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UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

History

**‘My Well-Beloved Companion’: Men, Women, Marriage and Power in the Earldom
and Duchy of Lancaster, 1265-1399**

by

Rebecca Holdorph

Thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

January 2016

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

ABSTRACT

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‘MY WELL-BELOVED COMPANION’: MEN, WOMEN, MARRIAGE AND POWER IN THE EARLDOM AND DUCHY OF LANCASTER, 1265-1399

Rebecca Elizabeth Holdorph

Contemporary debate about what marriage is and who should be allowed to enter into it is often based in assumptions about ‘traditional’ historical marriage. The study of marriage in the Middle Ages is particularly relevant: this period saw the emergence of the establishment of many marriage patterns that exist today. Scholarly work on marriage in the Middle Ages has generally focused on the middle and lower classes. Where it has examined elite society, previous literature has often focused only on landed wealth and politics as motives for marriage. This thesis addresses this gap. By exploring how one aristocratic family created and experienced marriage across five generations, I provide an in-depth examination of elite marriage in the medieval period. To that end, I have focused on three major questions: why did the elite classes marry? What was marriage like and what defined a ‘successful’ marriage? What were marriage’s legacies, in the short and long term? The earldom and duchy of Lancaster provides a strong case study to use in answering these questions. As some of the most influential figures of their day, members of this family – both men and women – appear frequently in historical records. The duchy’s absorption of the crown following Henry IV’s accession in 1399 has meant that extant documentation in The National Archives is unusually rich. In addition to these records, I have analysed other evidence, including literature, chronicles and material evidence.

I argue that in this family, marriage was a considerably more complicated than is usually appreciated. Motives for marriage extended beyond the acquisition of land or power. They included specific political ambitions, the need to reinforce a weak line of succession, the desire for security, and even love. Most couples had a decent personal relationship, and some developed deep affection for each other. What was perhaps more important, however, were the relationships – with in-laws, step-families, or rulers – that emerged as a result of marriage. These connections were not a mere by-product of marriage, but rather one of its most important functions. Marriages had important legacies. Memorialisation strategies can reflect the quality of a relationship in life, as well as a family’s needs after a spouse’s death. In the longer term, marriage facilitated the creation of networks or claims that could last for generations. This thesis adds new knowledge on the creation and experience of marriage for the elite classes of late medieval England, as well as the public and private lives of those in elite society. By shedding light on marriage’s past, I contribute to understandings of the present and future of this enduring and universal relationship.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I,[please print name]

declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

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I confirm that:

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6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission

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Definitions and Abbreviations

<i>Calendar of Charter Rolls</i>	<i>CCharR</i>
<i>Calendar of Close Rolls</i>	<i>CCR</i>
<i>Calendar of Liberate Rolls</i>	<i>CLR</i>
<i>Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem</i>	<i>CIPM</i>
<i>Calendar of Patent Rolls</i>	<i>CPR</i>
<i>John of Gaunt's Register</i>	<i>JGR</i>
<i>Parliament Rolls of Medieval England</i>	<i>PROME</i>

Introduction

In January 1396, word from Lincolnshire spread throughout England and Europe: John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, had done the unthinkable. He had married his long-time mistress Katherine Swynford, an aging widow of no fortune and dubious reputation, the mother of his four bastard children. The marriage was the most dramatic in a series of marriages made by Gaunt and his predecessors, the earls and dukes of Lancaster, in the late-thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

This project examines the use and experience of marriage in the house of Lancaster from 1265 to 1399, focusing in particular on the motivations for marriage, the relationships produced and the long-term effects of marriage. It sits at the intersection of social and political history, discussing the institution of marriage in a real-world context. An understanding of both the history of marriage – particularly in the medieval period – and of the social and political history of late medieval England is crucial. Members of the house of Lancaster, both men and women, stood at the highest level of society. Their marriages help to illuminate the concerns and reactions of the English political community during this period. At the same time, an examination of marriage in one noble house prompts new questions and reveals new insight into medieval marriage and aristocratic society generally. This study, which examines a sample of twenty-seven marriages covering over a century of English history, also enables a prosopographical approach to broader questions about medieval aristocratic marriage. This introduction considers the history and historiography of marriage before moving on to a discussion of marriage within the house of Lancaster in particular.

Marriage

Marriage is an enigma found in nearly every culture throughout human history, yet anthropologists and historians have found it impossible to agree on one definition that describes marriage in all its iterations. Kinship and marriage remain of ongoing interest in part because they look so different in different cultures at different times. Not all cultures dictate that marriage must exist between only two individuals; indeed, the emphasis on monogamy in the modern West is quite rare. Other aspects of marriage that Western society has accepted as the norm can be different in other cultures. Not all cultures believe marriage must exist between only two partners, between partners of the opposite sex, or even between two living partners. ‘Ghost marriage’, between a living member of one family and a dead member of another, designed to create a bond between families in the absence of marriageable children, has played an important role in some societies.¹ Not all cultures draw what we might consider a clear distinction between a married and unmarried person; in Europe until the eleventh

¹ Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage, a History: From Obedience to Intimacy or How Love Conquered Marriage* (London: Viking, 2005), pp. 27-31.

century, concubines were essentially 'less married' to their partners than wives.² In the Middle Ages, the potentially lengthy journey from betrothal, to marriage, to consummation meant that some found themselves in a liminal state between being unmarried and married for some time. While the idea of degrees of marriage may be difficult for the modern mind to comprehend, the medieval mind allowed for a grey area. Historians examining marriage must remain aware of their own cultural biases when discussing how people of the past approached the creation and dissolution of marriages, as modern notions of marriage are often very different from the historical reality. When approached with these constraints in mind, however, the study of marriage opens new avenues of research and approaches to people and events of the past.

Medieval Marriage

The study of marriage in the Middle Ages is particularly relevant, as this period saw the emergence of ecclesiastical control over marriage and the establishment of many marriage patterns, such as strict expectations of monogamy, that exist today. As Karras points out, modern conflict over marriage broadly breaks down into two camps: those who believe marriage ought to be based on a couple's love and those who see marriage as the creation of a family unit dedicated to creating children. Both of these definitions have their roots in the Middle Ages.³ Most scholarly literature on medieval marriage concentrates on ecclesiastical marriage reforms of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.⁴ This period saw marriage change drastically, as the church sought to 'Christianise' and standardise marriage across Europe. Churchmen argued that marriage ought to be monogamous, indissoluble, freely contracted by the parties being married, exogamous, the only legal space for a sexual relationship, and – most importantly – under ecclesiastical jurisdiction.⁵ By the end of the twelfth century, the church had asserted complete jurisdiction over marriage, connecting it with increasingly strict notions of legitimacy and inheritance.⁶ Only children of a properly married man and woman were considered legitimate, and, crucially, only legitimate children could inherit from their parents. The central focus of marriage had become heirs and inheritance, especially at the top of society. Although these reforms were established by the beginning of the period discussed in this study, it should be borne in mind that they were still relatively new.

Canonists identified three major areas of conflict: the role of consent and consummation in creating a marriage; the need for exogamous marriages; and the indissolubility of a marriage, once formed. Early canonists were clear that marriage ought to be created by free consent of the couple, in accordance

² Jack Goody, *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 75-77.

³ Ruth Mazo Karras, *Unmarriages: Women, Men and Sexual Unions in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, University of Philadelphia Press, 2012), p. 1.

⁴ David d'Avray, *Medieval Marriage: Symbolism and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); David d'Avray, *Papacy, Monarchy and Marriage, 860-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Christopher N. L. Brooke, *The Medieval Idea of Marriage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); James A. Brundage, *Law, Sex, and Christian Society in Medieval Europe* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage, a History*; Georges Duby, *Medieval Marriage: Two Models from Twelfth-Century France*, trans. by Elborg Forster (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); R. H. Helmholz, *Marriage Litigation in Medieval England* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

⁵ Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society*, p. 183.

⁶ Brooke, p. 56.

with Roman law, but they disagreed about the role that consummation played in marriage. In Roman law, free consent was all that was needed for marriage, but could Christian marriage truly be considered complete and valid without consummation?⁷ Great thinkers of the day, including Gratian and Peter Lombard, disagreed, with Gratian arguing that both consummation and consent were necessary and Lombard arguing that only consent was needed to create marriage. The issue was solved in the papal decretal *Veniens ad nos*, which made ‘marriage easier to contract and more difficult to dissolve’.⁸ Pope Alexander III sided with Lombard, declaring that a marriage could be contracted either by present consent (*verba de praesenti*) of two people of legal age (twelve for women, fourteen for men); or by future consent (*verba de futuro*), if this consent was followed at any point by consummation. The church might dissolve a legally contracted marriage under few circumstances. The pope’s ruling did not eliminate conflict, however, and the conflict over consent and consummation continued throughout the period. Critically, Alexander III’s compromise between consent and consummation meant that, while the church disapproved of clandestine marriages (contracted by the couple privately, without witnesses), they could still be valid.⁹ This created the predictable problem that it could be difficult to prove whether or not a marriage had occurred, especially if the couple disagreed.¹⁰

The church took a firmer stance regarding the second conflict, exogamous marriage, insisting, after 1215, that the marriage of any couple related within four degrees was incestuous. The church adopted a broad interpretation of incest: kinship could be created not only by blood relation, but by spiritual relation, for instance through marriage or by becoming a godparent. This was partly born out of worldly interest. The landowning class preferred to marry within their own families, ensuring that property stayed in the family line. Waugh argues that by forbidding consanguineous marriages, the church attempted to create greater diffusion of property and a more even balance of power.¹¹ This concern was more than simply theoretical: the church used its power over marriage to break up consanguineous unions. Regulations on exogamy proved to be a double-edged sword. The nobility were known for manipulating church rules to their own ends, occasionally ‘discovering’ a kinship affinity in order to dissolve marriages that were no longer desirable.¹² More recently, however, d’Avray has pointed to a sharp decline in annulments granted after the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 to argue that after Innocent III’s papacy, the church refused to grant annulments unless there were powerful reasons supported by canon law.¹³

Finally, reformers confronted the question of whether a marriage, once contracted, could later be dissolved. There was genuine concern over whether any human, no matter how powerful, could dissolve a marriage that was understood to have been created by God. Canonists generally agreed that

⁷ Brooke, pp. 128-129.

⁸ Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society*, p. 333; Helmholz, pp. 25-27.

⁹ Brundage, pp. 334-335.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 362

¹¹ Scott. L. Waugh, *The Lordship of England: Royal Wardships and Marriages in English Society and Politics, 1217-1327* (London: Princeton University Press, c.1988), p. 36.

¹² Brundage, pp. 192-193; Duby, pp. 63-65.

¹³ d’Avray, *Papacy, Monarchy and Marriage*, pp. 189-193.

annulments should only be granted under the most serious circumstances, but disagreed about what those circumstances might be. Annulments were distinct from separations, where the couple legally remained married, but no longer lived together. It was most common for marriages to be dissolved on account of one spouse's pre-contract to another person, but other causes, including demonstrated impotence, adultery, or if both partners agreed to enter religious life, could be justification for annulment or separation.¹⁴

The church was particularly keen to prevent couples from 'self-divorcing'. Butler has noted that the ecclesiastical courts were concerned with married couples who failed to cohabit, often ordering them to resume living under the same roof. She argues that couples who separated unofficially without seeking church sanction may have been practising earlier, pre-reform traditions, which explains the church's reaction to what it saw as a threat to its authority in these situations.¹⁵ Some examples of abductions or rapes of married women, like that of Alice de Lacy in 1317, may in fact be cases where women chose to leave their marriages.¹⁶ Butler has suggested that these cases may indicate that while ecclesiastical marriage reform became the legal norm, lay society never quite accepted the new 'rules' for marriage.¹⁷ In studying medieval marriage litigation, Helmholz has noted that the prevalence of 'self-divorce' may demonstrate popular disinclination to accept church control over marriage in practice, even if most accepted that the church controlled marriage in theory.¹⁸ Despite the church's prohibition of divorce, unhappy couples could sometimes end their marriages, either officially or unofficially.

Duby has argued that the reforms brought in by the church were in conflict with aristocratic, secular ideals of marriage. Ecclesiastical emphasis on free consent, exogamous relationships and indissolubility was a threat to aristocratic preferences for arranged marriages, endogamous relationships, and the ability to divorce.¹⁹ Some scholars have argued that Duby presented the two points of view as more opposed than they actually were. Helmholz, for instance, suggests that the two models of marriage coexisted fairly comfortably, and that any real conflict was between the desires of the couple and the desires of their families.²⁰ Nonetheless, Duby's system provides a helpful vantage point in examining medieval marriage. In the high Middle Ages, church leaders were willing to compromise on many issues as long as they kept nominal control. Towards the end of the period, this changed: dispensations were relatively easy to acquire, but as long as the dispensation had been issued appropriately, there was no way of dissolving a properly contracted marriage.²¹ Dispensations could be

¹⁴ Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society*, pp. 201-202; 370-377; 511.

¹⁵ Sara M. Butler, *Language of Abuse: Marital Violence in Later Medieval England* (Boston, MA: Brill, 2007), pp. 120-122.

¹⁶ Caroline Dunn, *Stolen Women in Medieval England: Rape, Abduction, and Adultery, 1100-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 129.

¹⁷ Sara M. Butler, 'Runaway Wives: Husband Desertion in Medieval England', *Journal of Social History*, 40 (2006), 337-359 (p. 352).

¹⁸ Helmholz, *Marriage Litigation*, pp. 25, 75.

¹⁹ Duby, p. 21.

²⁰ R. H. Helmholz, 'Marriage Contracts in Medieval England', in *To Have and to Hold: Marrying and its Documentation in Western Christendom, 400-1600*, ed. by Philip Lyndon Reynolds and John Witte (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 260-286, (pp. 272-273).

²¹ D'Avray, *Papacy, Monarchy and Marriage*, p. 9.

granted for certain consanguineous unions; evidence could be discovered to render an existing marriage invalid. Brooke has suggested that, if there was any change in marriage in this period it was in the *appearance* of regulation, rather than in the way that society formed and maintained marriages.²² D'Avray's recent work, however, argues that the church was less at the mercy of the elite classes than Brooke and others have suggested, positing that the church compromised on the question of consanguinity by issuing more dispensations, but also fewer annulments, no matter how powerful the petitioner.²³ By the middle of the thirteenth century, church reforms were well established, though the ways in which they evolved remained relevant throughout the medieval period.

A final key point about medieval marriage is the separation between love and marriage. Though people have fallen in love and even formed relationships based on love for all of human history, historically, marriage has not been centred on the needs of individuals, but of families, communities and even nations. Marriage, Coontz notes, 'was too vital an economic and social institution to be entered into solely on the basis of something as irrational as love.'²⁴ While love might have been expected to develop along with marriage, in the medieval mind, other commitments – to family, community, or ruler – were expected to take precedence.²⁵ There is a tendency among some scholars to assume that medieval people would have preferred to marry for love, given the opportunity, just as most of us in the West do today.²⁶ The notion that arranged marriages were loveless and somehow 'less than' than modern Western marriages is unrealistic. In all likelihood, the majority of those of an age to be married accepted society's prescriptions for who made a good marriage partner. In a world where love was generally depicted as something that happened outside marriage, or that developed along with marriage, it would never have occurred to most that they might marry for love, much less that they would *prefer* such a match. This was particularly true of the elite classes, who had so much riding on making the 'right' marriages and avoiding the 'wrong' ones.

Aristocratic Marriage

Although the norms that marriage reforms established theoretically applied equally to all, those with political and financial influence found it easier to bend the rules. For those at the highest levels of society, the goals remained the same: keeping property in the family, acquiring political and social power, and ensuring that all children in a family were provided for. As Neal has pointed out, masculine identity was equated with maintenance of property. It was crucial that property inherited or acquired by marriage be appropriately looked after, because this was part of what made a man a man, especially in the elite classes.²⁷

The most important role played by marriage in the Middle Ages was in allowing for the orderly transfer of money, property and social prestige; most scholarly literature discussing aristocratic marriage

²² Brooke, p. 127.

²³ D'Avray, *Papacy, Monarchy and Marriage*, pp. 7-9.

²⁴ Coontz, p. 7.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

²⁶ For a particularly spectacular example of this, see H. R. Lantz, 'Romantic Love in the Pre-Modern Period: A Sociological Commentary', *Journal of Social History* 15 (1982) 349-370.

²⁷ Derek G. Neal, *The Masculine Self in Late Medieval England* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 59.

focuses on these 'practical' considerations. For all social classes, but especially for the landed classes, property was the driving force behind marriage. In medieval England, two conflicting customs evolved among the landowning class. First, the eldest male son inherited the bulk of a landed estate whenever possible. Second, other family members – younger sons and daughters – were also given lands, often those acquired during the holder's lifetime or by marriage. As a result, accumulated estates rarely passed intact from one generation to another. In the absence of a male heir, an estate could be inherited by a daughter, which probably occurred about 20% of the time. If there was more than one daughter, the estate would be split between all the daughters as co-heiresses, leading to more dramatic fracturing of a patrimony.²⁸ In England, when a married woman inherited property, her husband received a life interest in it. A medieval landowner faced the challenge of adding to his landed wealth while preventing as much fragmentation as possible, ideally by producing a male heir to inherit a reasonably intact estate. Family obligations were not the only sources of eroding patrimony, however, as debt, forfeiture, and other factors could lead to a considerable reduction in an estate.²⁹

Three key strategies emerged to counteract this eroding effect: patronage, the purchase of land and, most significantly, marriage. Many marriages were arranged with the goal of acquiring or protecting land in mind, especially among those with large territorial interests. Since the nobility, with few exceptions, only married within their own social group, what emerged was 'a consanguineous group through which claims to inheritance, property, and lordship were widely diffused'.³⁰ Patrimonies might fragment through devolving inheritance, but usually only within this relatively small group. Moreover, bearing in mind the unpredictability of inheritance, there was every chance that two pieces of the patrimony, separated in one generation, might be reunited in future generations.³¹ Waugh describes landed wealth as 'a mosaic of relatively stable patrimonial centres... between which drifted parcels of land acquired by marriage, lease, or grant'.³² In light of this concern about patrimony, the marriage of heiresses became a serious business. Scholars have noted how heiresses, women who would receive a significant portion or perhaps even the entirety of their fathers' estates, made ideal wives for younger sons. Such a marriage ensured that the original patrimony would remain unbroken and distinct, while also providing for the son without too much burden on his father.³³

In addition to marrying an heiress, marriage to a widow could also be a lucrative – and easy – means for a man to acquire wealth and status. Dower, the one-third of her former husband's property to which a wife was legally entitled after his death, and jointure, the lands which a husband and wife held jointly, remained a widow's for life.³⁴ A woman who had made several marriages and accumulated multiple dowers and jointures was a particularly good catch, especially if she had already demonstrated

²⁸ Waugh, pp. 15, 18.

²⁹ Ibid, p. 27.

³⁰ Waugh, *The Lordship of England*, p. 38; J. H. Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History*, 3rd edn (London: Butterworths, 1990), pp. 308-312.

³¹ Waugh, *The Lordship of England*, p. 38.

³² Ibid., p. 34.

³³ S. J. Payling, 'The Economics of Marriage in Late Medieval England: The Marriage of Heiresses', *Economic History Review* 54 (2001), 413-429 (pp. 417-418); Duby, pp. 10-11; Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility*, p. 9.

³⁴ Waugh, *The Lordship of England*, p. 47.

her fertility by bearing children. Widows were more likely to have a say in their remarriage than never-married women, as evidenced by the fact that many women remarried to less wealthy men, often those who had served in their late husbands' households. For some, widowhood provided more independence and financial security than they had ever experienced previously. Ward has pointed out that between jointures and dowers, widows could end up controlling a substantial portion of a family's assets for decades after their husbands' deaths, which, while detrimental to the heir's prospects, gave the widow authority and autonomy.³⁵ More recently, however, Dunn has demonstrated that rhetoric surrounding widows' privileged status can be misleading. Their position as desirable marriage partners made widowed women more vulnerable to abduction, rape, and forced marriage.³⁶ Political conflict could also cast a widow's position into doubt; although inheritance and jointure were theoretically protected in the case of a husband's treason, they could still be vulnerable. Ward, however, argues that women who suffered during political crisis often found it relatively easy to recoup their losses when the situation stabilised.³⁷

Political and social considerations were another key motivation in the selection of a marriage partner for the medieval aristocracy. Goody has argued that developing a web of in-laws was one of the most important factors in medieval marriage.³⁸ Payling has noted that marriage to an heiress, for instance, was about more than just money; in a financial emergency, lands could be sold for better profit. Connections between families were just as important.³⁹ Marriages to members of established powerful families, political up-and-comers, and with families with adjoining lands might all be particularly sought-after. Schutt argues that elite children were largely socialised to agree with these goals and there was generally little conflict within the family.⁴⁰ The church's strict rules on consanguineous marriage, which prohibited marriage within four degrees of kinship, placed stringent restrictions upon the pool of available marriage partners. In cases of second marriages, the impediments created by the first marriage made the pool even smaller, forcing people to look further afield and, in some cases, creating valuable connections between new families.⁴¹ Although papal dispensations often allowed couples to marry within the forbidden degrees, these were not assured, and the family still had to have the wherewithal to acquire a dispensation. Political, as well as financial, factors might affect a family's ability to acquire a dispensation. In the 1360s, Edward III negotiated a marriage agreement between his son, Edmund of Langley, and Margaret, heiress of Flanders. Charles V of France intervened with the papacy and the pope refused the necessary dispensation. At the highest levels of society, marriages could affect national and international politics, and could be made with the goal of sealing alliances or preventing war; these were crucial considerations when a family planned its marriage strategy. Longterm consequences, however, were unpredictable; the marriage between Edward II of England

³⁵ Jennifer C. Ward, *English Noblenwomen in the Later Middle Ages* (London: Longman, 1992), pp. 25-27, 33-41.

³⁶ Dunn, *Stolen Women*, pp. 87-89.

³⁷ Ward, *English Noblenwomen*, pp.45-48

³⁸ Goody, p. 57.

³⁹ Payling, p. 416

⁴⁰ Kimberly Schutt, *Women, Rank and Marriage in the British Aristocracy, 1485-2000: An Open Elite?* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 2.

⁴¹ Waugh, *The Lordship of England*, p. 47.

and Isabella of France, undertaken at a time when there were several direct male heirs to the French throne, was intended to ensure peace, but instead ended up creating an impetus for the Hundred Years War.

As Karras notes, the line between 'married' and 'single' in the Middle Ages can seem blurred from a modern perspective.⁴² Negotiations for an aristocratic or royal marriage might begin as soon as a child was born and drag on for years. Marriage agreements could be complicated documents, but usually dictated the amount of dowry (money paid by the bride's family to the groom's), dower (the one-third of a husband's property to which a widow was entitled for life) and jointure (the property or money settled on bride and groom jointly for life). Once the marriage had been agreed, the marriage or betrothal (if the couple were underage), with the exchange of vows for the present or the future, could take place. A betrothal could be 'upgraded' to marriage either by the giving of present consent once the couple came of age or by sexual consummation. Although canon law clearly explained the distinction between betrothal and marriage, this distinction was not always as clear in lay society. In many cases, documents refer to a 'marriage' between a couple too young to be fully married, who must have legally been only betrothed. Even legal documents might refer to either a marriage or betrothal as a *sponsalia*, creating confusion for the modern reader. Alternatively, a couple might be fully married, having exchanged present consent, but not reside together or have consummated the marriage. Both these cases arise in this thesis, though the former is more common.

Practical considerations were central to arranging medieval marriages, and evidence for these considerations is certainly the easiest to find. As Herlihy has argued, however, the modern tendency to see medieval family relationships as cold or unfeeling masks the reality.⁴³ Rosenthal has demonstrated that there are a number of elite marriages in the Middle Ages for which our only explanation is that the marriage was a 'love match'.⁴⁴ Landed or political interests might have usually been the emphasis in marriage, but some couples made marriages for other reasons, including love. Nonetheless, such examples should be approached cautiously. The absence of an obvious political, financial, or territorial motive for marriage does not make the marriage a love match; searching for the hidden motives behind unusual aristocratic marriages can be particularly illuminating. Too often, scholars see motives in marriage as an 'either-or' proposition, assuming the motives must have been either material or love. However, these motivations were complex and numerous; matches seemingly made on practical grounds may have been backed up by ties of friendship between the families or affection between the couple. Studies of individual marriages or groups of marriages can reveal the complexity of connections, motivations and relationships created by marriage among the aristocracy in the Middle Ages.

⁴² Karras, *Unmarriages*, p. 2.

⁴³ David Herlihy, *Medieval Households* (London: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 112.

⁴⁴ Joel T. Rosenthal, 'Aristocratic Marriage and the English Peerage, 1350-1500: Social Institution and Personal Bond', *Journal of Medieval History*, 10 (1984), 181-194, (pp. 182-186).

The House of Lancaster

While much has been written about medieval marriage, in both the aristocracy and the lower classes, this thesis presents the first in-depth study of how one aristocratic house used and experienced marriage. Scholars have acknowledged marriage's role in creating the immense patrimony that launched and then sustained the earls and dukes of Lancaster as the most powerful magnates in the late English Middle Ages, but have not generally discussed marriages themselves in depth.⁴⁵ The limited work on women of the house of Lancaster has tended to focus more on women's personal experiences of marriage.⁴⁶ Thus men's interests in marriage are considered in terms of land and politics, and women's in terms of emotions, a gendered approach which leaves many stones unturned. This study aims to examine both the 'practical' and 'personal' for men and women equally, specifically examining motivations that prompted these marriages, the relationships produced, and the long-term results of the marriages in terms of family strategy and identity.

Outline

The house of Lancaster is particularly well suited for a study of this nature as it is contained to a relatively manageable time period, from 1265, when Edmund, first earl of Lancaster was granted the earldom of Leicester, to 1399, when Henry of Bolingbroke deposed Richard II. Several international marriages enable a comparison of domestic and international marriage strategies (though I only examine international marriages *into* the house of Lancaster, rather than out of it, in depth). Henry IV's accession and the duchy of Lancaster's subsequent absorption into the crown have meant that extant documentation in The National Archives is unusually rich. To that end, evidence from that archive repository has formed the backbone of my archival research. Where possible, however, I have included other evidence, including literature and physical evidence such as tombs, in order to create a more well-rounded study. This project takes a chronological approach, studying the marriages of each of the earls and dukes of Lancaster in turn. Where one generation produced a number of children, I have chosen several case studies to examine in more detail. This allows an exploration of the family's

⁴⁵ See Sydney Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt, King of Castile and Leon, Duke of Aquitaine and Lancaster, Earl of Derby, Lincoln and Leicester, Seneschal of England* (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1904); Anthony Goodman, *John of Gaunt: The Exercise of Princely Power in Fourteenth-Century Europe* (Harlow: Longman Group UK, 1992); Kenneth Fowler, *The King's Lieutenant: Henry of Grosmont, First Duke of Lancaster, 1310-1361* (Elek, 1969); John Kirby, *Henry IV of England* (London: Constable, 1970); John Robert Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster, 1307-1322: A Study in the Reign of Edward II* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970); Walter E. Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster', *English Historical Review* 10 (1895), 19-40; Walter E. Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster (Continued)', *English Historical Review*, 10 (1895), 209-237; Robert Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster* (London: The Chancellor and Council of the Duchy of Lancaster, 1953).

⁴⁶ See Marjorie Anderson, 'Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster', *Modern Philology* 45 (1948), 152-159; Raquel García Arancón, 'La "Otra" Blanca de Navarra, Una Reina Entre Tres Reinos', *Príncipe de Viana* 75 (2014), 113-130; Theodore Evergates, 'Aristocratic Women in the County of Champagne', in *Aristocratic Women in Medieval France*, ed. by Theodore Evergates (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 74-110; Jeannette Lucaft, *Katherine Swynford: The History of a Medieval Mistress*, 2nd edn, (Stroud: The History Press, 2010); Linda E. Mitchell, *Portraits of Medieval Women: Family, Marriage and Social Relationships in England, 1225-1350* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); B. Verity, 'The First English Duchess: Isabella of Beaumont, Duchess of Lancaster (c.1318-c.1359)' *Foundations* (2004), 307-323; Elena Woodacre, *The Queens Regnant of Navarre: Succession, Politics, and Partnership, 1274-1512* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

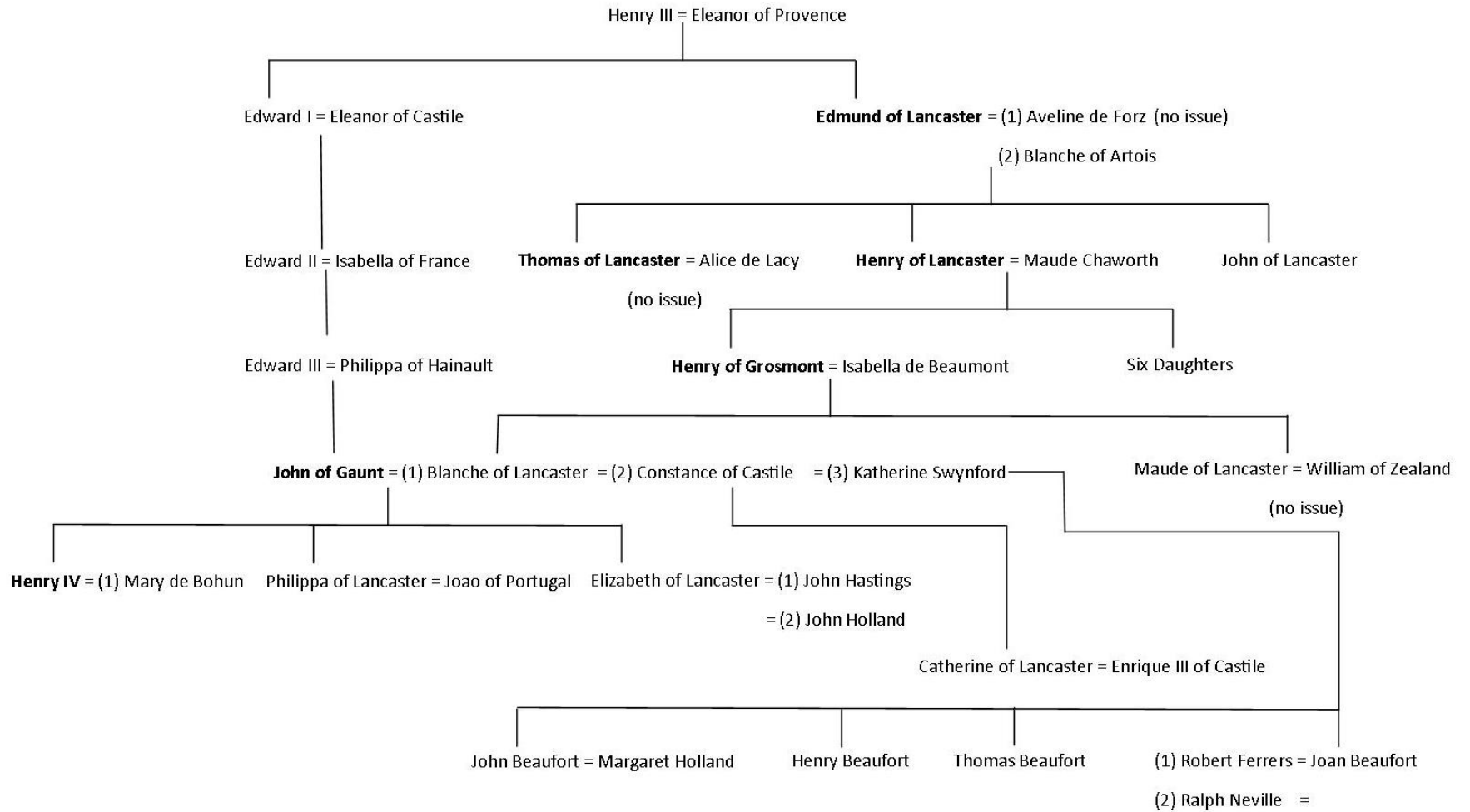


Figure 1 House of Lancaster descent

political and financial goals in marrying younger sons and daughters, as well as treating women's marriages equally to men's. The discussion of each marriage follows a similar pattern, examining the motives for marriage, relationships produced by marriage, and long-term effects of marriage in turn. Naturally, variations in documentary survival rates have meant that different elements receive different emphasis in each section.

This study will begin by studying the impact of Edmund of Lancaster's marriage to Blanche of Artois and move on to examine Thomas of Lancaster's tempestuous marriage to Alice de Lacy. I will then approach the marriages of Henry of Lancaster, as well as Henry of Grosmont and his six sisters, and discuss the web of interfamilial relationships created. The study will then examine the three marriages of John of Gaunt before moving on to study the last generation of Lancastrians before the succession of Henry IV, examining Bolingbroke's marriage to Mary de Bohun as well as touching briefly on his siblings' marriages. Although I focus on only twelve of the marriages in depth, I also analyse patterns in the entire group – for instance looking at the average first ages for marriage – to draw conclusions about aristocratic marriages in general. This research tests accepted conclusions about aristocratic marriage in the Middle Ages and notes the ways in which an examination of individual marriages can shed light on new aspects of medieval marriage more broadly. At the same time, it sheds light on themes – political life, gender and others – that are peripheral to marriage, further illuminating this crucial period in medieval history.

Chronology

Edmund of Lancaster first married in 1269, when he was twenty-four. His ten-year-old bride Aveline de Forz was the sole heiress of her mother, Isabella de Redvers, lady of the Isle of Wight and *suo jure* countess of Devon, and her father William de Forz, earl of Aumale. The marriage would have eventually brought Edmund the earldoms of Devon and Aumale and the lordship of the Isle of Wight, had Aveline not died childless in 1274, aged only fifteen. In 1276, Edmund remarried, this time to twenty-eight-year-old Blanche of Artois, the widowed queen of Henry I of Navarre. The marriage brought him territorial interests and allies on the Continent. Blanche and Edmund had three sons, Thomas, Henry and John. Blanche was frequently involved in managing the Lancastrian estates, as Edmund was often abroad. After his death in 1296, she retired to France, where she died in 1302. The earldom passed to Edmund and Blanche's eldest son and heir, Thomas of Lancaster, who had married Alice de Lacy, heiress of the earldoms of Lincoln and Salisbury, in 1294. Thomas played a leading, and sometimes very solitary, role as a member of the opposition to Edward II. Their childless and by all accounts unhappy marriage ended in 1322 with Thomas's execution for treason. After Thomas's death Alice remarried twice. Her life did not lack in drama; in 1316 she was abducted by John de Warenne, earl of Surrey, who may have been acting on orders from Edward II.⁴⁷ In 1336, Alice was abducted by Hugh de Frene, whom she married. Both abductions have been surrounded with some debate as to

⁴⁷ Mitchell, pp. 111-113.

Alice's complicity. Alice's life provides a case study of the potential benefits and potential dangers of aristocratic widowhood, as discussed in Chapter One.

Chapter Two concerns Thomas's younger brother Henry and Henry's children. Henry of Lancaster married Maud Chaworth, sole heiress of her father Patrick of Chaworth, by 1297, when he was about seventeen and Maud fifteen. The pair had six surviving daughters and one son, Henry of Grosmont; through the marriages of these children the house of Lancaster expanded its influence and connections. Henry was a central member of the opposition to Isabella of France and Roger Mortimer, for which he was rewarded by Edward III throughout the 1330s and 1340s. Maud died in 1322 and Henry survived her by twenty-three years, but never remarried, despite having only one male heir, which may indicate that the pair had a particularly loving marriage. Henry's only son, Henry of Grosmont, married Isabella de Beaumont, a younger daughter of Henry de Beaumont, in 1330, when he was twenty and she only ten years old. Henry and Isabella had two daughters, Maud and Blanche. Through his skill on the battlefield and loyalty to Edward III, Grosmont reaffirmed the valuable connections between the duchy and the throne, for which he was rewarded when his daughter Blanche married the third son of Edward III, John of Gaunt.

The third chapter concerns John of Gaunt's marriages. Blanche of Lancaster married John of Gaunt in 1359, when Blanche was about fifteen and Gaunt nineteen. Blanche's inheritance from her father, Henry of Grosmont, was split with her sister and co-heiress, Maud, upon Grosmont's death in 1361; however, Maud's timely death a year later left Blanche and John with the entire inheritance. The marriage returned the earldoms of Lancaster and Leicester to the main royal line. The pair had three children: Philippa of Lancaster, Elizabeth of Lancaster, and Henry of Bolingbroke, who in 1399 became king of England. Gaunt mourned Blanche's early death in 1368 for the rest of his life. In 1371, Gaunt, then thirty-one, remarried to seventeen-year-old Constance of Castile, a claimant to the thrones of Castile and León. Though he spent much of their two-decade marriage pursuing the Castilian throne in his wife's right, Gaunt was not successful. They had only one daughter, Catherine of Lancaster, who in 1388 settled the question of the Castilian succession by marrying Enrique Trastámara, son of Juan I of Castile. After Constance's death, Gaunt, then in his fifties, married a third time, to his long-time mistress Katherine Swynford, by whom he had already had three sons and a daughter, the Beauforts. John of Gaunt's three marriages expanded the influence of the duchy across Europe, and with the accession of his son, Henry of Bolingbroke, as Henry IV in 1399, the house of Lancaster merged with the crown.

Chapter Four discusses Bolingbroke's own first marriage to Mary de Bohun, one of the heiresses to Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford, Essex and Northampton, which added yet more to the Lancastrian inheritance. Mary's older sister, Eleanor de Bohun had married Bolingbroke's uncle Thomas of Woodstock – splitting the girls' inheritance may have led to a quarrel between Henry and Thomas. Henry and Mary married in 1381, when he was fourteen and she twelve or thirteen; they may have had a short-lived son in 1382. They had no more children for four years, but eventually had four sons, including the future Henry V, and two daughters. Mary died in 1394 from complications related

to the birth of their youngest daughter, Philippa, and so never lived to see her husband become king. Henry did not remarry until his 1403 union with Joan of Navarre, after his accession.

Questions

Research has already addressed the role of marriage in expanding the house of Lancaster's territorial interests, but by closely examining the family's marriages this study aims to illuminate other aspects of marriage and aristocratic society in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.⁴⁸ A look into individual relationships can help expand understanding of the 'personal' side of medieval marriage. Each marriage provides insight into the politics and culture of thirteenth and fourteenth-century England, raising questions and challenging assumptions about why the upper class married. To that end, this study will focus on three central themes: the motivations for marriage; the relationships created in a marriage; and the short- and long-term results of a marriage.

Scholarly work has often presented motivations for aristocratic marriage as straightforward: political and financial gain or, in rare cases, love.⁴⁹ In some cases they *were* straightforward, but scholarship has generally failed to appreciate how involved the motivations for marriage could be. Because the effects of marriage could be so far-reaching and unpredictable, those arranging them had to take many factors into consideration. The reasons that all parties involved, including the families of both partners, the partners themselves, and the political community and crown, had for creating – or sometimes preventing – a marriage could be complicated in the extreme. An in-depth understanding of the contemporary political and social situation can shed light on these motivations. Likewise, an understanding of motivations can shed light on how individuals understood their position in contemporary aristocratic society, as well as how they understood and reacted to the events of their time.

The second theme of this study, relationships produced by marriage, represents a fairly large gap in knowledge. Marriage at this level of society created a complex web of relationship. Most central to this was the primary relationship created between the married couple. As discussed above, however, it has been suggested that a major motivation in medieval marriage was the acquisition of in-laws, and thus the relationships between the couple and their in-laws will be examined as well. In aristocratic society, marriages could send reverberations throughout the entire social group and affect the crown and

⁴⁸ Anderson, 'Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster'; Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt*; Fowler, *The King's Lieutenant*; George Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility in Fourteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957); Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster (Continued)'; P.E. Russell, *The English Intervention in Spain and Portugal in the time of Edward III and Richard II* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955); Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*; Malcolm Vale, *The Angevin Legacy and the Hundred Years War, 1250-1340* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); Woodacre, *The Queens Regnant of Navarre*.

⁴⁹ Duby, *Medieval Marriage*, pp. 10-11; Chris Given-Wilson, *The English Nobility in the Late Middle Ages: The Fourteenth-Century Political Community* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), pp. 10-11; Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility*, pp. 7-35; K. B. McFarlane, *The Nobility of Later Medieval England: The Ford Lectures of 1953 and Related Studies* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), pp. 10-11; Payling, 'The Economics of Marriage'; Somerville, pp. 12, 18-19, 26, 33-35, 49-51, 67-68; Waugh, *The Lordship of England*, pp. 32-34; Charles R. Young, *The Making of the Neville Family: 1166-1400* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1996), pp. 43-44.

Some more recent work (particularly Spencer's research on Edward I and his earls) has done a much better job of incorporating a discussion of marriage into that on the wider political climate.

international community as well. This will also be examined. This study, then, seeks to explore both the nature of the relationships formed by Lancastrian marriages and the effects that these relationships had on the Lancastrian patrimony and on English society. That these relationships would have naturally evolved over the years of marriage is crucial to understanding relationships.

Another advantage of a study of this nature is the ability to chart a marriage's legacy across generations. Some legacies – for instance, the acquisition of lands that have remained part of the duchy to this day – are obvious, but others are less readily apparent. In some instances, marriages created alliances that stretched across several generations. Other instances suggest evidence of marriages created as a reward for past service or a reflection of a personal relationship between the duke or earl and members of his household. This study will allow an exploration into the 'ripple effect' created by Lancastrian marriages within individual families, in the duchy as a whole, and in England and Europe.

Specific research questions will examine the motivations behind each of the marriages. Were the motivations practical, driven by personal considerations, or both? Is there evidence of a long-term family strategy being played out? Whose needs was the marriage meant to meet – the bride and groom to-be, their parents, the crown, the international community? The relationships created by the marriage will also be discussed. What does surviving evidence suggest about the personal relationship between the married couple, and between their families? What might any public manifestations of the marriage – ceremonies, celebrations, or memorials – suggest about the image the couple hoped to project? I will also examine the long-term effects of the marriages. Did any marriages establish or reflect an on-going relationship between two families? Is there evidence of family strategy played out across generations? What role did marriage play in the creation or transmission of a uniquely 'Lancastrian' family identity? What, in essence, did it mean to be someone's 'well-beloved companion' in late medieval England?

Appendix A: Lancastrian Marriages, 1265-1399

Marriages in the main line of succession

Husband	Age at Marriage	Wife	Age at Marriage	Surviving Issue	Result	Burial
Edmund Crouchback	24	Aveline de Forz	10	None	Aveline pre-deceased Edmund in 1274	Both buried in Westminster, near each other
Edmund Crouchback	31	Blanche of Artois	28	3 sons	Edmund pre-deceased Blanche in 1296	Blanche buried at Cordeliers, Paris
Thomas of Lancaster	16	Alice de Lacy	12	None	Thomas executed in 1322	Thomas at the priory (?) in Pontefract Alice buried at Barling Abbey, next to her second husband
Henry of Lancaster	16-17	Maud Chaworth	15	6 daughters 1 son	Maud pre-deceased Henry in 1322; he remained unmarried for the next 23 years	Henry buried in St Mary Newarke, Leicester Maud buried Mottisfont Priory, Hampshire
Henry of Grosmont	20	Isabella de Beaumont	10	2 daughters	Both died of plague in early 1361	Both buried in St Mary Newarke, Leicester
John of Gaunt	19	Blanche of Lancaster	14-16	2 daughters 1 son	Blanche pre-deceased John in 1368	Together, in St Paul's, London

John of Gaunt	31	Constance of Castile	17	1 daughter	Constance pre-deceased John in 1394	Constance buried in St Mary Newarke, Leicester
John of Gaunt	56	Katherine Swynford	c. 46	1 daughter 3 sons	John pre-deceased Katherine in 1399	Katherine buried in Lincoln Cathedral
Henry of Bolingbroke	14	Mary de Bohun	12-13	2 daughters 4 sons	Mary pre-deceased Henry in 1394	Mary buried in St Mary Newarke, Leicester Henry buried in Canterbury Cathedral next to his second wife

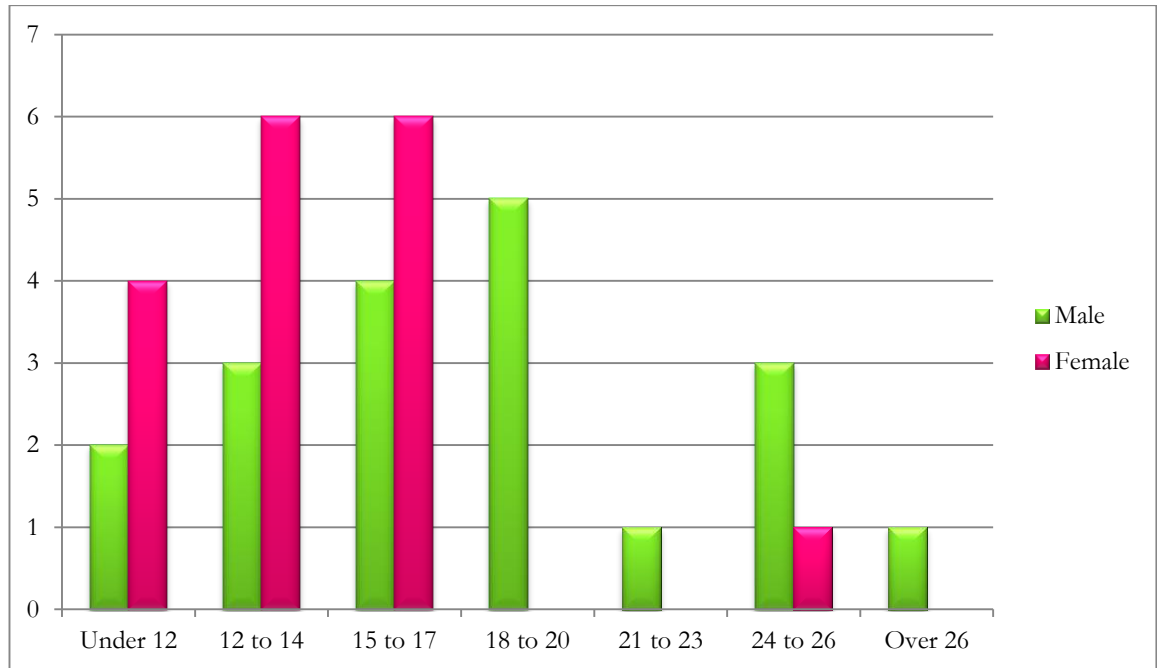
Appendix B: Marriages of other children (Lancastrian children in italics)

Husband	Age at Marriage	Wife	Age at Marriage	Surviving Issue	Result	Burial
<i>Children of Edmund Crouchback</i>						
<i>John of Lancaster</i>	c. 26	Alix de Joinville	? (at least 17)	None	John died in 1317	Unknown
<i>Children of Henry of Lancaster</i>						
Thomas Wake, (a ward of Henry of Lancaster)	18	<i>Blanche of Lancaster</i>	c. 11	None	Thomas died in 1349; Blanche remained unmarried until her death, c. 1380	Thomas: Haltemprice Priory, Yorkshire Blanche: Stamford, Lincolnshire
William de Burgh, (a ward of Henry of Lancaster)	15	<i>Maud (Matilda) of Lancaster</i>	c. 17	1 daughter	William was murdered in 1333	William ? Maud: With second husband

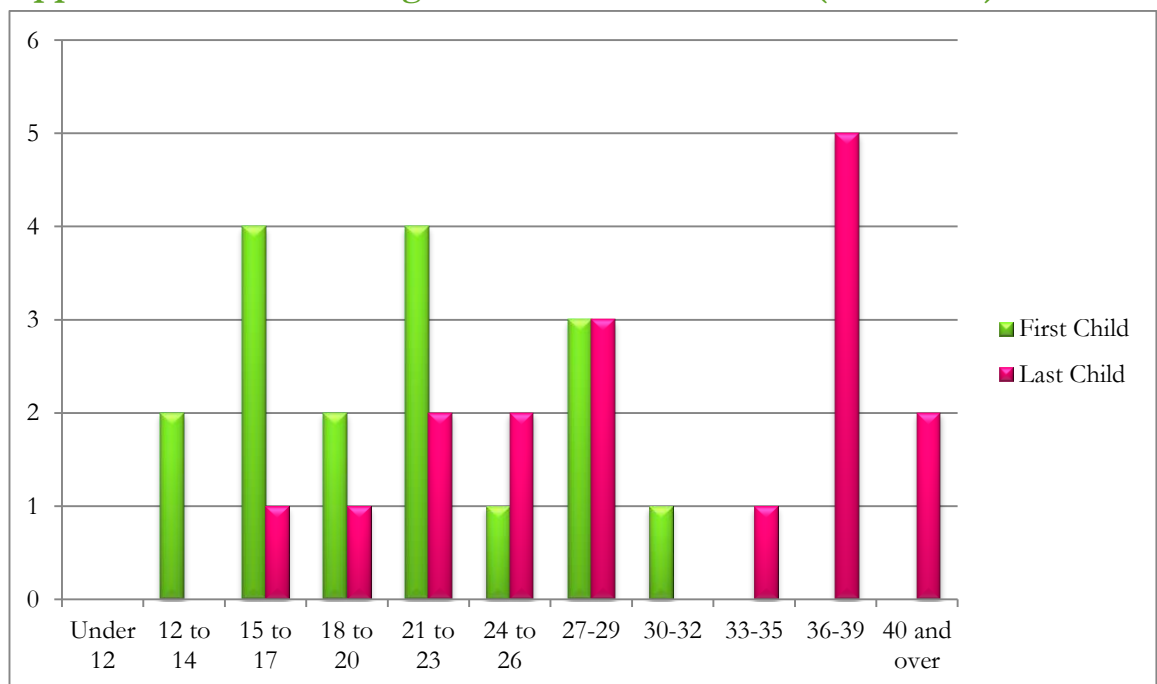
Ralph Ufford	Less than 44	<i>Maud (Matilda) of Lancaster</i>	c. 33	1 daughter	Ralph pre-deceased Maud in 1346	Both in Campsey Ash, Suffolk
John de Mowbray (marriage given to Henry of Lancaster)	17	<i>Joan of Lancaster</i>		2 daughters 1 son	Joan pre-deceased John by 1344	John: Bedford Joan ?
<i>Isabel of Lancaster</i>	Prioress of Amesbury					? (Amesbury Priory?)
John de Beamont	12	<i>Eleanor of Lancaster</i> (1318-1372)	12	1 daughter 1 son	John died in a tournament in 1342	
Richard FitzAlan	38 (second marriage)	<i>Eleanor of Lancaster</i>	26	4 daughters 3 sons	Eleanor pre-deceased Richard in 1372	Together, in Chichester Cathedral
Henry de Percy (1321-1368)	13	<i>Mary of Lancaster</i> (1320-1362)	14	2 daughters 2 sons	Mary pre-deceased Henry in 1362	Together, in Alnwick Abbey, Northumberland
<i>Children of Henry of Grosmont</i>						
William of Zealand	22	<i>Maud of Lancaster</i> (1341-1362)	11	None	Maud pre-deceased William in 1362	Maud: St Mary Newarke, Leicester (?)
John of Gaunt	19	<i>Blanche of Lancaster</i>	14-16	2 daughters 1 son	Blanche pre-deceased John in 1368	Together, in St Paul's, London
<i>Children of John of Gaunt</i>						
Joao of Portugal	27	<i>Philippa of Lancaster</i>	26	1 daughter 5 sons	Philippa pre-deceased Joao in 1415	Together, in Batalha Monastery, Leiria, Portugal

John Hastings	8	<i>Elizabeth of Lancaster</i> (1364-1425)	16	None	Betrothal ended by 1386	
John Holland	c. 34	<i>Elizabeth of Lancaster</i>	22	1 daughter 3 sons	John was executed in 1400	John: Pleshey, Essex
John Cornwall	36	<i>Elizabeth of Lancaster</i>	36	1 daughter 1 son	Elizabeth pre-deceased John in 1426	Elizabeth: Burford, Shropshire John: Ludgate, Middlesex
Henry of Castile	9	<i>Catherine of Lancaster</i> (1373-1418)	15	2 daughters 1 son	Henry pre-deceased Catherine in 1406	Together in the cathedral of Toledo, Spain
<i>John Beaufort</i>	c. 26	Margaret Holland	c. 12	2 daughters 4 sons	John pre-deceased Margaret in 1410	Together, in Canterbury Cathedral
<i>(Henry Beaufort)</i>	Bishop of Winchester, cardinal					Winchester Cathedral
<i>Thomas Beaufort</i>	c. 20	Margaret Neville		None	Margaret pre-deceased Thomas (date unknown)	Together in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk
Robert Ferrers	c. 19	<i>Joan Beaufort</i>	c. 13	2 daughters	Robert pre-deceased Joan (1395-96)	
Ralph Neville	32	<i>Joan Beaufort</i>	c. 16	5 daughters 5 sons	Ralph pre-deceased Joan (1425)	Ralph: Staindrop, County Durham Joan: Lincoln Cathedral

Appendix C: Age at First Marriage (36 marriages)



Appendix D: Women's Age at First and Last Child (16 women)

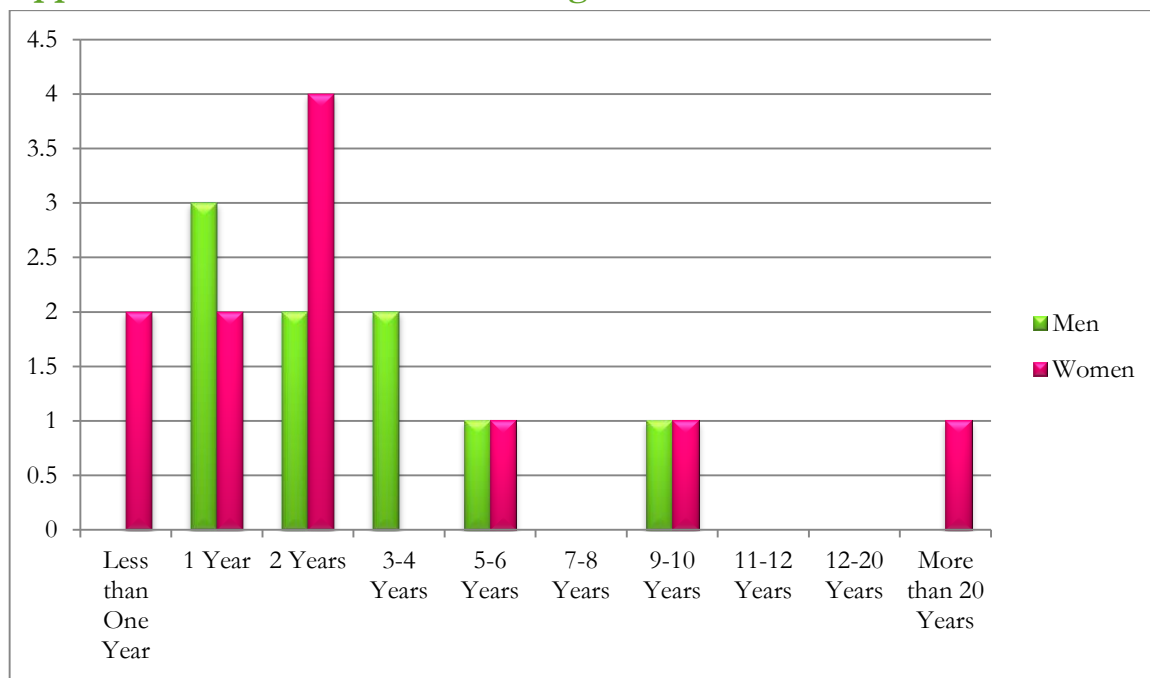


⁵⁰ It is interesting to note that many of the women who had children younger (between approximately the ages of 14 and 20) were married to an earl or duke – or an heir – at the time.

