

WILLIAM CLINTON, EARL OF HUNTINGDON, AND THE COUNTY OF KENT: A STUDY OF MAGNATE SERVICE UNDER EDWARD III

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The long reign of Edward III (1327-77) has often drawn notice for marking the beginnings of a distinct shift in the distribution of noble titles. A trend observable since the end of Stephen's reign was reversed as elevations to the title of 'earl' (Latin: *comes*) abounded, with eleven English earls receiving comital title from Edward.¹ As David Crouch has noted looking forward from an earlier period, 'Edward III belonged to a newer generation, and the fear of titled magnates was not on him'.² The question of why Edward III created so many earls and what the roles of these earls were in the Edwardian polity has not proved easy to answer. In 1965, the great historian of the English nobility in the late middle ages, Bruce McFarlane, asked his audience:

If creation also involved endowment one may well ask, why did the king wish to create new earls and other peers? If the members of the higher nobility were such obviously bad things, obstacles to good government, natural enemies to the royal authority, why didn't sensible kings let them die out? Why multiply a conspicuous evil, why create obstacles to one's own exercise of power? Was it just blind folly that led Edward III to reverse his grandfather's policy of limitation? ... If not, then what were his reasons?³

The questions raised by McFarlane remain important, not least because McFarlane died before being able to supply his own answers to them. Views on the political place of the titled nobility under Edward III depend to a considerable extent on whether we assume, as the historians of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did, that the interests of the nobility in the late middle ages naturally pushed against the 'centralising tendencies' of the crown.⁴ Royal government grew in the fourteenth century and historians differ over the place of the nobility within this intensification, and how nobles themselves reacted to the institutional and ideological articulation of royal power.⁵

The present author would put forward two ways in which our understanding of noble power under Edward III can be enhanced. The first (not pursued further here) is an investigation into contemporary perceptions of the nobility in political thought. The second is an investigation into the 'dynamics' of noble service under Edward III which – crucially – integrates studies of local politics and local structures of power into an exploration of what Edward III's nobles actually did. The

local perspective has not been prominent in studies of the Edwardian nobility, as compared to earlier and later periods of English history.⁶ It is, however, important, since the power of the nobility was based in the localities, in the relationships and wealth bound up in their massive landholdings. Christine Carpenter and Sam Drake have recently added a great deal to our understanding of noble power under Edward III through regional studies of Warwickshire and Cornwall respectively, which link these localities to our knowledge of Edward III's kingship more generally.⁷ The following study is framed by a desire to explore the dynamics of noble service under Edward III and uses a local perspective to illuminate the career of William Clinton (d.1354), made earl of Huntingdon in 1337 (**Fig. 1**), by exploring how his power and status in Kent underpinned the workings of royal authority in the region.

William Clinton: Marriage, Lands, and Legacy

William Clinton was born in the early fourteenth century (c.1304) to John Clinton, lord of Maxstoke (Warwickshire), and Ida Odingsells of Maxstoke.⁸ By 1324, Clinton had been knighted and was serving as a banneret of the royal household. In 1328 he was catapulted up the ladder of social standing by marriage to Juliana Leybourne (d.1367), who had previously been married to John, Lord Hastings (d.1325), nephew of Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, and to Thomas Blount (d.1328), then steward of the royal household.⁹ Clinton then played a key part in a coup at Nottingham Castle on the night of 19 October 1330 which saw Edward III seize the reins of government from his mother, Queen Isabella, and Roger Mortimer, Earl of March. He was a trusted friend and supporter of the young king, part of a discernible group linked together by their relative youth, careers in the royal household, and proven ability in royal service. On 16 March 1337, Clinton and four other figures within this group were the beneficiaries of royal largesse as Edward III created six new earls in a single day. Clinton's title was 'earl of Huntingdon' and he was given 1,000 marks (£666 13s. 4d.) per annum to support his newfound station near the apex of aristocratic society.¹⁰ Clinton's ride on the Wheel of Fortune to date had been smooth. But bumps on the road appeared in the late 1330s, when he headed a series of important councils along with John Stratford, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Richard FitzAlan, Earl of Arundel, which were tasked with ruling the realm while Edward III himself was abroad.¹¹ As a member of the council blamed by the king for lack of financial supply, Clinton was in an unfortunate and uncomfortable position in the political crisis of 1340-1. But he continued to serve his king frequently after 1341 and was especially prominent in diplomatic negotiations. After a period of illness, Clinton died on 25 August 1354. He was buried at Maxstoke Priory in Warwickshire, which had enjoyed the benefits of the earl's largesse during his lifetime.

Clinton's patrimonial estates were centred in the West Midlands but his marriage made him a major landowner in Kent, since Juliana held twenty-six manors there (**Map 1**).¹² In October 1328, the king ordered that Juliana's estates be delivered to William Clinton.¹³ This heralded his arrival into landed Kent society and contributed a great deal to his income. The local eminence brought to Clinton by Juliana's Kent estates can be glimpsed in the bland statements of the Kentish list



Fig. 1a William Clinton's seal as earl of Huntingdon: TNA, PRO 23/1731 – a plaster mould cast from an original seal dating to 1344-5 (the original document is TNA E 43/217). Reproduced with permission.



Fig. 1b Sketch of Clinton's seal from an original of 1347, found in The Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS Ashmolean 1137, fol. 144. Reproduced with permission.



Map 1 The distribution of Juliana de Leybourne's estates in Kent.
(NB Her Bromsmythe manor unlocated.)

of those assessed for the traditional aid levied to support the knighting of Edward III's eldest son in 1346/7, which assessed the earl of Huntingdon at well over £20, the county's highest sum.¹⁴ William and Juliana were certainly able to enjoy the trappings of a substantial fortune: when Juliana died in 1367, she had almost £1,250 in cash at her favoured manor of Preston (by Wingham) and chattels worth over £700 at some of her other Kent manors.¹⁵ Clinton's horizons were not, of course, centred wholly on Kent and it would not do to portray him as a resident 'Kentish' magnate: his chosen burial site of Maxstoke reminds us that Clinton's interests went beyond Kent's borders and that his primary residences seem to have been in Warwickshire. But, be this as it may, Kent loomed large in the tenurial geography of William Clinton's landed interests. It loomed equally large in the story of his career in royal service.

This career is interesting in part because Clinton has been placed into the historiographical shadows by some of his contemporaries. The extraordinary military careers of some of Edward III's nobles in the Hundred Years War have tended to monopolise the attention of modern historians, and understandably so.¹⁶ While William Clinton died in 1354 with a substantial military career behind him, he was not one of the great military figures of the age. He spent much of the years 1338-40 in England serving on the domestic council, he missed the battle of Crécy (1346), he died before the great campaigns of the mid-1350s, and he was not a member of the Order of the Garter. This did not stop the great antiquarian William Dugdale (d.1686) writing that Clinton was:

‘amongst the chiefest Worthies of that age’, ‘a person of great eminency’ whose ‘prudence grew so conspicuous, he was thought worthy to be ranked among the superior nobility [i.e. summoned to the Lords]’, and whose elevation to the rank of earl meant he was ‘honoured and enriched, and also advanc’t to such places of power and trust [that he built Maxstoke Castle]’.¹⁷

Where they have considered him, modern writers have been less sure about how to characterise Clinton’s place in mid fourteenth-century England. McFarlane positioned Clinton as one of the ‘new’ earls who ‘served Edward III *hard* and faithfully both before and after 1337 until they died’.¹⁸ Richard Partington has noted that Clinton’s service in office holding and on the council means he can be viewed as one of ‘the two great comital administrators of [Edward III’s] reign’.¹⁹ On the other hand, James Bothwell and Richard Barber have drawn attention to the tensions between Clinton and his king arising from the crisis of 1340-1 and have noted his omission from the membership of the Order of the Garter.²⁰ Bothwell in particular has suggested that Clinton and Richard FitzAlan ‘though not officially banished ... were gradually left out of events at the centre, usually through acts of omission by the king and administrators than anything more active. Nonetheless, it was fairly evident that these men were no longer “on the inside”’. Clinton’s political life, then, has been open to various plausible interpretations. It is certainly multifaceted and generalising is therefore not an easy task. Nonetheless, an assessment of William Clinton’s career which looks beyond his part in the crisis of 1340-1 and examines his relationship with Kent opens up a number of insights into the dynamics of noble service. This can then be tied into a wider intensification of noble power, which was situated in localities across England (not to mention Ireland, Wales and Gascony) to underpin the operation of English kingship.

