA, SP 1/112, f. 131 (*LP*, xi, 1251).

¹⁷⁰ TNA, SP 1/115, f. 196 (*LP*, xii, i, 345).

¹⁷¹ *LP*, xii, i, 1025.

¹⁷² TNA, SP 1/109, f. 208 (*LP*, xi, 883); TNA, SP 1/110, f. 183 (*LP*, xi, 989).

¹⁷³ TNA, SP 1/111, f. 41 (*LP*, xi, 1032).

¹⁷⁴ *LP*, xii, i, 1106.

¹⁷⁵ *LP*, xi, 921; R.R. Reid, *The King's Council in the North* (London, 1921), p. 104.

¹⁷⁶ R.W. Hoyle, *The Pilgrimage of Grace and the Politics of the 1530s* (Oxford, 2001), pp. 365-88.

region; many landowners were in a position to reestablish their positions with the regime.¹⁷⁷ The seriousness of the threat posed by the Pilgrimage of Grace explains why the efforts of local men to diffuse tensions were so important. The outbreak of violence in October 1536 reflected the uncertainty faced by the local population. The dynamic of regional society was changing: landowners had to balance the maintenance of their positions in local society with the prospect of future, and occasionally unpopular, involvement in national affairs. Indeed, the involvement of men like Robert Bowes and other senior palatinate figures in the Pilgrimage is evidence of the fragility of local patronage networks and their propensity to break down if not adequately managed. In the short- and medium-term this had the effect of temporarily weakening the crown's political and administrative foothold in the region. Despite years of careful nurturing, the potential longevity of the crown's North-Eastern networks was placed in serious doubt during the Pilgrimage and, albeit to a lesser extent, Francis Bigod's rebellion in the far North. Both episodes demonstrate how individual motives and attitudes could surpass previous loyalty and service to the crown. That said, the fragile state of affairs in early 1537 did provide Durham men with the opportunity to reassert their commitment to Westminster. The long-term effect of the Pilgrimage, then, was to strengthen those bonds – severely tested and in some cases compromised during the rebellion – that had been forged through years of dedicated service. For the remainder of Henry VIII's reign, disruption in the palatinate was minimal. This serves as a testament to those men who set out to restore order in the region and of the durability of Durham's relationship with the Henrician regime.

The Impact of the Dissolution on Durham and its Lay Landowners

Aside from the distinctive change to the region's religious landscape that came with the seizure of the abbeys, the dissolution had the effect of further eroding the palatinate's geo-political boundaries. The Reformation marked a period of seismic change for Durham; the hostile attitudes of the local population, including Durham's bishops, its lesser landowners, and the peasantry, towards royal officials that had

¹⁷⁷ Haigh, *Lancashire Monasteries and the Pilgrimage*, pp. 86-101; Newman, 'Bowes of Streatham', pp. 85-6.

characterised the late medieval palatinate had given way to pragmatic collaboration. For the most part, commissioners for the dissolution in Durham – including bishopric landowners and those from neighbouring shires – went about their business in the same manner as those operating throughout the country. Durham no longer represented a major or threatening obstacle to crown agents. Open hostility did break out at Hexham in September 1536 and with the Pilgrimage of Grace one month later, but the failure of the canons at Hexham and the pilgrims to reverse the trend of centralisation is testimony to the power of the supremacy and the state's ability to enforce it through patron-client networks. Once the Pilgrimage had been suppressed the regime was able to commence the wholesale dissolution of England's remaining monasteries, including the highly symbolic resting place of Saint Cuthbert at Durham Cathedral Priory.

Any tangible remnant of the bishopric's pre-Conquest religious identity was all but removed with the dissolution of the Benedictine Cathedral Priory on 31 December 1539.¹⁷⁸ Legitimised by the Second Suppression Act, passed in early 1539, the process of dissolving the priory had in fact begun two years previously when William Blytheman and Thomas Legh dismantled Cuthbert's shrine, where the saint had remained undisturbed for more than four centuries.¹⁷⁹ Cuthbert's tomb had been unceremoniously broken open and his body removed to the vestry for safekeeping. How strenuous the dissolution proved to be for the priory's inmates is less certain.¹⁸⁰ Hugh Whitehead's good relationship with Cromwell helped ensure the livelihood of fourteen inmates; the remaining thirty-two monks received pensions, ranging from £5 to £6 13s. 4d.¹⁸¹ The sums granted to former religious at Durham Priory were consistent with those throughout the North-East. The pensions granted to the twenty-five former inmates of Byland in January 1539 ranged from £8 to £4; for the nineteen monks at Tynemouth the sums were the same as those awarded to their Durham counterparts; and the eighteen displaced inmates of Newburgh Priory received pensions between £6 13s. 4d and £4.¹⁸² A comparison of the pensions granted to the ex-religious at Durham with those at Byland, Tynemouth, and Newburgh would

¹⁷⁸ *LP* xiv, ii, 772, i.

¹⁷⁹ *SR*, iii p. 733.

¹⁸⁰ Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal*, p. 259.

¹⁸¹ TNA, SP 1/168, f. 192 (*LP*, xvi, no. 1493); *LP*, xiv, ii, 772, ii.

¹⁸² *LP*, xiv, i, 185.

suggest that the sums awarded by Westminster were reasonably generous.¹⁸³ Given the pensions awarded to the bishopric's ex-religious and the relatively small sums at which its monastic houses were sold off or alienated, it is difficult to reconcile the dissolution with short-term financial incentives.¹⁸⁴ Rather, it served to strengthen the crown's foothold in the region; the sale or granting of land to local landowners was another means through which the regime hoped to consolidate its authority in the North-East.

A number of those Durham men who had taken part in the dissolution were called upon once again to conduct an assessment of the chantries in early 1546. Robert Bowes served on two commissions: the first in Northumberland, the bishopric, including the city of Durham, and Newcastle; the second commission covered the counties of Westmorland and Cumberland.¹⁸⁵ Tunstall and William, Lord Eure, joined Bowes in the bishopric; Cuthbert Horsley, receiver for the court of augmentations, was listed among those responsible for Westmorland and Cumberland. It would appear that the positive impression generated by their work during the dissolution reinforced Westminster's decision to appoint Durham men to survey the chantries in early 1546.

Durham's growing involvement within the national polity was reiterated through the strategic distribution of palatinate offices to royal agents. On 19 March 1545, Robert Bowes, who by this point had been made warden of the middle march, was appointed chief steward of the lordship and liberty of Hexhamshire.¹⁸⁶ The empanelling of local commissions and the dispersal of offices once the preserve of the bishop suggests much about the shifting power dynamic in Durham. The crown had become the principal source of patronage in the county palatine, a newfound position reflected in its ability to dispense confiscated monastic land.

Durham's secular landowners and officers profited enormously from the dispersal of former monastic land. Of those royal commissioners to receive land, we have seen how Westminster went about rewarding Anthony and Richard Bellasis. In

¹⁸³ Sturge remarked that the pensions were on a 'scale which was not inadequate': *Cuthbert Tunstall*, p. 262.

¹⁸⁴ Christopher Haigh has argued that the dissolution of the monasteries 'was cloaked in the language of spiritual reform, but the real motive was financial'. Haigh, *English Reformations*, p. 130. George Bernard has since questioned the financial profitability to the crown's sale and alienation of confiscated monastic land. Bernard, 'Dissolution', p. 393.

¹⁸⁵ *LP*, xxi, i, 302 (30).

¹⁸⁶ *LP*, xx, i, 465 (53); *LP*, xx, i, 465 (54).

June 1541, George Lawson – who was responsible for the seizure of several houses in Yorkshire, including Jervaulx – was granted a twenty-one-year lease to the site of Newcastle nunnery, including land located within the bishopric.¹⁸⁷ Westminster proved equally forthcoming with those who had not directly participated in the dissolution, but who nonetheless could be considered clients or agents. Robert Tempest of Holmside, nephew of Sir Thomas, received the dissolved priory at Syningthwaite, north Yorkshire, in December 1538.¹⁸⁸ In early 1545, Lord Eure was leased land in Durham and Yorkshire with a net worth of £428 10s 10d, including the monastery at Newminster and site of Jarrow Priory in Durham.¹⁸⁹ The priory at Neasham was eventually sold in January 1540 to James Lawson, brother of the former prioress, Jane Lawson, for £227 5s.¹⁹⁰

The distribution of land to members of the court helped the crown consolidate its position in the region. One of the court's rising stars, Sir Ralph Sadler, was granted a huge complex of land in Yorkshire in August 1540, including the abbey at Selby.¹⁹¹ The sale of monastic property, and the impact this had on Westminster's influence in Durham, continued for many years after the dissolution. Edward VI provided Sadler with the site of the abbey at Alnwick in 1550.¹⁹²

It was through the dispersal of offices and confiscated land that the regime began to replace the bishop as the principal patronage broker in the region. Those men who had received monastic land did so, by and large, as a reward for having participated in the suppression or because they had already established themselves as royal agents. By the late 1530s it would seem that the upper echelons of local secular society regarded the crown as the source of real authority in the bishopric. This was made possible through a resumption of lands, a reservoir of patronage that enabled the crown to extend its reach into Durham, while at the same time guaranteeing a ready supply of potential and existing clients.

In his 1977 *Reform and Reformation*, Geoffrey Elton made the distinction between a 'public' and 'private' resumption of land in the aftermath of the dissolution. The former referred to the crown's desire to augment its own land-base;

¹⁸⁷ *LP*, xvi, 1500 (188b).

¹⁸⁸ *LP*, xiii, 1182 (34).

¹⁸⁹ *LP*, xx, i, 465 (54).

¹⁹⁰ *A History of the County of Durham*, ed. William Page (London, 1907), ii, pp. 106-8.

¹⁹¹ 'Sadler, Ralph (1507-87)', *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff

[<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/sadler-ralph-1507-87>]

¹⁹² William Davidson, *A Descriptive and Historical View of Alnwick* (London, 2013), p. 272.

the latter concerned the gentry's eagerness to purchase monastic leases and bolster their own landed interests.¹⁹³ When it came to the consolidation of the regime's position in Durham, Elton's distinction is less marked: rather than viewing the 'public' and 'private' demand for land as being separate, it would appear that the two were very much interlinked. The crown would have been unable to extend its influence into Durham had it not distributed land to its clients. The suppression of the monasteries in the North-East should be seen not so much in terms of financial greed or a desire to implement religious reform. Rather, the episode formed part of a wider, deliberate, Henrician reform programme designed to cement royal power in the furthestmost parts of the realm.

Conclusion

Tudor policy towards the Durham palatinate during the mid-to late-1530s was driven by a philosophy of pragmatic integration. Where elements of Durham's politico-religious infrastructure were seen to be incapable of accommodating the seismic changes brought about by the Reformation, central government did not shy away from exerting a controlled influence in the region. In spite of its long history of political, financial, judicial, and religious autonomy, the bishopric was not regarded or treated as a special case in matters concerning England's separation from Rome. On those policies of national and international significance – the succession, the enforcement of the royal supremacy, and dissolution of the monasteries – Westminster thought it expedient to intervene in palatinate business. On the one hand, Durham could not be seen as in any way divergent when it came to the implementation of the Reformation at a local level. On the other, Westminster was by no means determined to 'do away with' the palatinate, as Geoffrey Elton and his Whig predecessors argued.¹⁹⁴ Where Durham's secular and ecclesiastical bodies were seen to be conducting themselves efficiently, the crown maintained a low but omnipresent position in the bishopric, respecting its right to self-determination, while ensuring that central authorities were kept abreast of local developments.

¹⁹³ Elton, *Reform and Reformation*, p. 238.

¹⁹⁴ Elton, *England under the Tudors*, p. 175.

An examination of the enforcement of Reformation Parliament legislation in Durham reveals a great deal about the on-going debate concerning the nature of early Tudor government in peripheral territories. Despite Elton's argument to the contrary, the 1536 Franchises Act did not mark the beginning of the end for Durham.¹⁹⁵ Indeed, more recent research has suggested that the bishop's franchisal courts continued to flourish after the bill came into effect. Moreover, writs were occasionally issued in the name of the bishop, admittedly by mistake, though such administrative blunders went largely unpunished.¹⁹⁶ Revisionists have, however, gone too far in their assessment of the piecemeal impact of the Franchises Act on Durham's position vis-à-vis Westminster. The Reformation Parliament had passed a series of measures before the franchises bill that bound the palatinate in the same manner as its northern neighbours. Parliament did not distinguish English shires from the independent franchise at such a critical juncture. The propagation of the supremacy required uniform acceptance throughout the realm.

Those Durham landowners and officials who served as intermediaries made the enforcement of the supremacy and the dissolution of the monasteries possible. Durham's pragmatic relationship with central government was contingent upon the support of local landowners. The restoration of law and order in the North-East after the Pilgrimage is testimony to the importance of the local gentry and their constructive role in the wider polity. Royal ministers at Westminster and the palatinate authorities made effective use of informal political networks to ensure that the Reformation was preached and adhered to in the county palatine and its surrounding enclaves. This type of political interaction was not uncommon; royal officials made a concerted effort to establish and nurture networks in York and throughout the West Country.¹⁹⁷ Just as parliament did not distinguish between Durham and other English shires when drafting legislation, the Tudor regime adopted the same apparatus to enforce political or religious change. The Durham palatinate of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries sought to maintain its autonomy in the face of repeated attempts by the crown to curtail it. The palatinate of the 1530s, however, was

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 175.

¹⁹⁶ Kitching, 'Durham Palatinate and the Courts of Westminster', pp. 49-70.

¹⁹⁷ Lewycky, 'Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks'; idem, 'Wolsey and the City of York', pp. 43-60; Robertson, 'Management of West Country Government', pp. 793-816; Bettey, *Suppression of the Monasteries in the West Country*, pp. 57-69.

seen as an integral component of the state by the authorities in London and, for the most part, by those in Durham.

CHAPTER FOUR

Henry VIII's 'Rough Wooing': Durham and the Wars with Scotland, c. 1537 - 1545

Historians have exchanged blows over the nature, execution, and efficacy of Henry VIII's policy towards Scotland during late 1530s and 1540s, a period romanticised by Sir Walter Scott as England's 'Rough Wooing'.¹ On the one hand, English policy towards Scotland has been seen in dynastic terms; Henry was eager to unite the two kingdoms through the marriage of his son, Prince Edward, to the infant Mary, queen of Scots.² R.G. Eaves nuanced this thesis somewhat, suggesting that Henry's ambitions were rooted in his sister Margaret's marriage to James IV in 1503; the result of Margaret and James' union was that Henry could assert a familial and dynastic claim to the Scottish crown through his nephew, the future James V.³ On the other hand, J.J. Scarisbrick, Cliff Davies, and Geoffrey Elton voiced scepticism about Henry's Scottish ambitions. Far from intending a dynastic union, English policies were transient and reactionary.⁴

The mid-century wars reveal much about Henry's Scottish policies and, more broadly, the nature of early Tudor state building. Those whose research centres on the nature and composition of European states have tended to conclude that warfare, a monocausal explanation for state development, does not account for the various factors that, collectively, led to the consolidation of largely centralised states. Michael Braddick, Steve Hindle, and Wolfgang Reinhard stressed that fiscal-military states emerged at different times in response to multifarious stimuli, from the confessional,

¹ Sir Walter Scott, *Tales of a Grandfather* (Edinburgh, 1842), p. 224.

² A.F. Pollard, *Henry VIII* (London, 1925), pp. 362-64, 405-7; J.D. Mackie, 'Henry VIII and Scotland', *TRHS*, 4th series 29 (1947), pp. 93-114; Gordon Donaldson, *Scotland, James V to James VII* (London, 1965), pp. 26-30; A.J. Slavin, *Politics and Profit: A Study of Ralph Sadler, 1507-1547* (Cambridge, 1966), p. 95; M.H. Merriman, 'The Assured Scots: Scottish Collaborators with England during the Rough Wooing', *Scottish Historical Review* 47 (1968), pp. 10-34; M.L. Bush, *The Government Policy of Protector Somerset* (London, 1975), p. 7; D.M. Head, 'Henry VIII's Scottish Policy: A Reassessment', *Scottish Historical Review* 61 (1982), p. 2.

³ R.G. Eaves, *Henry VIII's Scottish Diplomacy, 1513-1524: England's Relations with the Regency Government of James V* (New York, 1971), p. 11.

⁴ J.J. Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII* (London, 1968), pp. 435-36; C.S.L. Davies, *Peace, Print and Protestantism, 1450-1588* (London, 1976), p. 214; G.R. Elton, *Reform and Reformation: England, 1509-1558* (Cambridge, 1977), p. 305-6.

dynastic, and administrative aspects of statecraft.⁵ Durham's involvement in the Scottish wars and its impact on the palatinate's position in the national polity should be examined in a similar light. By participating in diplomatic negotiations and, when these broke down, military campaigns on the border, palatinate landowners further integrated Durham within the crown's orbit in the North-East. Durham operated as part of a highly regional community, whose networks enabled the crown to assert its prerogative more forcibly on the border.

Significantly, discussions of the impact of warfare on European state building have begun to recognise the importance of politico-military networks. Research into the late Elizabethan campaigns in the Netherlands and Spain has shown that the earls of Leicester and Essex, made effective use of military clienteles to raise troops and equipment.⁶ In the North-East, Mark Arvanigian has demonstrated that the management of the Scottish marches in the late fourteenth century owed more than had previously been acknowledged to the mobilisation of the local families, who operated in tandem with county authorities and the crown itself.⁷ Scholars looking at methods of troop-raising in France have reached similar conclusions.⁸

⁵ Wolfgang Reinhard, *Geschichte der Staatsgewalt: eine vergleichende Verfassungsgeschichte Europas von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart* (Frankfurt, 1999), pp. 15-45; idem, 'Introduction; Power Elites, State Servants, Ruling Classes, and the Growth of State Power', in *The Origins of the Modern State in Europe, 13th-18th Centuries: Power Elites and State Building*, ed. Wolfgang Reinhard (Oxford, 1996), pp. 1-18; M.J. Braddick, *State Formation in Early Modern England, 1550-1700* (Cambridge, 2000), *passim*; Steve Hindle, *The State and Social Change in Early Modern England, 1550-1640* (Basingstoke, 2000), *passim*; S.J. Gunn, David Grummitt, and Hans Cools, *War, State and Society in England and the Netherlands, 1477-1559* (Oxford, 2007); idem, 'War and the State in Early Modern Europe: Widening the Debate', *War in History* 15 (2008), p. 383; I.A.A. Thompson, *War and Government in Habsburg Spain, 1560-1620* (London, 1976), p. 146; J.B. Wood, *The King's Army: Warfare, Soldiers and Society during the Wars of Religion in France, 1562-1576* (Cambridge, 1996), p. 309; David Parrot, *Richelieu's Army: War, Government and Society in France, 1624-1642* (Cambridge, 2001), pp. 551-52; Jan Glete, *War and the State in Early Modern Europe: Spain, the Dutch Republic and Sweden as Fiscal-Military States* (London, 2002), pp. 1-3.

⁶ S.L. Adams, 'The Gentry of North Wales and the Earl of Leicester's expedition to the Netherlands, 1585-1586', *Welsh History Review* 7 (1974), pp. 129-47; Neil Younger, 'The Practice and Politics of Troop-Raising: Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex, and the Elizabethan Regime' *EHR* 127 (2012), pp. 566-91. For a detailed account of early Tudor troop-raising in an outlying region see David Grummitt, *The Calais Garrison: War and Military Service in England, 1436-1558* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 63-91.

⁷ Mark Arvanigian, 'The Durham Gentry and the Scottish March, 1370-1400: County Service in Late Medieval England', *NH* 42 (2005), pp. 257-73.

⁸ Robert Harding, *Anatomy of a Power Elite: The Provincial Governors of Early Modern France* (New Haven and London, 1978); Mack P. Holt, 'Patterns of *Clientele* and Economic Opportunity at Court during the Wars of Religion: The Household of Francois, Duke of Anjou', *French Historical Studies* 13 (1984), pp. 308-13; Mark Greengrass, 'Noble Affinities

This chapter will examine how Durham landowners and officers, operating within a close-knit, yet highly flexible, regional network, contributed to Henry's war effort with Scotland, mobilising men and equipment, participating in raids, and conducting peace negotiations. As Henry's foreign political agenda began to shift towards Scotland in the late 1530s, Durham families – some of whom had taken part in the Pilgrimage of Grace that had gripped much of the region a few years earlier – re-emerged as dependable crown agents on the border, to whom the crown could turn to realise its objectives. The Bowes and Eure families in particular, as they had during the Scottish campaigns of the 1510s and 1520s, worked alongside noblemen parachuted in from the royal court – including the duke of Norfolk and the earls of Hertford and Shrewsbury – and local magnates in what had steadily become a national network of shared responsibilities; the crown relied on Durham officers on the border and these men turned to the crown and its patrons for favour and rewards. When viewed alongside the enforcement of religious change in the palatinate this chapter will demonstrate that military cooperation and networks were equally significant drivers of political integration.

Palatinate Men on the Border in the Late 1530s

As the 1530s came to a close and the threat of domestic rebellion eased, Henry VIII increasingly focused his gaze on foreign policy. On the continent, Henry hoped to rekindle relations with the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, in an attempt to put his French counterpart, Francis I, under increasing pressure, laying claim once again to the borrowed sovereignty of France. In the far North, relations with Scotland had reached an impasse. Henry's widespread religious reforms had soured already fragile ties between England and Scotland; James V repeatedly repudiated invitations from his uncle to break from the Church in Rome and seize Scotland's monastic houses. The Scottish king's election to the order of the garter in 1535 was somewhat

in Early Modern France: The Case of Henri de Montmorency, Constable of France', *European History Quarterly* 16 (1986), pp. 275-311; Sharon Kettering, 'Clientage during the French Wars of Religion', *SCJ* 20 (1989), pp. 221-39; David Potter, *War and Government in the French Provinces: Picardy, 1470-1560* (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 115-17; Stuart Carroll, *Noble Power during the French Wars of Religion* (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 53-88; Wood, *The King's Army*, p. 44.

overshadowed by calls from his French wife, Mary of Guise, and Cardinal Beaton to declare unanimously in the pope's favour. Pope Paul III's plans for a joint crusade, to be led by Francis I and Charles V, to depose the heretical king of England and his assertion of James' rights to the recently separated, schismatic, Church in England did little to ease concerns on the Anglo-Scottish border.⁹

It was against this background of escalating tensions that Henry issued a new set of instructions for the management of the east and middle marches in late January 1537. Sir William Eure was among those appointed to oversee affairs on the border. He had served as the king's lieutenant and deputy warden of the middle march from March 1521 and March 1523, respectively. As part of Henry's administrative reshuffle, Eure was entrusted with the deputy wardenship of the east march, with fees of £733 6s 8d. Sir John Withrington oversaw the middle marches as deputy warden.¹⁰ It was Sir Anthony Browne, a favoured courtier who had been sent north to negotiate with the rebels at Doncaster in December the previous year, who informed Eure of his new assignment. Browne's role as an intermediary is testimony not only to his worth as a royal emissary during the Pilgrimage, but to the importance attached to the execution of border management. Henry's instructions to Browne were precise, outlining the responsibilities entrusted to Eure and Withrington.¹¹ At the same time, Henry took further steps to reinforce the east and middle Marches by appointing a group of pensioners to assist the two deputy wardens. Several northern landowners and office-holders, many of whom had worked within or had material interests in the palatinate, operated alongside Eure and Withrington. Eure was accompanied by Sir Robert Ellerker, Sir Roger Grey, Thomas Grey, Thomas Forster, and fifteen others. Withrington's contingent included Lord Ogle, Sir William Ogle, Sir Cuthbert Radcliffe, Robert Collingwood, John Horseley and seven others. The deputy wardens and pensioners could also call upon the services of the reconstituted council in the north, who included among their number several palatinate men familiar with Westminster, including Richard Bellasis, Robert Bowes, and Sir Thomas Tempest.¹²

⁹ Head, 'Henry VIII's Scottish Policy', pp. 12-14; David Potter, *Henry VIII and Francis I: The Final Conflict, 1540-47* (Leiden, 2011), p. 87.

¹⁰ *LP*, xii, i, 222-24; *LP*, xii, i, 249, 250.

¹¹ BL, Cotton Caligula B/VIII, f. 45 (*LP*, xii, i, 225); TNA, SP 1/116, f. 29 (*LP*, xii, i, 422).

¹² *LP*, xii, i, 249, 250. Although the instructions outlining the number of pensioners serving alongside Eure and Withrington has been dated 12 July 1537, it is likely that this list was compiled and dispatched at the same time as Sir Anthony Browne informed Eure of his deputy wardenship in January.

By the spring of 1537, tensions on the border erupted once again into open hostility. Thomas Howard, duke of Norfolk, still residing in the region having taken command of the royal army during the Pilgrimage of Grace, reported to Cromwell on 21 April that two hundred Scots borderers from Liddisdale had crossed into Tynedale and ‘spoyled certain of thinhabitants of the same and kyled three Tyndale men’.¹³ Writing from Sheriff Hutton one week later, Norfolk informed Cromwell of ‘the Common brewte of Scottisshe opinions’ and that the Scots, according to his network of informers, ‘intende warr’.¹⁴ The same month a list of royal pensioners was compiled for the safeguarding of two major northern stongholds, Carlisle and Berwick. Ralph Neville, fourth earl of Westmorland, recently appointed to the council in the north, was appointed chief captain of Berwick. He was to be supported by one thousand men from the bishopric and, when deemed necessary, could call on a further one thousand men from Bishop Tunstall’s episcopal enclave at Elandshire. Westmorland’s force were strengthened by the inclusion of Robert Bowes, his reputation restored after the Pilgrimage of Grace, and either his brother, Richard, or his nephew, George.¹⁵

James V’s unwillingness to embrace religious reform in Scotland, in spite of Henry’s repeated efforts to impress the idea, did little to alleviate Anglo-Scottish antagonism. The Scottish king proved unwilling to renounce his allegiance to Rome and did not follow the English precedent of dissolving religious communities *en masse*. Matters did not improve in late 1538 after a series of ballads critical of Henry’s reforms had begun to circulate in Scotland and on the border. Sir Thomas Wharton had written to Cromwell on two occasions in December 1538 informing him of the ballads and their defamatory content; he added that spies had been sent into Scotland to root out the texts.¹⁶ Early in 1539, Henry commissioned his deputy warden of the east marches, Sir William Eure, recently installed as captain of Berwick, to request that James implement measures to prevent further dissemination

¹³ TNA, SP 1/118, f. 235 (*LP*, xii, i, 448).

¹⁴ TNA, SP 1/119, f. 41 (*LP*, xii, i, 482).

¹⁵ *LP*, xii, i, 1092. The list refers to Robert Bowes and ‘young Bowes’, which could be a reference to Robert’s brother, Richard, or, more likely, to his nephew, George. George Bowes, son of Sir Ralph Bowes (c. 1455-1516), was born in 1517 and by the early 1540s had established a reputation as a capable soldier. According to his biographer for the dictionary of national biography, George Bowes profited from the patronage of his uncle, Robert, who presented him to Thomas Cromwell as a ‘young man anxious to devote his youth to the king’s service’. Gervase Phillips, ‘Bowes, Sir George (1517-1545)’, *ODNB*.

¹⁶ TNA, SP 1/140, f. 192 (*LP*, xiii, ii, 1129).

of the poems. Eure subsequently reported that his master was concerned that the continued circulation of material critical of the supremacy might exacerbate animosities between the two kingdoms.¹⁷ Adding weight to Eure's letter, the council in the north voiced their concerns that James had not yet apprehended the authors.¹⁸

James' response was to assure Wharton and Eure that Lord Maxwell, warden of the Scottish west marches, would take measures to apprehend the author. Maxwell informed Wharton that James had ordered searches to be conducted on 'any maner of Scottis men hes maid ballettis or sangs in ye defematioun and blasfleming of his derrest onckle the Kingis grace of England'.¹⁹ On 6 February, James replied to Eure promising that he would launch an investigation into the production of 'dogrymes' in Scotland; he assured Eure that any Scotsman found in possession of the poems would be punished by death.²⁰ Notwithstanding his assurances, James was adamant that the 'divers famous... and despitiful ballettis' were produced in England.²¹ Eure later relayed James' letter to Cromwell in London.²²

Palatinate landowners were called upon once again in late 1541 after the foiling of a plot to capture or murder Robert Holgate, Tunstall successor as president of the northern council. Tensions had reached fever pitch by September after James refused to meet Henry in York.²³ James' snub prompted Henry to issue a new set of instructions to Eure, Sir Cuthbert Radcliffe, now deputy warden on the middle marches, Sir Robert Bowes, Sir Ralph Ellerker, Sir John Withirington, Robert Collingwood, and John Horseley, for the 'avoydinge and expelling of the greate... nombre of... Scotyshe peole [that] doo inhabite within owre Countie of Northumbrelande'. The Scots, the commission added, were guilty of various offences 'contrary to the knowne forme... and to the greate hurte losse and detrimente of oure true... subiectis'. Significantly, the language used in the commission is suggestive of

¹⁷ BL, Cotton Caligula B/III, f. 289 (*LP*, xiv, i, 164); TNA, SP 1/142, f. 175 (*LP*, xiv, i, 165); TNA, SP 1/142, f. 187 (*LP*, xiv, i, 178). Sadly, large sections of Eure's letter are no longer legible.

¹⁸ BL, Cotton Caligula B/I, f. 295 (*LP*, xiv, i, 232).