Three women are thought to have died in childbirth: Aveline de Forz, wife of Edmund of Lancaster (d. 1274, age 15); Blanche of Lancaster, wife of John of Gaunt (d. 1368, age 23); Mary de Bohun, wife of Henry of Bolingbroke (d. 1394, age 26). Mary is the only one who certainly died this way.

This evidence clearly suggests that medieval couples waited until women had matured (possibly indicated by first menstruation) before consummating a marriage.

Appendix E: Time before Remarriage in Men and Women



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⁵¹ Two remarriages (those of Richard FitzAlan and John de Hastings/Elizabeth of Lancaster) were the result of annulment, not death.

Both men and women *tended* to remarry within the first year or two after the end of a marriage (whether through death or annulment). However, men were clearly more inclined than women to wait longer than this, suggesting that they had more flexibility when it came to remarriage.

This implies that the contention that women tended to wait at least a year to remarry, to avoid questions regarding paternity, is more or less true. However, this was not always the case.

Both the remarriages taking place after less than one year were those of Elizabeth of Lancaster. The first time this happened, it was because she was already pregnant by her second husband, John Holland.

The one remarriage that took place after more than twenty years was that of Katherine Swynford, who was widowed for about twenty-six years between the death of her first husband, Hugh Swynford, and John of Gaunt. This clearly suggests that a mistress was more likely to avoid remarriage than a woman entirely without a man to provide 'coverage' and protection.

Chapter One

The Marriages of Edmund and Thomas of Lancaster, 1265-1348

The first marriages discussed here – between Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois, and then between Edmund’s son Thomas of Lancaster and Alice de Lacy – emphasise the many and varied motives for marriage. An understanding of the political background to a marriage is crucial; these marriages both reflected and affected the state of national and international politics. They also highlight the combination of personal and political factors that might make a marriage desirable. Remarriage after a first spouse’s death involved its own set of motives, often quite different from those for first marriages. The relationships produced in these marriages were also diverse. The relationship between Edmund, first earl of Lancaster, and his wife Blanche of Artois is a sharp contrast to that between his son Thomas and his wife, Alice de Lacy. These marriages also emphasise the importance of discussing extended relationships – between in-laws or step-children, for example. The legacies of these first marriages varied. They emphasise that a legacy could be dynastic, territorial, or social, in the form of a ‘family identity’.

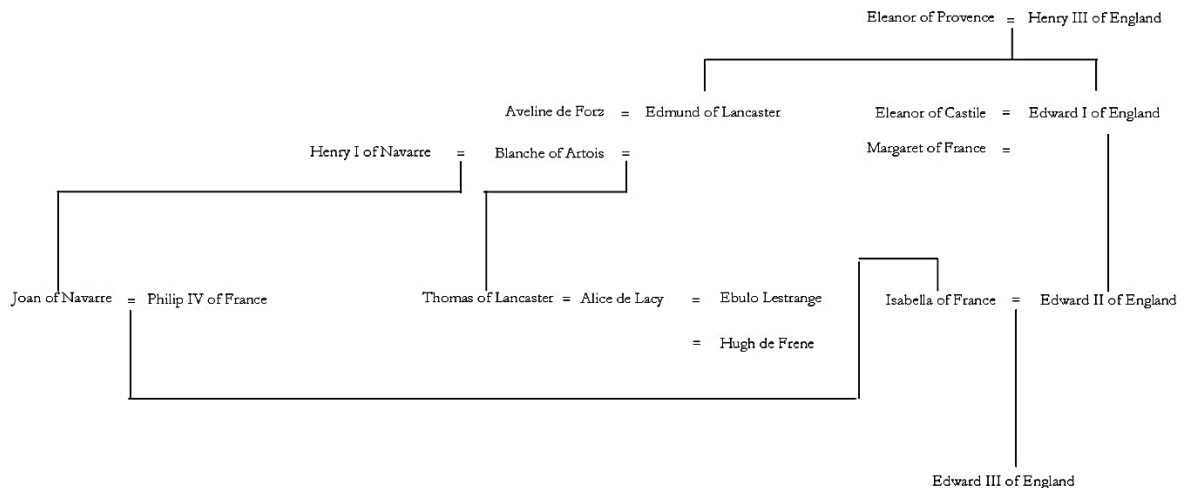


Figure 2 Line of Descent, Henry III to Edward III

1.1 Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois

1.1.1 Background

The second surviving son of Henry III and Eleanor of Provence, Edmund of Lancaster was born in January 1245. Other than a brief attempt to install Edmund as king of Sicily, little is known of him until he became part of English political life in the 1260s. After the Second Barons’ War (prompted in part by his financial demands over Sicily), Henry III rewarded Edmund with several crucial grants of

lands and titles. In 1265 he was granted the earldom of Leicester, along with all the forfeited lands of Simon de Montfort and Nicholas de Segrave; in 1266 he was granted the lands of the earldom of Derby (though the title of earl of Derby was not held by earls of Lancaster until Edmund's grandson Henry of Grosmont); in June 1267 Henry III granted Edmund the county of Lancaster and created him earl of Lancaster, an entirely new earldom.⁵² With the creation of this appanage, Edmund became one of the wealthiest landholders in Europe overnight. Edmund accompanied his older brother, the future Edward I, on Crusade in 1271-72, returning to England after only about six months in the Holy Land. He served regularly as envoy to the French court, and was Edward I's chief advisor when it came to the question of the duchy of Aquitaine: whenever, as frequently occurred in the 1270s-90s, tension emerged between the kings of France and England over the territory, Edmund travelled to France to negotiate.⁵³ Rhodes has argued that Edmund was crucial to the success of Edward I's reign. Edmund's frequent peace negotiations in France created time for Edward to reform the English legal system and government and Edmund's landed power in parts of Wales gave Edward room to subdue other areas of Wales.⁵⁴

In 1268, Henry III gave Edmund permission to marry the widowed Isabella de Redvers, *suo jure* countess of Devon and lady of the Isle of Wight, widow of William de Forz, earl of Aumale. In 1268-69, Edmund instead married their daughter Aveline de Forz.⁵⁵ Upon the death in 1273 of her older brother Thomas, Aveline (and thus Edmund) briefly inherited his title of earl of Aumale, but Aveline died the next year, possibly from complications in childbirth. She was buried in Westminster Abbey, where her tomb still remains. Since she died childless and with no obvious heir, the earldom of Aumale was surrendered to the crown. In 1275-76, Edmund married Blanche of Artois, the widow of Henry I, king of Navarre and count of Champagne and Brie in France. Blanche had had one surviving child – a daughter, Joan – from this first marriage. When Henry died in 1274, Blanche became regent of Navarre and Champagne for her infant daughter. Joan of Navarre married the oldest son of Philip III of France; when he succeeded to the throne as Philip IV in 1285, she became queen of both France and Navarre. Blanche's marriage to Edmund produced three sons who survived to adulthood – Thomas (b. 1278), Henry (b. 1280-81) and John (b. after 1281). When Edmund died in Gascony in 1296, Blanche served as chief executor of his will, as well as guardian of her son (and Edmund's heir) Thomas, still a minor at the time, and his lands.⁵⁶ Edmund was originally buried at the Minories Church near Aldgate in London, a convent of Poor Clares he and Blanche had founded. When his body was moved to Westminster Abbey in 1300 on Edward I's orders, his heart remained, perhaps with the expectation that Blanche might eventually be buried with it.⁵⁷ Blanche died in France in 1302

⁵² Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster', pp. 20-26, 31; Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*, pp. 7-9.

⁵³ Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster (Continued)', pp. 210-211, 219, 225, 230.

⁵⁴ Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster', pp. 19-20.

⁵⁵ Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster (Continued)', pp. 209-210.

⁵⁶ London, The National Archives, DL 42/12, ff. 21v.-22r.

⁵⁷ Mark Duffy, *Royal Tombs of Medieval England* (Stroud: Tempus, 2003), p. 92.

and was probably buried in the Franciscan foundation of the Cordeliers in Paris, where her daughter Joan was eventually also buried.⁵⁸

1.1.1.1 Sources

Limited scholarship on Edmund of Lancaster means that Rhodes's 1895 observation that Edmund has been neglected in favour of his brother Edward I remains accurate.⁵⁹ The only scholar to provide a substantive discussion of Edmund, Rhodes says little on Edmund's marriages, other than to note the lands and influence that they brought him.⁶⁰ Somerville follows the same pattern, noting the importance of the lands Edmund's marriage to Aveline de Forz would have brought him had she survived, and discussing the political motivations behind his marriage to Blanche of Artois.⁶¹ Powicke and Vale have discussed Edmund's importance in English and European political life, noting particularly the impact of Edmund's marriage to Blanche of Artois on thirteenth-century Anglo-French relations.⁶² Discussion of Edmund's wives is even more limited. Denholm-Young has addressed Edward I's desire to acquire the Isle of Wight, part of Aveline de Forz's inheritance.⁶³ Recent work on medieval queenship and noblewomen has offered thoughts on Blanche of Artois, generally focusing on her role as mother of Joan of Navarre and mother-in-law to Philip IV.⁶⁴ Arancón's 2014 article in Spanish on Blanche of Artois remains the only work on Blanche of any considerable length.

The limited primary documentation available for these marriages has never been thoroughly explored. There are no surviving documents from the period of Edmund's first marriage to Aveline de Forz, making it impossible to offer an in-depth treatment of their marriage. Only circumstantial evidence survives, and it suggests they were not close. He was fourteen years older than her; they married when Edmund was twenty-four and Aveline only ten – not exactly conducive to a deep personal connection. There is no record of Aveline accompanying Edmund when he joined his older brother on Crusade in 1271-72, when Eleanor of Castile accompanied the future Edward I. This could indicate that the relationship between Edmund and Aveline was not particularly intimate, but is more likely to reflect Aveline's age. Twelve years old at the time, she was probably still considered too young to consummate the marriage, and there was simply no need for her presence. Her death a few years later, when she was only fifteen, was probably not a personal loss for her husband, though he probably regretted the loss of her inheritance. Because so little evidence survives from Aveline's life, this section will focus on Edmund's marriage to Blanche. From this marriage, significantly more evidence survives. It includes documents relating to Blanche's dower agreement; records of negotiations between Edmund and Philip IV of France regarding Blanche's French lands; and material relating to her executorship of

⁵⁸ Raquel García Arancón, 'La "Otra" Blanca de Navarra, Una Reina Entre Tres Reinos', *Príncipe de Viana* 75 (2014) 113-130, p. 126.

⁵⁹ Rhodes, 'Edmund, earl of Lancaster', p. 19; Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster (Continued)'.

⁶⁰ Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster (Continued)', pp. 209-210, 213-217.

⁶¹ Somerville, pp. 12-15.

⁶² Michael Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century, 1216-1307* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1953), pp. 237-241; Malcolm Vale, *The Angevin Legacy and the Hundred Years War, 1250-1340* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990) pp. 23-27; 178-179.

⁶³ N. Denholm-Young, 'Edward I and the Sale of the Isle of Wight', *English Historical Review*, 175 (1929), 433-438.

⁶⁴ Theresa Earenfight, *Queenship in Medieval Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 158; Evergates, pp. 74-110 (pp. 86-89); Woodacre, pp. 27-35.

Edmund's estate. Although the evidence paints only an incomplete picture, Blanche emerges as a woman who was deeply important – and deeply involved – in English and European politics of the time.

1.1.2 Motivations

The motivations for these marriages were generally the 'traditional' ones of land and political influence. Edmund's marriage to Aveline de Forz would have brought the Isle of Wight and the earldoms of Aumale (part of the duchy of Normandy) and Devon into the Lancastrian patrimony. This suggests a desire to extend Lancastrian influence, then mostly based in the Midlands, into the south of England and the Continent. Edmund's marriage to Aveline de Forz reflects a need to strengthen relations between the royal family and baronage in the wake of the Barons' War, while his marriage to Blanche of Artois implies an increased emphasis on international relations in the beginning of Edward I's reign. The major motives for this second marriage were practical: Blanche's lands in France and her influence in the French court. At the same time, however, there is evidence of genuine attraction between the pair. The shift in Edmund's two marriages, from a domestic alliance to an international one, speaks to changing political circumstances and needs.

1.1.2.1 Practical Motivations: Landed Interests and Political Power

An understanding of thirteenth-century Anglo-French relations is crucial in discussing the marriage of Blanche of Artois and Edmund of Lancaster. The Treaty of Paris, signed in 1259 by Henry III of England and Louis IX of France, made the king of England a vassal of the king of France and obliged English kings to render homage to their French counterparts for the duchy of Aquitaine. Although the treaty ended years of conflict between the two countries, the uncomfortable situation it produced led to tension which, less than a century later, culminated in the outbreak of the Hundred Years War. Nonetheless, the second half of the thirteenth century, until the 1290s, saw unusual peace and cooperation, reinforced by a web of matrimonial alliances between the two countries. Two sisters, Eleanor and Margaret of Provence, ruled as queens of England and France, respectively. In the next tier of the English aristocracy, as Vale has noted, a number of English earls were foreign-born and more had family links to the continent. These men naturally assumed roles as intermediaries between the French and English courts and had an incentive, with lands in both countries, to help maintain peace.⁶⁵ This also created a deterrent against going to war for both kings: if conflict broke out, neither could be sure of support from his key nobles.⁶⁶

Family connections extended across Europe; matrimonial alliances between the royal houses of France were particularly prolific. Blanche of Artois's first marriage to Henry I of Navarre, count of Champagne and Brie, was one of these. Blanche was the daughter of Robert of Artois, a younger brother of Louis IX, and Matilda of Brabant. Her marriage to Henry was almost certainly organised

⁶⁵ Vale, pp. 27-29.

⁶⁶ This was a very real possibility: Aymer de Valence, earl of Pembroke, was called upon to serve Philip IV of France in the early fourteenth century, though there is no evidence he actually served. See J. R. S. Phillips, *Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, 1307-1324: Baronial Politics in the Reign of Edward II* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1972), p. 4.

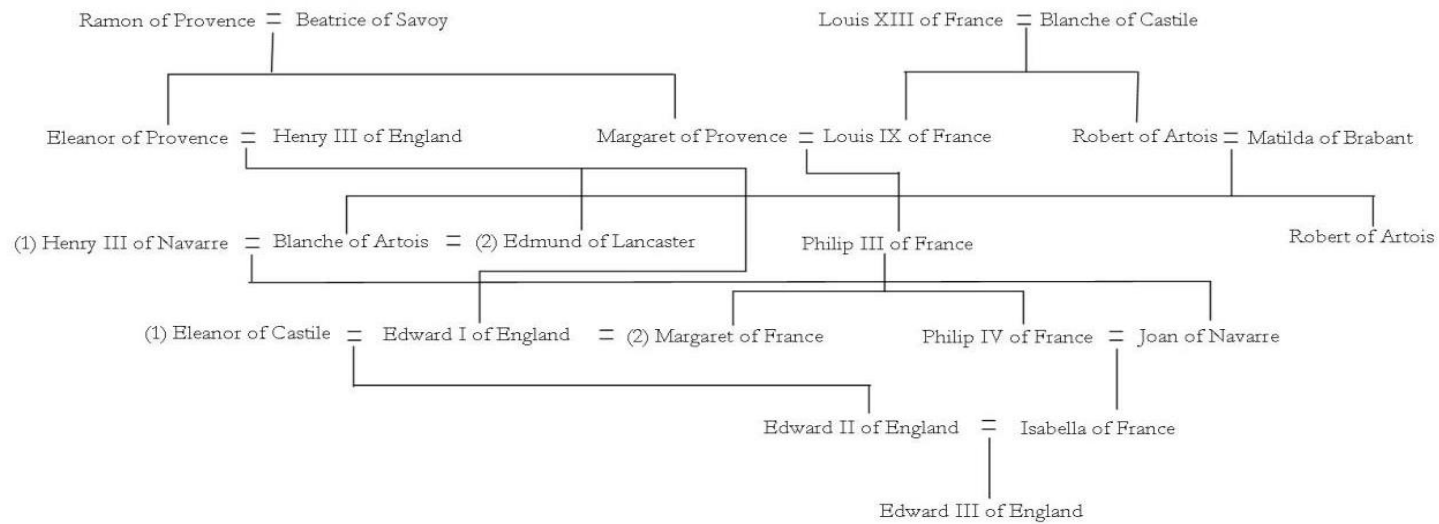


Figure 3 Entangled European Marriage Alliances, 1200-1308

with the help of Louis IX: the French king donated a dowry of 23,000 *livres tournois* towards Blanche's dowry and her brother the count of Artois promised another 2000.⁶⁷ The pair had two children. Theobald, the oldest, was born in 1272 and betrothed to Violante of Castile the same year, but died soon after, falling from a tower in the castle of Estella. Their second child Joan was born in January 1273 and betrothed to Alphonso of England, one of the younger sons of Edward I, in November of that year. In the event that she did not inherit from her father, her dowry was to have been 40,000 *livres tournois*; Edward I promised the couple the territory of Gascony and 2000 marks. Philip III of France contested the alliance but the reason the marriage did not come about, in the end, was more to do with Henry of Navarre's unexpected death in 1274.⁶⁸ Her husband's death left Blanche as regent for Joan, still an infant. The situation created some danger for both, with the kings of Castile and Aragon showing an interest in the Navarrese succession and some willingness to pursue that interest militarily. However, according to the Navarrese chronicler Joseph de Moret, 'neither was able to achieve this, on account of the cunning and prudence of the queen mother [Blanche], who secretly took the girl queen to France'.⁶⁹

In December 1274 Blanche rendered homage to Philip III for Champagne and in early 1275, Philip suggested a marriage between Joan and his second son Philip; Pope Gregory X had already agreed to grant the necessary dispensation to Joan and Philip, who were related in the third degree. In the dispensation, the pope cited Philip III's upcoming crusade to the Holy Land and concern that French knights should not be distracted from this cause by an inheritance dispute in Champagne or Navarre, as well as worries about French security, Joan's youth and Blanche's position as a widow.⁷⁰ Joan was to be granted 4000 *livres parisis* per year (a sum to be augmented if her husband inherited the French throne) and Navarre and Champagne were to be in French custody, with the French crown both paying for their defense and receiving their rents.⁷¹ The Treaty of Orléans, made between Blanche and Philip in May 1275, did contract marriage between Joan and Philip, but Blanche seems to have negotiated the question of who would control her daughter's inheritance. Philip agreed to take over as regent in Navarre, while Blanche retained the regency of Champagne during Joan's minority. Her daughter's future secured, Blanche herself remarried to Edmund of Lancaster in December 1275 or January 1276.

⁶⁷ Arancón, p. 114. Henry later used these sums to purchase territory: the lordship of Beaufort, seignury of Berulle and properties in Velleneuve-au-Chemin and Droyes.

⁶⁸ Arancón, pp. 115-116.

⁶⁹ Joseph de Moret, *Annales del Reyno de Navarra, Compuestos por el Padre M. Joseph de Moret, de la Compania de Jesus, natural de Pamplona, Chronista del mismo Reyno*, 8 vols (Pamplona: Martin Gregorio de Zabala, 1684-1704), [Google eBook] <Accessed 19 December 2013> III, pp. 488-489. All translations from this work are mine.

'...pero yá que no pudieron conseguir esto, por la sagacidad, y prudencia de la Reyna Madre, que secretamente transfirió la niña Reyna à Francia...'

⁷⁰ '1275, February 20', in *Les Registres de Gregoire X et Jean XXI*, ed. by E. Cadier and Jean Guiraud (Paris, 1892-1960), no. 875, p. 351., repr. in David d'Avray, *Papacy, Monarchy and Marriage, 860-1600*, pp. 255-257. Arancón (p. 115) suggests the pope granted the marriage between Joan and one of Philip III's younger sons in order to prevent the French crown acquiring too much landed wealth, but there is no indication of this in the wording of the dispensation itself.

⁷¹ Arancón, pp. 116-118.

The complicated background to this marriage and number of individuals likely involved in its negotiations make it difficult to sort out whose motives were most important, and the betrothal of Joan of Navarre to the future Philip IV in 1275 is a crucial piece of background. Edward I, Edmund of Lancaster, Blanche of Artois, Philip III, Eleanor and Margaret of Provence and even the pope were all probably involved in both marriages. Arancón suggests that Philip III married Blanche to Edmund of Lancaster on the advice of his mother Margaret of Provence.⁷² Rhodes argues that, seeing Joan's betrothal to Philip of France, Edward I decided that a marriage between Joan's mother and his brother Edmund would be an appropriate countermove.⁷³ Philip III's second wife Marie of Brabant, Blanche of Artois's first cousin, whom he had married in 1274, may have also encouraged the match. Blanche's own motives have never been discussed. Her first husband's death placed both mother and daughter in an uncomfortable and dangerous situation. Scholars have debated whether Philip III forced Blanche to make a disadvantageous marriage for Joan, or whether the agreement she eventually reached with Philip was mutually beneficial.⁷⁴ This seems unlikely, as Aragon had also put in an offer for Joan's hand, and there was probably room for negotiation with England; with Blanche widowed, her own marriage was also a useful bargaining chip. While Blanche may have felt most connected to France, it is unlikely that she would have been willing to agree to a disadvantageous marriage simply because of this. Other offers probably created valuable room for negotiation for Blanche when it came to preventing too much French control over Joan's inheritance.

Joan of Navarre's initial betrothal to Edward I's son Alphonso, which would have granted the couple control over Gascony, suggests that it was the border between Aquitaine, Navarre and Iberia that particularly interested Edward I, rather than Champagne and Brie. Granting Aquitaine to Joan and her husband would have solved the ongoing issue of rendering homage for the duchy, as well as helping to secure the border between Aquitaine and Iberia, hindering Spanish aid to France in the event of war. These factors suggest that for the English, the Treaty of Orléans, which granted Blanche continuing control over Champagne and Brie, but not Navarre, was not ideal. The fact that Blanche's brother Robert was eventually placed in Navarre was probably a result of Blanche's negotiations – she could expect him to listen to her wishes and opinions, even if he ultimately answered to Philip III. The initial marriages arranged for Blanche and Henry's children, with Theobald set to marry into the royal house of Aragon and Joan into that of England, were no doubt intended to protect Navarre's independence. Aragon would have incentive to protect Navarre and the connections with Aragon and England would discourage the French from encroaching. The French had probably always wanted a marriage with Joan, as evidenced by Philip III's protest against her betrothal to Alphonso of England. For Philip III, Henry of Navarre's death was probably very convenient, as it gave France a fresh chance to assert control over Navarre. These were all factors Blanche had to bear in mind: in the midst of all these conflicting interests, the only person who could be trusted to take Blanche and Joan's interests to heart

⁷² Arancón, p. 119.

⁷³ Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster (Continued)', p. 70.

⁷⁴ Earenfight, pp. 86-88; Elizabeth M. Hallam, *Capetian France, 987-1328* (Harlow: Longman, 1980), pp. 275-277; Powicke, pp. 238-240; Woodacre, pp. 24-32.

was Blanche herself. The marriage between Joan and Philip was thus meant to secure Joan's inheritance, but created a French interest in Navarre. Blanche's own marriage to Edmund of Lancaster may thus have been meant to help counteract this.

Blanche was a desirable match for Edmund on a number of levels. The territorial element was fairly straightforward: Edmund became regent of Champagne and Brie, for which he did homage to Philip III in January 1276.⁷⁵ This created a potentially volatile situation where both Edward I and Edmund of Lancaster owed homage to the king of France. The lands that Blanche controlled were not only wealthy, but significant militarily. Strategically located on the border between the Low Countries and Paris, Champagne and Brie essentially created a road to the heart of France. English control of the duchy of Aquitaine meant that the English royal family held a significant proportion of French land. In addition to the lands this marriage brought to the English royal family, the alliance between Edmund and Blanche both reflected and affected the balance of power across Europe, especially between England and France. The dower agreement, dated December 1275, which granted Blanche of Artois the entirety of the earldom of Derby, in addition to the traditional third of all Edmund's other lands for life, highlights how desirable this marriage was for Edmund.⁷⁶ This unusually generous settlement demonstrates that Edmund (and presumably his brother, Edward I) was particularly keen to secure the marriage to Blanche. It may also have been a sign of respect to her superior status as dowager queen of Navarre, which placed her ahead of Edmund on the social scale. Blanche's fecundity – her first marriage had produced two healthy children in the space of a year – only added to her other attributes.

The marriage also reflected, and probably facilitated, Edmund's role as a key intermediary between the English and French courts in the late thirteenth century. As discussed above, a series of cross-Channel marriages had connected both the English royal house and many noble houses to Continental aristocracy. Edmund of Lancaster's marriage to Blanche of Artois contributed to the entangled marriage alliances which helped to keep England and France at peace during this period. On a day-to-day level, the marriage gave Edmund a personal stake in Anglo-French relations and created a French base which allowed him to conduct business at the court in Paris. Blanche's influence at the court, as the queen's mother, the king's cousin and as a member of the powerful house of Artois, could only have helped here. That the 1285 agreement between Edmund, Blanche, Philip IV and Joan specifically allowed Blanche the continued use of a Paris townhouse belonging to the counts of Champagne underscores this crucial motive for the marriage.⁷⁷

After having been married to a king; was a second marriage to a mere royal earl a comedown for Blanche? Payling and Duby have both noted the aristocracy's tendency to marry younger sons to heiresses, which created provision for the younger son without creating financial strain for his family.⁷⁸ Henry III had already created an appanage for Edmund in the form of the earldoms of Leicester, Lancaster and Derby. The marriage was, however, a cheap way for Edward I to extend influence in

⁷⁵ Powicke, p. 239.

⁷⁶ TNA C 47/27/2/5.

⁷⁷ TNA E 30/1525.

⁷⁸ Payling, pp. 417-418; Duby, pp. 10-11.

France and provide his brother with property on the Continent. Blanche, however – a wealthy woman with connections to the French court and plenty of childbearing years ahead of her – was a valuable commodity on the medieval marriage market. Was Edmund of Lancaster really the best she could do? Her concern about French control over her daughter's inheritance was an important factor. Blanche may have married 'down' in order to secure the connection with England that would offset French power in Navarre and protect Joan's inheritance. Even after her marriage to Edmund, Blanche may have seen her primary role as mother to the queen of France, rather than wife to the earl of Lancaster.

1.1.2.2 Personal Motivations

The strong practical and political motives do not mean that there were no personal motives for Blanche's marriage to Edmund. As Arancón notes, Edmund would certainly have met Blanche's brother Robert of Artois in 1267, when he was in France to see Philip III knighted.⁷⁹ As Blanche had not yet married Henry of Navarre at that time, she may have also been in attendance. The chronicler John de Trokelowe, a clerical writer who composed his chronicle in the early 1330s, claims that Blanche and Edmund were first attracted to each other after having heard of the other's good reputation. He writes that Blanche,

left alone without the comfort of a husband, honourably and wisely led herself and her court, so that many princes loved her and praised her. This lady's reputation for nobility and beauty thus travelled everywhere. And having heard rumour of the goodness, elegance and generosity of Lord Edmund, spread through many regions, her heart was ardently aroused in love.

Therefore since the rumour and reputation of each was similar, and they each heard so often of the other's fame, each one desired a marriage alliance with the other. After having received news and requested advice from their friends, the business was concluded. Their wedding was solemnised with joy and honour.⁸⁰

Trokelowe's account is clearly fictionalised and inspired by literature of courtly love; Blanche, far from leading the Navarrese court, in fact fled it for the relative safety of Paris. Still, the tenor of this story may be reasonably true. It is entirely possible that each, recognising that the other possessed useful and attractive traits, was eager for the marriage.

Trokelowe's account provides a glimpse into the marital negotiations of the elite and the way those on the outside might perceive or characterise an elite marriage. While this story does not gloss over the fact that Edmund and Blanche's marriage was arranged, it equally does not go into detail of the political or territorial motives for the match, which were surely key. Trokelowe instead depicts the chief attractions for this marriage as personal ones: beauty, nobility, goodness, largesse and elegance.

⁷⁹ Arancón, pp. 119-120.

⁸⁰ John de Trokelowe, *Johannis de Trokelowe et Henrici de Blaneфорde, monachorum S. Albani, necnon quorundam anonymorum Chronica et annales, regnantibus Henrico Tertio, Edwardo Primo, Edwardo Secundo, Ricardo Secundo, et Henrico Quarto*, ed. by Henry Thomas Riley (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1866), pp. 70-71. All translations from this work are mine.

‘...viri solatio destituta, sic honeste et sapienter se et suam Curiam regebat, quod multi principes ipsam dilexerunt, et reginae laudaverunt eam. Fama igitur nobilitatis et pulchritudinis istius dominae ubique volabat. Rumor etiam super probitate, elegantia, et largitate, Domini Edmundi, per multas regiones diffusus, corda audientium in amorem ipsius vehementer excitabat. Rumor igitur et fama eorum obviaverunt similiter, et ad notitiam utriusque totiens pervenerunt, quod alter alterius maritali foedere conjungi affectavit. Super quo nunciis intermissis, et concilio amicorum requisito, hujusmodi negotium ad effectum deduciter praeoptatum. Nuptiis quidem inter eos solemnizatis cum gaudio et honore...’

He emphasises that marriage is not something to be entered into lightly, as both Blanche and Edmund sought information about the other and consulted their friends. A marriage made for dynastic, political reasons thus receives a more personal, emotional gloss. This may reflect some of the dissonance between aristocratic and ecclesiastical ideals for marriage that Duby has identified.⁸¹ Brooke suggests that one of the results of church reforms of marriage had been an increased emphasis on love in marriage, yet Trokelowe must surely have known that the aristocracy (and indeed most of society) continued to marry for more practical reasons.⁸² By glossing the practical motives for marriage between Blanche and Edmund with motives more appropriate for the church's point of view, Trokelowe walks the line between aristocratic practicalities and ecclesiastical ideals. At the same time, as Trokelowe wrote with the benefit of hindsight, his depiction may suggest that the couple was known for their closeness.

1.1.3 Relationships

1.1.3.1 The Relationship between Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois

Only circumstantial evidence for the quality of Blanche and Edmund's personal relationship survives, but it suggests their marriage was happy. Blanche's success in producing heirs for the house of Lancaster was crucial. She and Edmund had three sons and, according to some sources, a daughter, in fairly quick succession after the marriage. The relatively small age difference of three years would have given them more in common than had been the case between Edmund and Aveline de Forz. Other evidence for Blanche's importance in Edmund's life and his respect for her abilities comes from documents which survive from his death. A safe-conduct issued for her by Edward I in November 1296 and meant to remain in effect until August 1297 mentions that Blanche was traveling to England from Gascony.⁸³ Since Edmund had died in Gascony in June 1296, it seems reasonable to presume that Blanche had been with him at the time and was returning with his body to England. Blanche may have accompanied Edmund on at least some of his many trips to Aquitaine and Paris. As Vale has noted, Edmund's 'entrée to the court of France was an essential facet of Anglo-French relations'⁸⁴. Blanche's own French connections – both as the mother of Philip IV's queen and a close relative of many French nobles in her own right – can only have facilitated Edmund's dealings in the French court. Blanche's independent action after her first husband's death in Navarre had demonstrated her political *savoir-faire*; she was a good partner for Edmund in negotiation. Edmund of Lancaster also showed his trust in and respect for Blanche in death, making her the chief executor of his will, a position indicating his faith in Blanche's abilities and his trust that Blanche would understand and follow his wishes. What is particularly important about Blanche's executorship, however, is what it says about her relationship with her brother-in-law Edward I.

⁸¹ Duby, pp. 15-17.

⁸² Brooke, p. 56.

⁸³ TNA C 47/27/3/14.

⁸⁴ Vale, p. 27.

1.1.3.2 Extended Relationships

Blanche of Artois and Edward I

Blanche's relationship with her brother-in-law Edward I is difficult to describe. In some areas, the close relationship between Edmund of Lancaster and his brother Edward I carried over into Edward's relationship with Blanche. She may have helped negotiate the 1290 marriage of Edward I's daughter Margaret to John II of Brabant, her cousin, and has been credited with helping to organise the 1294 peace between England and France. Documentary and circumstantial evidence suggests that Blanche and Edward remained close and worked together after Edmund's death. For instance, at some point after Edmund's death Blanche lent Edward the substantial sum of 2000 marks, with crown jewels deposited as surety.⁸⁵ This loan demonstrates ongoing cooperation between the king and his sister-in-law, as well as Blanche's financial security and that she had the political wherewithal to demand jewels as surety. Edward's behaviour immediately after Edmund's death suggests that, like his brother, the king placed a good deal of trust in Blanche. A July 1297 grant from the king gave Blanche custody of all Edmund's property during the minority of their son Thomas, then eighteen, as well as the custody of Thomas himself.⁸⁶ This was a generous act on Edward's part, as Thomas's extraordinarily valuable lands, as well as his wardship, would normally have gone to the king during his minority.

Despite Edward I's apparent generosity to Blanche, they disagreed over her dower. As discussed above, Edmund had originally granted Blanche the entirety of the earldom of Derby, in addition to the traditional one third of his lands and tenements. Edward I confirmed this grant in October 1276, less than a year after Blanche and Edmund married.⁸⁷ When Edmund died twenty years later, the king had second thoughts about this generous endowment. He first ordered in August 1297 that all the lands of the earldom be given into Blanche's hands, in accordance with her dower agreement.⁸⁸ In April 1298, however, Edward commanded that the lands of the earldom be taken into his hands, as Blanche had released them to him.⁸⁹ Dower assignment was made from the lands of the earldom in June of the same year, granting Blanche lands worth £337 7s. 12d. annually from the earldom of Derby.⁹⁰ In the end, Blanche received only the traditional one third. Edward did not assign any dower to Blanche until April 1298, at the same time as he also granted Blanche respite from both her own and Edmund's debts.⁹¹ Edward's reasons for changing his mind are unclear; perhaps he was concerned that Blanche not acquire too much territorial power in England, or wanted to ensure that her son Thomas was not deprived of too much of his inheritance. Either way, it seems that Edward pressured Blanche into agreeing to take only the third of the earldom of Derby and withheld all dower until she agreed.

⁸⁵ TNA E 101/363/7. There seems to have been some difficulty in repaying this loan: in 1303 Edward issued letters patent acknowledging that he owed Ralph de Shepeye, Blanche's former receiver, 2000 marks. That the surviving indenture was made in 1304, two years after Blanche's death, indicates that this surety was needed, as the loan clearly had not been repaid when she died (CPR 1301-1307, p. 108).

⁸⁶ TNA DL 42/12, f. 21v.

⁸⁷ TNA C 47/27/2/8.

⁸⁸ CCR 1296-1302, p. 39.

⁸⁹ CFR 1272-1307, p. 399.

⁹⁰ TNA DL 42/12, ff. 21v-22r.

⁹¹ CCR 1296-1302, pp. 159, 161.

Edmund of Lancaster, Blanche of Artois, Philip IV of France and Joan of Navarre

The ongoing relationship between Edmund of Lancaster, Blanche of Artois, Philip III and IV of France and Joan of Navarre was occasionally marked by tension. It is difficult to say precisely how much time Blanche or Edmund spent on Blanche's lands in Champagne, though Evergates's assertion that Edmund took little interest in the county is unfair, as evidence suggests he was present in Champagne at least from time to time.⁹² For instance, in May 1282, Edmund wrote to his brother from La Ferté-Milon in Champagne to say that he had heard news of Edward's newest war with the Welsh and would return to England quickly, bringing Champenois troops with him if possible.⁹³ There was certainly conflict between Edmund, Blanche and Philip III about Blanche's rights in France. In particular, they disagreed over the age at which Joan would come of age and Blanche's regency over Champagne and Brie would end. As Woodacre has noted, the strategic location of the county of Champagne, which nearly surrounded the Ile-de-France, was a regular source of worry for the Capetian kings. A 1284 inquest held by Philip III determined that the custom in Navarre was that a woman could do homage for her property from the age of eleven (Joan's age at the time); Edmund and Blanche argued that Joan would not come of age until she was twenty-one. Philip was clearly eager to assert French control over Champagne and Brie, while Blanche and Edmund hoped to prevent this until Joan reached adulthood. In 1284, Blanche and Edmund agreed to give him regency of the county, but only in exchange for 60,000 *livres tournois*, dower properties for Blanche and the right to use the home of the counts of Champagne in Paris.⁹⁴ The agreement assigned Blanche dower lands of Sezanne, Chantemerle, Nogent-sur-Seine, Pont-sur-Seine and Vertus in Champagne.⁹⁵ In August of that year, Joan and Philip (the future Philip IV) finally married, after nearly a decade of betrothal – the timing suggests that Philip III may have threatened to break off the betrothal unless Blanche and Edmund gave up their regency of Champagne and Brie.

1.1.4 Death and Memory

1.1.4.1 Blanche's Widowhood

After Edmund's death, in Bayonne, while fighting in Gascony on behalf of Edward I, Blanche seems to have remained in France long enough to settle his affairs before returning to England for his burial. As chief executor of his will, she remained in England until June of 1298, when Geoffrey Luttrell and William de Baiocia were issued letters of protection to travel overseas with her. Further letters from January 1299 and June 1300 indicate that she stayed abroad a long while, probably the rest of her life.⁹⁶ This may suggest that Blanche was only interested in remaining in England long enough to sort out Edmund's affairs. As soon as her oldest son Thomas was declared of age, sometime in the summer of

⁹² Evergates, pp. 87-88.

⁹³ TNA SC 1/16/138.

⁹⁴ Woodacre, pp. 33-35; TNA E 30/1525.

⁹⁵ Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster (Continued)', pp. 224-225; Arancón, p. 120.

⁹⁶ CPR 1292-1301, pp. 354, 393, 521.

1298, she quickly returned to France. Her presence in France – possibly on official business, since Edward I granted her letters of protection – may indicate that she was involved in the peace settlement between England and France that year. She eventually died in Paris in 1302 and her daughter Joan, queen of France, was named an executor of her will.⁹⁷ Binski argues that the layout of the tombs in Westminster Abbey, with that of Aymer of Valence lying between Edmund's and Aveline de Forz's, suggests that Blanche was originally meant to be buried next to Edmund's tomb.⁹⁸ Blanche's decision to live out the rest of her life and be buried in France, however, indicates that she identified more with her role as mother of the queen of France, than countess of Lancaster.

1.1.4.2 Lancastrian Legacy

Within their lifetimes, Blanche and Edmund's claims and influence in France had a far-reaching effect on Anglo-French relations. On the one hand, Blanche's position as mother-in-law to Philip IV was a crucial element in Edmund's relationship with the French king. On the other, their territorial interest in Champagne was an implicit threat; French lands held by English magnates (including, most obviously, the duchy of Aquitaine) were part of the tension that led to the outbreak of war in 1294 and Edmund and Blanche were a part of this pattern.⁹⁹ The marriage of Blanche and Edmund brought few permanent changes to the house of Lancaster in terms of territorial or political power. Edmund's role as envoy to France, facilitated by his marriage to Blanche, was not one his son Thomas took on after his death, although his second son Henry (later earl of Lancaster) did travel regularly to France on royal business during Edward II's reign. Blanche's claims to the lands of Beaufort and Nogent in France were not forgotten. John of Gaunt laid claim to them in the 1370s and named his illegitimate family after the Beaufort lands over which he no longer exercised sovereignty, and Henry V included the claim to the lands in his own extensive negotiations with the French.

Blanche of Artois and Edmund of Lancaster's marriage was most important in terms of founding a dynasty. Blanche's own fecundity was crucial to securing the house's future; it was fortunate that she produced several spare male heirs since two of her sons, Thomas and John, had no legitimate children. Her role as mother of the dynasty was clearly remembered by later generations: Henry of Lancaster, Henry of Grosmont and Henry of Bolingbroke all named daughters after her. The descent of the French royal house also, for a time, went through Blanche of Artois. That Thomas, Henry and John of Lancaster were half-brothers of the French queen – and uncles to Isabella of France, wife of Edward II – was a consideration of some importance in Anglo-French relations during the reign of Edward II.

1.1.5 Conclusion

Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois's marriage was crucial both to Anglo-French relations of the late thirteenth century and to the house of Lancaster. Motives for the marriage highlight the importance of understanding the political circumstances in which a marriage was formed – this marriage both reflects the relationship between France and England and had an effect on that

⁹⁷ CPR 1301-1307, p. 117.

⁹⁸ Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 113.

⁹⁹ Vale, 239, 241-244.

relationship. It also helps to highlight those elements – similar life experience and goals, similar personalities – that made for a positive relationship within a marriage. Extended relationships were also important here: their unique connections helped Edmund and Blanche serve as a bridge between the kings of France and England. In terms of legacy, this marriage was laid a solid foundation for the house of Lancaster. Overall, the relationship between Edmund and Blanche was very positive; the marriage of their eldest son would not be nearly as successful.

1.2 Thomas of Lancaster, Alice de Lacy and the Legacy of Lancastrian Marriage

1.2.1 Background

1.2.1.1 Family/Chronology

Alice de Lacy was born in 1281-82, the only surviving child of Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, and his wife Margaret Longespée, *suo jure* countess of Salisbury. Their two sons, Edmund and John, predeceased both their parents as young children.¹⁰⁰ Margaret descended from William Longespée, an illegitimate son of Henry II, and her husband Henry de Lacy spent his life as a loyal supporter of Edward I and his brother Edmund of Lancaster. Alice de Lacy's value as bride thus included her parents' connections as well as her inheritance. She was probably the most desirable bride of comital rank in her generation, her inheritance from the earldom of Lincoln alone having been estimated at somewhere from £3000 to £6000 per year.¹⁰¹ Alice's fortunes were tied to the house of Lancaster in 1292 when she was betrothed to Thomas, eldest son of Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois. Alice was eleven or twelve at the time and Thomas fourteen. The marriage was intended to bring Thomas Alice's valuable inheritance of the earldoms of Lincoln and Salisbury; by this point it would probably have been obvious that Henry de Lacy would have no surviving male heirs. By 1294, Thomas and Alice, then about sixteen and thirteen respectively, were married.

Though her husband's turbulent career as a dissident under Edward II is well known, little is known of Alice's life until 1317 when she was 'abducted' by men associated with John, Earl Warenne, an event which has come to define her marriage to Thomas of Lancaster. Alice then virtually disappears from the record from 1317-22. In 1322, Thomas of Lancaster's many years of opposition to Edward II caught up with him and, having been captured in the battle of Boroughbridge, was executed for treason on 22 March and his inheritance confiscated. Alice was also arrested at royal command, forfeited her title as countess of Lancaster, and was forced to quitclaim her entire inheritance of the earldoms of Lincoln and Salisbury, which she held in her own right. Edward II eventually re-granted her both titles and gave her a life interest in some of their lands, but Alice never entirely reassembled her vast inheritance.¹⁰² After spending several uneasy years in seclusion after Thomas's execution, Alice remarried in 1324 to Ebulu Lestrangle. Alice's marriage to Lestrangle lasted over a decade and seems to

¹⁰⁰ J. S. Hamilton, 'Lacy, Henry de, fifth earl of Lincoln (1249–1311)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 8 July 2013].

¹⁰¹ Hamilton, 'Lacy, Henry de'; Andrew M. Spencer, *Nobility and Kingship in Medieval England: The Earls and Edward I, 1272-1307* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 23.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 114.

have been much happier than her first marriage; he died in 1335 and when Alice followed him twelve years later, she was buried with him in Barlings Abbey (co. Lincs). Shortly after LeStrange's death, Alice's life again took a dramatic turn. In late 1335 or early 1336, she was abducted once more, this time from her home of Bolingbroke Castle, by Hugh de Frene, steward of Cardigan Castle, whom she married shortly thereafter. He died in December 1336, making Alice a widow for the third and final time.¹⁰³ She died, aged sixty-six, on 2 October 1348, possibly, as Mitchell contends, from the Black Death.¹⁰⁴

1.2.1.2 Sources

The lack of evidence for Alice de Lacy's presence in Thomas's life makes it difficult to speak much to their married life. Few sources attest to her role as his wife; until her husband's execution in 1322, Alice rarely appears in official records. She is mentioned regularly from 1322-24, mostly in entries involved with sorting out her estate after Thomas's execution. Again, from 1324-35, during the period of her second marriage, Alice appears less frequently in the records, only to re-emerge during her second and third widowhoods. Surviving Duchy of Lancaster documents preserved in The National Archives are more helpful, and provide insight into Alice's widowhoods. A number of miscellaneous deeds, indentures and charters survive from 1322-48. They help illustrate her life as a widow who controlled a number of estates that later fell into Lancastrian hands, as well as events of her second and third marriages. Some evidence, especially of her two abductions, survives in chronicles and legal documents.