Warden of the Cinque Ports and Constable of Dover Castle

On 13 December 1330, William Clinton was appointed warden of the Cinque Ports and constable of Dover Castle.²¹ He held this post for just under thirteen years, a period which spanned Edward III’s attempts to consolidate royal authority within England as well as the beginnings of war with Scotland and – more presciently for the inhabitants of Kent’s vulnerable ports – with France.²² This position was one of great regional importance: as Murray showed in her pioneering work ‘in the fourteenth century the Warden was the sole channel of communication between the central government and the ports and performed all the duties of a sheriff’.²³ Holding the wardenship was both a recognition and an empowerment: it depended on the landed presence within the county Clinton owed to Juliana; it recognised the trusted position Clinton held after the coup in Nottingham; and it gave him extensive military and judicial responsibilities, including the holding of the warden’s court of Shepway at Dover Castle.²⁴

These responsibilities were such that Caroline Burt suggested that Stephen Pencester’s wardenship (c.1268-99) formed an important part of a more general assertion of order in Kent under Edward I before 1294: ‘Edward [I] had clearly appointed a man to the Wardenship whom he conspicuously trusted, and to whom he was prepared to offer support whenever it was needed, and his policy seems to have paid off’.²⁵ Again, in the final years of the reign, ‘the new Warden, Robert

Burghershe of Kent and Sussex, was trusted by the crown in the same way as Stephen de Pencester had been. Many of the best features of pre-1294 royal policy in Kent had now been restored'.²⁶ Edward III's use of William Clinton as warden can be seen as continuing (whether consciously or unconsciously) the policies of his grandfather. Clinton's extensive official and unofficial influence as warden cannot and should not be wholly divorced from his more general role in Kent's military and judicial experiences. These were all interrelated, doubtless in ways that often cannot be fully recovered. For the sake of convenience, however, some of Clinton's responsibilities and actions in his role as warden as a distinct area of his career will be delineated. This can then be read alongside expansions into his military role and his appointment on judicial commissions pursued in subsequent sections.

The royal chancery directed a stream of writs to William Clinton as warden of the Cinque Ports. A few examples culled from this flood of parchment dating from 1331 can illustrate its nature. The warden had the responsibility of returning the names of the barons of the Cinque Ports elected to represent their fellows in parliament and, as such, orders addressed to him were sent early in 1331, when the king summoned a parliament to meet at Westminster.²⁷ At the same time, Clinton was ordered 'not to permit earls, barons, knights or other men-at-arms to pass to ports beyond the sea from the port of Dover'.²⁸ In May, he – or his deputy – was to make an exception and allow Mary Saint-Pol, widow of Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, to pass through Dover.²⁹ The warden was also responsible for the dissemination of fiscal policy: in April, Clinton was 'to order proclamation to be made prohibiting any merchant from bringing into the realm any manner of money counterfeiting the king's money, on forfeiture of life and limb'; and in May he was to prohibit merchants from exporting wool through ports other than Sandwich.³⁰ Such orders could each be multiplied many times.

Generally, the implementation of these administrative tasks on the ground was probably the responsibility of Clinton's deputy.³¹ Sometimes, however, the particular importance of an order stands out. In 1335, for instance, Clinton was ordered to arrange surveillance to observe the arrival of Philip VI's diplomatic envoys and to inform Chancellor John Stratford of their arrival.³² We may suspect that Clinton saw fit to direct this task in person, rather than through the agency of his deputy. The actual identity of Clinton's deputies (let alone what exactly they did on his behalf) remains frustratingly obscure. We lack the evidence of his own archives and, although the deputies of wardens begin to be named in royal records by the clerks of the chancery with greater regularity later in the century, between 1330 and 1343 they were generally content with the vaguer specification of orders sent 'to William Clinton, constable of Dover Castle and warden of the Cinque Ports, or to him who supplies his place'. Doubtless this had much to do with the fact that deputies were in the pay of the warden himself, not of the Crown. However, a scattering of evidence from shortly after William Clinton's period in office suggests the existence of a series of local deputies each responsible for a port.³³ They perhaps reported to a lieutenant of greater local substance, as appears to have been the case in the last quarter of the century, and who may have been one of those gentry figures who served with Clinton on commissions and on campaign.³⁴

Dover Castle was, of course, of great strategic importance. As constable, Clinton

was responsible for its upkeep and garrisoning. In May 1331, he received 100 marks (£66 13s. 4d.) by the hand of Peter Barde, bailiff of Sandwich, and Ralph de Saint Laurence, sheriff of Kent, for repairs and works on the castle.³⁵ These military duties became increasingly important from 1338, when French raids hit England's south coast. In November, the barons of the exchequer were ordered to fund defensive measures to be put in place by Earl William: they were to pay him £50 for repairs on the castle and to pay the earl for a garrison of 20 men-at-arms, 40 armed men and 40 archers.³⁶ Later that month, Clinton was ordered to stock up the castle's supply of victuals.³⁷ Clinton's first bill for the wages of this garrison came to £160 10s., the final £100 of which was assigned upon the tax collectors of Kent.³⁸ Subsequently, Clinton's dues for the payment of the garrison were worked out at regular intervals corresponding with prominent dates in the medieval calendar (for instance from the Gule of August (1 August) to Michaelmas next (29 September)).³⁹ Some of these payments were still outstanding at the end of 1347.⁴⁰ They prove that Earl William met his responsibilities as constable at this time of genuine threat to the coastline of southern England by maintaining a substantial garrison in Dover Castle. By the time he left the office of constable in December 1343, the castle was certainly well stocked for defence.⁴¹

Along with a wide range of military and administrative tasks, the warden also played an important part in legal process in Kent. The loss of the relevant plea rolls prevents a full analysis of the role of the warden's court.⁴² Despite this, we know from Clinton's accounts covering the period 1334 to 1337 that the proceedings of the pleas held at the castle of Dover raised not inconsiderable sums: £6 19s. 4d. from Michaelmas 1334 to Michaelmas 1335, £5 0s. 3d. for 1335-6, and £4 6s. 3d. during 1336-7.⁴³ Beyond this, the general prevalence of piracy and maritime disorder in the region ensured the warden played a prominent role in the transnational process of mercantile restitution.⁴⁴ William Clinton was therefore tasked with making inquisition or giving judgments on a number of complaints during his time as warden. In 1334, it was ordered that writs should be issued to Clinton so that he could hear the complaints of any persons bringing forward allegations of piracy.⁴⁵ But perhaps more pressing were allegations by alien merchants that they had suffered acts of piracy at the hands of men from Cinque Ports or from Kent more generally. Peter Seseres, an Aragonese merchant, petitioned the king and his council to claim that Salomon Yok and Ellis Condy were among other men of Sandwich who robbed him.⁴⁶ Clinton was ordered to make an inquiry and arrest those responsible.⁴⁷ In June 1336, a mandate addressed to Clinton ordered him to 'go in person and cause the stolen goods to be arrested forthwith and restored to the owners' after the robbery of a ship called the *Dromund* by men of the ports.⁴⁸ In c.1336-7, John Alfonso de Tanyle, merchant of Portugal, twice petitioned Clinton to ask for redress, alleging robbery and injury done to him by men of Sandwich.⁴⁹ It does not seem that Clinton responded and, by March 1337, Alfonso had petitioned the king and his council and William Clinton and John Hampton were commissioned as justices of *oyer* and *terminer* to find out whether men of Sandwich had 'carried away 300 couples of figs and grapes, worth £90 ... imprisoned him and compelled him by fear of death to give £30 to the master of the ship and to seal with his own seal divers letters of acquittance to them of all actions real or personal'.⁵⁰ Subsequently, at least one 'man of Sandwich' had to receive mainprise

from friends and family as surety for appearance in court.⁵¹ A final example can illuminate how Clinton as warden – an office of mediation between centre and locality – might be caught between the ties of this locality and the orders of the king. In a petition to the royal council, Peter de Saint John, merchant of Bayonne, stated that he had sued for redress for three years for compensation for a robbery committed against him at sea in the port of Dartmouth (Devon) apparently by men of the Cinque Ports.⁵² He went on to say that he still required redress, although the King had often written to the earl of Huntingdon, constable of Dover and warden of the Cinque Ports, asking him to give Peter justice. Indeed, after he received the king's most recent order, Earl William had then been persuaded to abandon proceedings by the bailiff of Winchelsea and John Seaman, one of the (alleged) malefactors. A writ was then sent to Earl William, noting that despite the King's commands no justice had been done 'to the ruin of the merchant and to the great scandal and contempt of the King'.⁵³ Clinton was ordered to provide justice swiftly or to appear before the council to explain his negligence.