¹⁹ BL, Cotton Caligula B/III, f. 191 (*LP*, xiv, i, 176); BL, Cotton Caligula B/III, f. 182 (*LP*, xiv, i, 170).

²⁰ BL, Cotton Caligula B/VII, f. 252 (*LP*, xiv, i, 241).

²¹ BL, Cotton Caligula B/I, f. 295 (*LP*, xiv, i, 232).

²² TNA, SP 1/143, f. 69 (*LP*, xiv, i, 275).

²³ *LP*, xvi, 733, 763, 785, 875; *CSP, Spain*, vi, i, 158; Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, p. 427; Head, 'Henry VIII's Scottish Policy', p. 16.

a healthy working relationship between Henry and his clients in the North-East: ‘we haveinge speciall confidence and truste in youre wisdom... and discrec[i]ons... co[m]mande youe... to see owre saide lawes... to be put in execuc[i]on’.²⁴ Though such language was a common feature of patron-client letter exchange throughout England, that Henry charged palatinate landowners with the removal of Scots from Northumberland, at such a critical juncture in Anglo-Scottish relations, is testimony to the trust and loyalty the crown placed on these men, some of whom only five years previously had taken up arms against the crown during the Pilgrimage of Grace.

Henry had also got word that Scottish troops had crossed into Northumberland, seized cattle, and murdered several English residents on the border. On 25 September, the day before the commission was issued, Henry wrote directly to Eure ordering that his deputy warden ‘cause watches to be nightly kept on the frontiers by our pencioners therof and likewise within lande’. Faced with the prospect of further Scottish transgressions, Eure was commanded to victual the castle at Berwick and, if provoked, to ‘slyppe asmany under his rule as shall do the Scottes in spoyles, burnynges, and killings, three hurts for one’.²⁵ Henry had also sent instructions to Sir Robert Bowes and Ralph Ellerker, on 26 September, calling for an extensive survey of English fortresses on the east and middle marches; the pair were to remain on the border and provide reports on the number of troops required, costs of provisioning, and, if need be, the nature of repairs required at certain strongholds.²⁶

Shortly after receiving Henry’s commission, Eure, Bowes, Ellerker and Collingwood informed the king of developments in Northumberland. The commissioners had met at Alnwick on 5 October and had devised a scheme for the expulsion of the Scots, which they expected to be fulfilled within a month. In response to the Scottish aggression in Northumberland the previous month, Henry’s clients had exacted punitive revenge against their northern neighbours. While conducting their survey, Bowes and Ellerker had set out to ruin all Scottish farmland and crops sown in the far North, forcing those residing illegally in England to remove

²⁴ TNA, SP 1/167, f. 58 (*LP*, xvi, 1205). Commission dated 26 September 1541.

²⁵ BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 225 (*LP*, xvi, 1202); *HP*, i, 87; BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 222 (*LP*, xvi, 1203; *HP*, i, 86); BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 227 (*LP*, xvi, 1207; *HP*, i, 88).

²⁶ TNA, SP 1/167, f. 58 (*LP*, xvi, 1205); BL, Add MS. 32,646, f. 229 (*LP*, xvi, 1206; *HP*, i, 89).

their cattle and goods at least six miles into Scotland.²⁷ Eure had also liaised with John Heron to discuss how they might incite the residents of Tynedale and Redesdale to wage war against their counterparts in Liddesdale and Teviotdale. At the same time, Eure had planned to hold talks with the warden of the Scottish west marches. Henry was kept abreast of Henron's activities through Eure, Ellerker, and Bowes, who relayed two of the former's letters to the king, which outlined the difficulties he faced procuring the services of those in Tynedale and Redesdale. Heron had written to Bowes on two occasions – 11 and 14 October – providing accounts of several small raids conducted in Liddesdale; Heron had sacked a number of small villages and destroyed Scottish livestock.²⁸ By 7 November, the commissioners informed Henry that they had examined the major fortresses on the east and middle marches and had found that several were in serious decline; the owners and captains had fled further inland, abandoning their castles. Those that had absconded were later commanded by the commissioners to return and fortify their positions against any future provocation.²⁹ Meanwhile, the commissioners had begun their preparations for the survey of the English west marches. The examination of the east and middle marches – completed by Radcliffe, Ellerker, Bowes, Heron, and Collingwood – was eventually presented to Henry on 2 December; Radcliffe, Ellerker, and Bowes wrote to the king the next day, enclosing a preliminary survey of the west march.³⁰

That Eure, Radcliffe, Bowes, Collingwood, Ellerker, Heron, and Horseley were entrusted with surveying the marches is indicative of a fruitful and pragmatic working relationship between Henry and his principal border officials. As deputy wardens, Radcliffe and Eure could have expected to be named commissioners. With Bowes and Ellerker, however, Henry was explicit in his instructions that the two men be included.³¹ The composition of Henry's marcher commissions is not surprising given the history of palatinate landowners and office-holders on the border. As royal clients, these men had forged reputations as dependable servants throughout the

²⁷ BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 233 (*LP*, xvi, 1263; *HP*, i, 91); BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 235 (*LP*, xvi, 1264; *HP*, i, 92).

²⁸ BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 233 (*LP*, xvi, 1263; *HP*, i, 91); BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 235 (*LP*, xvi, 1264; *HP*, i, 92); BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 238 (*LP*, xvi, 1250; *HP*, i, 92, i); BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 237 (*LP*, xvi, 1259; *HP*, i, 92, ii).

²⁹ BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 259 (*LP*, xvi, 1326; *HP*, i, 101).

³⁰ BL, Harl. MS. 292, f. 97; BL, Cotton Caligula B/VIII, f. 64; TNA, SP 1/168, f. 15; BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 268 (*LP*, xvi, 1399; *HP*, i, 104); BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 270 (*LP*, xvi, 1404; *HP*, i, 105).

³¹ TNA, SP 1/167, f. 58 (*LP*, xvi, 1205).

course of the previous three decades; Eure had served on the crown's behalf on the border since the mid-1510s. Henry was evidently willing to delegate border management to these men and expressed his gratitude in form of future assignments and written praise. In one such letter, dated 20 October 1541, Henry commended Sir Robert Bowes and Sir Ralph Ellerker for their efforts to encourage the men of Tynedale and Redesdale to launch raids into Scotland.³²

The importance of royal and regional networks to the fulfilment of crown policy with Scotland should not be underestimated. Mark Arvanigian's research into the Durham gentry and the Scottish marches between 1370 and 1400 has demonstrated that Henry's predecessors made a concerted effort to employ local families on the border.³³ By appointing the likes of Bowes and Ellerker to oversee the survey of marcher strongholds and the removal of Scots from Northumberland, Henry was adopting tried and tested methods of managing England's northernmost frontier. Henry's North-Eastern network did more than simply levy men and provisions, however. Palatinate office-holders fulfilled a crucial role as intermediaries, relaying dispatches back to policy makers in Westminster. During the late 1530s and early 1540s, Durham office-holders had been in constant communication with the king - who had taken the wardenship of the marches into his own hands - advising Henry on provisioning, Scottish raids, and plans for English campaigns into Scotland. Moreover, the relatively successful implementation of Henry's border policy owes more than has previously been conceded to the involvement of Durham landowners and office-holders operating within an increasingly tight-knit regional network of crown officials. While Eure and Bowes held considerable land within the bishopric, men like Collingwood had begun their careers as royal agents in Northumberland and surrounding counties. A 'county communities' model is simply not flexible enough to accommodate the regional nature of border management during the Scottish wars of the mid-century.

³² BL, Add. MS. 32,646, f. 251 (*LP*, xvi, 1274; *HP*, i, 96).

³³ Arvanigian, 'Durham Gentry and the Scottish March', pp. 257-73.

In autumn 1542 hostilities between Henry and James resumed and once again the authorities in Westminster would employ Durham office-holders and landowners to assert the crown's prerogative on the marches. On 28 July, Sir Robert Bowes received instructions for the levying of troops on the east and middle marches. Although a truce had been agreed earlier in the year, Bowes, alongside Thomas Manners, earl of Rutland, was commanded to repair to the borders and await further instructions. Since Rutland 'having yet no knowlege herof cannot revirently put himself... to goo to the said bordres', Bowes, 'with 'le[tt]res and money', was responsible for the 'leviing of vi [hundred] men' in readiness of the earl's arrival. Bowes was also responsible for instructing Rutland to raise a force of some four hundred men (for which the earl would receive £200), informing the wardens to remain vigilant in anticipation of Scottish aggression, and writing to John Heron and other royal pensioners, requesting them to ready men and provision strongholds on the east and middle marches.³⁴

Having been in residence on the borders for four or five days, Bowes, with 'good espial upponn the Scott[es]', was ordered to keep the king abreast of developments.³⁵ Scottish ambassadors had been conducting peace negotiations in London during the first week of August, prompting Henry to write to Eure and Radcliffe instructing them to observe a period of truce. Conscious of further attacks, however, Henry implored his wardens to remain watchful and avenge any military aggression.³⁶ On 7 August, Henry issued a separate set of instructions to the earl of Rutland, recently appointed warden general of the marches, to establish a council for the management of secret affairs. The council was to be made up of five men, including Sir Robert Bowes. Rutland's council would operate in tandem with Henry's deputy wardens, Robert Collingwood, Ralph Ellerker, Thomas Forster, John Heron, and John Horseley.³⁷

After a group of reiver families on both sides of the border had engaged in a series of spasmodic skirmishes, Eure pleaded with the privy council, on 19 August, to

³⁴ TNA, SP 1/171, ff. 180-83 (*LP*, xvii, 540).

³⁵ TNA, SP 1/171, ff. 180-83 (*LP*, xvii, 540).

³⁶ TNA, SP 1/172, ff. 30-31 (*LP*, xvii, 574).

³⁷ *LP*, xvii, 577; BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 21 (*LP*, xvii, 579).

be allowed to raise an additional three hundred men for the security of Berwick.³⁸ It would appear as though Eure's advice was heeded promptly. Three days later, Henry ordered Rutland and his council to begin provisioning at Norham, Wark, Alnwick, Carlisle, and Berwick; three thousand men were to be kept in readiness at Berwick should the Scots cross into England. Henry added that the recently formed dean and chapter at Durham Cathedral, under Hugh Whitehead, had pledged their support and that he had written to the council in the north commanding them to put measures in place to allow for the mobilisation of the entire region at an hour's notice. Moreover, should the Scots launch further raids into England, Rutland and Bowes were to lead counteroffensives of their own.³⁹ The information provided by Eure was evidently of paramount importance. Just four days after Eure's letter to the privy council, Henry's councillors, who included Bishop Tunstall among their number, met at Hampton Court to discuss measures to be put in place at Berwick. In response to Eure's plea, large quantities of equipment were delivered to the North-East, including 1,500 bows, 1,000 arrow sheaths, and stores of gunpowder.⁴⁰

Escalating military preparations on the marches prompted the return of Thomas Howard, duke of Norfolk, to the North-East as the king's lieutenant on 24 August.⁴¹ Norfolk had proven himself a highly capable military commander during the intermittent conflicts that occurred during the first decades of Henry's reign and it was during this period that he had forged a number of contacts with the northern gentry, including those in the bishopric.⁴² On his return, Norfolk was ordered to raise a force to combat the Scots and his commission provides a noteworthy insight into the council's perception of Durham's integral role in military affairs: Norfolk was permitted to levy men from a host of northern and midland counties and the palatinate.⁴³

That a royal official was granted the necessary authority to levy troops from the bishopric was not unprecedented. Norfolk, as earl of Surrey, had called upon Durham men and their retinues for the Gedworth raid in September 1523. The levying of troops from Durham in August 1542 reaffirmed the palatinate's importance as part

³⁸ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 27 (*LP*, xvii, 638; *HP*, i, 120).

³⁹ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 27 (*LP*, xvii, 638; *HP*, i, 120); BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 33 (*LP*, xvii, 650; *HP*, i, 123); BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 40 (*LP*, xvii, 651; *HP*, i, 124).

⁴⁰ *LP*, xvii, 652; *APC*, i, 22.

⁴¹ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 47 (*LP*, xvii, 661; *HP*, i, 126).

⁴² See chapter 2.

⁴³ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 47 (*LP*, xvii, 661; *HP*, i, 126); *LP*, xvii, 714 (19).

of the state's military infrastructure. It is also worth bearing in mind that Bishop Tunstall was among those privy councillors responsible for drafting Norfolk's commissions; no doubt the bishop was prepared – or at least unwilling to prevent – to allow the lieutenant to draw men from his bishopric.

On the same day that Norfolk was reappointed the king's lieutenant, Robert Bowes and Cuthbert Radcliffe led a disastrous campaign into Scotland at Tevoitdale, roughly three miles from Kelso, in what has become known as the battle of Haddon Rig. On the evening of the failed raid, Eure, writing from Berwick, informed the council of the raid's fortunes. Bowes had met with Eure previously to discuss the potential for an offensive operation into Scotland prior to Norfolk's arrival.⁴⁴

Accompanying Robert Bowes was his nephew, George (*d.* 1545), whose letter to the earl of Rutland shortly after this return to England provides a thorough account of the battle. The English force of approximately three thousand men ransacked several Scottish towns, destroying large numbers of livestock in the process. The campaign came into difficulties when the forces of Radcliffe, the earl of Angus, and John Heron became separated from Bowes' retinue. The arrival of nearly two thousand Scottish troops caused confusion among the English ranks, many of whom abandoned their posts. A number of the English commanders, who doubled as Henry's border officials, were taken prisoner, including Robert Bowes, his brother, Richard, Cuthbert Radcliffe (with thirty of his household servants), John Heron, John Tempest and approximately five hundred soldiers.⁴⁵

The defeat at Haddon Rig and Bowes' capture presented Henry and Norfolk with a serious dilemma. Bowes was the aggressor at Teviotdale and his raid somewhat undermined the wider English diplomatic effort. Norfolk continued his negotiations with the Scots. His terms, however, orchestrated by Henry in the wake of Bowes' loss, were increasingly stringent and unrealistic: James was to release all English captives or face retribution; Henry's insistence that the Scottish king seal the agreement by travelling to London before Christmas 1542 proved equally implausible.⁴⁶ Bowes's capture presented a more immediate problem for the earl of

⁴⁴ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 48 (*LP*, xvii, 662; *HP*, i, 127).

⁴⁵ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 98 (*LP*, xvii, 663; *HP*, i, 146). The earl of Angus and Sir George Douglas informed the privy council of Bowes' raid on 25 August: BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 50 (*LP*, xvii, 673; *HP*, i, 128).

⁴⁶ Head, 'Henry VIII's Scottish Policy', pp. 17-18; Scarisbrick, *Henry VIII*, p. 435; Sturge, *Tunstall*, p. 235; Potter, *The Final Conflict, 1540-47*, p. 94.

Rutland, who in his letter to the king on 25 August lamented that he had lost such a skilful military tactician. He implored Henry to send a man of equal experience to sit on his council.⁴⁷ Bowes was a prized royal asset on the border and the ramifications of his capture might have been felt more severely had it not been for the flexibility and efficiency of the crown's patronage network in the North-East.

The English defeat at Haddon Rig posed further problems for those Durham landowners and officers operating on the border. Fearful of Scottish reprisals, George Bowes wrote to Rutland requesting that he inform the king's council – with whom Rutland was in regular contact – of the need for additional men and equipment at Norham Castle.⁴⁸ Like Bowes, John Horseley and Robert Collingwood wrote to Rutland on 26 August, complaining of a general lack of men and resources at key fortresses along the east and middle marches. Berwick was largely depleted of grain and Rutland feared that stockpiles at Berwick, Carlisle, and Newcastle would be further eroded with the arrival of a royal army.⁴⁹ On the same day that he received Horseley and Collingwood's letter, Rutland informed the privy council of the scarcity of grain and other resources on the borders.⁵⁰ Rutland and his council continued to provide the privy council with information on Scottish military preparations in the weeks after Haddon Rig. On the evening of 27 August, Rutland received a letter from Eure, Collingwood, and Sir George Lawson concerning Scottish intentions for Sir Robert Bowes and other northern men taken at Teviotdale. In his guise as a royal intermediary, Rutland's letters contain crucial reports on Scottish troop movements on the marches; Northumberland was in severe need of men to combat a large Scottish force – George Heron, son of the captured John Heron, estimated that the Scottish army numbered some two thousand men, with one thousand horsemen - rumoured to be assembling on the east march.⁵¹ Rutland wrote to the council again on 31 August, reporting that he had consulted with members of his council on the issue of who should replace Sir Cuthbert Radcliffe and Sir Robert Bowes as deputy wardens. He

⁴⁷ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 52 (*LP*, xvii, 672; *HP*, i, 130).

⁴⁸ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 98 (*LP*, xvii, 663; *HP*, i, 146, i).

⁴⁹ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 57 (*LP*, xvii, 681; *HP*, i, 132); BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 64 (*LP*, xvii, 696; *HP*, i, 135, i).

⁵⁰ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 59 (*LP*, xvii, 682; *HP*, i, 133); *LP*, xvii, 679, 704, 709.

⁵¹ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 61 (*LP*, xvii, 695; *HP*, i, 134).

had learned that Collingwood and Horseley had attempted to negotiate Bowes and Collingwood's release, but that both men had later been removed to Edinburgh.⁵²

By the end of August, Henry's response to the border wrangling was to instruct the duke of Norfolk to command a royal army to invade Scotland, alongside the earl of Southampton; Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk, would be sent northwards to guard the marches in Norfolk and Southampton's absence. Meanwhile, Henry issued a typically robust ultimatum to his counterpart in Scotland: enter into peace negotiations with his commissioners and renounce his alliance with the French or face immediate retaliation. These terms were presented to the Scots at a conference held at York on 18 September. Bishop Tunstall, who had left court in early September, was one of the English negotiators, alongside Norfolk, Southampton, and Sir Anthony Browne.⁵³

After three weeks at York the conference was adjourned and relocated to Newcastle, where Tunstall and his colleagues arrived on 11 October.⁵⁴ Negotiations were interrupted in late September after the privy council learned of a Scottish plot to sack the bishop's residence at Norham; shortly after the initial warning Tunstall informed the council that their concerns were unfounded.⁵⁵ On the same day as the conference reconvened at Newcastle, Henry's commissioners received a new set of instructions, which forbade the acceptance of any peace offer from the Scots and ordered that Norfolk commence his campaign; no formal declaration of war, as was customary, was deemed necessary.⁵⁶

While negotiations were being conducted at York and later at Newcastle, efforts to marshal forces and provisions had begun in earnest. The nature of North-Eastern troop mustering in the early 1540s mirrored that of the Scottish campaigns in the 1510s and 1520s: it is suggestive of a highly regional network, in which the

⁵² BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 74 (*LP*, xvii, 713; *HP*, i, 139).

⁵³ Potter, *The Final Conflict*, pp. 94-95; G. Ridpath, *The Border-History of England and Scotland deduced from the earliest times to the union of two crowns* (Edinburgh/Berwick, 1776), p. 538; Sturge, *Tunstall*, p. 325; BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 72 (*LP*, xvii, 705; *HP*, i, 138); BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 77 (*LP*, xvii, 710; *HP*, i, 140); BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 130 (*LP*, xvii, 778; *HP*, i, 158); BL, Harl. MS. 6,989, f. 91 (*LP*, xvii, 779); BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 162 (*LP*, xvii, 799; *HP*, i, 163).

⁵⁴ *LP*, xvii, 919.

⁵⁵ BL, Harl. MS. 6,989, f. 99 (*LP*, xvii, 859); BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 259 (*LP*, xvii, 875; *HP*, i, 190).

⁵⁶ BL, Add. MS. 32,648, f. 38 (*LP*, xvii, 925; *HP*, i, 204); BL, Add. MS. 32,648, f. 36 (*LP*, xvii, 926; *HP*, i, 203); BL, Add. MS. 5,754, f. 10, 16, 24 (*LP*, xvii, 927); BL, Add. MS. 32,648, f. 44 (*LP*, xvii, 939; *HP*, i, 206).

region's leading landowners and officers, including those in Durham, pooled resources to help enforce the crown's policies. Before negotiations had begun, Rutland and his council had written to William Frankeleyn and Sir George Conyers, sheriff of Durham since September 1538, to request that five hundred men from the bishopric be sent to Norham Castle in anticipation of a Scottish attack and an English retaliatory raid. The bishopric men were to remain in Norhamshire for two weeks until relieved by Lord Latimer's one-thousand strong force.⁵⁷ Five hundred men from Durham were still in residence on the border on 6 October as part of the earl of Westmorland's forces.⁵⁸

In late September, Henry issued several commissions for the mustering of troops in the North-East. Sir Ralph Eure, son of Sir William Eure, and Sir Roger Cholmeley, whose father had served in Durham during Henry VII's reign and who had himself served as Henry's gentleman usher in Yorkshire from 1519, were charged with assembling men in Pickering, Scarborough, Whitby, and Scawton in north Yorkshire.⁵⁹ Of the eleven muster lists Sir Ralph's is unique in its attention to detail. Each of the names, where appropriate, is followed by the annotation 'able person', with information on the number of horses and harness at his disposal. Eure and Cholmeley managed to enlist 177 'able persons' in Pickering and a further 286 archers, 866 billmen, harness for 255 men, and 280 horses. In Scarborough, Scawton, and Whitby the number of men and amount of equipment raised was marginally less. Notwithstanding, Eure and Cholmeley continued to label men as either 'able' or otherwise and provided a breakdown of the number of archers, billmen, harness, and horses available.⁶⁰

A lack of provisioning continued to plague English strongholds on the east and middle marches prior to Norfolk's offensive. As had been the case during the initial stages of the wars, the region's officers were charged with equipping the royal army. Sir George Lawson, a dissolution commissioner and northern councillor, emerged as the man to whom the government at Westminster turned to resolve the problem. The correspondence that survives for the period before Norfolk's campaign

⁵⁷ TNA, DURH 3/78, m. 10d; TNA, DURH 20/44; BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 63 (*LP*, xvii, 703; *HP*, i, 135).

⁵⁸ BL, Add. MS. 32,648, f. 23 (*LP*, xvii, 910; *HP*, i, 198).

⁵⁹ Richard Cholmeley: chapter 1. Roger Cholmeley is listed in the earl of Worcester's book of 1519 that recorded 'the names of the king[es] [ser]vantes of alle Shyres of Englonde'; chapter 2 (TNA, E 36/130, f. 172v, 173v).

⁶⁰ *LP*, xvii, 882 (M. 10. Yorkshire).

reveals that Lawson was in frequent communication with Norfolk and other royal officials coordinating the English invasion. On 1 September, the privy council informed Edward Shelley, ‘one of the masters of household with the King’s Majesty’, that shipments of wheat, cheese, and beer had been delivered to and paid for by Lawson.⁶¹ Norfolk himself had relied on Lawson to furnish him with information on the provisions at Berwick, where Lawson had been treasurer and receiver general since 1517.⁶² Lawson had written to Norfolk on three separate occasions between 18 September and 2 October concerning the stockpiling of weaponry and other essential provisions on the east march.⁶³ Lawson’s communications from Berwick were not overlooked. The ailing earl of Southampton wrote to Thomas Wriothesley in praise of Lawson: ‘I suppose that never man acquitted him self more slendrelie that Lawson hath done’.⁶⁴ In a particularly frank letter to Norfolk, written three weeks before the English offensive, Lawson commented on the desperate lack of wheat and brewing ingredients. Lawson’s concerns were not unfounded, as Norfolk, Hertford, and Sir Anthony Browne made clear in a letter to the council; the success or failure of the English raid, Henry’s commanders remarked, was inextricably linked to the supply of certain provisions, particularly beer.⁶⁵

Norfolk’s ill-provisioned force set out from Newcastle on 15 October, reaching Berwick on 19 October, where he was joined by Sir Anthony Browne, Hertford, and Sir John Gage’s men. After several delays the English force crossed into Scotland on 22 October, inflicting minimal damage; the beleaguered army was forced to return within six days owing to a lack of food and beer.⁶⁶ No sooner had Norfolk’s disastrous campaign come to an end and its leaders summoned back to court than events on the border swung in Henry’s favour. A hastily prepared and outnumbered English army under Sir Thomas Wharton defeated the Scots (whose

⁶¹ BL, Cotton Titus B/I, f. 103; TNA, SP 1/172, ff. 153-7 (*LP*, xvii, 718).

⁶² ‘Lawson, George (by 1493-1543)’, *House of Commons, 1509-1558*, ed. S. T. Bindoff [<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/lawson-george-1493-1543>]

⁶³ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 194 (*LP*, xvii, 804; *HP*, i, 170, i); BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 261 (*LP*, xvii, 860; *HP*, i, 190, i); BL, Add. MS. 32,648, f. 26 (*LP*, xvii, 895; *HP*, i, 198, i)

⁶⁴ BL, Add. MS. 32,647, f. 223 (*HP*, i, 177).

⁶⁵ BL, Add. MS. 32,648, f. 82 (*LP*, xvii, 975; *HP*, i, 221).

⁶⁶ BL, Add. MS. 32,648, f. 108 (*LP*, xvii, 996; *HP*, i, 226); BL, Add. MS. 10,110, f. 237 (*LP*, xvii, 998); BL, Add. MS. 32,648, f. 116 (*LP*, xvii, 1000; *HP*, i, 229).

army under Sir William Musgrave was estimated to be eighteen thousand strong) at the battle of Solway Moss on 24 November 1542.⁶⁷

Palatinate gentry once again proved themselves to be dependable royal agents in the days preceding and following the English victory. Two days before the Scots crossed into England, Sir William Eure informed Hertford, who had remained in the North as the acting lieutenant, that the Scots had mustered a sizeable force and that he expected them to invade within the coming days.⁶⁸ Hertford acted upon Eure's intelligence, as he informed the council the day before Solway Moss, ordering Sir Ralph Eure and Ralph Bulmer to ready their forces near Berwick.⁶⁹ Eure's endeavours prior to Solway Moss were later recognised by the council, who requested that Hertford pass on Henry's appreciation to the deputy warden.⁷⁰ The day after the battle, Hertford suggested to the council that he intended to lead a raid into the Scottish west march. Three days later, Hertford, accompanied by George Bowes (*d.* 1545), Ralph Eure, and William Bulmer, sacked the abbey and town of Coldstream. Hertford and his Durham accomplices boasted that they had burnt some £1000 worth of crops, took eighty prisoners, and sixty Scottish horses; it was, as a jubilant Hertford and Bishop Tunstall explained to the council 'the best boty that hath gotten by any mans remembraunce in this parties'.⁷¹

Durham and the Border during Henry VIII's Final Years

After Solway Moss, Anglo-Scottish tensions were relatively subdued during the negotiations surrounding the marriage of James V's daughter, Mary, and the English Prince Edward. A temporary truce was ratified on 14 February 1543, while Sir Ralph Sadler had been sent to the North to conclude talks and finalise plans for the betrothal of Edward and Mary; the treaty was signed on 1 July at Greenwich (it was not

⁶⁷ A full account of the battle and Musgrave's estimates can be found at: BL, Add. MS. 32,648, f. 156 (*LP*, xvii, 1121; *HP*, i, 240); BL, Harl. MS. 289, f. 17 (*LP*, xvii, 1137).

⁶⁸ *LP*, xvii, 1002; *LP*, xvii, 1115.

⁶⁹ *LP*, xvii, 1117.

⁷⁰ *HP*, i, 239.

⁷¹ *LP*, xvii, 1124; BL, Add. MS. 32,648, f. 170 (*LP*, xvii, 1157; *HP*, i, 245); TNA, SP 49/5, ff. 114-18 (*LP*, xvii, 1197).

formally ratified until 25 August) by the earl of Arran, the acting Scottish governor.⁷² As the Anglo-Scottish peace settlement began to unravel towards the close of 1543, Durham officials were entrusted with reviving negotiations with senior Scottish diplomats. On 25 November, Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk, the king's lieutenant in the north from 12 January 1543 to 12 February 1544, commissioned Sir George Bowes and Sir Thomas Hilton to conduct talks between Sir George Douglas and Sir Thomas Wharton, deputy warden of the west marches. Bowes and Hilton later informed Suffolk of how discussions were progressing and of the likelihood of an English military success should negotiations fall through.⁷³ Both men had negotiated with Sir George Douglas, alongside William Eure, whose letter to Suffolk provided the king's lieutenant with much of the information that he in turn relayed to the council in London.⁷⁴ During those transient periods of peace, Durham landowners and officials, as they had previously during times of open fighting, fulfilled a crucial role as crown informants within a wider North-Eastern informational network. Bowes and Hilton's efforts, however, did little to reverse the tide as tensions between England and Scotland mounted. Hostilities had resumed by mid-August with the English once more at war with France; English agents had seized Scottish ships bound for France. Anglo-Scottish relations reached their nadir on 11 December 1543, when the Scottish parliament formally renounced the Greenwich treaty, reaffirming the Auld Alliance with France.⁷⁵

The Scottish parliament's repudiation of the Greenwich treaty enraged Henry, who, after a series of diplomatic overtures, ordered Hertford to launch new raids into Scotland.⁷⁶ Hostilities recommenced on 3 May 1544 with the earl of Hertford and Viscount Lisle's raids on Edinburgh, where several settlements were burnt. Hertford's force included the retinues of William Eure, recently ennobled as First Baron Eure in March 1544, and his son, Ralph. The day after Hertford launched his raid he wrote to both William and Ralph Eure requesting that their men in Alnwick and Berwick be

⁷² The temporary truce was intended to last from 14 February to 1 June 1543, but was later extended to 1 July and then again to 1 August. BL, Add. MS. 32,650, f. 62 (*LP*, xviii, i, 305); *The State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler, Knight-Banneret*, ed. Arthur Clifford (Edinburgh, 1809), i, 65.