Secondary literature has tended to follow the information available in the primary documentation, concentrating on Alice's abductions and her treatment following Thomas of Lancaster's execution. Mitchell has given the fullest treatment to Alice de Lacy, devoting a book chapter to Alice's life. She argues that Alice was a 'martyr to the cause of her family's social and political mobility'.¹⁰⁵ Fryde has dealt with Alice in the context of her discussion of Edward II's treatment of rebels after Boroughbridge, suggesting that Edward consistently behaved harshly towards Alice.¹⁰⁶ Bothwell has also discussed Edward II's treatment of Alice after Thomas's execution, analysing the ways in which she may have been humiliated or punished following her husband's treason.¹⁰⁷ He has also touched on Alice's abduction by Hugh de Frene in 1335-36.¹⁰⁸ Most recently, Dunn also examined Alice's abductions; she demonstrates how the ambiguous language used to describe rape and abduction in medieval legal sources makes it difficult to reconstruct what actually happened to Alice.¹⁰⁹ She analyses Alice's abduction in 1317 by John de Warenne in the context of wider power struggles of the time,

¹⁰³ CCR 1333-37, no. 726.

¹⁰⁴ 'Alesia, Countess of Lincoln', in *CIPM IX*, no. 107; Mitchell, pp. 122-123; CPR 1348-50, pp. 137-139, 203.

¹⁰⁵ Mitchell, p. 124.

¹⁰⁶ Natalie Fryde, *The Tyranny and Fall of Edward II, 1321-1326* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 83.

¹⁰⁷ J. S. Bothwell, *Falling from Grace: Reversal of Fortune and the English Nobility, 1075-1455* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), *passim*.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 134, 138, 209.

¹⁰⁹ Dunn, pp. 128-129.

noting that women like Alice ‘were caught in webs of personal honour and political conflict’.¹¹⁰ Neither Maddicott’s extensive biography of Thomas of Lancaster nor Somerville’s *History of the Duchy of Lancaster* discuss Alice de Lacy beyond briefly mentioning the lands that she brought to the marriage and mentioning the role her abduction played in precipitating the private war between Thomas and John de Warenne.¹¹¹

1.2.2 Motivations

1.2.2.1 Practical Motives: Political and Financial Reasons for the Marriage of Thomas of Lancaster and Alice de Lacy

The ‘practical’ motives for the marriage between Thomas of Lancaster and Alice de Lacy appear superficially to fit into typical aristocratic concerns of territory and political power. The pair were an ideal match. Thomas of Lancaster was destined to be a royal earl and Alice de Lacy was descended from earls on both parents’ sides, making them nearly social equals. They were also near to each other in age – Alice was thirteen when they married and Thomas sixteen. As their fathers were friends, their paths would likely have crossed before their betrothal and marriage. When they were betrothed in 1292, Alice was the only female heiress to an English earldom; barring an international marriage this was the best match that Thomas could hope for. The lands from Alice’s inheritance added considerably to the already-substantial Lancastrian patrimony. The Lacy family, meanwhile, confirmed their connections with the crown and with Lancaster, marrying their daughter to a member of the royal family.

Yet the marriage agreement was unusual: it required Henry de Lacy and Margaret Longespée to quitclaim their earldoms to Edward I, who granted them jointly to Alice and Thomas, with a life interest for Henry de Lacy. Ultimate remainder was to Thomas and *his* heirs, ensuring that the Lacy patrimony would become a permanent part of the Lancastrian inheritance regardless of whether Alice and Thomas had children. This agreement flies in the face of the accepted notion that medieval landowners were keen to keep their patrimonies distinct and intact, and suggests motives for the marriage were more complicated than they seem at first. As Hamilton has observed, the contract effectively disinherited the rest of the Lacy family, as well as any heirs Henry de Lacy might have in the future.¹¹² On the face of it, Alice’s parents’ decision to allow this is difficult to explain, but they still had good reasons to agree to it. Henry de Lacy and Margaret Longespée found themselves in a situation where, with only one daughter as heir, their earldoms would likely end up absorbed into another person’s patrimony either way. Holmes has noted that when an inheritance’s integrity was in danger, medieval English aristocracy had a number of ways of handling the situation. In 1346, John de Warenne hoped to have an heir (he had none at the time) married into the royal family, planning for his blood to be ‘preserved’ in the royal blood. He was prepared to agree to grant remainder of his lands

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 190.

¹¹¹ Somerville, pp. 18-19; Maddicott, *Thomas of Lancaster*, pp. 3, 190-91.

¹¹² Hamilton, ‘Lacy, Henry de’. At the time of Alice’s marriage to Thomas, it is difficult to say who his heir in the male line would have been – his closest male relative was his nephew Gilbert de Clare, earl of Hertford and Gloucester (d. 1295), the son of Lacy’s sister Maud. Henry de Lacy did remarry after his first wife’s death, so it is not outside the realm of possibility that he could have had a legitimate male heir, though as it happens, his second marriage was childless.

to the king, on the condition that the Warenne name, title and arms be given to his heir, and then to his heirs.¹¹³ Part of the motivation behind Alice de Lacy and Thomas of Lancaster's marriage agreement may thus have been the 'preservation' of Lacy blood within Thomas's royal blood and they may have anticipated that any younger sons of the marriage would be granted arms and titles associated with Lincoln or Salisbury.

Practical Motives: National Politics

Turning to the national level, Hamilton has suggested that the unusual agreement may indicate royal pressure on Henry de Lacy and Margaret Longespée to agree to the contract.¹¹⁴ Edward I had made a policy of bringing earldoms closer to the crown, following a similar pattern in arranging the marriage of his daughter Joan of Acre to Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester and Hertford in 1290. After the two were married, the Clare inheritance was also rejoined with that of the crown, with a life interest for him and his wife and ultimate remainder to Joan and *her* heirs.¹¹⁵ The king followed a similar, though not identical, pattern in his daughter Elizabeth's marriage to Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford and Essex in 1302. Bohun granted his inheritance to the king, who in turn re-granted it to the couple to be held jointly.¹¹⁶ The inheritance was to be held in tail by heirs of their bodies; if there were no heirs, half would revert to the king, while the other half would be held by the living earl.¹¹⁷ Moving valuable royal earldoms closer to the royal family is a pattern also repeated later, notably by Edward III in the marriage in 1352 of Lionel of Antwerp to Elizabeth de Burgh, heiress of the earldom of Ulster, and in 1359 of John of Gaunt to Blanche, co-heiress of the earldom of Lancaster. In each of these cases, the marriage meant that an earldom, with the political and financial influence that came with it, was transferred closer to royal control. In the case of Alice and Thomas's marriage, the king was prepared to sweeten the deal however: in 1294 he pardoned all the debts Henry de Lacy owed the crown, possibly, as Spencer suggests, as part of the marriage agreement.¹¹⁸

The alliance of Lancaster and Lacy shifted power at the highest levels of the English aristocracy. Acquiring multiple earldoms was a growing trend in the thirteenth century (see Appendix 1.A). Although Alice's father Henry de Lacy was a trusted royal servant, Edward I could not be sure that Alice or the man she eventually married would be as trustworthy, and therefore desired to keep the marriage within the royal family. Thomas of Lancaster was the son of Edward's loyal brother Edmund; in the 1290s, it may have seemed that he was the safest choice for such elevation. Thomas was his father's heir; there would have been no concern about providing for him. The earldoms of Lincoln and Salisbury were a prize, but not, strictly speaking, necessary to secure Thomas's future. At this point the

¹¹³ Holmes, p. 41.

¹¹⁴ Hamilton, 'Lacy, Henry de'.

¹¹⁵ Jennifer C. Ward, 'Joan, countess of Hereford and Gloucester (1272–1307)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008) <<http://oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 10 July 2013].

¹¹⁶ J. S. Hamilton, 'Bohun, Humphrey (VII) de, fourth earl of Hereford and ninth earl of Essex (c.1276–1322)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008) <<http://oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 15 August 2013].

¹¹⁷ Holmes, pp. 19–20.

¹¹⁸ CPR 1292–1301, p. 72; Spencer, p. 92.

Lancastrian inheritance already included the earldoms of Lancaster and Leicester, as well as the lands belonging to the earldom of Derby and scattered lands and castles on the Welsh border. From the point of view of inheritance alone, Alice might have made a more sensible wife for one of Thomas's younger brothers, but it is doubtful that her parents could have been persuaded to quitclaim their earldoms for a younger son. The political element is crucial to understanding the settlement. By 1312, when Thomas and Alice had inherited from both her parents, Thomas held four of the sixteen extant English earldoms and was one of four men to hold more than one earldom (see Appendix 1.B).¹¹⁹ These four held more than half the earldoms in England. This creation of a new 'tier' of earl, considerably more powerful than the rest, might be seen as a precursor to the creation and proliferation of extremely powerful royal dukes in the fourteenth century under Edward III and Richard II.

Scholars have noted the trend, beginning under Henry III and continuing throughout Edward I's reign, of earldoms being brought closer to the royal family, by escheat, forfeiture and marriage. There has been debate on the question of whether Edward I had a 'policy' towards the earls and what that policy was.¹²⁰ Tout saw Edward I as 'anti-earl', arguing that the king worked to pull earldoms closer to royal influence and force earls to work in support of royal goals.¹²¹ McFarlane argued Edward I was not against the earls *per se*, but working to support his own family – royal policy was to intervene, where possible, to restrict comital status to those with royal blood. This allowed Edward to provide efficiently for his family and for himself; the policy was thus more about family than politics.¹²² Spencer argues that Edward I surely considered the political consequences of the fact that his marriage policy made most future earls relatives of the royal family. He points out that Edward only had one living son at the time when these marriages were contracted and argues that the goal of the policy was to create support for the future Edward II, not simply to cheaply provide for the growing royal family.¹²³

It is naïve to think that Edward I had not contemplated his policy's effects, even if his primary goal was providing for his family. Scholars' tendency to see this policy as either malicious (intended to undermine the earls' power) or benevolent (intended to provide for the royal family) obscures its true utility. Edward I's marriage policy did both, effectively creating provision for younger offshoots of his large family, while limiting the earls' power and drawing them closer to the crown. It is difficult to imagine that Edward was not acting, in part, to prevent the problems that overly-powerful earls had created for his father. The effect of Thomas and Alice's marriage was to reduce the number of individual earls from eleven to ten, and to redistribute earldoms held by the wealthiest. This placed Thomas of Lancaster, a collateral member of the royal family, head and shoulders above the other earls and further concentrated power at the highest levels of the social scale. At the same time, it also

¹¹⁹ The others were Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford and Essex; Gilbert de Clare, earl of Hertford and Gloucester; and John de Warenne, earl of Surrey and Sussex.

¹²⁰ K. B. McFarlane, 'Had Edward I a "Policy" Towards the Earls?', *History* 50 (1965), 145-159; Spencer, *Nobility and Kingship in Medieval England*; T. F. Tout, 'The Earldoms under Edward I', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 8 (1894), 129-155.

¹²¹ Tout, p. 140.

¹²² McFarlane, 'Had Edward I a "Policy" Towards the Earls?', pp. 148, 158.

¹²³ Spencer, *Nobility and Kingship in Medieval England*, pp. 43-44.

contributed to a situation which would prove problematic for Edward II and Richard II: the earls, and later dukes, of Lancaster grew powerful enough to pose a genuine military threat to the kings of England. Looking into the fifteenth century and beyond, however, the story changes: the vast Lancastrian patrimony was essential for financing government and supporting royal power under Henry IV and his successors. Edward I's policy had far-reaching and unforeseen consequences.

Territorial factors added extra motivation for Thomas of Lancaster and Alice de Lacy's marriage. As Spencer has noted, the Lacy lands were closely associated geographically with important Lancastrian properties. In Lancashire, the Lacy properties of Clitheroe Castle, Burnley, Darwin, Widnes and Rochdale were all close to Lancastrian lands in Liverpool and Salford. In Lincolnshire, Bolingbroke Castle was quite close to the Lancastrian lordship of Lindsey. In London, Lacy property in Holborn was not far from the Savoy Palace. In addition, Alice's inheritance included Halton Castle and the constablership of Chester in Cheshire; the lordship of Denbigh in Wales; and the honour of Pontefract in Yorkshire, as well as many other properties.¹²⁴ Many of these, especially Bolingbroke, Pontefract and Clitheroe, became essential ingredients in Lancastrian power. The marriage thus expanded Lancastrian influence into the north and west, while consolidating Lancastrian control in its traditional powerbase of the Midlands.

1.2.2.2 'Personal' Motives: The Relationship between the Earls of Lancaster and Lincoln

As discussed above, this marriage meant the permanent absorption of Lincoln and Salisbury into the Lancastrian patrimony. As sole heiress to both earldoms, Alice was a prize and her family doubtless had its pick of potential husbands for her – there was no need to commit to a marriage agreement that removed the possibility of the Lacy inheritance ever again being its own entity. Alice was betrothed at ten or eleven, several years after the youngest age (seven) at which girls could enter a betrothal, which may suggest that there were multiple negotiations for her marriage, or that her parents were waiting to see if they might have a male heir. However, she married Thomas when she was twelve or thirteen, at or near the earliest age at which girls were canonically allowed to marry. Clearly both families were eager for the marriage to go forward. This appears to have been a disadvantageous marriage for the Lacy family, but they seem to have been eager for it. It seems likely, then, that in addition to possible royal pressure for the marriage, personal motivations played a role.

The relationship between Edmund of Lancaster and Henry de Lacy rounds out a discussion of motives for this marriage. They spent a good deal of time together, serving royal interests, throughout the 1280s-90s and were members of Edward I's closest circle of advisers and friends.¹²⁵ In December 1282, Edward I issued letters patent to Edmund and Henry for any deaths that had occurred in the siege of Chartley Castle (co. Staffs.), a possession of the Ferrers earls of Derby, which Edmund had besieged on the king's orders.¹²⁶ In 1291 Edmund and Henry were serving together in Scotland.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ Spencer, *Nobility and Kingship in Medieval England*, p. 22.

¹²⁵ CCR, 1288-96, no. 55.

¹²⁶ CPR 1281-1292, no. 53.

¹²⁷ CPR, 1281-92, nos. 268, 278, 294, 302, 365; CCR, 1288-96, no. 34.

After their children married in 1294, they continued to support each other's interests. In that year Henry loaned Edmund the substantial sum of 4000 marks and in 1295 they together petitioned the king for a favour to a John le Leuter, citizen of London.¹²⁸ These entries speak to the trust Edward I placed in Lacy, as well as Lacy's relationship to Edmund of Lancaster. Henry and his wife Margaret regularly received gifts and other tokens of appreciation from the king, and in 1290 Henry served as one of the executors of Queen Eleanor's will.¹²⁹ In this context, another goal of the marriage between Alice de Lacy and Thomas of Lancaster seems to have been to confirm and extend positive relations between Lincoln, Lancaster and the crown, and may reflect the on-going personal relationships between the men involved. Another key relationship to consider is that of Henry de Lacy and Edward I. It has been well established that Lacy was one of Edward's most loyal supporters, trusted advisors and closest friends. As Spencer has discussed, Thomas of Lancaster was in the 1290s the most valuable marriage prospect in England after the Prince of Wales.¹³⁰ The marriage between Thomas and Alice de Lacy was thus part of the king's reward to her father for his decades of loyal service.

1.2.3 Relationships

Alice de Lacy and Thomas of Lancaster's marriage provides an opportunity to analyse the relationships produced by aristocratic marriage in the Middle Ages. In many cases a married couple's happiness – or lack thereof – could affect events far beyond the marital sphere. This was especially true if the couple, as in this case, held wealth or power on a national level.

1.2.3.1 Evidence for an Unhappy Marriage: Infertility, Abduction, Separate Lives

Scholars have accepted that Thomas of Lancaster's marriage to Alice de Lacy was unhappy, commonly citing Alice's abduction by John de Warenne – and the suspicion that she may have colluded in it – as evidence. Alice's abduction probably *was* evidence of unhappiness in her marriage to Thomas; however, it may also provide insight into Alice's own political manoeuvrings. Other evidence, including Alice's apparent infertility and evidence that she and Thomas led separate lives before and after her abduction, suggests that their marriage had been unhappy for some time.

Infertility

Circumstantial evidence for an unhappy marriage comes from the fact that the couple had no children. Thomas had two illegitimate sons, so it would have been clear that it was Alice who was infertile.¹³¹

¹²⁸ CPR 1292-1301, nos. 102, 144.

¹²⁹ CCR 1279-88, nos. 161, 214, 278; CCR 1288-96, nos. 79, 179, 187, 212, 241, 276, 304, 467; CCR 1296-1302, no. 223.

¹³⁰ Spencer, *Nobility and Kingship in Medieval England*, p. 41.

¹³¹ *Calendar of Papal Petitions, Vol. 1, 1342-1419*, pp. 193, 271, 383; *British History Online* [<http://www.british.history.ac.uk>], <Accessed 3 March 2014>. John of Lancaster was the son of Thomas of Lancaster and an unmarried woman related to Thomas in the third degree. He received a university education and in 1350 resigned his position in the diocese of Lichfield in order to take up a canonry and prebend in Lincoln. The other illegitimate son, Thomas, was apparently the result of a liaison with a different woman. He also attended university and later served Edward III as a knight and chamberlain. In 1355 Edward III petitioned the pope that Thomas might have a dispensation to join the Friars Minor. In unclear who the mothers of these children were or when they were born (though as both were still living and had put together reasonably full CVs by the 1350s, we might speculate that they were born in the early 1300s). Though no evidence of them dates to Thomas's lifetime, he must have recognised them in order for Edward III to intervene on their behalf with the pope.

That her subsequent marriages were also childless may confirm this conclusion, though she was in her forties by the time she remarried. Accepted ideas of medieval aristocratic marriage suggest that childlessness, particularly in a marriage like this one, where the inheritable property was extremely large, would place a large strain upon the marriage. Neither seems to have ever considered an annulment, though. As d'Avray has recently argued, the appearance that the upper classes could easily manoeuvre around canon law to acquire annulments may have been misleading; by the thirteenth century, the church only granted annulments in cases where there was legitimate legal justification.¹³² The traditional means of demonstrating this, the 'discovery' of a prohibited degree of kinship, was impossible in this situation, as Alice and Thomas were not related within four degrees. At any rate, the terms of the marriage contract ensured that Lancaster would receive Alice's inheritance with heirs or without children. Thomas may still have taken Alice's infertility personally and resented the fact that he would have no legitimate son of his own to whom he could pass his patrimony. Nonetheless, there would have been no immediate concern that the Lancastrian patrimony would be lost or split: Thomas had two younger brothers and his brother Henry's wife had given birth to a son, Henry of Grosmont, by 1310. By that date, then, the Lancastrian inheritance was preserved for the next generation. Beginning in the early years of the fourteenth century, Henry of Lancaster likely saw himself as the *de facto* heir of the earldom.

If this is the case, then it must raise questions about accepted understandings of marriage in the Middle Ages. Although most married couples presumably desired children, in cases where there was no concern for succession, other motivations may have taken precedence. Thomas and Alice's marriage agreement, which made Thomas and the house of Lancaster heirs of the Lacy/Longespée patrimony, reinforces the conclusion that in this marriage, where inheritance was not a major concern, consolidating and adding to Lancastrian power was more important. The impact of Alice's childlessness would have had a greater effect on her natal family. Although the marriage agreement allowed the house of Lancaster to keep the earldoms of Lincoln and Salisbury in the event that Alice had no children, her parents probably did not expect this to actually happen. In the end, Alice's infertility meant that her parents' earldoms passed out of their bloodline, which was probably a disappointment to all concerned.

Abduction

The most dramatic event of Alice de Lacy and Thomas of Lancaster's marriage was Alice's abduction, in 1317, by men associated with John de Warenne, earl of Surrey. Scholars agree the abduction was politically motivated, with the goal of either revenge on Thomas of Lancaster or to distract him from his dissent against Edward II. The basic events of the abduction are well established: in April 1317, Alice was taken from her home at Canford in Dorset (part of her mother's earldom of Salisbury) to Warenne's castle of Reigate in Surrey. Thomas responded by attacking several of Warenne's castles in York, Shropshire and Wales.¹³³ Outside chronicle depictions, there is no evidence for Alice's feelings

¹³² D'Avray, *Papacy, Monarchy and Marriage*, pp. 6-7.

¹³³ CCR, 1313-18, pp. 554, 575.

and actions during the abduction. Traditionally, scholarship has focused on Thomas's reaction and the effect that his attacks on Warenne had politically. However, the abduction and its aftermath can shed light on the quality of Thomas and Alice's relationship, especially Thomas's attitude towards their marriage. A close reading of the evidence and an understanding of rape and abduction in the period suggest Alice was accepting of, and possibly complicit in, her abduction.

The substantial body of literature on abduction and rape in medieval England generally focuses on the difficulty in understanding accusations of these acts.¹³⁴ This confusion results from three major causes: the language used in medieval documentation; women's place as 'property'; and a conflation in the meanings of 'abduction' and 'rape'. Medieval records employ numerous terms to describe abduction and most of these can be translated in multiple ways. As Dunn has demonstrated, meanings of the Latin verb *rapere* shifted throughout the Middle Ages. Dunn argues that by the late Middle Ages, the concepts of rape, abduction, seduction and elopement existed on the same linguistic continuum, all covered by the term *rapere*.¹³⁵ Other terms, such as *abducere*, *cadere* and *stuprum* were used occasionally in reference to incidents of rape or abduction, but *rapere* is the most common in the legal record. Here I have translated *rapere* as 'ravisht', the most neutral meaning, but it should be borne in mind that many translations, ranging from 'seduce' to 'rape', are possible.

A second source of confusion in cases of medieval ravishtment comes from an increasing legal emphasis on women's abduction as loss of property. This reflects the medieval emphasis on women – their sexuality and reproductive potential – as a valuable commodity. The Second Statute of Westminster, enacted in 1285 and still the authority in 1317 when Alice de Lacy was first ravisht, highlights this particularly well. Although a woman could sue the crime of ravishtment personally, her family or the crown could also sue, whether or not the woman had consented. In addition to dealing with straightforward cases of rape and abduction, the statute covered lost rights over a marriageable daughter, the abduction of wards, or the goods taken with an abducted wife.¹³⁶ As Post has pointed out, the statute thus used the same language to cover a variety of cases, with the result that

the Statutes of Westminster turned the law of rape into a law of elopement and abduction, which inhibited the purposes of the woman herself... and fostered the interests of those who

¹³⁴ See especially: Caroline Dunn, *Stolen Women in Medieval England: Rape, Abduction, and Adultery, 1100-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Barbara A. Hanawalt, 'Whose Story was This? Rape Narratives in Medieval English Courts', in *'Of Good and Ill Repute: Gender and Social Control in Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 124-141; Kim M. Phillips, 'Written on the Body: Reading Rape from the Twelfth to Fifteenth Centuries', in *Medieval Women and the Law*, ed. by Noel James Menuge (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), pp. 125-44; J. B. Post, 'Ravishtment of Women and the Statutes of Westminster', in *Legal Records and the Historian: Papers Presented to the Cambridge Legal History Conference, 7-10 July 1975, and in Lincoln's Inn Old Hall on 3 July 1974* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1978), pp. 150-164; Elizabeth Robertson, 'Public Bodies and Psychic Domains: Rape, Consent, and Female Subjectivity in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*', in *Representing Rape in Medieval and Early Modern Literature* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 281-310; Elizabeth Robertson and Christine M. Rose, 'Representing Rape in Medieval and Early Modern Literature', in *Representing Rape in Medieval and Early Modern Literature* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 1-17; Corinne Saunders, 'A Matter of Consent: Middle English Romance and the Law of Raptus', in *Medieval Women and the Law*, ed. by Noel James Menuge (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), pp. 105-24.

¹³⁵ Dunn, *Stolen Women*, pp. 25-29.

¹³⁶ *Second Statute of Westminster* as printed in Dunn, *Stolen Women*, pp. 197-198.

wanted material recompense for the material disparagement wrought by self-willed womenfolk and suitors.¹³⁷

The men in a woman's life had an incentive to depict such acts as ravishment, even if the woman in question had actually consented.

The third source of confusion in looking at cases of ravishment, the conflation of 'abduction' and 'rape', flows naturally from the first and second. Dunn has suggested that *rapere* (to rape/ravish) and *abducere* (to abduct) were used together, especially after the Second Statute of Westminster, forming the 'lexical doublet' *rapere et abducere*.¹³⁸ This is not to suggest that medieval society could not or did not distinguish between forced and consensual sex, but the conflation in these terms creates confusion for those trying to interpret the record today. Phillips has suggested that the conflation in meaning of *rapere* and *abducere* is representative of a shift in victimisation in these cases. She argues that by the fourteenth century, a raped woman as victim of assault was second in importance to the new 'victim': her husband, father or guardian.¹³⁹ These are not the only sources of confusion when looking at these incidents – the reliability of the record and of the recorder, for instance, must be considered – but they are the most important ones. The result of this confusion is that, when examining cases of medieval ravishment, the facts can be difficult to establish.

Alice's involvement in and reactions to her abduction have raised a number of questions. While some, both at the time as well as now, have accepted that Alice was taken against her will, others have suggested that she went with her 'captors' willingly, or was even involved in arranging the abduction. The event is mentioned in at least seven chronicles, whose writers offer several different interpretations. Some see the event as a crime against Alice and her husband, while others lay the blame for the incident at Alice's feet. Although they differ in their depictions of Alice's involvement, most agree that motives for the abduction were political. Nearly every chronicler makes a connection, either explicitly or implicitly, between Thomas of Lancaster's actions against Edward II and Warenne's abduction of Alice. Several – the Meaux Chronicle, *Annales Paulini* and *Gesta Edwardi de Carnarvan* – merely include a short description of Alice's abduction in the context of the political turmoil of the period.¹⁴⁰ Others make the connection more explicitly. The author of the *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, composed by 1325, depicts the messengers that Thomas of Lancaster sends to Edward II to excuse his absence from parliament explaining that

you [Edward II] ought not to be offended or surprised if the earl of Lancaster does not come to parliament, for he fears the deadly plots of certain men whom the royal court protects and fosters.

¹³⁷ Post, pp. 150, 160.

¹³⁸ Dunn, *Stolen Women*, pp. 33-38, 43.

¹³⁹ Phillips, p. 138.

¹⁴⁰ Thomas de Burton, *Chronica Monasterii de Melsa a Fundati Usque ad Annum 1396, Auctore Thoma de Burton, Abbate* (Meaux Chronicle), 3 vols., ed. by Edward A. Bond (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1866-68), II, p. 335; William Stubbs, '*Annales Paulini*' in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, ed. by William Stubbs, 2 vols. (London: Longman, 1882-1883), I, p. 280; William Stubbs, '*Gesta Edwardi de Carnarvan Auctore Canonico Bridlingtoniensi*' in William Stubbs, ed., *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II* (London: Longman and Co., 1883), p. 54.

Their enmity is already clearly well known; they have already carried off the earl's wife to his disgrace and shame, whereby they have plainly displayed the feelings they bear towards him.¹⁴¹

The author of the *Flores Historiarum*, a generally anti-royalist chronicle written at Westminster more or less contemporaneously with events, claims that the original target of the attack was not Alice de Lacy, but Thomas himself:

A group of the wicked having been convened, they unanimously and treacherously conspired to murder the aforesaid earl. And met as one, they directed the earl Warenne, a great flatterer, that the unjust plan should be quickly pursued with a strong band of armed men, and that the desired goal should be unhappily brought about. When they arrived at the earl of Lancaster's lands, suddenly a great fear, with a trembling of the heart, possessed them, so that they neither dared to progress further, nor to look upon the earl's lands. But turning their horses, they approached the place where they knew the countess of Lancaster to be staying; and they seized her.¹⁴²

Thomas Walsingham's *Historia Anglicana* is the only major chronicle not to connect Alice's abduction with political events, but Walsingham was writing in the late fourteenth century, at least fifty years after the events occurred. His major concern was to tell an elaborate story and emphasise the abductors' evil attitude. He may also have been influenced by Thomas of Lancaster's good reputation in the latter half of the fourteenth century. 'The perpetrators of the crime detestably assembled, so it is said, with royal assent, were many of the court,' Walsingham says, adding that, 'though she [Alice] was very dignified, she was taken away, to the contempt of the aforesaid earl of Lancaster, to the said earl Warenne at his castle of Reigate'.¹⁴³ He describes Richard of St Martin, who took charge of Alice, as a 'man of poor stature, crippled and hunchbacked, and always intending evil acts'.¹⁴⁴ Walsingham has St Martin claim that he had married Alice before Thomas had done, and claim the earldoms of Lincoln and Salisbury in parliament. In the end, however, Alice is the one who truly suffers. While noting that Alice was innocent in the abduction, Walsingham also says that 'thus she who all her life had been reputed to be the noblest lady, suddenly with a turn of the wheel of fortune, it is shameful to say, was acclaimed by the whole world to be the foulest prostitute'.¹⁴⁵ This depiction reflects concerns about raped or abducted women that Robertson has identified in medieval literature. In a society in which women and their sexuality were merely another form of property, a raped woman was damaged property and her place in society became suspect.¹⁴⁶ Thus Alice de Lacy, even while innocent of her abduction in

¹⁴¹ *Vita Edwardi Secundi: The Life of Edward II*, ed. and trans. by Wendy R. Childs (Oxford: Clarendon, 2005), pp. 136-137.

¹⁴² *Flores Historiarum*, ed. by Henry Richards Luard, 3 vols, (London: HMSO, 1890), III, pp. 178-179. All translations from this work are mine.

'...et convocato conventu malignantium in necem praedicti comitis unanimiter subdole conspirarunt. Et in unum convenientes, direxerunt comitem de Warannia, forem adulatorem, com armorum valida manu ad illorum iniqua consilia celeriter prosequenda et ad optatum finem infeliciter perducenda. Qui cum partes comitis Lancastriae appropinquassent, tantus timor cum tremore corda illorum subito invaserat, ut nec ulterius progredi nec ipsas partes cominus intueri audebant. Sed retortis fraenibus cum celeritate locum, ubi noverant comitissam Lancastriae degentem, aggressi sunt, ipsamque toto cordis desiderio illorum voluntatibus faventem ceperunt et gaudentem in castrum de Reygate secum abduxerunt'.

¹⁴³ Thomas Walsingham, *Chronica Monasterii S. Albani, Thomae Walsingham, Quondam Monachi S. Albani, Historia Anglicana*, ed. by Henry Thomas Riley, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1863), I, p. 148. All translations from this work are mine.

'...convocatis ad illud factum detestabile fautoribus, ut dicebatur, assensu regio, plurimis Anglicorum. Ducta est autem pompose nimis, in despectum Comitis dicti Lancastriae, ad dictum Warennae Comitem, ad castellum suum de Reygate'.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 149. '...uidam miserae staturae, claudus et gibbosus, suisque perpetuo intendens malitiis...'

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.* '...ac sic quae toto tempore vitae suae nobilissima fuerat reputata domina, subito vergente rota fortunae, quod dictu turpe est, per totum orbem spurcissima meretrix acclamatur...'

¹⁴⁶ Robertson, 'Public Bodies and Psychic Domains', p. 284.

Walsingham's depiction, could still be considered 'the foulest prostitute'. Dunn has demonstrated that there was a strong link in the medieval mind-set between a woman leaving her home and a woman committing adultery. Alice's departure from a home owned by her husband thus strongly implied her infidelity, whether there was a sexual element to her abduction or not.¹⁴⁷

Only Walsingham explicitly claims that Alice was innocent in the abduction. The Meaux Chronicle, *Vita Edwardi Secundi* and *Annales Paulini* all place the blame with the earl Warenne, merely mentioning that the earl 'took' or 'ravished' Alice. Whether Alice may have been complicit in her own ravishment is a question that they apparently considered unimportant, which is logical if they understood the matter mostly as an insult to her husband.¹⁴⁸ Two chronicles, the *Flores Historiarum* and *Gesta Edwardi de Carnarvan*, state that Alice did consent. The author of the *Gesta Edwardi de Carnarvan* is neutral, noting merely that 'the wife of Thomas of Lancaster, namely the daughter of Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, withdrew from her county and from her husband's rule, and the earl Warenne received her into his custody'.¹⁴⁹ Robert of Reading, the author of the *Flores Historiarum* for this period, is considerably happier to pass judgement on Alice, describing how Warenne's men seized Alice

who was entirely supporting of their wishes, and abducted her, as she rejoiced, to the castle of Reigate. Which countess, having forgotten the nobility and honour of her birth, involved herself with a certain lame esquire. Thus, out of their adulterous and shameless embraces, the name of countess was notoriously changed to adulteress.¹⁵⁰

Further difficulties in interpreting chronicle accounts come from the language used. Some of the same confusion in translation carries over into these chronicle accounts. Some chronicles mimic the Latin legal terms of the time while others use their own terminology. Walsingham and the authors of the *Annales Paulini* and *Vita Edwardi Secundi* employ a form of the verb *rapere*. The authors of the Meaux Chronicle, *Flores Historiarum* and *Gesta Edwardi de Carnarvan* all use ambiguous terms as well. The result makes it even more difficult to make sense of what happened to Alice. Most of the chronicles that depict Alice as innocent fail to clarify whether the abduction was sexual and, if so, whether Alice was a victim of rape or a consenting participant. The *Flores Historiarum*, Walsingham's *Historia Anglica* and the chronicle of Nicholas Trivet state that Alice became sexually involved with an esquire of the earl Warenne's household. Walsingham and Trivet add the name of the esquire (St Martin) and the fact that the sexual involvement was non-consensual.¹⁵¹ Though each of the chroniclers notes that the earl Warenne was responsible for the abduction, none suggests that Alice began a sexual relationship with

¹⁴⁷ Caroline Dunn, 'The Language of Ravishment in Medieval England', *Speculum*, 86 (2011), 79-116, (pp. 99-102).

¹⁴⁸ Thomas de Burton, *Meaux Chronicle*, II, p. 335; *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, p. 138; *Annales Paulini*, p. 280.

¹⁴⁹ *Gesta Edwardi de Carnarvan*, p. 54. All translations from this work are mine.

'...uxor Thomas Lancastriae, videlicet filia Henrici de Lasey comitis Lincolniae, recessit de comitiva et potestate domini sui supradicti, et comes de Warena eam in suam custodiam tunc recepit'.

¹⁵⁰ *Flores Historiarum*, p. 179.

'Sed retortis fraenis cum celeritate locum, ubi noverant comitissam Lancastriae degentem, aggressi sunt, ipsamque toto cordis desiderio illorum voluntatibus faventem ceperunt et gaudentem in castrum de Reygate secum abduxerunt. Quae quidem comitissa, nobilitatis sui generis it honoris oblita, cuidam adhaesit armigero claudo, et de adulterinis impudica congaudens amplexibus, nomen comitissae pro nomine adulterae ignobiliter commutavit'.

¹⁵¹ *Flores Historiarum*, p. 179; *Historia Anglica*, p. 149; *Nicholai Triveti Annalium Continuatio; ut et Adami Murimuthensis Chronicon, cum ejusdem Continuatio: Quibus Accedunt Joannis Bostoni Speculum Coenobitarum, et Edmundi Bolton Hypercritica* (Oxford: 1722). Accessed via Archive.org, <<https://archive.org>>, [accessed 4 March 2014], pp. 20-22.

Warrenne. The author of the *Meaux Chronicle* states the opposite, noting that 'John, earl Warrenne, carried away the wife of Thomas, earl of Lancaster, not in the cause of adultery, but in disdain for the said earl'.¹⁵²

Chroniclers' depictions of John de Warrenne's abduction of Alice de Lacy add colour to our understanding of the event, but do little to answer the questions of whether the abduction was consensual and what it might say about Alice's relationship with her husband. Neither Alice, Thomas, nor the king ever pursued the case legally, which may suggest that both Alice and Edward II were complicit. Under the Second Statute of Westminster, enacted in 1285, rape was one of few crimes that a married woman could sue personally, though her husband could also sue on her behalf; if neither sued, the king could also bring suit.¹⁵³ Thomas certainly never addressed the issue in court: in November 1317 the king chastised him for waging private war instead of seeking legal redress.¹⁵⁴ Edward II's decision not to bring suit, as he was entitled to do, may suggest his involvement in the abduction – if Warrenne had abducted Alice with on the king's orders or with his encouragement, the king might be less inclined to pursue the case.

If the abductors' goal was to offend Thomas of Lancaster, his attacks on Warrenne's lands in 1317-18 suggest that it worked. It is difficult to know what Thomas of Lancaster thought of his wife's role in her abduction, or whether he suspected – or knew for certain – that she was complicit in it. His failure to address Alice's abduction legally may indicate class bias. Thomas may have felt that a court case was beneath him and that the more chivalric course of action was to engage John de Warrenne in battle; if this was the case, his choice to attack Warrenne's castles in York, Shropshire and Wales is interesting. The chronicles agree that Alice was taken to Warrenne's castle of Reigate in Surrey, far from the castles that Thomas attacked. His focus was more on exacting revenge on Warrenne's property than rescuing his wife, which could suggest that he knew she did not need rescuing. He did attempt to turn the insult of Alice's abduction to his own financial advantage. In early 1319 Thomas and Warrenne reached a rather complicated settlement in which Thomas enfeoffed Warrenne of lands and rents worth approximately 1000 marks. In exchange, Warrenne agreed to pay to Thomas a fine of £50,000 and quitclaimed all his Yorkshire lands to him.¹⁵⁵ The goal, as Maddicott convincingly argues, presumably was to disinherit Warrenne completely, as raising such a large sum would have been nearly impossible. Warrenne went on to claim that he had been held against his will and coerced into agreement. Maddicott has suggested that the Warrenne lands, which were eventually granted to Thomas for life only, considerably consolidated Lancastrian power in Yorkshire and Wales.¹⁵⁶ Thomas of Lancaster and John de Warrenne had had a tempestuous relationship throughout Edward II's reign; this agreement may thus have reflected some mutual ongoing dislike. If Alice *had* arranged or been complicit in her abduction, colluding with one of her husband's enemies would have added extra

¹⁵² *Meaux Chronicle*, pp. 334-335. All translations from this work are mine.

'Johannes comes de Warrenne Thomae comiti Lancastriae sponsam suam abripuit, non tamen causa adulterii sed in despectu comitis antedicti?'

¹⁵³ Dunn, *Stolen Women*, p. 197.

¹⁵⁴ CCR 1313-18, p. 554.

¹⁵⁵ CPR 1317-21, pp. 263-264, 319; Maddicott, p. 235; TNA E 42/101.

¹⁵⁶ Maddicott, pp. 235-236.

insult. There is no indication that Warenne ever paid any of the £50,000 fine or that the agreement resolved any of the issues between the two – in 1322 he was one of the judges who ordered Thomas's execution. In 1328, he reached an agreement with Henry of Lancaster to have some of his lands returned in exchange for 2000 marks.¹⁵⁷

Interpreting this settlement as regards Thomas's own feelings towards his marriage is difficult. To a modern mind, Thomas's concern that he benefit financially from his wife's abduction comes across as unfeeling and calculating. Warenne's abduction of Alice would have been seen as a deep personal insult to Thomas; the decision to attack Warenne's property and extract money from him rather than satisfaction in the form of a duel could have come across as unchivalric and crass in a medieval context. His choice not to fight Warenne in person to protect his or Alice's honour may suggest that Thomas considered the marriage already over, in essence if not in fact. The agreement may also suggest that Thomas did not feel he would receive a fair trial if he took his wife's abductor to court. The nature of Thomas and Alice's relationship after her abduction is mysterious. It is unclear how long she remained in Warenne's custody and when, if ever, she was able to return to her husband or her own lands, though at the time of her 1322 arrest, Alice was living on her own lands with her stepmother. It is also unclear how her abduction affected her relationship with Thomas. An account of issues of Thomas's wardrobe from 1318-19 may be helpful here: Alice is not mentioned at all in the account, though several letters were sent to Pickering, where Alice's household had been based previously, and one letter was sent to Alice's stepmother, the countess of Lincoln; these may be slight indication of communication between Alice and Thomas.¹⁵⁸ Altogether, however, the account suggests that by 1318-19 Alice and Thomas had next to nothing to do with each other.

The abduction was a pivotal moment in Alice's life and marriage and the question of Alice's own goals has not been satisfactorily addressed. It seems likely that Alice was at least willing to go along with her abductors, and possibly even involved in organising the event. It is difficult to imagine that a woman with Alice's resources could be kidnapped and transported nearly one hundred miles between Canford and Reigate unwillingly. That the majority of chroniclers asserted that Alice was complicit adds weight to this interpretation. Scholars have also demonstrated that, while true kidnappings did occur, many 'abductions' were actually incidents of women attempting to elope or leave a marriage.¹⁵⁹ Alice's abduction is the highest-status example of such an event, which adds an additional element to dissect. When a woman of lower status left her husband, it had little effect beyond the local community, but Alice must have been aware that her departure would affect national politics. If she was already living separately from Thomas, she did not need to run away with Warenne to get away from her marriage. It is possible that Alice's goal in the abduction was to provoke Thomas into initiating a divorce. In the Middle Ages adultery was cause only for a divorce *a mensa et thoro* ('from table and hearth'), a legal

¹⁵⁷ Scott L. Waugh, 'Warenne, John de, seventh earl of Surrey (1286–1347)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2008) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 14 July 2013].

¹⁵⁸ DL 28/1/13, mm. 1-2.

¹⁵⁹ Post, p. 60; Dunn, *Stolen Women*, pp. 23, 39-40.

separation that allowed a couple to live apart but did not allow remarriage or entirely dissolve the marriage – it would have thus provided legal gloss to their choice to separate.¹⁶⁰ Insulting Thomas may have been as much Alice’s goal as her abductors’. Perhaps Alice, concerned that her husband’s actions against the king might bring retribution on her head as well as his, sought to demonstrate her loyalty to Edward II. Her lack of personal ties – she was independently wealthy and had no living parents or children – may have been to her benefit. If Alice consented to, or even helped to plan, her abduction, it is a sign that she considered her marriage broken beyond repair. Husbands and wives were understood to become one social self. A wife’s poor behaviour was thus an attack on her husband’s honour, as well as an indication that he had poor control over his household.¹⁶¹ For Alice, departure from her husband’s household was thus a means of giving him a very personal insult. If she helped to arrange her abduction in a show of protest against her husband’s dissent, it helps shed light on the ways in which some women might circumvent the constraints of a patriarchal society to communicate their own opinions.

Separate Lives

As discussed above, Thomas and Alice seem to have spent little time together. The writ of 22 March 1322 – the same day as Thomas’s execution -- which called for Alice’s arrest, also ordered the arrest of Alice’s widowed step-mother Joan lady Audley and others of their household, suggesting that the two women were living together.¹⁶² Whether this was a permanent or temporary arrangement is impossible to know. The little surviving financial evidence from Thomas of Lancaster’s tenure as earl supports the theory that Alice lived separately from her husband before his death. Canford Castle, where Alice was living when she was abducted by Warenne, is only a few miles from Kingston Lacy, which was the centre of Lacy power in Dorset. We might, then, suggest that Alice preferred to live on lands that had belonged to her family. The 1318-19 record of Lancastrian wardrobe issues, which makes no mention of Alice at all, is further evidence that, certainly after her abduction, she and Thomas were living apart.¹⁶³ Alice’s apparent infertility may have played a role in the decision that she and Thomas would lead separate lives. One or both of them may have seen their lack of children as a sign of divine disapproval of the marriage. Once it became clear that Alice was infertile, it may have been decided that the decent thing to do was to live separately. If Alice and Thomas disliked each other, this was so much the better.

More evidence for unhappiness in their marriage comes from religious bequests. Neither seems to have arranged for prayers or services to be said for the other’s soul. In 1302, when Thomas granted land his mother had held to a London convent, he specified that it was for the good of his soul and those of his parents.¹⁶⁴ In 1316 Thomas was granted licence to alienate a messuage in the parish of St

¹⁶⁰ Baker, *An Introduction to English Legal History*, p. 562.

¹⁶¹ Neal, p. 82.

¹⁶² CPR 1321-24, p. 84.

¹⁶³ TNA DL 28/1/13, *passim*.

¹⁶⁴ TNA LR 14/1083. Thomas granted land previously held by his mother to the abbess and sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary near Aldgate. This may refer to the convent of Poor Clares at Aldgate that Blanche of Artois and Edmund of Lancaster had founded, and where Edmund was first buried.

Mary atte Strond in London and to hire chaplains in Worcester Cathedral to celebrate services for his parents, himself, and Robert Holland, his favourite retainer. A similar grant, made in 1318, dictated that masses be celebrated in St Peter's Chapel at Tutbury Castle for the souls of Thomas's parents, his grandparents Henry III and Eleanor of Provence, and himself and his heirs.¹⁶⁵ Alice's conspicuous absence from these lists might be interpreted as a sign that both considered the marriage finished well before Thomas's death.

At the same time, some evidence of Alice's integration into the Lancastrian household comes from the earl of Lancaster's receiver general's account of 1313-14. It notes that Nicholas de Schepie, the former receiver of the countess's household, had returned £47 13s. 5½ d. in victuals before he left and was replaced by Richard de Warmynton. In the same account, Nicholas de Schepie appears as the current receiver of Tutbury, suggesting that Alice's successful household servants might be promoted within the Lancastrian administration to more prestigious posts. Whatever Alice's personal feelings, her household was at least partly integrated with the rest of the Lancastrian administration. When this account was made, Alice's household was based at the castle of Pickering, North Yorkshire. Her household expenses, while hardly small at £439 8s. 3½d., are paltry compared to her husband's expenses of £5230 18s. 7½d. Baldwin suggested that Alice kept an entirely separate establishment, with its own treasurer and income.¹⁶⁶ The account of 1313-14 supports this. Not all the lordships that Alice and Thomas owned are included in the receiver general's account; several of those that belonged to Alice's inheritance are missing, suggesting that she administered them independently and used the profits to augment her income from Thomas.¹⁶⁷ About fifty miles from Thomas's main residence at Pontefract, Pickering was close enough to Thomas to facilitate communication, while far enough away that they did not have to interact very often. One fact of note is that Alice and Thomas did not confine their choices of residence to castles that had come from their own inheritances: Pickering was part of the Lancastrian patrimony, while Thomas acquired Pontefract through the Lacy earldom of Lincoln.

1.2.3.2 Relationships: Men's Networks

Thomas and Alice's marriage, as well as Alice's subsequent marriages, reflect the web of relationships connecting the men in their lives. Both their parents were members of Edward I's most intimate circle, as discussed above. Henry de Lacy and Thomas of Lancaster's relationship is particularly worth examining, though only speculation is possible. In 1308, when most of the earls were in opposition to Edward II over the issue of Piers Gaveston, Thomas remained neutral, perhaps, as Maddicott contends, because he was torn between support for the king (his cousin) and support for Lacy (his father-in-law and head of the opposition). By the summer of 1309, however, Thomas also openly opposed royal policy. Maddicott expresses confusion, speculating that perhaps a quarrel between Thomas and Edward had been blown out of proportion.¹⁶⁸ Henry de Lacy's death may provide a more

¹⁶⁵ CPR 1313-17, p. 441.; CPR 1317-21, p. 203.

¹⁶⁶ J. F. Baldwin, 'The Household Administration of Henry Lacy and Thomas of Lancaster' *English Historical Research* 42 (1927), 180-200 (p. 193).

¹⁶⁷ TNA DL 29/1/3.

¹⁶⁸ Maddicott, pp. 80-81, 94, 111-114.

compelling explanation. When Lacy died in February of 1311, Thomas had been the *de facto* leader of the opposition since the spring of 1310. It seems reasonable to speculate that he took over this unofficial role when Henry de Lacy's health began to fail and, furthermore, that Lacy saw Thomas as his heir politically as well as territorially. The chronicler John de Trokelowe describes how Lacy, on his deathbed, giving Thomas sage counsel. Lacy, he says,

instructed the said Thomas, as his son and heir, in acts of war and the way of diligently living.

When he had discerned that the day of his death was approaching, he addressed Thomas, who came to him to alleviate his suffering as much as he might and to receive his final blessing: 'My son, you have married my only daughter, whence my inheritance shall come to you. You are the son of a good father, from whom you have three earldoms, and now by your wife you will obtain two more, namely Lincoln and Salisbury, and thus you will rule over five earldoms. Remember, however, how the Lord has enriched you before all the other magnates of England, whence you are held to devote honour to him before all others. You are already distinguished by singular faith, but the English church, which was accustomed to freedom, by the oppressions of the Romans and unjust taxes of kings, so often extorted, has now become a slave. And the people of our land, who were accustomed to enjoy many liberties, by diverse upheavals and talliaiges imposed by kings, have been led to servitude. Therefore I charge you, for my blessing and God's, when you see that the opportune time has come, to defend the church and the people from such oppressions, to the honour of God. Let you show the king, who is your lord and your cousin by blood, due honour and reverence. And let you continually lead him in all care and haste, so that evil counsellors and foreigners may leave his court, and so that he may bring to final effect the tenor of the Magna Carta, with other articles, petitioned and conceded by the clergy and people for the status of the church and the salvation of the realm, and confirmed under the threat of excommunication by our venerable father Lord Robert of Winchelsey, Archbishop of Canterbury, together with all the clergy of England. And let you choose English counsellors and ministers, and let you teach them to do what is just to everyone, so they may direct your court in all abundance and discretion. And when it happens that the estate of the realm with all the magnates' lands withdraws, let you undoubtedly adhere to the advice of the nobleman Guy, earl of Warwick, who surpasses all his equals in sound counsel and maturity... Doing these things, you will discover favour and honour in this time and glory in the future.'