Clinton's role as warden and constable of Dover Castle, then, positioned him on the interface of administrative, judicial and political interactions between the king and the people of Kent. From Edward III's point of view, appointing William Clinton as warden enabled him to follow in Edward I's footsteps and fill this important office with a favoured servant, whose local status in the region combined with his official role in the pursuit of good governance. From a local point of view, the appointment of a warden with extensive local holdings and connections allowed a dialogue to be established with the personnel of central government and, at times, enabled the burden of royal justice to be deflected or delayed. The fact that the warden was required to swear an oath to select men of the ports promising to uphold their liberties when he assumed office was only the most symbolic representation of the responsibilities the warden held towards protecting the interests of those he presided over.⁵⁴

Both of these impulses can be seen in the choice of Clinton's replacement, Bartholomew Burghersh, another local figure favoured by Edward III. Burghersh had served as warden in the early years of the reign and his father Robert had occupied the office in the early fourteenth century. Before Burghersh became warden on 3 December 1343, he had been 'Keeper' of the royal forests south of the river Trent, another important position of favour and trust. It was this keepership and its stipend of £100 which William Clinton received on 4 December 1343, as his own long spell as warden came to a close.⁵⁵ Clinton and Burghersh essentially swapped offices. This may even have been due to a private agreement between them, although no evidence has survived to prove this suspicion. But whatever logic lay behind Clinton's shift in role, his lengthy tenure of the wardenship formed a key part of both his wider career and his relationship with the people of Kent.

William Clinton's Military Service and Kent's Military Community

William Clinton had a respectable military career, even if he lacked the subsequent fame attached to the highest echelons of England's chivalric elite. The following section will explore the interconnectivity between Clinton's military life and Kent by focusing on two areas in particular: his role in the defence of the county,

positioned as it was on the ‘front line’ of war with France, and the presence of Kent men in his military retinue during campaigns. Both of these areas offer interesting avenues of exploration. The first can supplement the traditional focus on the role of nobles on campaign with the role of the nobility in what H.J. Hewitt called the ‘organisation of war’.⁵⁶ It also serves to integrate the maritime sphere into the history of noble service, an area rather neglected until recently.⁵⁷

For the defence of coastal areas, levies of adult males were raised by royal commissioners along a coastal zone termed the ‘maritime lands’ (*terre maritime*) usually extending from 6-12 leagues inland (with a league – ‘leuga’ or ‘leuca’ – probably reckoned at one and a half miles), regions which were not precisely charted but were ‘conventionally and traditionally understood’.⁵⁸ The ‘keepers of the maritime lands’ were responsible for arraying men within these coastal areas.⁵⁹ This was military service in the defence of the realm in the most literal sense. Throughout the initial phase of the Hundred Years War, a number of earls were prominent as keepers of the maritime lands in regions in which they had substantial landholdings. As John Alban has suggested, this met the pressure for the keepers to be embedded within local relationships while also ensuring a certain degree of military power stiffened the muster.⁶⁰ Geographically, of course, the coastal regions of Kent were part of an area of particular vulnerability in the thin line of surveillance and defensive manpower which stretched along the southern and eastern coasts of England.⁶¹

A significant number of William Clinton’s extensive manorial holdings were situated near or in the maritime lands: for instance, Preston (east of Canterbury), Westgate (on the coast east of Margate), Ripple (north of Dover), and Ham (south of Sandwich) (Map 1); and we know, for instance, that he was staying at Preston when he left the manor to travel abroad in the king’s service in August 1341.⁶² This proximity, combined with his prior experience in the royal household, made him an obvious choice to be included on commissions of maritime lands and of array in the county. In March 1337, Earl William was one of three magnates appointed to select archers from Kent and to bring them to Winchelsea ready to campaign with the king.⁶³ In June, the system of maritime defence in the coastal shires was mobilised. Clinton’s priorities were now expanded to include the defence of the Kent coast: he was appointed at the head of a commission ‘to keep the ports and coast and the coastal land in Kent and to strongly resist the king’s enemies if they should presume to come ...’.⁶⁴ As was usual, this order had provision for the appointment of deputies: as with many appointments to commissions in the late middle ages, it was often unnecessary for magnates to carry out day-to-day duties in order for their influence to be felt.⁶⁵ There is, however, evidence that Clinton was one of three commissioners who carried out their duties in person by conducting an inspection of ‘watch and ward’, reporting on the numbers of armed men keeping watch at coastal beacon sites.⁶⁶

In 1338, Clinton’s service was again orientated towards the defence of Kent’s coast. This was carried out within a revised administrative system which had been modified in response to a series of French raids and the fear they produced: Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight had been attacked in the spring of 1338, the Channel Islands were occupied, and Southampton would be burned in October.⁶⁷ The crown responded by arranging the English counties into seven large groups,

with overseers of each group appointed to supervise the array.⁶⁸ Archers raised in Hampshire for a proposed expedition to Gascony under Earl William were instead sent to defend the coastline of Norfolk.⁶⁹ Clinton himself was appointed along with John Warenne, Earl of Surrey, as overseer of the counties of Southampton, Berkshire, Wiltshire, Surrey, Sussex, Oxfordshire and Kent ‘to be ready to repel invasions of the French at the request or summons of the keepers of the coast’.⁷⁰ This revised system of keepers and magnate overseers was further modified in August. The earls of Huntingdon and Surrey were joined by the earl of Arundel and entrusted with supervising the defensive arrays of Southampton, Berkshire, Wiltshire, Surrey, Sussex, Oxfordshire and Kent.⁷¹ Unsurprisingly, of these three earls Clinton appears to have taken particular responsibility for Kent: in October 1338, in his position as overseer in the county, he was ordered not to compel the Abbot of Battle to find men-at-arms, since the Abbot claimed these had already been raised.⁷² Clinton’s involvement in array and defence in Kent as facilitated and formalised through such commissions continued for the rest of his life. He headed Kent commissions in 1339, 1344, 1345, 1351 and 1352; and in 1350 he and Bartholomew Burghersh the elder were ordered to take the ports and maritime lands at the mouth of the Thames into their protection because of the threat of piracy.⁷³ Once again, there is evidence to suggest that Earl William took an active part in at least some of these posts. An undated petition to the royal council from the *commune* of Kent, probably datable to the 1340s or 1350s, requested that the earl of Huntingdon be ordered to allow those arrayed for the defence of the maritime lands to go home and rest (a request which was duly accepted).⁷⁴

The frequency of Clinton’s service in guarding Kent’s coasts paralleled his role in the war at sea itself.⁷⁵ Noblemen often served as admirals, since it was a role that depended on authoritative status with the day-to-day tasks usually undertaken by deputy.⁷⁶ Clinton was twice appointed admiral. On 16 July 1333 he was made admiral of the Western Fleet, the portion of England’s fleet containing ships raised from ports between Kent and Cumbria, and remained in this role until January 1335.⁷⁷ While information on his activities as admiral is scarce, it may be that expenses of £40 granted to Clinton in 1337 for the time when he was at sea off Kent and Sussex ‘defending the coast of these places’ relate to his admiralty.⁷⁸ In February 1340, Clinton was appointed as admiral of the vessels of the Cinque Ports gathering at Winchelsea.⁷⁹ Following this, the earl actually implemented comital leadership in the war at sea and sailed to Boulogne with the fleet of the Cinque Ports, after four captured burgesses of the city had been interrogated at Sandwich.⁸⁰ Complete surprise was achieved as the English ships approached under the cover of foggy weather. Although there were casualties on both sides, the men of Boulogne took more losses and Clinton and the portsmen burned around twenty enemy galleys and a number of other vessels before the earl led his ships back to their home ports. This engagement formed a precursor to Clinton’s notable and lauded service at the bloody naval battle of Sluys (24 June), which saw Edward III wounded but victorious.⁸¹ Along with the earls of Derby, Northampton, and Gloucester, Earl William was repeatedly singled out for praise in his martial conduct by contemporary chroniclers.⁸² The poet Laurence Minot lauded the ship commanded by the earl as one of the first to engage the enemy.⁸³ The well-informed writer Adam Murimuth told how one large French ship, the

James of Dieppe, attempted to capture a ship owned by the prior of Canterbury and crewed by men of Sandwich only to be defeated by the Kent portsmen, who were aided in their battle by the earl of Huntingdon.⁸⁴ Such service must have bolstered Clinton's military reputation, for the battle of Sluys was a victory much heralded by the English.⁸⁵ Even in 1847, Sir Nicholas Harris Nicolas proclaimed 'No year was more memorable in the Naval history of England than 1340'.⁸⁶

Clinton had certainly fulfilled a local military role during through the 1330s and 1340s, two decades 'which witnessed the apogee of the involvement of Kent's ship-board community in the wars of the fourteenth century'.⁸⁷ His service in the less glamorous side of warfare represented by defensive commissions and naval battles may not fit our assumptions of the role of an earl at war under Edward III but it does show how local noble status could be integrated with the gritty realities of fourteenth-century warfare. Indeed, the battle of Sluys perhaps comprised the high point of his military career.