⁷³ BL, Add. MS. 32,653, f. 97 (*LP*, xviii, ii, 423; *HP*, ii, 113).

⁷⁴ BL, Add. MS. 32,653, f. 101 (*LP*, xviii, ii, 424; *HP*, ii, 115).

⁷⁵ BL, Add. MS. 32,651, f. 232 (*LP*, xviii, ii, 46; *HP*, i, 451); *LP*, xviii, ii, 47; BL, Add. MS. 32,652, f. 163 (*LP*, xviii, ii, 481; *HP*, ii, 134).

⁷⁶ BL, Add. MS. 32,654, f. 80 (*LP*, xix, i, 314; *HP*, ii, 207).

made available to him; Hertford would pay Ralph Eure's men, who had not received payment for previous military service, upon arriving at Edinburgh.⁷⁷ The Eures were not the only Durham family involved in the Edinburgh burnings; Ralph Bulmer, son of Sir William Bulmer, and Sir George Bowes were both knighted in the field at Leith on 11 May by a grateful earl of Hertford.⁷⁸ Sir George Bowes displayed his marshal credentials in Scotland once again four months later, as Lord Eure reported to Francis Talbot, fifth earl of Shrewsbury. Bowes had crossed into Scotland with a small company of soldiers and 'toke iij of four prisoners and brought a waye iiijc horse lodes of corne'. Eure's account of the raid, sent to Shrewsbury on 24 September, was subsequently relayed by the earl, Bishop Tunstall, and Ralph Sadler to Catherine Parr in London, acting regent during Henry's absence in France.⁷⁹

English aggression in Scotland continued into early 1545 and Durham landowners remained at the forefront of military preparations. On 26 February 1545, Lord Eure and his son, Sir Ralph, warden of the middle march, informed Shrewsbury, Tunstall, and Sadler that the bishopric's forces could be made ready to repel an expected Scottish attack on the border.⁸⁰ The following day, Sir Ralph Eure left England with a wholly inadequate and ill-provisioned force, which was subsequently defeated; both Eure and Sir Brian Layton, captain of Norham Castle, were killed and some thirteen to fourteen hundred English troops taken prisoner. While the bishopric's men had been assembled for the raid, reports indicate that Eure did not actually call upon these men.⁸¹ Conscious of possible Scottish reprisals, the same Durham men were ordered to remain on the border, to be accompanied by the trio of Shrewsbury, Bishop Tunstall, and Sadler; retinues mustered in Yorkshire were to be kept in reserve, ready to assist at an hour's notice. Meanwhile, fortresses along the east and middle marches were provided with additional resources.⁸² By 5 March, Shrewsbury, Tunstall, and Sadler had reported to Henry that the Scottish men

⁷⁷ BL, Add. MS. 32,654, f. 170 (*LP*, xix, i, 464; *HP*, ii, 230i); *LP*, xix, 467.

⁷⁸ Gervase Phillips, 'Bowes, Sir George (1517-1545)', *ODNB*.

⁷⁹ BL, Add. MS. 32,655, f. 199 (*LP*, xix, ii, 315; *HP*, ii, 327).

⁸⁰ BL, Add. MS. 32,656, f. 164 (*LP*, xx, i, 271; *HP*, ii, 412).

⁸¹ BL, Add. MS. 32,656, f. 172 (*LP*, xx, i, 280; *HP*, ii, 414); BL, Add. MS. 32,656, f. 170 (*LP*, xx, i, 285; *HP*, ii, 414); BL, Add. MS. 32,656, f. 174 (*LP*, xx, i, 286; *HP*, ii, 415); BL, Add. MS. 32,656, f. 185 (*LP*, xx, i, 311; *HP*, ii, 420).

⁸² BL, Add. MS. 32,656, f. 170 (*LP*, xx, i, 285; *HP*, ii, 414); BL, Add. MS. 32,656, f. 178 (*LP*, xx, i, 295; *HP*, ii, 417); *LP*, xx, i, 288, 298.

stationed on the border had dispersed, thanks in part to the bishopric's forces remaining as a visible, if somewhat exaggerated, sign of English military strength.⁸³

In the immediate aftermath of Eure and Layton's deaths, the question of who should fill the vacant wardenship and captaincy of Norham was raised. The crown reverted to the tried and tested Sir Robert Bowes to fill the vacant wardship; he was also appointed chief steward of the strategically important franchise of Hexham on 19 March.⁸⁴ Sir Robert's career as a royal official in the North-East dated back to the mid-1520s and it would seem that his reputation was significantly enhanced by the mid-1540s; he had evidently made a good impression on the crown's military commanders, who wrote to Henry on 11 March that a 'meeter man' could not have been entrusted with the wardenship. The search for Layton's successor at Norham saw Henry solicit the advice of Bishop Tunstall, who provided the king with a list of potential candidates. Among those recommended by the bishop were two Durham landowners, Sir George and Richard Bowes, as well as Cuthbert Layton, brother of the deceased former captain.⁸⁵ The privy council wrote to Tunstall one week later requesting that he bestow the captaincy on Sir George Bowes; the council informed Tunstall that the king had taken his recommendations into consideration.⁸⁶ Bowes might well have owed his appointment to Norfolk and Hertford's influence on the council – both men had established profitable relationships with George Bowes, while Norfolk had worked alongside George's uncle, Sir Robert, in the aftermath of the Pilgrimage. Robert and George's respective appointments are testimony to the value and trust attributed to Durham landowners by royal officials on the border and at Westminster; Henry and the privy council were acutely aware of the importance of integrating Durham's resources into the crown's military networks in the far North. The maintenance and efficacy of these networks depended in large part on the crown's continued favour towards trusted clients. The early Tudor regime had made a concerted effort to reward those in Durham and the trend continued unabated in Henry's final years. Robert Bowes's prowess resulted in his appointment as constable and master forester of Alnwick on 4 September 1546.⁸⁷ Even as the ailing Henry languished in his privy chamber an annuity of £50 was presented to Bowes from

⁸³ BL, Add. MS. 32,656, f. 182 (*LP*, xx, i, 312; *HP*, ii, 419).

⁸⁴ *LP*, xx, i, 306, 465 (53-4).

⁸⁵ BL, Add. MS. 32,656, f. 200 (*LP*, xx, i, 340; *HP*, ii, 425).

⁸⁶ *LP*, xx, i, 381.

⁸⁷ *LP*, xxi, i, 1538 (195).

crown lands in Northumberland, along with the marriage and wardship of the minor Robert, Lord Ogle.⁸⁸

The Bowes family were present once again during Henry's final major offensive foray into Scotland. Hertford had been dispatched to the North in the summer of 1545 as lieutenant general, charged with conducting a new invasion which, it was hoped, would compel the Scottish government into accepting a new marriage settlement between Prince Edward and the infant Mary, queen of Scots. Hertford's commission, dated 2 May, permitted the king's lieutenant to levy men from a host of northern counties, including Durham; his force was made up of a contingent of major landowners from across the North-East, North-West, the county palatine of Cheshire, and several midland counties.⁸⁹ Hertford's force set out for Kelso and Jedburgh on 15 September, leaving, as had been the case in previous years, Archbishop Holgate and Bishop Tunstall in charge of domestic affairs. Three days later Hertford informed Henry of the invasion's devastating results; the English were occupied in Scotland for a fortnight, sacking several towns and castles in Roxburghshire, destroying the abbeys at Kelso, Jedburgh and Melrose.⁹⁰ From five in the morning to mid-afternoon on 16 September, Robert Bowes commanded a 'good bande of 1500 lighthorsemen' in Tyvyote and Rowle, approximately seven miles from Jedburgh, 'brennyng the countrey where were brent 14 or 15 townes and villagies and a great quantitie of all kyndes of corne'.⁹¹ While Hertford singled out Bowes for special praise, the latter's conduct at Jedburgh is symptomatic of the crucial role undertaken by Durham families, coordinating and leading royal campaigns across the border. No sooner had Hertford struck a decisive in Scotland than he was recalled to London, his lieutenancy in the North suspended, as foreign policy shifted back towards France.

⁸⁸ *LP*, xxi, ii, 771 (26); 'Bowes, Sir Robert (by 1497-1555)', *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff [http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/bowes-robert-1497-1555]

⁸⁹ *LP*, xx, i, 846 (2).

⁹⁰ TNA, SP 49/8, f. 193, 199; TNA, SP 1/208, f. 82 (*LP*, xx, ii, 546-48).

⁹¹ TNA, SP 49/8, ff. 183-84 (*LP*, xx, ii, 400).

Conclusion

Much like the Anglo-Scottish border of the 1510s and 1520s, Henry's 'Rough Wooing' of Scotland between 1537 and 1545 had the effect of integrating Durham's lay landed elites and the palatinate itself more closely within the national polity. Bonds of allegiance and military networks between families in Durham, surrounding counties, and central authorities that had been consolidated by service at home and abroad were reinforced, and, in some cases, re-established, after the Pilgrimage of Grace. For a region that had risen up in opposition to the crown's religious reforms less than a decade before that men from the North-East were now prepared to enforce government strategy on the marches is testimony not only to the crown's ability to harness clienteles, but to the durability of its networks in Durham. It says much about the significant role of the palatinate on the border and its role implementing wider government policy. Within less than five years of his having taken a leading role in the unrest, Robert Bowes had managed to convince the crown of his loyalty, rise to the upper-echelons of border administration, and promote family members to senior marcher offices. Bowes's example is one of a local landowner aware that the best avenue for future assignments, rewards, and status lay with the crown and its ministers. Henry, too, benefited from the services of former Durham rebels, without whom the enactment of royal policy on the northern frontier would arguably have faced greater obstacles.

As policy shifted away from suppressing rebellion in the North towards the enforcement of Henry's Scottish policies, Durham's landed elite proved willing to operate alongside noblemen parachuted in from court, local magnates, Bishop Tunstall and his episcopal staff, and, most importantly, landowners from neighbouring counties. English shires in the North did not operate in isolation, but as part of a wider regional community. Durham, like Yorkshire, Northumberland, and Westmorland, functioned in concert with a range of other northern authorities. The mobilisation of the county palatine's human and material resources, as part of concerted regional response, during periods of hostility with Scotland was far from unprecedented.⁹² On the contrary, Henry VII had called upon Bishop Fox and the bishopric to muster men for his campaigns of the mid-1490s, and Thomas Howard,

⁹² Arvanigian, 'Durham Gentry and the Scottish March', pp. 257-73.

duke of Norfolk, had experience of commanding palatinate soldiers during the Scottish wars of the early Henrician period. Henry's adoption of local military networks and infrastructure in the mid-sixteenth century, then, was a tried and tested aspect of late medieval and early Tudor military strategy. When it came to the mustering of troops, from within and outside of the bishopric, and the provisioning of border fortresses, palatinate officers and landowners emerged once again as highly capable and reliable royal agents.

It was during the mid-century wars that new players began to emerge in the North-East, who used the wars with Scotland as a means of establishing their careers as crown agents. The mustering of troops in Yorkshire prior to Norfolk's ill-fated 1542 campaign allowed both Sir Ralph Eure and, to a lesser extent, Sir Roger Cholmeley to showcase their credentials as royal clients. Sir George Bowes was another up and coming palatinate man to benefit from his involvement in the wars. Bowes owed his rise to fame as much to his familial connections as to military prowess. By early 1544, however, as the Treaty of Greenwich began to unravel, Bowes was deemed of sufficient stature by the earl of Hertford to mediate negotiations between the English ambassadors and their Scottish counterparts. At times of fragile peace as much as during armed hostilities, Durham officials took a leading role enacting royal policy on the border. Moreover, it was as intelligence gatherers and intermediaries that bishopric men went about reaffirming their worth to the crown. Sir William Eure's intelligence gathering in the days leading up to Solway Moss allowed the earl of Hertford to put measures in place that contributed to the English victory. The crown's networks in the North-East were not simply designed for military purposes; they were also about the collection and relaying of information. The mid-century palatinate, then, far from representing a beacon of opposition to crown policy constituted an integral part of Henry's nationwide politico-military network.

CHAPTER FIVE

Mid-Tudor Durham: Edward VI and Mary I, c. 1547 – 1558

Given the seismic nature of political and religious change that took place during the reigns of Edward VI and Mary I, examinations into how both monarchs enforced their policies in the localities have been relatively sparse. Debate has centred on the composition of Edward's privy chamber, the factional nature of Edward Seymour's politics and the rise to power of John Dudley, earl of Warwick and later duke of Northumberland, and the religious turnaround that took place after November 1553.¹ Meanwhile, studies of mid-Tudor Durham and the Anglo-Scottish border have been preoccupied with Protector Somerset's garrisoning of Scotland, the dissolution of the bishopric in the spring of 1553, and Northumberland's eagerness to forge a power base in the North-East.² Since Charles Sturge published his biography of Bishop Cuthbert Tunstall in 1938, a number of works have been produced which argue that Northumberland sought to annex the bishopric to the crown to augment his personal influence in the region.³ More recently, discussions on the nature of local politics under Somerset and Northumberland have placed greater emphasis on the regime's

¹ D.E. Hoak, 'The King's Privy Chamber, 1547-1553', in *Tudor Rule and Revolution*, ed. D. Guth and J. McKenna (Cambridge, 1982), pp. 87-108; H.M. Speight, 'Local Government and politics in Devon and Cornwall, 1509 - 49, with special reference to the south-western rebellion of 1549' (University of Sussex PhD thesis, 1991); David Ashton, 'The Tudor state and the politics of county: the greater gentry of Somerset, c. 1509 – c. 1558' (University of Oxford DPhil thesis, 1998); S.L. Adams, 'Faction, clientage and party: English politics, 1550-1603', *History Today* 32 (1982), pp. 33-34; W.K. Jordan, *Edward VI: The Threshold of Power: The Dominance of the Duke of Northumberland* (London, 1970); H. James and R. Scudamore, 'The Aftermath of the 1549 Coup and the Earl of Warwick's Intentions', *HR* 62 (1989), pp. 91-7; *The Mid-Tudor Polity, c. 1540-1560*, ed. Jennifer Loach and Robert Tittler (London, 1980); Robert Tittler, *The Reign of Mary I* (London and New York, 1991), pp. 7-11, 23-36; Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England under Mary Tudor* (New Haven and London, 2009).

² David Loades, 'The Dissolution of Diocese of Durham, 1553-54', in *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham, 1494-1660* (Loughborough, 1987), pp. 101-16; idem, 'The Last Years of Cuthbert Tunstall, 1547-1559', *Durham University Journal* 66 (1973), pp. 10-21.

³ R.R. Reid, *The King's Council in the North* (London, 1921), pp. 172-73; Charles Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstall: Churchman, Scholar, Statesman, Administrator* (London, 1938), pp. 281-96; H.R. Trevor-Roper, 'The Bishopric of Durham and the Capitalist Revolution', *Durham University Journal* 7 (1946), pp. 45-58; Mervyn James, *Family, Lineage, and Civil Society: a Study of Society, Politics, and Mentality in the Durham Region, 1500-1640* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 48-49; David Loades, *John Dudley, duke of Northumberland, 1504-1553* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 180-230; Jennifer Loach, *Edward VI* (New Haven and London, 2002), p. 129.

concerted efforts to work in tandem with established local and regional networks.⁴ Examinations of Mary Tudor's influence in local politics, however, have tended to focus on the reversal of Edwardian religious policies and the scale of persecutions.⁵ David Loades' 1991 monograph and Tim Thornton's work on Cheshire have looked at how one of the sixteenth century's most polarised regime changes influenced the careers of royal men operating in the shires, but more research is needed to show how the ushering in of a Catholic polity after years of cumulative reform altered the fortunes of those men who had established themselves as Henrician and Edwardian servants.⁶

This final chapter will analyse how the palatinate and the North-East's gentry and networks of landowners and officials were affected by successive regime changes between January 1547 and November 1558, a period that saw three monarchs exercise varying degrees of influence in the region. It will look at how Somerset as protector of the realm tapped into palatinate resources, both human and material, as part of his plan to garrison Scotland. Somerset had worked alongside a number of local families during Henry's 'Rough Wooing' and would rely on the same men to erect and provision his strongholds, provide intelligence on Scottish military preparations, and conduct campaigns on both sides of the northern frontier. M.L. Bush remarked that the limited success of Somerset's garrisons owed more to the conduct of northern officials than had been previously conceded; the contention here is that Durham gentry families formed an integral part of the lord protector's northern and Scottish networks and that, while extremely costly and short-lived, Somerset would not have been able to enact his policy without harnessing the support of these men.⁷

⁴ Stephen Alford, *Kingship and Politics in the Reign of Edward VI* (Cambridge, 2002), pp. 146-47; Alan Bryson, 'Edward VI's 'special men': crown and locality in mid-Tudor England', *HR* 82 (2009), pp. 229-51.

⁵ Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, 1400-1580* (New Haven and London, 1992), pp. 524-55; John Edwards, *Mary I: England's Catholic Queen* (New Haven and London, 2011), pp. 226-65; G. Williams, 'Wales and the Reign of Mary I', *Welsh History Review* 10 (1981), pp. 334-58; Ralph Houlbrooke, 'The Clergy, the Church Courts and the Marian Restoration in Norwich', in *The Church of Mary Tudor*, ed. Eamon Duffy and David Loades (Abingdon, 2006), p. 124-48; T.S. Freeman, 'Burning Zeal: Mary Tudor and the Marian Persecution', in *Mary Tudor: Old and New Perspective*, ed. Susan Doran and T.S. Freeman (Basingstoke, 2011), pp. 171-205.

⁶ David Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor: Politics, Government and Religion in England, 1553-58* (London, 1991), pp. 40-41, 56; Tim Thornton, *Cheshire and the Tudor State, 1480 - 1560* (Woodbridge, 2000), pp. 238-39.

⁷ M.L. Bush, *The Government Policy of Protector Somerset* (London, 1975), p. 15.

The second part of the chapter will look at how John Dudley, duke of Northumberland, managed to consolidate his and the crown's position in Durham. Despite his acquisition of bishopric lands and his involvement in the dissolution of the diocese in the spring of 1553, Dudley's regime had a modest impact on the livelihood of Durham gentry families; most simply transferred their allegiances from the disgraced Somerset to Northumberland, who, like his predecessor, seemed content to operate in unison with established local families. The significant exception to this, however, was Bishop Tunstall; if Northumberland's regime had a relatively minor impact on lay landowners, the fallout for Durham's bishop was more severe. Tunstall was deprived of his bishopric (for the first time) in March 1553 and the ancient see at Durham was abolished for a little more than a year until it was restored under Mary Tudor. The chapter will conclude by looking at the ways Mary Tudor negotiated those powerful bishopric families who had served under her brother, Edward. For the most part, Mary was content, and to a degree forced, to leave the management of the marches and the bishopric to local families during the first years of her reign. By the end of the reign, however, a number of high-profile deaths and religious disaffection saw the rule of the North-East migrate towards the Catholic seventh Percy earl of Northumberland and the fifth Neville earl of Westmorland.

The Somerset Protectorate

King Henry VIII's death in the early hours of 28 January 1547 had little immediate impact on the careers of Durham's regional elites and, for that matter, the political and administrative landscape in the North-East. Edward Seymour, Prince Edward's maternal uncle, informed the young heir to the English throne of his being king on 29 January; two days later Edward VI's councillors, selected by Henry on his deathbed, duly recognised the boy's uncle as lord protector.⁸ The bishopric's figurehead, Cuthbert Tunstall, had been involved in the planning of the new king's coronation and, alongside the Bishop of Bath and Wells, was to assist the king during the event,

⁸ *The Chronicle and Political Papers of King Edward VI*, ed. W.K. Jordan (London, 1966), p. 4. According to Henry VIII's will, full authority during Edward's minority was to be shared by a council of sixteen executors, but even before Henry's death, Edward Seymour, earl of Hertford, and Sir William Paget, the king's secretary, had decided to ignore the ailing king's will and establish Seymour as protector of the realm and guardian of the young king's person.

which took place on 20 February.⁹ Tunstall had been present when Seymour was provided with the dukedom of Somerset on 16 February and was himself sworn a privy councillor on the same day the council confirmed Seymour as protector and governor of the realm and the king's person.¹⁰

In the North-East the machinery of local government continued largely unaffected. Peace commissions were issued across the region in late May 1547. Unfortunately, commissions for the bishopric are no longer extant; however, it is possible to gain an insight into the careers of Durham landowners and officials through an examination of neighbouring commissions.¹¹ Durham men are listed on commissions in Cumberland, Northumberland, and Westmorland, as well as the North, East, and West Ridings of Yorkshire. William, Lord Eure, served as a JP in Northumberland and in all three Ridings of Yorkshire, as did another prominent palatinate landowner, John, Lord Conyers, who had only a few months before been appointed bailiff, master forester, and steward of the king's castles at Richmond and Middleham.¹² Bishop Tunstall, who had returned to his diocese sometime in March, served in Yorkshire, alongside Sir Ralph Bulmer (*d.* 1558), son of Sir William Bulmer, who was active in both the North and West Ridings. Accompanying these local men were a string of royal councillors and noblemen – including Somerset, the earls of Cumberland, Shrewsbury, and Westmorland, Robert Holgate, president of the northern council, and Thomas, Lord Wharton - who had journeyed north in advance of Somerset's Scottish campaigns later that year. The May 26 commissions represent no significant departure from the normal practice of empanelling local officials from a variety of counties to sit across the region; Edward VI's first commissions in the North-East followed the same pattern as those appointed during his father's reign. The appointment of Durham landowners to commissions in Cumberland, Northumberland, and Yorkshire bolstered local and regional reputations and provided the crown with a ready source of dependable legal officials. Chief among the crown's agents was Sir Robert Bowes, whose record of royal service dated back to his appointment to the young duke of Richmond's council in the north in 1525. Bowes served on all six May

⁹ TNA, SP 10/1, f. 21, 25; *APC*, ii, pp. 29-33.

¹⁰ *CPR, 1547-1548*, pp. 173-74, 97. Seymour was appointed protector and governor on 12 March 1547.

¹¹ Clarissa Elizabeth Hinojosa, 'A man moste meete': a nationwide survey of justices of the peace in mid-Tudor England, 1547-1582' (University of Houston, PhD, 2014), p. 4.

¹² *CPR, 1547-1548*, p. 162.

1547 commissions; he was joined in Northumberland and the North Riding by his brother, Richard, father of George Bowes (c. 1527-80).¹³

Robert Bowes, lord warden of the middle marches, was called upon yet again to do the crown's bidding on the Anglo-Scottish border after relations had begun to break down in the summer of 1547. Somerset's 'Rough Wooing' of Scotland took a new turn on 31 March 1547 with the accession of the Anglophobe French king, Henri II.¹⁴ The English intention to unite the two kingdoms through the marriage of the infant Mary, queen of Scots, and the then Prince Edward – sealed by the Greenwich Treaty of 25 August 1543 and later repudiated by the Scottish parliament – had not been realised, while relations, subdued after the Scottish victory at Ancrum Moor, began to deteriorate. The council wrote to Tunstall on 12 April informing the bishop of the new king's stance towards England and how his accession might have an adverse impact on the border; the Scots, meanwhile, were busy assembling their forces for 'somme notable explycte'. Tunstall was ordered, once he had regained his health, to return to his bishopric, and it was from Durham that he wrote to Somerset on 30 May concerning the ill provision of the English forces and the sale of crucial war supplies.¹⁵ Somerset and the council had hoped to resolve tensions on the northern frontier peacefully and so it was that Tunstall and Bowes were chosen to negotiate with the Scottish ambassadors on 4 August. The commission, dated 18 July, called for Tunstall and Bowes to restore Anglo-Scottish amity; Somerset was keen to avoid 'theffusion of Christian bloode' and desired 'nothinge more then to continewe in honorable peace wth or neighbors'. The commissioners were ordered to overlook prior Scottish misdemeanours and 'entreate uppon some good means of a [per]fecte peace and ende of all co[n]trov[er]sies'. The resumption of harmonious relations and a marriage contract between Edward and Mary were of the utmost importance; Edward and Somerset were prepared to discard Scottish aggression on the border, 'their unkinde proceedings wth us since the death of or father', and their earlier reneging on the marriage treaty. Desirous as Edward and Somerset were to rekindle marriage negotiations, the council was nonetheless pessimistic about the Scots willingness to conduct talks and advised Tunstall and Bowes accordingly: 'we thincke

¹³ Peace commissions: *CPR, 1547-1548*, p. 82, 90-92.

¹⁴ Penry Williams, *The Later Tudors, 1547-1603* (Oxford, 1998); Loach, *Edward VI*, p. 52.

¹⁵ *APC*, ii, p. 475; BL, Add. MS. 32,657, f. 2 (*HP*, ii, 440).

the Scottes will use this meetinge rather for a practice to winne [waste] time then for oonce good faithe they meane to use'.¹⁶

The commission, though ostensibly issued in the king's name, undoubtedly formed part of the protector's strategy towards Scotland; the instructions, after all, had been issued with 'thadvice and consente of or deerest uncle the duke of Somerset'. If we take M.L Bush's argument that Somerset's Scottish agenda represented the defining aspect of his foreign policy, then his decision to appoint Tunstall and Bowes as the negotiators responsible for rekindling Edward and Mary's marriage is indicative of their importance and standing within the Somerset regime.¹⁷ Both men were referred to as the king's 'right trustie and right welbeloved' councillors. Members of the council were confident that Tunstall and Bowes would see through any attempts to distract the English while the Scots mustered their forces.¹⁸ Much as Somerset and the council were eager to select the right men to conduct negotiations, the bishop of Durham and Bowes likewise sought to establish advantageous ties with the leader of the new regime. While the bishop and the protector did not agree on the direction of religious policy, Sturge remarked that there was a mutual respect and moderation between both men that helped to engender a healthy working relationship.¹⁹ The council later wrote to Tunstall 'thankinge him for his good service and great travaile in the Kinges Majesties affaires'.²⁰ Bowes, too, would have been anxious to reaffirm his credentials as a royal agent with Somerset and the council. His endeavours were later recognised in the form of a £20 annuity deriving from the manors of Duddle and Spynelthorpe, Northumberland, and Daldon in the bishopric of Durham. Bowes was also presented with the constableness of the strategically important Alnwick Castle.²¹

As negotiations unfolded, Tunstall and Bowes were forbidden from advancing talks after the council had got word of Scottish raids at the English garrison at

¹⁶ TNA, SP 50/1, f. 51 (BL, Cotton Caligula, B/VII, f. 331); TNA, SP 50/1, f. 53.

¹⁷ Bush, *Protector Somerset*, p. 2, 9-11; M.H. Merriman, 'The Assured Scots: Scottish Collaborators with England during the Rough Wooing', *Scottish Historical Review* 47 (1968), pp. 10-11.

¹⁸ TNA, SP 50/1, f. 53.

¹⁹ Charles Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstall: Churchman, Scholar, Statesman, Administrator* (London, 1938), p. 270.

²⁰ *APC*, ii, p. 515.

²¹ *CPR, 1547-1548*, pp. 1-2.

Langholm.²² The failure to conclude a truce prompted Somerset to launch an offensive near Musselburgh; the lord protector reached Berwick at the head of a 16,000 strong force, which routed a larger Scottish army at Pinkie on 10 September.²³ English preparations for the Pinkie campaign had begun months before Tunstall and Bowes received their commission and it was through another member of the Durham gentry that Somerset was able to mount his offensive. William, Lord Eure, warden of the English east march, had opened up an effective channel of communication with Somerset and the council by early April 1547, providing detailed reports on the state of the marches, Scottish preparations, and the mustering of English troops. During a period of truce a small number of Scotsmen from Teviotdale had seized six or seven English horses. On 6 April Eure informed Somerset that he and his deputies had held special sessions for the redress of various offences committed on the border by both the English and the Scots, ‘wherby this east m[ar]che hath been and is in good quietness’. Scottish border officials, however, had been unable to safeguard Liddesdale, leaving the English middle and east marches open to future unrest; Eure assured the council that he would cause ‘watches to be kept as well by night as by daie’.²⁴ Three days later, Eure penned another letter to the protector and council: his spies in Scotland had learnt that a proclamation had been issued in the name of the young queen and governor, calling for all inhabitants, aged between sixteen and sixty, in Merse and Lammermoor to be made ready near Gresley Moor.²⁵

Scottish military preparations intensified towards the end of June and Somerset and his colleagues on the council were kept abreast of developments on the border through Lord Eure’s dispatches. On 29 June, Eure wrote that the governor of Scotland had made strides towards raising an army, alongside the earls of Angus and Huntley, to be ready to attack the English garrison at Langholm within two weeks. Eure’s spies, meanwhile, had learnt that the Scots had been unable to muster sufficient troops and victuals, but intended to launch a raid from Dumfries.²⁶ Three days later, Eure wrote another letter explaining that the earls of Argyle and Huntley had assembled men close to the border with the intention of marching on Berwick,

²² *APC*, ii, p. 515.

²³ Williams, *Later Tudors*, p. 39; G.R. Elton, *England under the Tudors*, 3rd edn. (Abingdon, 1991), p. 204; Loach, *Edward VI*, pp. 52-54; Bush, *Protector Somerset*, pp. 12-14, 15, 17-18.

²⁴ TNA, SP 15/1, f. 15.

²⁵ TNA, SP 15/1, f. 24.