Having said these things, given him his blessing, faithfully received the sacramental rites, and disposed well of his earthly matters, he departed to Christ and was buried in the church of St Paul in London. Which inheritance, given to him on his wife's part, the said Thomas undertook. Remembering the advice of his father-in-law, he chose such great counselors and ministers for himself that he was a man prosperous in all matters.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ Trokelowe, pp. 72-73.

'...et dictum Thomam, ut filium et haeredem suum, in gestis militaribus et modo vivendi diligenter instruebat. Hic, cum diem mortis suae cerneret imminere, venientem ad se Thomam, ut languores ipsius pro viribus mitigaret, et ut ultimam ejus benedictionem acciperet, sic est allocutus: "Fili mi, filiam meam unicam desponsasti; unde haereditas mea tibi incumbit. Filii quidem boni patris es, ex parte cujus tres Comitatus habuisti, et nunc per uxorem tuam duos alio obtinebis, videlicet, Lincolniae et Sarisbiriiae; et sic super quinque Comitatus dominaberis. Memento ergo, qualiter prae cunctis Angliae magnatibus Dominus te ditavit; unde honorem sibi prae caeteris impendere teneris. Cernis jam oculata fide, quod Ecclesia Anglicana, quae solebat esse libera, per oppressiones Romanorum, et injustas exactiones a regibus totiens extortas, nunc facta est ancilla. Populus etiam terrae nostrae, quae multis libertatibus gaudere solebat, variis vexationibus et talliagiis, per reges huc usque impositis, in servitutem deducitur. Quare te adjuro, pro benedictione Dei et mei, quatenus, cum tempus videris opportunum, Ecclesiam et populum ex talibus oppressionibus ob honorem Dei, pro viribus tuis liberes et defendas; Regi tuo, qui dominus et nepos consanguineus est, honorem et reverentiam debitam exhibeas, et ut malos consiliarios et alienigenas a Curia sua amoveat, tenoremque Magnae Chartae, cum aliis Articulis, a clero et populo pro statu Ecclesiae et regni salvando, petitis et concessis, et, sub interminatione anathematis in contravenientes dati, a verabili patre nostro, Domino Roberto de Winchelse, Cantuariensi Archiepiscopo, una cum toto clero Angliae, confirmatis, ad finalem effectum perducat, cum omni cautela et maturitate inducas, consiliarios et ministros Anglicanos tibi eligas, quibus, ut unicuique quod justum est faciant, Curiamque tuam in omni plenitudine et discretionem dirigant, jugiter praecipias. Et cum de statu regni cum caeteris terrae magnatibus contigerit retractare, consilio nobilis viri g[uidonis], Comitis Warwicencis, qui prae caeteris paribus suis sano consilio et maturitate pollet, ac circa regni utilitates profundius tractat, indubitanter adhaereas. Haec faciens, gratiam et honorem invenes in hoc saeculo, et gloriam in futuro".

Trokelow, writing in the 1330s, was clearly influenced by popular opinion, which at that point saw Thomas of Lancaster as a quasi-martyr to the oppression of Edward II. He was clearly willing to play with the truth: describing Thomas as ‘prosperous in all matters’ is a stretch, to say the least. Trokelowe’s depiction reflects the common criticisms of Edward II’s regime: his reliance on foreign counsellors, his association with men of low birth, his oppression and excessive taxation of the church and common people. His account is certainly biased – the complaint about Edward II’s oppression of the church more closely reflects clerical concerns than comital ones. Yet it clearly shows Henry passing the torch to his son-in-law. We cannot know how closely this conforms to the facts of their relationship, but it demonstrates that at least one near-contemporary understood it in this light.

1.2.4 Death and Memory

1.2.4.1 Widowhood

Evidence from Alice de Lacy’s widowhood sheds light on the concerns and lifestyle of a wealthy single woman of the fourteenth century. Although Alice’s experience was unique and hardly representative of widows as a whole, it offers insight into widowhood and remarriage for medieval aristocratic women. Scholarship on medieval widowhood is limited; while many scholars have addressed women’s lives after marriage, there has been no comprehensive work on widowhood. The work that has been done generally takes one of two approaches, examining either the spiritual or social sides of widowhood. Spiritual approaches deal with the ecclesiastical ideal of the chaste widow. Medieval society saw all women’s sexuality as a threat to chastity, but a widow, a woman who had previously been sexually active, but was expected to remain celibate after her husband’s death, occupied a liminal sexual space that was particularly troubling. At the same time, widowhood provided women with a unique opportunity: unlike her still-married sisters, a widow had a second chance at living a chaste life. There was even opportunity for extra heavenly reward: the *Myroure to Lewde Men* taught that a woman who kept a chaste widowhood would have her heavenly reward sixty-fold.¹⁷⁰ Canonists and theologians had a difficult time grappling with remarriage. Although the New Testament clearly allowed remarriage, medieval commentators generally regarded remarriage as a ‘concession to human frailty’ and Pope Alexander III denied a second nuptial blessing to anyone who had been married previously.¹⁷¹ Brundage has noted that the church’s position on widowhood and remarriage reflects a dissonance

Huius dictis, data sibi benedictione, et Sacramentis ecclesiasticis devote perceptis, temporalibusque rebus suis bene dispositis, migravit ad Christum, et in ecclesia Sancti Pauli Londoniis cum honore sepultus est. Cujus haereditatem, ex parte uxoris suae sibi debitam, dictus Thomas ingreditur; monita patris sui legalis memoriter retinens, tales consiliarios et ministros sibi elegit, per quos erat vir in cunctis prospere agens.

I am grateful to Dr Lena Wahlgren-Smith for her assistance with this translation.

¹⁷⁰ Cordelia Beattie, *Medieval Single Women: The Politics of Social Classification in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 58. A lifelong virgin would have her heavenly reward multiplied one hundred-fold; a member of chaste marriage, thirty-fold.

¹⁷¹ James A. Brundage, 'The Merry Widow's Serious Sister: Remarriage in Classical Canon Law', in *Matrons and Marginal Women in Medieval Society*, ed. by Robert R. Edwards and Vickie Ziegler (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1995), pp. 33-48 (pp. 38-39).

between religious expectation and social reality that was symptomatic of the medieval church's ambivalent attitude towards marriage and sexuality in general.¹⁷²

The social reality was that in a society with a high mortality rate, widowhood was a common state which created both opportunities and vulnerabilities for the women who experienced it. Scholarship examining the 'social' side of widowhood has generally fallen into one of two camps. Some, like Archer, see widowhood as 'the best years in a woman's life'.¹⁷³ Brundage, however, takes a more cynical view of a woman's options after her husband's death, painting the result of widowhood as 'the wreckage of family life'.¹⁷⁴ The reality was somewhere in between these extremes: widowhood did open new doors to women, but choices open to them in theory could be constrained by real-life concerns and pressures. Women had a number of options, ranging from remarriage to the cloister, but which choice they made depended on a number of factors. Scholarship on widows has, with few exceptions, focused on the experience of lower and middle-class women. The concerns of aristocratic women, faced with questions of inheritance, property and politics, could be quite different and more complex.

Aspects of widowhood – religious, legal and social – that affected all widows affected those of the upper classes in different ways. Much of the rhetoric surrounding medieval widowhood has discussed widows' dower and control of property, noting that the property held by widows could constitute a significant portion of the heir's inheritance. A wealthy widow, especially one who had had children and was still young enough to have more, was a valuable marriage partner, as seen in the case of Blanche of Artois. This made remarriage a serious consideration for aristocratic widows. Magna Carta guaranteed widows easy and quick access to their dowers and provided that widows should not be compelled to remarry, as long as they gave security that they would not marry without their lord's permission.¹⁷⁵ The many records of women suing for their dower in medieval courts indicate, however, that widows' legal rights were not always automatically respected and enforced.¹⁷⁶ These legal questions were of particular importance to women with property. On the social side of things, aristocratic women may have had more concern for their reputations after they became widows, particularly if they hoped to marry again. Whether or not a woman remarried, her previous marriage(s) always remained part of her identity; a woman might continue to be referred to as a man's wife (*femme* or *uxor*) long after his death or her remarriage.¹⁷⁷ This was, again, something true at all levels of society, but of particular importance to

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 48.

¹⁷³ Rowena E. Archer, 'Rich Old Ladies: The Problem of Late Medieval Dowagers', in *Property and Politics: Essays in Late Medieval English History*, ed. by Tony Pollard (Gloucester: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1984), pp. 15-35 (p. 19).

¹⁷⁴ Brundage, 'The Merry Widow's Serious Sister', p. 33.

¹⁷⁵ Magna Carta, chapters 7-8.

7. '*Vidua post mortem mariti sui statim et sine difficultate habeat maritagium et hereditatem suam, nec aliquid det pro dote sua, vel pro maritaggio suo, vel hereditate sua, quam hereditatem maritus suus et ipsa tenuerint dit obitus ipsius mariti, et maneat in domo mariti sui per quadraginta dies post mortem ipsius, infra quos assignetur ei dos sua*'. 8. '*Nulla vidua distringatur ad se maritandum, dum voluerit vivere sine marito, ita tamen quod securitatem faciat quod se non maritabit sine assensu nostro, si de nobis tenuerit, vel sine assensu domini sui de quo tenuerit, si de alio tenuerit*'.

¹⁷⁶ Sue Sheridan Walker, 'Litigation as Personal Quest: Suing for Dower in the Royal Courts, circa 1272-1350', in *Wife and Widow in Medieval England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), pp. 81-108, passim.

¹⁷⁷ Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner, 'Introduction', in *Widowhood in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Sandra Cavallo and Lyndan Warner (Harlow: Pearson Education, 1999), pp. 3-23 (p. 10). Goldberg has recorded one instance of this as well: 'Also that Felmersham's widow [*uxor*] with her entire household and other mature

those who had been married to famous – or infamous – men. Wives of traitors, such as Alice de Lacy, were particularly vulnerable. Archer has noted that a husband's forfeiture for treason resulted in the forfeiture of his wife's dower, jointure and inheritance as well, events which occurred frequently under Edward II.¹⁷⁸ Nonetheless, widowhood, especially when it occurred early in life, could give aristocratic women a good deal of freedom. The choices between remarriage, single life, or some sort of religious life were, in many ways, more 'real' for upper-class women.

Execution of Thomas of Lancaster

Whatever Alice's personal feelings may have been after her husband's execution, her situation in the spring of 1322 was precarious. On 22 March 1322, the same day as Thomas's execution at Pontefract, Edward II ordered Alice's arrest (along with her step-mother Joan de Lacy and members of her household), and that they be taken to him.¹⁷⁹ Joan spent over two months in royal custody before being released to her father's care – on the conditions that she spoke to no one and did not leave York – in June.¹⁸⁰ Alice appears to have been under royal control, either with the royal court or with the Despensers, throughout the summer and autumn of 1322. Mitchell has argued that a grant Alice made to Barlings Abbey in July of that year suggests that she thought she was about to be executed and was making plans for the safe-guarding of her soul.¹⁸¹ Alice may have had some reason to fear: an account made in the 1330s under her brother-in-law Henry of Lancaster reveals that

Alice, who was the wife of the aforesaid Thomas, was seized and taken to York and imprisoned, and there she was arraigned by Hugh Despenser the father and Hugh the son, as if she had been part of the quarrel [between Thomas of Lancaster and Edward II]. And they said that she had been the cause of her lord's death and that she used sorcery. And the aforesaid Alice, for fear of death, placed herself entirely in the command of the aforesaid Hugh and Hugh, and in the protection of the said king. For this, the aforesaid Alice granted and released to the said king the greater part of her lands.¹⁸²

This account, which comes in the midst of a collection of legal documents collected for Henry of Lancaster, was probably intended to demonstrate that Alice was coerced into granting her property. These threats would have been terrifying; although accusations of witchcraft were not as common in this period as they became later, politically-motivated accusations of sorcery did happen occasionally.¹⁸³ Her fear cannot have lasted long, however, as a number of other entries in the Patent and Close Rolls at this time indicate that Edward was planning on Alice remaining alive.

women be removed entirely from the monastery within the coming year...?' (*Visitations of the Bishop of Lincoln*, in *Women in England, c. 1275-1525*, ed. by P. J. P. Goldberg (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), p. 271).

¹⁷⁸ Archer, p. 20. This happened until 1388, when the law was changed to allow the wives of traitors to receive inheritance and jointure.

¹⁷⁹ CPR 1317-21, p. 84.

¹⁸⁰ TNA C 81/1329/42.

¹⁸¹ Referencing CPR 1317-21, p. 175. Mitchell, pp. 114-115.

¹⁸² TNA DL 42/11, ff. 66v-67r. My translation.

'...Aleyse qe fuist la femme lavaunt dit Thomas fuist pris & meisne a Everwik' et emprisonne et illeoges fuist arrenit par Hugh' le Despenser le pere & Hugh' le fitz auxi come un de la dite querele & disoient qele estent cause de la morte son Baron' et qele serroit arç & lavaunt dite Aleyse pardoutes de sa morte se myst haute et bace en lordinance les avaunt ditz Hugh & Hugh & en la garte le dit Rois par quele ordinarie lavaunt dite Aleyse graunta et relessa au dit Roi la grendre partie de ses terres...'

¹⁸³ Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Witchcraft in the Middle Ages* (London: Cornell University Press, 1984), p. 194.

The evidence suggests that Alice was forced to release her entire inheritance to Edward II and his favourites, with the understanding that she would be granted an income and could make a case, via petition, for individual properties to be returned to her for life. It would have been humiliating for Alice, especially considering that it had been her husband, not she, who had committed treason. This arrangement gave Edward some assurance of Alice's good behaviour; he could control which lands were returned to her, and she had to rely on him for their return. By tying her fortunes to his goodwill, the king could be reasonably certain that Alice would not present problems in the future. The case of Alice de Lacy would have presented a very thin line for Edward II to walk. On the one hand, he could not allow a noblewoman like Alice, with every reason to dislike him, to have access to the sorts of resources she was accustomed to. On the other hand, she was probably innocent of any wrongdoing and Edward had a duty as king to protect widows and the helpless. Edward's actions suggest he was attempting to limit Alice's influence while still appearing to protect her interests.

An inventory of Lacy documents found at Pontefract after Thomas of Lancaster's execution testifies to Edward II's interest in and systematic takeover of Alice de Lacy's lands.¹⁸⁴ On 25 June she entered into a recognisance of £20,000 requiring her to quitclaim or alienate her entire inheritance.¹⁸⁵ A number of the properties that Alice quitclaimed to the king were, unsurprisingly, later granted to the Despensers. In July 1322 Edward granted Alice an annuity of five hundred marks in exchange for her alienation to the king of a number of Lacy properties in Lancashire.¹⁸⁶ She was also granted sets of properties in Middlesex, Lincolnshire, Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Wales, and the lands and tenements in Holborn, London, all with reversion to the Despensers (see Appendix 1.B). Edward selected the lands he granted Alice fairly evenly from the earldom of Lincoln, earldom of Salisbury and dower lands from the earldom of Lancaster.¹⁸⁷ The king granted some of these properties without prompting; Alice was forced to petition for others and demonstrate her right to them in Chancery.¹⁸⁸ Grants from the middle of July 1322 gave Alice more lands in Berkshire, Chester and Derbyshire.¹⁸⁹ These lands were granted in accordance with Alice's initial dower agreement, made in 1292-94. At the same time, Alice received licence 'to marry whomsoever she will of the king's allegiance', a generous and unusual act on Edward's part, as widows who held land of the crown were typically required to get the king's approval before remarrying.¹⁹⁰ Edward's generosity suggests that Alice had convinced him of her loyalty.

In other instances Alice was less successful in reuniting her inheritance from Lincoln and Salisbury. For example, a petition, probably dating from July 1322, requesting to have the honour of Pontefract returned to her, was not resolved in Alice's favour.¹⁹¹ Until at least 1327, the castle and honour of Pontefract were run by the royal administration.¹⁹² Edward was probably concerned about Pontefract's military and symbolic role. Thomas of Lancaster had used Pontefract, the most defensible Lancastrian

¹⁸⁴ TNA DL 41/133.

¹⁸⁵ CPR 1317-21, p. 141.

¹⁸⁶ CPR 1317-21, p. 141.

¹⁸⁷ 'Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln', *CIPM*, V, no. 279; CPR 1321-24, p. 183.

¹⁸⁸ CPR 1321-24., pp. 178-183; TNA SC 8/56/2752.

¹⁸⁹ CPR 1321-24, p. 285.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

¹⁹¹ TNA SC 8/56/2753.

¹⁹² TNA SC 6/1145/21, SC 6/1146/18, SC 6/1085/17.

castle, as his military headquarters. As the location of Thomas's execution, Pontefract quickly became the focal point of his growing cult. It was thus an ideal place from which to lead a rebellion, had Alice or those loyal to her been so inclined. Edward and his council chose which properties Alice received from each petition, often replacing lands she was denied with alternatives (see appendices).¹⁹³ The lands Alice petitioned for would have given her a strong power base in Lincoln and in London, as well as scattered properties throughout central England. Those Edward granted her retained the power base in Lincoln, but also included land in the south and west of England, and spreading into Wales. This may reflect some concern on the part of Edward II that Alice not be allowed to build too much local power and be kept busy managing lands spread throughout the country.

In the end, Alice reunited only a very small proportion of her inheritance. She was still a wealthy woman – her income of five hundred marks, combined with the lands Edward II granted to her would have seen to this – but not nearly on the level she would have been had she received her entire inheritance. It is difficult to estimate Alice's income, but the receiver general's account of 1313-14 gives some clues. In that year, the Lancastrian receiver general received £843 15s. 6½d. from Bolingbroke, Sutton in Holland, Clifford, and Halton, all properties that Alice was granted in 1322.¹⁹⁴ These are only four (though among the most lucrative) of the forty-four properties she was eventually granted that year; even accounting for year-to-year differences in money received, Alice would have been living comfortably. She was clearly forced to give up much of her inheritance, and the reversion to the Despensers would have been galling, but the lands and income that Alice was granted would have created a lifestyle befitting her role as *suo jure* countess of Lincoln.

Other documentary entries from this period speak to Alice's vulnerability. In 1322 she granted to Hugh Despenser, the younger, her reversion of the constablership of Chester, as well as various castles and lands in Chester and Cambridgeshire which her step-mother held in dower. A grant Alice made to St Mary's, Barlings, in mid-July 1322 was witnessed by both Depensers, indicating that they were exercising some degree of control over her.¹⁹⁵ A November 1322 mandate to the sheriff and bailiffs of Lincolnshire, ordering them to protect Alice from abduction has an ominous ring to it.¹⁹⁶ It reads more like an attempt to prevent Alice from leaving the county than genuine concern for her safety. Bothwell has noted that the captivity of a downfallen noble might often take the form more 'of an enforced visit than imprisonment *per se*'.¹⁹⁷ If this was the case with Alice, it certainly suggests that some of the king's earlier generosity, particularly the grant to marry whomever she chose, was disingenuous. Edward may have been particularly concerned about Alice's remarriage options and keen to have her marry a man of his choosing. Those associated with Alice also experienced setbacks after Thomas of Lancaster's execution. In a 1322 petition, Henry de Kersewell and Robert de Tylvinton complained that the sheriff of Staffordshire had wrongfully deseised them of their lands 'because before this time they bore the

¹⁹³ TNA SC 8/56/2752-4; CPR 1321-24, pp. 175, 178-81, 183, 194; CCR 1318-23, pp. 596, 605, 641, 646.

¹⁹⁴ TNA DL 29/1/3.

¹⁹⁵ CPR 1321-24, pp., 194, 324.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 215.

¹⁹⁷ Bothwell, *Falling from Grace*, p. 135.

robes of the countess of Lincoln and for no other reason'.¹⁹⁸ In this case the king responded favourably, ordering the sheriff to return their property, but others seen as Alice's adherents may have suffered similarly, and not all would have had the money or influence to take their case directly to the king.¹⁹⁹

Alice was keen to maintain a lifestyle in keeping with her social status, despite the challenges that her limited income may have presented. An indenture between Alice de Lacy and John de Woyneley from December 1337 indicates that Alice maintained a retinue. John indented with Alice for an annuity of twenty shillings and was granted robes, 'to be worn at our castle of Bolingbroke in the same manner as our gentlemen esquires at the feast of the Nativity of our Lord'.²⁰⁰ If this occurred at the same time that Mitchell suggests that Alice was effectively imprisoned at Bolingbroke by her brother-in-law Roger Lestrage, her imprisonment cannot have been too trying.²⁰¹ In 1337, Alice complained to the king that Lestrage had attacked her at Bolingbroke, stealing twenty of her horses and taking away £200 of goods, indicating that she maintained a household lavish enough to attract roving eyes.²⁰² Alice participated in many of the sorts of activities one would expect from an important landowner: she held courts, lent money, and leased her lands, for example in the 1320s granting her *vadlet* John Talbot her constabship of Lincoln Castle in exchange for rent.²⁰³ She also maintained some ties, financial and social, with the house of Lancaster. Her brother-in-law, Henry, earl of Lancaster's account of 1330-31 notes that she held a number of knights' fees in Derbyshire and Lancashire in dower.²⁰⁴

The events of Alice de Lacy's first widowhood, following the execution of Thomas of Lancaster, help to illustrate the hazards faced by medieval women – even powerful, wealthy ones – who found themselves on the wrong end of the political stick without a male protector. Alice was arrested, kept under royal control, threatened with execution and forced to give up her entire inheritance. Yet she seems to have played what cards she had well: though forced to rely on Edward II's generosity when it came to the return of her lands and income, she did manage to put together a lifestyle worthy of the countess of Lincoln and Salisbury. Even so, it is not surprising that Alice wasted little time in remarrying.

Marriage to Ebulo Lestrage and Hugh de Frene

Alice's second husband, Ebulo Lestrage, came from a family that had been associated with the earldom of Lancaster and the crown at least since the 1260s.²⁰⁵ Neither Ebulo nor his nephew Roger Lestrage, lord of Knockin, appear in Lancastrian documents from Thomas of Lancaster's administration, but Ebulo was listed with Fulk and Robert Lestrage in Thomas's 1314 pardon for

¹⁹⁸ TNA SC 8/7/315.

¹⁹⁹CCR 1318-22, pp. 443-444.

²⁰⁰ TNA DL 32/2, f. 20 (no. 48).

²⁰¹ Mitchell, p. 121.

²⁰² CPR 1334-38, p. 450.

²⁰³ TNA DL 36/2, no. 199.

²⁰⁴ TNA DL 40/1/11, f. 7v-8.

²⁰⁵ TNA DL 25/1864/i.

killing Piers Gaveston.²⁰⁶ Fulk Lestrangle (whether the same or another is difficult to say) served as royal steward in Gascony in the 1320s. Ebulo probably served Thomas of Lancaster and may have been associated with the Lacy family as well. He and Alice married in 1324. In 1326, Ebulo was appointed commissioner of array for Lincolnshire and in 1330 participated in the coup that overthrew Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer. He and Alice experienced royal approval in the early years of Edward III's reign: they were jointly re-granted Alice's honours of Builth (Wales) and Bustlesham (co. Berks) for life. Ebulo died in 1335 and was buried in Barlings Abbey, where Alice herself was also eventually buried.²⁰⁷ After Ebulo's death, Alice took a vow of chastity.²⁰⁸

As Prestwich points out, these are signs that the marriage was a 'love match'.²⁰⁹ That Ebulo stood far below Alice socially supports this interpretation. Alice had practical motives as well, however. Le Strange argues that Alice's marriage to Ebulo allowed her more comfort, both materially and socially.²¹⁰ Alice may have decided that after the scandal of her 1317 abduction and her husband's subsequent execution for treason, respectable marriage was the only way forward. She could, and perhaps should, have opted for a man unassociated with the house of Lancaster. Her choice of a man who had served her previous husband suggests that Ebulo was someone that Alice already knew and liked; while there is no evidence for it, it is possible that their relationship began before Thomas's death. Ebulo's lower social standing would have confirmed her role as the dominant half of the partnership; that Ebulo never claimed Alice's titles of Lincoln and Salisbury *jure uxoris*, as he was entitled to do under English law, emphasises this point. Ebulo's family history of faithful service to the crown under Edward I made this marriage a good political move as well. At the same time, Schutt has observed that early modern women whose first husbands had been executed for treason were very likely to remarry to men below their own rank, suggesting that such women may not have been desirable marriage partners. A traitor's wife might have particular need of a man who could be trusted, particularly if he had served her during periods of trouble.²¹¹

Their life was not always simple. In the early 1330s, William le Butiller and the justices of the peace in the county of Shropshire demanded the arrest of Ebulo, Roger Lestrangle, the earl of Arundel and others.²¹² In 1332 Ebulo was accused of having ordered Alice's illegitimate half-brother Sir John de Lacy, who was later accused of assisting Hugh de Frene in abducting Alice, and others to murder a William Carty of Lincoln, though he was acquitted.²¹³ Neither of these incidents resulted in any long-term damage to Ebulo's reputation or prospects, testifying to his ability to adapt to changing political circumstances. In 1326 he was assigned to assist the earl of Arundel in gathering troops from

²⁰⁶ TNA DL 28/1/13, passim; Hamon Le Strange, *Le Strange Records: A Chronicle of the Early le Stranges of Norfolk and the March of Wales, A. D. 1100-1310, with the Lines of Knockin and Blackmere Continued to their Extinction* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1916) <<http://archive.org>> [accessed 12 September 2013], p. 272.

²⁰⁷ Mitchell, pp. 116-120.

²⁰⁸ TNA SC 8/64/3163.

²⁰⁹ Michael Prestwich, *The Three Edwards: War and State in England, 1272-1377* (London: Methuen, 1981), p. 156.

²¹⁰ Le Strange, p. 273.

²¹¹ Schutt, pp. 135-137.

²¹² TNA C 49/33/10.

²¹³ TNA DL 36/3, no. 83.

Lincolnshire to defend Edward II against Isabella and Mortimer's invasion.²¹⁴ He was given letters of protection at the same time.²¹⁵ That he went on to receive favours from the Mortimer regime as well as Edward III speaks to his political savvy and probably his wife's connections.

The vow of chastity Alice made after Ebulo's death has, as discussed above, been seen as evidence that her marriage to Ebulo was based on love; while this may be true, there was probably more to this decision as well. Vowesses have received very little attention in scholarly literature on women and widowhood. Few widows became vowesses, but there was a standard form for the vow, in which the widow publicly promised, in the presence of witnesses and a religious official – often her bishop – to remain chaste for the rest of her life.²¹⁶ The widow was given a habit, veil, ring or other form of identification; the bishop of Lincoln gave Alice a habit and ring when she made her vow.²¹⁷ What this vow actually meant is unclear. Hanawalt claims that a vowess became 'a nun in all respects except for taking the veil'.²¹⁸ Rosenthal, however, sees the vow of chastity as 'an ecclesiastically endorsed commitment to eschew marriage and domestic life, with no obligation to withdraw from worldly concerns or family affairs'.²¹⁹ Whether a vowess was seen an uncloistered nun or a veiled widow, she occupied a space somewhere between spiritual isolation and the world.

Taking a vow of chastity was a spiritual choice with real-world consequences. As discussed above, women who kept a chaste widowhood could expect greater heavenly reward and, essentially, a 'second chance' at virginity. This had real social implications as well. As Carlson and Weisl have pointed out, there was a strong link between women's sexual activity and women's subordination in medieval society; because marriage was the only licit arena for sex, a sexually active woman was automatically assumed to be under the control of her husband.²²⁰ Conversely, a woman who chose to abjure sexual activity by becoming a vowess was publicly declaring her intention to remain independent and avoid remarriage. While the vow of chastity was a comfort for the church, concerned about widows' sexuality, it may thus have presented a challenge to the patriarchal establishment. Because these vows were rare, they allow us a unique insight into minds and emotions of the women who chose to make

²¹⁴ Fryde, p. 183.

²¹⁵ CPR 1324-1327, p. 340.

²¹⁶ A 1454 vowess, Isabel Maryone, promised in the following words: 'In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy ghost, I, Isabel Maryone, of your diocese, widow, promise and vow to God, Our Lady, St Mary, and to all the saints, in your presence, reverend father in Christ Sir John, by the grace of God, Bishop of Lincoln, to be chaste and I determine to keep myself chaste from this time forward as long as my life lasts. In witness of this I here subscribe with my own hand...' (from 'Vow of Chastity', in *Women in England, c. 1275-1525*, ed. by P. J. P. Goldberg (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 289-290). Another fifteenth-century vow stated that: 'I Alice Lynne widowe a vowe to god perpeuel chastite of my body fro yis tyme fortheward in presence of you rigtworshipful fader in god... And I behete to lyve stavely in yis avowe, and yerto with myn owne I make yis subscripcyon' (Robin L. Storey, ed., *The Register of Thomas Langby, Bishop of Durham, 1406-37*, 6 vols., (Durham: Surtees Society, 1956-1970), vol. 1, p. 190.), quoted in Rosenthal, 'Fifteenth-Century Widows and Widowhood: Bereavement, Reintegration, and Life Choices', in *Wife and Widow in Medieval England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), pp. 33-58', (p. 45).

²¹⁷ *Calendars of Entries in Papal Registers: Papal Letters, Vol. 2 (1305-1342)*, p. 544.

²¹⁸ Barbara A. Hanawalt, 'Remarriage as an Option for Urban and Rural Widows in Late Medieval England', in *Wife and Widow in Medieval England* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), pp. 141-164 (p. 158).

²¹⁹ Rosenthal, 'Fifteenth-Century Widows', p. 45.

²²⁰ Cindy L. Carlson and Angel Jane Weisl, 'Constructions of Widowhood and Virginity', in *Constructions of Widowhood and Virginity in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Cindy L. Carlson and Angela Jane Weisl (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), pp. 1-23 (p. 2).

them. As Rosenthal has pointed out, a woman who became a vowess ‘may be letting us come as close to a view-of-life statement as we find from a gender socialized against self-expression’.²²¹ Alice de Lacy’s decision to become one of these women may thus be an expression of love for Ebulo, a public declaration that after his death she wanted no other man and intended to finish life as a single woman. It was probably also inspired by spiritual and political concerns: she may have been making a statement about her intention to resume control of her decisions and affairs after a lifetime of control by men.

While Alice’s marriage to Ebulo Lestrage was at least partly a response to the position in which she found herself after Thomas of Lancaster’s death, her final marriage, to Hugh de Frene, was unrelated and will not be treated in detail here. Frene was a Herefordshire knight, keeper of the town and castle of Cardigan and royal steward of Cardiganshire. The pair married in early 1336, about a year after Ebulo’s death, apparently after Frene abducted Alice from Bolingbroke Castle. The act prompted a court case and official petitions to Edward III protesting Frene’s behaviour, but the marriage was eventually confirmed. It was short-lived, however: Frene died in December 1336, widowing Alice for the final time. She lived the rest of her life as a single woman, eventually dying in 1348.

1.2.4.2 Lancastrian Legacy

On-Going Relationships

Alice maintained contact with her Lancastrian in-laws long after Thomas’s death. Her brother-in-law Henry of Lancaster and his son Henry of Grosmont both showed an interest in the lands they would inherit after Alice’s death, though they seemed unconcerned with helping to reassemble her inheritance during her lifetime. After Alice died in 1348, Grosmont was quick to assert his rights to lands in Chester and the castle of Clitherou (co. Lincs), citing his position as heir of Henry de Lacy.²²² Henry IV seems to have been very interested in his connection to the de Lacy lands, both before and after his succession – especially Sutton and Bolingbroke.²²³ During and after Alice de Lacy’s marriage to Ebulo Lestrage, connections between the Lacy and Lestrage families continued. Mitchell has suggested that Roger Lestrage, Ebulo’s nephew and lord of Knockin, was something of a bully to Alice.²²⁴ He certainly remained a presence in her life long after Ebulo’s death. In 1340, Alice leased the tolls of the market and mill of Wrangel (co. Lincs) to Roger for twenty marks per year.²²⁵

Lancastrian Family Identity

The beginnings of a uniquely ‘Lancastrian’ family identity also appear here for the first time. Writing in the 1330s, Trokelowe has a dying Henry de Lacy describe the importance of great magnates to Thomas of Lancaster: Trokelowe’s account from the 1330s in which the dying Henry de Lacy describes the importance of great magnates to Thomas of Lancaster (quoted above, see p. 50) emphasises the well-

²²¹ Rosenthal, ‘Fifteenth-Century Widows’, p. 46.

²²² CCR 1346-1349, pp. 569, 576, 610.

²²³ TNA DL 41/105, passim, a collection made under Henry IV of copies of documents relating to Alice de Lacy’s inheritance; DL 41/423; DL 42/11 (includes a number of documents created or copied under Henry of Lancaster and Henry of Grosmont, assembled under Henry of Bolingbroke).

²²⁴ Mitchell, p. 121.

²²⁵ TNA DL 25/74.

worn notion that much is expected of those to whom much has been given. It also emphasises Thomas of Lancaster's unique role as the most powerful and wealthy English earl and the extraordinary position of influence into which this places him. This is the beginning of a common theme: the house of Lancaster, having been raised to a position of unique prominence, owed a unique debt to God, which it should repay by defending the people and the church from corruption. Marriage is a crucial element of this. Henry de Lacy is depicted here handing his political and moral role to his heir, Thomas. This is another theme that comes up later with the relationship between Henry of Grosmont and John of Gaunt. The importance of St Paul's Cathedral in London is another part of the Lancastrian family identity that emerges in this generation. Henry de Lacy was buried in St Paul's, and the cathedral eventually also held a monument to Thomas of Lancaster. Later chapters will demonstrate that Lancastrians continued to feel an affinity with the church.

1.2.5 Conclusion

The marriage between Alice de Lacy and Thomas of Lancaster, as well as Alice's subsequent marriages and widowhood, highlight crucial themes in the study of aristocratic women, marriage and politics in late medieval England. The layers of motivation for the marriage underscore the fact that at the highest levels of society, many factors had to be considered. These arrangements did not, however, always go according to plan. Edward I may have felt that giving his nephew Thomas four earldoms was safer than letting non-royal earls continue to collect titles. Instead, he created the power that allowed Thomas to rebel against Edward II with impunity for much of his reign. In addition to the practical considerations, personal motivations also played a role. The marriage agreement, which dictated that Alice's inheritance would remain with the house of Lancaster whether Alice and Thomas had children or not, sheds light on Edward I's 'policy' vis-à-vis the earls. For the Lacy family, it was disadvantageous, and the close personal relationships between Edmund of Lancaster, Henry de Lacy and Edward I probably have something to do with Lacy's willingness to agree to such a settlement. The line between personal friendship and political alliance, especially among men who, by virtue of their rank, were born to play a political role, was a thin one. Alice de Lacy's second and third marriages add to our understanding of motivations for aristocratic marriage, especially as they provide insight into women's motivations. Her marriage to Ebulo Lestrage demonstrates how personal feeling and practical thinking might both be taken into account when making a decision about marriage.

These marriages also illustrate the complex relationships that developed through marriage, both between the couple as well between neighbours, the crown and society generally. The evidence backs up the commonly accepted notion that Alice and Thomas had a poor personal relationship. Alice's second marriage to Ebulo Lestrage demonstrates the ways in which ongoing relationships might facilitate a marriage. The Lestrage family already had a relationship with the house of Lancaster and it seems likely that Alice's relationship with Ebulo grew out of his service to Lancaster. Aristocratic marriages also created relationships outside the one between the married couple. Henry de Lacy's mentoring role relationship with Thomas of Lancaster is of particular interest. Thomas's increased political activity beginning in 1310-11, despite having shown little interest in politics previously, suggests that he took on his father-in-law's role as dissident during Henry's decline and death. Alice,

meanwhile, was forced to maintain relationships with her Lancaster in-laws for decades after Thomas's death. Whether by chance or design, aristocratic marriages could produce relationships – sometimes unexpected ones – that lasted well beyond the marriage itself.

The legacy of these marriages is a complicated one: Alice lived the results of her marriages until her death. Her marriage to Thomas proved important to the earldom and duchy of Lancaster throughout the fourteenth century right to the present day. The importance of the Lacy and Longespée inheritances to the house of Lancaster in terms of landed wealth has already been thoroughly discussed.²²⁶ Both Edward II and Richard II reaped the unpleasant rewards of Edward I's generosity, and the Lancastrian kings of England went on to reap the benefits. Alice's inheritance also remained of importance to later descendants of the house, particularly Henry of Bolingbroke, who seems to have been particularly concerned about the Lacy inheritance.

The marriages of the first generations of the house of Lancaster were thus crucial in the creation of a dynasty and the vast landed interest that singled out the lineage as particularly special and unique in medieval England. The development of a unique family identity also has its roots in these generations. These themes developed further under Henry of Lancaster and his son Henry of Grosmont.

²²⁶ See Somerville, *History of the Duchy of Lancaster*.

Appendix 1.A – English earldoms, 1200-1312

English Earls in 1200

Name	Earldoms
Humphrey de Bohun	Earl of Hereford
Geoffrey Fitzpeter	Earl of Essex
Richard de Clare	Earl of Hertford
Robert de Beaumont	Earl of Leicester
William Longespee (jure uxoris – <i>Ela of Salisbury</i>)	Earl of Salisbury
Hamelin de Anjoy (jure uxoris – <i>Isabel de Warenne</i>)	Earl of Surrey
Waleran de Beaumont	Earl of Warwick
William d'Aubigny	Earl of Arundel
Robert de Vere	Earl of Oxford
William Marshal	Earl of Pembroke
Arthur of Brittany	Earl of Richmond
Hawise of Aumale (suo jure)	Countess of Aumale
Ranulf de Blondville	Earl of Chester
William de Ferrers	Earl of Derby
Roger Bigod	Earl of Norfolk
William de Redvers	Earl of Devon

English Earls in 1250

Name	Earldoms
Humphrey de Bohun	Earl of Hereford
Humphrey de Bohun	Earl of Essex
Richard de Clare	Earl of Gloucester
Richard de Clare	Earl of Hertford
Simon de Montfort	Earl of Leicester
Ela of Salisbury (suo jure)	Countess of Salisbury
Margaret de Quincy (suo jure)	Countess of Lincoln
John de Warenne	Earl of Surrey
John du Plessis (jure uxoris – <i>Margaret de Beaumont</i>)	Earl of Warwick
John FitzAlan	Earl of Arundel
Hugh de Vere	Earl of Oxford
William de Valence	Earl of Pembroke
Peter of Savoy	Earl of Richmond
William de Forz	Earl of Aumale
William de Ferrers	Earl of Derby
Roger Bigod	Earl of Norfolk
Richard, count of Poitou	Earl of Cornwall
Roger de Quincy	Earl of Winchester
Baldwin de Redvers	Earl of Devon

English earls in 1275

Name	Earldoms
Edmund of Lancaster	Earl of Lancaster
Edmund of Lancaster	Earl of Lancaster
Humphrey de Bohun	Earl of Hereford
Humphrey de Bohun	Earl of Essex
Gilbert de Clare	Earl of Gloucester
Gibert de Clare	Earl of Hertford
Henry de Lacy (jure uxoris – <i>Margaret Longespee</i>)	Earl of Salisbury
Henry de Lacy	Earl of Lincoln
John de Warenne	Earl of Surrey
William de Beauchamp	Earl of Warwick
Richard FitzAlan	Earl of Arundel
Robert de Vere	Earl of Oxford
Aymer de Valence	Earl of Pembroke
John of Brittany	Earl of Richmond
Roger Bigod	Earl of Norfolk
Edmund of Almain	Earl of Cornwall
Isabella de Forz (suo jure)	Countess of Devon

English Earls in 1292

Name	Earldoms
Edmund of Lancaster	Earl of Lancaster
Edmund of Lancaster	Earl of Leicester
Henry de Lacy (jure uxoris – <i>Margaret Longespée</i>)	Earl of Salisbury
Henry de Lacy	Earl of Lincoln
Humphrey de Bohun	Earl of Hereford
Humphrey de Bohun	Earl of Essex
Gilbert de Clare	Earl of Gloucester
Gilbert de Clare	Earl of Hertford
John de Warenne	Earl of Surrey
John de Warenne	Earl of Sussex
William de Beauchamp	Earl of Warwick
Richard FitzAlan	Earl of Arundel
Robert de Vere	Earl of Oxford
William de Valence	Earl of Pembroke
John of Brittany	Earl of Richmond
Edmund of Cornwall	Earl of Cornwall

English Earls in 1312

Name	Earldoms
Thomas of Lancaster (<i>with Alice de Lacy</i>)	Earl of Salisbury
Thomas of Lancaster (<i>with Alice de Lacy</i>)	Earl of Lincoln
Thomas of Lancaster	Earl of Leicester
Thomas of Lancaster	Earl of Lancaster
Humphrey de Bohun	Earl of Hereford
Humphrey de Bohun	Earl of Essex
Gilbert de Clare	Earl of Gloucester
Gilbert de Clare	Earl of Hertford
John de Warenne	Earl of Surrey
John de Warenne	Earl of Sussex
Guy de Beauchamp	Earl of Warwick
Edmund FitzAlan	Earl of Arundel
Robert de Vere	Earl of Oxford
Aymer de Valence	Earl of Pembroke
John of Brittany	Earl of Richmond
Piers Gaveston	Earl of Cornwall

English Earldoms, 1200-1312

Year	1200	1250	1275	1292	1312
Number of Earldoms	16	19	17	16	16
Number of Earls	16	17	13	11	10
Earls with Multiple Earldoms	0	2	4	5	4

Appendix 1.B – Property Granted to Alice de Lacy, 1322

County	Property	Date	Reference	Notes	Inheritance
Lincoln	Swaveton, part of the manor of Brotelby (Modern: Swaton)	10 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #175 CCR 1318-23, #641 IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p.153) TNA SC 8/56/2754	Held by Henry de Lacy in chief as part of the earldom of Salisbury. Alienated by Alice to Barlings, 10 July 1322 Alice petitioned for this in 1322	Margaret Longespée
Lincoln	Halton upon Trent (Modern: West Halton)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79 CCR 1318-23, #641 TNA DL 41/105 TNA SC 8/56/2752	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322 Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322 Alice petitioned for this in 1322	?
Lincoln	Wadyngton (Waddington)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79 CCR 1318-23, #641 TNA DL 41/105 TNA SC 8/56/2753 IPM v.9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 97)	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322 Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322 Alice petitioned for the advowson of the church in 1322	Advowson part of jointure from Thomas of Lancaster
Lincoln	Brotleby (Brotelby)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79 TNA DL 41/105 IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 153)	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322 Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322 Held by Henry de Lacy in chief as part of the earldom of Salisbury	Margaret Longespée

Lincoln	Lutton	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79 CCR 1318-23, #641 TNA DL 41/105 TNA SC 8/56/2752	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322 Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322 Alice petitioned for this in 1322	?
Lincoln	Thorley (Thorlaye)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79 CCR 1318-23, #641 IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 164) TNA DL 41/105 TNA DL 36/2, no. 16	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322 Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322 Held by Henry de Lacy (worth 73s. 10.5d.) Granted to Margaret Longespee by Alina, widow of Geoffrey de Thorley	Margaret Longespee
Lincoln	Thoresby	Before 18 April 1323	CCR 1318-23, #641 IPM v.9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 98) TNA SC 8/56/2754	Granted to Alice by Edward II before 18 April 1323 Alice de Lacy petitioned for this in 1322	Henry de Lacy
Lincoln	Bolingbroke, the castle, manor, town & soke	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79 CCR 1318-23, #641 IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 154) IPM v.9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 97) TNA SC 8/56/2752	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322 Held by Henry de Lacy in chief Alice de Lacy petitioned for this in 1322	Henry de Lacy

Lincoln	Wyldemore (moor)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79 CCR 1318-23, #641	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322	?
Lincoln	Le Frith (moor)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79 CCR 1318-23, #641	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322	?
Lincoln	Lincoln Castle, constablenesship	20 Sept 1322	CCR 1318-23, #596 IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 153)	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 20 September 1322 Held by Henry de Lacy in chief of the inheritance of Margaret Longespée (?)	Margaret Longespée
Lincoln	Horblyng (Horbling) (Modern: Horbling)	2 Nov 1322	CCR 1318-23, #605 IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 154) IPM v.9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 98) TNA DL 41/105 TNA 8/56/2752	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322 Granted to Alice by Edward II after the death of Joan de Lacy, her step-mother, 2 November 1322 Held by Henry de Lacy of Thomas of Lancaster Alice petitioned for this in 1322	Henry de Lacy
Lincoln	Waynflet (Wainfleet)	Before 18 April 1323	CCR 1323-27, #269 ²²⁷ CCR 1318-23, #641 IPM v.9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 97)	Granted to Henry de Lacy by Edward I Granted to Alice by Edward II before 18 April 1323 Alice petitioned for this in 1322	Henry de Lacy

²²⁷ Entry mentions Wainfleet, Wrangle, Steeping, Ingoldmells, Thoresby, Wath, and Sutton in Holland were granted to Henry de Lacy by Edward I as a life interest. Lacy's IPM makes it clear that Sutton in Holland was held by Henry in right of his wife, Margaret Longespée. It's possible that these other life interests were also granted to Henry in right of his wife, in which case they should be considered from her inheritance. The fact that Alice petitioned for all of these together may be an indication that they all came from the same inheritance. Cannot find the original grant referenced in CCR in CPR.