An analysis of William Clinton's military retinue allows a welcome shift of focus towards his relationship with the people of Kent themselves. As Andrew Ayton has stressed, armies were social and political organisms and were underpinned by social relationships.⁸⁸ In the world of paid military service becoming the norm in mid fourteenth-century England, magnates acted as 'recruitment hubs' for the service of the lesser gradations of the aristocracy.⁸⁹ This meant that the 'dynamics of recruitment' were intimately tied up in the exercise of noble lordship, for the raising of armies depended to no small extent on noblemen exploiting the reach of the networks inherent in their landholding, personal connections and reputations. In turn, this meant that the military retinues fielded by some of Edward III's great nobles often had a regional flavour to them which corresponded with areas of landholding.⁹⁰ Although the sources for the recreation of military retinues are patchy in the mid fourteenth century, there is enough evidence to reveal something of Kent's contribution to the manpower Clinton was able to muster to accompany him on campaign.⁹¹

As a knight banneret, Clinton had served in the Scottish campaigns of 1333 and the summer of 1335.⁹² It is, however, only in the 1340s that it becomes possible to penetrate beyond the bland veneer of his retinue size as given in army payrolls and establish who some of his men-at-arms actually were. Earl William was one of many members of the titled nobility who landed on the Norman coast on 12 July 1346, at the start of the Crécy-Calais campaign.⁹³ Although he was part of the first stages of this expedition, he returned home to England after the sack of Caen (26 July), bringing with him over 300 prisoners and a widely publicised French invasion plan.⁹⁴ Clinton's return before the battle of Crécy itself (26 August) and before the start of the siege of Calais in September 1346 was, as Edward III stressed in royal letters issued for the earl, due to a 'grave and perilous illness'.⁹⁵ Earl William must, however, have recovered from this illness to a certain extent, since he re-joined his king outside the walls of Calais in April 1347 and was apparently one of a number of prestigious judges who heard disputed claims outside the town under the law of arms.⁹⁶

Thanks to the evidence of protection warrants and enrolled letters of protection, which provided legal security for those travelling abroad in the king's service, the

names of a number of men who probably served in Clinton's retinue at various points across the period 1346-7 can be recovered.⁹⁷ James Hegham, a member of a wealthy Kent gentry family, served with Clinton at this time.⁹⁸ This was his second stint of service with Earl William.⁹⁹ Similarly, two members of the St Laurence family of Kent (John and Thomas) served with Clinton.¹⁰⁰ Other representatives from Kent gentry families who took out protections to serve with Clinton in the years 1345-7 included Robert Cheyne, Sir John Kyriel, who like James Hegham had probably served with Clinton before, John and William Setnautz, and no fewer than three members of the Pecche family (John, a knight, Edmund, and Thomas).¹⁰¹ The presence of numerous Kent figures is confirmed by exonerations made in later years from the military assessment of 1345, which included orders for the sums assessed in Kent to be 'allowed' for William Orlaton and Simon Hanley because they had been in the company of William Clinton, Earl of Huntingdon, in 1346-7.¹⁰² So, although the evidence for Clinton's retinue in 1346-7 is far from complete, the surviving records make it clear that Clinton's status within Kent enabled him to draw on county society in order to field a retinue.

Another snapshot into the service of Kent's military community under the earl of Huntingdon can be seen in 1351, when the earl travelled to Calais for diplomatic negotiations. Such negotiations demanded a measure of pomp and ceremony and it was expected that noblemen would be accompanied by a retinue commensurate with their elevated social status.¹⁰³ Clinton received pay from 11 June 1351 for an initial retinue of himself, three bannerets, nine knights, 88 men-at-arms and 132 archers.¹⁰⁴ The composition of this retinue then fluctuated in size as negotiations continued through the following months until the earl returned to Dover on 29 August. Unusually – and usefully – a list of those men who served with the earl has survived.¹⁰⁵ Two of Earl William's three bannerets – John Kyriel and Roger Northwood – were from established Kent families, and Kyriel was a repeat server. Another Northwood, John, ranked among Clinton's knights, as did Robert Cheyne, Stephen Valoyns and Nicholas Sandwich, who can all be numbered amongst the Kent gentry. Members of the Higham, Culpepper and St Laurence families contributed to the ranks of Clinton's men-at-arms. This, in turn, raises the question of how we should view the relationship between Earl William and the military community of Kent. While it is clear that Clinton's military followers in the mid-1340s and in 1351 contained a strong cohort of men hailing from Kent, it would be precipitate to conclude that Clinton dominated the service patterns of the military community of the region throughout the first phase of the Hundred Years War. He did not serve with the regularity of some of the age's greatest comital campaigners – William Bohun, Earl of Northampton, for instance, or Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick. Nor does the evidence permit us to confirm beyond doubt the presence of a core group of Kent figures who campaigned with the earl on numerous occasions.¹⁰⁶ However, it is possible to conclude that the military community of Kent provided the earl of Huntingdon with a fertile recruiting ground when he needed to raise a full military following and, when combined with his integral role in the defence of the county in commissions and at sea as both warden of the Cinque Ports and admiral of the king's fleets, that the military experience of the inhabitants of Kent in the 1330s, 1340s and early 1350s was tightly bound up with William Clinton's career of military service under Edward III.

William Clinton and the Governance of Kent

Service in war was far from the only duty Edward III expected his nobles to perform. Law and order had deteriorated in the reign of Edward II and one of the major tasks facing his son and successor was the redress of grievances and the reestablishment of judicial and extra-judicial peacekeeping norms.¹⁰⁷ The challenge of securing internal peace faced by Edward III was greater in some parts of his realms than others. The densely populated and – in parts – vibrantly wealthy county of Kent was one of the less stable regions, as had been the case under Edward I and as would be the case in 1381.¹⁰⁸ Unlike most of England, Kent continued to feel the imposition of the general eyre, the traditional juggernaut medium of royal justice, long after it had declined elsewhere, with five visitations ordered under Edward III.¹⁰⁹ The power of the king's nobles as adjuncts to the authority of the crown and its common law had an integral part to play in enabling Edward III to meet the challenge of enforcing order, as Christine Carpenter has shown in a detailed study of Warwickshire.¹¹⁰ What follows will be less detailed but, nonetheless, should demonstrate how the position William Clinton held in local society was used by Edward III to help govern Kent.