²⁶ TNA, SP 15/1, f. 37.

where Eure was stationed; he assured Somerset and the council that ‘as I shall here of there further [pro]ceding[es] I shall remarke... thereof fromm tyme to tyme to yor grace and counsaill’.²⁷ Evidently, Eure and his staff at Berwick were concerned about the safety of the town. William Eure, and his son, Henry, urged the council to be allowed to make repairs to the town’s fortifications. The outer walls were dilapidated and the alarm bell in the watch house needed replacing; Lord Eure stressed that the town’s inhabitants struggled to hear the bell when called to muster. The bridge leading into the garrison was also in urgent need of repair, years of transporting ordnance and victuals (Berwick had served as a staging post for offensive campaigns into Scotland for centuries) had rendered the bridge unserviceable.²⁸

Eure had also made a concerted effort to remain in contact with English captains at garrisons in Scotland. On 12 July he received a letter from Gilbert Swynhoe, captain of Cornhill, approximately thirty miles from Edinburgh, regarding the governor’s troop raising: twelve French galleys had reportedly come to bolster the Scottish fleet and ferry the young queen to France. Meanwhile, Swynhoe had received conflicting reports on the Scots intentions, with some suggesting that a truce was being mooted, while others had reason to believe that they intended to attack Langholm before embarking on a campaign in England.²⁹ Weary of the possibility of Scottish raids, Eure did not hesitate to relay this intelligence back to Somerset. Writing from Berwick, William and Henry Eure advertised Somerset that ‘sundre of myne espicelles’ agreed that the ‘power of Scotland is alredye and to set forward... toward[es] lawthere [Lauder] w[i]t[h] greate orden[a]nce artyllerye and munisones’. Both men also reported news that French ships – ‘fyfye sayle... and xii gallyes’ – would arrive off the east coast of Scotland within eight days, wind permitting.³⁰

The council acted on Eure’s dispatches, ordering that musters be taken in the North-East to fend off an expected French naval attack at Holy Island. Twenty French ships had been spotted near the coast at Lindisfarne, the episcopal seat of Durham’s Saint Cuthbert. The town’s beacons were lit, Lord Eure himself led Berwick’s inhabitants and his own servants into the east march, while his son, Henry, and Thomas Gower, marshal of Berwick, organised the town’s internal defences.

²⁷ TNA, SP 15/1, f. 41.

²⁸ TNA, SP 15/1, f. 39.

²⁹ TNA, SP 15/1, f. 52.

³⁰ TNA, SP 15/1, f. 43.

Following the council's instructions, Lord Eure had, by 13 July, 'apontied certeyne nombre of the garisones of thest m[ar]ches too lye at tholye islonde for the defence of the same'. Eure's prompt implementation of the council's orders, and his liaising with Sir Robert Bowes, warden of the middle march, forced the French ships northwards away from Holy Island. William and Henry Eure's endeavours were promptly reported back to Somerset.³¹ Throughout late August, as the English and the Scots readied their forces, Lord Eure was in frequent contact with Somerset and the council.³² In the weeks before the victorious Pinkie campaign, Lord Eure had been tasked with assembling troops on the east march. Having received instructions from Somerset, Eure replied on 28 August that he had ordered 'all the capitaynes w[i]t[h] there garysones w[i]t[in] theste m[ar]ches to be in redynes upon one howers warneng'. He went on to provide the protector with a list of the number of men assembled and here we see that Lord Eure was not the only Durham official involved: Henry Eure and Richard Bowes had mustered one hundred horsemen at Berwick and Norham, respectively. George Lawson, son of George Lawson (c. 1493-1543), followed in his father's footsteps, raising men from Wark Castle to fight alongside Eure and Bowes' retinues.³³

William Eure remained a reliable source of information and a man capable of mustering men throughout Somerset's Scottish wars. His authority in the North-East, however, was not without challenge. He faced competition for Somerset and the council's favour. He had harboured a deep-seated grudge against Thomas Gower, marshall of Berwick, who would later be sent to the Fleet Prison for failing to answer Eure's allegations before the council.³⁴ In April 1547, the council was forced to intervene in a dispute between Eure and Sir Cuthbert Radcliffe over fishing rights and tithes at Berwick, where Eure had served as captain.³⁵ It was perhaps with this in mind that an ageing Eure petitioned Somerset on 12 February 1548 that his sons be allowed to hold in tandem the stewardship of Pickering, lands belonging to the dissolved house at Jervaux, and the constableness of Scarborough Castle.³⁶ By mid-March, William, Lord Eure, had died. William, Lord Grey of Wilton, informed

³¹ TNA, SP 15/1, f. 50.

³² TNA, SP 15/1, f. 57.

³³ TNA, SP 15/1, ff. 59-61.

³⁴ *APC*, i, p. 444.

³⁵ TNA, SP 15/1, ff. 17-18.

³⁶ TNA, SP 15/2, f. 26.

Somerset of Eure's passing and suggested that his son, Henry Eure, assume the wardenship of the east march and the governance of Berwick.³⁷ The request fell on death ears; Grey was himself appointed warden and governor of Berwick.³⁸

In spite of the resounding victory at Pinkie in September 1547, the Scots rejected the English demand that the marriage treaty between King Edward and Mary be revived. The Scottish queen was eventually smuggled to Brittany in August 1548, to be betrothed to the French dauphin, Francois (*d.* 5 December 1560), son of Henri II.³⁹ It was during this period that Durham officials and landowners led offensive raids in Scotland, fortified English fortresses on the border and garrisons in Scotland, and liaised with senior royal appointees on the marches. Victory at Pinkie had allowed Somerset to enact his policy of erecting English garrisons throughout Scotland.⁴⁰ By late 1547, Sir Ralph Bulmer was serving as captain of the English garrison at Roxburgh on the Scottish middle march. It was from Roxburgh that Bulmer wrote to Somerset in November 1547 of the parlous state of the garrison's storehouse, which for lack of slate was made a 'quarter naiked'. Bulmer pleaded with the lord protector that timber be brought to Roxburgh from Wark Castle so that a brew house could be completed. Bulmer had requested the material so that he could oversee the completion of works at Roxburgh, conceding that 'I am thought bousy and forward', but went on to stress the difficulties of transporting beer during the winter months: 'yt shalbe founde a sorere charge to the contry to brynge the vyttuales this winter from barwyck'.⁴¹ Provisioning at Roxburgh continued to plague Bulmer, who penned another letter to Somerset complaining of a lack of good quality coal; of the forty chalders to be delivered from Wark, only thirty had been brought into the garrison. The construction of the brew house continued to be hampered by the weather and an inability to transport timber from fortresses in England; the brewers at Roxburgh suffered from a shortage of malt and wheat. It would appear that the council took Bulmer's concerns seriously enough, for early the following year 350 labourers had been dispatched to Roxburgh to complete the works there.⁴²

³⁷ TNA, SP 50/3, f. 71.

³⁸ TNA, SP 50/3, f. 23; *CSP Scotland*, i, 187, 204.

³⁹ Julian Goodare, 'Mary [Mary Stewart] (1542 – 1587), queen of Scots', *ODNB*.

⁴⁰ Williams, *Later Tudors*, p. 39.

⁴¹ TNA, SP 50/2, ff. 132-33.

⁴² TNA, SP 50/3, f. 76.

Bulmer was not simply concerned with affairs at Roxburgh, however pressing. He kept Somerset abreast of Scottish military preparations, writing that on Christmas day ‘ther came two frenche ship[es] to dommebertton and ther landed w[i]t[h] fifty frenchemene captaynes whiche brought w[i]th them as mutche mony as will waige ten thowsand Scotyshemene’. The funds, Bulmer continued, had been ‘sent by the Byschop of Rome’. Some six thousand French soldiers had been assembled for service in Scotland; Bulmer feared that as soon as the Scots would be able to muster an additional ten thousand men, bolstered by foreign mercenaries, they would set sail for England.⁴³

Ralph Bulmer’s remit as captain at Roxburgh was not limited to defensive operations and intelligence gathering. In early February 1548, Lord Grey of Wilton reported that Bulmer had taken charge of an English raid that had set out to ransack a number of Scottish towns between Jedburgh and Roxburgh; several towns near Hawick had been burnt, with sheep and other livestock taken as spoils.⁴⁴ Bulmer was not the only Durham landowner, however, preoccupied with mustering men and equipment for garrisons in England and Scotland. By 2 January 1548, Lord Grey had written to Sir George Conyers, sheriff of Durham, to levy 120 men from the county palatine; Grey later informed Somerset that Conyers had mustered one hundred men, who were ‘such [per]sonages as are not mete to be pyoners muche les souldiours’. Somerset was implored to write to Conyers, who it was hoped would levy more suitable men at the lord protector’s request.⁴⁵ Whether Somerset had in fact urged Conyers to assemble more suitable men is unknown. By the end of January, however, Lord Grey was able to report that the sheriff had gathered two hundred ‘verie able and talle [per]sonages’ from the bishopric.⁴⁶ Conyers’ rallying of bishopric men might have been prompted by the intervention of two royal officials – Sir Thomas Holcroft, head of Somerset’s spy network in Scotland and a favoured royal courtier, and Sir Francis Leek – who had been dispatched northwards to ascertain the state of English border strongholds. On 8 January, Holcroft and Leek received instructions to ‘levy the king[es] ma[jesties] forces of the Bisshopricke of durham... and northumberland... to

⁴³ TNA, SP 50/2, ff. 171-72.

⁴⁴ TNA, SP 50/3, f. 34.

⁴⁵ TNA, DURH 20/49; TNA, SP 50/2, f. 146; TNA, SP 50/3, f. 1; TNA, SP 50/3, f. 6.

⁴⁶ TNA, SP 50/3, ff. 26-27.

[ser]ve on foot or horseback... as hath be... written to [his] hignes officers'.⁴⁷ The language used in the commission is instructive. Written six days after Lord Grey's report to Somerset concerning Conyers' mustering unsuitable men, it is possible that the lord protector or a member of his staff had penned a letter to Conyers, as one of his 'hignes officers', requesting that more be done in the bishopric. Despite the pressure of senior government officials and the presence of royal commissioners in the North-East the difficulties of raising and provisioning men in the region continued into the summer months; Grey wrote again to Somerset, this time concerning Bishop Tunstall and the earl of Westmorland's inability to provide troops for the English garrisons in Scotland.⁴⁸

In the months after Pinkie, as Somerset hoped to consolidate English military superiority on the Scottish marches and along the country's eastern seaboard, Sir Robert Bowes fulfilled a pivotal role erecting and fortifying English garrisons. In late January, Bowes, as warden of the middle marches, Thomas, Lord Wharton, warden of the west marches, and Lord Grey, lord lieutenant, compiled a report for Somerset on the condition of English strongholds on the marches and of the possibility of mounting future raids and defensive operations. All three concluded that no offensive campaigns could be conducted in Scotland and that the best course of action would be to summon the power of the east and middle marches to Haddington, fifteen miles east of Edinburgh, 'where we thinke most notable [ser]vice may be don'.⁴⁹ Haddington emerged as the principal English staging post in the Scottish lowlands; hurriedly bolstered with men and equipment after Pinkie, the garrison was eventually abandoned on 19 September 1549 as a presage to the treaty of Boulogne.⁵⁰

Bowes had succeeded in forging a close relationship with Somerset and Lord Grey during the garrisoning of Scotland and was often consulted on how best to secure and advance English interests north of the border.⁵¹ Grey had solicited Bowes' advice on how best to fortify the garrisons at Haddington and Dunbar; Grey later relayed Bowes' suggestions in a frank letter to Somerset in early March 1548.⁵² Such

⁴⁷ TNA, SP 15/3, f. 52.

⁴⁸ TNA, SP 50/4, ff. 182-83; TNA, SP 50/4, f. 330.

⁴⁹ TNA, SP 50/3, f. 23.

⁵⁰ *Chronicle of Edward VI*, p. 10; Bush, *Protector Somerset*, pp. 15-16; Williams, *Later Tudors*, pp. 40-41; W.K. Jordan, *Edward VI: The Threshold of Power: The Dominance of the Duke of Northumberland* (London, 1970), pp. 146-47.

⁵¹ TNA, SP 50/3, f. 36; TNA, SP 50/3, f. 51.

⁵² TNA, SP 50/3, f. 62.

was his importance to the regime's military networks in the North of England and Scotland when Lord Grey requested that he be allowed to return to court for a short period – ten days – in March, Bowes was the man recommended to oversee affairs. Grey assured Somerset that his temporary absence and Bowes' being left in command 'sholde nothing hinder nor abate the service'.⁵³ It would seem that Bowes was indeed left to fill Grey's vacuum during the latter's absence from the marches; shortly after his departure Grey issued Bowes with a set of instructions to muster the forces of the middle and east marches at Wark Castle on 18 March so that munitions and other provisions could be transported to the garrison at Lauder.⁵⁴ Four days later, Bowes informed Grey of his progress at Lauder. Unsuitable, weak horses had made transporting weaponry and other supplies extremely difficult; Bowes and his retinue were forced to rest at Kelso before advancing to Lauder. He explained that travel by night was impossible; the route to Lauder was so 'deip and dangerous' that the guides would only move in daylight. Bowes had also taken measures to ensure that those Scots who had escaped from the garrisons be apprehended; he had written to Sir Thomas Grey and Henry Eure ordering them 'to make al[l]... inquirie of the man[er]... and... put them in such safeguard'. Significantly, Bowes signed the letter 'yor good lordships allwayes at co[m]mandement'. While such postscripts were hardly a departure from common letter writing practices, the affirmation of his support for Grey - much like the townsmen of York pleading with Cardinal Wolsey - is nonetheless suggestive of Bowes' desire to cement a healthy and fruitful working relationship with one of Somerset's senior agents.⁵⁵ Bowes' part in the construction and fortification of Lauder is testimony to the strength and efficacy of the North-East's administrative and military networks. Even during Lord Grey's albeit brief absence, the region's most influential players were prepared to offer their services to the new Somerset regime.

After Lord Grey had returned to the North-East, Bowes continued to work alongside the lord lieutenant on Somerset's behalf. On 3 April, Lord Grey reported that Bowes had travelled to Lauder, his progress delayed by poor weather, 'w[i]th so

⁵³ TNA, SP 50/3, f. 61

⁵⁴ TNA, SP 50/3, f. 76.

⁵⁵ TNA, SP 50/3, ff. 80-81. The importance of language in early Tudor letter writing has been analysed by Nadine Lewycky, 'Cardinal Thomas Wolsey and the City of York, 1514 – 1529', *NH* 46 (2009), p. 9, 18.

much helpe as I wolde geve hym to procecute yor graces directions'.⁵⁶ Bowes arrived at Lauder the day after Grey penned his letter to Somerset. In the early hours of 5 April, he began updating the garrison's fortifications. Bowes had kept Lord Grey, stationed at Berwick, abreast of developments at Lauder, which Grey later relayed to the lord protector in London: 'Mr Bowes writeth to me finding the place so strong of nature as right sone it wilbe teneable and w[i]t[h]out any gret nombre of men safelye to be garded'.⁵⁷ Decades of border experience – Bowes had served as constable of Barnard and Alnwick Castles and as warden of the middle march - meant that Bowes was in a good position to advise both Grey and Somerset on suitable candidates for the captaincy at Lauder. It is not particularly surprising that both Lord Grey and Robert Bowes nominated one of Grey's clients for the post. Bowes had written to Grey on 22 March suggesting that a 'Mr Twtie' would be suitable to captain the garrison; shortly thereafter, Grey wrote to Somerset endorsing Bowes' recommendation.⁵⁸

Somerset and his officials on the marches evidently valued Bowes' experience, for on 11 April 1548 he was made aware of Somerset's intention to provide him with the wardenship of the east march; he would operate now as warden of both the middle and east marches. That Bowes was offered no enlargement of his salary or fees is indicative of the lord protector's increasingly parsimonious approach to border administration.⁵⁹ The dual warden now faced the unenviable task of accepting Somerset's patronage on the provision that his fees be increased. Lord Grey, perhaps returning the favour after Bowes had endorsed his servant for the captaincy of Lauder, acted as the mediator. He informed the lord protector that it was in 'sutch ioyfull ple[sur]... that yor grace heathe pleased to retayne hym [Bowes] in memorye', but stressed that the cost of maintaining the middle march had 'suced upp' Bowes's fees; the wardenship had also deprived Bowes of funds from his own patrimony. Grey suggested that Somerset increase Bowes' fees. In case such a request was deemed unpalatable, Lord Grey was quick to reaffirm Bowes' loyalty and knowledge of the border: 'no man in my opinion may seme more glad to obey yor pleasure than hee... his [ser]vice in my tyme hath bene so redy and forwarde as I have

⁵⁶ TNA, SP 50/4, f. 16.

⁵⁷ TNA, SP 50/4, f. 12.

⁵⁸ TNA, SP 50/3, f. 81; TNA, SP 50/4, f. 24.

⁵⁹ Bush, *Protector Somerset*, pp. 27-29.

bothe by wrytinge and speking shewed yor grace'.⁶⁰ Somerset's rather steely response was that Bowes must 'take paycence for time'. He was not granted the full fees for the wardenship of the east march until his appointment was confirmed on 1 January 1550, by which time he had also been made responsible for Tynedale and Riddesdale.⁶¹ Bowes' tenure as warden of the east march, however, was short lived. By 1 May 1549, Henry Manners, earl of Rutland, assumed the office of warden-general of the middle and east marches.⁶² It was as *de facto* warden of the east march that Bowes, alongside Sir Thomas Palmer, led a raid in August 1548 to relieve the Haddington garrison, which had been besieged by a recent influx of French soldiers. The campaign ended in disaster: the English force was ambushed and routed, while Bowes and Palmer were taken captive.⁶³

Somerset's decision to appoint Robert Bowes to the wardenship of the east march, albeit temporarily and marred somewhat by the issue of fees, is suggestive of the lord protector's desire to continue the Henrician policy of forging networks with the North-East's principal landowners. Seymour, as earl of Hertford, had already established ties with regional elites during Henry's wars with Scotland. Once confirmed as protector, it would appear that Somerset was eager to adopt Sir William Paget's advice to 'rewarde the kinges worthy servauntes liberally and quykely'.⁶⁴ Local landowners and clients understood that future border assignments and rewards rested with the lord protector, and it was to him that petitions for lands in the North-East, including the bishopric, were directed. James Henrison, author of *The Godly and Golden Book for Concord of England and Scotland*, petitioned the lord protector for the deanery of Auckland in March 1548, before his relationship with Somerset began to sour the following year.⁶⁵ Lord Grey of Wilton, whose career on the border owed much to Somerset, pleaded with his patron to intercede with the king to furnish him with the lordship of Stockton, 'lyeng in the countie of Duresme'. Service on the marches had deprived Lord Grey of much of his income; his request for Stockton,

⁶⁰ TNA, SP 50/4, f. 28.

⁶¹ BL, Add. MS. 5,475, f. 747; *APC*, ii, p. 473; *CPR, 1549-1551*, pp. 162-63. Bowes' fees for the east march came to £466 13s 4d, with £10 for two deputies. His fees for the middle march stood at £333 6s 8d.

⁶² *CPR, 1548-1549*, pp. 402-3.

⁶³ TNA, SP 10/4, f. 72; TNA, SP 10/5, f. 41; *APC*, ii, p. 361; *CSP Scotland*, i, 293; *HP*, ii, 615.

⁶⁴ Northamptonshire Record Office, Fitzwilliam Milton Correspondence, MS. 21, f. 4v.

⁶⁵ TNA, SP 50/3, f. 90; Bush, *Protector Somerset*, pp. 10-11.

therefore, was not veiled simply as a means of bolstering his income, it was, he assured, ‘so shall I also be more able to [ser]ve the king[es] ma[tie]’.⁶⁶ Somerset’s patronage policy towards bishopric men and regional officials was not undermined by factional disputes; like his predecessors, Seymour was acutely aware of the need to maintain cordial relations with the North-East’s most influential families, not least to give his garrisons in Scotland the optimal chance of success.⁶⁷ Moreover, an analysis of office-holding and commissions issued during Somerset’s protectorate reveals that it was the same families who exercised power on the crown’s behalf. Henry VIII’s death and the transition to a protectorate did not adversely impact the careers of the North-East and Durham’s lay landowners and officials. Somerset’s elevation did not induce a dramatic change in personal acting as royal servants in the region; the Bellasis, Bowes, Bulmer, Cholmeley, Conyers, Eure, Hilton, and Tempest families continued to dominate local and marcher offices during the protectorate. The core that had served under Henry in the mid-to late-1540s seemingly transferred their allegiances and support to Edward and Somerset.

The Emergence of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland

Somerset’s demise, the emergence of John Dudley, earl of Warwick, and a successful *coup* against conservatives on the council had a more profound impact on the palatinate and, to a lesser extent, its leading families. Popular unrest directed at Thomas Cranmer’s new prayer book in the summer of 1549 triggered a series of events that culminated in the dissolution of the Somerset protectorate on 13 October. Discord in the West Country and the spiralling cost of the Scottish garrisons paved the way for Dudley and his allies to institute a new government circle around the king. After a brief and unsuccessful conservative backlash in December 1549 - in which Thomas Wriothesley, earl of Southampton, attempted to implicate Warwick

⁶⁶ TNA, SP 50/4, f. 90.

⁶⁷ Bush, *Protector Somerset*, p. 15; Bryson, ‘crown and locality in mid-Tudor England’, p. 251; idem, ‘The speciall men in every shere’: The Edwardian regime, 1547-1553’ (University of St Andrews PhD, 2001), pp. 68-80.

with Somerset – the earl of Warwick replaced Somerset as the *de facto* figurehead of Edward's regime.⁶⁸

For Bishop Tunstall, John Dudley's elevation to power brought little immediate change. Towards the close of 1549, the bishop's relationship with Warwick was largely constructive. On 20 November, shortly after Dudley had assumed control of policy making, Tunstall and other members of the privy council had been instructed to enquire into missing funds due to be transferred to the king's coffers; the costs of Somerset's Scottish policies, the commission stated, necessitated such an enquiry.⁶⁹ In April 1550, Warwick had allowed Tunstall to retain one hundred men from the bishopric; Dudley himself had been permitted to retain the same number as the bishop, while John Cheke, who owed his increasing fortunes to Dudley's ascendancy, was entitled to retain only fifty.⁷⁰ What is more, it could well have been Warwick's influence in a legal decision of Easter 1550 that confirmed Tunstall's right to claim and disperse the wardship of heirs in the bishopric.⁷¹

Alan Bryson, Stephen Alford, and Steven Gunn, among others, have stressed that the immediate transition from Somerset to Dudley caused minimal disruption to the nature and composition of local administration and office-holding. Dudley appreciated that the success of local government across England depended, to a large degree, on his harnessing existing local networks.⁷² Dudley's ascendancy in late 1549 had a similarly underwhelming effect on the career trajectories of Durham officials operating across the North-East. The career of Robert Bowes, in central administration and local government, is reflective of Dudley's limited impact on the livelihoods of the gentry in the North-East. On 20 April 1550, Bowes, who had continued to serve as temporary warden of the east and middle marches after

⁶⁸ *Chronicle of Edward VI*, pp. 17-19; BL, Add. MS. 48,126, ff. 15-16; A.J.A. Malkiewicz, 'An eye-witness's account of the *coup d'état* of October 1549', *EHR* 70 (1955), pp. 600-9; Williams, *Later Tudors*, p. 41

⁶⁹ *CPR, 1548-1549*, pp. 250-51.

⁷⁰ *CPR, 1549-1551*, p. 327.

⁷¹ Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstall*, p. 283.

⁷² Bryson, 'crown and locality in mid-Tudor England', p. 229, 250-51; Alford, *Reign of Edward VI*, pp. 137-39; Steven Gunn, *Early Tudor Government, 1485-1558* (Basingstoke, 1995), p. 67; R.R. Reid, *The King's Council in the North* (London, 1921), pp. 169-70. Dale Hoak's work on Northumberland and the council portrays the duke in the similar light; in his position as lord president of the council, Dudley was able to restore a degree of executive competence: Dale Hoak, 'Rehabilitating the Duke of Northumberland: Politics and Political Control, 1549-1553', in *The Mid-Tudor Polity, c. 1540-1560*, ed. Jennifer Loach and Robert Tittler (Basingstoke and London, 1980), pp. 29-51.

Rutland's appointment, was eventually replaced by Dudley himself, whose fees of £1,000 were considerably higher than his predecessor.⁷³ Despite being relieved of his wardenships, Bowes remained active on the marches: he continued to sue the Scottish ambassadors for the confirmation of a truce and the delivery of English prisoners from Scotland, which Dudley hoped would be more forthcoming with the gradual reversal of Somerset's policies.⁷⁴ He continued to act as constable of Barnard and Alnwick castles and as steward for Dunstanburgh and Hexham in Northumberland, and was, owing to his to 'good service' on the marches, provided with a 'convenient pencion unto such tyme as he [Edward VI] shulde find occasion better to emploie him'.⁷⁵ On 19 July, the council wrote again to Bowes, instructing him that since the earl of Warwick had been detained in London that he should remain warden of the east and middle marches during his absence; Warwick's patent of 17 May was, however, enrolled without cancellation and it would seem that Bowes did not act as warden on either march after 1551.⁷⁶

That the council reappointed Bowes, albeit temporarily, during Warwick's absence is testimony to the high regard in which he was held by its members. In the intervening period between Bowes being relieved of his wardenships in April 1550 and the cessation of his formal border responsibilities in 1551, he appears to have been in regular contact with the privy council, providing reports on the finances of English strongholds, provisions, and French military preparations in Scotland.⁷⁷ English diplomats used Bowes's reports on French military activity in Scotland as a bargaining tool at the French court. On 17 February 1551, the council forwarded a report, in which Bowes expressed his concerns that French troops had amassed on the border with the intention of raiding the town of Berwick, to Sir John Mason, the English ambassador in France.⁷⁸ On the Anglo-Scottish marches, Bowes' years of experience were put to use in an advisory capacity. When Henry Grey, third marquis

⁷³ *APC*, iii, p. 4. When Dudley assumed the role of warden-general in October 1551, his fees increased to £1,333 6s 8d per annum, compared to the £5,333 6s 8d Somerset had awarded himself in 1547. BL, Harley Manuscript 353, f. 94; Bush, *Protector Somerset*, p. 33.

⁷⁴ *APC*, ii, p. 430; *APC*, iii, p. 67.

⁷⁵ *APC*, iii, p. 4, 23; 'Bowes, Robert (by 1497-155)', *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff [http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/bowes-robert-1497-1555]

⁷⁶ *APC*, iii, p. 84; 'Bowes, Robert (by 1497-155)', *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff [http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1509-1558/member/bowes-robert-1497-1555]

⁷⁷ *APC*, iii, p. 81, 102, 108, 119, 126.

⁷⁸ TNA, SP 68/6, f. 48.

of Dorset, was appointed lord warden, a position he held from April to September 1551, Bowes had prepared an extensive, twenty-two page document on ‘all things requisite for a Lord warden to know’. Bowes briefed the incoming warden on the strength of certain fortresses, conditions across the east and middle marches, and the reliability of particular families.⁷⁹ As Warwick moved towards abandoning Somerset’s costly Scottish policy in the summer of 1551, Bowes was among the English commissioners charged with negotiating a treaty with the Scots and, crucially, determining the limits of English jurisdiction on the border.⁸⁰ Although closely aligned with the Somerset regime, the lord protector’s demise – he was arrested on 1 December 1551 and executed on 22 January 1552 – would appear to have had little negative impact on Bowes’ political ambitions, both in the North-East and at court.

Bowes’ rapid ascension through the ranks of central government was closely aligned to John Dudley’s increasing power in the North-East: the latter was made duke of Northumberland on 11 October 1551. Bowes was admitted to the privy council two weeks earlier on 25 September, from which point he resided permanently in London, attending the large majority of its meetings. He received the mastership of the hospital of Savoy by 16 November and was made master of the rolls for life on 18 June 1552.⁸¹ Bowes’ legal knowledge was also put to use by the Northumberland regime; he sat on a plethora of commissions empanelled to collate and augment the king’s revenues.⁸² Bowes’ elevation through the senior ranks of central government under Somerset and, particularly, Northumberland reflects his important role within the new regime. After the Pilgrimage of Grace, he had managed to rehabilitate and further his political career, as a dependable military commander, informer in the North, and, as of the summer of 1552, as a member of Edward VI’s permanent council.

The consolidation of Northumberland’s authority in central government and in the far North had a similarly positive effect on the livelihoods of Durham’s landowning class. William, second Lord Eure (*b.* 10 May 1529 – *d.* 12 September 1594), son of Sir Ralph Eure (who was killed at Ancrum Moor), was made Dudley’s

⁷⁹ BL, Cotton Caligula B/VIII, ff. 109-31.

⁸⁰ TNA, SP 50/5, ff. 79-85; TNA, SP 68/6, ff. 159-64; BL, Harley Manuscript 289, f. 161. Bowes was joined by Sir Leonard Beckwith and Sir Thomas Chaloner.

⁸¹ *CPR, 1550-1553*, iv, p. 53, 110, 305; *APC*, iii, p. 363.