Lincoln	Wrangel	Before 18 April 1323	TNA SC 8/56/2754		
			CCR 1323-27, #269	Granted to Henry de Lacy by Edward I	Henry de Lacy
			CCR 1318-23, #641	Granted to Alice by Edward II before 18 April 1323	
			IPM v.9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 97)	Alice petitioned for this in 1322	
Lincoln	Stepyng (Steeping)	Before 18 April 1323	TNA SC 8/56/2574	Village of Wrangel granted to Henry de Lacy by Alan Lanerd	
			TNA DL 36/2, no. 10		
			CCR 1323-27, #269	Granted to Henry de Lacy by Edward I	Henry de Lacy
			CCR 1318-23, #641	Granted to Alice by Edward II before 18 April 1323	
Lincoln	Ingoldmeles (Ingoldmells)	Before 18 April 1323	TNA SC 8/56/2754	Alice petitioned for this in 1322	
			IPM v. 9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 97)		
			CCR 1323-27, #269	Granted to Henry de Lacy by Edward I	Henry de Lacy
			CCR 1318-23, #641	Granted to Alice by Edward II before 18 April 1323	
Lincoln	Watch (Wathe, Wath)	Before 18 April 1323	TNA SC 8/56/2754	Alice petitioned for this in 1322	
			IPM v.9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 97)		
			CCR 1323-27, #269	Granted to Henry de Lacy by Edward I	Henry de Lacy
			CCR 1318-23, #641	Granted to Alice by Edward II before 18 April 1323	

Lincoln	La Haye (court of)	20 Sept 1322	CCR 1318-23, #596, 641	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 20 September 1322	Margaret Longespée
			IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 153)	Held by Henry de Lacy in chief as part of the earldom of Salisbury	
Lincoln	Sutton-in-Holland, part of the manor of Brotelby (Modern: Long Sutton)	Before 18 April 1323	CCR 1318-23, #641	Granted to Alice by Edward II before 18 April 1323	Margaret Longespée
			IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 153)	Held by Henry de Lacy in chief as part of the earldom of Salisbury	
			IPM v.9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 97)	Alice petitioned for this in 1322	
			TNA SC 8/56/2754		
Staffs	Penkull (town)	13 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #183	Granted to Alice as dower by Edward II, 13 July 1322	Thomas of Lancaster?
Staffs	Sheprugg (town)	13 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #183	Granted to Alice as dower by Edward II, 13 July 1322	Thomas of Lancaster?
Staffs	Wolstanton (town)	13 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #183	Granted to Alice as dower by Edward II, 13 July 1322	Thomas of Lancaster?
Staffs	Clayton (town)	13 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #183	Granted to Alice as dower by Edward II, 13 July 1322	Thomas of Lancaster
			IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 161)	Held by Henry de Lacy of Thomas of Lancaster	
Middlesex	Coleham (Modern: Colham)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79	Held by Henry de Lacy in chief as part of the earldom of Salisbury	Margaret Longespée
			IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 154)	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322	
			TNA DL 41/105	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322	

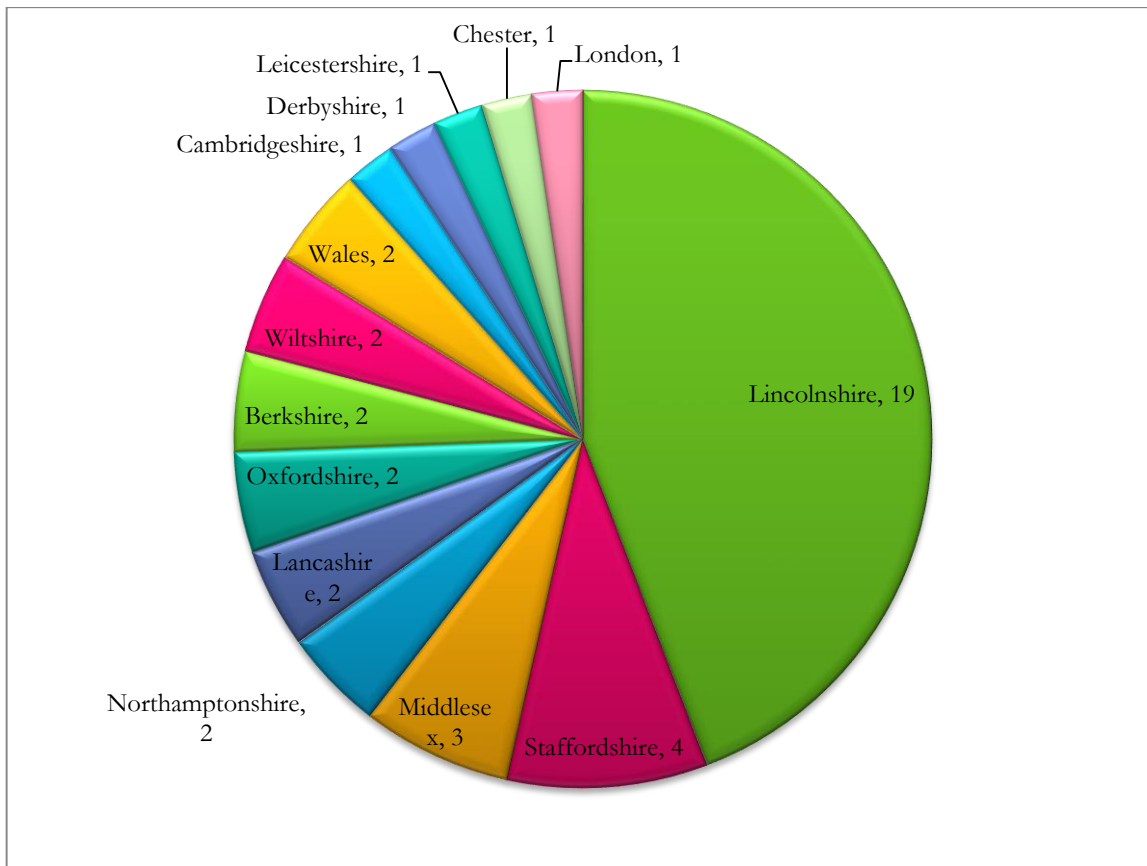
			TNA SC 8/56/2752	Alice petitioned for this in 1372	
Middlesex	Woxbrugge (Woxbregge) (Modern: Uxbridge)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79 IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 154)	Held by Henry de Lacy in chief as part of the earldom of Salisbury Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322	Margaret Longespée
			TNA DL 41/105	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322	
			TNA SC 8/56/2752	Alice petitioned for this in 1322	
Middlesex	Eggeswere (Egewere) (Modern: Edgeware)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79 IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 154) IPM v.9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 95)	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322 Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322 Held by Henry de Lacy in chief as part of the earldom of Salisbury Alice de Lacy petitioned for this in 1322	Margaret Longespée
			TNA DL 41/105		
			TNA SC 8/56/2752		
Northants	Wadenho (Modern: Wadenhoe)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322	Henry de Lacy (accdg to Wikipedia!)
			TNA DL 41/105	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322	
			TNA SC 8/56/2752	Alice petitioned for this in 1322	
Northants	Wardington	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322	?
			TNA DL 41/105	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322	
			TNA SC 8/56/2753	Alice de Lacy petitioned for this in 1322 (petition references Wardyngton in Buckinghamshire)	
Lancs	Rochesdale (Rachedale)	13 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #183	Granted to Alice as dower by Edward II, 13 July 1322	Thomas of Lancaster

			IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 162)	Held by Henry de Lacy of Thomas of Lancaster	
Lancs	Blakebourn (Blakeburn)	13 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #183	Granted to Alice as dower by Edward II, 13 July 1322	Thomas of Lancaster
			IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 179 (p. 161)	Held by Henry de Lacy of Thomas of Lancaster	
Oxford	Birencestre (Burncestre) (Modern: Bicester)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322	Margaret Longespée
			IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 156)	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322	
			IPM v.9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 95)	Held by Henry de Lacy in chief as part of the earldom of Salisbury	
			TNA DL 41/105	Alice petitioned for this in 1322	
			TNA SC 8/56/2752		
Oxford	Mydelyngton (Mudelyngton) (Modern: Middleton Stoney)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322	Henry de Lacy
			IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 157)	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322	
			IPM v.9, Alice de Lacy, no. 107 (p. 95)	Held by Henry de Lacy in chief, honour of Pontefract	
			TNA DL 41/1-5	Alice petitioned for this in 1322	
			TNA SC 8/56/2752		
Berks	Avington (Avyngtone)	10 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #180	Granted to Alice (after death of Emma de Longespée), 10 July 1322	Margaret Longespée
			IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 155)	Held by Henry de Lacy in chief as part of the earldom of Salisbury	

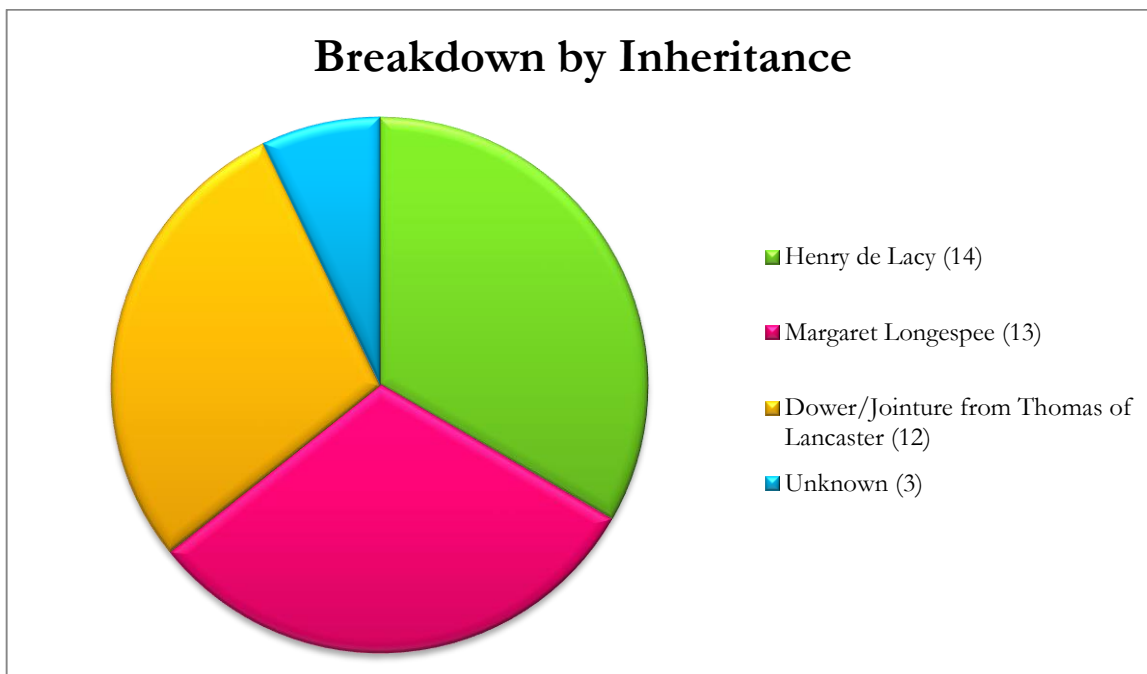
Berks	Hungerford	13 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #183	Granted to Alice as dower by Edward II, 13 July 1322	Thomas of Lancasater?
Wilts	Everle	13 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #183	Granted to Alice as dower by Edward II, 13 July 1322	Thomas of Lancaster?
Wilts	Colyngbourn	13 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #183	Granted to Alice as dower by Edward II, 13 July 1322	Thomas of Lancaster?
Wales	Glasbury	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79 TNA DL 41/105 IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 158)	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322 Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322 Held by Henry de Lacy of Margaret Longespée	Margaret Longespée
Wales	Clifford (castle and honour)	12 July 1322	CCR 1318-23, #646 DL 41/105 IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 157)	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322 Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322 (not referenced in CPR) Held by Henry de Lacy in chief as part of the earldom of Salisbury	Margaret Longespée
Cambridge	Grauncestre	2 Nov 1322	CCR 1318-23, #605 TNA DL 41/105 IPM v.5, Henry de Lacy, no. 279 (p. 154)	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322 Granted to Alice by Edward II after the death of Joan de Lacy, her step-mother, 2 November 1322 Held by Henry de Lacy in chief	Henry de Lacy
Derby	Derford	13 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #183	Granted to Alice as dower by Edward II, 13 July 1322	Thomas of Lancaster?
Leicester	Shelton	13 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #183	Granted to Alice as dower by Edward II, 13 July 1322	Thomas of Lancaster?

Chester	Halton (Haulton)	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #181	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322	Henry de Lacy
			CPR 1321-24, #194	Granted to Alice, 12 July 1322	
		27 July 1322	TNA DL 41/105	Alice granted her reversion to these properties to Hugh Despenser, 27 July 1322	
				Held by Henry de Lacy, pertaining to constablenesship of Chester	
London	Holborn	12 July 1322	CPR 1321-24, #178-79	Granted to Edward II by Alice, 27 June 1322	Henry de Lacy?
			TNA DL 41/105	Granted to Alice by Edward II, 12 July 1322	
			TNA SC 8/56/2752	Alice petitioned for this in 1322	

Breakdown of Property by County and Inheritance



Breakdown by Inheritance

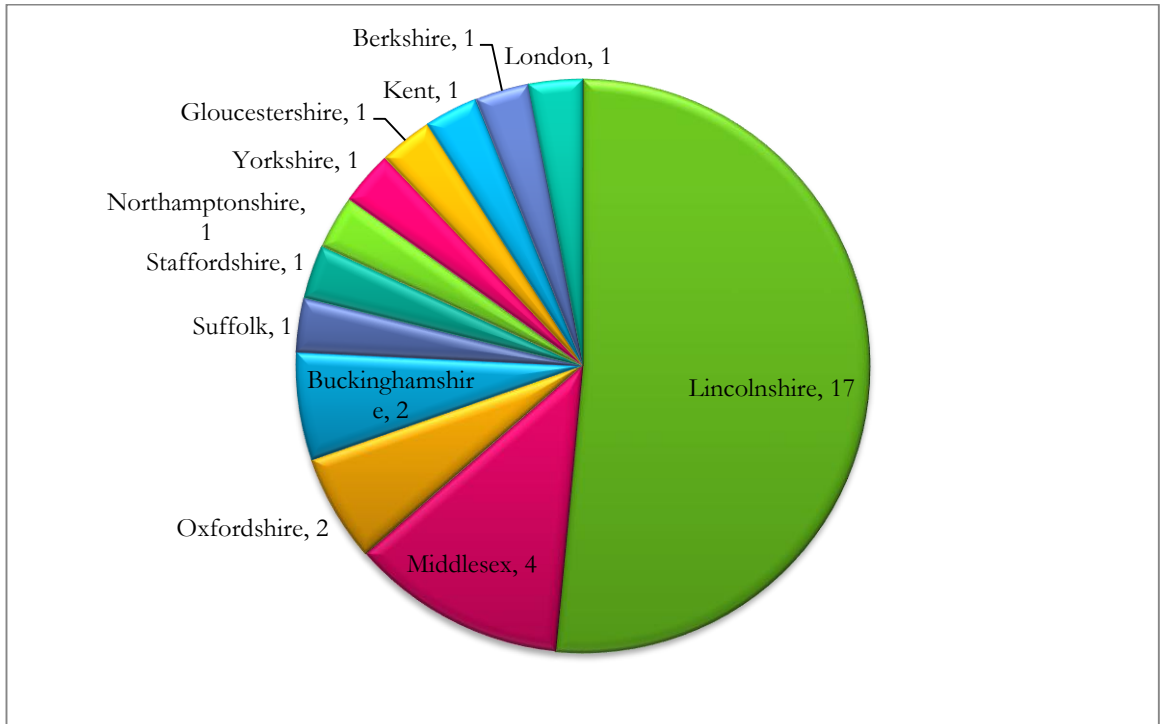


Lands Alice de Lacy Petitioned For, 1322

County	Property	Reference	Inheritance	Successful?
Lincolnshire	Halton upon Trent (Modern: West Halton)	TNA SC 8/56/2752	?	Yes -- 12 July 1322
Lincolnshire	Bolingbroke	TNA SC 8/56/2752	Henry de Lacy	Yes -- 12 July 1322
Lincolnshire	Lutton	TNA SC 8/56/2752	?	Yes -- 12 July 1322
Lincolnshire	Horbling	TNA SC 8/56/2752	Henry de Lacy	Yes -- 2 November 1322
Lincolnshire	Temple Bruer	TNA SC 8/56/2753	?	No
Lincolnshire	Resham (Reepham)	TNA SC 8/56/2753	Margaret Longespée	No
Lincolnshire	Waddington	TNA SC 8/56/2753	Thomas of Lancaster (jointure)	Yes -- 12 July 1322
Lincolnshire	Waddingham	TNA SC 8/56/2753	?	No
Lincolnshire	Wainfleet	TNA SC 8/56/2754	Henry de Lacy	Yes -- Before 18 April 1323
Lincolnshire	Wrangle	TNA SC 8/56/2754	Henry de Lacy	Yes -- Before 18 April 1323
Lincolnshire	Steeping	TNA SC 8/56/2754	Henry de Lacy	Yes -- Before 18 April 1323
Lincolnshire	Ingoldmells	TNA SC 8/56/2754	Henry de Lacy	Yes -- Before 18 April 1323
Lincolnshire	Thoresby	TNA SC 8/56/2754	Henry de Lacy	Yes -- Before 18 April 1323
Lincolnshire	Wath	TNA SC 8/56/2754	Henry de Lacy	Yes -- Before 18 April 1323
Lincolnshire	Sutton in Holland (Modern: Long Sutton)	TNA SC 8/56/2754	Margaret Longespée	Yes -- Before 18 April 1323
Lincolnshire	Swaveton (Modern: Swaton)	TNA SC 8/56/2754	Margaret Longespée	Yes -- Before 10 July 1322
Lincolnshire	Stainton	TNA SC 8/56/2753	?	No
Middlesex	Calham (Colham)	TNA SC 8/56/2752	Margaret Longespée	Yes -- 12 July 1322
Middlesex	Wallingford, honour of	TNA SC 8/56/2752	Margaret Longespée	No
Middlesex	Woxbrugge (Uxbridge)	TNA SC 8/56/2752	Margaret Longespée	Yes -- 12 July 1322

Middlesex	Egeswere (Modern: Edgeware)	TNA SC 8/56/2752	Margaret Longespée	Yes -- 12 July 1322
Oxfordshire	Burncestre (Modern: Bicester)	TNA SC 8/56/2752	Margaret Longespée	Yes -- 12 July 1322
Oxfordshire	Midlinton (Modern: Middleton Stoney)	TNA SC 8/56/2752	Henry de Lacy	Yes -- 12 July 1322
Buckinghamshire	Bulstrode	TNA SC 8/56/2753	?	No
Buckinghamshire	Wardington (Modern: Warrington)	TNA SC 8/56/2753	?	No
Suffolk	Cowlinge	TNA SC 8/56/2753	Margaret Longespée	No (But granted it later – See DL 36/2, no. 219)
Staffordshire	Keele	TNA SC 8/56/2753	?	No
Northamptonshire	Wadenhoe	TNA SC 8/56/2752	Henry de Lacy (Wikipedia)	Yes -- 12 July 1322
Yorkshire	Pontefract, honour of	TNA SC 8/56/2753	Henry de Lacy	No
Gloucestershire	Temple Guiting	TNA SC 8/56/2753	?	No
Kent	Ewell	TNA SC 8/56/2753	?	No
Berkshire	Brustlesham (Bisham)	TNA SC 8/56/2753	?	No
London	Holborn	TNA SC 8/56/2752	Henry de Lacy	Yes -- 12 July 1322

Lands Alice Petitioned for by County



Chapter Two

The Marriages of Henry of Lancaster and His Children, c.1280-1380

2.1 Henry of Lancaster and Maud Chaworth

2.1.1 Background

2.1.1.1 Chronology

Henry of Lancaster was born in 1280-81, the second son of Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois and Thomas of Lancaster's younger brother. By the mid-1290s he was being summoned to parliament as lord of Monmouth. Little is known of him until the late 1290s, when he began serving in English armies. Although a member of the opposition to Edward II with his brother – in 1313 he was included in the group of men pardoned for the murder of Piers Gaveston – Henry seems to have stayed out of the limelight. As Waugh notes, when Thomas's opposition to Edward II turned military in 1321, Henry was conspicuously absent.²²⁸ After his brother's 1322 execution, Henry emerged as one of Edward II's chief opponents and was accused of treason. In 1326 he joined the invasion of Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer. Having helped to capture Edward II at Neath, Henry was given custody of the king and had him imprisoned at Kenilworth. He was made chief guardian of the realm during the minority of Edward III and in January 1327 he presided over the council that reversed the process against Thomas of Lancaster. He received the entire Lancastrian patrimony, including the title of earl of Lancaster, by April that year. By 1328, Henry was emerging as head of the opposition against Isabella and Mortimer; however, he was abroad in France from 1329-1330, so was not present for the coup that removed Mortimer from power. By late 1330 he had returned to royal favour. At some point in this period, he became blind and his eldest son, Henry of Grosmont, came to the fore in English politics as chief representative of Lancastrian interests. Henry died in September 1345 and was buried in St Mary in the Newarke, the hospital he had founded in Leicester, just to the right of the high altar.²²⁹

Henry married his father's ward Maud Chaworth by March 1297, when he was sixteen or seventeen and she about fifteen. The only surviving child of Patrick Chaworth and Isabella de Beauchamp (daughter of William de Beauchamp, earl of Warwick) Maud was heiress to her parents as well as to her paternal uncle, Payn Chaworth, who had been chaplain to Edward I's wife Eleanor of Castile.²³⁰ Her father Patrick died in 1283 when Maud was only one. Eleanor of Castile received her wardship; after the queen's death, Edward I granted Maud's wardship and marriage to Edmund of Lancaster in December 1292 (when Maud was about ten), with the understanding that she would marry either

²²⁸ Scott L. Waugh, 'Henry of Lancaster, third earl of Lancaster and third earl of Leicester (c.1280–1345)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2006), <www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 7 March 2014].

²²⁹ Waugh, 'Henry of Lancaster'; John Leland, *The Itinerary of John Leland In or About the Years 1535-1543*, 5 vols, ed. by Lucy Toulmin Smith (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1906-1910), I, pp. 15-16.

²³⁰ John Carmi Parsons, *Eleanor of Castile: Queen and Society in Thirteenth-Century England* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995), p. 35.

Henry or his younger brother John.²³¹ Henry and Maud married by March 1297 and Maud gave birth to seven surviving children – six daughters and one son, Henry of Grosmont. Little is known of her life as lady of Monmouth. It is also unclear when she died; a petition of her daughter Blanche from 1320 mentions that Maud was alive, but she had certainly died by 1322.²³² Either way, she did not live to see her husband's rise to power in the 1320s-30s and never officially became countess of Lancaster. She was buried in Mottisfont Priory in Hampshire.²³³

2.1.1.2 Sources

There has been nearly no scholarly work on Henry of Lancaster or Maud Chaworth. Henry is naturally mentioned in discussions of the end of Edward II's reign and beginning of Edward III's, but the only works exclusively dedicated to him are his entries in the Dictionary of National Biography and *Complete Peerage*.²³⁴ Secondary literature touches even less on Maud Chaworth, who is only mentioned in terms of the importance of her inheritance to the house of Lancaster.²³⁵ Primary sources in the form of Chancery rolls are more helpful and attest in particular to the central role Henry of Lancaster played in government after his elder brother's death. Chancery records speak generally to the influence of the Chaworth family in the thirteenth century, but (with one exception) references to Maud herself pertain to matters concerning her inheritance. Surviving archival sources again focus on Maud's inheritance, especially Kidwelly in Wales and lands in Dorset and Cornwall. Financial accounts reveal how this inheritance was incorporated into the earldom and put to use. Copies of deeds reveal the importance of Maud's inheritance from her uncle Payn in particular.

2.1.2 Motivations

On the face of it, Maud Chaworth, daughter of a lesser noble family, does not seem an ideal marriage partner for the grandson of a king. There was a paucity of English heiresses in this period – Henry de Lacy was the only man of comital or baronial status to have a female heir in the 1290s. Having already secured the generation's major marriage prize, Alice de Lacy, for their eldest son, Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois were forced to look further afield for Henry's bride. Notwithstanding her lower rank, Maud Chaworth was set to receive an inheritance that was both lucrative and strategically located. This marriage is a classic example of providing for a younger son by marrying him to an heiress, a mutually-beneficial strategy that the aristocracy frequently used. Maud made an excellent marriage and Henry's parents were able to provide for him at relatively low cost to themselves or to Thomas, the heir. In theory, Maud's inheritance would remain distinct and she would be accorded a position of respect.

²³¹ Waugh, 'Henry of Lancaster'.

²³² TNA SC 8/87/4346.

²³³ Waugh, 'Henry of Lancaster'.

²³⁴ Waugh, 'Henry of Lancaster'.

²³⁵ Fowler, *The King's Lieutenant*, p. 23; S. J. Payling, 'Chaworth Family', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [<http://www.oxforddnb.com>], <Accessed 28 May 2014>; Waugh, 'Henry of Lancaster'.

2.1.2.1 Landed Power

The primary motive for this marriage was clearly territorial: Maud's inheritance, with areas of strength in southeast England and Wales, was complemented by a series of grants in Wales to Henry. Lands Maud inherited from Patrick Chaworth were centred in the south and southeast of England, particularly Hampshire and Gloucestershire, but included scattered lands elsewhere. Maud's inheritance from her uncle Payn Chaworth contributed property in Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Hampshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. Chaworth lands in Wales, particularly the castles of Kidwelly and Ogmere on the south coast, were the real prize. These were Maud's only Welsh lands, but were valued at £367 19s. 8¾d.; her English inheritance, on the other hand, was worth £265 18s. 5½d., according to Patrick Chaworth's inquisition post mortem.²³⁶ The value of Maud's entire expected inheritance would thus have been well over £600, most of this from her Welsh properties. While the lands Maud was set to inherit in England were certainly welcome, her Welsh lands were clearly the real incentive. A series of copies of deeds of title made in the mid-fourteenth century under either Henry of Lancaster or Henry of Grosmont includes copies of twelve deeds pertaining to Payn Chaworth and none related to Patrick Chaworth.²³⁷ This suggests that Payn Chaworth's inheritance, while perhaps not as important as Patrick's, was still a central consideration in arranging the marriage between Maud and Henry. When examining motives for medieval aristocratic marriage, it is important to look beyond inheritance the marriage partners were set to receive from their parents alone and also consider other relatives.

Edmund of Lancaster began carving out a patrimony for Henry of Lancaster in early 1292, around the time that he was granted Maud's wardship. Edmund had granted Henry the honour of Monmouth, White Castle, Skenfrith, Grosmont (Wales), Minsterworth and Rodley (co. Gloucs) by April 1292.²³⁸ Edward I confirmed the grant in August 1292, giving both Edmund and Henry a life interest in the properties.²³⁹ In 1299 Henry was summoned to parliament for the first time as lord of Monmouth.²⁴⁰ Henry III had granted Edmund the Welsh lands – previously the property of Edmund's older brother Edward – in June 1267, at the same time as Edmund was granted the earldom of Lancaster. Edmund received Minsterworth and Rodley, both former properties of Simon de Montfort and valued at £60 in total, at the same time.²⁴¹ Henry's cluster of properties were strategically placed on both sides of the Welsh border around the mouth of the Severn, a location of military and political significance. This cluster also formed a 'bridge' between Maud's lands in south Wales and her lands in England.

²³⁶ CIPM, II, no. 477 Accessed via British History Online <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk>> [Accessed 13 June 2014]; TNA DL 41/1/11, f. 50.

²³⁷ TNA DL 42/11, *passim*.

²³⁸ CCR 1288-1296, p. 263.

²³⁹ CCharR, 1257-1300, p. 423.

²⁴⁰ Waugh, 'Henry of Lancaster'.

²⁴¹ CCharR 1257-1300, pp. 78, 18, 264.



Figure 4 Henry of Lancaster and Maud Chaworth's property around Wales and the Marches, c. 1292. Henry's property is shown in black, and Maud's in white.

The nature and timing of this settlement suggests that Edmund granted Henry these lands in order to complement Maud's inheritance. It has long been understood that it was desirable to choose a marriage partner whose inheritance complemented one's own. Henry's settlement inverted this strategy: instead of choosing a bride whose inheritance connected well with what he was set to receive, Henry was granted lands according to a marriage already arranged, demonstrating very conscientious planning on his parents' part. This was actually a more efficient way of providing for Henry. Moreover, because Edmund held Maud's wardship, her lands were already being administered by Lancastrian officials at the time of the marriage, allowing for an easy transfer of authority. While the nobility did pursue marriages based on complementary landed holdings, there could be more ways of doing this than simply finding someone whose lands complemented one's own.

The timing of a number of settlements made in the 1290s suggests that Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois had an overarching strategy for their sons' inheritances. Edmund created Henry's patrimony in 1292, the same year that Thomas of Lancaster was betrothed to Alice de Lacy. None of their sons had overlapping areas of influence – Thomas's inheritance would bring him power in the Midlands and north; Henry received a collection of property cutting across south Wales and into south central England; the third son John received Blanche's inheritance in France. Each was thus guaranteed his own area of influence, probably accompanied by a unique role in English or European politics. This allowed Edmund and Blanche to provide appropriately for each of their sons, but also allowed for more efficient management of the growing Lancastrian estates. As it happened, however, the careful split of Lancastrian lands lasted only one generation: after both his brothers died childless,

Henry inherited everything.²⁴² In this context, it is particularly interesting to note that Henry – not Thomas – was designated as John’s heir. Normally Thomas, as the oldest son, would have inherited from John automatically, so granting the remainder of his properties to Henry instead was a deliberate move. The plan may have been that Blanche and Edmund intended for Thomas to become a purely English magnate, without Continental interests, making him a supporter of only the English crown with no confusion from foreign allegiances. Henry was granted lands in Wales, allowing Thomas to focus on the main Lancastrian centre of power in the Midlands, and ensuring that Henry would always have a military and political role to play. John was designated the diplomat, with overseas land to support him, stepping into the role Edmund had played for Edward I, with Henry as his understudy.

A comparison with other comital families with multiple sons illustrates the unique flexibility Lancaster had in terms of providing for younger sons. Most families of comital rank clearly had difficulty providing for younger sons, whose parents rarely granted them significant property. William Beauchamp, third son of Thomas Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, was granted four hundred marks worth of lands in his father’s will in 1369, but nothing from his father during his lifetime.²⁴³ Aubrey de Vere, fourth son of John de Vere, earl of Oxford, was granted two manors that his mother had held in jointure after her 1366 death, in accordance with an entail created by his father.²⁴⁴ Occasionally, younger sons might be provided for by other members of their families. William de Bohun, third son of Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford and Essex, was granted land by Thomas of Brotherton, his maternal uncle, in 1332. His younger brother Edward, was granted land – for life only – by his older sister Eleanor and his older brother Edmund. More commonly, younger sons provided for themselves through royal service. Edward III granted Edward de Bohun an annuity of £100 to help him maintain his knightly rank in 1327, suggesting that any income Bohun was receiving from his family was insufficient.²⁴⁵ The final common way to provide for younger sons was a career in the church. William de Beauchamp was originally destined for the church, but returned to lay society in 1361 after the deaths of his two younger brothers.²⁴⁶ Bogo de Clare, third son of Richard de Clare, earl of Gloucester and Hertford, was intended for the church from a young age, having been granted two livings and the church of Callan, Kilkenny, in 1255 when he was only about six years old.²⁴⁷ Of the four sons of Ela Longespee, countess of Salisbury, two joined the church. That Edmund of Lancaster did not have to resort to any of these tactics to provide for Henry or John highlights the unique character of his vast landed wealth. That John, the youngest son, could expect to completely support himself from lands Blanche of Artois had held in dower attests to the benefit a good marriage could bring a family for

²⁴² CPR 1317-1321, p. 217.

²⁴³ Christine Carpenter, ‘Beauchamp, William (V), First Baron Bergavenny’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [Accessed 2 June 2014].

²⁴⁴ Anthony Goodman, ‘Vere, Aubrey de, Tenth Earl of Oxford’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [Accessed 2 June 2014].

²⁴⁵ CPR 1327-1330, pp. 39, 403, 485, 512.

²⁴⁶ Christine Carpenter, ‘Beauchamp, William’.

²⁴⁷ Henry Summerson, ‘Clare, Bogo de’, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [Accessed 2 June 2014].

generations to come. In this sense, the earls of Lancaster could provide for their younger sons more in the manner of kings than magnates, by creating a sphere of influence or mini-appanage for each son.

Landed power was clearly the major motive of this marriage, but actually getting their hands on Maud's entire inheritance proved something of a challenge, as numerous petitions attest. In 1304 Henry and Maud successfully petitioned for various lands in Cornwall and Devonshire that had been the property of Maud's grandfather, claiming that Richard, earl of Cornwall, had unlawfully seized them.²⁴⁸ In 1307-08, Maud and Henry were forced to petition for Kidwelly, the crown jewel of Maud's inheritance, which they claimed Edward I had incorrectly retained after Maud came of age.²⁴⁹ In 1319 Henry was petitioning for knights' fees in Devonshire and Cornwall that she should have inherited.²⁵⁰

For Henry, Edmund of Lancaster created a centre of power that fitted in neatly with Maud Chaworth's properties in Wales and southwest England. The importance of Henry's Welsh lands became clear in the 1320s when Queen Isabella invaded England. Adam Murimuth describes how Queen Isabella

sent to Wales to the earl of Lancaster, lord William la Zouche and master Rhys ap Howell (who had previously been liberated from a London prison), because those three men held lands and lordships in Wales near the place where the king [Edward II] was said to be hiding. Whence these men, with the support of the Welsh... seized the king, Hugh Despenser the Younger, Robert de Baldok and Simon de Reading... And they released the king to the custody of the earl of Lancaster, his kinsman, who took him by Monmouth and Ledbury and other places to his castle of Kenilworth, where he remained throughout the winter.²⁵¹

Murimuth makes it clear that Henry's (and others') Welsh properties were crucial to Isabella's campaign. Lancastrian lands also created a secure path for Henry to follow with the captured king from Wales to Kenilworth.

There was probably also a political element to the marriage. The hope was doubtless that Henry would 'inherit' the Chaworth family's political connections, especially in Wales, an addition to Maud's landed wealth. Her Londres ancestors had owned their Welsh land, particularly Kidwelly and Ogmores Castle, since the Norman invasion of Wales in the early twelfth century, and were presumably well established in the area.²⁵² Political motives on the national level were probably considered as well. If, as Rhodes has suggested, Edmund of Lancaster's influence in Wales was crucial to Edward I's conquest of north

²⁴⁸ TNA SC 8/2/83.

²⁴⁹ CCR 1307-1313, p. 18; TNA SC 8/56/2767.

²⁵⁰ TNA SC 8/56/2769; SC 8/123/6149; SC 8/124/6176; SC 8/240/11977.

²⁵¹ Adam Murimuth, *Adae Murimuth Continuatio Chronicarum Robertus de Avesbury de Gestis Mirabilibus Regis Edwardi Tertii*, ed. by E. M. Thompson (London: HMSO, 1889), p. 49. All translations from this work are mine. *Regina vero, cum exercitu suo, se transtulit versus Herefordiam; ubi morabatur fere per mensem cum stipendiariis suis et aliis, paucis exceptis. Et de loco illo misit in Walliam comitem Lancastriae, dominum W[illelmum] la Zouche, et magistrum Resum ap Howel, qui fuit prius de carcere Londoniarum liberatus, quia in illis partibus erant noti, cum paucis marchiensibus, quia ipsi tres habuerunt terras et dominia in Wallia prope locum ubi rex, ut praemittitur, latitabat. Unde ipsi, adiutorio Wallensium, de quibus rex et sui confidebant, ipsum regem et dominum H[ugonem] le Despenser filium et R[obertum] de Baldok et Simonem de Redynges ceperunt, non sine pecuniae interventu, de aliis regis familiaribus non curantes; et regem comitis Lancastriae, consanguinei sui, custodiae liberarunt, qui duxit regem per Monemoutham et Ledebury et alia loca usque ad castrum suum de Kenelworth, ubi per hiemem totam mansit.*

²⁵² Payling, 'Chaworth Family', ODNB.

Wales, then creating a major Welsh and March patrimony for Edmund's son would solidify this arrangement and ensure it kept working into the next generation.²⁵³

While Edmund of Lancaster's motives for arranging this marriage are clear, it is more difficult to speculate on whether Maud's family had a say. Maud was about ten when her wardship was granted to Edmund of Lancaster, probably too young for her opinion to be considered. Her father was obviously not involved, since he had died when Maud was only a year old. Maud's mother Isabella de Beauchamp was sister of the earl of Warwick and had remarried to the elder Hugh Despenser, and so was a woman of some influence. However, there is no record of where Maud lived or how much connection she had with her mother. We might expect that Isabella was, at the very least, consulted on and approved of her daughter's marriage, but beyond this it is impossible to say. It is difficult to imagine Maud's family objecting, as this was a very good marriage for her, both socially and financially.

2.1.2.2 'Personal' Motivations

It is clear that the primary motivation for this marriage was territorial, followed by political motives, but it is worth considering more personal factors that may have made the marriage desirable. There is some evidence that Patrick Chaworth was a part of the circle around Edward I to which Edmund of Lancaster, Henry de Lacy, and Hamo Lestrangle belonged. In 1258 he and Hamo Lestrangle witnessed a charter of the future Edward I.²⁵⁴ In the early 1270s he accompanied Prince Edward and Edmund of Lancaster on crusade to the Holy Land; in 1273 he was granted 600 silver marks in return for fulfilling his vow to do this.²⁵⁵ Obviously he and Edmund would have known each other, and may have been friendly; however, Patrick does not seem to have been a part of the Lancastrian circle. Spencer has demonstrated that Patrick was not among those who witnessed multiple charters of Edmund of Lancaster, which would have been an indication of a closer relationship.²⁵⁶

It is unclear what the relationship between Edmund and the Beauchamp family may have been. Spencer has noted that the earls of Warwick were consistently the least common comital witnesses to royal charters during Edward I's reign, suggesting that they were not often at court, though both William and Guy de Beauchamp, ninth and tenth earls respectively, were loyal supporters of Edward.²⁵⁷ While not undesirable, an alliance with the earldom of Warwick cannot be seen as a primary motivation. At this point, the Despenser family had not come to the fore, and it is unlikely that Edmund was seeking a relationship with them, though Maud's widowed mother had recently married the younger Hugh Despenser. Maud's landed wealth thus remains as the primary motivation for the marriage. The Despenser connection may have become important later on: it is worth speculating that Henry's connection to the family by marriage may have helped to save him after his brother's treason. In the coup that overthrew Edward II, however, there is no evidence to suggest that Henry interfered on their behalf.

²⁵³ Rhodes, 'Edmund, Earl of Lancaster', p. 19.

²⁵⁴ CCharR 1257-1300, p. 2.

²⁵⁵ *Calendar of Entries in Papal Registers*, I, 1198-1304, p. 445.

²⁵⁶ Spencer, *Nobility and Kingship in Medieval England*, p. 171.

²⁵⁷ Spencer, *Nobility and Kingship in Medieval England*, pp. 198, 223, 233, 245, 255.

The connection between the Chaworth family and Edward I's first wife, Eleanor of Castile, suggests another personal motivation for the marriage. Maud's uncle Payn was the queen's chaplain; while we cannot know for certain how intimate Eleanor's relationship with Payn was, it seems reasonable to assume that this connection was one of the reasons Eleanor received Maud's wardship after Patrick Chaworth's death. Eleanor may also have influenced the decision that Maud and Henry would eventually marry. Maud's close proximity to the royal court during her childhood certainly suggests that she and Henry would have met – perhaps regularly – as children. At least from 1292, when Maud's wardship was transferred to Edmund of Lancaster, she and Henry probably knew they would eventually marry.

2.1.3 Relationships

2.1.3.1 Maud and Henry's relationship

Although the evidence for Henry and Maud's personal relationship is circumstantial, it hints that they worked well together, both on their public and private lives. Maud may have been unusually active during her married life. Certainly compared to her sister-in-law Alice de Lacy, Maud is considerably more present in the sources. At least early in their marriage, Maud apparently exercised a certain degree of autonomy: in August 1299 she and her household were granted permission to go abroad (though where and why is unspecified) and, since no letters of protection for Henry were issued around this time, it would appear that she went alone.²⁵⁸ Later, there is evidence that Maud was active in helping Henry pursue the lordship of Gower. Letters close of December 1309 ordered both Henry and Maud to cease interfering with William de Braose's property there. Braose had complained to the king that Henry and Maud had ordered their men to steal his property and committed homicide and besieged highways in the area.²⁵⁹ He also complained about Maud in particular, claiming she had ordered attacks on his knights and ministers when they travelled to court to discuss the matter. He claimed that his men had been threatened with life and limb and the burning of their property.²⁶⁰ From about 1299-1306 Braose had been engaged in a series of disputes to demonstrate his lordship over Gower.²⁶¹ It is unclear what the basis for Maud and Henry's claims in Gower may have been – Braose was clearly the heir of the lordship – but their interest in the property, which lay on the coast of Wales between Maud's properties of Kidwelly and Ogmere, is clear. It would seem that they took advantage of the disputed inheritance to make a claim themselves.

Other circumstantial evidence of a closer personal relationship comes from the fact that Maud and Henry had seven surviving children. This meant that the Lancastrian inheritance would be preserved for the next generation, certainly a relief after it became clear that Thomas of Lancaster was not likely to have children by Alice de Lacy. It is also evidence that Maud and Henry spent a good deal of time together. Though Henry eventually became an important diplomat, he does not appear to have served

²⁵⁸ CCR 1296-1302, p. 265.

²⁵⁹ CCR 1307-1313, p. 239.

²⁶⁰ TNA SC 8/204/10172. TNA dates this petition to 1317-20, but it seems much more likely that it dates to the earlier conflict between Braose, and then Henry and Maud, over Gower.

²⁶¹ Michael Prestwich, *Edward I* (London: Methuen, 1988), p. 539.

royal interests abroad until 1318, just after the death of his younger brother John. There could be a number of explanations for this, but it is worth considering that Henry was disinclined to leave his wife and young family alone in England for extended periods of time.²⁶² Maud did accompany Henry abroad at least once, in 1320, when a petition from her daughter Blanche to the king mentions that both Maud and Henry were out of the country – they were probably on pilgrimage to Compostela with their son-in-law Thomas Wake (see below).²⁶³ More evidence for an affectionate relationship between Henry and Maud comes from the fact that he spent at least twenty years as a widower after her death. He certainly could have – and possibly, from the point of view of the Lancastrian inheritance, should have – remarried. This decision is discussed in further depth below, but could be taken as evidence of a close personal relationship between the two.

2.1.3.2 Maud Chaworth's Relationship with her Natal Family

Evidence of patronage of religious houses, both in life and death, suggests that Maud maintained an emotional relationship with her natal family. At some point in their marriage she and Henry granted land to the Hospital of St John the Baptist in Lechlade-on-Thames, Gloucestershire. The priory was located near to Maud's inherited properties of Inglesham and Kempsford, suggesting her family had acted as patrons to the hospital.²⁶⁴ Mottisfont, the Augustinian priory where Maud was buried, had been connected with her Chaworth family for several generations. In 1277, Patrick de Chaworth granted it lands in return for the prior performing an annual obit for his 'brother' (likely an illegitimate half-brother) Hervey Chaworth.²⁶⁵ Eleanor of Castile gifted money to the priory in 1290, while Maud was her ward.²⁶⁶ All this – particularly Maud's burial at Mottisfont – suggests that she felt an emotional connection to properties connected with her natal family. It might have been more typical for Maud to have been buried in a 'Lancastrian' location – possibly St Mary in the Newarke in Leicester, though Henry of Lancaster's development of a Lancastrian foundation there had not fully taken off at this point. That Maud was instead buried in a priory associated with her own family suggests that this was her wish, though without a surviving will it is impossible to do more than speculate on this point. If so, however, her decision is similar to Alice de Lacy's decision to be buried at Barlings Abbey and Blanche of Artois's choice to be buried in France. Choice of burial location (where we can be reasonably certain that the choice was made by a woman, not her male family), may have been a way for women to make a statement about their own identities. The choice to be buried separately from her husband, however, does not necessarily reflect a woman's attitude towards her marriage – many women who apparently had close relationships with their husbands still chose to be buried separately.

²⁶² CPR 1317-1321, p. 145.

²⁶³ TNA SC 8/87/4346.

²⁶⁴ TNA SC 8/79/3908.

²⁶⁵ TNA DL 27/232.

²⁶⁶ John Carmi Parsons, *The Court and Household of Eleanor of Castile, 1290*, (London: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1997) p. 95.

2.1.4 Death and Memory

2.1.4.1 Male Widowerhood

As mentioned above, Henry of Lancaster's decision not to remarry after Maud's death is perhaps an indication of personal affection between the two. From a merely practical point-of-view, the decision is perhaps odd, because at the time of Maud's death Henry of Lancaster had only one male heir, Henry of Grosmont, who was probably only about nine years old. When Maud died, Henry's younger brother John had already died childless and it would have been clear that his elder brother Thomas was unlikely to have an heir. If anything had happened to Grosmont, the Lancastrian inheritance would have been split between Henry and Maud's six daughters. Henry was still fairly young – only in his forties – and had not yet entered the retirement that accompanied his blindness, and so was presumably capable of fathering more children. In this situation, then, we might expect him to have remarried in the hope of producing another male heir, but Henry chose to remain single.

Scholarly work on male widowerhood is particularly limited; as Skinner has noted, this is partly because, unlike widows, men's marital status is rarely noted in the surviving records and so widowers are difficult to identify.²⁶⁷ A study of aristocratic widowers is therefore easier than one of lower or middle-class widowed men, because we are more likely to know their wives' death dates. Roman law, which prescribed a one-year wait for remarriage for widows, allowed widowers to remarry as soon as they liked. As Brundage has noted, widowers did not face the economic or social pressure to remarry that widowed women experienced.²⁶⁸ Others, however, have observed that in medieval and early modern Europe, widowers tended to remarry quite quickly, possibly because they needed a wife to care for their young children – presumably less of a concern in the upper classes.²⁶⁹

Thus far, the sample in this study suggests a different conclusion. In this sample, women and men were equally likely to be widowed at least once. Among the six men who were widowed and who then remarried, the average wait for remarriage was two years; in the case of the eleven women who were widowed and remarried, the average wait for remarriage was 1.7 years, not a statistically relevant difference. My research does confirm the conclusion that women were more likely than men to remarry in general: of twenty-two women studied, eleven were widowed and of these nine women (82%) remarried at some point. Of the twelve men who were widowed at any point, only six chose to remarry (see Appendix 2.A). That only half the men remarried is clear evidence that single life did not have the social or economic pressure for men that women experienced.

In this context, Henry of Lancaster's decision not to remarry after Maud Chaworth's death is not very unusual. It seems to have been reasonably common for men to remain single, often for a long time, after a spouse's death. What is perhaps uncommon is that Henry chose to do this when the family inheritance relied on him, he only had one son and no collateral line had male heirs either. He had no

²⁶⁷ Skinner, p. 57.

²⁶⁸ Brundage, 'The Merry Widow', pp. 43, 46.

²⁶⁹ Cavallo and Warner, pp. 10-11; Hanawalt 'Remarriage', p.147; Hanawalt, *The Ties that Bound: Peasant Family Life in medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 19986, p. 225; Herlihy, p. 107.

grandson until 1340.²⁷⁰ Most men who remained single after widowerhood had already secured their succession. In this study, both João of Portugal and Sir John Cornwall, who chose not to marry after their wives' (Philippa and Elizabeth of Lancaster, respectively) deaths, had more than one son. In cases where it was in the family's interests that the man remarry in the hopes of producing a male heir (or an extra male heir), we might conclude that the husband's grief at his wife's death was such that remarriage was unthinkable. Alternatively, Henry may have been reluctant to make a marriage that could prove regrettable in this politically turbulent period. By the time things calmed down, Henry was about fifty, and it could have been too late to arrange a new marriage. During this period Henry arranged marriages for most of his children, including his heir, all to members of established families or to important up-and-comers. His many children may have allowed him to spread his influence and hedge his political bets, so it was less important for Henry himself to make a political alliance. Henry also had six daughters: arranging marriages for all was an expensive and time-consuming venture (as it was, one still entered the church). There may have been concern about providing appropriately for children of a second marriage.

2.1.4.2 Land and Legacy

Maud Chaworth's inheritance played an important role in the growing Lancastrian patrimony. In the short term, Maud's inheritance was used traditionally in providing for children and paying her debts. The issues of Ogmores Castle were assigned to the executors of Maud's will at least until 1327, when Henry ordered that Richard de Ryvers, one of the executors, be paid £19 6s. from its issues.²⁷¹ Henry of Lancaster issued a deed in 1344 ordering that Patrick Chaworth's lands would be used to provide for Henry of Grosmont.²⁷² These are uses that scholars have traditionally identified for a wife's lands and are not surprising. A wife's lands often remained 'unofficially' separate, at least in people's minds, even after officially being absorbed into a patrimony. In the long term, Maud Chaworth's lands were not as influential in the Lancastrian inheritance as, for example, Alice de Lacy's, but they were important nonetheless. Her Welsh lands – particularly Kidwelly – formed a base for Lancastrian activity in Wales under both Henry of Grosmont and John of Gaunt. Henry of Lancaster and Maud Chaworth's seven children created a web of connections that will be explored in depth in the third section of this chapter.

2.1.5 Conclusion

The marriage of Henry of Lancaster to Maud Chaworth added crucial lands to the Lancastrian patrimony, extending the family's influence in south Wales and the Marches. Examining the land granted to Henry before his marriage to Maud illustrates how a family might provide for a younger son in order to complement an anticipated inheritance. In addition to Maud's landed inheritance, Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois probably intended that Henry should succeed to her 'social' inheritance of established connections in Wales. The evidence suggests that the two had a strong

²⁷⁰ Eleanor of Lancaster gave birth to her oldest son Henry de Beaumont in April 1340, and Joan of Lancaster to her oldest son John de Mowbray in June 1340.

²⁷¹ TNA DL 25/971.

²⁷² TNA DL 42/11, f. 55v.

partnership, both privately and publicly, with Maud giving birth to seven surviving children and enthusiastically representing her husband's interests. Her ongoing relationship with religious foundations connected to her natal family does not detract from this – she obviously sought to nurture connections with both. Henry's long widowhood after her relatively early death reinforces the argument that this was a strong relationship, as well as providing insight into the pressures faced by elite widowers. The land that Maud brought to this marriage proved important to the Lancastrian patrimony. Just as important, however, were her seven children, whose marriages firmly knit Lancaster into the web of elite society and had long-term consequences for English politics in the fourteenth century and beyond.

2.2 Henry of Grosmont and Isabella de Beaumont

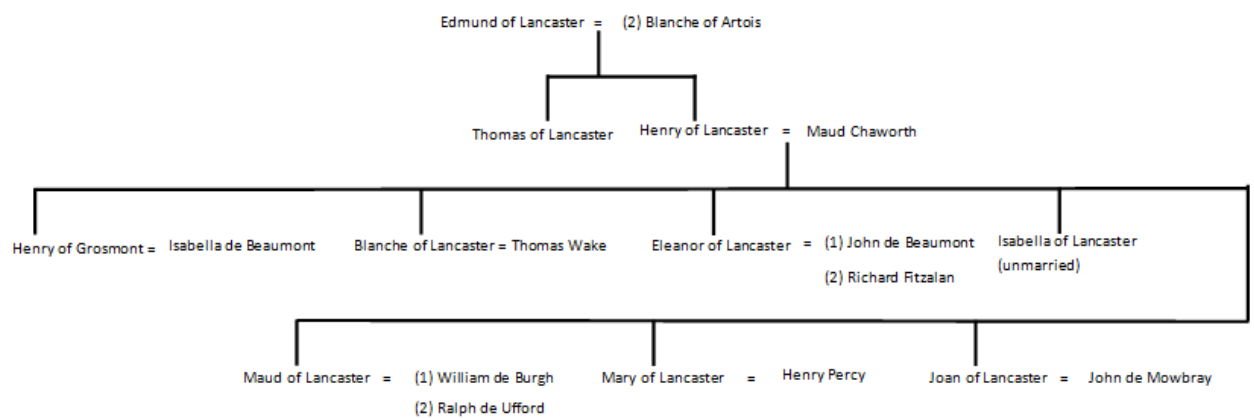


Figure 5 Descent from Henry of Lancaster and Maud Chaworth

2.2.1 Background

2.2.1.1 Chronology

Born around 1310, Henry of Grosmont was one of Henry of Lancaster and Maud Chaworth's middle children, and their only son. Ormrod suggests that Henry of Lancaster's 'uneasy' relationship with Edward II, then Isabella and Mortimer's regime, meant that Grosmont probably spent little time at court as a child.²⁷³ He entered the public scene in 1330 when he was knighted and also began taking over his father's public role around this time, including representing him in parliament. Scholarship has chiefly remembered Grosmont as an outstanding figure of the early Hundred Years War, as well as a trusted royal servant and diplomat. He spent much of his life overseas; Fowler notes that from 1333 on, Grosmont spent about half his time abroad, never remaining in England for a year uninterrupted.²⁷⁴ In 1337 on the eve of the Hundred Years War, Edward III created him earl of Derby (one of a number of comital elevations made at the same time), partly in recognition of the fact that Lancaster had held the earldom (though not the title) since the 1260s. Recognition of his unique loyalty

²⁷³ W. M. Ormrod, 'Henry of Lancaster [Henry of Grosmont], first duke of Lancaster (c. 1310-1361)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [accessed 30 June 2014].