On 18 February 1331 Clinton headed a general commission of *oyer and terminer* – to ‘hear and determine’ crimes – appointed to inquire into misdeeds by the king's ministers (but in practice with a more general criminal role) in Kent, Surrey, Sussex, Wiltshire and Southants.¹¹¹ This formed part of a wider series of such commissions which spanned much of England. These were issued across February, March, April, and May, so the commission in which Clinton was involved was one of the earliest. A new commission was issued in May with altered personnel but Clinton still headed this revised group of justices.¹¹² Unfortunately (although not unusually) the roll of cases heard by Clinton has not survived. However, it is clear from the rolls of the court of King's Bench, which heard cases directed to it by allegations of error (such as false indictment), that Clinton and his fellow justices did indeed hear cases. From these entries, we know that Clinton and his fellows had found in the favour of the Prior of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem (seised of various lands and rights in Kent) that John Lyle, then under-sheriff of Kent, had unjustly distrained the priory's livestock.¹¹³ We know, too, that Clinton was charged to inquire into misdeeds committed by a number of men in Edward II's reign and that Hugh Audley, who later shared the parliamentary stage with Clinton on 16 March 1337 as he was made earl of Gloucester, was one of these men and was subject to distraint on the justices' orders.¹¹⁴

The reign of Edward III saw a number of experiments with the mediums of royal justice, in part in response to the increasingly vocal demand for more royal law articulated by the localities. The ‘keepers of the peace’ – *ad hoc* commissioners assigned to particular regions – were increasingly given powers to determine felonies as ‘justices of the peace’, drawn from a combination of local landowners and legal experts.¹¹⁵ This expansion and delegation of the crown's judicial reach in the ‘quarter sessions’ was a process of great long term significance. An important series of peace commissions was issued in February 1332 and was supplemented in March by larger commissions of ‘keepers of the counties’ with orders to ‘arrest all disturbers of the king's peace and to hear and determine the trespasses whereof

they are indicted'.¹¹⁶ William Clinton headed the February commission sent to Kent along with three resident Kent figures in John Cobham, John Segrave, and Thomas Faversham. In the March commission, these men were appointed 'keepers' of the county of Kent along with Geoffrey Say (later constable of Rochester castle from September 1354 to July 1359) and Otto de Grandison. Clinton, then, headed a series of important judicial commissions in Kent in the wake of Edward III's assumption of personal power in 1330 which formed part of the slow and uncertain evolution of local justice.

Clinton's service on Kent commissions continued periodically, perhaps in part because his relative lack of regular campaigning compared to some of Edward III's other earls increased his availability to serve in other areas. In October 1336, after parliament had requested the appointment of royal justices, Clinton headed a general commission of *oyer* and *terminer* sent to Kent.¹¹⁷ And, as with his service on a similar commission in 1331, incidental evidence suggests that Clinton was himself involved in the work of this commission as it unfolded.¹¹⁸ He was not, however, named on the Kent branch of the great *oyer* and *terminer* commissions empowered to enquire into the conduct of the king's ministers in 1341.¹¹⁹ Instead, he was named at the head of the commission assigned to Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Gloucestershire, none of which were areas of particular landed interest for him.¹²⁰ The commission to Kent, Sussex, Southampton and Wiltshire was headed by John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, whose estates were centred in Essex. Generally, it seems that – unusually – an effort was made to divorce some of the noblemen named on the 1341 commissions from their primary geographical areas of interest, presumably to try and ensure that local sympathies and connections did not lessen the impact of the justice Edward III wished to impart.

It was not long, however, before Earl William's presence within Kent was once again being used to support the workings of royal justice. In August 1343, Clinton headed a powerful commission of *oyer* and *terminer* inquiring into felonies and misdemeanours in Kent which included both local potentates and royal judges; and in February 1344 he led another group of local gentry figures and royal justices in an inquiry into allegations that men of Canterbury had raised support in the town and the county more broadly, intimidated jurors and prevented them from appearing before the justices of assize, and committed numerous crimes including murder.¹²¹ The following year, Clinton led two more special commissions inquiring into the rape of Agnes de Charnels at Woolwich and the abduction of Joan, late the wife of Sir Henry Garnet.¹²² Finally, along with his associates John Cobham and Otto de Grandison, Earl William was named at the head of a large peace commission issued in 1351 which had responsibility for hearing cases arising from the implementation of the recent labour legislation enacted in the wake of the Black Death of 1348-9, as well as other cases of felony and trespass.¹²³ These commissions displayed the blend of local influence and judicial expertise characteristic of the changing system of royal justice in the localities which emerged during the fourteenth century.

William Clinton was perhaps the most conspicuous lay magnate appointee to Kent commissions, along with John Cobham. His service in this role suggests that he was, in effect, Edward III's right hand man in Kent, the figure whose power and authority was repeatedly used to try and make the wheels of royal justice turn.

Clinton's landed position in Kent embedded him in the social fabric of the county;

simultaneously, his position in the king's inner circle and on the royal council gave him access to the innermost workings of England's personal monarchy. Clinton could, therefore, span both the 'centre' and the 'localities' and act as an intermediary between regional concerns in Kent and the wishes of Edward III and his council. In 1333, following the death of Stephen Mepham, Archbishop of Canterbury, the county was visited by an eyre.¹²⁴ After the justices in eyre had begun to hear pleas, the *commune* of Kent entered into negotiations for the cessation of the eyre in return for the payment of a collective fine and, after an initial proffer of £500 had been rejected by the king, a compromise of 1,000 marks (£666 13s. 4d.) was agreed at the request of John Stratford, archbishop-elect.¹²⁵ The payment of this was subsequently disputed and the claim of those who consented to the fine to represent the 'community' of Kent contested.¹²⁶ On 18 March 1334, William Clinton was empowered along with William Morant, Ralph Savage and Thomas Faversham to assess and collect the fine after complaints 'that many men of the county refuse to pay their portions of the fine'.¹²⁷ But even Clinton's status within the region was insufficient for the task: in August, Clinton and his fellow collectors were reprimanded for their 'lukewarmness and negligence' in collecting the fine, which the king blamed as much as resistance from the people of Kent, and ordered to compel payments.¹²⁸ Letters dated 1 September doubtless made even more alarming reading: if payment was not made by All Souls (2 November), Clinton and the other collectors would themselves be liable for the 1,000 marks.¹²⁹ Clinton himself – although a favoured royal servant – was thus exposed to the wrath Edward III habitually displayed towards those ministers and officials who he considered to have failed in their duties.

William Clinton's role as an intermediary between Kent society and the Westminster government continued after his elevation to the titled nobility. In 1337, as the diplomatic tension between Edward III and Philip VI deteriorated into war, the English king made every effort to convince his subjects of the righteousness of his cause and by extension of the demands of taxation and supply he heaped upon them. On 28 August, John Stratford, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the earl of Huntingdon – perhaps the king's two most powerful local magnates in Kent – were tasked with conveying the contents of a remarkable *cedula* (schedule) to the clergy and the lay people of the county, to induce them 'to aid the king to the extent of their ability, as it will be necessary to incur great expenses for the public defence (*pro defensione publica*)'.¹³⁰ The French text of this *cedula* contains lengthy justifications setting out Edward III's attempts to avoid war and listing his grievances against Philip VI. This was probably to be communicated to the people of Kent by the archbishop and the earl in English, as Mark Ormrod has suggested.¹³¹ Clinton was therefore placed at the heart of the interface of negotiation and financial supply connecting the people of Kent with their king. An intermediary role was once again his burden to bear after another Kent eyre had been called in 1348.¹³² Once again, this eyre was cancelled in return for a large communal fine. This was the result of negotiations between the community of Kent on the one side and Earl William, Bartholomew Burghersh, the royal chamberlain and warden of the Cinque Ports, and Geoffrey Say on the other.¹³³ These men negotiated with representatives of the community at a 'colloquium' and agreed (*admittatur*) fines of £1,000 payable to the king and 200 marks payable to the eyre

justices and officials. Subsequently, an investigation into payment made in 1349 by the barons of the exchequer found that the sheriff had accounted for £120 of this and that he had distrained lands and chattels in the community to the value of a further £100, while the 200 marks had been portioned out between the king's judges in varying amounts.¹³⁴

These examples show how William Clinton interacted with the inhabitants of Kent on behalf of his king, who used Clinton's local status to make him into a powerbroker between the royal government and local concerns. The weighting of the surviving sources towards the royal archives mean it is easier to uncover Clinton's activity in interactions initiated by the royal government than it is to see him articulate local concerns at 'the centre'. Alongside his role in the negotiations accompanying eyres, we have seen that Clinton filled the post of warden of the Cinque Ports, which acted as a channel of communication between the royal government and the locality. Two further small instances can be used to supplement this picture of a genuine dialogue facilitated by Clinton. The first instance dates to 1347. William Langley, recently sheriff of Kent, had been summoned before the King's Bench to answer an accusation of writ-tampering made by Joan Glover of Godmersham. The king pardoned Langley 'at the special request of William Clinton, earl of Huntingdon, who has testified that the said William [Langley] is guiltless of the fault aforesaid and that Joan was not damaged by reason of the erasure'.¹³⁵ The second instance is a letter from Earl William to the chancellor of England, which cannot be dated precisely but which may date to the early 1350s, requesting a commission of gaol delivery (comprising a group of touring royal justices charged with placing prisoners on trial) for Middleton (Milton) prison.¹³⁶ This was, presumably, a stage in a chain of communication that had originated in Middleton. If this request does date to the 1350s it may even have been successful, since justices of gaol delivery toured Kent in June 1353.¹³⁷