⁸² *CPR, 1550-1553*, iv, p. 144, 278, 352-3, 254-6, 390, 392; *APC*, iv, p. 120, 137; TNA, SP 10/14, f. 27.

deputy on the middle march on 24 November 1552, with fees of 600 marks. In Northumberland's absence, Eure, alongside Thomas, Lord Wharton, deputy warden-general, and Thomas Dacre, deputy warden on the west march, was commissioned to determine and record the king's friends on the border.⁸³ When Thomas Dacre was deprived of the deputy wardenship of the west march, he was replaced by John, Lord Conyers, on 23 December 1552.⁸⁴ Anthony Bellasis had established ties with Northumberland and Sir William Cecil, who had emerged as one of Northumberland's patronage brokers. Bellasis' career in chancery gained momentum by the beginning of 1552 and it was a 'Dr Belassyor' who was promised a prebend in Carlisle before his death in mid-August.⁸⁵ Ralph Bulmer, formerly captain of Roxburgh, was active on commissions in Yorkshire and by May 1552 had been released from a £100 bond taken to ensure his loyalties towards Somerset.⁸⁶

An examination of crown commissions also reveals the extent to which the same families continued to dominate regional politics. Sir George Conyers, Thomas Hilton, Thomas Tempest, and Robert Hyndmer were all selected to collect sums owed to the crown from within the bishopric; the commissioners were accompanied by the earl of Westmorland, Bishop Tunstall, and Robert Meynell, a local lawyer.⁸⁷ Thomas Hilton exemplified the regional nature of the commissions. He was appointed to collect sums in neighbouring Northumberland and Newcastle, where he was joined by other influential North-Eastern landowners.⁸⁸ The composition of the council in the north both before and after Somerset's fall from power in late 1549 is equally suggestive of the essential continuity of personnel in North-Eastern government. Of the eleven named members empanelled to sit on the earl of Shrewsbury's May 1549 council, nine retained their places in February 1550, including Bishop Tunstall, John, Lord Conyers, Sir George Conyers, and Sir Robert Bowes, his importance underscored by an annual salary of 100 marks and his not being able to depart without the president's leave. Anthony Bellasis' inclusion in February 1550 can be explained by his proximity to the then earl of Warwick.⁸⁹ Northumberland, then, not unlike his

⁸³ *CPR, 1549-1551*, p. 173; *CPR, 1550-1553*, p. 258, 277-78.

⁸⁴ *CPR, 1550-1553*, pp. 186-87.

⁸⁵ *CPR, 1550-1553*, p. 184; BL, Lansdowne MS 2, f. 201r; Alford, *Reign of Edward VI*, p. 141.

⁸⁶ *CPR, 1549-1551*, p. 217; *CPR, 1547-1553*, p. 410.

⁸⁷ *CPR, 1547-1553*, p. 365.

⁸⁸ *CPR, 1547-1553*, p. 365.

⁸⁹ TNA, SP 15/4, ff. 87-104; Reid, *Council in the North*, pp. 169-70.

predecessor, was aware of the need to foster and nurture networks in the North-East, including the bishopric, in exactly the same manner as he had done throughout the realm.⁹⁰ By harnessing the support of the region's most influential families, Northumberland adopted a model of centre-periphery management, based on symbiotic patronage relationships, patented by the Richard Fox, Cardinal Wolsey, and Thomas Cromwell.

The Duke of Northumberland and the 'King's County Palatine'

Shortly after parliament had been prorogued on 1 February 1550, the privy council ordered that Bishop Tunstall return to the North-East to deter further Scottish attacks on the border.⁹¹ David Loades, whose 1987 work on the dissolution of the bishopric remains the seminal study of the subject, has argued that Tunstall's forced withdrawal from London can be explained as much by the council's determination to rid London of a religious dissident as by the need to ensure security on the marches.⁹² By June the tide of events began to move against the bishop. According to the privy council entry, it was at this time that a Percy family dependant, Ninian Menvile, accused Tunstall of fomenting rebellion against the government; in September, Tunstall was formally questioned about his role in the plot to unseat the recently established Warwick regime.⁹³ Debate surrounds Dudley's motivations regarding the bishopric at this time and suggestions that the king's minster was seeking to annex the palatinate, whether for the king or his own personal use, stem from a letter in which Dudley assured Cecil that Tunstall's imprisonment and the seizure of his bishopric 'would touch him wonderfully and yield to the King as good return as the B[ishop] of Winchester is like to do'.⁹⁴ Warwick's reference to the bishop of Winchester concerned Stephen

⁹⁰ Bryson, 'crown and locality in mid-Tudor England', pp. 250-1; Alford, *Reign of Edward VI*, p. 146, 150.

⁹¹ Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal*, p. 284.

⁹² Loades, 'Dissolution of the Diocese of Durham', pp. 101-2; idem, 'The Last Years of Cuthbert Tunstall, 1547-1559', *Durham University Journal* 66 (1973), pp. 10-21.

⁹³ *APC*, ii, pp. 448-49.

⁹⁴ TNA, SP 10/10, f. 31; Loades, 'Dissolution of the Diocese of Durham', p. 102; Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal*, p. 287; Loach, *Edward VI*, p. 129; H.R. Trevor-Roper, 'The Bishopric of Durham and the Capitalist Revolution', *Durham University Journal* 7 (1946), pp. 45-58; James, *Civil Society*, pp. 48-49; Gunn, *Early Tudor Government*, p. 67; B.L. Beer, *Northumberland: The Political Career of John Dudley, Earl of Warwick and Duke of*

Gardiner, who had been placed in the Tower and deprived of his see by royal commission; the revenues from Winchester, the wealthiest see in England at £3,885 3s 4d per annum, were now directed to the king.⁹⁵

Legal proceedings against Tunstall moved slowly. He remained under house arrest for approximately twelve months before the council formally interrogated him in May 1551; a formal commission to investigate the bishop's involvement in a northern conspiracy was issued in October but came to nothing.⁹⁶ A week after Tunstall's incarceration, the Imperial ambassador, Jehan Scheyfve, reported that 'they will deprive him of his bishopric, the land and manors belonging to which border on, and are conveniently placed to be applied to the duchy of Northumberland'. By the time Scheyfve penned his thoughts on 27 December 1551, Dudley had been elevated to the dukedom of Northumberland; his reference to the 'duchy of Northumberland', therefore, alludes to Dudley's ambition to remove Tunstall and so pave the way for the erection of a secular palatinate under his control.⁹⁷ No formal charge of treason was brought against the aging bishop in the common law courts; a bill of attainder for the lesser crime of misprision of treason was passed by the lords on 31 March 1552, but later disappeared.⁹⁸

Shortly after the lords passed its bill against Tunstall, Northumberland wrote to Cecil concerning the governance of the bishopric. Now that the jurisdiction of 'County pallatyn of [bish]opricke of Duresme' had been passed into the king's hands, Dudley thought that it should be governed in a similar fashion to the royal franchise at Chester, which had passed to the crown in 1301. Northumberland's letter of 7 April 1552 stoked suggestions among contemporaries and historians that he had intended to annex the palatinate to bolster his own northern affinity: 'I [intend] therfor... to move Mr Vice Chamb[er]leyn... to be meene to the King[es] ma[jes]te that [he might give the office] of his highnes chancellor and steward of the same [county palatine of

Northumberland (Kent: Ohio, 1974), pp. 181-82; *CSP, Reigns of Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth, 1547-1580*, ed. Robert Lemon (London, 1856), i, p. 26 (16 September 1550).

⁹⁵ TNA, SP 10/15, f. 163.

⁹⁶ *APC*, iii, p. 381. On 20 December 1551, the council committed Tunstall to the Tower, 'to abyde there suche ordre as his doinges by the course of the lawe shall appere to have deserved'. An inventory was made of Tunstall's possessions at his London residence. *APC*, iii, p. 449.

⁹⁷ *CSP Spanish*, x, p. 425.

⁹⁸ *Journal of the House of Lords*, i, p. 418.

Durham]... to me and my deputys'.⁹⁹ While scholars have focused their gaze on Northumberland's remarks about the offices of the bishopric being made available to him, it is important not to overlook the language used to refer to the ancient see of Durham. Almost all contemporary accounts used the term 'bishopric'. Northumberland, however, may have been hinting at the crown's desire for a secular palatinate under the king's jurisdiction when he referred to Durham as a 'County pallatyn'.¹⁰⁰

Whether Northumberland had in fact planned to dissolve the palatinate for his own personal gain is unclear. What does emerge in the years and months leading up to the dissolution of the bishopric is his growing influence in the region and his steady acquisition of land and offices. By 20 May 1550 Dudley received a grant of a swathe of land in the North-East and the bishopric, including the lordship and castle at Barnard, the forest of Teesdale, and lands attached to the dissolved abbey at Tynemouth. His acquisition of these lands was justified in terms of consolidating his own power as warden general of the marches, a position that had been bestowed on Dudley just one month before.¹⁰¹ In December 1551 and January 1552, Dudley was provided with more land, mostly former Percy estates that had once made up the ancestral property of Richard Beauchamp, thirteenth earl of Warwick.¹⁰² By bolstering his landed resources in the bishopric, Northumberland, under Edward's auspices, had surpassed Somerset, Tunstall, and other local magnates as the man to whom the regional gentry increasingly looked towards for future assignments and patronage.¹⁰³ Regional landowners also relayed requests for or disputes concerning palatinate patronage to Sir William Cecil, who had himself risen to prominence under Northumberland. On 28 July 1552, Richard Ogle, whose family had a rich history of crown service on the border, wrote to the chancellor concerning the lease of St Leonard's hospital.¹⁰⁴ It is likely that Northumberland's influence lay behind the

⁹⁹ TNA, SP 10/14, f. 29. The manuscript is badly damaged. Parts of the transcription have been taken from *CSP, Domestic, Edward VI*, 610.

¹⁰⁰ TNA, SP 10/14, f. 29.

¹⁰¹ *CPR, 1549-1551*, pp. 370-74.

¹⁰² Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstall*, p. 286; *CPR, 1550-1553*, p. 117.

¹⁰³ TNA, SP 10/14, ff. 161-62; TNA, SP 10/15, f. 124.

¹⁰⁴ R.B. Dobson, *Church and Society in the Medieval North of England* (London, 1996), p. 96; Christian Liddy, *The Bishopric of Durham in the Late Middle Ages: Lordship, Community and the Cult of St Cuthbert* (Woodbridge, 2008), p. 62, 185-86, 237-39; Steven Ellis, *Defending English Ground: War and Peace in Meath and Northumberland, 1460-1542*

decision to award the hospital of St Giles at Kepier to the Scottish reformer John Cockburn in May 1552.¹⁰⁵ On 4 February 1553, Richard Rede, a royal councillor and master of the court of requests, was presented with the hospital at Sherburn (the wealthiest benefice in the bishopric valued at £135 7s per annum), the mastership of the hospital of St Mary Magdalene, and an annuity of £100, all of which came about from service in the North-East alongside Northumberland.¹⁰⁶ The hospital at Sherburn had often been the reward presented to royal officials operating in Durham; Thomas Legh, one of Henry VIII's northern dissolution commissioners, had been awarded the hospital in September 1537.¹⁰⁷ The important distinction between the two grants, however, was that Bishop Tunstall sanctioned Legh's 1537 grant - possibly as a means of placating the royal agent during his inspection of Durham's religious houses - while Rede owed his award, ostensibly, to the king.

Legal proceeding to deprive Tunstall of his bishopric began in late September 1552. Six lawyers, including Sir Roger Cholmeley, with his record of service in Durham and now chief justice of king's bench, and the soon to be master of Sherburn hospital, Sir Richard Rede, were commissioned to hear the case.¹⁰⁸ The commissioners sat on two separate occasions, on 4 and 14 October, after which Tunstall was formally deprived of the bishopric of Durham; its revenues and jurisdiction were now in the king's hands, as was customary during vacancies.¹⁰⁹ On 21 March 1553 a bill 'for the dyssoluc[i]on of the Bysshopprick of durham' was brought before the house of lords; the lords approved the bill before it passed through the house of commons in less than twenty-four hours after three hurried readings and little or no debate.¹¹⁰ The bill outlined the crown's intention to dissolve the ancient see and erect two new bishoprics in its stead:

(Oxford, 2015), p. 97; TNA, SP 10/14, f. 112; TNA, SP 10/14, f. 119. Cecil had been made chancellor in April 1551.

¹⁰⁵ *CPR, 1550-1553*, p. 360.

¹⁰⁶ *CPR, 1547-1553*, p. 134; TNA, SP 10/15, f. 171r.

¹⁰⁷ See chapter 3.

¹⁰⁸ The other commissioners were: John Gosnold, solicitor-general; Richard Goodrich, attorney of the court of augmentations; William Stanford, later a justice of common pleas; Robert Chidley; and Ricard Lyell.

¹⁰⁹ *APC*, iv, p. 127, 232; Loades, 'Dissolution of the Diocese of Durham', pp. 103-4; Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstall*, p. 291.

¹¹⁰ *Journal of the House of Lords*, i, p. 436.

the king[es] matie of his most godly dysposition ys desirous to have goddes moste holy and sacredd worde in thos partyes adioyning to the borders of Scotlande beinge nowe wylde and barbarous for lacke of good doctrine... ys fully determynd to have two seuerall Ordynaryes as... bishoppes to be erected and establyshed within the lymytes and boundes and Iurisdicc[i]ons of the sayd bishopprick of durham wherof thone shalbe called the Sea of the bishopprick of durham and thother the Sea of the bishopprick of newccastell upon Tyne.¹¹¹

The crown would appoint two ‘meete and... learned men’ to fill the newly erected sees. The two royal recipients were to be endowed with ‘manours landes Tenementes and other hereditamentes... as shalbe mete and convenient for any of the king[es] subiectes to have’. The new sees at Durham and Newcastle would be valued at two thousand and one thousand marks, respectively.¹¹² The values contained in the bill presented to the lords were significantly lower than those put forward by Northumberland in a letter to Cecil in late October 1552; Dudley suggested that the king could claim £2,000 worth of the ‘best land[es] w[i]t[h]in the north part[es]’ and as much as four thousand marks ‘a year of as good revenue as any ys w[i]t[h]in the realme’.¹¹³ Northumberland had kept up a correspondence with Cecil on the importance of ascertaining the value of the bishopric before the bill was introduced to parliament, which has prompted suggestion among historians that Northumberland had intended to dissolve the bishopric for his own financial benefit.¹¹⁴

The suppression of the old bishopric, however, would not take place in parliament. Rather, the bill paved the way for Edward to dissolve the bishopric by way of royal letters patent; only the dean and chapter of the reconstituted cathedral was exempted.¹¹⁵ The letters patent responsible for the formal dissolution of the bishopric and erection of the ‘kinges countie palentyne of Durhame’ were issued in

¹¹¹ TNA, C 65/161, item 12. See appendix 4.

¹¹² TNA, C 65/161, item 12.

¹¹³ TNA, SP 10/15, f. 79. The bishopric of Durham was actually valued at £2,831 in a survey taken before 1550: TNA, SP 10/15, f. 163.

¹¹⁴ TNA, SP 10/15, f. 81; TNA, SP 10/15, f. 120; TNA, SP 10/15, f. 129; TNA, SP 10/18, f. 1; Burnet, *Church of England*, ii, p. 194, 216; Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstall*, p. 296.

¹¹⁵ TNA, C 65/161, item 12.

the first week of May 1553.¹¹⁶ Another patent of 2 May made Northumberland chief steward of all the king's lands in Cumberland, Northumberland, Westmorland, and elsewhere, formerly in the possession of the bishops of Durham, with the 'rule and leading of all the king's men and tenants... and all profits.... as amply as Thomas Tempest, Richard Bellasis, and John, Lord Lumley deceased, or any other had them'.¹¹⁷ Northumberland had been appointed constable of Durham Castle and keeper of the royal forests in the bishopric, with combined fees of £20 13s 4d.¹¹⁸ He was also entrusted with the command of Barnard Castle.¹¹⁹ Northumberland was not the only royal official to benefit materially from the bishopric's restructuring. Francis Jobson, master of the jewels, was awarded the lordship of Howden, with an annual value of £284 19s 8½d; Henry Sidney, a principal gentlemen of Edward's privy chamber and later lord deputy of Ireland under Elizabeth, received lands in Durham and the North-East worth £75; the earl of Shrewbury was presented with Tunstall's residence at Coldharbour in London.¹²⁰ Perhaps the most significant loss for the bishop of Durham, aside from the bishopric itself, was that of Gateshead, which had been annexed to Newcastle after centuries of conflict between Tunstall's predecessors and the burgesses of the town. Although Gateshead was worth a little over £35 to the bishop, revenues from mineral exploitation and trading meant that its value, in practice, was significantly higher.¹²¹

If the dissolution of the bishopric had a severe impact on the career of Bishop Tunstall, its effect on the region's officers and gentry was less extreme. Some seventy-five per cent of the ancient bishopric was now subject to the crown's control, yet the day to day management of the palatinate continued largely as normal.¹²² With the exception of Northumberland's recently acquired offices and lands, for the most part Durham landowners remained in the same offices and exercised a similar degree of influence in regional society. Cuthbert Conyers continued to act as sheriff after the dissolution and his reports reveal the almost negligible impact of the crown's policies on the bishopric. One of Conyers' reports accounted for the period from the 'feast of

¹¹⁶ TNA, C 66/858, m. 20; *CPR, 1547-1553*, p. 177.

¹¹⁷ TNA, C 66/858, m. 17; *CPR, 1547-1553*, p. 176.

¹¹⁸ TNA, C 66/858, m. 17; *CPR, 1547-1553*, p. 176.

¹¹⁹ *CPR, 1547-1553*, p. 174.

¹²⁰ *CPR, 1547-1553*, p. 134, 64, 230.

¹²¹ *SR*, iv, pp. 173-74; Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, pp. 54-5, 187-88; W.M. Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans: The Church of Durham, 1071-1153* (Woodbridge, 1998), 94-98.

¹²² Loades, 'Dissolution of the Diocese of Durham', p. 101, 109.

St Michael the Archangel in the twenty-third year of the pontificate of Cuthbert, by the grace of God Bishop of Durham, to the feast of St Michael in the twenty-fourth year of the same pontificate', or the 29 September 1552 to 29 September 1553.¹²³ His account for the next year – 29 September 1553 to 29 September 1554 – opens using similar language.¹²⁴ That Conyers' reports did not refer to the royal dissolution and continued to name Tunstall as bishop could have been the result of clerical oversight. It is also possible, however, that his accounts reflect the relatively small impression on local life made by Edward's decision to annex the palatinate to the crown. Where the crown's impact on Durham society proved more tangible was in the appointment of trusted local officials to palatinate offices. Robert Bowes was appointed the king's chancellor in Durham in June or July 1553.¹²⁵ His brother, Richard Bowes, now referred to as the 'King's servant', was appointed constable of Norham Castle, with fees of £40, and received a grant of lands around the manor of Norham. All profits from former bishopric land in Northumberland, worth £163 6s 8d per annum, would be delivered to Bowes in exchange for an annual rent of £100.¹²⁶ The same local men, including Thomas Hilton, George and Cuthbert Conyers, and Robert Tempest were also called upon to sit on and enforce royal commissions in the now secular county palatine.¹²⁷

Edward's dissolution of the bishopric of Durham proved short-lived. His death on 6 July, Mary's accession, and Northumberland's execution on 22 August 1553, meant that, after a thirteen-month interlude of legal nonexistence, between March 1553 and April 1554, the palatinate would be re-established and its bishop restored. In legal and parliamentary terms the dissolution had a profound impact on the bishopric's status and that of its bishop. In practice, however, the period between March 1553 and April 1554 did not drastically alter the lives of the region's most powerful families, many of whom retained and, in some cases, augmented their own personal influence. Edward and Northumberland were aware that if the crown hoped to cement its newfound legal overlordship of the bishopric, it had to garner the support of the region's gentry families. Northumberland's various grants of land and

¹²³ TNA, DURH 20/51.

¹²⁴ TNA, DURH 20/52.

¹²⁵ *CPR, 1547-1553*, p. 68.

¹²⁶ *CPR, 1547-1553*, p. 6. Bowes was the incumbent warden at Norham before he was made constable.

¹²⁷ *APC*, iv, pp. 286-87.

palatinate offices prior to the dissolution and Robert Bowes' appointment as chancellor suggest that the crown sought to govern the palatinate through a mixture of trusted royal officials and local landowners. While the circumstances surrounding the bishopric's dissolution were unprecedented, the methods employed to implement royal authority there were tried and tested aspects of early Tudor centre-periphery management.

Continuity and Change under Queen Mary

If Edward VI's reign brought about unprecedented change for the bishopric and its bishop, then Mary Tudor's accession saw a return to the *status quo ante*. After Lady Jane Grey's brief reign, Mary entered London as queen on 3 August 1553. Three days later, the seventy-nine year old Cuthbert Tunstall was released from captivity in the Tower; by 14 August he was serving on the queen's privy council as bishop of Durham.¹²⁸ At Mary's coronation on 1 October, Tunstall fulfilled the role traditionally assigned to the bishops of Durham.¹²⁹ Meanwhile, Tunstall had officially appealed against his deprivation and on 23 August a commission was issued to the earl of Arundel and other Marian sympathisers, who declared the bishop's removal under Edward to have been unlawful on account that the sentence had been pronounced by laymen and that Tunstall had been given insufficient time to prepare a defence.¹³⁰ In November, Mary took the issue of Tunstall's deprivation to parliament, whose numbers, in spite of the new Marian regime, were swelled by those who only nine months previously had deprived him.¹³¹ The commons proved reasonably cooperative, repealing the Protestant Act of Uniformity, but the bill to restore Tunstall failed at its third reading after concerns were voiced about the restitution of former

¹²⁸ *APC*, iv, p. 425.

¹²⁹ TNA, SP 11/1, ff. 26-33; John Edwards, *Mary I: England's Catholic Queen* (New Haven and London, 2011), p. 129.

¹³⁰ *CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 76; Loades, 'Last Days', p. 18. The other commissions were: Sir John Baker; Sir Edward Carne; Sir Richard Southwell; Sir Thomas Moyle; Richard Morgan, serjeant at law; David Poole; Henry Cole; and William Armistead, later a royal chaplain.

¹³¹ 'The Bill for the Confirmation of the Bishoprick of Durham, and Durham Place, to Cuthbert Tunstall, bishop there, and his Successors'. *Journal of the House of Commons*, i, p. 31.

monastic land.¹³² Mary was forced into alternative action and on 18 January 1554, she issued a fresh set of letters patent for the erecting of a new bishopric: Tunstall's reconstituted authority included the jurisdiction of Durham itself, the royal liberty of Saint Cuthbert between the Tyne and the Tees, and the counties of Bedlingtonshire and Norhamshire.¹³³ Crucially, Mary's patent did not repeal the Edwardian statute of March 1553. Rather, it took advantage of a clause in the bill to re-erect the ancient bishopric of Durham, thereby effectively nullifying the patent issued by Edward in May.¹³⁴

The issue of confiscated bishopric lands, however, remained an intractable problem; the earl of Shrewsbury had been awarded the bishop's house at Coldharbour; the profits and lordship of Howden had been granted to Francis Jobson; while the burgesses of Newcastle proved extremely reluctant to relinquish their rights to Gateshead. On 7 April 1554, Mary introduced another bill in the second parliament of her reign, which resolved the issue of former bishopric land. Careful not to impugn her late brother, the act made clear that the dissolution and granting of lands had been brought about by the 'sinistree and corrupte labour of the said Ambitious [per]sons', namely John Dudley, duke of Northumberland.¹³⁵ The bill passed through the lords without incident, and while the burgesses of Newcastle continued to protest over Gateshead, the matter was later resolved, albeit on disadvantageous terms to the bishopric and the crown.¹³⁶ Nine months after Mary ascended the throne, she had circumvented the Edwardian statute, nullified the king's letters patent, and restored the bishopric (and its bishop) to its former state, as an independent franchise, governed, in theory at least, by an elected bishop.

Mary's accession had certainly had a positive impact on the life and career of Durham's bishop, but the extent to which her first months as queen influenced the professional trajectories of the region's gentry is less certain.¹³⁷ At least six Durham landowners, including George Bowes, William, Lord Eure, and John, Lord Conyers,

¹³² *Journal of the House of Commons*, i, pp. 32-3.

¹³³ TNA, C 66/877, m. 32; *CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 377.

¹³⁴ TNA, C 65/161, item 12.

¹³⁵ *SR*, iv, pp. 226-28.

¹³⁶ *Journal of the House of Commons*, i, p. 34; Loades, 'Dissolution of the Diocese of Durham', p. 111, 116.

¹³⁷ A.G. Dickens, *The English Reformation* (1967), p. 379; idem, *The Marian Reaction in the Diocese of York* (London and York, 1957); David Loades, *The Reign of Mary Tudor: Politics, Government and Religion in England, 1553-58* (London, 1991), pp. 39-40.

who had been closely associated with the Somerset and Northumberland regimes received royal pardons within three months of Mary coming to the throne.¹³⁸ In spite of attempts to reorient the management of the border around those untainted by service under Somerset or Northumberland, Mary appointed John, Lord Conyers, warden general of the east march and captain of the castle at Berwick within two months of her accession.¹³⁹ John, Lord Conyers, and Sir George Conyers had managed to retain their seats on the council in the north.¹⁴⁰ Cuthbert Conyers, palatinate sheriff during the final two years of Edward's reign, was not replaced and continued to occupy the position until 29 September 1557.¹⁴¹ Thomas Hilton, another Edwardian sheriff of Durham, was serving on commissions in the North-East by spring 1554, although his career began to wane over the course of Mary's reign, perhaps because of religious disaffection.¹⁴²

Robert Bowes' influence in the North-East and at court is perhaps the most fitting example of the tightrope trodden by Durham landowners after Mary's accession. A favourite among the Somerset and Northumberland regimes, the apogee of Bowes' career came in September 1551 when he was admitted to the privy council. Bowes had added his signature to the letters patent that prohibited Mary and Elizabeth from inheriting the throne, signed a letter of 19 July 1553 to Lord Rich, urging him to remain loyal to Edward's candidate, and served on the short-lived royal council of Lady Jane Grey.¹⁴³ Although he received a royal pardon on 14 October 1553, Bowes' career in central government was all but ended by Mary.¹⁴⁴ By 14 August he had surrendered the mastership of the rolls, which was subsequently bestowed on Nicholas Hare, a member of the queen's council.¹⁴⁵ He is not listed as having attended any privy council meetings after 16 November 1553; however, this could have been a result of his being dispatched to the Scottish marches where his experience was still

¹³⁸ *CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 443, 444, 453, 464. Thomas Hilton and Roger Tempest also received pardons. Robert Tempest was pardoned on 13 July 1554: *CPR, 1554-1555*, p. 357.

¹³⁹ *CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 177. Conyers' fees amounted to seven hundred marks per annum.

¹⁴⁰ Reid, *Council in the North*, p. 492.

¹⁴¹ TNA, DURH 20/51-57.

¹⁴² TNA, DURH 20/76; *CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 303.

¹⁴³ *The Chronicle of Queen Jane and of Two Years of Queen Mary, and Especially of the Rebellion of Sir Thomas Wyatt*, ed. John Gough Nichols, Camden Society 48 (London, 1850), p. 100, 109; Reid, *Council in the North*, pp. 180-81.

¹⁴⁴ *CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 464.

¹⁴⁵ *CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 209.

highly valued.¹⁴⁶ By mid-November 1553, Bowes had returned to Berwick, where he and Sir Thomas Cornwallis were commissioned to negotiate with the Scots for the redress of a variety of grievances, from the seizure of sheep and cattle to disputed fishing rights.¹⁴⁷ Bowes was at Berwick in February 1554, when he and Lord Dacre were commanded to muster the town and conduct a general survey of its defences, and would remain there until his death on 28 February 1555.¹⁴⁸ Despite his removal from central office during the first years of Mary's reign, Bowes continued to enjoy a relatively fruitful career in local politics between November 1553 and his death. A good marker of his influence in local matters can be gleaned from the valuation of his property and goods after his death. When his father, Sir Ralph Bowes, had died in 1512, Robert Bowes inherited lands in the bishopric worth just £10 per annum; by 1524, Bowes had inherited the lands of his mother, Margery Conyers, in South Cowton, Yorkshire. At the time of Sir Robert's death his goods were valued at £188 and he was able to pass the manor of South Cowton to his younger brother, Richard, who later leased the manor to his son, Sir George Bowes.¹⁴⁹

That Mary was prepared, or perhaps in some instances forced, to rely on the same local men that had exercised power in the North-East during Edward's reign can be seen through an examination of local peace commissions and quarter sessions. One peace commission for the bishopric of Durham survives from Mary's reign. Dated April or May 1555, it shows that William, Lord Eure, Thomas and William Hilton, Sir George Conyers, Robert Meynell, Richard Bowes, William Bellasis, Robert Tempest, and Cuthbert Conyers were still active in Durham after Mary had inherited the throne.¹⁵⁰ Moreover, the empanelling of neighbouring peace commissions in 1554 and 1555 followed the blueprint established during the reigns of Mary's predecessors: palatinate landowners and senior officials sat on commissions throughout the North-East. John, Lord Conyers, William, Lord Eure, Sir Richard Chomeley, Robert

¹⁴⁶ *APC*, iv, p. 367.

¹⁴⁷ TNA, SP 51/1, ff. 9-12; *APC*, iv, p. 357, 366, 381; *APC*, v, p. 10.

¹⁴⁸ *APC*, v, p. 95.

¹⁴⁹ TNA, C 142/102/46; *CPR, 1555-1557*, p. 171; *Wills and Inventories from the Register at Durham: Part 1*, ed. James Raine, SS 2 (London, 1835), p. 145; *Wills and Inventories from the Archdeaconry of Richmond, extending over the portion of the counties of York, Westmerland, Cumberland, and Lancaster*, ed. James Raine, SS 26 (Durham, 1853), pp. 116-20.

¹⁵⁰ TNA, SP 11/5, f. 32.