²⁷⁴ Fowler, *The King's Lieutenant*, pp. 27, 214.

and accomplishments came in 1351 when he was elevated to duke of Lancaster for life, only the second duke in English history, Edward of Woodstock (the Black Prince) having been created duke of Cornwall in 1337. He died, possibly of the Black Death, in 1361. Like his father, he was buried at St Mary in the Newarke, Leicester.

Henry married Isabella de Beaumont around June 1330.²⁷⁵ She was a daughter of Henry de Beaumont, a distant relation of Eleanor of Castile, and Alice Comyn, heiress to the Scottish earldom of Buchan. Initially a close supporter of Edward II, Beaumont switched allegiance to Isabella and Mortimer after the Anglo-Scottish truce of 1323 saw English nobles with claims to land in Scotland effectively disinherited. He became dissatisfied with the Mortimer regime after the 1328 treaty of Northampton and joined Henry of Lancaster's rebellion against the regime that year.²⁷⁶ Isabella's date of birth is unclear. Fowler only suggests that the relatively late birthdate of their oldest child suggests that Isabella was much younger than Henry.²⁷⁷ Verity suggests a birthdate of 1316 or 1318, based on what is known of her siblings' ages.²⁷⁸ While much is known of her family, very little is known of Isabella herself. She rarely appears in the record, either before or after her marriage, and even the date of her death is unclear, though evidence suggests it was fairly close to (and certainly before) her husband's. The couple had two children: Maud (b. c. 1339-41) and Blanche (b. c. 1342-47).

2.2.1.2 Sources

Secondary sources for Henry of Grosmont are the most prolific of any of the figures this thesis has addressed thus far. Fowler's biography of Grosmont appropriately focuses on his military role in the beginning of the Hundred Years War, offering only a brief discussion of Grosmont and Isabella's marriage. He suggests that Isabella must have been considerably younger than Grosmont and argues (though not entirely convincingly) that she occasionally accompanied him abroad (see below).²⁷⁹ Limited work on Grosmont's devotional treatise, *Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines*, has usually addressed autobiographical details found in the work.²⁸⁰ Scholarly work on the *Livre* has not addressed the lengthy passages on lust, and what they might imply about Henry's marriage or medieval marriage generally. Verity's article on Isabella de Beaumont is the only work devoted only to her and does a good job of gathering together all the available sources on Isabella.

In terms of primary sources, references to Grosmont are numerous. He appears regularly in Chancery enrolments, though Isabella is mentioned only once.²⁸¹ The *Livre* is the most significant primary source, and the only example in this thesis of work actually produced by a person under discussion. As mentioned above, the *Livre* has generally been discussed in terms of anecdotal details about

²⁷⁵ *Calendar of Papal Letters, 1305-1342*, p. 343.

²⁷⁶ John Robert Maddicott, 'Beaumont, Sir Henry de (c. 1280-1340)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [Accessed 3 July 2014].

²⁷⁷ Fowler, *The King's Lieutenant*, p. 215.

²⁷⁸ Verity, 'The First English Duchess', p. 311.

²⁷⁹ Fowler, *The King's Lieutenant*, p. 26, 214-16.

²⁸⁰ Henry, Duke of Lancaster, *Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines*, ed. by E. J. Arnould (Oxford: Pub. for the Anglo-Norman Text Society by B. Blackwell, 1940), pp. vii-xi; Margaret Wade Labarge, 'Henry of Lancaster and *Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines*', *Florilegium* 2 (1980), 183-191; Naoë Kukita Yoshikawa, 'Holy Medicine and Diseases of the Soul: Henry of Lancaster and *Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines*', *Medical History* 53 (2009), 397-414.

²⁸¹ CPR 1340-1343, p. 573.

Grosmont's life, aristocratic society, what it reveals about general knowledge of medicine, and what it says about lay devotion in late medieval England. Grosmont does not discuss his marriage, but the numerous and lengthy passages on lust are revealing, especially concerning attitudes to women and to fidelity. John Capgrave's *Liber de Illustribus Henricis*, written in the mid-fifteenth century for Henry VI, discusses both Henry of Grosmont and his father-in-law Henry de Beaumont and casts light on how both Henries were remembered. Chronicles of the period mention Grosmont regularly, but focus on his military exploits and are unhelpful for details of his personal life.

Similarly, there are numerous archival sources touching on Grosmont, but they do little to illuminate the marriage. A financial account made under Henry of Lancaster in 1332, shortly after Isabella and Grosmont's marriage, provides a few details of these years, but the lack of detail makes it difficult to infer much.²⁸² One letter of Isabella de Beaumont, written sometime after 1351, is also helpful here.²⁸³ In general, however, there is very little information on their marriage or personal lives.

2.2.2 Motivations: The Double Beaumont/Lancaster Marriage

Unusually, Isabella brought little or nothing to the marriage in terms of property, so motives for the marriage must be understood in terms of the political context of the late 1320s. Henry of Grosmont was married to Isabella de Beaumont by June 1330; at almost exactly the same time (as discussed below), his older sister Eleanor was married to Isabella's brother John, Henry de Beaumont's eldest son and heir. The motives seem to have been purely practical; if there were personal motives, they are impossible to identify now. There is no surviving evidence of the marriage ceremonies or negotiations, but a 1327 entry in the Close Rolls reveals when the marriages were arranged. In that year Henry de Beaumont and his sister Isabella acknowledged that they owed Henry of Lancaster four lots of money totalling £14000. In turn, Henry of Lancaster acknowledged that he owed Henry de Beaumont £3000.²⁸⁴ Similar entries between other men found in the Close Rolls reveal that these sums were recognisances, payable if either man pulled his child out of the agreed marriage.²⁸⁵ If this entry marks Lancaster/Beaumont betrothals, it also indicates an alliance between the two families going back to 1327, three years before the marriages actually took place.

Several scholars have noted the two marriages, but no scholarly work has attempted to explain them beyond Verity's brief suggestion that they must be understood in the context of Henry of Lancaster and Henry de Beaumont's opposition to Isabella and Mortimer in the late 1320s. Verity is certainly correct to view the marriages in terms of the wider political context, but as the betrothals date to 1327, they must be more to do with opposition to Edward II and the establishment of the Mortimer government. Verity sees the marriages of the Lancaster and Beaumont heirs to daughters of each other as 'a powerful and public statement'.²⁸⁶ It is probably true that the marriages were a statement of

²⁸² TNA DL 40/1/11.

²⁸³ TNA SC 1/40/110.

²⁸⁴ CCR 1327-1330, p. 90.

²⁸⁵ See, for instance, CCR 1349-1354, pp. 92-93, 421-422, 633. These will be discussed at greater length in the final section of this chapter.

²⁸⁶ Verity, 'The First English Duchess', p. 312.

alliance, but both men may have had something more cynical in mind. As several scholars have noted – usually, though not always, in the context of international politics – a betrothed or married woman often played the role of hostage, a guarantor of her male relatives' good behaviour.²⁸⁷ Henry of Lancaster and Henry de Beaumont both switched sides (Beaumont more than once) in the tumultuous 1320s. Beaumont had been a loyal supporter of Edward II and only switched to the opposition fairly recently. As Thomas of Lancaster had demonstrated in 1322, opposition to royal power or royal favourites was a life-threatening proposition. Both thus had good reason to take steps to ensure the other's loyalty, and the double marriage was probably one of these steps. The nature of the agreement suggests that Henry of Lancaster was able to drive a hard bargain: while Beaumont obliged himself to pay £14,000 if the marriages failed to take place, Henry was only obliged to pay £3000 in the same event. Nonetheless, the fact that Henry of Lancaster was willing to marry his heir to a woman with no inheritance to speak of is evidence of how badly he felt he needed the Beaumont alliance.

Elsewhere, this study emphasises that motivations for marriage should be understood in the long term, but this aberrational marriage makes it clear that this was not always the case. Henry of Lancaster was willing to sacrifice a marriage that could have added more land to the Lancastrian patrimony in favour of a match that furthered his own short-term needs and did little for his son. From a long-term point of view, the marriage was thoroughly impractical: Grosmont married a girl who would be too young to have children for some time and brought no property to the marriage. Extenuating outside circumstances might push someone to arrange a marriage that would otherwise bring no advantage.

2.2.3 Relationships

The lack of evidence for the marriage makes it difficult to say anything about Isabella de Beaumont and Henry of Grosmont's relationship. It is probably fair to assume that their relationship was not very close, if only because Grosmont spent about half his time abroad. References to Isabella in surviving documentation reveal almost nothing. In the first year of their marriage, 1330, she, her new husband and Eleanor of Lancaster (recently married to Isabella's brother John) spent a good deal of time in each other's company, as revealed by financial records of Henry of Lancaster, who was paying to support them.²⁸⁸ She is mentioned in government records exactly once, in October 1350, when she and Henry were jointly given licence to grant the manor of Longstock (co. Hants) to Henry de Camoys.²⁸⁹ In March 1344 she petitioned the pope for benefices for two of her household servants. A similar petition from Blanche Wake, her sister-in-law, was answered the same day, suggesting that both petitions were submitted to the pope together.²⁹⁰ This shows that Isabella maintained connections with Grosmont's family, and may indicate that Blanche and Isabella were residing together at the time, though this is only speculation. A letter, datable to 1351-56, from Isabella to the bishop of Worcester, at that point chancellor of England, does little to illuminate her character. In it she requests that the

²⁸⁷ Fiona Harris Stoertz, 'Young Women in France and England, 1050-1300', *Journal of Women's History* 12 (2001), 22-46 (p. 25).

²⁸⁸ TNA DL 40/1/11, f. 52v.

²⁸⁹ CPR 1348-1350, p. 573. Longstock was part of Maud Chaworth's inheritance and not connected to the Beaumont family in any way. That the couple were jointly granted permission to grant the manor may imply that it was part of her dower or jointure.

²⁹⁰ *Calendar of Papal Petitions, 1342-1419*, p. 47.

bishop re-present her chaplain John Sexcestre as parson of Wympel.²⁹¹ It tells us that Isabella kept a chaplain and that she played some role in managing her personal household, facts which do nothing to differentiate her from other women of her station. The letter is dated from Kingston Lacy (co. Dorset). Fowler suggests that Kingston Lacy was one of Grosmont's favourite residences and so we might presume that it served as something akin to a family home.²⁹² It was certainly convenient for the south coast, which would be useful for a man who was often abroad. Isabella writing a letter from here might also be evidence that she preferred to stay away from court. Without more evidence, however, it is impossible to draw any positive conclusions. On 30 May 1359 Henry of Grosmont petitioned the pope for permission for the chaplain at St Mary's in Leicester to hear the confessions of himself, his wife, his children and his household.²⁹³ This could be, as Verity argues, evidence that Isabella died around this time and that Henry was considering the possibility of remarriage. However, this is more likely related to their daughter Blanche's marriage to John of Gaunt, which had taken place eleven days earlier; the petition was meant to ensure that Gaunt, now Grosmont's son by marriage, could also confess to the chaplain's at St Mary's.

As is often the case, the lack of information says as much as the evidence that does survive. Isabella was clearly not involved in political or public life the way that her sisters-in-law or later duchesses of Lancaster would be, as we shall explore later.

2.2.3.1 Lack of Heirs

If any fourteenth-century nobleman needed a male heir, it was Henry of Grosmont. He had no living brothers or legitimate male cousins and the largest landed patrimony in England, yet in the end only two daughters to whom it could descend. The lack of male heirs surely had an impact on his marriage. In the end, of course, Grosmont's inheritance passed intact to Blanche of Lancaster and John of Gaunt, but in the 1340s-50s, Grosmont and Isabella would have assumed that it would be split between both daughters. Ormrod and Fowler both suggest that Isabella was a good deal younger than Grosmont, since their oldest daughter Maud was not born until around 1341, eleven years after the marriage took place.²⁹⁴ This goes some way to explain the wait between marriage and Maud's birth, but cannot explain it entirely. Isabella must have been at least eleven when she married Henry; she cannot have been much older than this, as otherwise the marriage would have been consummated much earlier and she would have had children earlier. My evidence suggests that marriages were not normally consummated until the wife was around fifteen or sixteen years, or occasionally a little older. Assuming that Isabella was eleven at her marriage and the marriage was consummated when she was sixteen, in 1335, we are still left with a six year gap between consummation and the birth of her first child. If Isabella did not accompany Grosmont on his frequent journeys abroad, this would help to explain the delay in having children. Without knowing precisely the girls' years of birth, it is impossible to say for certain. The long period before Maud's birth, as well as the gap (at least three years) between Maud and

²⁹¹ TNA SC 1/40/110.

²⁹² Fowler, *The King's Lieutenant*, p. 214.

²⁹³ *Calendar of Papal Petitions, 1342-1419*, p. 341.

²⁹⁴ Ormrod, 'Henry of Lancaster [Henry of Grosmont]'; Fowler, *The King's Lieutenant*, p. 215.

Blanche's births, also suggest that Isabella had difficult pregnancies. She probably had several miscarriages or children who died young, without making it into the record. This may have been genetic. Isabella's daughter Blanche had a difficulty giving birth – at least two (possibly more) of her children died as infants, and she probably died in childbirth. Maud of Lancaster had only one child, who also died young. That both Maud and Blanche made lower-status betrothals (to Ralph Stafford and John Segrave, respectively) before their second, higher-status marriages may suggest either that there were sons who did not survive, or that sons were still expected.

Henry of Grosmont's lack of male heir may have affected more than just the inheritance of his estates. Ormrod has suggested that Edward III may have felt comfortable elevating Grosmont to the rank of duke precisely because he had no son to claim the title after his death.²⁹⁵ This reasoning suggests that by 1351, it was clear that Henry and Isabella would have no more children. It was certainly obvious by 1352, when Maud of Lancaster was married to William of Zeeland, since the prime motivation for Maud's marriage would have been her half of the Lancastrian inheritance. If there was a hint that she might yet gain a younger brother, she would have been a much less desirable bride. At this point, Isabella de Beaumont was in her late thirties at the oldest, still within childbearing age (see Introduction, Appendix E). This again suggests that pregnancy and childbirth were more difficult or dangerous for her than most women.

2.2.3.2 *Livre de Seyntz Medicines* and Medieval Attitudes to Infidelity

The most valuable source for Henry of Grosmont and Isabella de Beaumont's marriage is Grosmont's devotional treatise *Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines* ('Book of Holy Medicines'). Composed in 1354, the *Livre* was clearly intended for public consumption and written in two sections.²⁹⁶ Grosmont first catalogues the seven wounds which poison his soul, infected with the poison of the seven deadly sins. The second section requests remedies for these wounds from the Divine Physician and his Assistant (God and Christ, respectively), and the Blessed Virgin Mary, so that Grosmont may return to spiritual health. While not considered a great literary work, the *Livre* illuminates aspects of late medieval aristocratic society, including lay religious attitudes and medical knowledge. Labarge has argued that the *Livre* offers unparalleled insight into the personal piety of a devout layman who was also an important public figure. She sees the book as 'a sincere, attractive, and temperate book of piety'²⁹⁷, which reveals much of Grosmont's attitudes and personality. Details in the book reveal both sides – spiritual and martial – of his character.²⁹⁸ Yoshikawa has observed that it may be particularly helpful to interpret the *Livre* in light of increasing lay spirituality after the Black Death.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁵ Ormrod, 'Henry of Lancaster [Henry of Grosmont]?'.

²⁹⁶ Henry, Duke of Lancaster, *Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines*, p. 244. All translations from this work are mine. 'CEST LIVRE ESTOIT COMENCEE ET PARFAITE EN L'AN DE GRACE NOSTRE SEIGNUR JHU' CRIST M.CCC.LIIII. ET LE FIST UN FOLE CHEITIF PECCHEOUR QE L'EN APELLE ERTSACNAL EDCUD IRNEH [Henri duc de Lancastre], A QI DIEUX SEZ MALFAITZ PARDOYNT. Amen!'

²⁹⁷ Labarge, p. 184.

²⁹⁸ Labarge, pp. 184, 187.

²⁹⁹ Yoshikawa, p. 398.

The sins Grosmont discusses in the *Livre* include taking too much pleasure in good food and clothing, pride in chivalric skill and dancing, and oppression of his tenants.³⁰⁰ Several times in the book, Grosmont discusses the sin of lust, including his flirtatious interactions with noblewomen and his visits to prostitutes, but he never mentions his marriage.³⁰¹ Grosmont's writing suggests he was not faithful to Isabella, but it is unclear whether he refers to specific cases of extramarital sex or to sins of the mind or heart. What is clear is that Grosmont sees his lust as distinct from his marriage – the fact that it may have affected his wife or their relationship is never suggested. What does this say about Grosmont's marriage, and about medieval aristocratic marriage more generally?

Infidelity in the Middle Ages

A study of extramarital sex and relationships, as Morgan points out, sheds light on marriage, sexuality and gender relations.³⁰² However, modern sociologists examining infidelity have noted that adultery has received relatively little scholarly attention, despite its abundant presence in popular culture.³⁰³ Scholarly literature on marriage and sexuality in the Middle Ages does discuss infidelity, but rarely in much depth. There is no comprehensive historical work on infidelity, either in the medieval period or in general. Turning to sociology, VanderVoort and Duck succinctly sum up modern views of infidelity, defining adultery as 'a transgression of marriage'.³⁰⁴ Modern society sees adultery as a reprehensible act which shakes marriage to its core; it is vital for a historian to bear in mind that not all societies have understood extramarital sex in such black-and-white terms. In the Middle Ages, infidelity occupied a more ambiguous space than today. How 'wrong' adultery was depended on a number of factors, including who was committing the act and the extent to which the adultery affected public life. Karras suggests that infidelity was more accepted among social elites – or at least among elite men – than the lower classes. For kings and nobles, a vast array of women, both single and married, was available.³⁰⁵ Certainly, most extant evidence of adultery comes from the upper classes, usually in the form of acknowledged illegitimate children or gossip in chronicles or occasionally government records. This could, however, indicate a bias in the record, which is more likely to reflect the doings of the aristocracy in the first place, more than licence for elites to do as they pleased.

Clearly, it was considerably more acceptable for men to engage in adultery than women. Two crucial ideas helped to create this double standard: first, women's reproductive ability – and thus their sexuality in general – was seen as men's property. The possibility that an unfaithful wife might bear illegitimate children, who might threaten the inheritance of a man's legitimate children, was frightening

³⁰⁰ Yoshikawa, p. 403.

³⁰¹ Henry, Duke of Lancaster, *Livre de Seyntz Medicines*, pp. 13-16, 21-22, 51-52, 69, 76-78, 88, 178-179.

³⁰² David H. J. Morgan, 'The Sociological Significance of Affairs' in *The State of Affairs: Exploration in Infidelity and Commitment*, ed. by Jean Duncombe, et. al. (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), pp. 15-34 (p. 16).

³⁰³ Harrison, Kaeren and Dennis Marsden, 'Preface: An Interesting State of Affairs' in *The State of Affairs: Exploration in Infidelity and Commitment*, ed. by Jean Duncombe, et. al. (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), pp. xi-xxi (p. xi).

³⁰⁴ Lise VanderVoort and Steve Duck, 'Sex, Lies, and ... Transformation', in *The State of Affairs: Exploration in Infidelity and Commitment*, ed. by Jean Duncombe, et. al. (London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), pp. 1-13 (p. 1).

³⁰⁵ Ruth Mazo Karras, *Sexuality in Medieval Europe: Doing Unto Others* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 93, 158.

to the patriarchal medieval establishment. Second, sex and sexual pleasure were seen as sinful. Women, then, had two very good reasons to remain faithful to their husbands. For men, these two ideas created conflict. On the one hand, pleasurable sex, whether in or out of marriage (and it seems fair, generally speaking, to assume that the major motive for extramarital sex *was* pleasure), was sinful. At the same time, as Bullough describes, there was a strong secular tradition teaching that adultery was permitted to men.³⁰⁶ Among men, adultery became a quietly accepted – and very common – element of society. Betzig argues that medieval aristocratic society more closely resembled well-known polygynous societies (comparing it to Babylon, Egypt, China and India) than scholars often appreciate. She cites evidence that powerful men, both lay and clerics, attracted young, attractive women – who were sexually available to them – in great numbers, in the style of harems. Betzig suggests that medieval Europe was a society which was monogamous in terms of marriage, but polygynous in terms of sex.³⁰⁷ Although Betzig perhaps overstates this, failing, for instance, to appreciate the role that religious disapproval of sexual pleasure probably played in curbing male sexuality, the overall pattern is clear. Adultery, as long as it followed the ‘rules’, was widely available to men.

Sociologists observe that in modern society, gossip enforces norms for social behaviour: fear of gossip discourages adultery.³⁰⁸ I suggest that in the Middle Ages, gossip (perhaps in this context best understood as public acknowledgement or condemnation) served to check – but not prevent – infidelity. Betzig notes that the medieval church and the medieval state adopted similar views on ‘monogamous marriage’, but both failed to effectively sanction against ‘polygynous mating’.³⁰⁹ Karras argues that church teaching on sexuality made men aware that illicit sex was something to be kept quiet outside the confessional, but otherwise had no impact on men’s behaviour.³¹⁰ I believe, however, that there is considerable evidence that public knowledge could curb adultery. Infidelity was something medieval society gave little consideration until the adulterer broke certain rules, at which point it became a problem. Popular condemnation could bring an affair to an end (as I will discuss in the third chapter in the case of John of Gaunt and Katherine Swynford). It could censure and punish a woman who had participated in an affair, such as Edward III’s mistress, Alice Perrers. While church and state may not have effectively prevented adultery, popular perception could keep it under control. Neal echoes this, suggesting that sexual misbehaviour that demonstrated a lack of self-control was problematic, but such behaviour that took place within certain parameters was acceptable.³¹¹ I argue that, generally, if a man limited his sexual partners to women who were of lower rank, (usually) unmarried, out of the public eye, and who had a non-sexual reason for being in his life – and perhaps most importantly, as long as his affairs did not affect his performance in public life – society accepted his infidelity.

³⁰⁶ Vern L. Bullough, 'Medieval Concepts of Adultery', in *Arthuriana* 7 (1997), 5-17 (pp. 5-8).

³⁰⁷ Laura Betzig, 'Medieval Monogamy' *Journal of Family History* 20 (2005), 181-216 (pp. 184-191, 183).

³⁰⁸ VanderVoort and Duck, p. 2.

³⁰⁹ Betzig, p. 197.

³¹⁰ Karras, *Doing Unto Others*, pp. 160-161.

³¹¹ Neal, pp. 71-72.

What, then, did infidelity mean in medieval society? In their discussion of modern adultery, VanderVoort and Duck observe that in modern society, adultery is a threat to marriage, the basic building block of human association. In this context, to accept adultery is to accept radical social upheaval. In the Middle Ages, marriage was a social contract more concerned with families, communities and nations than with individuals. Medieval infidelity was thus only a threat when it began to affect society in general. Women's infidelity could compromise bloodlines, and was therefore always unacceptable. Men's infidelity only became problematic if it broke certain conditions. In effect, adultery was only adultery if it was committed by a woman, or if a man's sexual partner was of too-high rank, married, played too-public a role, or had no other reason for being in his life.

Infidelity and Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines

Henry of Grosmont's reports of his own infidelity both confirm and add to these views. While there is no clear indication, either in the *Livre* or in any other evidence, that Grosmont kept a mistress or fathered illegitimate children, he does confess to the various ways he has committed the sin of lust. He first confronts his lustfulness in discussing the ways in which the seven deadly sins have affected his mouth. He has seduced women through his speech, by boasting, flattering them, flirting, or even lying.

I have committed [lechery] a little through my mouth, and much more often in my actions, in many an evil guise, one time as a worthy man and another time as a stealthy thief. Indeed, it is evil to know lechery alone, and worse to know it in companionship. Lord, I recognise that though my mouth, lechery often passes in the guise of an honest man (which I have imitated more in word than in action), and always to ensnare the foolish. Like a thief, it often comes by subtle and intimate words and by many false promises, only believed. And alas, sweet lord, many times I have delighted in speaking without action, or in boasting of what I have done or what I can do, or saying 'I am of such ability, that when I make my wish known it is done'. And many times I have lied, and then the sin is doubled by those who are foolish. And the great sin of lechery is in my evil mouth in other ways. When I speak to a woman whom I think may be difficult to please, I send a mackerel to her, and I say very piteously, 'I shall die if you do not help me' and then, 'I shall not die if you do help me' -- twice I say it, to speak the truth. By which little friendly act we shall both be lost.³¹²

In Grosmont's mind, his sin here is seduction, whether by flattery, falsehoods or fish. What he aims to do with these women is unclear – is the 'companionship' he speaks of sexual, or simply a game of courtly love? – but he never suggests that his behaviour has affected his wife or his marriage. Attraction for and seduction of another woman, while certainly sinful (even if all Grosmont is confessing to is wishful thinking, not things that actually happened), is entirely separate to his marriage vows.

³¹² Henry, Duke of Lancaster, *Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines*, pp. 21-22.

'Du pecche de luxure ore vous en dirrai, qe per ma bouche court et par my passe mult sovent et en meynte male guyse, a la foi3e comme prodomes et autre foi3e comme larouns, si qe il est mult mal a conoistre et pire en compaignye : certes, Sire, jeo reconoisse qe par ma bouche est il sovent passee en guyse de prodomes, lequel j'ai contrefait plus en dit qu'en fait, et tout pur engyner les noun sages ; et comme liers venoit il sovent par sotyves paroles et privees et par meyntes fauses promesses qe bien estoinet foles qi les croient. Et ausi, tresdoux Sire, mult de foi3e me suit jeo mult delitez d'ent parler sanz plus faire et de me vaunter qe j'ai ceo cy fait, ou puisse tant faire, ou dire : 'De tiele puisse jeo faire ma volunte ou ai fait', et mult de foi3e mentir ; et en ceo le pecche est doublee. Et en autre maners s'en est grant pecche de la male bouche : quant n'ose parler a ascune qe jeo quide q'elle serroit dangereuse, jeo envoieiroi ascune makerel a qi jeo parleroier mult pitousement et dirroi : 'Jeo ne su qe mort, si vous ne me eidetz' mes 'Jeo ne su qe mort, si vous m'eideitz' deusse jeo dire pur dire voir ; va le mien amy, qe poi d'amiste me fait et se va perdre et moi ausint'.

A later passage, this time detailing the injury sin has done to his eyes, makes much the same point:

And what have I given to my soul? Certainly much evil and little good. Through the door of the eye is the entrance to a great gathering of sin and lechery. For when I have seduced a girl by my smooth and false words, it indeed pleases me to look upon her and in that very great delight, I can think of no other thing at that moment. It seems to me that by that sin I am so inflamed by the fire of lechery that clearly, it pleases me above all things -- and I do not look upon anything that displeases me.³¹³

Again, the sin here lies in the lechery that so 'inflames' Grosmont, not in any dishonour it does to his wife or to his marriage vows.

Near the end of his *Livre*, Grosmont discusses the three types of sinful kisses: the lustful kiss, the kiss of treachery and the insincere kiss given to the Lord at Mass:

There are three types of kisses. My evil mouth is accustomed to all of them, and it is in mortal shame, which is with it and involved with it. The first kiss which wounds the mouth is a poison to me often: it is a foul and lecherous kiss which poisons my mouth through the sin of lust. I have such great delight in kissing that it murders me, and I have by it murdered she whom I have kissed. By the evil delight in kissing comes foul mortal sin, which invariably bites all of us to death. [The second kiss is the kiss of treachery; the third kiss is the kiss given to the Lord at Mass, sinful because it is often given insincerely.] ... I have damned myself completely. The devil is very powerful in the flavour which is in such [lustful] kisses. Indeed, for myself, I would more willingly kiss a tart, ugly and poor, immoral in her body, than a good woman of exalted rank, no matter how beautiful. The more she loves, fears and serves God, the more it pleases me to kiss her... a woman does not delight me if I do not believe that she has thought or will think something wicked -- and all the sooner -- on account of my evil kiss.³¹⁴

Whether Grosmont is confessing to fantasies, kissing, or a full-blown affair, he certainly had sinful intentions. While it is possible that his interactions with women of his own class stopped at kisses, it seems unlikely that he was visiting prostitutes for anything but sex. It is odd that he would advertise his sins in this way, unless they were already well known or were, perhaps, considered nothing out of the ordinary. While Grosmont probably took his *Livre* seriously, his tone suggests a degree of self-congratulation – is he boasting as much as confessing? Hadley has discussed the tension between secular and clerical notions of appropriate masculine behaviour, which may explain the boasting tone.

³¹³ Henry, Duke of Lancaster, *Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines*, pp. 51-52.

'Et quei est ceo que jeo lui doune ? Certez mult de male et poi de bien. Par cest porte si entre un grande partie de pecche de lecherie : car quant j'ai ascune fole engynee par mes sotilles et fausez paroles, il me plest si a la regarder et par si tresgrant delit de lecheri q'il ne me sorvient de nule autre chose en l'eure ; et il me semble que jeo estoï par cele pecche si enluminee de feu de luxure que quantqe cele fesoit me pleut sur toutz rienz et ne veioie nule chose que me despleust.'

³¹⁴ Henry, Duke of Lancaster, *Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines*, pp. 178-179.

'Et c'est en trois maneres de beisers, de qoi la plaie de ma male bouche s'en deust et en est devenue mortele par le venym de pecche que s'est mys ovesques et s'en est entremys : Une beiser est que la plaie de la bouche ad envynmez de moy sovent ; c'est une beiser orde et lecherous que moelt m'ad envynmee la bouche quant droit par la pecche de lecherie ai eu si grant delit en beiser ceo que me tuoit, et beisoie celle que jeo tuoie, et par le malveis delit de beisers avenoit l'ord pecche mortel que nous tout diaux mordoit a mort. L'autre beiser que me deust, si est cely que j'ai beisee mon proeme en manere de bon amytee, e n'ai mye cella entierment portee en coer mes a la foi3e volu son damage plus que son bien, et ceo a la foi3e moustree en fait ou en dit, ou en touz diaux, que pis vaut. Le tierce boiser malveis, si est un que uncore pis vaut de touz, car de luy mesimes est il malveis ; et ausi tout la malveiste de autres diaux si neissent et venont de luy. C'est une beiser que jeo beise touz les jours a la Messe en signifiante de pees entre Nostre Seignur, luy tresdouz Jesus, et moi, d'un mortel guerre que sourdy entre luy et moi du primer que jeo unqes fui de age que jeo poi pecher ... Jeo me perdoie de tout en toute, et bien poet chescun savoir q'en tiels beisers le diable se melloit fort : car pur moi le die jeo que plus volentiers eusse une lede poure garce beisee, deshoneste de son corps, que jeo n'eusse fait une bone femme de grant estat, ne feust elle ja si bele ; et de tant come elle amoit plus Dieux, servoit et cremoit, de tant meyns me pleust le beiser... , et riens ne me delitoit si jeo ne pensase q'elle male pensast ou penseroit, et le plus tost, par mon malveise baiser.'

Activities, such as visiting prostitutes, that the church might disapprove of, could, in the secular world, reinforce a man's masculinity. Well-controlled sexuality was a central part of masculinity.³¹⁵ Taking this tone in the *Livre* allowed Grosmont to flaunt his masculine prowess and confess his sins at the same time.

For Grosmont, the sin lies in the lust itself, and in the fact that, by his own lecherous actions, he leads other women to sin (and enjoys it). Although the medieval church held that men and women were equally required to remain sexually faithful in marriage, Grosmont was among the men who experienced little shame in failing to meet this requirement. This reinforces the ideas about infidelity already expressed: as long as it conformed to certain guidelines (and, since Grosmont had no public reputation for lechery, it would seem that it did), infidelity was entirely tolerated. It is worth noting that in Grosmont's case, infidelity might have been considered excusable – he was away fighting for long periods of time, usually, presumably, without his wife. The *Livre* reflects a broader point about marriage: it was about combining assets (whether landed or political) and families, and producing legitimate offspring to inherit property. A noble wife was accorded a place of honour and responsibility in her husband's household. She had an important role to play, both in his public and private life. This did not mean that she received – or expected to receive – love and fidelity, despite the church's attempts to make this the case. Moreover, it is dangerous to assume that a disinclination towards sexual fidelity precluded a loving relationship. Modern culture assumes a connection between love and sexual monogamy; we should be wary of assuming the same for the medieval period. Some medieval relationships may have been monogamous, but men who had affairs could still love their wives.

2.2.4 Death and Memory

As might be expected from a marriage from which so little evidence survives, there is little to suggest how this marriage was remembered. Capgrave's *Book of Illustrious Henries*, written as an instructional manual for a young Henry VI in the mid-fifteenth century, follows a familiar line, focusing generally on Grosmont's military achievements.³¹⁶ It also mentions his good deeds, and, perhaps most importantly in terms of memory, focuses on the royal house of Lancaster's descent from Grosmont:

Behind him he left two noble daughters: one married William duke of Holland and Zeeland; the other John of Gaunt, then earl of Richmond. And by this distinguished lady the same John presently became duke of Lancaster....

From this lady Blanche and the said duke descended the invincible Henry IV; may his soul remain in bosom of Abraham with his ancestors for eternity. Amen.³¹⁷

³¹⁵ Hadley, p. 16.

³¹⁶ John Capgrave, *Johannes Capgrave Liber de Illustribus Henricis*, ed. by F. C. Hingeston (London: HMSO, 1858) <<http://www.archive.org>> [Accessed 3 July 2014], pp. 161-164.

³¹⁷ Capgrave, *Liber de Illustribus Henricis*, p. 164.

'Hic post se duas generosas reliquit filias: unam duxit Willielmus dux Hollondiae et Selondiae; alteram Johannes de Gandavo, tunc comes Richemundiae. Et per hanc praeclaram dominam postmodum idem Johannes dux Lancastriae effectus est. Ex esta domina Blanca et dicto duce descendit invictissimus rex Henricus Quartus; cujus anima in sinu Abrahae permaneat cum proavis suis in aeternum. Amen.'

Capgrave also included Henry de Beaumont in his book, but never notes the connection between the two men, again reinforcing the idea that Isabella was of little importance to Grosmont's public life and the memory of their marriage was short. When John Leland visited St Mary in the Newarke in Leicester in the mid-sixteenth century, he noted that 'on the south side lyith Henry the first Duke of Lancaster: and yn the next arch to his hedde lyith a lady, by likelihod his wife'.³¹⁸ By the sixteenth century, when Leland was writing, Isabella's name was not part of popular consciousness. The fact that she and Henry were buried in separate tombs instead of a double tomb may be a sign of less intimacy in their relationship, but since Leland notes that the church was quite small, it is as likely to reflect space constraints.³¹⁹

2.2.5 Conclusion

The marriage of Henry of Grosmont to Isabella de Beaumont illustrates the importance of recognising short-term political necessity, as well as long-term goals, as motives for elite marriages in the late Middle Ages. Henry of Lancaster and Henry de Beaumont's decision to unite their families highlights how marriage could reinforce – or enforce – political alliances. Little can be said of Isabella and Grosmont's married life, other than that they probably did not see each other often. That Grosmont's *Livre de Seyntz Medicines* makes no mention of his marriage reinforces the notion that this was of relatively little importance to him.

2.3 A Family Web: Henry of Lancaster's Daughters

This section examines three of Henry of Lancaster's daughters – Blanche, Maud and Eleanor of Lancaster. These women are particularly interesting for the roles that they or their marriages played in English politics of the mid-fourteenth century. Taken together, the marriages of Henry of Lancaster's children reveal that he pursued a campaign of marrying his daughters in a way that would maximise their chances in life and their ability to help the family.

2.3.1 Blanche of Lancaster and Thomas Wake

2.3.1.1 Background

Blanche of Lancaster was one of the six daughters of Henry of Lancaster and Maud Chaworth; although their birth order is difficult to determine, it is safe to assume that, as she had married by 1316, she was one of their older children.³²⁰ There is relatively little that can be said of her life while married, other than elements that touch on her husband Thomas Wake. They had no children and Thomas died in 1349 – as he was only middle-aged, he may have been a victim of the Black Death. Like many of the women discussed in this thesis, Blanche herself appears most in the record as a widow. She was active

³¹⁸ John Leland, *The Itinerary of John Leland in or about 1535-1543*, p. 16.

³¹⁹ Leland, *Itinerary*, p. 15.

³²⁰ CPR 1313-1317, p. 553.

in her thirty-one years of single life and remained dedicated to serving her family.³²¹ The longest lived of Henry of Lancaster's children, she survived all her siblings to die in 1380.

Her husband Thomas was son of John, first lord Wake, and Joan Fitzbernard.³²² After his father's death in 1308, his wardship was first given jointly to his mother, Henry de Lacy, Piers Gaveston and Queen Isabella. Edward II arranged a marriage for him to Gaveston's daughter Joan, but in 1316 he married Blanche of Lancaster without royal permission.³²³ Wake was a close supporter of Henry of Lancaster in the 1320s and was rewarded by Edward III in 1330 with several positions of trust.³²⁴ His landed interests were focused in Lincolnshire, with significant holdings in Yorkshire, Cumberland and Westmorland. In 1325 his sister Margaret married Edmund, earl of Kent. Thomas and Blanche had no children, so at Thomas's death Margaret inherited his land and title. Wake was apparently a religious man: he went abroad on pilgrimage in 1320-21 and again in 1341-42, both times to Santiago de Compostela.³²⁵ He died in 1349 and was buried in Haltemprice Priory, the Augustinian priory he had founded in the East Riding of Yorkshire. When Blanche died in 1380, she was buried at the Franciscan convent in Stamford (co. Lincs).³²⁶

³²¹ See James Aberth, 'Crime and Justice under Edward III: The Case of Thomas de Lisle', *English Historical Review* 107 (1992), 283-301 for a discussion of Blanche Wake's role as accomplice to Edward III in his eventually successful attempt to disinherit Thomas de Lisle, bishop of Ely. Her role within the wider Lancaster family will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

³²² W. M. Ormrod, 'Wake, Thomas, second Lord Wake (1298-1349)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [Accessed 29 July 2014].

³²³ Ormrod, 'Thomas Wake'; CPR 1313-1317, p. 553.

³²⁴ CCR 1330-1333, p. 448; CFR 1327-1337, p. 87; Ormrod, 'Thomas Wake'.

³²⁵ CPR 1317-1321, p. 440; TNA SC 8/87/4346; Ormrod, 'Thomas Wake'

³²⁶ Ormrod, 'Thomas Wake'

2.3.1.2 Motivations for Marriage between Thomas Wake and Blanche of Lancaster

Thomas's father John Wake was not a particularly prominent figure and it is unclear how Thomas and Margaret became such desirable spouses. Edward II was obviously perturbed by Thomas's secret



Figure 6 Property of Thomas Wake near the Pickering (co. Yorks). Wake's lands are shown in white and Lancaster lands in black.

marriage to Blanche of Lancaster. Margaret Wake's very prestigious marriage to Edward's half-brother Edmund, earl of Kent, emphasises the desirability of a Wake connection. Thomas's inquisition post-mortem demonstrates that he held considerable lands at his death in 1349.³²⁷ His father John Wake's inquisition is incomplete, making it difficult to say how much of Thomas's property he inherited and how much he acquired during his lifetime.³²⁸ The marriages of Henry of Lancaster's other daughters make it clear that there was no lack of higher-ranked eligible men. Wake's inheritance must thus have been the crucial factor. It expanded and consolidated Lancastrian influence in the north of England, and gave Lancaster a stake in Scotland. Areas of strength in Lincolnshire, Yorkshire and the Midlands in particular complemented Lancastrian holdings. In some places Wake lands bordered Lancastrian lordships. While it is difficult to estimate for certain,

based on the value of the dower lands assigned to Blanche, Thomas's landed income at his death was about £1900 per year.³²⁹ He may not have had a comital title, but he had the wealth and probably the political standing of an earl.

Thomas and Blanche married by October 1316, when Joan Gaveston was granted the fine that Thomas owed the king as a result of his marriage without royal permission.³³⁰ Over the next two years, he was pardoned most of the fine and for making the marriage itself.³³¹ The marriage came during a period of weakness for Edward II and of power for Thomas of Lancaster after the English loss at Bannockburn in 1314, and it is reasonable to assume that both brothers were involved with arranging this secret marriage. The marriage may have been made knowing that Thomas could arrange for royal leniency. Blanche of Lancaster was quite young when they married, no older than twelve and possibly younger, and her parents probably acted without her influence.

On Wake's side the motivations for the marriage are more obvious. Joan Gaveston was a great-granddaughter of Edward I (through her mother Margaret de Clare), but she was also the daughter of

³²⁷ *CIPM* IX, no. 219.

³²⁸ *CIPM* III, no. 597.

³²⁹ CCR 1349-1354, p. 53.

³³⁰ CPR 1313-1317, p. 553.

³³¹ CPR 1317-1321, pp. 43, 251-252.

Piers Gaveston, who had been assassinated only four years previously by opponents of Edward II. With Thomas of Lancaster back in power, it may have seemed to Wake that it was better to cast his lot with Lancaster than with Gaveston's daughter. The family was extraordinarily wealthy and powerful, and Thomas, only about eighteen years old at this point, may have been easy to influence. Joan Gaveston, probably born in 1312, would not be able to marry until 1324 and Wake may have decided it was impractical to wait.

There is little evidence for the quality of Thomas and Blanche's personal relationship. One interesting clue to the early years of their marriage, however, comes in a 1320 petition to Edward II, in which Blanche complained to the king that Wake was

away on pilgrimage to St James [Santiago de Compostela] with the king's license, and for his protection and aid her father Sir Henry of Lancaster and her mother are overseas, so that she is left only in the protection of our lord the king and in his peace. Certain evildoers, robbers and murderers have come to one of her husband's manors from the village of Spalding [co. Yorks – Thomas Wake had several manors nearby], and there they have killed, injured and murdered men of the said lord's household and men of the household of the said lady, and they have taken her goods and chattels and the bodies of those they have killed... and done many other damages and evil deeds, so that the said lady and her other ladies are in such fear that they cannot go outside... The lady prays that our lord the king, as her liege lord, and his council, shall ordain certain convenient justices to hear and determine this outrage.³³²

This petition is revealing on a number of levels. It is surprising that Blanche did not accompany her husband on pilgrimage, especially since her parents apparently accompanied him. This may suggest that four years after their marriage, Blanche was still not of childbearing age and there was no need for her to be with Thomas. It could alternatively be an indication that they preferred to be out of each other's company, but they were both relatively young at this point, so this is difficult to conclude. It also speaks to the vulnerability of women left without a man's protection – Blanche's reminder to Edward II that both her husband and father are gone reinforces that this was a common notion in her society. If we believe her petition at face value, it suggests that neither Thomas nor Henry made arrangements for Blanche's safety in their absence. The petition also emphasises that creating networks of in-laws was a crucial goal of aristocratic marriage; it is difficult to escape the conclusion that both Henry of Lancaster and Thomas Wake saw their relationship with each other as more important than their relationship with Blanche.

Thomas Wake, Thomas of Lancaster and Henry of Lancaster worked together in the early 1320s, and Wake continued to stay close to his father-in-law after Thomas of Lancaster's death, for instance using

³³² TNA SC 8/87/4346.

A nostre Seignur le Roi & a son conseil coustre Blanche Wake cusine nostre Seignur le Roi & compaignie au seignur Wake qe come son dit seignur Wake [1 word] dez en pelgrimage a seing Iake par la congie nostre Seignur le Roi & par sa proteccion & auxint son piere sire Henri de Lancastr' & sa miere sont dela la mier issunt qele demoert soulemt en laffiaunte nostre Seignur le Roi & en sa pees a un des manoirs son dit seignur la vyndrent plusours meffesours robbeours & murdrissours des gentz de la ville de Espandynge' & out les gentz son dit Seignur & les gentz d' hostiel la dite Dame mortz mantez & murdrissez & lour biens & lour chateux emportez & les corps de eux qe sont mourz... & plusours autres maynez & maufrez tauntqa la morte par quei le Dite Dame & les altres dames qe oue lui sont sont (sic) en tiel affrai qil ne osent en la terre demorer & hastine' remedie ne y seit mis par quei ele prer a nostre seignur le Roi come son seignur lige e a son conseil qil villent orderer certeignes iustices covenables a oir a determiner ceste outrage...

the same legal 'team' as his in-laws. In November 1320 Wake enfeoffed Michael de Meldon of two manors so that Michael could re-grant them jointly to Thomas and to Blanche, a common means of creating jointure.³³³ The same Michael was recorded as witness to a grant of Thomas Wake made in August of the same year.³³⁴ Michael de Meldon was a clerk of Thomas of Lancaster, one of the men who served as Alice de Lacy's attorneys during her marriage to Thomas.³³⁵ This suggests that the same team worked with both Henry and Thomas of Lancaster and that those who married into the family could take advantage of this.

Furthermore, Henry of Lancaster and Thomas Wake provided each other advocacy and political support. In June 1317, Wake was permitted to have seisin of his lands, though not yet of age, at Henry's request.³³⁶ Their names appear together regularly in surviving records. This support seems to have been particularly important in the late 1320s, when Thomas Wake, Henry of Lancaster and Henry de Beaumont were all involved first in the overthrow of Edward II, then of Queen Isabella and Roger Mortimer. When the future Edward III was made keeper of the realm at the end of 1326, Thomas Wake one of the first listed as having given his permission for the event, along with Henry of Lancaster and Henry de Beaumont.³³⁷ In January 1329, it was ordered that property of Henry of Lancaster, Henry de Beaumont and Thomas Wake be taken into the king's hands³³⁸ The *Annales Paulini*'s description of the trial of Hugh Despenser in 1326 notes also that

that year [1326] on [27 October], the vigil of the apostles Simon and Jude, lord Hugh Despenser the Elder, earl of Winchester, was led to Bristol to hear judgement in the presence of William Trussel, knight, the justice assigned to the matter. The lords Henry earl of Lancaster, Thomas of Brotherton earl of Norfolk and marshal of England, Edmund earl of Kent, Roger Mortimer, Thomas Wake and other magnates were also present in that place.³³⁹

The same chronicle describes a meeting between the barons and bishops in 1328:

The second day of January, the aforesaid Archbishop of Canterbury, bishop of Winchester, earls of Lancaster, Norfolk and Kent, Thomas Wake and many other magnates assembled in St Paul's in London and confederated upon certain ordinances, not only to the benefit of the king, but also to the English realm. And the Archbishop, Bishop of London, Earl Marshall and earl of Kent were sent to the king on behalf of the associates to discuss what ought to be reformed for peace. Soon after the earl of Lancaster restored himself and others to the king's grace at Bedford.³⁴⁰

³³³ CPR 1317-1321, p. 531

³³⁴ CPR 1317-1321, p. 494

³³⁵ Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility*, pp. 67-68; TNA LR 14/1083; TNA DL 40/1/11, f. 45r; TNA DL 28/1/3, mm. 2-3.

³³⁶ CCR 1313-1318, p. 13.

³³⁷ CCR 1323-1327, p. 655.

³³⁸ CFR 1327-1337, p. 116.

³³⁹ *Annales Paulini*, p. 317.

'Eodem anno [1326] vi kalendas Novembres videlicet in vigilia apostolorum Simonis et Judae, dominus Hugo Despenser senior comes Wyntoniensis coram domino Willelmo Trussel milite apud Bristoliam, justiciario ad hoc assignato, dominis Henrico comiti Lancastriae, Thoma de Brothertone comite Northfolebiae et marescallo Angliae, Edmundo comite Cantiae, Rogero de Mortuomari, Thoma Wake et aliis magnatibus ibidem sedentibus, ad audiendum iudicium ductus fuit...'

³⁴⁰ *Annales Paulini*, p. 344.

Secundo die Januarii mensis praedicti archiepiscopus Cantuariensis, Wyntoniensis, episcopus, comites Lancastriae, Norfolkiae et Cantiae, ac T. de Wake, et lii plures magnates in ecclesia Sancti Pauli Londoniis congregati et confaederati super quibusdam ordinationibus ad commodum regi set regni Angliae; et missi sunt ex parte comitum ad regem pro pace reformanda archiepiscopus,

Adam Murimuth's description of the 1328 Salisbury parliament describes how 'the earl of Lancaster, lord Wake and other nobles did not come, though they were allowed to come armed, at which the king took offence. Yet later they submitted to the king, on the advice of Archbishop Simon [Mepham, of Canterbury]'.³⁴¹ The public perceived Henry and his son-in-law as an influential twosome.

The *Gesta Edwardi de Carnarvan* also ties their names together:

In the year of the Lord 1328, and the second year of the king's [Edward III] reign, Henry earl of Lancaster, Henry de Beaumont, Thomas Wake, Hugh de Audley and many others, with the community of London, were disposed to rise up against the lord king. But quickly the earl of Lancaster, Hugh de Audley and Thomas Wake, considering the outcome of the matter doubtful, submitted themselves to the king's grace.³⁴²

Henry Knighton's description of Queen Isabella's destruction of Leicester describes how

they did all this to taunt the earl of Lancaster who at that time was coming from the south with a great force wishing to meet them. In his retinue he had magnates who were with Thomas, earl of Lancaster, and the earl of March, Edmund earl of Kent his cousin and the king's uncle, the bishops of London and Winchester, lord Wake, lord Beaumont, Hugh Audley, lord Thomas Rosslyn and many others.³⁴³

Clearly Henry of Lancaster, Henry de Beaumont and Thomas Wake were crucial sources of support for each other. It is particularly interesting to see Wake, not a man of terribly high status, regularly listed after members of the royal family in these accounts. Apparently he had gained prestige by marriage.