Conclusion

The processes of royal governance in the late middle ages were by necessity processes of mediation. As Gerald Harriss wrote in 1993:

Government was moulded more by pressures from within political society than by the efforts of kings or officials to direct it from above. It was these pressures which shaped the institutions of government, the conventions of governing, and the capacity of kings to govern effectively.¹³⁸

Altogether, an understanding of Clinton's role within the military and governmental life of Kent provides a microcosmic view into the patterns of noble service which were situated within this 'moulding' of government and which helped shape noble life in a period of rapid societal and institutional change. This perspective has something to offer if we return to the questions raised by McFarlane noted at the start of this article, which focused on the relationship between Edward III and his nobles and asked why he endowed them with lands and status. William Clinton's marriage to Juliana Leybourne gave him the resources needed to exert a considerable influence in Kent society. This was, in turn, harnessed by Edward III both before and after Clinton's elevation to the title earl of Huntingdon in 1337. From 1330 to

1343, his role as warden of the Cinque Ports gave him an important part to play as a local provider of law and arbitration and the defender of Dover Castle. His wider actions in the county in defence and governance complemented this role. Clinton was a frequent appointee to defensive commissions in Kent between 1337 and 1352, served in the associated role of admiral and, at his most militarily active period in the 1340s, provided military leadership both to the gentry of Kent and to the mariners of the ports. Paralleling this service in the defence of the county from external foes was Clinton's role on judicial commissions and occasions. This brings out the mediatory nature of Clinton's position as one of Edward III's favoured magnates: his power was imposed by the king's order on sections of Kent society through his heading of judicial inquiries but Clinton also negotiated with the inhabitants of Kent and acted as a channel for their concerns, a dynamic which also characterised his relationship with the Cinque Ports during his wardenship. As a great magnate, Clinton was embedded in both local networks and in the designs of the king and his government, which were in turn enmeshed in local events. Clinton's landed status and, after 1337, his comital title pushed responsibilities onto him. The demands made on William Clinton both by his king and by the people of Kent were real and they were heavy. Both king and community expected the performance of noble service by those who enjoyed the privilege brought by nobility of blood and elevated social gradation. It is within this pressure for service that Clinton's public life must be placed and, in no small part, this life was played out in Kent.

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ENDNOTES

¹ See C. Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages: The Fourteenth-Century Political Community* (London, 1987), pp. 29, 33–46. A useful table of creations and restorations is provided in S.L. Waugh, *England in the Reign of Edward III* (Cambridge, 1991), p. 121.

² D. Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (London, 1992), p. 55.

³ K.B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England: The Ford Lectures for 1953 and Related Studies* (Oxford, 1973), p. 156.

⁴ See, for example, T.F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England*, 6 vols (Manchester, 1920-33), III, pp. 37-8.

⁵ The key work is G.L. Harriss, 'Political Society and the Growth of Government in Late Medieval England', *Past & Present* 138 (1993), pp. 28-57. Also useful is W.M. Ormrod, *Political Life in Medieval England 1300-1450* (Basingstoke, 1995).

⁶ This point is explored in C. Carpenter, 'Bastard Feudalism in England in the Fourteenth Century', in *Kings, Lords and Men in Scotland and Britain, 1300-1625: Essays in Honour of Jenny Wormald*, ed. S. Boardman and J. Goodare (Edinburgh, 2014), pp. 59-92.

⁷ C. Carpenter, *Bastard Feudalism in Fourteenth-Century Warwickshire*, Dugdale Society Occasional Papers, 52 (2016); S. Drake, *Cornwall, Connectivity and Identity in the Fourteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2019). Prior to these works, Nigel Saul had published two pioneering books which spanned the mid fourteenth century: N. Saul, *Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century* (Oxford, 1981); N. Saul, *Scenes from Provincial Life: Knightly*

Families in Sussex, 1280-1400 (Oxford, 1986). The key work on the reign and Edward III himself is W.M. Ormrod, *Edward III* (London, 2011).

⁸ Information on William Clinton and his family can be found in G.E. Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom*, rev. V. Gibbs *et al.*, 13 vols (London, 1910-59), *sub nom.* 'Clinton' and 'Huntingdon, earldom of'.

⁹ Two insightful blog posts on Juliana have been published by Kathryn Warner: http://edwardthesecond.blogspot.com/2007/03/alice-de-toeni-and-juliana-de-leyburne_17.html; <http://edwardthesecond.blogspot.com/2007/06/de-leyburne-and-de-sandwich.html> (both accessed 14/4/2020).

¹⁰ *Reports from the Lords' Committees Touching the Dignity of a Peer of the Realm: With Appendixes*, 5 vols (London, 1829), V, pp. 28-9; *Calendar of Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Edward III*, 16 vols [hereafter CPR] (London, 1891-1916), 1334-1338, p. 415.

¹¹ For this period, see Ormrod, *Edward III*, pp. 186-246.

¹² *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Edward III*, 8 vols (London, 1909-52), X, no. 193. See also *Calendar of Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Edward III*, 14 vols [hereafter CCR] (London, 1896-1913), 1354-1360, pp. 51-3.

¹³ CCR 1327-1330, p. 326.

¹⁴ *Inquisitions and Assessments Relating to Feudal Aids... AD 1284-1431*, 6 vols (London, 1899-1920), III, pp. 20-53. This is noted in P. Fleming, 'The Landed Elite, 1300-1500', in *Later Medieval Kent, 1220-1540*, ed. S. Sweetinburgh (Woodbridge, 2010), pp. 209-33, at p. 215.

¹⁵ L.B. Larking, 'The Inventory of Juliana de Leyborne, Countess of Huntingdon', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, I (1858), pp. 1-8.

¹⁶ For example, K. Fowler, *The King's Lieutenant: Henry of Grosmont, First Duke of Lancaster, 1310-1361* (London, 1969).

¹⁷ W. Dugdale, *The Baronage of England*, 3 vols (London, 1676-7), I, p. 530; W. Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire*, 2 vols (London, 1730), II, pp. 992-3.

¹⁸ McFarlane, *Nobility*, p. 160.

¹⁹ R. Partington, 'The Nature of Noble Service to Edward III', in *Political Society in Later Medieval England: A Festschrift for Christine Carpenter*, ed. B. Thompson and J. Watts (Woodbridge, 2015), pp. 74-92, at p. 89.

²⁰ R. Barber, *Edward III and the Triumph of England: The Battle of Crécy and the Company of the Garter* (London, 2013), p. 303; J. Bothwell, 'Internal Exiles: Exclusion from the Fourteenth-Century English Court and Kingdom', in *Absentee Authority across Medieval Europe*, ed. F. Lachaud and M. Penman (Woodbridge, 2017), pp. 132-152, at pp. 143-4 (for this and the next sentence).

²¹ *Calendar of the Fine Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Edward III*, 5 vols (London, 1913-24) [hereafter CFR], 1327-1337, p. 204.

²² Clinton was to receive £300 yearly for this office: £146 from castle guards, 100 marks (£66 13s. 4d.) from issues of the ports, and £87 6s. 8d. at the exchequer. The exchequer portion was ordered by writs of liberate, which were enrolled on the Liberate rolls (The National Archives UK, C 62). All references to unpublished documents refer to manuscripts held by The National Archives UK.

²³ K.M.E. Murray, *The Constitutional History of the Cinque Ports* (Manchester, 1935), pp. 84-5.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-19.

²⁵ C. Burt, *Edward I and the Governance of England, 1272-1307* (Cambridge, 2013), pp. 104-5. For Pencester's career, see Richard Eales, 'Pencester [Penchester, Peshurst], Sir Stephen of (d. 1298), administrator', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online edn. (Oxford, 2004) (<https://0-www-oxforddnb-com>), *sub nom.* 'Pencester' (accessed 04/04/2020).

²⁶ Burt, *Edward I and the Governance of England*, p. 230.

²⁷ CCR 1330-1333, p. 287.

²⁸ CCR 1330-1333, p. 289.