Meynell, and Richard and Robert Bowes sat in Cumberland, Northumberland, Westmorland, and the North and East Ridings of Yorkshire.¹⁵¹

Mary had also followed the examples of Henry VII and Henry VIII appointing crown lawyers to sit on northern peace commissions. Among those favoured by the new queen were Edward Saunders (*d.* 1576) and William Dalison (*d.* 1559). Saunders had emerged as a supporter of Mary when he persuaded the mayor of Coventry to refuse Dudley's order to proclaim Lady Jane Grey as queen. On Mary's accession he was duly made a justice of common pleas on 4 October 1553.¹⁵² Dalison's legal career would appear not to have suffered from the political and religious convulsions that followed Edward's death; he had served as a serjeant at law since 1552 and was elevated to the queen's bench in November 1555.¹⁵³ Both men sat on the bishopric peace commission issued in April or May 1555, and served on commissions in Cumberland, Northumberland, Westmorland and all three Ridings of Yorkshire in February 1554 and May 1555.¹⁵⁴ Saunders and Dalison were also appointed to oversee quarter sessions in the county palatine between 12 August 1555 and 3 August 1556, accompanied by a number of local men, including Robert Hyndmer, chancellor of Durham, and Robert Meynell.¹⁵⁵ The motivation behind Saunders and Dalison's appointments in Durham and neighbouring shires might well have been as much about allowing the regime to keep an eye on certain local families as it was about the dispensation of justice. A large proportion of those gentry families serving on the Marian peace commission had advanced their careers under the Edwardian regime and while their experience was evidently valued, their commitment towards Mary and her Catholic regime could not be assured. The loading of local commissions with trusted royal officials was not unique to Durham; in the North-West, Cheshire had witnessed the removal of a number of Edward's justices after August 1553.¹⁵⁶

As Habsburg-Valois tensions heightened after Philip's invasion of the papal states in September 1556, palatinate landowners were active once again on the marches as

¹⁵¹ *CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 18, 22, 25, 26; TNA, SP 11/5, ff. 43-44, 54, 55.

¹⁵² J.H. Baker, 'Saunders, Sir Edward (1506 – 1576), judge', *ODNB*.

¹⁵³ J.H. Baker, 'Dalison, William (*d.* 1559), judge and law reporter', *ODNB*.

¹⁵⁴ TNA, SP 11/5, f. 32, 43-44, 54, 55;

¹⁵⁵ *Durham Quarter Sessions Rolls, 1471 – 1625*, ed. C.M. Fraser, SS 199 (Newcastle, 1991), p. 78, 86.

¹⁵⁶ Thornton, *Cheshire and the Tudor State*, pp. 238-39.

relations with Scotland slowly deteriorated. As early as late December 1555, George Bowes, William Bellasis, Cuthbert Conyers, and Robert Tempest, among others, had been conducting examinations of and making repairs to fortresses on the east and middle marches.¹⁵⁷ Mary's formal declaration of war against France on 7 June 1557, in support of her husband Philip, meant that the hitherto relatively subdued Anglo-Scottish frontier was once again braced for conflict. On 2 June, a series of musters were taken across the North-East: the bishop of Durham assembled 1,769 persons; Lord Dacre 5,425 men; while William, Lord Eure, and John, Lord Conyers, assembled 143 and 600 men, respectively.¹⁵⁸ Sir Ralph Bulmer was appointed a military commander for the bishopric and had been involved in negotiating a prisoner exchange with the Scots in early September.¹⁵⁹ Sir George Bowes, nephew of the deceased Robert Bowes, was made marshal of Berwick on 15 January 1558 and was commanded by Mary 'to serve us there w[i]th the nombre of one hundred and fyfte horsemen... for the better advancem[en]t of our service'.¹⁶⁰ Treasurer accounts for October 1558 show that Bowes had indeed managed to muster one hundred footmen and fifty horsemen, with combined fees of over £400.¹⁶¹ At the same time as he was appointed marshal of Berwick, George Bowes assumed the offices of steward and constable of Barnard Castle, both of which had formerly been held by his uncle.¹⁶²

The mustering of troops and the exchange of border offices among the gentry belies a subtle shift in the overall Marian strategy for border management. A combination of deaths, a shortage of suitable candidates, and uncertainty surrounding the religious inclinations of local landowners had meant that the coordination of English policy on the marches was now entrusted to a partisan nobility, particularly Henry Neville, fifth earl of Westmorland, Francis Talbot, fifth earl of Shrewsbury, Thomas Percy, seventh earl of Northumberland, and an aging Bishop Tunstall. Indeed, Tunstall wrote in praise of Westmorland, whose quick thinking and preparedness to take military action had ensured that the rebel Thomas Stafford was captured shortly after arriving in Scarborough in late April 1557.¹⁶³ Westmorland was commissioned alongside Tunstall and his chancellor, Robert Hyndmer, to negotiate a

¹⁵⁷ *CPR, 1555-1557*, p. 54.

¹⁵⁸ TNA, SP 11/11, f. 34.

¹⁵⁹ TNA, SP 11/11, f. 67; TNA, SP 15/8, f. 68.

¹⁶⁰ TNA, SP 15/8, f. 119; TNA, 15/8, ff. 120-22; TNA, SP 15/8, f. 242.

¹⁶¹ TNA, SP 15/8, f. 242.

¹⁶² *CPR, 1557-1558*, p. 257.

¹⁶³ TNA, SP 15/8, f. 6; TNA, SP 15/8, f. 4; TNA, SP 15/8, f. 8.

truce with the Scots on 10 June 1557; after five weeks of talks, the English commissioners had managed to secure a two-month truce.¹⁶⁴ When the Scots began raiding the border again in early August, the duke of Northumberland and Hyndmer were called upon to reopen talks; Tunstall's age had finally caught up with him, unable to travel, Mary nonetheless ordered that Northumberland keep the bishop informed of developments.¹⁶⁵

Mary evidently placed greater trust in Tunstall than in those regional landowners who had served under Edward. As Robert Bowes had been commissioned to provide instructions to the marquis of Dorset following his appointment as lord warden in April 1551, Bishop Tunstall was asked to advise and support the earl of Shrewsbury, who, in August 1557, had been appointed lieutenant general in the North.¹⁶⁶ By spring 1558, it was the Catholic earls Northumberland and Westmorland relaying reports on the condition of the borders back to the queen and her council in London.¹⁶⁷ Northumberland had recently been installed as warden of the east and middle marches.¹⁶⁸ William, Lord Eure, continued to lead raids into Scotland and received a letter of thanks from Mary in April 1558.¹⁶⁹ Yet, despite Eure's best efforts, overall authority on the marches now lay in the hands of the seventh Percy earl of Northumberland and the fifth Neville earl of Westmorland. The result of this transition of power, as a set of instructions issued to the bishop of Ely and Sir William Cordell on 20 June 1558 illustrates, was a palpable sense of unease and distrust between Northumberland, Westmorland, Eure, and Sir Henry Percy, who were all now seeking to consolidate their own power in the North-East.¹⁷⁰

It is perhaps little wonder that Thomas Percy, having wrestled power on the borders towards the end of Mary's reign, was among those rebels who in 1569 sought to overthrow the Protestant Elizabeth I.¹⁷¹ Though Percy was ostensibly responsible

¹⁶⁴ TNA, SP 15/8, f. 25; TNA, SP 51/1, f. 37, 46-47.

¹⁶⁵ TNA, SP 51/1, f. 71, 73-76.

¹⁶⁶ TNA, SP 15/8, f. 59, 57, 60.

¹⁶⁷ TNA, SP 15/8, f. 130; TNA, SP 15/8, f. 150; TNA, SP 15/8, f. 170.

¹⁶⁸ *CPR, 1557-1558*, p. 194.

¹⁶⁹ TNA, SP 15/8, f. 172; TNA, SP 15/8, f. 183.

¹⁷⁰ TNA, SP 15/8, ff. 206-7.

¹⁷¹ David Marcombe, 'A Rude and Heady People: the local community and the Rebellion of the Northern Earls', in *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham, 1494 – 1660*, ed. David Marcombe (Loughborough, 1987), pp. 117-51; Mervyn James, *Society, Politics and Culture: Studies in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 305-6; idem, *Civil Society*, p. 62; K.J. Kesselring, *The Northern Rebellion of 1569: Faith, Politics, and Protest in Elizabethan England* (Basingstoke, 2007), pp. 45-90.

for the rebellion, alongside Charles Neville, sixth earl of Westmorland, son of the fifth earl, the outbreak of revolt – some six thousand men from across the North had taken up arms in support of the northern earls – had as much to do with religious disaffection and the pace of Protestant reform as it did with the reversal of Marian political practices in the region. The Protestant Reformation under Elizabeth had become increasingly unpopular throughout much of the North-East; James Pilkington, Tunstall's successor as bishop of Durham, and a firm supporter of the new queen, did little to alleviate tensions. Twenty-one Marian priests in the North were deprived of their living in 1559, only to be replaced by those Edwardian clerics who had been replaced on Mary's accession.¹⁷² In late 1569, the rebels took it upon themselves to forcibly remove married ministers from local churches, while Protestant books were destroyed in seventy-three Yorkshire parish churches and no fewer than twelve in the bishopric of Durham.¹⁷³

Conclusion

Edward and Mary's short reigns had a transformative, albeit short-lived, impact on the status of the Durham palatinate and its incumbent, Bishop Tunstall. Within less than two years, Edward and Northumberland had dissolved the diocese, annexing it to the crown, only for Mary to put an abrupt halt to plans to reform the bishopric and restore Tunstall within a matter of months after her accession in November 1553. The period from February 1547 to November 1558 had a similarly significant effect on the lives and careers of Durham's leading lay landowners and the crown's clients in the North-East. When Edward ascended the throne the early Tudor blueprint for centre-periphery management had been firmly established and central government could call upon the services and loyalty of a number of palatinate families. As earl of Hertford, Edward Seymour had cemented bonds with Durham men during the Henrician wars with Scotland; promoted to the dukedom of Somerset at the beginning of the new reign the Bowes, Bulmer, and Eure families, to name but three, all participated in the lord protector's garrisoning policy. Within the palatinate itself and in neighbouring

¹⁷² *The Royal Visitation of 1559: Act Book for the Northern Province*, ed. Christopher Kitching, SS 187 (London, 1975), p. xxv.

¹⁷³ Kesselring, *Northern Rebellion of 1569*, pp. 69-70.

counties the same families occupied senior local offices, sat as JPs, and provided reports on the state of the marches both before and after the English victory at Pinkie Cleugh in September 1547. Alford and Bryson have suggested that Somerset was eager to tap into the patron-client networks not only to extend Edward's prerogative but to advance his own political interests and reputation outside of Westminster.¹⁷⁴ In the palatinate it would seem that leading families were more than prepared to work in tandem with royal ministers and the king's council in an attempt to negotiate the transition of royal power as quickly and effectively as possible.

The 1549 coup to overthrow Somerset and his allies is also testimony to the strength and durability of the crown's networks in Durham. While Durham landowners and officers had forged good patron-client ties with the lord protector, his demise does not appear to have undermined their careers in central and local government. Allegiances were, by and large, simply given over to the new Northumberland regime. Whether the duke had intended to annex the palatinate to consolidate his personal fortunes in the North-East, Durham men remained well placed to advance their careers, in the localities and at the centre of government, under the new regime. The council of the north continued to operate in much the same manner under Dudley as it had under Somerset; its composition, too, remained largely constant, with a number of Durham landowners serving under the earl of Shrewsbury from February 1550.

The ramifications felt by Bishop Tunstall after the dissolution of the bishopric, sealed by the king and managed by Northumberland and Cecil, were in sharp contrast to the rather muted reaction among the palatinate's secular elites. Cuthbert Conyers' sheriff reports serve as a reminder of the dichotomy in Durham after May 1553: on the one hand, in an unprecedented move by the crown, Tunstall had been deprived of his bishopric with nearly seventy-five per cent of its land passing to the new regime; on the other, the day to day management of law and order in the North-East was still overseen by local families.¹⁷⁵ Northumberland may well have sought to bring the bishopric under his control, but he proved reluctant to completely disregard old networks and instead chose to orient his authority within these firmly established local political structures. 1553 may have been a significant year for Durham in terms

¹⁷⁴ Alford, *Reign of Edward VI*, pp. 146-47; Bryson, 'Crown and locality in mid-Tudor England', p. 229, 250-51.

¹⁷⁵ Loades, 'Dissolution of Durham', p. 109.

of its constitutional and legal position within the English polity, but to what extent this was felt by its inhabitants, particularly the gentry, is less clear. Robert Bowes' appointment as chancellor and the essential continuity of personal in local offices would suggest that the period between May 1553 and April 1554 was not as detrimental to local families as it could have been. It would also appear that religious loyalties among the palatinate's landed lay elites could give way to political motivations. While Robert and George Bowes, for example, were committed reformers – both rose through the ranks of regional and central government under first Somerset and then Northumberland – a number of Durham's gentry remained largely conservative in religious outlook, but were nonetheless prepared to place political ambitions over confessional loyalties when the need arose.

Mary Tudor's accession in August 1553 ushered in a new, nationwide, Catholic regime and one of her first acts was to restore Tunstall to a newly erected bishopric. But if Mary's decision to repeal Edward's letters patent dissolving the bishopric is a sign of her determination to restore the control of Durham to its bishop then the queen's reliance on those same families who had operated alongside Somerset and Northumberland forces us to reassess our understanding of local government during the Marian period.¹⁷⁶ During the first years of her reign, Durham's gentry families continued to monopolise local and border offices. Even Robert Bowes, a supporter of Lady Jane Grey, who added his signature to the document that effectively deprived Mary of her rightful inheritance, was employed at Berwick. The appointment of royal justices to the Durham bench helped to bolster her support among palatinate circles, but this was hardly a departure from Henrician policy. Altogether more significant change in the bishopric came towards the end of the reign. Mary's increasing reliance on Thomas Percy, earl of Northumberland, and Henry Neville, earl of Westmorland, saw certain families squeezed out of the mainstream local political fold. The return to Percy and Neville rule in the bishopric was, however, short-lived. Mary's death and Elizabeth's decision to oversee Durham through a mixture of local families, royal officials, and the extremely pliant Bishop James Pilkington effectively forced the hand of the seventh Percy earl of Northumberland, whose decision to join the northern rebellion in late 1569 failed to rescue his authority in the region.

¹⁷⁶ Loades, *Reign of Mary Tudor*, p. 41.

CONCLUSION

Mary Tudor's death and the accession of Elizabeth I in November 1558 did not bring about an immediate change in the management and governance of palatinate society. When Mary claimed the throne in July 1553 she was forced, to a large extent, to rely on the loyalties and services of those landowners and officers who had helped to bridge the geo-political gap between the bishopric and Westminster under Henry VIII and Edward VI. The need to provide strong and effective government in the North-East largely outweighed religious differences, with a few notable exceptions: Bishop Tunstall was restored to his see in 1554 and more than twenty Edwardian clergy were removed from office. The first years of Elizabeth's reign followed a similar pattern. By the summer of 1558, the Catholic seventh Percy earl of Northumberland and fifth Neville earl of Westmorland had regained a number of senior local and marcher offices and proved reluctant to relinquish them after Mary's death. For fear of disturbing what was a delicate balance of power in the far North, the fledgling Elizabethan regime avoided implementing wholesale change in the region.¹

If political and administrative changes were relatively unforthcoming in Durham, then so too was widespread religious reform. The eighty-four year-old Cuthbert Tunstall was not present at the new queen's coronation and was no longer required to attend parliament.² His remarkable ability to navigate the religious tensions of Henry VIII and Edward VI's reigns finally gave way in September 1559, when, having refused to take the oath of supremacy under Elizabeth, he was deprived of his bishopric for the second time; Tunstall remained at Lambeth Palace under the hospitable custody of Archbishop Matthew Parker until his death on 18 November 1559. Tunstall's successor, James Pilkington, having been nominated to the bishopric of Winchester, was later installed as bishop of Durham on 2 March 1561. Pilkington's concerns about alienations of land in Winchester and subsequent disputes about rights to land in Northumberland had a part in the delayed appointment of a successor in Durham, as did a desire on the crown's part to keep the see vacant as a source of

¹ David Marcombe, 'A Rude and Heady People: the local community and the Rebellion of the Northern Earls', in *The Last Principality: Politics, Religion and Society in the Bishopric of Durham, 1494-1660*, ed. David Marcombe (Loughborough, 1987), p. 120-21.

² TNA, SP 12/1, f. 86.

revenue.³ The ramifications of Pilkington's delayed appointment, however, continued to plague the bishop and the crown for some years after. By 1565, the ardently Protestant Bishop Pilkington complained about a shortage of suitable clergy in the North-East. A large number of crypto-Catholic clergy had survived the 1559 visitation and a subsequent purge two years later.⁴ On his translation to Durham, Pilkington faced a number of obstacles, from Catholic survivalism and pluralism, to insufficient clerical wages and a high number of unfilled parishes. Matters were far from alleviated with the arrival of Scottish clergy, whom Pilkington held in particular contempt.⁵

Less than a year after he had been enthroned at Durham, Pilkington was writing in bleak terms to Sir William Cecil. On 13 October 1561, the bishop spoke of an air of tension in the bishopric and of his difficulty winning over the local population: 'I am afraid to thi[n]k what mai folowe iff it be not foresene. the worshipfull of the shire is set & off small power, the peple rude & heddi be these occasion[n]s most bold'.⁶ Where Tunstall had succeeded in procuring the services of local elites of different confessional standpoints, his successor encountered greater problems. Just one month after his first letter, Pilkington wrote again to Lord Burghley, complaining of an animosity shown by palatinate officers: 'For the nature off the peple, I wold not have thoght there hadd been so frowayd a generatio[n] in this

³ Marcombe, 'Pilkington, James (1520-1576), bishop of Durham', *ODNB*; Marcombe, 'A Rude and Heady People' pp. 120-21.

⁴ Marcombe, 'A Rude and Heady People', pp. 131-32; B. Wilson, 'The Changes of the Reformation period in Durham and Northumberland' (Durham University PhD thesis, 1939), pp. 192-93. A significant historiographical debate centred on the suitability and learning of the clergy in Elizabethan England and the North-East. On the one hand, Arthur Tindal Hart and Patrick Collinson suggested that a nationwide dearth meant that poorly qualified candidates were appointed to benefices throughout the realm: Arthur Tindal Hart, *The Country Clergy in Elizabethan & Stuart Times, 1558-1660* (London, 1958), p. 11; Patrick Collinson, 'The Elizabethan Church and the New Religion', in *The Reign of Elizabeth I*, ed. Christopher Haigh (London, 1984), p. 185. For Horton Davies poor education and preaching was a problem confined to the first two decades of the reign: Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England. From Cranmer to Hooker, 1534-1603* (Princeton, 1970), p. 218. On the other, Susan Keeling, Jane Freeman, and Margaret Harvey have suggested that the Elizabethan clergy in Durham were relatively well qualified and fit for office: S.M. Keeling, 'The Church and Religion in the Anglo-Scottish Border Counties, 1534 to 1572' (Durham University PhD thesis, 1975), p. 154; Jane Freeman, 'The Parish Ministry in the Diocese of Durham, c. 1570-1640' (Durham University PhD thesis, 1979), p. 23; Margaret Harvey, *Lay Religious Life in Late Medieval Durham* (Woodbridge, 2006), p. 198.

⁵ TNA, SP 15/12, f. 108; BL, Lansdowne MS. 8, f. 87. Despite a large presence of Scottish clergy in Durham during the first years of Elizabeth's reign: Freeman, 'Parish Ministry in the Diocese of Durham', p. 24.

⁶ TNA, SP 12/20, f. 11.

reame... I am growe into such displeasure wt thei[m]... that I know not whither thei like me wurse or I thei'. The bishop went on to add that he was 'moche destitute off gudd officers'; Robert Meynell was singled out for particular criticism.⁷ Now a serjeant-at-law, Meynell had forged his career in regional government from the late 1530s, serving under Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary I. He was among a group of local landowners and officers commissioned by Henry VIII to assess the sums owed from within the bishopric and Yorkshire in the wake of the suspension of annates in 1534; Edward VI called on Meynell to fulfill the same task in December 1551.⁸ Meynell's service on North-Eastern commissions under the Catholic Queen Mary may have been a point of contention with the new bishop.⁹

Having arrived in the bishopric in May 1561, one of Pilkington's initial challenges was to ensure the loyalty of his episcopal staff and officers. Palatinate officers suspected of harbouring Catholic sentiments were promptly replaced by those more akin to the bishop's beliefs. Though appointed sheriff in the first year of the new episcopal reign, a position he had held since 1558, Robert Tempest and Robert Meynell were removed from office.¹⁰ Senior bishopric offices were bestowed on a mixture of reformers from within and outside the bishopric. Thomas Calverley was made Pilkington's temporal chancellor in 1562 and was appointed steward of Durham not long after.¹¹ William Fleetwood, originally from Buckinghamshire, emerged as the bishop's principal legal advisor. He replaced Meynell as custodian of the bishopric's halmote court in 1561, was appointed escheator the same year, and sat on a variety of palatinate commissions.¹² The council in the north was also purged of Catholic influence. After 1560, the earl of Shrewsbury was replaced by a succession of Protestant presidents: the earls of Rutland and Warwick and, in May 1564, Thomas Young, archbishop of York.¹³

⁷ TNA, SP 12/20, ff. 62-63; *CSP, Foreign: Elizabeth, 1561-1562*, iv, 371.

⁸ TNA, SP 1/92, f. 137 (*LP*, viii, 696); *CPR, 1547-53*, p. 365.

⁹ *CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 18, 22, 25, 26; TNA, SP 11/5, ff. 43-44, 54, 55; TNA, SP 11/5, f. 32; *Durham Quarter Sessions Rolls, 1471 – 1625*, ed. C.M. Fraser, SS 199 (Newcastle, 1991), p. 78, 86.

¹⁰ TNA, DURH 3/82, m. 1.

¹¹ TNA, DURH 3/81, m. 9d; TNA, DURH 3/82, 2d.

¹² TNA, DURH 3/83, m. 2; TNA, DURH 3/82, m. 1; TNA, DURH 3/81, m. 6d, 9d; 'Fleetwood, William I (c. 1525-94)', in *House of Commons*, ed. P.W. Hassler [<http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1558-1603/member/fleetwood-william-i-1525-94>]

¹³ Reid, *Council in the North*, p. 487.

On the borders, Thomas Percy, seventh earl of Northumberland, was replaced as warden of the east and middle marches by Sir John Forster and Francis Russell, second earl of Bedford.¹⁴ Sir George Bowes later replaced Henry Neville, fifth earl of Westmorland, as Durham's lord lieutenant on the latter's death in 1564.¹⁵ Pilkington's Protestant grip on diocesan administration was further strengthened in the autumn of 1563 with the appointment of the Marian exile, William Whittingham, as dean of Durham Cathedral. On his journey to the bishopric Whittingham had preached before the queen at Windsor; on his arrival he wrote to Cecil in praise of Pilkington's reforms and his 'preaching of God's word'.¹⁶ Some years later, Sir Francis Knollys remarked that 'the Bishop of Durham has his diocese well instructed, though there be obstacles in his way'.¹⁷

The 'obstacles' hampering Pilkington and the crown's progress in Durham were not unique to the North-East. Religious and social tensions in southern and midland counties had escalated throughout the 1560s. In Derby, residents took up arms in response to the enclosure of common lands within the duchy of Lancaster. Local authorities in Suffolk had to take measures to put down a series of disputes concentrated around Beccles in the summer of 1569.¹⁸ Further north, in Cumberland, local men protested against recent enclosures in the Westward Forest.¹⁹ At the same time, a series of polemical pamphlets and ballads were circulated throughout the North. Some prophesied of better days ahead under Catholic rule, with particular reference to Mary, queen of Scots and the Catholic duke of Norfolk. Others opined on the ramifications of Elizabeth's decision to abandon noble rule, while some warned of England's descent into witchcraft, sorcery, and religious anarchy.²⁰ In the palatinate, Pilkington's decision to load his diocese with likeminded clergymen and civic

¹⁴ C.H. Hunter Blair, 'Wardens and deputy wardens of the Marches of England towards Scotland in Northumberland and the English wardens of Berwick-upon-Tweed', *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 4th Series, 28 (1950), pp. 71-74.

¹⁵ Marcombe, 'A Rude and Heady People', p. 120.

¹⁶ BL, Lansdowne MS. 7, f. 24; David Marcombe, 'Whittingham, William (d. 1579), dean of Durham' *ODNB*.

¹⁷ *CSP Scotland, 1563-1569*, ii, 514.

¹⁸ K.J. Kesselring, *The Northern Rebellion of 1569: Faith, Politics, and Protest in Elizabethan England* (Basingstoke, 2007), pp. 13-14.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

²⁰ David Cressy, 'Agnes Bowker's Cat: Childbirth, Seduction, Bestiality, and Lies', in *Travesties and Transgressions in Tudor and Stuart England*, ed. D. Cressy (Oxford, 2000), pp. 9-28; Susan Doran and Christopher Durston, *Princes, Pastors and People: The Church and Religion in England, 1529-1689* (London, 1991), pp. 76-77, 82; Keeling, 'Church and Religion in the Anglo-Scottish Border Counties', pp. 310-11.

officials, and his *quasi* puritanical breed of Protestantism, generated friction between local crypto-Catholic landowners and the bishopric's clergy. By the late 1560s, much of the North-East remained committed to the old religion; Durham itself, in spite of Pilkington's Protestant agenda, contained a high number of religiously conservative inhabitants.²¹ There were outbreaks of violence in Sedgefield and at Barnard Castle in 1567, as divisions between the bishop, crown, regional magnates, and local inhabitants deepened.²²

Local political and religious tensions reached a climax on 14 November 1569 when a band of rebels led by Thomas Percy, seventh earl of Northumberland, and Charles Neville, sixth earl of Westmorland, marched into Durham Cathedral. The leaders of the revolt were accompanied by a group of regional landowners, including Neville's uncles, Christopher and Cuthbert Neville, Richard Norton, sheriff of York, Robert Tempest, formerly sheriff of Durham, John Swinburne, Thomas Jennings, Egremont Radcliffe, and Thomas Markenfield.²³ Having received a largely favourable welcome on entering Durham, the rebels set about destroying prayer books and communion tables, remonstrating against the establishment of 'new... religion and heresie, contrarie to Gods word', ordering all those aged between sixteen and sixty to join the cause 'for the setting forth of his [God's] trew and Catholique religion'.²⁴ The first of several Catholic masses was held at Durham Cathedral on 14 November by Robert Pearson, the earl of Westmorland's curate at Brancepeth; masses were

²¹ Newton, 'The Impact of Reformation on North-East England: A Preliminary Survey', *NH* 45 (2007), p. 41; Mervyn James, *Family, Lineage, and Civil Society: A Study of Society, Politics, and Mentality in the Durham Region, 1500-1640* (Oxford, 1974), p. 150; Caroline Litzenberger, 'Defining the Church of England: Religious Change in the 1570s', in *Belief and Practice in Reformation England: A Tribute to Patrick Collinson from his Students*, ed. S. Doran and C. Litzenberger (Aldershot, 1998), p. 139; Harvey, *Lay Religious Life in Late Medieval Durham*, p. 191-92. For Susan Doran and Christopher Durston a large proportion of England's local clergy were fundamentally conservative in religious outlook: Doran and Durston, *Princes, Pastors and People*, pp. 145-46.

²² Karl Gunther, 'Rebuilding the Temple: James Pilkington, Aggeus and Early Elizabethan Puritanism', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 60 (2009), pp. 689-707; Newton, 'Impact of Reformation on North-East England', p. 44; James, *Civil Society*, p. 43, 49-50; David Marcombe, 'The Dean and Chapter of Durham, 1558-1603' (Durham University PhD thesis, 1973), pp. 181-90.

²³ Marcombe, 'A Rude and Heady People', p. 119; Kesselring, *Northern Rebellion of 1569*, p. 56.

²⁴ J.K. Lowers, *Mirrors for Rebels: A Study of Polemical Literature Relating to the Northern Rebellion, 1569* (Berkeley, 1953), p. 31. The two earls triumphantly promised to remove all those 'disordered and evil disposed persons' that had corrupted the queen and denied England of the true faith and social order: TNA, SP 15/15, f. 29.

celebrated in numerous churches throughout the bishopric, altar stones restored, and baptisms and marriages conducted according to Catholic rites.²⁵

Within a matter of days, some six thousand armed followers had joined the two earls, marching, as the inhabitants of the North had done during the Pilgrimage of Grace, under banners bearing the five wounds of Christ. Sir George Bowes commented on the tactics and success with which the earls had mustered a following: coercion, a sense of Catholic responsibility, and financial incentives were all marshalled to attract support.²⁶ The rebel forces were divided into two groups, one besieged the border stronghold at Barnard Castle, rather than attempt the capture of York; the other set out for Hartlepool. Meanwhile, Bishop Pilkington and Dean Whittingham fled to safety as Elizabeth and the council readied forces – some fourteen thousand strong – to march northwards under the earl of Sussex.²⁷

The revolt of the northern earls proved short-lived. By mid-December 1569 the rebel army was forced northwards, against a tide of mounting pressure from the royal army under the earls of Essex, Sussex, and Warwick. Sir George Bowes played an instrumental role safeguarding royal interests. When the rebel army attacked Barnard Castle on 2 December, Bowes, with a contingent of roughly eight hundred men, managed to hold out for nearly two weeks. Though he was eventually forced to surrender the castle, of which he held the stewardship, Bowes' display of loyalty to the Elizabethan regime was in stark contrast to large numbers of the palatinate's political elite, many of whom fled the bishopric.²⁸ Throughout the revolt, Bowes was subjected to threats by the rebel army, who destroyed much of his livestock and land, including the family seat at Streatlam Castle. The defeated earls having fled into Scotland, Bowes was appointed Sussex's deputy in Durham and Richmondshire and provost marshal, in which role he was responsible for the execution of those condemned to death.²⁹ Bowes was later rewarded for his part putting down the rebellion, receiving grants of land in Yorkshire and Robert Tempest's family seat at

²⁵ Masses in Durham churches: DULSC, DDR-EJ-CCD 1/2, f. 168v, 173v, 184v-97v, 200v-202r, 203r-207r. Restoration of altar stones: DULSC, DDR-EJ-CCD 1/2, f. 167v, 170v-73r, 178v-84r, 189v-190v, 192v-94v.