2.3.2 The Marriages of Maud of Lancaster

2.3.2.1 Background

Maud of Lancaster's birthdate is also unclear, though the date of her first marriage in 1327 suggests she was one of Henry of Lancaster and Maud Chaworth's middle children. In that year she married her father's ward William de Burgh, earl of Ulster. William was the son of John de Burgh (himself son of Richard de Burgh, earl of Ulster), and Elizabeth de Clare, sister of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester. In 1331 Edward III made Burgh king's lieutenant in Ireland.³⁴⁴ The couple moved to Ireland, but Burgh was murdered in June 1333 and Maud was forced to flee to England with their daughter

episcopus Londoniensis, comités Marescallus et Cantiae. Et cito post reddidit se comes Lancastriae et alii gratiae domini regis apud Bedeforde.

³⁴¹ Adam Murimuth, *Adae Murimuth Continuatio*, p. 58.

...Ad quod parlamentum comes Lancastriae, dominus de Wake, et alii quidam nobiles non venerunt, licet prope venerant armati; de quo rex fuit offensus. Qui tamen postmodum in aestate regis, procurante Simone archiepiscopo, submiserunt.

³⁴² *Gesta Edwardi de Carnarvan*, p. 99.

Anno Domini [1328], et regni regis [secundo], Henricus comes Lancastriae, Henricus de Bellomonte, Thomas le Wake, Hugo Daudeley, et plures alii cum communitate Londoniensi contra dominum regem insurgere disponebant; sed cito post comes Lancastriae, Hugo Daudeley, et Thomas le Wake, eventum rei dubium opinantes, se regis gratiae submiserunt.

³⁴³ Henry Knighton, *Chronicon Henrici Knighton, vel Cnitthon, Monachi Leycestrensis*, 2 vols, ed. by Joseph Rawson Lumby (London: HMSO, 1889-1895), I, p. 450.

Et hoc totum in opprobrium comitis Lancastriae qui tunc fuerat in veniendo de partibus australibus cum potestate magna volens eis obviasse, habens in comitatu suo magnates qui fuerant cum Thoma comite Lancastriae, scilicet comitem Marchiae, Edmundum comitem Cantiae, fratrem suum et avunculum regis, episcopos Londoniarum, Wyncestriae, dominum le Wake, dominum de Beaumont, Hugonem Dandleye, dominum Thomam Rosselyne, et multos alios.

³⁴⁴ Robin Frame, 'Burgh, William de, third earl of Ulster (1312-1333)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2012) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [Accessed 2 Aug 2014].

Elizabeth. In 1341 Elizabeth was betrothed to Edward III's son Lionel of Clarence (the marriage was solemnised in 1352). In late 1343 Maud married a second time to the new justiciar of Ireland Ralph de Ufford, a younger brother of the earl of Suffolk.³⁴⁵ The couple moved to Dublin, but Ralph died unexpectedly in 1346 and a pregnant Maud was once again forced to flee Ireland for England. After her return to England Maud decided to become a canoness in the Augustinian priory at Campsea Ashe (Suffolk) where Ufford was buried. In 1364 she became a minoress at Bruisyard (Suffolk), but when she died in 1377 she was buried alongside Ufford's body at Campsea Ashe.³⁴⁶

2.3.2.2 Maud of Lancaster's Irish Marriages

An understanding of Ireland's place in English affairs in the fourteenth century illuminates a discussion of Maud of Lancaster's marriages. The English crown began its conquest of Ireland in the mid-twelfth century, but, aside from those few magnates who held land in both countries, the English aristocracy was generally unconcerned with Irish affairs. The conquest of Ireland continued sporadically throughout the medieval period; the country required near-constant warfare to keep the situation under control. Royal absenteeism meant that Anglo-Irish magnates felt abandoned: rule by justiciars was not an effective stand-in for royal rule.³⁴⁷ The earldom of Ulster shared a close maritime border with western Scotland – this could work to England's advantage when English kings were strong and could rely on Irish troops to help in Scotland and perhaps even launch attacks from Ulster. Under a weak king, however, this could leave Ulster open to invasion. In 1326-27, there was concern in Westminster and Dublin that Ulster might choose to support Robert Bruce in his conflict with Balliol and might allow Scottish troops to enter Ireland.³⁴⁸

Maud of Lancaster's marriage to William de Burgh reflected these concerns and the English crown's response. An English wife ensured that William (and thus Ulster) would have a personal connection to England and English interests and gave Henry of Lancaster a stake in Irish affairs. Maud and William's marriage was symbolic of the 'marriage' between England and Ireland generally. Tying William de Burgh to English royal interests by granting him a prestigious marriage to a woman from a collateral line of the royal family (about as good as he could hope for, as there were no unmarried girls in the direct royal line at that point) was a very smart move. Frame notes that William de Burgh's appointment as king's lieutenant in Ireland was 'not merely a gesture to the Lancastrians', but that Burgh was seen as a man with solid interests in both England and Ireland and thus an excellent choice. His commission as lieutenant would make him more powerful within Ireland and give him more authority establishing control in Ulster, one of the hardest areas for the English government to subdue.³⁴⁹ Henry de Beaumont, Thomas Wake and Henry Percy – all Henry of Lancaster's in-laws – were among the 'disinherited', men who had been deprived of Scottish lordships by the peace treaty

³⁴⁵ Robin Frame, 'Matilda of Lancaster, countess of Ulster (*d.* 1377)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2012) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [Accessed 1 Aug 2014]; Robin Frame, 'Ufford, Sir Ralph (*d.* 1346)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2012) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>> [Accessed 2 Aug 2014].

³⁴⁶ Frame, 'Matilda of Lancaster'

³⁴⁷ Robin Frame, *English Lordship in Ireland, 1318-1361* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), pp. 1-9.

³⁴⁸ Frame, *English Lordship in Ireland*, pp. 131-132, 141.

³⁴⁹ Frame, *English Lordship*, p. 203.

between the Mortimer regime and Robert Bruce, and had an agreement with Edward Balliol about the return of their lands. Henry of Lancaster's choice to marry his daughter Maud to the earl of Ulster, with its proximity to the Scottish coast, may have been partly about creating support for Balliol.

In April 1327 a papal dispensation was granted to Burgh, allowing him to 'intermarry with a noble lady of England related to him in the fourth degree; such marriage tending to consolidate the peace between the English and the Irish'.³⁵⁰ The reference to the marriage helping to foster peace between the English and Irish strongly suggests royal involvement (or, given the date, involvement from the Mortimer regime). Maud had probably not been selected as William's bride at this point, but the fact that the dispensation specifies that he may marry a woman related to him in the fourth degree (both were great-grandchildren of Henry III and Eleanor of Provence) suggests that one of Henry of Lancaster's daughters was in mind.

William de Burgh's murder in June 1333 – the result of a family dispute with another branch of the Burghs – forced Maud to flee to England with their infant daughter Elizabeth. Her first widowhood was marked by difficulty in granting her dower in Ireland, as Maud had no means of taking possession of lands consumed by warfare.³⁵¹ She petitioned the crown repeatedly for extra funds beyond those which she had been granted in place of property in Ireland.³⁵² Maud evidently retained personal custody of her daughter Elizabeth in this period and remained involved in Irish affairs.³⁵³ Her influence can be seen in an August 1337 instruction from Edward III to John de Cherleton, justiciary of Ireland. Cherleton had been granted the power to pardon rebels in Ireland, but the king specifically ordered that no one involved in the murder of William de Burgh was to be pardoned. The next day, the king sent an order to Cherleton to proclaim that anyone who took any of the people involved in William's murder, dead or alive, would have a gift of one hundred marks from Maud.³⁵⁴ Given that she was clearly in contact with the king at this period, we might assume that Maud had influenced the king's decision not to grant pardon to anyone involved in William's murder. In May of 1341, it was announced that Elizabeth de Burgh would marry Lionel of Antwerp when he became old enough.³⁵⁵ At this point, Elizabeth was nine years old and Lionel was three.

Maud's second marriage continued to affect and reflect developing Anglo-Irish relations. In the mid-1340s Ireland had been involved in conflict for some time, and revenues from the country had dropped dramatically. Edward III, caught up with war in France, was keen to keep Ireland calm and, if possible, make it profitable. Ralph Ufford was one of many younger sons who had made a name for himself serving the king in France.³⁵⁶ His promotion to justiciar was beneficial for all: Ufford got a chance to prove himself and Edward III got a man motivated to do a good job and be promoted

³⁵⁰ *Calendar of Papal Registers, 1305-1342*, p. 257.

³⁵¹ CCR 1333-1337, pp. 202, 248-250; CFR 1327-1337, p. 372..

³⁵² CCR 1337-1339, pp. 369, 466, 506; CCR 1339-1341, p. 175; CFR 1337-1347, p. 146.

³⁵³ CPR 1330-1334, pp. 463, 484, 486, 490; CFR 1327-1337, p. 42.

³⁵⁴ CCR 1337-1339, pp. 155, 170.

³⁵⁵ CPR 1340-1343, p. 187.

³⁵⁶ Frame, 'The Justiciarship of Ralph Ufford: Warfare and Politics in Fourteenth-Century Ireland', *Studia Hibernica* 13 (1973), 7-47 (pp. 8-9).

further. Maud of Lancaster probably exerted some influence here, though it is unclear whether they married before or after Ufford's appointment. Ufford may have been chosen at least partly because of Maud's experience in Ireland, or the marriage may have been arranged with this in mind.

Giving Ufford a personal connection to Ireland, through Maud and the pressure to regain her daughter's inheritance, may have been both a blessing and a curse, as it came with baggage. Given Maud's high social standing and Ufford's lower status, it is unsurprising that Irish chroniclers accused him of simply following her instructions.³⁵⁷ The marriage seems to have been arranged quickly. In August 1343 Maud was present at the papal curia in Avignon, petitioning that she and several of her ladies in waiting be absolved from a vow to visit Santiago de Compostela.³⁵⁸ As she visited the curia in person, Maud may have in fact already begun the pilgrimage and been forced to detour when she received news of her impending nuptials. She is referred to here as 'Matilda de Lancastria', so was not yet married to Ufford.

Ralph Ufford's justiciarship saw an unprecedented level of royal interest in Ireland, possibly a precursor to Edward III sending his own son Lionel to Ireland in 1361, and a more violent relationship between the local Anglo-Irish and the justiciar. Ufford was an unusually prestigious appointment as justiciar. His brother Robert had been created earl of Suffolk in 1337 and was a trusted royal servant. His marriage to Maud of Lancaster brought him close to the royal family. He was also accompanied by a strong retinue and had support from within Ireland: the Burgh family apparently accepted Ufford as nominal leader in place of Maud's daughter Elizabeth.³⁵⁹ His tenure in Ireland was unpopular with the locals, as revealed by the author of the *Chartularies of St Mary's, Dublin*, who wrote that

On 13 July 1344, Lord Ralph de Ufford with his consort, the countess of Ulster, came to Ireland as chief justiciar. With his coming, the noble breeze in the air was suddenly and intemperately changed, and thereafter an abundance of rain and an overflowing of storms followed, until his departure from this life. None of his predecessors, unfortunately, could compare. For this justiciar, in executing his office, showed himself to be an attacker of the people of Ireland, a pillager of the goods of clerics and laymen, rich men and poor, and a defrauder of many under the pretext of doing good... In these and in other things he did or attempted, he was led by the advice of his consort.³⁶⁰

This depiction of Maud surely reflects the anti-female sentiments common to many clerical chroniclers, but also lends some support to the argument that Maud's zeal to secure her daughter's inheritance drove Ufford to cruelty beyond the norm. Ufford was accompanied by a retinue of English troops, many with ties to the Ufford family or the earldom of Lancaster, paid for by the king, and

³⁵⁷ Frame, 'Justiciarship of Ralph Ufford', pp. 9-10.

³⁵⁸ *Calendar of Papal Petitions*, p. 74.

³⁵⁹ Frame, *English Lordship*, pp. 262-266.

³⁶⁰ *Chartularies of St Mary's Abbey, Dublin: With the Register of its House at Dunbrody, and Annals of Ireland*, 2 vols, ed. by John T. Gilbert (London: Longman & Co., 1884) Accessed via Gallica <<http://www.gallica.bnf.fr>> [accessed 29 September 2014], II, p. 385. All translations from this work are mine.

Item, xiii. die mensis Julii, Dominus Radulphu Ufford, cum sua consorte, Comitissa Ultonie, venit Capitalis Justiciarius Hibernie, in quorum ingressu aura pulchra in aeris intemperie subito matatur, ac exinde ymbrium abundancia, et tempestatum effluencia, usque ad vite sue exitum copiose sequebatur. Nullus suorum predecessorum temporibus retroactis sibi, prob dolob, extitit comparabilis. Hic enim Justiciarius Justiciarie officium gerens, populi terre [Hibernie] extitit invasor, clericorum, laicorum, divitum et pauperum bonorum depredator, sub colore boni multorum defraudator. Jura ecclesie non observans, legem regni non custodiens, indigenis injurias irrogans, pauci aut nullis justitiam tribuens, indigenis, paucis duntaxat exceptis, totaliter diffidens. Hec et alia faciens et attemptans, sue consortio conilio ductus.

Maud set up a large court in Dublin. The large numbers of English proved unpopular.³⁶¹ Maud may herself have been driven by a desire for revenge for her first husband's murder.

After three years in Ireland, including a largely unsuccessful intervention in Ulster, Ufford unexpectedly died in the spring of 1346. The Dublin chronicler wrote that on

the ninth day of April, Lord Ralph de Ufford, the aforementioned justiciar of Ireland, departed the carnal world. At his death, only his wife was overcome by more than moderate grief. On account of this same death the faithful of Ireland, both the clergy and the people of the land, rejoiced, and, rejoicing in his departure from this life, with dancing in their hearts, solemnly celebrated the feast of Easter... In May, the justiciar being dead and securely enclosed in a lead coffin, the aforementioned countess, with her treasure (and yet gathering with her even the smallest relics of saints), with cruel grief in her heart, travelled to England once more, believing that the body ought to be buried there. The second day of that month, a portent – doubtless from heaven – was revealed. For she [Maud], who, at her first entry into Dublin came with the king's standard and a great military force through the city doors, and thereafter led the court in Ireland, exited the same city secretly by the back door.³⁶²

Ufford's justiciarship in Ireland was brief but effective. Under his rule Irish revenues increased substantially, from £1950 in 1343-44, to £3225 in 1345-46. His unexpected death created a power vacuum in Ireland that led to disorder for some time.³⁶³

After her return to England, Maud entered religious life within a year, possibly as soon as Ufford's estate had been sorted.³⁶⁴ She claimed to have had a calling for some time, explaining in a petition to the pope that she had in childhood intended to become a Minoreess.³⁶⁵ Her daughter Maud de Ufford had married Thomas de Vere, heir of the earl of Oxford, by 1350.³⁶⁶ Maud seems to have been particularly concerned with persevering the memory of her second husband, setting up a chantry at Campsea Ashe in Suffolk, where Ralph de Ufford was buried, and where she eventually was also buried, to offer prayers for herself and Ralph, his brother John, and for Thomas de Hereford (though not, somewhat oddly, for Ralph's older brother Robert).³⁶⁷

2.3.3 The Marriages of Eleanor of Lancaster

2.3.3.1 Background

Eleanor of Lancaster was probably one of the middle daughters of Henry of Lancaster and Maud Chaworth – based on the date of her first marriage, she was probably younger than Blanche and Maud. Her first marriage, to John de Beaumont, heir of Henry de Beaumont and brother of Isabella de Beaumont, Henry of Grosmont's wife, had taken place by November 1330. Their first and only child,

³⁶¹ Frame, 'Justiciarship', p. 13-15; CCR 1343-1346, p. 304.

³⁶² *Chartularies of St Mary's*, p. 388.

Mortuo igitur Justiciario, in capsula plumbea fortiter incluso, Comitissa antedicta cum thesauro predicto, inter tamen Sanctorum reliquias minime collocando, cum diro dolore cordia, viscera in Anglia bumanda ad partes predictas transtulit denuo mense Maii. Mensis etiam ejusdem dieque secundo, heu prodigium non dubium a superis miraculose monstratum, illa enim que prius in suo ingressu cum signis Regiis, magnaue constipata milicia, per valvas Dublin in civitatem eandem gloriose est ingressa, exindeque cum sue licet brevi tempore vitam ducens regiam in Hibernie insula, in ejusdem vero egressu a civitate predicta clam per posticum Castrum.

³⁶³ Frame, 'Justiciarship', pp. 38-39.

³⁶⁴ CPR 1348-1350, pp. 86, 97.

³⁶⁵ *Calendar of Papal Petitions*, p. 488.

³⁶⁶ CPR 1348-1350, p. 511.

³⁶⁷ TNA SC 8/243/12130.

Henry de Beaumont, was born in 1340, which reinforces the idea that Eleanor married John close to the earliest canonical age of twelve.³⁶⁸ Henry of Lancaster's accounts (discussed above) reveal that Eleanor returned to her father's household after the marriage, rather than moving to her husband's.³⁶⁹ John de Beaumont died in 1342. Eleanor married secondly Richard Fitzalan, earl of Arundel, in February 1345.³⁷⁰ Born about 1313, Richard was the son of Edmund Fitzalan and Alice de Warenne. The Mortimer regime executed Edmund Fitzalan for treason in 1327 for his support of Edward II; his son Richard was slowly granted his father's titles and estates throughout the early 1330s and in December 1331 had the process against his father reversed by parliament.³⁷¹ He demonstrated his worth to Edward III throughout his life with loyal military service in the early years of the Hundred Years War. Fitzalan was also an active diplomat, representing the English crown in Castile, Portugal, Aragon, France, Scotland and the papal curia. He proved himself an able administrator as well, at several points appointed one of the guardians of England in Edward III's absence.³⁷² A combination of good fortune in inheritance – he inherited the Warenne patrimony in the 1340s – good investments and smart money-lending meant that at his death, Fitzalan was worth about £72,000, of which £60,000 was in cash, making him the wealthiest man in England.³⁷³ He married first in 1321 Isabella Despenser, daughter of Hugh Despenser the younger (and thus a granddaughter of Isabella de Beauchamp, Maud Chaworth's mother). This marriage produced two daughters and one son, Edmund. In 1344 he petitioned for an annulment on the grounds that free consent to the marriage had never been given. He married Eleanor de Beaumont, with whom he was already romantically involved, before the annulment was officially granted. Richard's children by Isabella Despenser were declared illegitimate.³⁷⁴ He and Eleanor had three sons and four daughters, all of whom did quite well for themselves – Thomas Fitzalan became Archbishop of Canterbury, though their eldest son Richard was executed in 1397 for his role in the Appellant crisis.³⁷⁵ Eleanor died at Arundel in 1372 and was buried in Lewes Priory. When Richard died in 1376 he left instructions that he was to be buried with Eleanor.³⁷⁶ Their tomb, which depicts them holding hands, was made by Henry Yevele, and eventually moved to Chichester Cathedral, where it remains today.

2.3.3.2 Relationships

Eleanor of Lancaster and Richard Fitzalan

³⁶⁸ CIPM, VIII, pp. 252-253.

³⁶⁹ TNA DL 40/1/11, f. 52v.

³⁷⁰ *Calendar of Papal Petitions*, p. 99.

³⁷¹ Chris Given-Wilson, 'Fitzalan, Richard (II), third earl of Arundel and eighth earl of Surrey (c.1313–1376)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, Sept 2013) <<http://www.oxforddnb.com>>, [Accessed 29 July 2014]; CCR 1330-1333, pp. 81, 293.

³⁷² Given-Wilson, 'Fitzalan, Richard'.

³⁷³ Chris Given-Wilson, 'Wealth and Credit, Public and Private: The Earls of Arundel 1306-1397', *English Historical Review* 106 (1991), 1-26 (pp. 1; 18-21).

³⁷⁴ Given-Wilson, 'Fitzalan, Richard'.

³⁷⁵ Given-Wilson, 'Fitzalan, Richard'.

³⁷⁶ Nicolas Harris, ed., *Testamenta Vetusta: Being Illustrations from Wills, of Manners, Customs, &c., as well as of the Descents and Possessions of Many Distinguished Families from the Reign of Henry the Second to the Accession of Queen Elizabeth*, 2 vols (London: Nichols and Son, 1826), Accessed via [archive.org](http://www.archive.org) <<http://www.archive.org>> [accessed 11 November 2014], I, p. 94.

Eleanor's romantic relationship with Fitzalan likely began around 1344, when they went on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela together.³⁷⁷ They were certainly sexually involved before Richard applied for an annulment of his marriage to Isabella Despenser in December 1344. When the pope referred the case back to the archbishop of Canterbury and bishop of Chichester, Eleanor and Richard, 'fearing certain dangers' married 'clandestinely' on 5 February 1345, at the king's chapel at Ditton Manor, in the presence of the king and queen. They were forced to apply for a papal dispensation – on account of the affinity created by Eleanor's descent from Isabella Despenser – a month after the fact in March. In July 1345 they applied for another dispensation, having discovered they had a kinship in the fourth degree (both were great-great-grandchildren of Isabella of Angoulême). They asked for the dispensation and for confirmation that their offspring, present and future, would be legitimate, which was granted.³⁷⁸ There is no confession of adultery: Fitzalan makes it clear that his marriage to Isabella Despenser was consummated by force and that he 'would not consent to marry' her after reaching puberty. In the March petition, he calls his son by Isabella illegitimate, even though the marriage had not yet been dissolved. The lawyers were apparently attempting to present the annulment case as a *fait accompli* – there was no need to confess or request absolution for adultery, because Fitzalan had never considered his marriage legitimate.

Taken together, these petitions tell a scandalous story. The wording of the final July petition makes it clear that Eleanor had given birth to a child by Richard, so she was already pregnant at their February wedding. Richard probably applied for his annulment from Isabella Despenser around the time that Eleanor's pregnancy was confirmed, assuming she gave birth before June 1345. The annulment was referred back to the English church authorities, which would have dragged out the process a bit – Richard and Eleanor were probably hoping for a response directly from the pope. Since Lent (when marriages could not be solemnised) approached near the beginning of February, they decided to marry anyway, even though Richard's annulment had not yet been decided, to make sure that their child would be legitimate if it were born early – presumably the 'certain dangers' that Richard and Eleanor feared.

Royal Relationships

Eleanor's relationship with the royal family pre-dated her relationship with Fitzalan. In December 1340, she and John de Beaumont were in attendance with Edward III and Philippa of Hainault in the Low Countries. Eleanor was pregnant and they proposed returning to John's lands for the birth, but the king commanded them to stay for the queen's comfort, promising to vouch for their child's succession in England. The king, 'taking into consideration that the said John and Eleanor at the time of the conception and birth of the said Henry [de Beaumont] were cohabiting continually in Brabant in his company in marital intercourse, reposes Henry to be their true and legitimate son'.³⁷⁹ There is a suggestion that Eleanor grew particularly close to the queen during this time. She may have attended

³⁷⁷ Given-Wilson, 'Fitzalan, Richard'.

³⁷⁸ *Calendar of Papal Petitions*, pp. 75, 81, 99.

³⁷⁹ CPR 1340-1343, pp. 72-73.

John of Gaunt's birth in Ghent in March 1340, and was still with the queen nine months later, about the time that Philippa's pregnancy with Edmund of Langley (born in June 1341) would have been confirmed. In May 1341 Edward III granted Eleanor an annuity of £100 in thanks for her service to Queen Philippa.³⁸⁰ This is an extraordinary amount for an annuity and certainly reflects a close personal relationship between Eleanor and the royal family.³⁸¹

This close royal relationship may help to explain why Eleanor exercised an unusual amount of independence for a married woman. An October 1337 record reveals that Richard de Acton owed John de Beaumont and Eleanor £135.³⁸² That she was personally named, along with her husband, suggests that Eleanor was exercising a degree of financial independence. In May 1339 Eleanor was personally granted the goods and chattels that had belonged to a Ralph and Nicholas de Skylyngton, forfeited after they were indicted in the death of Robert de Barkeworth.³⁸³ There is no mention of why Eleanor was given these goods and not her husband – and legally, this should not have happened, as married women could not independently own property. In October 1349 Eleanor was granted wardships of several manors to hold until her son Henry reached his majority.³⁸⁴ The same land (Barton-on-Humber) was later re-granted to Eleanor and Richard jointly in 1370 after Henry de Beaumont's death.³⁸⁵ Similarly, Eleanor's very generous £100 annuity was originally granted to her personally, during her marriage to John de Beaumont. After she married Richard Fitzalan it was re-granted to both of them jointly. In 1351 Eleanor made an agreement with a Joan, widow of Ellis de Chene. Joan agreed to grant to Eleanor all her lands in Tortington, near Arundel, and Eleanor rendered to Joan £16 per year and robes at Christmas.³⁸⁶ It was not unusual for noblewomen to grant robes herself, separately from her husband, but Eleanor should not have been able to make a legal agreement or own land in her own right. In theory, the only married woman in England who was allowed to act as *femme sole* was the queen, but it appears as though in practice, certain high status women also exercised this right.

Richard Fitzalan and the Beaumonts

Richard Fitzalan seems to have taken on a paternal role for Eleanor's son Henry de Beaumont. In August 1349 the crown granted Fitzalan certain Beaumont lands to hold for Eleanor's son Henry until he reached his majority.³⁸⁷ In 1357, he was involved in negotiations for Henry's marriage. The close rolls record a series of recognisances made between Richard and John de Vere, earl of Oxford.³⁸⁸ Such recognisances usually indicate a marriage agreement, and indeed, Henry de Beaumont married John de Vere's daughter Margaret at some point in the early 1360s.

³⁸⁰ CCR 1341-1343, p. 235; CPR 1340-1343, p. 175.

³⁸¹ CPR 1340-1343, pp. 501-502 ; CCharR 1341-1417, p. 14 ; CFR 1337-1347, p. 386.

³⁸² CCR 1337-1339, p. 264.

³⁸³ CCR 1339-1341, p. 84.

³⁸⁴ CFR 1347-1356, p. 172.

³⁸⁵ CFR 1368-1370, p. 96.

³⁸⁶ TNA E 210/9411.

³⁸⁷ CFR 1347-1356, p. 151.

³⁸⁸ CCR 1354-1360, pp. 421-422.

Fitzalan may have stepped into the role of spokesman for the Beaumont family. In the 1366 parliament, when Elizabeth de Beaumont, Eleanor of Lancaster's sister-in-law, complained that her father-in-law James Daudley failed to jointly grant lands to her and her husband Nicholas that had been promised, James insisted that Richard Fitzalan be present. Parliament decided this was unreasonable and found in favour of Elizabeth, ordering James Daudley to pay her £6000.³⁸⁹ This suggests that Fitzalan had been involving himself in the affair on Elizabeth's behalf and James Daudley, upset by this involvement, wished to face him publicly. In 1342 Elizabeth and Nicholas had sought Eleanor's help when they acquired a manor from James Daudley without licence – Eleanor petitioned the king to pardon them.³⁹⁰ In 1364 Henry de Beaumont nominated Richard Fitzalan as his attorney in England.³⁹¹ Second marriages could create new – equally, if not more important – networks of in-laws who could be drawn upon, and women played a central role in facilitating this.

Fitzalan's marriage into the house of Lancaster did not only create relationships with relatives from his wife's first marriage, but also forged links and strengthened existing ones with Eleanor's extended family. In 1366 he enfeoffed John of Gaunt (his nephew-in-law), Humphrey de Bohun (son-in-law), Henry de Beaumont (stepson), Roger Lestrangle, Henry de Percy (brother-in-law) and others of the castle and town of Reigate, as well as of other manors. The lands were then re-granted to Richard and Eleanor for life – this was a common means of creating a jointure in trust.³⁹² Marriage was of ongoing importance in creating a circle of trusted allies.

Memory

Richard seems to have taken some time to plan his tomb with Eleanor. In 1375 he was delivered two



Figure 7 Eleanor of Lancaster and Richard Fitzalan's tomb in Chichester Cathedral. (Image from Wikimedia Commons)

tombs of marble.³⁹³ This may be an indication that he began planning for his own death around this time, or that he simply took time to plan Eleanor's memorialisation. It certainly indicates that by this point he was planning to be buried with her. The wording of Fitzalan's will, also of 1375, makes it clear that

³⁸⁹ CCR 1364-1368, pp. 237-239.

³⁹⁰ CPR 1340-1343, p. 422.

³⁹¹ CPR 1364-1367, p. 28.

³⁹² CPR 1364-1367, pp. 198, 237.

³⁹³ CCR 1374-1377, pp. 59-60.

the tomb had not been constructed by the time of his death. He ordered that his tomb, when it was constructed, be no higher than hers.³⁹⁴ Their effigies are one of several examples of hand-holding tombs used by members of the house of Lancaster or those with Lancastrian connections. Although the present tomb was heavily reconstructed in the nineteenth century, the hand-holding appears as was typical in such tombs, and thus likely reflects the original effigies. The design was unusual (Harris estimates only forty such tombs were made in Europe from 1350-1500) and so Fitzalan or his executors would have had to request this depiction specially. Such tombs usually depicted husband and wife with their right hands joined, as in this example, a symbol of the marriage vow. Double tombs usually placed the husband on the heraldic right (the left side, from the viewer's point of view), but hand-holding tombs, as in the image above, often reverse this, placing the wife on the dominant right side, as seen above. Harris has convincingly argued that hand-holding tombs reflect unusually close marriages where the wife was seen as a particularly significant contributor.³⁹⁵ Eleanor of Lancaster's important connections, her involvement in her husband's affairs and her impressive fecundity all support this conclusion.

2.3.4 Other Marriages and Conclusions

Henry of Lancaster's daughters made marriages that helped their father extend his web of supporters during the uncertain first decades of the fourteenth century. Some of these connections – Eleanor's marriage to Richard Fitzalan, Maud's to William de Burgh, Mary's to Henry Percy – were to families of longstanding importance. Others – Eleanor's to John de Beaumont, Blanche's to Thomas Wake, Maud's to Ralph de Ufford and Joan's to John de Mowbray – were connections to men who looked like up-and-comers from a contemporary point of view. Henry of Lancaster created a network of in-laws not only for himself, but for generations to come. As will be discussed in later chapters, the connections made from these marriages in the first half of the fourteenth century affected the family and national politics in the second half. Like his parents before him, Henry was fortunate to be able to provide appropriately for so many children, though as it was, Isabella of Lancaster entered the religious life, likely at least in part because marrying off so many girls was a financial burden. He also worked behind-the-scenes to take care of his sons-in-laws' interests. A series of orders from October and November 1327 dealing with the inheritances of William de Burgh and Thomas Wake, all granted at Pontefract, suggest that the king was paying a visit to Henry of Lancaster and Henry was taking advantage of the situation to further his in-laws' interests.³⁹⁶

Patterns suggest something of Henry's concerns during the end of Edward II's reign and beginning of Edward III's. With the exception of William de Burgh, all his children's spouses were English (and the Burgh family had significant English interests). In this period of internal tumult just before the outbreak of the Hundred Years War, allies at home had become more important than those abroad. Yet there were also plans for the future: making connections with three members of the Disinherited

³⁹⁴ *Testamenta Vetusta* I, p. 94.

³⁹⁵ Oliver Harris, "'Une Tresriche Sepulture': The Tomb and Chantry of John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster in Old St Paul's Cathedral, London", *Church Monuments* 25 (2010), 7-35, (pp. 24-27).

³⁹⁶ CCR 1327-30, p. 185.

(the Beaumonts, Wakes and Percys, as well as possibly the Burghs) suggests that Henry was anticipating increased activity in Scotland. An examination of all Henry's children's marriages together helps to shed light on how a contemporary viewed the political situation at the beginning of Edward III's reign.

A look at these women reveals their importance in their own rights, not simply as daughters, wives and mothers of powerful men. Blanche of Lancaster does not seem to have had a particularly close relationship with her husband Thomas Wake, but used her long widowhood to further her family's interests, eventually serving as guardian for John of Gaunt's children. Maud of Lancaster faced the challenge of young widowhood with determination to secure her daughter's valuable inheritance. Chroniclers' reports of her second marriage to Ralph de Ufford underscore the importance of her far-from-passive role in Ireland. As with her sister Blanche and Alice de Lacy, her decision to remain celibate after being widowed suggests that after two dramatic marriages, she could appreciate the benefits of single life. Eleanor of Lancaster had the ear of the king and queen and was willing to leverage this influence in order to exert more power than most women. Was the royal family's presence at her not-quite-legal wedding to Richard Fitzalan a favour to him or to her? Although their influence often has to be inferred, these women were clearly among the power players of their day.

Appendix 2.A: Remarriage and Widowhood in the House of Lancaster

Men

Name	Widowed? (Who?)	Year	Remarried? (Whom?)	Year	Gap	Years Single
Edmund of Lancaster	Yes -- Aveline de Forz	1275	Yes -- Blanche of Artois	1276-77	1-2 years	
Edmund of Lancaster	No					
Thomas of Lancaster	No					
John of Lancaster	Unknown					
Henry of Lancaster	Yes -- Maud Chaworth	1317-19	No			27 (1345)
Henry of Grosmont	No					
John of Gaunt	Yes -- Blanch of Lancaster	1368	Yes -- Constance of Castile	1371	3 years	
John of Gaunt	Yes -- Constance of Castile	1394	Yes -- Katherine Swynford	1396	2 years	
John of Gaunt	No					
Henry of Bolingbroke	Yes -- Mary de Bohun	1394	Yes -- Joan of Navarre	1403	9 years	
Thomas Wake	No					
William de Burgh	No					
Ralph Ufford	No					
John de Mowbray	Yes -- Joan of Lancaster	1345	Yes -- Elizabeth de Vere	?	?	
John de Beaumont	No					
Richard FitzAlan	Yes -- Eleanor of Lancaster	1372				
Henry de Percy	Yes -- Mary of Lancaster	1362	Yes -- Joan de Oreby	1365	3 years	
William of Zealand	Yes -- Maud of Lancaster	1362	No			27 (1389)

Joao of Portugal	Yes -- Philippa of Lancaster	1415	No			18 (1433)
John Hastings	No					
John Holland	No					
John Cornwall	Yes -- Elizabeth of Lancaster	1426	No			17 (1443)
Enrique of Castile	No					
John Beaufort	No					
Thomas Beaufort	Yes -- Margaret Neville	?	No			Unknown
Robert Ferrers	No					
Ralph Neville	Yes -- Margaret Stafford	1396	Yes -- Joan Beaufort	1396	>1 year	

Women

Name	Widowed? (Who?)	Year	Remarried? (Whom?)	Year	Gap	Years Single
Aveline de Forz	No					
Blanche of Artois	Yes -- Henry of Navarre	1274	Yes -- Edmund of Lancaster	1276-77	2-3 years	
Blanche of Artois	Yes -- Edmund of Lancaster	1296	No			6 years (1302)
Alice de Lacy	Yes -- Thomas of Lancaster	1322	Yes -- Ebulo Lestrangle	1324	2 years	
Alice de Lacy	Yes -- Ebulo Lestrangle	1335	Yes -- Hugh de Frene	1336	1 year	
Alice de Lacy	Yes -- Hugh de Frene	1336	No			
Maud Chaworth	No					
Isabella de Beaumont	No					
Blanche of Lancaster	No					
Constance of Castile	No					

Katherine Swynford	Yes -- Hugh Swynford	1371	Yes -- John of Gaunt	1396	25 Years	
Katherine Swynford	Yes -- John of Gaunt	1399	No			4 years (1403)
Mary de Bohun	No					
Alix de Joinville	Yes -- Unknown	?	Yes -- John of Lancaster	?	?	
Maud of Lancaster	Yes -- William de Burgh	1333	Yes -- Ralph Ufford	>1343	?	
Maud of Lancaster	Yes -- Ralph Ufford	1346	No			31 years (1377)
Joan of Lancaster	No					
Eleanor of Lancaster	Yes -- John de Beaumont	1342	Yes -- Richard Fitzalan	1345	3 years	
Eleanor of Lancaster	No					
Mary of Lancaster	No					
Blanche of Lancaster	Yes -- Thomas Wake	1349	No			31 years (1380)
Maud of Lancaster	No					
Philippa of Lancaster	No					
Elizabeth of Lancaster	Yes -- John Holland	1400	Yes -- John Cornwall	1400	>1 year	
Elizabeth of Lancaster						
Catherine of Lancaster	Yes -- Enrique of Castile	1406	No			12 years (1418)
Margaret Holland	Yes -- John Beaufort	1409	Yes -- Thomas of Lancaster	1411	2 years	
Margaret Neville	No					
Joan Beaufort	Yes -- Robert Ferrers	c.1395	Yes -- Ralph Neville	1396	1 year	
Joan Beaufort	Yes -- Ralph Neville	1425	No			15 years (1440)

Men

Number of Men: 24
Number of Marriages: 27
Number of 'Widowerings': 13
Number of Men Widowed: 12
Number of Remarriages: 7
Number of Men Remarried: 6

Percentage of Men Widowed: $12/24 = 0.5$ (50%)
Percentage of Marriages Ending with Husband Widowed: $13/27 = 0.4815$ (48%)
Percentage of Widowerings Ending in Remarriage: $7/13 = 0.5385$ (54%)
Percentage of Men who Remarried: $6/12 = 0.5$ (50%)
Percentage of Men who Didn't Remarry: $6/12 = 0.5$ (50%)

Median Wait before Remarriage: 4.5 years
Average Wait before Remarriage: 2 years

Median Years Single: 18
Average Years Single: 22.25

Women

Number of Women: 22
Number of Marriages: 30
Number of 'Widowings': 19
Number of Women Widowed: 11
Number of Remarriages: 10
Number of Women Remarried: 9

Percentage of Women Widowed: $11/22 = 0.5$ (50%)

Percentage of Marriages Ending with Wife Widowed: $19/30 = 0.6333$ (63%)

Percentage of Widowings Ending in Remarriage: $10/19 = 0.5263$ (53%)

Percentage of Women who Remarried: $9/11 = 0.8182$ (82%)

Percentage of Women who Never Remarried: $2/11 = 0.1818$ (18%)

Percentage of Women who Chose Not to Remarry at Some Point: $7/19 = 0.3684$ 37%

Median Wait Before Remarriage: 12.5 years (with Katherine Swynford included)

1.5 years

Average Wait Before Remarriage: 4.6 years (with Katherine Swynford included)

1.7 years

Median Years Single: 15

Average Years Single: 16

Chapter Three: The Marriages of John of Gaunt

Married three times, John of Gaunt's life was, as Armitage-Smith has noted, 'moulded by marriage'.³⁹⁷ His first wife, Blanche of Lancaster, brought him the fortune and political prestige that dictated the role he played in English society for the rest of his life. Constance of Castile, his second wife, brought a claim to a continental throne that Gaunt would pursue for much of their two-decade marriage. His third marriage to his long-time mistress Katherine Swynford ensured his legacy as the ancestor of kings, both in England and abroad. Each of these relationships sheds light on the personal and political sides of marriage in late medieval England. They provide insight into the politics of fourteenth-century marriage, raising questions and challenging assumptions about why the elite class married.

Documentation of Gaunt's life is particularly rich. To that end, *John of Gaunt's Register*, which records letters and other business carried out by the Duchy of Lancaster at the duke's orders, is the basis for many of my conclusions. It covers the years 1372-75, and 1378-82, a period when he was mourning his first wife, marrying his second, and starting a relationship with the woman who would become his third. The Register provides insight into how much time Gaunt actually spent with his wives, and what their positions, both in his household and his life, may have been. Chancery records fill in some gaps left by the Register. Chronicles shed light onto how the duke's relationships were perceived, as well as how they affected, and were affected by, his public image. Gaunt's wardrobe accounts, which survive for three years in the 1370s and 1390s, fill in some gaps and reveal where his wives stood in the Lancastrian administration.

The marriage of Henry of Grosmont and Isabella de Beaumont's older daughter Maud of Lancaster to William of Zeeland in 1352 fits into a broader understanding of the Hundred Years War and, as an international marriage, will not be addressed here in depth, except as it touches on the Lancastrian inheritance. It is worth noting that, as with Blanche of Lancaster's 1359 marriage to John of Gaunt, Maud's marriage demonstrates how valuable the house of Lancaster continued to be, even as it descended away from the royal house.

3.1 John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster

3.1.1 Background

In May 1359, the chronicler John of Reading reported that

John earl of Richmond, son of the king of England, with great honour married Blanche, his cousin and the daughter of lord Henry duke of Lancaster at Reading with the pope's dispensation. While travelling from the said town to London with all his knights, all wishing to run against each other, he held tournaments in the fields and towns. At this time it was proclaimed that a tournament would be held at London during the Rogation days, the mayor of the city and the alderman riding against all comers. In their name, the lord king, secretly,

³⁹⁷ Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt*, p. 13.

with his four sons Edward, Lionel, John and Edmund, and nineteen other noblemen, held the field with honour.³⁹⁸

The right marriage could change a family's fortunes, and John of Gaunt's marriage to Blanche of Lancaster is a perfect example of how successful parents could provide for children by marrying them to heiresses. The focus of this section will be the results, material and political, of John of Gaunt's first marriage to Blanche of Lancaster, as well as Gaunt's efforts to ensure that Blanche was remembered appropriately.

With no record of Blanche's birth, it is difficult to speculate on her age at her marriage to Gaunt in 1359. She was first betrothed to John de Seagrave in 1347, when both were children; however, he died before the marriage could take place.³⁹⁹ This makes 1347 the latest possible year of her birth, though, as she had her first child in 1360, we might speculate that she was at least fifteen or sixteen when she married Gaunt. References to twenty-four candles being placed around her tomb at her obits may indicate that this was her age when she died in 1368, placing her birthdate in 1344 and making her fifteen at her marriage.⁴⁰⁰ Firm plans for her marriage to Gaunt were finalised around January 1359: Edward III petitioned the pope for the required dispensation on 6 January and Gaunt petitioned for a portable altar for himself and his wife and household a few days later on 10 January.⁴⁰¹ The couple married at Reading Abbey on 19 May 1359. Blanche's father Henry of Grosmont died of plague in March 1361 and, after her sister Maud's death the next year, Gaunt and Blanche inherited all the lands of Lancaster and Leicester. The couple had five children: two boys, John and Edward, died in infancy, but Philippa (born in 1360), Elizabeth (1363-64), and the heir, Henry (1367), the future Henry IV, survived.⁴⁰² Blanche died on 12 September 1368.⁴⁰³ She was buried in a lavish tomb at St Paul's Cathedral in London and both Gaunt and Henry IV ensured that the anniversary of her death was celebrated annually.⁴⁰⁴ Gaunt's will of February 1399 requested that he be buried with her.⁴⁰⁵

This marriage highlights some of the complications that aristocratic marriage in the Middle Ages could create. Grosmont's death in 1361 necessitated the splitting of his inheritance between his two daughters, according to the laws regarding co-heiresses. The quantity of documentation relating to the partition attests to the size of the Lancastrian patrimony and the complexity of the situation. The

³⁹⁸ John de Reading, *Chronica Johannis de Reading et Anonymi Cantuariensis 1346-1367*, ed. by James Tait (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1914), pp. 131-132. All translations from this work are mine.

'Johannes, comes de Richmond', filius regis Angliae, dominam Blanchiam, filiam domini Henrici ducis Lancastriae, dicti Johannis consanguineam, cum dispensatione domini papae apud Redingum duxit in uxorem honorabiliter valde; etenim, itinerando a dicta villa usque Londonias, ipse cum milibibus suis omnibus sibi occurrere volentibus et in campis et villis bastiludia tenebat. Praeconizantur medio tempore fieri et bastiludia Londoniis tribus diebus Rogationum, viz., majorem dictae civitatis cum xxxiiij aldermannis contra omnes; nomine quorum dominus rex Angliae, occulte tamen, cum quattuor filiis suis, scilicet dominis Edwardo, Leonello, Johanne et Edmundo, aliisque nobilibus xix, campum tenebat cum honore.'

³⁹⁹ Anderson, p. 152.

⁴⁰⁰ Instructions for Mary de Bohun's memorials (see Chapter 4) also specified twenty-four candles, which was probably her age when she died in 1394. In his will, Thomas Beaufort specified that as many poor men as years he had lived should attend his funeral wearing white hoods (*Testamenta Vetusta*, I, p. 208).

⁴⁰¹ *Calendar of Papal Letters, 1342-1362*, p. 605; *Calendar of Papal Petitions 1342-1419*, p. 337.

⁴⁰² Armitage-Smith, pp. 152-157.

⁴⁰³ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 46.

⁴⁰⁴ Anderson, p. 157.

⁴⁰⁵ Armitage-Smith, p. 420.

division was achieved with Maud and Blanche's assent, which suggests that, since Maud was living abroad at the time, the nature of the division had been agreed previously – probably in connection with the negotiations for her marriage to William of Zeeland.⁴⁰⁶ Maud's own death in early 1362 made the split superfluous: as Maud had no children, her younger sister was her heir and, as a result, Blanche and Gaunt received Maud's half. Grosmont and Maud's opportune deaths were apparently a cause of suspicion for some. Knighton describes how, after Maud of Lancaster's death, 'vulgar repute had it that she had been poisoned to reunite the inheritance'.⁴⁰⁷ While there is no evidence that this report was more than gossip, it does illustrate the beginnings of distrust in Gaunt's power and influence.

Immediately after Grosmont's death in early 1361, Edward III granted John of Gaunt the keeping of the Lancastrian patrimony, along with the issues of the lands, until they could be split.⁴⁰⁸ Generally speaking, Blanche received the lands of the earldoms of Lancaster and Lincoln, and Maud those of the earldom of Leicester, though in places the split followed different lines (Maud, for instance, received all

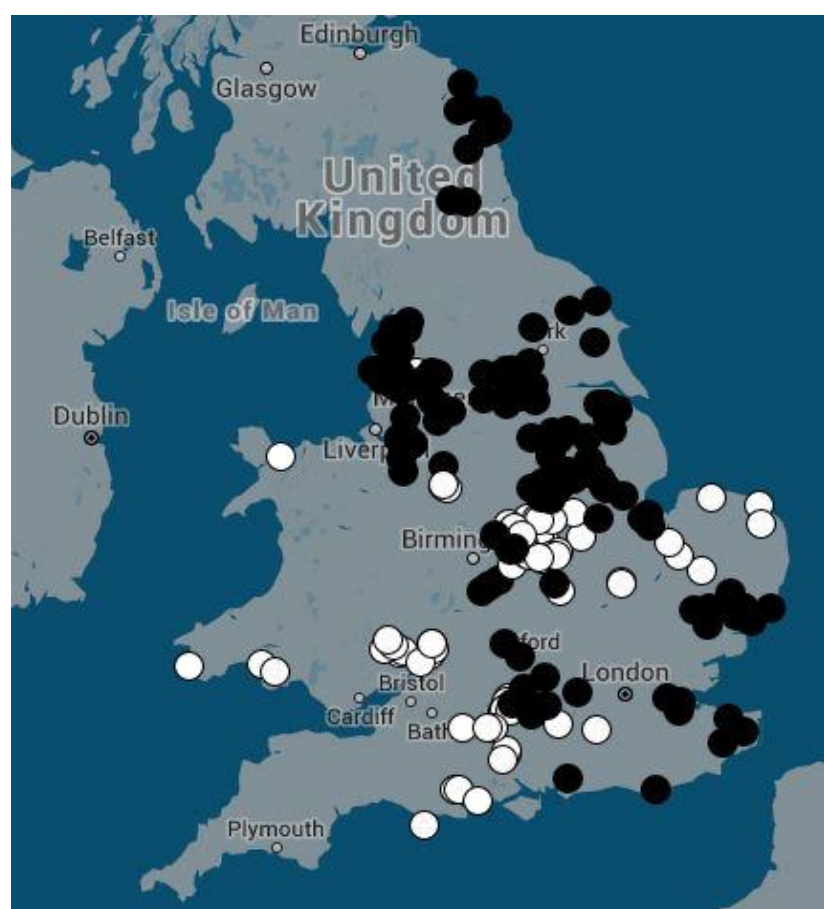


Figure 8 Partition of Henry of Grosmont's lands. Those that went to Maud of Lancaster are shown in white, and those to Blanche of Lancaster in black.

of the patrimony's Welsh lands, including those inherited by Maud Chaworth and granted to Henry of Lancaster). The split may have been decided with the idea that Maud's portion, generally located further south, would be easier to manage from her home in Zeeland, though Maud could probably expect to govern mostly through advisors. This could explain why she was also given Beaufort and Nogent in France.⁴⁰⁹

3.1.2 Motivations: The marriage of heiresses

The loss of male lines in the Black Death meant women

were more likely to inherit in post-Plague England. However, as Payling notes, it is necessary to distinguish between women as 'potential' heiresses and women who were heiresses at the time of marriage.⁴¹⁰ Gaunt's marriage to Blanche was undoubtedly the source of his unprecedented wealth and

⁴⁰⁶ CPR 1361-64, p. 50; CCR 1360-64, p. 210.

⁴⁰⁷ Henry Knighton, *Knighton's Chronicle, 1337-1396*, ed. and trans. by G. H. Martin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 185.

⁴⁰⁸ CFR 1356-1368, p. 157.

⁴⁰⁹ CFR 1356-1368, pp. 164-166.

⁴¹⁰ Payling, 'The Economics of Marriage in Late Medieval England', pp. 414-415.

power, but this was not the anticipated outcome. When they married in 1359, the couple could only expect to receive half of Henry of Grosmont's patrimony, as English law dictated that an inheritance be split evenly between female heiresses. At that point, Grosmont was in good health and Maud of Lancaster could be expected to have surviving children. If, as I have speculated, Isabella de Beaumont was often unwell, it was even possible that Grosmont might remarry and have a male heir after her death. The Lancastrian patrimony as a whole was not the motivation for the marriage, though Blanche's anticipated half would have been powerful incentive in its own right.