²⁹ CCR 1330-1333, p. 305.

³⁰ CCR 1330-1333, pp. 303, 318.

³¹ Murray, *Constitutional History of the Cinque Ports*, pp. 132-3, 136-7. Note, however, that the executive role of the deputy is seen by Murray as increasing significantly after the fourteenth century.

³² *CCR 1333-1337*, p. 364.

³³ SC 8/47/2321 (endorsement): petition dated between 1349-54, endorsed with an order for inquiry by 'the Warden of the Cinque Ports or his lieutenant in Winchelsea'.

³⁴ For example, John Culpepper of the local gentry family was Lord William Latimer's deputy in 1374: *CPR 1370-1374*, p. 491.

³⁵ E 403/256, m. 7; E 159/115, rot. 90; E 372/183, rot. 10.

³⁶ *CCR 1337-1339*, pp. 556-7.

³⁷ *CCR 1337-1339*, p. 568.

³⁸ E 159/115, rot. 103; E 404/501/45, 46. It is possible that such payments acted as a guide for the fee of £160 set to support a garrison under Henry VIII: F.W. Hardman, 'Castleguard Service of Dover Castle', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, XLIX (1937), pp. 96-107, at p. 105.

³⁹ *CCR 1339-1341*, pp. 22, 69, 150, 174, 285, 368; E 159/115, rot. 172; E 159/116, rot. 39.

⁴⁰ E 403/340, m. 20.

⁴¹ As appears in the inventory sewn on to his account: E 101/23/32.

⁴² F. Hull, 'The Archival History of the Cinque Ports', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 3 (1965), pp. 15-19, at p. 16 and n. 1.

⁴³ E 101/19/5.

⁴⁴ See D.G. Sylvester, 'Communal Piracy in Medieval England's Cinque Ports', in *Noble Ideals and Bloody Realities*, ed. N. Christie and M. Yazigi (Leiden, 2006), pp. 163-77; T. Heebøll-Holm, *Ports, Piracy, and Maritime War Piracy in the English Channel and the Atlantic, c.1280-c.1330* (Leiden, 2013), pp. 40, 45-7, 49-50, 62-9, 84-9, 195-200; F. Cheyette, 'The Sovereign and the Pirates, 1332', *Speculum*, 45 (1970), pp. 40-68.

⁴⁵ C 47/28/3/43.

⁴⁶ SC 8/74/3672.

⁴⁷ SC 8/74/3672 (endorsement).

⁴⁸ *CPR 1334-1338*, p. 297.

⁴⁹ SC 1/37/64; SC 1/41/165.

⁵⁰ *CPR 1334-1338*, p. 443.

⁵¹ *CCR 1337-1339*, p. 130.

⁵² SC 8/238/11892A for this and the following sentences.

⁵³ SC 8/238/11892B.

⁵⁴ Murray, *Constitutional History of the Cinque Ports*, 73-4, 77-8. A sense of the drama involved in this occasion can be gleaned from J. Lyon, *The History of the Town and Port of Dover and of Dover Castle*, 2 vols (Dover, 1813-14), I, pp. 250-52.

⁵⁵ *CFR 1337-1347*, p. 354; C 62/122, m. 3.

⁵⁶ H.J. Hewitt, *The Organisation of War under Edward III, 1338-1362* (Manchester, 1966).

⁵⁷ A particularly salient contribution on Kent and maritime warfare is A. Ayton and C. Lambert, 'A Maritime Community in War and Peace: Kentish Ports, Ships and Mariners, 1320-1400', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, CXXXIV (2014), pp. 67-103.

⁵⁸ Hewitt, *Organisation of War*, pp. 6-7. For this reckoning of the 'league', see J.B.P. Karslake, 'Further Notes on the Old English Mile', *The Geographical Journal*, 77 (1931), pp. 358-60; F.W. Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond*, new edn (Cambridge, 1987), p. 371.

⁵⁹ The best account of coastal defence is J.R. Alban, 'National Defence in England, 1337-89' (University of Liverpool unpublished PH.D. thesis, 1976). See also J.R. Alban, 'English Coastal Defence: Some Fourteenth-Century Modifications within the System', in *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England*, ed. R. Griffiths (Gloucester, 1981), pp. 57-78.

⁶⁰ Alban, 'National Defence', p. 110.

⁶¹ This subject can be approached through the case studies in R.A.L. Smith, 'Marsh Embankment and Sea Defence in Medieval Kent', *Economic History Review*, 10 (1940), pp. 29-37.

⁶² E 101/311/40. See also e.g. E 40/11734 (16 January 1349); E 40/11954 (30 September 1352). After Clinton's death, Countess Juliana chose Preston as her primary residence.

⁶³ *CCR 1330-1333*, p. 487.

⁶⁴ C 61/49, m. 26 (accessed via <http://www.gasconrolls.org/en/>).

⁶⁵ This seems especially prominent in the fifteenth century: see, for example, J. Ross, *John de Vere, Thirteenth Earl of Oxford (1442-1513): 'The Foremost Man of the Kingdom'* (Woodbridge, 2011), p. 153; P. Maddern, *Violence and Social Order: East Anglia, 1422-1442* (Oxford, 1992), pp. 60-63.

⁶⁶ Printed in T. Hearne, ed., *Textus Roffensis* (Oxford, 1720), pp. 236-42. The author owes his knowledge of this to Alban, 'National Defence', pp. 140, 222.

⁶⁷ J. Sumption, *The Hundred Years War*, 4 vols (London, 1990-2015), I, pp. 226-7, 246-51.

⁶⁸ *CPR 1338-1340*, p. 134; Alban, 'English Coastal Defence', p. 64.

⁶⁹ C 61/50, m. 10.

⁷⁰ *CPR 1338-1340*, p. 134.

⁷¹ *CPR 1338-1340*, pp. 141-2.

⁷² *CCR 1337-1339*, p. 542.

⁷³ T. Rymer, ed., *Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae etc.*, 4 vols in 7 parts (London: Record Commission, 1819-69), II.ii, p. 1071; III.i, pp. 200-1, 217-19; C 76/19, m. 8; C 76/30, m. 4.

⁷⁴ SC 8/207/10318.

⁷⁵ Two key works are C. Lambert, *Shipping the Medieval Military: English Maritime Logistics in the Fourteenth Century* (Woodbridge, 2011); A. Ayton and C. Lambert, 'Navies and Maritime Warfare', in *The Hundred Years War Revisited*, ed. A. Curry (London, 2019), pp. 169-202. G. Cushway, *Edward III and the War at Sea: The English Navy, 1327-1377* (Woodbridge, 2011) should be used with caution.

⁷⁶ For examples of the appointment of deputies, see *CPR 1343-1345*, p. 533; *CPR 1350-1354*, p. 521. See also Cushway, *Edward III and the War at Sea*, pp. 31-2, 104; Lambert, *Shipping the Medieval Military*, p. 29 n. 98.

⁷⁷ *Rotuli Scotiae*, 2 vols (London, 1814-19), I, p. 254.

⁷⁸ *CCR 1337-1339*, p. 47.

⁷⁹ C 76/15, m. 32.

⁸⁰ For this and the following sentences, see *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa*, ed. E.A. Bond, 3 vols (London, 1866-68), III, pp. 43-4; Adam Murimuth, *Continuatio Chronicarum*, ed. E.M. Thompson (London, 1889), pp. 103-4.

⁸¹ See Ormrod, *Edward III*, pp. 221-3.

⁸² For instance, *The Anonimale Chronicle, 1333-1381*, ed. V.H. Galbraith (Manchester, 1927), p. 16; Henry Knighton, *Knighton's Chronicle, 1337-1396*, ed. and trans. G.H. Martin (Oxford, 1995), p. 29; Jean Froissart, *Chroniques*, ed. S. Luce *et al.*, 15 vols (Paris, 1869-1975), II, pp. 37-8.

⁸³ *Political Poems and Songs Relating to English History*, ed. T. Wright, 2 vols (London, 1859-61), I, 70-71.

⁸⁴ Murimuth, *Continuatio Chronicarum*, p. 107. This story was reproduced by Joshua Barnes, *The History of That Most Victorious Monarch Edward III* (Cambridge, 1688), p. 183.

⁸⁵ Ormrod, *Edward III*, pp. 223-4; K. DeVries, 'God, Leadership, Flemings, and Archery: Contemporary Perceptions of Victory and Defeat at the Battle of Sluys, 1340', *American Neptune* 55 (1995), pp. 223-42.