²⁶ BL, Cotton Caligula B/IX, ii, f. 425; Kesselring, *Northern Rebellion of 1569*, p. 2.

²⁷ Kesselring, *Northern Rebellion of 1569*, pp. 1-2; Marcombe, 'Pilkington, James (1520-1576), bishop of Durham', *ODNB*.

²⁸ Kesselring, *Northern Rebellion of 1569*, pp. 86-88.

²⁹ C.M. Newman, 'Bowes, Sir George (1527-1580), soldier and administrator', *ODNB*. As provost marshal, Bowes also oversaw the pardoning of former rebels: *CPR, 1569-1572*, 1331, 1356, 2040, 2128, 2171, 2212, 2214, 2220, 2228, 2525-26, 2581.

Holmside, which had been confiscated on the latter's escaping to Louvain.³⁰ Westmorland escaped execution and fled to the Netherlands, where he lived in relative poverty, his estates having been confiscated by the crown. Northumberland, captured in Scotland by James Douglas, fourth earl of Morton, who sold him to Elizabeth on 6 June 1572 for £2,000, was later executed.³¹ The suppression of the uprising did not bring about an immediate end to hostilities in the far North, however. Elizabeth's thirty-nine articles were met with opposition in the early 1570s. Bishop Pilkington was forced to write once again to Cecil, complaining of Catholic dissent and the circulation of conservative texts smuggled in from the continent.³²

Factional infighting at the royal court, local power struggles, the decline of the earls of Northumberland and Westmorland, and religious tensions have all be seen as having contributed to the outbreak of unrest in November 1569.³³ Yet, as with the Pilgrimage of Grace thirty-three years earlier, the 1569 rebellion serves as a reminder of the importance of harnessing local politico-religious networks and of the potentially disastrous consequences of their breaking down. Sir George Bowes' efforts to restore law and order in late 1569, and his being rewarded by the Elizabethan regime, are testimony to the importance of maintaining healthy patron-client networks.

This thesis has shown that the creation and maintenance of informal, patron-client, networks was paramount to the increasingly collaborative and pragmatic relationship between the palatinate of Durham and the early Tudor state. Networks with Durham and the North-East's leading lay and ecclesiastical landowners and officers constituted an integral component of the Tudor polity's political, administrative, religious, and social fabric. They represented the medium through which the regimes of Henry VII, Henry VIII, Edward VI and Mary I could enforce the royal prerogative in the far North, a region where the crown had traditionally exercised a more limited

³⁰ *CPR, 1569-1572*, 2405, 2520.

³¹ John Guy, *Tudor England* (Oxford, 1988), pp. 274-75.

³² TNA, SP 12/81, f. 48.

³³ R.R. Reid, 'The Rebellion of the Earls, 1569', *TRHS*, 2nd Series 20 (1906), pp. 171-203; W.T. MacCaffrey, *The Shaping of the Elizabethan Regime* (London, 1969), 199-246, 337; Mervyn James, 'The Concept of Order and the Northern Rising of 1569', *Past and Present* 60 (1973), pp. 49-83; Guy, *Tudor England*, pp. 274-75; Marcombe, 'A Rude and Heady People', p. 119; Anthony Fletcher and Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Tudor Rebellion*, 4th edn. (New York, 1997), pp. 102-16; Andy Wood, *Riot, Rebellion and Popular Politics in Early Modern England* (Basingstoke, 2001), pp. 72-73; Kesselring, *Northern Rebellion of 1569*, p. 7

degree of overt control and authority. An essentially pragmatic relationship with the palatinate, its landowners and officers, allowed the crown to extend its support base into a region famed for its Yorkist and Ricardian sympathies. From Henry VII's recruitment of former Percy and Yorkist retainers, and Henry VIII and Edward VI's rewarding local landowners after the dissolution of the monasteries, to Mary's decision to rely on experienced local officials whose religious beliefs were not necessarily aligned with her own, the crown sought out ways to augment its own affinity in the province through cooperation and networks of mutual benefit.

The crown's networks within the Durham palatinate comprised the bishop; his ecclesiastical household and staff; the Cathedral Priory, and later the dean and chapter; noblemen and noblewomen; regional gentry, from within and outside of the bishopric, with varying degrees of landed wealth; local officials and commissioners; royal men transferred to the North-East; senior royal ministers, from Richard Fox to Thomas Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell; and, of course, the monarchs themselves. These networks were by their nature diverse, fluid, and adaptable. Where one client or patron could not be relied upon to enforce a policy that person could easily be replaced, temporarily or indefinitely. Patron-client networks were based on ties of kinship and friendship, the oversight and management of local and regional offices on a broker or patron's behalf, and, as was more common in Durham, local men and women seeking to establish and cement their credentials as dependable crown agents. They differed somewhat from the great noble affinities of later medieval England, based on feudal ties and military obligations. For the most part, early Tudor patronage networks were founded on office-holding, service on local commissions, diplomacy, and information brokering. Military service, at home and abroad, continued to be an influential factor in the recruitment of clients and the extension of royal policy.

Tudor clients in the bishopric were expected to fulfill a number of roles: to gather and relay information on domestic unrest or Scottish military advances on the border; when relations with Scotland broke down, palatinate men were involved in the mustering of troops in Durham and across the North-East and led forces alongside royal commanders, including the duke of Norfolk and the earl of Hertford; during the first years of the Somerset protectorate, Durham men were left to manage English garrisons in Scotland; Durham landowners, including its bishops, were also charged with conducting peace negotiations and ensuring safe passage for English subjects to and from Scotland. Crown clients were active on peace, assize, and gaol commissions

throughout the North, and it was through county and national commissions that local men were able to enforce political and religious change, particularly the enforcement of Westminster legislation and royal directives during the break with Rome.

Senior local officials and lawyers were presented with the opportunity to further their careers by way of appointment to the councils in the north; local men sitting as councilors fulfilled a variety of tasks, including, but by no means limited to, the extension of royal equity justice into the provinces. The extent to which the palatinate and outlying territories benefited from Westminster equity jurisdiction has been downplayed in more recent examinations of the bishopric; the limited number of local cases heard in London has been presented as evidence of the county palatine's administrative autonomy in the face of overwhelming Tudor centralisation.³⁴ With the appointment of Durham landowners and officials to the royal councils in the north, the early Tudor regimes were able to promote and extend royal justice into the furthestmost parts of the realm. Though the remit of the 1536 council did not officially extend into the bishopric, its members did conduct equity-based hearings in Durham. Far from a policy of aggressive centralisation, the councils in the north provided both the crown and regional authorities with the opportunity to implement legal advances in the northernmost shires of the realm, in a manner that made full and effective use of local government resources.

With the resumption of crown lands *en masse* under Henry VII and the declining influence of the Percy earls of Northumberland and Neville earls of Westmorland, local families were increasingly attracted by the prospects and advantages of membership of the crown's networks and wider northern affinity. The Bowes, Bulmer, Eure, Hilton, and Tempest families, among others, had a history of local service dating back, in some cases, to the thirteenth century; gentry families competed for recognition and reward among the affinities of the earls of Northumberland and Westmorland, the bishops of Durham, and the Cathedral Priory.³⁵ By the end of the fifteenth century it was to the crown and its local agents that Durham landowners and officers often turned for career advancement.

³⁴ Tim Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham and the Problem of Provincial Liberties in England and the Wider Territories of the English Crown', *TRHS* 11 (2001), pp. 86-89.

³⁵ Christian Liddy, *The Bishopric of Durham in the Late Middle Ages: Lordship, Community and the Cult of St Cuthbert* (Woodbridge, 2008), pp. 79-94, 101-3, 104-16.

Membership of the crown or a royal patron's networks did much to bolster local prestige, influence, and wealth.

Late medieval bishops of Durham possessed a significant landed base through which they could attract the support and services of local families. The appointment of Mervyn James' Tudor-courtier bishops, starting with Richard Fox in 1494, did much to increase the crown's presence in the region.³⁶ The Tudors benefited enormously from placing trusted senior officials in the provinces to oversee local and regional government. The translation of royal favourites to Durham also allowed the crown to influence the course of palatinate patronage. Bishops of Durham acted as brokers of local patronage, appointing crown men to Durham offices, both ecclesiastical and temporal. Far from an abandonment of palatinate privilege, networks fostered by early Tudor bishops of Durham played a significant part in the formation of a largely symbiotic and advantageous relationship.

The Cathedral Priory, too, commanded a large affinity in the early sixteenth century. Prior Whitehead had sought to maintain a positive working relationship with central government throughout the late 1520s and 1530s. As the Reformation gained momentum, Whitehead and his brethren made a concerted effort to safeguard the favour of senior government ministers, particularly Thomas Cromwell. With its dissolution and subsequent refoundation as a dean and chapter in 1540, the cathedral was absorbed into the crown's burgeoning northern affinity. Dean Whitehead continued to furnish royal men with offices, provided military assistance during the mid-century wars with Scotland, and sought to maintain amicable relations with central government. Early Tudor bishops of Durham, the Cathedral Priory, and the crown, for the most, operated in unison as part of a broader effort to forge new and cement existing political, administrative, and religious clienteles.

The joint employment of regional landowners and officers in the North-East and in royal government went some way to expanding the royal affinity. Influential minor nobles and gentry families sought out opportunities to work for the crown and its agents in the provinces and in central government. Loyal service in the localities was often the precursor to a career at court or elevation to central offices. Robert Bowes rose through the ranks of local and regional government to hold a number of influential and lucrative central government posts; his appointment to Edward VI's

³⁶ James, *Civil Society*, p. 45.

privy council in September 1551 was the apogee of a political career that began in Durham. The recruitment of local men to royal offices in Westminster and in the provinces was counterbalanced by the appointment of royal or ‘new’ men to local offices.³⁷ Royal men occupied a variety of posts in local government, which included sitting on palatinate assize and peace commissions, serving as stewards of bishopric lands and strongholds, commanding local retinues in foreign campaigns, and operating as temporary custodians during vacancies. Parachuting royal servants into the provinces was not a phenomenon unique to the early Tudor period. Richard II, Henry IV, and the Yorkist kings sought to bring the provinces more closely under the umbrella of royal government through the appointment of trusted government officials to regional offices.³⁸ It is crucial to bear in mind, however, that the use of royal men in the localities was not motivated by a desire to undermine local government infrastructure. Rather, these men served as patrons and brokers of crown patronage; their role was to increase levels of cooperation and, where necessary, ensure that royal policies were adhered to.

An examination of the palatinate’s patronage networks builds on previous research into patron-client relationships in early modern England and France. Nadine Lewycky, Mary Robertson, and Steven Gunn, among others, have all shown how royal ministers enforced central government policies in the localities through networks and systems of clientage.³⁹ From Yorkshire and the West Country to the French provinces, network analysis has allowed historians to reconstruct a fundamental aspect of the early modern European political and administrative fabric. In this regard, Durham was no exception. The crown’s networks in and around the palatinate were built on similar ties of mutual responsibility and benefit; brokers,

³⁷ S.J. Gunn, ‘‘New Men’ and ‘New Monarchy’ in England, 1485-1523’, in *Powerbrokers in the Late Middle Ages: Les Courtiers Du Pouvoir Au Bas Moyen-Age*, ed. Robert Stein (Turnhout, 2001), pp. 153-63.

³⁸ Chris Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King’s Affinity: Service, Politics and Finance in England, 1360-1413* (New Haven, 1986), p. 253-54; J.A.F. Thomson, *The Transformation of Medieval England, 1370-1529* (London, 1983), pp. 230-32.

³⁹ Nadine Lewycky, ‘Cardinal Thomas Wolsey and the City of York, 1514-1529’, *NH* 46 (2009), pp. 43-60; M.L. Robertson, ‘The Art of the Possible: Thomas Cromwell’s Management of West Country Government’, *HJ* 32 (1989), pp. 793-816; J.P.D. Cooper, *Propaganda and the Tudor State: Political Culture in the West Country* (Oxford, 2013), pp. 2-3; S.J. Gunn and Armand Jamme, ‘King’s, nobles and military networks’, in *Government and Political Life in England and France, c. 1300 – c. 1500*, ed. Christopher Fletcher, Jean-Philippe Genet, John Watts (Cambridge, 2015), pp. 41-77; Sharon Kettering, *Patrons, Brokers and Clients in Seventeenth-Century France* (Oxford, 1986), *passim*.

often the region's gentry or indeed the bishops, were used to mediate relationships and bridge the six-hundred-mile geo-political divide between Durham and Westminster. The nature and character of Durham's patronage networks was similar to those throughout England, as were the people who facilitated them. A comparison between Wolsey's archiepiscopal affinity in York and his episcopal staff in Durham reveals the extent to which officers operated throughout the North-East.

It is on the regional nature of Durham's position in local society that this thesis departs from previous work on patronage relationships and, indeed, on the palatinate's position within the early Tudor state. First expounded in 1973, Alan Everitt's 'county community' model continues to underpin a large number of examinations of local government.⁴⁰ Yet, Durham's role in the North-East was not confined to the land between the rivers Tyne and Tees. While county boundaries provide a useful, if rather convenient, medium through which to examine local society, an analysis of early Tudor commissions, office-holding, parliamentary representation, warfare, and networking suggests that 'Durham' – its bishops, landowners, and officers – operated within a highly regional network, spanning several counties. The local gentry's landed and administrative interests were often divided between two or more counties, particularly after the large-scale sale of monastic lands from the late 1530s onwards. Local patrons and government ministers hoped to maximize and manipulate this local influence and experience, appointing Durham clients to offices outside of the bishopric and visa-versa.

The composition of local peace, assize, gaol, and miscellaneous commissions exemplify the regional nature of northern society during the early Tudor period. Durham men sat on Yorkshire, Cumberland, Westmorland, Northumberland, and Lincolnshire peace commissions, while northern landowners and clients from outside the palatinate were appointed to the bishop's commissions. Durham assize commissions were frequently bolstered by the inclusion of Yorkshire lawyers, as well as senior legal officials brought in from Westminster. Meanwhile, Sir Robert Bowes' appointment to the 1525 and 1536 councils in the north is illustrative of a wider trend

⁴⁰ Alan Everitt, *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion, 1640-1660* (Leicester, 1973), p. 13; J.S. Morrill, *Cheshire, 1630-1660 County Government and Society during the English Revolution* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 330-33; Alan Hassell Smith, *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk, 1558-1603* (Oxford, 1974), pp. 107-9; Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County* (Oxford, 1986); Liddy, *Bishopric of Durham*, p. 17.

of Durham lawyers operating in crown-sponsored legal bodies throughout the region. Other local positions followed a similar pattern. While the palatinate remained unrepresented in parliament for the duration of the period covered in this thesis, Durham landowners were nonetheless in a position to reinforce political ties by sitting as MPs for other norther shire. Palatinate garrisons were often captained by those whose landed interests were concentrated outside of the bishopric, while Yorkshire and Northumberland men mustered and commanded troops to fight alongside those from Durham on the Anglo-Scottish frontier.

Durham's position within a largely integrated regional network helps to explain why local men were often able to survive regime change and the political and religious convulsions of the early Tudor period. A noted reformer, Sir Robert Bowes and his nephew, Sir George Bowes (*d.* 1580), remained prominent regional figures under Mary, who, despite removing Sir Robert from central office, continued to use both men in the North-East and on the Scottish border. Durham's networks were also sufficiently resilient to survive episodes of domestic crises. Henry VII was able to rely on Durham men at Stoke in 1487, while Henry VIII and Elizabeth I made use of northern officers to quash the Pilgrimage of Grace and the 1569 rebellion. Although some crown clients found their positions irreparably compromised by involvement in domestic revolt – the crown's networks in the far North were subject to the same vulnerabilities as those in other regions – the Pilgrimage and the events of 1569 are equally suggestive of a willingness among certain local men to work in tandem with crown agents in an effort to restore a semblance of law and order.

The efficiency and regional nature of Durham's political and religious networks explains why the palatinate was increasingly seen and presented as a vital component of the national polity. Durham's role on the Anglo-Scottish border has often been presented as a vital aspect of its relationship with central government. Indeed, throughout the early Tudor period, bishops of Durham, the cathedral, landowners, and officers continued to enforce the royal prerogative on the border; warfare continued to serve as a driver of state formation. Yet, Durham's role within the Tudor state was extremely varied and extended far beyond the northern frontier. Leading figures were used to cement Tudor rule in the first years of Henry VII's reign, win over disgruntled Yorkists, and, where this proved difficult, to act as sureties and safeguards of financial bonds. The enforcement of parliamentary legislation, particularly during the break with Rome, could not have been achieved

without the mobilisation of local networks and the increasingly cooperative relationships between crown agents and Durham men. The implementation of legal advances, pioneered in the Westminster equity courts, was contingent upon a harmonious mixture of crown and regional lawyers.

It was this integral position within the Tudor polity that accounts for the shift in attitude towards royal cooperation, certainly among the upper-echelons of palatinate society. Bishopric privileges were far from wiped out during this period – the bishops of Durham maintained the right to appoint commissions throughout, for example – but the political and fiscal strength of the crown after the Wars of the Roses, combined with the steady decline of the earls of Northumberland and Westmorland, meant that the bishops and the region's gentry were, at times, prepared to overlook local interests in favour of national involvement. On those occasions when the crown's influence proved overbearing or unduly partisan, Durham's relationship with central government was subject to extreme challenges, not least in the autumn of 1536 and winter of 1569. For the most part, however, the crown's status as the principal source of national and regional patronage, bolstered by the dissolution of the monasteries, served to engender a cooperative relationship; where royal agents in the Middle Ages had been met with hostility attempting to implement crown policy in Durham, by the 1550s this was commonplace.

Though in theory Durham retained a large degree of political and administrative autonomy, in practice its participation within a regional network meant that it operated on much the same level as neighbouring Yorkshire or Northumberland. One historian has gone so far as to say that it is 'hard to see the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries as a period of institutional centralisation weakening the Durham palatinate... If anything, the trend was towards a confirmation of its powers'.⁴¹ An examination of the early Tudor state's networks within and around the palatinate, however, reveals that Tudor centralisation was not designed to curtail local privileges, but to ensure a degree of unity and pragmatism at a time of intense political and religious upheaval. The crown was not determined to 'do away with' Durham, or even to weaken its position in the wake of centralising reforms. Rather, through the formation of symbiotic networks and the maintenance of mutually beneficial, cooperative, relations, the crown, bishops of Durham, and the local gentry

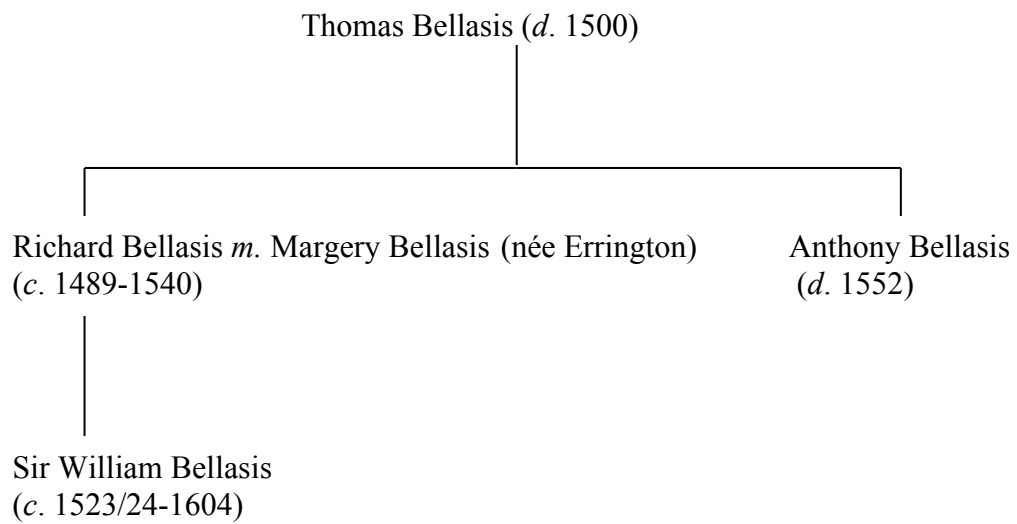
⁴¹ Thornton, 'Fifteenth-Century Durham', p. 94.

sought to maximise Durham's position, harness its potential, and employ its resources for the betterment of both local men and the Tudor state.

APPENDICES

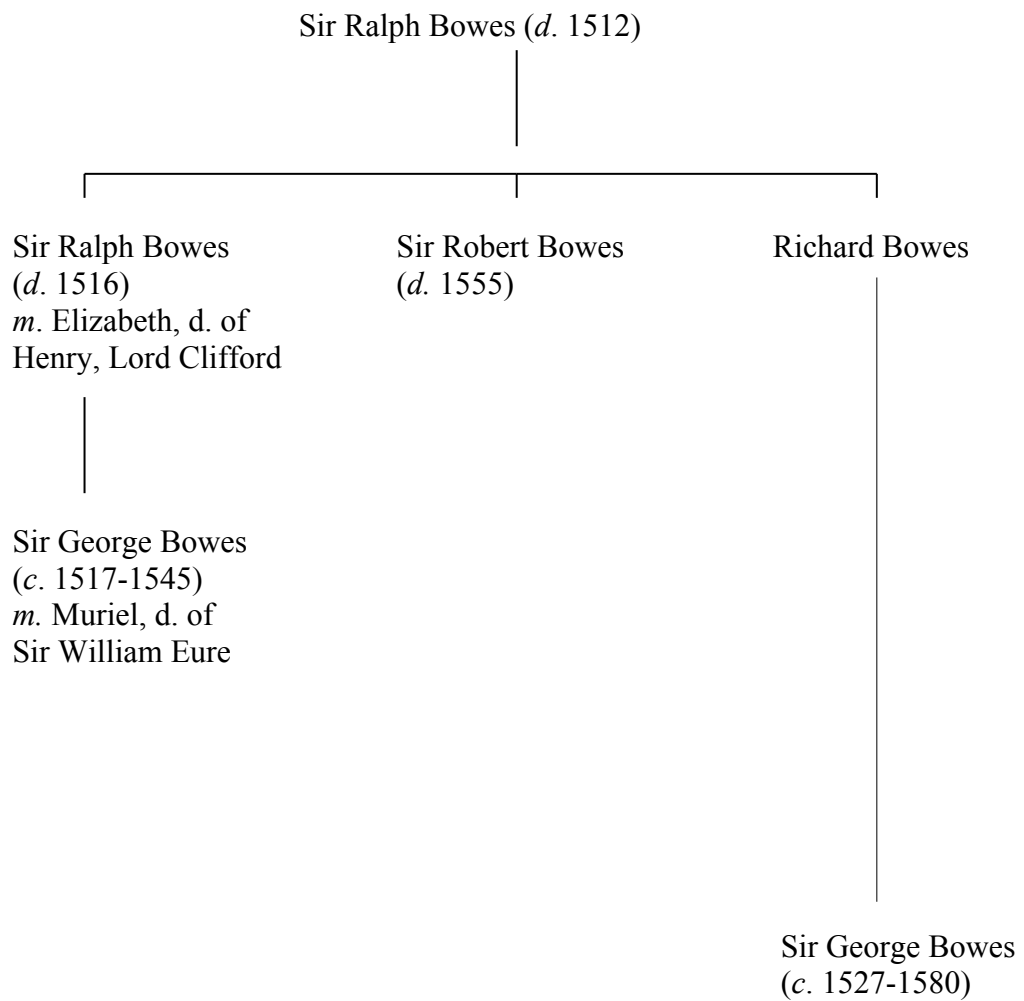
APPENDIX 1

A. The Bellasis Family of Henknowle, Durham



APPENDIX 1

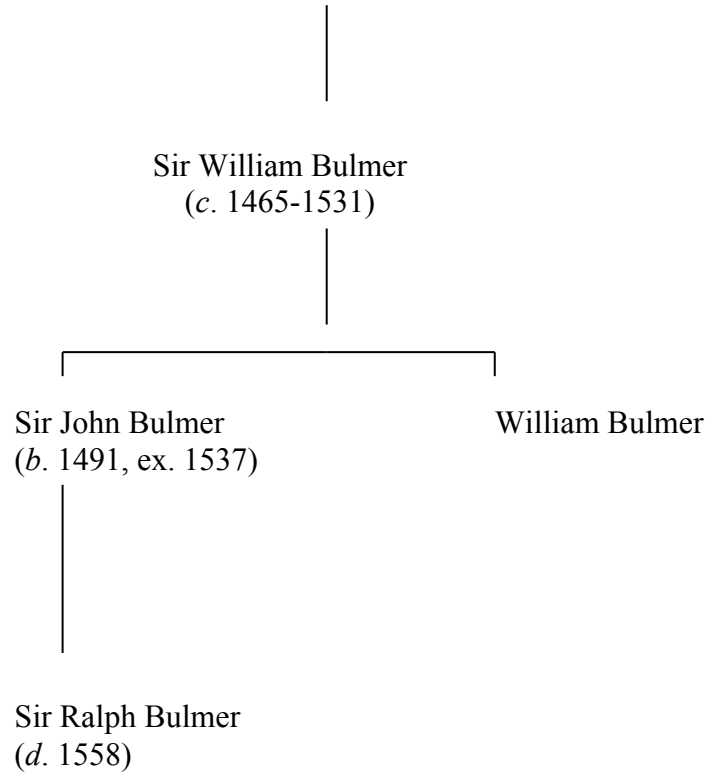
B. The Bowes Family of Streatlam and South Cowton



APPENDIX 1

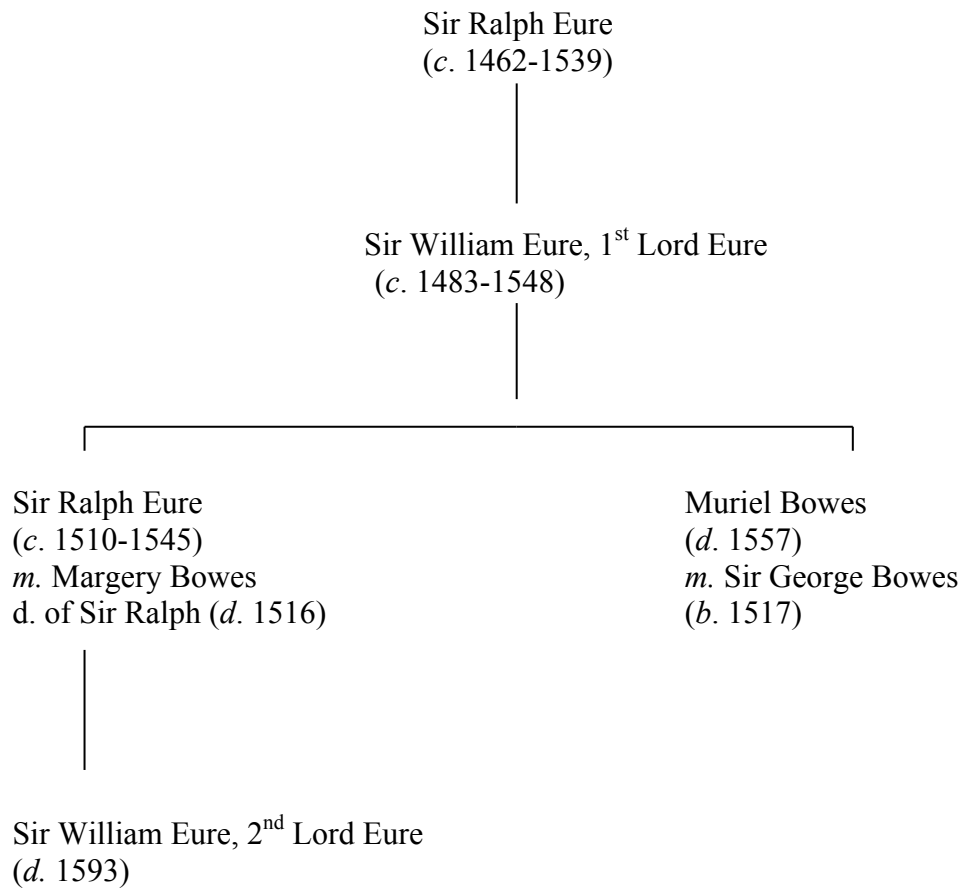
C. The Bulmer Family of Wilton, N. Yorks

Sir Ralph Bulmer (*c.* 1441/2-1486) *m.* Joan Bowes, d. of Sir William Bowes (*d.* 1466)



APPENDIX 1

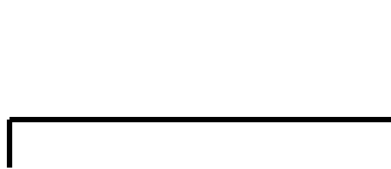
D. The Eure Family of Witton-le-Wear, Durham



APPENDIX 1

E. The Hilton Family of Hilton, Durham

Sir William Hilton (*b.* 1457)



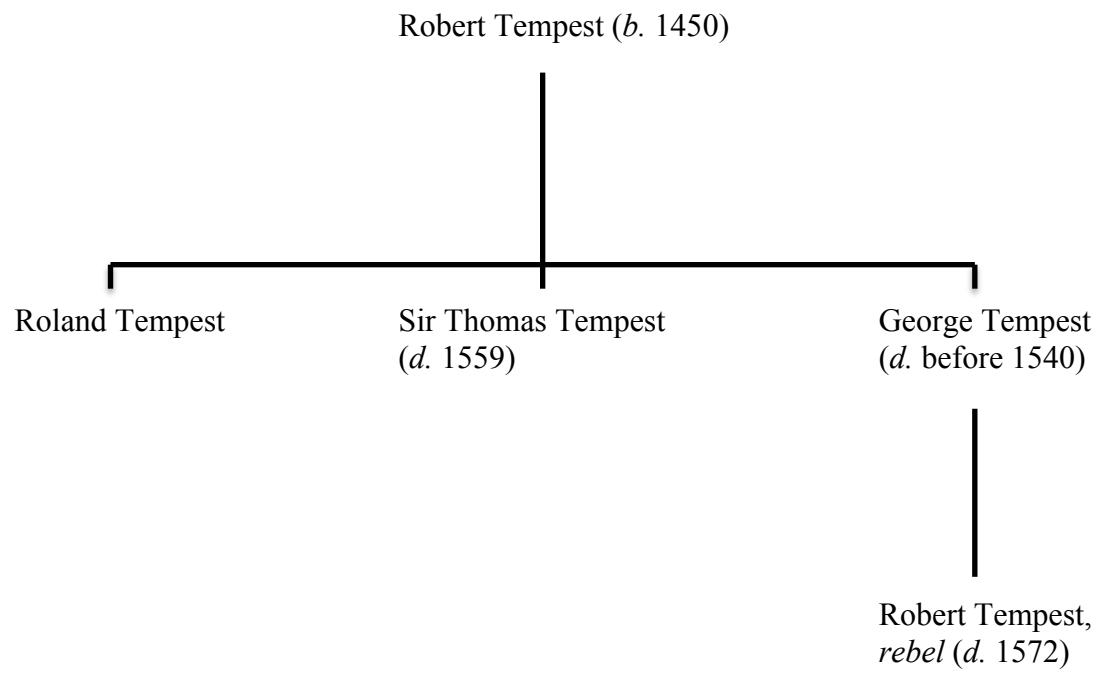
Sir William Hilton (*d.* 1537), 9th Lord Hilton *m.* Sybill Lumley



Sir Thomas Hilton (*d.* 1559), 10th Lord Hilton

APPENDIX 1

F. The Tempest Family of Holmside, Durham



APPENDIX 2

A Prosopographical List of Key Palatinate Landowners and Officials

Bellasis, Anthony (*d.* 1552), of Henknowle, Durham

Cambridge BCL, 1520; doctorate, by November 1532

Canonry of Chester-le-Street, Durham diocese, 1 August 1530

Rectory of Whickham, Durham diocese, 4 May 1533

Vicar of St Oswald's, Durham diocese, 1533-9

Dissolution commissioners for the North-East (see pp. 181-82)

Resident of Thomas Cromwell's household, 1538

Canon of Exeter, 1540

Rectory of Brancepeth, Durham diocese, 1540

Named among chapter of Westminster Cathedral, 17 December 1540

Prebend in Auckland College, Durham diocese, 9 November 1541

Archdeacon of Colchester, 23 March 1543

Canon of Ripon, 27 April 1543

King's chaplain by 2 August 1543

Master of chancery by 1544

Master of Sherburn Hospital, Durham diocese, 1545

Vicarage of Aycliffe, Durham diocese, 21 February 1549

Earl of Shrewsbury's council in the north, 1549 (Reid, *Council in the North*, pp. 169-70)

Canon of Carlisle, 12 June 1552

Deputy in chancery, 21 June 1552

Rector of Riply, Yorks., master of St Edmund's Hospital, Gateshead, and canon of Hereford by death.