⁸⁶ N.H. Nicolas, *A History of the Royal Navy*, 2 vols (London, 1847), II, p. 44.

⁸⁷ Ayton and Lambert, 'A Maritime Community', p. 93.

⁸⁸ Recently, see A. Ayton, 'The Carlisle Roll of Arms and the Political Fabric of Military Service under Edward III', in *Ruling Fourteenth-Century England: Essays in Honour of Christopher Given-Wilson*, ed. R. Ambühl, J. Bothwell and L. Tompkins (Woodbridge, 2019), pp. 133-62.

⁸⁹ A. Ayton, 'Armies and Military Communities in Fourteenth-Century England', in *Soldiers, Nobles and Gentlemen: Essays in Honour of Maurice Keen*, ed. P. Coss and C. Tyerman (Woodbridge, 2009), pp. 215-39; A. Ayton, 'Military Service and the Dynamics of Recruitment in Fourteenth-Century England', in *The Soldier Experience in the Fourteenth Century*, ed. A. Bell, A. Curry, A. Chapman, A. King and D. Simpkin (Woodbridge, 2011), pp. 9-59.

⁹⁰ For instance, William Bohun, Earl of Northampton, and Essex: A. Ayton, 'The English Army at Crécy', in *The Battle of Crécy, 1346*, ed. A. Ayton and P. Preston (Woodbridge, 2005), pp. 159-251, at pp. 204-11.

⁹¹ A. Ayton, *Knights and Warhorses: Military Service and the English Aristocracy under Edward III* (Woodbridge, 1994) is indispensable.

⁹² *Foedera*, II.ii, pp. 864-5; *Rotuli Scotiae*, I, p. 253.

⁹³ See *The Battle of Crécy, 1346*, ed. Ayton and Preston; Barber, *Edward III and the Triumph of England*.

⁹⁴ Murimuth, *Continuatio Chronicarum*, p. 205; Knighton, *Knighton's Chronicle*, p. 59; Ormrod, *Edward III*, pp. 282-3.

⁹⁵ The text of this letter is given in J. Delpit, ed., *Collection generale des documents francais qui se trouvent en Angleterre* (Paris, 1847), p. 72.

⁹⁶ M. Keen, *Origins of the English Gentleman: Heraldry, Chivalry and Gentility in Medieval England, c.1300-c.1500* (Stroud, 2002), p. 40.

⁹⁷ Letters of protection signify intent to serve in the future, rather than service performed in the past, but should be considered reasonably reliable.

⁹⁸ C 81/1728, no. 111; C 76/22, m. 12.

⁹⁹ C 81/1728, no. 112; C 76/16, m. 13.

¹⁰⁰ C 81/1728, no. 111; C 76/22, m. 12.

¹⁰¹ C 81/1728, nos. 109, 111, 112, 127; C 76/20, m. 18; C 76/22, mm. 12, 13.

¹⁰² E 159/130, *brevia directa baronibus*, Hilary term, rot. 3; E 159/132, *brevia directa baronibus*, Easter term, rot. 3.

¹⁰³ P. Chaplais, *English Diplomatic Practice in the Middle Ages* (London, 2003), p. 179 n. 134.

¹⁰⁴ E 372/196, rot. 41 for this and the following sentence.

¹⁰⁵ E 101/26/16.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. N. Gribit, *Henry of Lancaster's Expedition to Aquitaine, 1345-1346* (Woodbridge, 2016), pp. 218-44.

¹⁰⁷ For recent studies, see C. Burt, 'Local Government in Warwickshire and Worcestershire under Edward II', in *Political Society in Later Medieval England*, ed. Thompson and Watts, pp. 55-73; Drake, *Cornwall, Connectivity and Identity*, pp. 116-34.

¹⁰⁸ Kent is one of three counties integrated into Burt, *Edward I and the Governance of England*. A pioneering account of the 1381 revolt was W.E. Flaherty, 'The Great Rebellion in Kent of 1381 illustrated from the Public Records', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, III (1860), pp. 65-96.

¹⁰⁹ C. Burt, 'The Demise of the General Eyre in the Reign of Edward I', *English Historical Review* [hereafter *EHR*], 120 (2005), pp. 1-14; D. Crook, 'The Later Eyres', *EHR*, 97 (1982), pp. 241-68, at p. 264 n. 1.

¹¹⁰ Carpenter, *Bastard Feudalism in Fourteenth-Century Warwickshire*, pp. 28-58.

¹¹¹ *CPR 1330-1334*, p. 138.

¹¹² *CPR 1330-1334*, p. 139.

¹¹³ KB 27/290, rot. 183, 183d. For other examples, see KB 27/286, rot. 173d; KB 27/290, Rex side, rot. 38. A number of pardons were also issued to those indicted before the justices: *CPR 1330-1334*, pp. 219, 243. For the Order in Kent, see J.F. Wadmore, 'The Knight Hospitallers in Kent', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, XXII (1897), pp. 232-75.

¹¹⁴ KB 27/298, Rex side, rot. 14.

¹¹⁵ A. Verduyn, 'The Politics of Law and Order during the Early Years of Edward III', *EHR* 108 (1993), pp. 842-67; A. Musson, *Public Order and Law Enforcement: The Local Administration of Criminal Justice, 1294-1350* (Woodbridge, 1996); A. Musson and W.M. Ormrod, *The Evolution of English Justice: Law, Politics and Society in the Fourteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 1999), esp. pp. 50-74. A useful synthesis can be found in C. Carpenter, 'War, Government and Governance in England in the Later Middle Ages', in *The Fifteenth Century VII*, ed. L. Clark (Woodbridge, 2007), pp. 1-22, at pp. 16-21.

¹¹⁶ *CPR 1330-1334*, pp. 287, 294. The relationship between these commissions has been revised in Musson, *Public Order and Law Enforcement*, pp. 63-5.

¹¹⁷ *CPR 1334-1338*, pp. 370-1.

¹¹⁸ *CCR 1337-1339*, p. 52

- ¹¹⁹ Ormrod, *Edward III*, pp. 231-3, 240 and studies cited there.
- ¹²⁰ *CPR 1340-1343*, pp. 111-12.
- ¹²¹ *CPR 1343-1345*, pp. 166, 278, 284.
- ¹²² *CPR 1343-1345*, pp. 583, 584.
- ¹²³ *CPR 1350-1354*, p. 85.
- ¹²⁴ Mepham's career has been explored by Roy Martin Haines, whose evaluation of the archbishop can be gleaned from his chosen titles: 'An Innocent Abroad: The Career of Simon Mepham, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1328-33', *EHR*, 112 (1997), pp. 555-96; *Archbishop Simon Mepham, 1328-1333: A Boy Amongst Men* (Bloomington, Indiana, 2012).
- ¹²⁵ JUST 1/389, rot. 1; Crook, 'The Later Eyres', pp. 265-6.
- ¹²⁶ J.G. Edwards, 'Taxation and Consent in the Court of Common Pleas, 1338', *EHR*, 57 (1942), pp. 473-82.
- ¹²⁷ *CFR 1327-1337*, p. 395.
- ¹²⁸ *CFR 1327-1337*, p. 414.
- ¹²⁹ *CFR 1327-1337*, p. 458. In the end, Clinton and Faversham were discharged by a letter of 3 January 1338: E 159/114, rot. 58; allowed in E 372/182, rot. 9.
- ¹³⁰ *Foedera*, II.ii, pp. 994-5 (trans. in *English Historical Documents: IV, 1327-1485*, ed. A.R. Myers (London, 1969), pp. 61-2). See also J.F. Willard, 'Edward III's Negotiations for a Grant in 1337', *EHR*, 21 (1906), pp. 727-31.
- ¹³¹ Ormrod, *Edward III*, p. 193.
- ¹³² JUST 1/393; Crook, 'The Later Eyres', pp. 265-6.
- ¹³³ JUST 1/393, rot. 10d for this and the following sentence.
- ¹³⁴ E 368/121, rot. 50, 50d.
- ¹³⁵ *CPR 1345-1348*, pp. 533-4.
- ¹³⁶ SC 1/41/25.
- ¹³⁷ JUST 3/138.
- ¹³⁸ Harriss, 'Political Society and the Growth of Government', p. 33.