Wealth at death: in goods and properties £1,069

(All references are to C.S. Knighton, 'Bellasis, Anthony (*d.* 1552), clergyman and civilian', *ODNB*, unless otherwise indicated)

Bellasis, Richard (1489-1540), of Henknowle, Durham

Provided joint-lease to Bishop Wolsey's coal pits near Bishop Auckland, 10 December 1525 (DCM, Reg. 5, f. 216r-225r)
 Constable of Durham Castle, 1527 (DURH 3/73, m. 42)
 JP for Durham, 1529 (DURH 3/76, m. 5)
 Dissolution commissioners for the North-East (see p. 181)
 Member of council in the north, 1536 (*LP*, xii, i, 249-50)
 Crown pensioner on the border, 1537 (*LP*, xii, i, 249-50)
 Awarded tenements of Great Morton and Cold Morton, Hanby, April 1539 (*LP*, xiv, i, 904, 22; *LP*, xvi, 947, 64)
 Granted Newburgh Priory (*LP*, xv, 831, 84)

Bowes, Sir George (1517-1545), of South Cowton, Yorks., and Streatlam, Durham

Served under his uncle, Sir Robert Bowes, at Haddon Rigg, August 1542 (*LP*, xvii, 663, 673)
 Knighted at Leith, 11 May 1544 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 54)
 Captain of Norham Castle, 1545 (*LP*, xx, i, 381)

Bowes, Sir George (1527-1580), of South Cowton, Yorks., and Streatlam, Durham

Received royal pardon, 1553 (*CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 443)
 Commissioner for the examination of border fortresses, December 1555 (*CPR, 1555-1557*, p. 54)
 Marshal of Berwick-upon-Tweed, 1558-61 (SP 15/8, f. 119, 120-22)
 Constable and steward of Barnard Castle (*CPR, 1557-1558*, p. 257)
 Steward of Allertonshire, 1560 (Reid, *Council in the North*, pp. 494)
 Seneschal of Allertonshire, 1568 (Reid, *Council in the North*, pp. 494)
 Steward of Barnard Castle, 1569 (Reid, *Council in the North*, pp. 494)
 Member of the council in the north, April 1561 (Reid, *Council in the North*, pp. 494)
 Provost marshal of the ear of Sussex's army, 1569
 Acting marshal of Berwick, 1579-80
 (All references are to *House of Commons*, ed. Hasler, unless otherwise indicated)

Bowes, Sir Ralph (d. 1512), of Streatlam, Durham

Knighthood, 22 August 1482 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 20)
Sheriff and auditor of Durham, September 1486-September 1494 (DURH 20/8-10, 11-13)
Reappointed sheriff of Durham, 1501-2 (DURH 3/64, m. 2)
Sat on at least thirteen different commissions during Henry VII's reign (see pp. 63-64, 86)

Bowes, Sir Robert (d. 1555), of South Cowton, Yorks., and Streatlam, Durham

Member of Duke of Richmond's council in the north, 1525
Appointed to Henry Percy's border council, 1527 (see p. 129)
Commissioner for the assessment of first fruits and tents, Durham diocese, 1535 (*LP*, viii, 149, 65)
Dissolution commissioner, 1537 (see p. 181)
Escheator for the bishopric of Durham, July 1529-April 1531
Appointed to council in the north, 1536 (*LP*, xi, 921; Reid, *Council in the North*, p. 104)
Crown pensioner on the border, 1537 (*LP*, xii, i, 249-50)
Elected MP for Yorkshire, 1539, 1542
Commissioner to remove Scots from Northumberland, 26 September 1541 (*LP*, xvi, 1205)
Commissioner for survey of the marches, 1541 (*LP*, xvi, 1263-4)
Appointed to the earl of Rutland's border council, 7 August 1542 (*LP*, xvii, 577, 579)
Joint-commander of Teviotdale campaign, August 1542 (*LP*, xvii, 663, 673)
Constable of Barnard Castle, 1543-d
Treasurer of the Scottish wars, 1543
Constable and master forester of Alnwick, 1545-d (*LP*, xxi, 1538, 195)
Elected MP for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1545
Warden of middle march, 1545-8
Master of requests, 1545
Chief steward of Hexhamshire, 19 March 1545 (*LP*, xx, i, 465, 54)
Commissioner for dissolution of chantries in Northumberland, bishopric of Durham, Westmorland, and Cumberland, 1546 (*LP*, xxi, i, 302, 30)
Elected MP for Westmorland, 1547
Warden of east and middle marches, 1548-51

Earl of Shrewsbury's council in the north, 1549 (Reid, *Council in the North*, pp. 169-70)

Appointed to Edward VI's privy council, 25 September 1551 (*APC*, iii, 363)

Master of the Savoy, November 1551-52/3

Master of the rolls, June 1552

Chancellor of the bishopric of Durham

Elected MP for Middlesex, March 1553

Sat on various commissions in Durham, Northumberland, Westmorland, Cumberland, and Yorkshire.

(All references are to *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff, unless otherwise indicated)

Bulmer, Sir William (1465-1531), of Wilton, Yorks

Sheriff of Durham, 1503-16, 1522-25, (DURH 20/14-24, 31-35)

Escheator of Durham, 1503-16, 1523-27

Joint custodian of the bishopric with Prior Thomas Castell, 1505-7 (DURH 3/67, m. 1)

Custodian of bishopric in Ruthall's absence, October 1513 (Margot Johnson, 'Ruthall, Thomas (*d.* 1523)', *ODNB*)

Sheriff of York, 1517-18

Appointed to earl of Shrewsbury's northern council, 1522

Knighted, 1523 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 44)

Lieutenant of the east march, 1523

Lieutenant of Norham Castle, 1523

Marshal of Berwick, 1527 (*LP*, iv, 2994)

Joint-sheriff of Durham with Sir John Bulmer, 1527-29 (DURH 20/36)

Recorded as the king's gentleman usher in York, 1519 (E 36/130, f. 219v)

Member of Duke of Richmond's council in the north; steward of the duke's household 1525 (*LP*, iv, 1512)

Various peace and miscellaneous commissions in Durham, Yorkshire, Northumberland, Westmorland, Cumberland

(All references to *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff, unless otherwise indicated)

Bulmer, Sir Ralph (*d.* 1558), of Wilton, Yorks

Captain of 100 men at Solway Moss, November 1542 (*LP*, xvii, 1117, 1124, 1157, 1197)

Knighted at Leith, 11 May 1544 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 54)

Captain of Roxburgh by late 1547 (SP 50/2, ff. 132-33)

Cholmeley, Sir Richard (d. 1521)

Appointed joint-temporary custodian of the bishopric, 1494 (DURH 3/63, m. 2)

King's receiver and surveyor in Durham, 1494 (DURH 3/63, m. 1, 5)

Knighted, 30 September 1497 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, 32)

Various commissions in Durham.

Cholmeley, Sir Roger (1485-1565), of Thorndon on the Hill, Yorks

Admitted to Lincoln's Inn, 1506

Lieutenant of the Tower of London, 1513-20

Admitted as one of the common pleaders for the city of London, 1518

Recorded as the king's gentleman usher in York, 1519 (E 36/130, f. 219v)

Serjeant-at-law, 1531

Recorder of London, 1535-40

Knighted, 15 November 1538 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 51)

Appointed chief baron of the exchequer, 1545

Lord Chief Justice, King's Bench, 1552-53

Commissioner responsible for depriving Bishop Tunstall, 1553 (Sturge, *Cuthbert Tunstal*, 291)

Various commissions in Durham and the North-East

(All references are to J.H. Baker, 'Cholmley, Sir Roger (c. 1485-1565)', *ODNB*, unless otherwise indicated)

Collingwood, Robert (d. 1556), of Eslington, Northumberland

Deputy warden of middle march, 1528

Elected MP for Northumberland, 1529

Keeper of Wark-upon-Tweed, 1530-8

Dissolution commissioners, Durham diocese and Northumberland, 1536 (*LP*, xi, 504)

Crown pensioner on the border, 1537 (*LP*, xii, i, 249-50)

Sheriff of Northumberland, 1538-39, 1544-45, 1553-54

Commissioner to remove Scots from Northumberland, 26 September 1541 (*LP*, xvi, 1205)

Commissioner for survey of the marches, 1541 (*LP*, xvi, 1263-64)

(All references are to *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff, unless otherwise indicated)

Conyers, Sir Christopher (d. 1538); Second Baron Conyers

Summoned to parliament, November 1529 (*The Complete Peerage*, ii, p. 347)

Various peace, array, and miscellaneous commissions under Henry VII and Henry VIII

Conyers, Cuthbert, of Sockburn, Durham

Commanded Lord Darcy's forces at Gedworth, 1523 (see pp. 108-9)

Sheriff of Durham, 1552-57 (DURH 20/51-57)

Commissioner for the examination of border fortresses, December 1555 (*CPR, 1555-1557*, p. 54)

Conyers, Sir George, of Sockburn, Durham

Knighted, 1533 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 49)

Sheriff of Durham, 1538-49 (DURH 20/42-50)

Earl of Shrewsbury's council in the north, 1549 (Reid, *Council in the North*, pp. 169-70)

Council in the north, 1550-67 (Reid, *Council in the North*, p. 492)

Conyers, Sir John (d. 1557); Third Baron Conyers

Summoned to parliament, 1544-45, 1555 (*The Complete Peerage*, ii, p. 348)

Bailiff, master forester, and steward of Richmond and Middleham Castles, 1547 (*CPR, 1547-1548*, p. 162)

Earl of Shrewsbury's council in the north, 1549 (Reid, *Council in the North*, pp. 169-70)

Council in the north, 1550-56 (Reid, *Council in the North*, p. 492)

Deputy warden of west march, December 1552 (*CPR, 1550-1553*, pp. 186-87)

Warden of east marches, 1554 (*CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 177)

Governor of Berwick, 1554 (*CPR, 1553-1554*, p. 177)

**Conyers, Sir William, (d. 1524) of Sockburn, Durham and Hornby,
Richmondshire; First Baron Conyers**

Bailiff of Richmond, 4 February 1493 (*CPR, 1485-94*, p. 427)

Knighted, 1497 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 31)

Yorkshire array commissioner, November 1495 (*CPR, 1494-1509*, p. 52)

Baron Conyers, 17 October 1509 (*The Complete Peerage*, ii, p. 347)

King's squire in York, 1519 (E 36/130, f. 173v)

Eure, Sir Ralph (d. 1545), of Brompton, Yorks

Deputy constable of Scarborough Castle, 1531-37

Knighted, 15 November 1538 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 51)

Constable of Scarborough Castle, 1537-d

Keeper of Redesdale and Tynedale, 1542-d

Deputy warden of middle march by August 1543

Receiver for Lancaster and Pickering, Yorks., November 1543

Warden of middle march, 1544-d

(All references are to *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff, unless otherwise indicated)

Eure, Sir William (1483-1548), of Witton, Durham; First Lord Eure

Knighted, 25 September 1513 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 39)

Sheriff of Durham, 1519-23 (DURH, 20/28-30)

Muster commissioner for bishopric, September 1522 (*LP*, iii, 2531)

Sheriff of Northumberland, 1526-7

Lieutenant of the middle marches, 1522-3

Escheator of Durham diocese (*LP*, iii, 2877)

Appointed to Henry Percy's border council, 1527 (see p. 129)

Captain of Berwick Castle, 1538

Warden of the east march, 1538-d

Created First Lord Eure, 24 February 1544

Commissioner for dissolution of chantries in Northumberland, bishopric of Durham,
Westmorland, Cumberland, 1546 (*LP*, xxi, i, 302, 30)

Various peace and miscellaneous commission during reign of Henry VIII

(All references are to *The Complete Peerage*, v, pp. 170-81, unless otherwise indicated)

Eure, Sir William (1530-1593), of Witton, Durham; Second Lord Eure

Created Second Baron Eure, 1548 (*The Complete Peerage*, iii, 293)

Deputy warden of middle march, November 1552 (*CPR, 1549-1551*, iii, p. 173)

Frankeley, William (1480/1-1556), of Bledlow, Buckinghamshire

Cambridge BCL, 1504-5

Chaplain to Archbishop Thomas Wolsey, August 1515 (*LP*, ii, 861)

Rectory of Easington, Durham diocese, 1515

Master of St Giles Hospital at Kepier, Durham diocese, 1515

Rectory of Houghton-le-Spring, Durham diocese, 1522

Appointed chancellor of Durham, 1514, 1523 (DURH 3/70, m. 19; DCM, Reg. 5, f. 158r-v; DURH 3/73, m. 1)

Archdeacon of Durham, 1515-d

Canonry of Saltmarsh (Lewycky, 'Thomas Wolsey's Patronage Networks', p. 329)

Appointed to Duke of Richmond's council in the north, 1525 (*LP*, iv, 1512)

Appointed to Henry Percy's border council, 1527 (see p. 129)

Council in the north, 1536

Commissioner for the assessment of first fruits and tents, Durham diocese, 1535 (*LP*, viii, 149, 65; *LP*, iv, 5749, 5815)

Various peace commissions in Durham and North-East

Dean of Wolverhampton, 1536-48

Dean of Windsor, 17 December 1536-1552

Various assize, peace, and miscellaneous commissions in Durham and neighbouring shires (*LP*, iv, 1610, 11; *LP*, iv, 5083, 10; *LP*, iv, 5243, 28; DURH, 3/70, m. 1, 11, 20; DURH, 3/73, m. 2, 4, 5; DURH 3/76, m. 5)

(All references are to Venn, *Alumni*, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 176, unless otherwise indicated)

Hilton, Sir Thomas (1500-1559), of Hilton, Durham

Knighted, 1523 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 44)

Sheriff of Durham, 1534-36, 1547-48 (DURH 20/40-1, 76)

Steward, escheator, and sheriff of Bedlingtonshire, 1537

Grant of twenty-one year lease to Tynemouth Priory, 1539

Sheriff of Northumberland, 1543-4

Elected MP for Northumberland, 1547

Commissioner for dissolution of chantries in Northumberland, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and bishopric of Durham, 1548 (*CPR*, 1548-49, p. 137)

Various commissions in Durham, Northumberland, Newcastle, 1538-54 (*CPR*, 1547-1553, v, p. 365; *APC*, iv, pp. 286-7; *CPR*, *Mary*, p. 303)

Received royal pardon on Mary's accession (*CPR*, 1554-1555, ii, p. 357)

(All references are to *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff, unless otherwise indicated)

Hilton, Sir William (d. 1537), of Hilton, Durham

Various bishopric and royal commissions in the North-East, 1490s-1523 (DURH, 3/60, m. 1, 7; *CPR*, 1494-1509, p. 420, 562; *LP*, i, appendix 1; *LP*, ii, 249; DURH, 3/70, 20; DURH, 3/73, m. 5)

Listed as one of the 'king's knights' in Northumberland, 1519 (E 36/130, f. 219v)

Received payment of £49 for commanding of Durham Cathedral Priory's forces at Jedburgh, 1519 (*LP*, iii, 573)

Received £10 award from Henry VIII for commanding campaign at Blackwater, 1520 (Cotton Caligula, B/I, f. 134)

Sheriff of Durham, 1531-3 (DURH, 20/37-9)

Horsley, Cuthbert (d. 1586), of Horsley, Northumberland

MP for Appleby, 1542; for Northumberland, 1553, 1554, 1559; Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1554

Receiver for the court of augmentations, archdeaconry of Richmond and bishopric of Durham, 1544-46 (*LP*, xx, i, 1336)

(All references to *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff, unless otherwise indicated)

Lawson, Sir George (1493-1543), of York and Berwick-upon-Tweed

Deputy captain of Berwick Castle, 1514

Treasurer and receiver-general of Berwick Castle, 1517-d

Surveyor of the works at Berwick Castle, by 1520-d

Cofferer in the household of Henry Fitzroy, duke of Richmond, 1526-34 (*LP*, iv, 1512)

Knighted, 1527 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 46)

Alderman for York, 1527-d

Elected MP for York, 1529, 1536

Mayor of York, 1530-31

Appointed to Henry Percy's border council, 1527 (see p. 129)

Dissolution commissioner; dissolved Jervaulx abbey, May 1537 (*LP*, xii, i, 1307; *LP*, xiv, i, 394)

Appointed to council in the north by 1540

Awarded twenty-one lease of Newcastle nunnery, June 1541 (*LP*, xvi, 1500, 188b)

(All references are to *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff, unless otherwise indicated)

Radcliffe, Sir Cuthbert (1491-1545), of Cartington and Dilston, Northumberland

Escheator of Northumberland, 1513-14

Sheriff of Northumberland, 1526, 1530-31, 1539-40

Elected MP for Northumberland, 1529

Knighted, 1530 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, p. 48)

Crown pensioner on the border, 1537 (*LP*, xii, i, 249-50)

Constable and chief forester of Alnwick, 1539-d

Chief steward of Tynemouth, 1539

Deputy warden of middle march, 1540-43

Commissioner for survey of the marches, 1541 (*LP*, xvi, 1263-4)

Joint-commander of Teviotdale campaign, August 1542 (*LP*, xvii, 663, 673)

Deputy steward of Hexham, 1543

Captain of Berwick Castle, 1544-45

(All references are to *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff, unless otherwise indicated)

Tempest, Sir Thomas (1476-1543/44), of Holmside, Durham

Steward of bishopric of Durham, 1510-d.

Recorder of Newcastle, 1517-36

Recorded as the king's gentleman usher in York, 1519 (E 36/130, f. 219v)

Comptroller of Durham by 1522

Muster commissioner for bishopric, September 1522 (*LP*, iii, 2531)

Steward of Northallerton by 1523

Knighted, 1523 (Shaw, *Knights of England*, ii, pp. 44)

Appointed to duke of Richmond's council in the north; comptroller of duke's household, 1525 (*LP*, iv, 1512)

Appointed to Henry Percy's border council, 1527 (see p. 129)

Elected MP for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1529, 1539

Commissioner for the assessment of first fruits and tents, Durham diocese, 1535 (*LP*, viii, 149, 65)

Appointed to the council in the north, 1536 (*LP*, xii, i, 249-50)

Crown pensioner on the border, 1537 (*LP*, xii, i, 249-50)

Sheriff of Yorkshire, 1542-43

Various peace and miscellaneous commissions in bishopric of Durham, Yorkshire, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland, 1507-d

(All references are to *House of Commons*, ed. Bindoff, unless otherwise indicated)

APPENDIX 3

[TNA, C 65/161]

‘12 it[e]m also for the dyssoluc[i]on of the Bysshopprick of durham’ [1553]

‘Where the byshoppricke of durham ys at this [prese]nte time voyde of a Byshoppe... the gifte therof remanethe in the king[es] maiestie most good and gracyous pleasure to be... bestowed as to his princely wysedome shall stame beaste and most convenient – And forasmuche as the... sayd Byshoppricke ys largdge and greate and extendethe into many shires and Counties and thone of them being so fare distant from thither... the chardge theof may not conveniently be supplied and well and sufficiently dischargd by one Ordynarye or one Byshoppe and forasmuche as the king[es] matie of his most godly dysposition ys desirous to have goddes moste holy and sacredd worde in thos partyes adioyning to the borders of Scotlande beinge nowe wyld and barbarous for lacke of good doctrine and godly educac[i]on in good ltres and learning plentifully taught preached and set for the amongst his loving subiectes ther as thanckes be unto god the same ys well exersysed and put in use in... other [par]ties of this realme dothe therfore mynde and ys fully determyned to have two seuerall Ordynaryes as... bishoppes to be erected and establyshed within the lymytes and boundes and Iurisdicc[i]ons of the sayd bishopprick of durham wherof thone shalbe called the Sea of the bishopprick of durham and thother the Sea of the bishopprick of newccastell upon Tyne and tappoint two apte meete and godly learned men in goddes holy woorde to be bishoppes of the same seuerall dyoces and to endowe them seuerally with manours landes Tenementes and other hereditamentes withe suche good and honourable lyberties... as shalbe mete and convenient for any of the king[es] subiectes to have or enioye that is to say the sayd bishopricke of durham withe manors landes and Tenementes and other hereditamentes of the clere yerely valours of two thowsande markes. And the sayd bishopricke of newcastell withe manours landes Tenementes and other hereditamentes of the clere yerely value of one thowsande markes and also to make the sayd Town of newcastell upon Tyne one Cytye whiche shalbe called the cytye of newcastell upon Tyne and to... appoint ther one Churche whiche shalbe called the Cathedrall Churche of newcastell upon Tyne and the Sea of the bishopricke therof and also to erecte and make one

Deanrye and Chaper ther and to endowe the same with convenient possessions and hereditamentes for the mayntenance therof and to make statutes and ordenannces for the beyyer ordering the sayd Deanrye and Chapter whiche good and godly intende and purpose can not be conveniently nee fully finished and [pre]fected but by theyde and authoritee of [par]lement **Be it** therfor inacted by thauctorite of this [par]lement that the sayd bishoprocke of Durham togyther withal thordynarye Iurisdic[i]ons ther unto belonging and appertenning shalbe adiudged from hensforthe clerely dissolved extinguished and determined and that the king our souereyne Lorde shall from hensfoorth have holde possede and enioye to him his heres and successoures for euer all and singler honnoures Castelles manoures lordeshippes Granges measis landes tenementes meadowes pastures rentes reuer[i]ons services woddes Tythes pensios portions [par]sonages appropriated vicarages Churches and Chappelles and advowsons no[m]inac[i]ons patronages annuitees rightes Interestes entreis condic[i]ons comens leeses Courtes Lyberties pryvyleges Franchesyes and other hereditamentes... whiche dothe appertene or belong to the sayd bishoprike of durham in as large and ample maner and fourme as the late bishoppe of the sayd bishoprike or any of his predecesspures bishoppes ther had helde or occupy or of right ought to have had holden or occupied in the right of the sayd byshoprike togyther withall... profettes rising co[m]ming and growing of the premisses and every parcell of the same from the tyme of thadvoydance of the sayd bishopricke of durham

And be it also enacted by thauctoritee aforesayd that all and singler the sayd honours Castelles manoures landes tenementes and other the premisses shalbe adiudged and demed to bee in the king[es] maties roiall and actuall possession without any Office or other Inquysition therin to bee had or taken **Saving to** all and every [per]son and [per]sons bodies politike and corporal ether heires and successoures and theirs and – successoures of every of them other then the late byshoppe of durham aforesayd and his successoures and suche [per]sons and their heires as pretende to bee patrones... of the said bishoprick of durham or of any manours landes tenementes or other hereditamentes belonging to the same bishoprike of durham / All suche right title clayme Interest possession rent[es] Charg[es] annuities leases fermes Offices fees lyveryes and lyving[es] porc[i]ons pensyons Corodies[??] co[m]mens Cynodes proyies and other profites whiche they or any of them have clayme ought may or might have had in or to the premisses or to any parte or parcell therof in suche lyke maner fourme and condic[i]on to all Intentens

respectes... and purposes as yf this alle had never been had ne made **And for** **the** better corroborac[i]on and [per]fecting of therecc-ous[??]and stablysmen of the said two newe byshopprikes that ys to saye thone of durham and thother of newcastell upon Tyne whiche the king[es] maiestie mindethe [prese]ntly to doo... by his most gracyous Lres patentes and tappointe their severally by the said lres patentes their Episcopall and Ordinarye Iurisdicc[i]ones Circuities and authoritees **Be it** **therefore** enacted by thauctoritee of this [prese]nte [par]leament that the sayd lres patentes concerning the said severall erec[i]ns and thendowmentes of the sayd Deanrye and Chapter of newe Castle upon Tyne and the making of the said Towne of newcastell upn Tyne a Cytie and all and every thing in the same severall lres patentes to be conteined for thaccomplishm[en]te of the same shalbe good and avayleable in the lawe to all Intentes and... purposes according to the tenour fourme and effecte of the same sverall lres patentes and according to the true meaning of this acte agenest the king his heires and successoures **provided** always that this acte or any thing therin conteyned shall not in any wise extende to gyve any Interesse right tittle or possession to the king[es] maiestie in and to the Cathedral Church of the sayd Byshoprick of Durham nor in or to the Deanrye and Chapter of durham nor in or to any [par]te or [par]cell of the manoures landes and other hereditamentes whatsoever to the same deanrye and Chapter in any wise apperteyning or belonging or being reputed or taken as [par]te or [par]cell of the possessions therof severed of distinct from the sayd bishoprike of durham But that the said deanrye and Chapter shall from hensforthe remayne and continue in such lyke fourme condic[i]on and effecte as the same nowe ys / Any thing or matter conteinded in this acte sowndyng to the contrary hereof in any wise notwithstanding **And be** yt further enacted by thauctoritee aforesaid that the sayd Cathedrall Church of durham shall from the tyme of therecc[i]on of the sayd bushopricke of Durham to bee erected by the king[es] lres patentes as... bee adiudged and taken to all Intentes and purposes the Cathedrall Church of the same byshopricke And lykewise the sayd Church to be appointed by the king[es] lres patentes to be the Cathedrall Church of newcastell upon Tyne shall from the tyme of thappointment therof by the king[es] lres patentes as ys aforesayd bee adiudged the Cathedral Church of the bishopricke of newcastell upon Tyne’.

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- C 65 Parliament Rolls
- C 66 Patent Rolls
- C 142 Inquisitions Post Mortem
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DUCHY OF LANCASTER

- DL 3 Court of Duchy Chamber: Pleadings, Depositions and Examinations, Series 1
- DL 5 Proceedings of the Council Learned in the Law

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- E 25 Treasury of Receipt: Acknowledgements of Supremacy
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