This was the first marriage for both Gaunt and Blanche, who were nineteen and about fifteen years old, respectively. In this marriage, more than in any of Gaunt's later ones, the parents' motives took precedence. Henry of Grosmont's position as close friend and advisor to Edward III was key: marrying his daughter Blanche to Edward's son ensured that the close ties between Lancaster and the crown that had flourished under Edward III would survive into another generation. The benefits to the crown are clear. With the inheritance split, the royal earldom of Lancaster would return to the crown after Grosmont's death, while the non-royal Leicester would go to Maud. Edward III provided handsomely for a younger son without digging into his own pockets. This union also contributed to Edward's larger-scale plans for the royal family. Ormrod has argued that Edward III's policy, beginning in the 1340s, was to once again spread England's power across Europe in the style of Edward I and Henry II. Edward III had initially hoped to marry Gaunt to the heiress of Flanders, which would have fitted this plan perfectly.⁴¹¹ By the late 1350s, English priorities had shifted. The series of royal marriages of 1358-59 was intended to strengthen the crown's position across the British Isles, as the early victories of the Hundred Years War and the imminent Treaty of Brétigny had made alliances against the French less vital. Gaunt's sister Margaret married John Hastings, earl of Pembroke, on 13 May 1359 – a week before Gaunt's own marriage to Blanche – extending more direct royal influence in the Welsh marches. Gaunt's marriage set him up to inherit Grosmont's role as chief lord of the north. As a result, important families were tied to the crown and Edward's sons had incentive to expand and defend royal interests.⁴¹² Blanche of Lancaster also brought a claim to lands in Provence, inherited from her great-great-grandmother, Eleanor of Provence, as well as Blanche of Artois's French lands.⁴¹³ Motivations on both sides were straightforward, but numerous: Blanche made a prestigious marriage that confirmed the house of Lancaster's close ties with the crown, while Gaunt became heir to an envious fortune and would return a royal house to royal control.

3.1.3 Legacy

The paucity of documentation from Blanche's lifetime means that many details of Gaunt and Blanche's marriage are impossible to find. Papal petitions dating from their marriage give slight evidence for the quality of Blanche and Gaunt's personal relationship. From 1363-66, they petitioned jointly several

⁴¹¹ W. M. Ormrod, 'Edward III and his Family', *Journal of British Studies* 26 (1987), 398-422, (p.406); Armitage-Smith, p.12.

⁴¹² Ormrod, 'Edward III and his Family', pp.410-411.

⁴¹³ CPR 1364-67, p.330, referencing CPR 1317-21, p.341, a confirmation of a grant from Eleanor of Provence of her portion of the county of Provence to her grandsons Thomas and Henry of Lancaster; TNA DL 42/11, f. 11.

times, always for fairly common perquisites: a portable altar, permission for their chaplain to hear their confession, permission for religious to eat meat in their residences, plenary remission of sins, leave to change and choose their own confessors.⁴¹⁴ None of the requests is unusual, but the fact that they were all made jointly is – husbands and wives frequently petitioned individually for these things. The joint petitions may suggest that instead of two entirely separate households, as many noble couples had, there was more overlap here.

Clues to the nature of Gaunt and Blanche's relationship from the Register come after her death, as the extant Register dates only from 1372. All indications are that Gaunt was concerned, particularly following his second marriage in 1371, with preserving Blanche's memory as clearly as possible. Long-term plans for Blanche's commemoration began upon Gaunt's return to England after marrying Constance of Castile in September 1371. On 1 January 1372, he gifted vestments to Blanche's chaplains, indicating that some memorialisation was already taking place.⁴¹⁵ In February 1372, Gaunt ordered William de Bughbrigg, receiver general for the duchy, to set up payment to the chaplains assigned to Blanche's chantry at St Paul's. Some back payment was required, since the chaplains had been working since the previous Michaelmas. The same letter ordered 100s. 8d. to be paid to Robert, joiner, for building 'an altar near the tomb of our said companion [Blanche] in the said church'.⁴¹⁶ Payment was also made for a missal and chalice purchased for the chapel. Clearly, one of Gaunt's primary concerns upon his return to England was to personally direct the commemorations for his first wife. The three major types of memorial – their double tomb, annual obits, and Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess* – that were created for Blanche were of course expressions of genuine grief and concern about safeguarding her soul. They also illustrate the 'memorial strategy' for Blanche: she was depicted as a good, beautiful and (perhaps most importantly) uncontroversial woman. Her goodness came to represent Lancastrian goodness, and the continued use of St Paul's Cathedral emphasised a Lancastrian desire to be seen as representatives of the people, as first expressed in Trokelowe's account of Henry de Lacy's death. Gaunt and his descendants worked to keep Blanche alive in the public memory, manipulating her memory in a potent, though admittedly not always effective, form of early propaganda.

3.1.2.1 John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster's Tomb in Old St Paul's Cathedral

In June 1374, Gaunt ordered his receiver at Tutbury to prepare six carts of alabaster to be taken 'to London...for the new work of the tomb of lady Blanche, late our companion',⁴¹⁷ marking the beginning of work on Blanche and Gaunt's joint tomb. In January 1375, the Register records a list of payments, including £486 to Henry Yevele, for work on Blanche's monument.⁴¹⁸ Including the money

⁴¹⁴ *Calendar of Papal Petitions 1342-1419*, pp. 401, 422-423, 528-529.

⁴¹⁵ *John of Gaunt's Register, 1372-1376*, 2 vols, Camden Third Series, Vol. XX-XXI., ed. by Sydney Armitage-Smith (London: Offices of the Camden Society, 1911), no. 915.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid.*, no. 918. All translations from the Register are mine.

⁴¹⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 1394.

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*, no. 1659.

owed to Yevele, the entire tomb, constructed between 1374-80, cost £592.⁴¹⁹ Gaunt's decision to have Blanche and himself buried at St Paul's is intriguing, and is best explained in the light of St Paul's

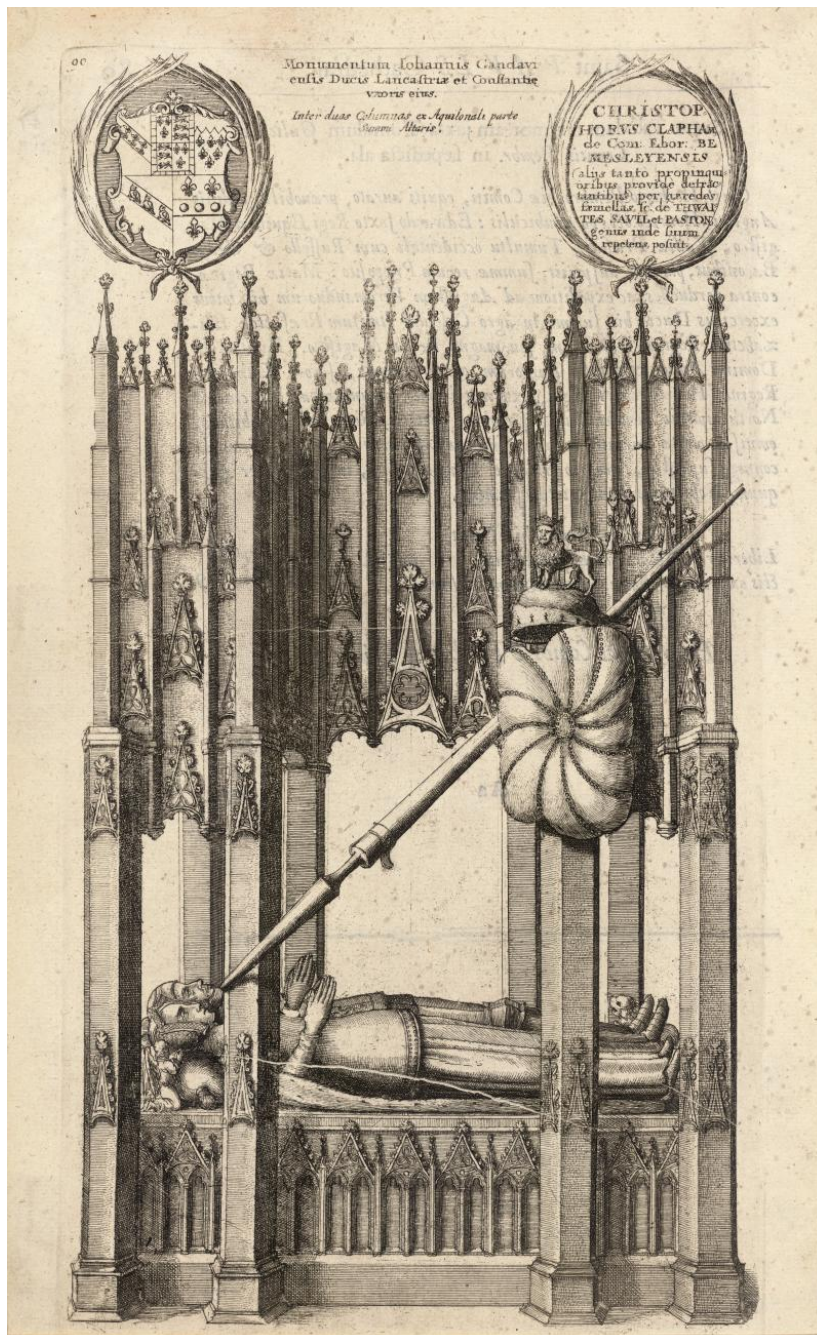


Figure 9 John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster's tomb in Old St Paul's Cathedral. (From the Wenceslaus Hollar Digital Collection, University of Toronto)

reputation as the church of the people of London, and its previous Lancastrian connections. The cathedral contained a shrine to St Thomas of Lancaster and Henry de Lacy had been buried there.⁴²⁰ After Blanche's burial, Lancastrians used the cathedral symbolically: the public reconciliation between Gaunt and Londoners after the Peasants Revolt; Gaunt's 1389 return to England from Spain; and Henry Bolingbroke's triumphant entry into London as king in 1399 were all marked with prayer services at St Paul's.⁴²¹

As in Richard Fitzalan and Eleanor of Lancaster's tomb, Blanche and Gaunt's effigies were depicted holding hands. Several of Gaunt's descendants went on to

use this pose as well: Philippa of Lancaster and her husband João of Portugal, their son Duarte I and his wife Leonor of Aragon, and John Beaufort (John of Gaunt's grandson) and his wife Margaret Beauchamp.⁴²² Gaunt's choice to commission this pose suggests not only his affection for Blanche, but

⁴¹⁹ Harris, p. 10.

⁴²⁰ Harris, p. 9. See Introduction, Appendix B.

⁴²¹ Harris, pp. 10-11.

⁴²² Ibid., pp. 24-26.

also his respect for her position as the mother of his heir and source of his wealth and status. Changes were made to the tomb throughout Gaunt's lifetime, especially as he neared death himself. In 1397-98 Gaunt purchased new items for the tomb and its accompanying altar: a new chalice and paten, as well as new vestments, for the substantial price of £13 15s. 5d.⁴²³

He had clearly planned to be buried with Blanche since the tomb was begun – the orders for alabaster were enough for a double tomb. Evidence suggests that the effigies were completed during his lifetime as well. Gaunt's effigy showed him wearing the arms of Castile and León on the dominant right half of his surcoat, suggesting that the effigy was completed before 1388, while he still claimed the Castilian throne (after he gave up his claim, the Castilian coat of arms moved to the left side of his coat of

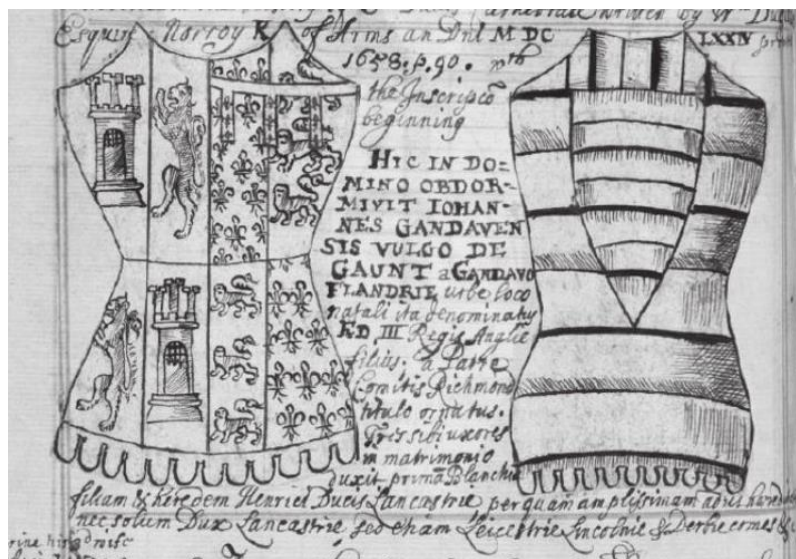


Figure 11 Drawing of Gaunt's surcoat as it appeared on his effigy, 1658

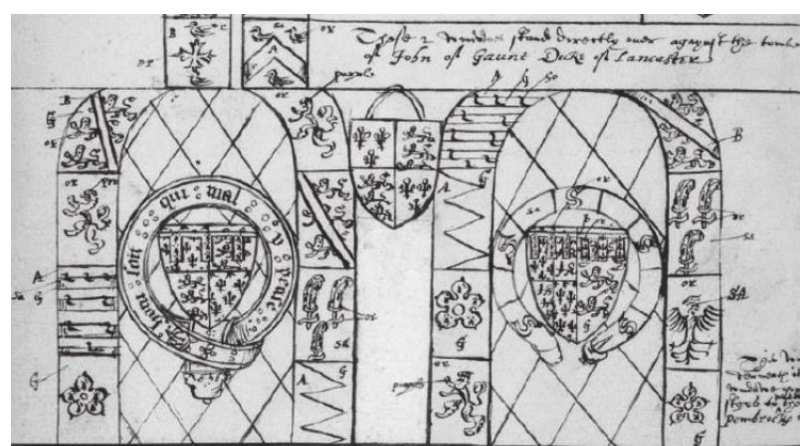


Figure 11 Stained glass in the chantry chapel of John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster, from a sketch by Nicholas Charles, c. 1605 (BL MS Lansdowne 874)

arms). As the tomb depicted the effigies touching, it seems reasonable to assume that they were completed at the same time, in the mid-1370s. Henry IV arranged for the chantry chapel that surrounded the tomb to be built, which explains why the stained glass in the chapel does not emphasise the Castilian connection.⁴²⁴ With its depictions of Gaunt and Blanche's coats of arms, arms of several Lancastrian lordships, the Order of the Garter and the collar of SS, the emphasis is much more on English – specifically Lancastrian – symbolism.

3.1.2.2 Obits

John of Gaunt's concern that Blanche's memory be preserved and her soul properly tended comes across

most clearly in the annual obits – memorial services held on the anniversary of a person's death – celebrated throughout the rest of his life. These had certainly begun by 1371: in February 1372 the

⁴²³ TNA DL 28/3/5, f. 13v.

⁴²⁴ Antje Fehrman, 'Politics and Posterity: English Royal Chantry Provision 1232-1509', in *The Medieval Chantry in England and Wales*, ed. by Julian M. Luxford and John McNeill (Leeds: Maney, 2012), pp. 74-99 (p. 83).

Register records an order to repay Sir William Croyser £38 18s. for expenses incurred in holding services at St Paul's the previous September.⁴²⁵ The most lavish ceremony the Register records was in 1374, possibly the first year that Gaunt attended personally (see Appendix 3.B). For it, black cloths were brought to the church from Gaunt's Savoy Palace and twenty-four poor men were paid to stand holding candles around the tomb wearing blue and white cloaks, the colours of Lancaster. Afterwards, the cathedral staff were provided with sweets while other important guests dined at the Savoy, all at Gaunt's expense.⁴²⁶ 'Regards' paid for fifty-one clerics, as well as choristers and bell-ringers, suggest that the service was formal and well-attended. In 1379, the cost of the event had fallen: William de Bughbrigg was to pay £30 6s. 7d. for costs associated with the obit held that year.⁴²⁷ By 1392 and 1396, the final years of Gaunt's life for which records survive, the obit cost only £10.⁴²⁸

This is probably the most detailed surviving account of a fourteenth-century obit, making it difficult to determine to what extent Blanche's obits were typical. Some help comes from less-detailed accounts for the obits of Philippa of Hainault and Isabella of France. They reveal that certain features of Blanche's obit, including the poor men holding torches around the tomb, were common: in 1372 Philippa's obit featured thirty such men and Isabella's twelve. While there is no breakdown of expenses as in the 1374 record for Blanche's memorial, the accounts reveal that Gaunt was spending a good deal of money on these obits. In 1372, Philippa's obit cost £39, compared to the £45 spent on Blanche two years later. Gaunt also spent considerably more on alms for the poor: the expenses for Blanche's obit included £10 in alms, but Philippa's in the same year only £5 and Isabella's a mere 16s.⁴²⁹ Holding an annual obit was a common activity and, for a man of Gaunt's wealth and rank, probably considered no more than what he ought to do for his late wife. The money spent, and perhaps particularly the money spent on alms, suggests that Blanche was being remembered on a queenly scale, reinforcing the notion that Gaunt was particularly concerned with Blanche's memorialisation. The large amount spent on alms also suggests, on a more cynical note, that Gaunt was eager to have Lancaster associated with generosity to the poor.

These services also fit well with regular Lancastrian use of St Paul's at other times. Keene describes St Paul's as the 'focal point' of medieval London and one of its major symbols.⁴³⁰ The body of the cathedral was used as a place to conduct formal business, and fourteenth-century regulations prohibiting playing football or shooting birds in the church speak to the other activities that the cathedral hosted.⁴³¹ Binski has noted the increasingly public-facing role of tombs in the fourteenth century, particularly in the development of canopied tombs which could be seen from afar, as well as

⁴²⁵ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 943.

⁴²⁶ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 1585.

⁴²⁷ *John of Gaunt's Register, 1379-1383, Vols. I and II*, Camden Third Series, Vol. LVI-LVII., ed. by Eleanor C. Lodge and Robert Somerville (London: Offices of the Camden Society, 1937), no. 105.

⁴²⁸ TNA DL 25/3/2, f. 17; DL 28/3/5 f. 11v.

⁴²⁹ TNA E 101/397/7; E 101/397/13.

⁴³⁰ Derek Keene, 'From Conquest to Capital: St Paul's c. 1100-1300', in *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London, 604-2004*, ed. by Derek Keene, et. al. (London: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 17-32 (p. 17).

⁴³¹ Caroline M. Barron and Marie-Hélène Rousseau, 'Cathedral, City and State, 1300-1540', in *St Paul's: The Cathedral Church of London, 604-2004*, ed. by Derek Keene, et. al. (London: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 33-44 (p. 38).

increasing uses of heraldry and other types of family symbols on tombs.⁴³² The tomb's scale, design and location thus encouraged public attention. During the years of Gaunt's unpopularity, people visiting the cathedral on everyday business would have seen the lavish double tomb – with Gaunt's effigy already lying next to his wife's. They would have been very aware when the cathedral (or part of it) shut for the obit, and Blanche's tomb was draped in black and surrounded with candles. Even those who were not in St Paul's on the day might perhaps see Gaunt and his followers processing to the cathedral from the Savoy and would certainly hear the bells being rung. Gaunt and later Henry IV used St Paul's for public events: in November 1381, the author of the *Anonimale Chronicle* describes how Gaunt made his peace with the city of London with a memorial service, describing how he

rode out from Fulham to the city of London to the cathedral church of St Paul with a great procession of people to hear Mass and give alms for the duchess his late wife. And the mayor and the aldermen, with a great number of the city on horseback, met there and brought themselves to the said church to make their devotion in honour of the great lady; and the same day accords were made between the said duke concerning the dispute that was between them.⁴³³

The connection made between Gaunt's efforts to make good with the people of London and the devotion to Blanche is of particular interest. This strongly suggests that there was a deliberate effort to use Blanche's memory to maintain support for Lancaster. The double tomb, the annual memorials and other ad hoc use of St Paul's clearly worked together as part of Gaunt's memorial strategy for Blanche – and propaganda strategy for himself and his family.

3.1.2.3 Book of the Duchess

Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess*, another memorial to Blanche, is not usually seen as a part of a memorial strategy, but the poem clearly articulates how Blanche was meant to be remembered by the Lancastrian establishment. *Book of the Duchess* is a lasting tribute to Blanche's memory and Gaunt's grief at her death, though it is difficult to know how best to interpret it. Rigby cautions against interpreting any of Chaucer's works as mere mirrors of reality, pointing out that, though Chaucer was inspired by real people and events, he also drew on contemporary literary conventions and his own lively imagination.⁴³⁴ The allegorical dream that Chaucer describes cannot be interpreted as literal fact, especially as he borrowed heavily from the poetry of Guillaume de Machaut, from which he took lines unedited.⁴³⁵ There is no indication that Gaunt commissioned the poem, but it has been suggested that its deeply personal tone indicates he was the intended reader.⁴³⁶

In *Book of the Duchess*, the narrator falls asleep and dreams of a Black Knight. He overhears the Black Knight's 'complaint':

'I have of sorwe so gret won

⁴³² Paul Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (London: British Museum Press, 1996), pp. 78, 83-86, 105.

⁴³³ *The Anonimale Chronicle, 1333-81*, ed. by V. H. Galbraith (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1927), p. 155.

⁴³⁴ S. H. Rigby, *Chaucer in Context: Society, Allegory, and Gender* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 2, 5-6. *Book of the Duchess* survives in three manuscripts, all dating from the fifteenth century: Bodleian Library MSS Bodley 638 and 16, and Tanner 346.

⁴³⁵ Geoffrey Chaucer, 'The Book of the Duchess', ed. by Colin Wilcockson, in *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd edn., ed. by Larry D. Benson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 329-346, Introduction, p. 329.

⁴³⁶ Goodman, p. 37.

That joye gete I never non,
 Now that I see my lady bryght,
 Which I have loved with al my myght,
 Is fro me ded and ys agoon.
 Allas, deth, what ayleth the,
 That tho noldest have taken me,
 Whan thou toke my lady swete,
 That was so fair, so fresh, so fre,
 So good that men may wel se
 Of al goodnesse she had no mete!⁴³⁷

The narrator and the Black Knight fall into conversation, and the Black Knight gives a lengthy, detailed description of ‘White,’ the woman he loves. She was more natural and beautiful than any other woman in the world, and never said a cruel word, but instead had a ‘goodly, softe speche’.⁴³⁸ Her personality was quiet and demure, working to live well and seek steadiness and ‘measure’.⁴³⁹ Chaucer drew heavily on Machaut’s *Jugement dou Roy de Beaigne* for this description, even of the more idiosyncratic elements that appear unique to a modern reader. However, Wilcockson notes that Chaucer’s description places more emphasis on his character’s personality than Machaut’s, creating ‘freshness and personal effect’.⁴⁴⁰ The description tallies with Froissart, who describes Blanche’s short years as ‘gay, kind, and cheery’.⁴⁴¹

The Black Knight tells the narrator that he loved White, but she did not know it, so he wrote and sang songs for her, though he had no talent.⁴⁴² Eventually, she loved him back, but it emerges that since then she has died. The narrator and Black Knight part ways and

With that me thoughte that thys kyng
 Gan homwarde for to ryde
 Unto a place, was there besyde,
 Which was from us but a lyte -
 A long castel with walles white,
 Be Seynt John, on a ryche hil,
 As me mette; but thus hyt fil.⁴⁴³

This rather perplexing ending is a series of metaphors – the ‘long castel’ is a reference to Lancaster; the ‘ryche hil’ to Richmond (Gaunt was Earl of Richmond until 1372); ‘Seynt John’ an allusion to John of Gaunt.

One of the difficulties in understanding the poem is that we do not know when it was written.

Typically, it is dated 1369-72, with the assumption that it would have been inappropriate to write it after Gaunt remarried. Palmer suggests November 1368 as the latest possible date, as to write a poem grieving a dead wife would be inappropriate after new marriage negotiations had begun.⁴⁴⁴ However, the assumption that grief for a dead wife would offer insult to a potential or current wife is based on

⁴³⁷ Chaucer, *Book of the Duchess* lines 475-486, p. 336.

⁴³⁸ Ibid., lines 878-882, p. 340; lines 904-910, 919-931, p. 341.

⁴³⁹ Ibid., lines 878-882, p. 341.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid., Note, p. 973.

⁴⁴¹ Jean Froissart, *Le Joli Buisson de Jonece*, ed. by Anthime Fourrier (Geneva: Droz, 1975), lines 246-248, p. 55.

⁴⁴² Chaucer, *Book of the Duchess*, lines 1146-1147, 1157-1160, p. 344.

⁴⁴³ Ibid., lines 1314-1320, p. 346.

⁴⁴⁴ J. J. N. Palmer, ‘The Historical Context of the *Book of the Duchess*: A Revision’, *Chaucer Review* 8 (1974), 253-261 (p. 259).

modern ideas about love and grief, not medieval ones. Some, however, have suggested elements in the poem, such as the reference to a 'kyng' (quoted above, line 1314), suggest it was written after Gaunt's second marriage, perhaps for one of Blanche's obits.⁴⁴⁵ Foster argues convincingly that *Book of the Duchess* was most likely written after Chaucer, who was married to Katherine Swynford's sister Philippa, moved closer to the Lancastrian 'inner circle' with the beginning of Katherine's relationship with Gaunt in 1372.⁴⁴⁶ It seems reasonable to date the poem to the first half of 1372, when Chaucer was brought into the Lancastrian circle and Gaunt still held the title of earl of Richmond. The poem's intimate portrayal of the Black Knight's grief suggests that Chaucer meant to assert a close personal relationship with Gaunt.⁴⁴⁷ Chaucer, who was certainly already married to Katherine's sister Philippa by the early 1370s (their son Thomas was born in 1367), would probably have been close enough to the family to be aware of Gaunt's feelings about Blanche's death, as well as his thoughts on how she should be remembered. Annuities Gaunt granted to Chaucer and Philippa in 1372 and 1374 may indicate the poem did its work.⁴⁴⁸

Hardman argues that the poem was written to mimic the structure and purpose of a memorial tomb.⁴⁴⁹ The *Book of the Duchess* presents the reader with an image, like an effigy, of White and the Black Knight, her weeper. White's beauty is described as unchangeable and the Black Knight's grief is immutable, as if both are set in stone. The concluding Lancastrian allusions mirror heraldic devices on a tomb and act as reminders of a family's greatness.⁴⁵⁰ The poem helps the reader remember the individual, witnesses the grief of family and friends, and makes a statement about the family's importance.⁴⁵¹ Seen in this context, Chaucer's depictions of White and the Black Knight fit into a larger memorial concept for Blanche. Blanche was to be remembered as beautiful, good and perpetually youthful, Gaunt's grief for her as eternal. Medieval literature was meant for public consumption, not private contemplation, so readings of the poem (it is easy to imagine it being read at Blanche's memorials) would have served a similar role to the memorials and the effigy in St Paul's: regular, public reminders of Blanche's – and thus Lancaster's – goodness.

Gaunt was careful to provide for those who had served Blanche in her lifetime: Blanche's falconer, several ladies-in-waiting and former confessors were granted annuities and gifts. Numerous gifts to his mistress Katherine Swynford in the early years of her relationship with Gaunt were given in thanks for her service as a member of Blanche's household. Though this was partly a nod to propriety, as will be discussed below, they also probably reflect a genuinely close relationship between the two women.⁴⁵² He also maintained ties to Lancastrian foundations inherited through his marriage to Blanche. Gaunt patronised Barlings Abbey, the foundation favoured initially by Alice de Lacy's maternal family, and

⁴⁴⁵ Michael Foster, 'On Dating the Duchess: The Personal and Social Context of Book of the Duchess', *Review of English Studies* 59 (2008), 185-196 (pp. 185-186).

⁴⁴⁶ Foster, 'On Dating the Duchess', pp. 187-188.

⁴⁴⁷ Foster, 'On Dating the Duchess', p. 192.

⁴⁴⁸ *JGR 1372-76*, nos. 608, 1056.

⁴⁴⁹ Philipa Hardman, 'The "Book of the Duchess" as a Memorial Monument', *Chaucer Review* 28 (1994), 205-215, (pp. 206-207).

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 209-212.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁴⁵² *JGR 1372-76*, nos. 473, 519, 620, 938.

arranged for obits for himself and his family celebrated there.⁴⁵³ As Goodman and Walker have noted, Gaunt worked to maintain the networks of alliance created by his predecessors Henry of Lancaster and Henry of Grosmont, working closely with the Mowbray, Ufford, Lestrangle and Fitzalan families.⁴⁵⁴ Many of his annuitants were inherited from his father-in-law – Walker cites seventeen men who transferred service from Grosmont to Gaunt.⁴⁵⁵ That he chose to name his illegitimate children either after himself (John and Joan) or after Lancastrians (Henry and Thomas) instead of traditional names of the royal family emphasises the fact that after he married Blanche, Gaunt reframed himself as member of the house of Lancaster, first and foremost.

Political and economic motivations played a straightforward role in John of Gaunt's first marriage: Gaunt could expect to receive half the Lancastrian inheritance upon Grosmont's death and Blanche became a member of the royal family. Lancaster would be reunited with the royal house and the already-intimate ties between Edward III and Grosmont became closer. No matter how loving John and Blanche's relationship was in the end, knowing that it was arranged by their parents makes it difficult to say this was a love match. *Book of the Duchess's* Black Knight's description of how he sought to win White's love is charming, but we cannot assume that it mimics reality. This may indeed reflect Gaunt and Blanche's relationship, but it may equally be an example of Chaucer fitting his patron's love story into literary convention. Gaunt's concern that Blanche's memory remain fresh attests to a love that probably developed along with their marriage. Moreover, the regular remembrances of Blanche's life may have had political, as well as personal, intent. Blanche had been popular and uncontroversial; as Gaunt's life veered in the opposite direction after her death, he may have deliberately called upon her memory in an attempt to drum up more public support. If that is the case, it worked: whatever the reality may have been, the relationship is still remembered as intimate and loving.

3.2 John of Gaunt and Constance of Castile

Gaunt's second marriage, to Constance of Castile, determined the course of much of his life and confirmed his position as a key player on the European stage, much as Edmund of Lancaster's marriage to Blanche of Artois had done nearly a century previously. This section will discuss the political motivations for the marriage and the effects of John and Constance's pursuit of power in Castile. It addresses the issue of Gaunt and Constance's personal relationship and questions the assumption that this marriage was 'unsuccessful'.

Constance was born in Castile in 1354, the second daughter of Pedro II and his mistress-turned-wife, Maria de Padilla. Pedro had first married Blanche of Bourbon, but after the wedding claimed that he was already married to Maria, a story viewed with some scepticism.⁴⁵⁶ In 1366, civil war in Castile between Pedro and his illegitimate half-brother Enrique Trastamara forced Pedro to flee to Gascony

⁴⁵³ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 262.

⁴⁵⁴ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 286; Simon Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity: 1361-1399* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 17.

⁴⁵⁵ Walker, pp. 28-29.

⁴⁵⁶ Armitage-Smith, p.37.

with his children and ask the Black Prince for aid under the terms of the 1352 Anglo-Castilian alliance. Edward III and the Black Prince agreed to help, but Pedro was to repay the cost of the expedition and was forced to leave important hostages, including his three daughters, in Gascony as guarantee. After the spectacularly successful Battle of Nájera in April 1367, in which John of Gaunt fought, Pedro owed his throne to English intervention, but by 1368 it was clear that he would be unable to repay the debts he owed.⁴⁵⁷ With French assistance, Enrique deposed Pedro again, and in April 1369, murdered him for good measure. In October of 1370, John of Gaunt became lieutenant of Aquitaine, where Pedro's two surviving daughters and heirs, Constance and Isabel, were still hostages. Constance married Gaunt in Aquitaine in early September 1371; Constance was seventeen and Gaunt still fairly young at thirty-one. Immediately after the marriage, they departed for England, where Gaunt settled down to the task of ruling Castile from afar. Assuming the trappings of kingship, Gaunt organised a Spanish chancery at the Savoy by early 1372, had Spanish seals made and coined money in Gascony. They were joined in England by Castilian knights and ladies-in-waiting, many of whom remained with them for decades and married Englishmen.⁴⁵⁸ Constance gave birth to a daughter, Catherine, in the summer of 1372, and a short-lived son in 1375. Some have speculated that Constance was pregnant again when she and Gaunt arrived in Spain in 1386, but this is doubtful.⁴⁵⁹

Russell argues that despite nearly constant attempts to lead armies to claim his Castilian throne, Gaunt's ambitions were hampered by the increasingly large role that Edward III's poor health and Richard II's minority forced Gaunt to play in English politics in the 1370s-80s.⁴⁶⁰ Certainly military success proved elusive. His *chevauchée* across France of 1373 was intended to include an attack on Castile after the army's arrival in Bordeaux, but in the spring of 1374, with the English army in disastrous condition and no help forthcoming from Iberia, Gaunt was forced to return to England.⁴⁶¹ Enrique II of Castile died in 1379 and was succeeded by his son Juan. The late 1370s and early 1380s saw Parliament refuse a number of invasion plans, and Edmund of Langley's campaign to Portugal and Castile in 1381-82 proved a near-complete disaster. In 1385, Parliament finally agreed to an invasion led by Gaunt personally, and in July 1386, he departed for Iberia, accompanied by Constance and his daughters Catherine, Philippa, and Elizabeth. Despite making some headway in Galicia, the campaign was a disappointment and in 1387 Gaunt renounced his royal ambitions in Castile. While the campaign was a military failure, it was a political success. Gaunt and Constance's daughter Catherine married Juan I's son Enrique, uniting the rival families and ending the war, while Philippa of Lancaster married João of Portugal to seal the Anglo-Portuguese alliance. As part of the settlement, Juan granted three Castilian towns to Constance, giving her a Spanish income, and Gaunt and Constance were to receive annual payments from Juan. No longer concerned with Castilian affairs, they returned to England,

⁴⁵⁷ Russell, p. 125.

⁴⁵⁸ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 1795; Russell, pp. 176-182.

⁴⁵⁹ Goodman, p. 126.

⁴⁶⁰ P. E. Russell, *The English Intervention in Spain and Portugal in the Time of Edward III and Richard II* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1955), p. 185.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp.206, 216-217.

leaving Philippa and Catherine with their respective husbands. Constance retired to Leicester until she died on 24 March 1394. She was buried in the Lancastrian mausoleum of St Mary's, Leicester.

3.2.1 Motivations

The Lancastrian inheritance made Gaunt a major prize on the European marriage market; negotiations for his second marriage began within weeks of Blanche's death. An autumn 1368 letter from Louis de Mâle, count of Flanders, to Philippa of Hainault, reveals that the queen was attempting to arrange a marriage between Louis's daughter Margaret, heiress of Flanders, and Gaunt.⁴⁶² Nothing came of this in the end (the pope had denied a dispensation for Gaunt's younger brother Edmund to marry the same Margaret only months previously), and in 1371 Gaunt was still a widower. Pointing to evidence that he never planned to stay in Gascony long, Russell suggests Gaunt resolved to marry Constance early in his lieutenancy.⁴⁶³ There were several motivations for the marriage. Since the 1360s, England and France had struggled for influence in the Iberian Peninsula, as control of the Castilian fleet, at that point the most advanced in Europe, was seen as a possible game-changer in the Hundred Years War. At the same time, the Castilian throne played well into Edward III's family strategy. Ormrod suggests that in the 1360s Edward was working to arrange overseas titles for his younger sons to avoid creating too-powerful royal earls at home. Consequently, he created opportunities to rule in Ireland and later Italy for Lionel of Clarence, attempted to marry Edmund of Langley to the heiress of Flanders and Burgundy, and gave the duchy of Brittany to his son-in-law John de Montfort.⁴⁶⁴ Setting up Gaunt as king in Castile fitted well with this strategy, and also had the potential to benefit England in the war with France. With Pedro II dead, Gaunt was in a perfect position to champion the cause of the legitimate heir, Constance.

Constance's own motivations for the marriage have, as with many women discussed in this thesis, generally been ignored. With Enrique Trastámara, now Enrique II, on the Castilian throne with French support, England was bound to take an interest. However, after the Black Prince's bitter withdrawal from Castile and Pedro's murder, Constance's claim must have looked increasingly hopeless. For Constance, then, marriage to one of the English king's sons would guarantee a champion for her cause. It was probably not the marriage she had anticipated as a child. Fourteenth-century Castilian princesses tended to form marriage alliances in southern Europe, usually within the Iberian Peninsula, so marriage to the third son of the English king may have been unexpected. The situation in which Constance found herself, however – by 1371 she had been an English hostage in Aquitaine for five years – did not easily allow for other negotiations. Additionally, given the poor health of both the Black Prince and Edward III, and with the succession potentially unclear, Constance had some reason to believe that her husband's prospects could dramatically improve in the future.⁴⁶⁵ Constance's motivations, then, centred around maintaining English interest in her cause in Castile. From Gaunt's point of view, the

⁴⁶² Palmer, 'The Historical Context of the *Book of the Duchess*', pp. 253-255, referring to BL Add MS 24062, f. 152.

⁴⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 167

⁴⁶⁴ Ormrod, 'Edward III and his Family', pp. 400-414.

⁴⁶⁵ See Michael Bennett, 'Edward III's Entail and the Succession to the Crown, 1376-1471', *English Historical Review* 113 (1998), pp. 580-609.

benefit of the marriage is obvious. Though Constance had no property at the time of the marriage, the possibility that she might in the future was all that was needed. It brought him a claim to a throne, a position on the international stage, and, most importantly in the end, a crucial bargaining chip.

3.2.2 Relationship

3.2.2.1 'Official' Evidence of Relationship

From the beginning of their marriage, due regard was shown for Constance's rank as queen of Castile. The author of the *Anonimale Chronicle* writes of her official entry to London after the couple's journey from Aquitaine:

On Shrove Tuesday [10 Febraury 1372]... the prince of England [the Black Prince] and many lords and knights with him and the mayor of London and a great number of the commons well arrayed and nobly mounted led the said lady and wife of the said Duke of Lancaster through London with a great company and great formality. And in Cheapside there were many gentlemen, dames and ladies gathered to see the beauty of the said young lady. And riding in formation they came to the Savoy and they gave the lady to her lord.⁴⁶⁶

Constance's official entry into England was thus timed to coincide with celebrations held before the beginning of Lent, when the city might already be in a festive mood. It was apparently a grand procession, with the Black Prince – by that point already in ill health – making the effort to see Constance properly greeted. She was probably four months pregnant at this point (their daughter Catherine was born in about July that year), which could account for her slow journey to London. It is worth considering, however, that Gaunt chose to delay her introduction to the English public until her pregnancy was confirmed.

Several entries in John of Gaunt's Register also demonstrate that Gaunt was keen to emphasise his new wife's high status. Constance seems to have spent most of her time at Hertford, north of London, while John's official residence remained the Savoy. Neither the Register nor chancery records indicate that Constance was assigned lands to provide personal income, so she probably relied entirely on her husband for maintenance. The Register records several payments and instructions associated with establishing Constance's household at Hertford in early 1372. In January and February that year payments of £40 and £200 were made to John Cheyne, clerk of Constance's wardrobe.⁴⁶⁷ The latter payment may be connected with nursery expenses, as Constance's pregnancy would have been confirmed around this time. Hertford probably remained Constance's chief residence for some time: the duchy of Lancaster receiver general's account from 1377-78 recorded that that year Gaunt spent a total of £166 6s. 8d. on building works, all of it on the Savoy and Hertford Castle.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶⁶ *Anonimale Chronicle*, p. 69. All translations from this work are mine.

'...et graunt noubre des communes bien arrayes et noblement mountez amenerunt la dite dame et femme al dit duk de Loncastre par my Loundres ad graunt route et solempnite et en Chepe furent moult de gentz et des dames et damosels pur veere le beaute de la dite iune dame et chinacherent sarrement tanque ils vendrent a Sawway et illeques lesserent la dite dame ad soun seignour et puis repairerent chescune a soun hostelle demesne'.

⁴⁶⁷ JGR 1372-76, nos. 898, 910.

⁴⁶⁸ TNA DL 28/3/1, m. 2.

In March of 1372, Gaunt organised a long-term arrangement: Constance was to receive 1000 marks per year, a very generous sum, which probably reflects the situation at the beginning of their marriage.⁴⁶⁹ In 1372, John and Constance had reason to believe their Castilian claims would be realised and that their stay in England was temporary. To that end, it was fitting that Constance receive an income that reflected Hertford's status as a royal court. Moreover, Constance had become pregnant quickly, within a month of the marriage, so there was reason to believe a large nursery would be necessary. Constance's annual income was eventually adjusted. In 1379, she received only 200 marks per year, and in 1380, the sum was raised to 500 marks. In both instances, John's wardrobe allowance was double Constance's. These lower amounts may indicate belts being tightened across the board, especially as plans for an invasion of Castile were made, or could reflect on the marriage. By 1379-80, it may have become clear that Constance would have no more children, and that the large amount allotted to her was unnecessary. Nonetheless, in 1392-93, Constance was given 1000 marks for her wardrobe expenses (Gaunt received 2000, the same amount as his son Henry), and this despite the fact that she was theoretically in 'retirement' and had no children living with her, which may reflect the fact that, with Gaunt away in Aquitaine, their expenses were more separate. Constance was granted a further two hundred marks at the end of the year – perhaps her expenses had exceeded her income.⁴⁷⁰

In addition to Constance's yearly allowance, she possessed items that displayed her status as queen of Castile and duchess of Lancaster. A list from April 1372 of items to be delivered to Constance, includes nearly four thousand pearls, a gold button-holder, a gold coronet with emeralds and rubies, a gold fillet with pearls and rubies, and 'a round barrel decorated in gold and made of stone ordered for her from our [Gaunt's] gift.'⁴⁷¹ Only the final item, the barrel for relics, which may hint at Constance's personal taste, is described as a gift, so the others were probably already in Gaunt's possession. A list of similar items from December 1372 includes a gold crown given to Constance by Edward III, a coronet, three gold nouches, and about 2500 pearls.⁴⁷² Made at Hertford on 24 December, the list probably includes items the couple wanted for their holiday celebrations and illustrates the luxury Constance enjoyed. At the beginning of the marriage, the large expenditures for her wardrobe may reflect the creation of a royal court at Hertford, but as chances of success in Castile and likelihood of a male heir faded, Constance's establishment became humbler.

Gaunt was happy to reward members of Constance's household who provided excellent service, and some grants suggest that he was responding to specific requests from Constance. The Register provides some clues to the quality of John and Constance's personal relationship. It records occasional gifts to Constance's servants, such as a New Year's gift in 1372 of silver goblets for Constance's *maistresse*. A March 1373 grant of an annuity to demoiselle Blanche Notton for good service was made at Hertford, so could have been at Constance's request.⁴⁷³ August 1375 saw an annuity of ten marks

⁴⁶⁹ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 408.

⁴⁷⁰ TNA DL 28/3/2, ff. 9, 10v, 20-20v.

⁴⁷¹ *JGR, 1372-76*, no. 1124.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, no. 1133.

⁴⁷³ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 1145.

granted to Mabile, wife of the late John Marreys, for services to Constance.⁴⁷⁴ Constance gave birth at Ghent in November of 1375, so this may be a gift for service given during pregnancy. John also made grants in the 1370s to Sancha Blount, one of Constance's Castilian ladies, who had married Sir Walter Blount, an important member of the Lancastrian retinue.⁴⁷⁵ Such gifts are infrequent in the Register, however, suggesting that truly extraordinary service, and probably a degree of influence, were required to secure one. For instance, it is difficult to know if gifts to Philippa and Geoffrey Chaucer, to whom Gaunt granted annuities in 1372 and 1374, respectively, were the result of good service to Constance, as the Register claims, or actually favours to Katherine Swynford, Philippa's sister.⁴⁷⁶ An annuity of forty marks granted to Philippa in 1376 looks to be more obviously a favour to Gaunt's mistress.⁴⁷⁷

Gifts given between Gaunt and Constance help to shed light on their relationship. Towards the beginning, they are valuable and personal. In April 1372, William de Hagh was repaid for a cloth of gold and chalice purchased for Constance.⁴⁷⁸ A January 1373 entry records more gifts, including, first on the list, 'a goblet made of gold in the manner of a double rose with base and lid and a white dove on the lid, given in Guyenne to our very dear and well-beloved companion'.⁴⁷⁹ In April 1373, a list of gifts to be delivered at Easter included a gold button for Constance shaped like a wild boar, a 'bladekyn' of silk, and a gold eagle (possibly a reference to St John).⁴⁸⁰ Like other items listed previously as gifts, these may reflect personal tastes. The next month, another list of gifts includes a gift to Constance of four more buttons shaped like wild boars and 'a nouche of two arms of gold and of stone with a balas ruby'.⁴⁸¹ In July 1374, the Register records payment for a palfrey given to Constance.⁴⁸² Up to this point, then, the gifts John gave Constance were frequent and personal. The second volume of the Register records only one gift given to Constance, a gold goblet given at New Year in 1382; the Princess of Wales received the same.⁴⁸³ The lack of personalisation is intriguing, especially since this occurred around the same time that Constance stopped receiving as much money and Gaunt stopped spending much time with her, and again suggests a shift in their relationship around this time.

While the relationship may not have been particularly intimate, entries from the Register suggest a considerable level of respect for or trust in Constance. A June 1372 letter to William de Chiselden, receiver at Leicester, ordered him to arrange for Ilote the midwife, who had previously assisted Blanche, to be taken to Constance at Hertford. She was to be taken by cart or horseback, 'on account of the close approaching labour of our companion the Queen'.⁴⁸⁴ There is no mention of arrangements like this for any other Lancastrian birth; Gaunt demonstrated an unusual level of concern for

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 728.

⁴⁷⁵ CPR 1396-99, p.547.

⁴⁷⁶ *JGR 1372-76*, nos. 1056, 608 respectively

⁴⁷⁷ TNA DL 29/262/4070, m. 1.

⁴⁷⁸ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 931.

⁴⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 1090.

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 1342.

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*, no. 1343.

⁴⁸² *Ibid.*, no. 1449.

⁴⁸³ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 715.

⁴⁸⁴ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 983.

Constance and the baby, who could prove to be the heir to Castile and León. A letter from August the same year ordered that a cask of wine be sent to Hertford 'because of the great need that our well-beloved companion the Queen has of wine at the moment'.⁴⁸⁵ These orders suggest that their daughter Catherine was born July-August 1372. Constance's presence with Gaunt in Flanders when she gave birth in 1375 indicates that it was important to him to be able to supervise the births of potential Castilian heirs, and may also suggest that Gaunt wanted her present in negotiations. If nothing else, the presence of a pregnant Constance would have been a symbol of the potency of the couple's claim to Castile.

Gaunt gave particular concern for Constance in the aftermath of the Peasants Revolt. A letter sent to William de Horneby, receiver at Lancaster, on 23 June 1381, about a week after the revolt ended, ordered William to send Gaunt money via Constance.⁴⁸⁶ Though disconnected from events, Gaunt had already ascertained Constance's whereabouts and was arranging for her to come to him.⁴⁸⁷ In September 1381, the Register records instructions that fish be purchased at Constance's order for the feast of Michaelmas, the next day.⁴⁸⁸ After the revolt, Gaunt clearly spent more time with Constance and she travelled with him more than usual, as this letter was written at Rothwell. However, a letter from March 1382 granting a gift to the esquire who delivered Constance's New Year gift to Gaunt demonstrates that they did not spend the holiday together, so perhaps this period was short-lived.⁴⁸⁹ Overall, there is a great deal of evidence of Constance in Gaunt's life – far more than of either of his other wives – but he was married to Constance longer than Blanche or Katherine, and the surviving volumes of the Register date from this marriage. The entries in the Register cast light mostly on their 'official' relationship, but some probing hints at their personal feelings. Predictably, the evidence mostly points to Gaunt's perspective; we have little way of speculating on Constance's views of the relationship.

3.2.2.2 The Castilian Claim

It is difficult to determine the extent to which the pursuit of Constance's Castilian inheritance was a joint desire or effort. There has been an inclination to view Gaunt's seemingly-endless pursuit of power in Castile as evidence of an arrogant and difficult nature, but few have examined Constance's role in this. Russell argues that seeing Constance as 'an insignificant tool for her husband's ambitions'⁴⁹⁰ is too simplistic, suggesting that much of Gaunt's tenacity in pursuing the Castilian throne might be attributed to Constance's determination to claim the royal authority she had inherited from her father.⁴⁹¹ Nonetheless, Constance left Castile at the age of twelve and did not return until 1386, almost twenty years later, living at English courts in the interim. Although surrounded by Castilian servants and possibly building an authentically Castilian court in England, she surely felt the

⁴⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 1034.

⁴⁸⁶ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 540.

⁴⁸⁷ *JGR*, *passim*.

⁴⁸⁸ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 602.

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 714.

⁴⁹⁰ Russell, pp. 168-169.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

disconnection from her homeland. Russell believes that her obstinacy and piety strike a ‘genuinely Castilian’⁴⁹² note, though he goes on to propose that descriptions of her piety were conventional only.⁴⁹³ Constance caused some offence in Castile when the letters she sent with men taking possession of the towns Juan had granted her referred to her as *Infanta*, a title to which Juan felt she was no longer entitled.⁴⁹⁴ Constance was clearly comfortable asserting pride in her lineage on Spanish soil. After her marriage to Enrique III, Catherine of Lancaster signed her letters *Yo sin ventura reyna* – ‘I, queen not by luck’ – reflecting the fact that she herself had a claim to the Castilian throne. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Catherine inherited this pride in her heritage from Constance.

Chroniclers’ present diverse depictions of Constance’s involvement in pursuing the Castilian throne. The Castilian chronicler Pedro Lopez de Ayala was an important advisor to Juan I and witnessed most of the events he describes. He wrote his *Chronicles of the Kings of Castile* under Enrique III, Catherine of Lancaster’s husband. The Trastámara dynasty’s need to legitimise its seizure of the throne is an important context for understanding Ayala’s chronicle works. In his descriptions, Enrique II is depicted as ‘a messiah’ chosen to save Castile from the ‘tyranny’ of Pedro the Cruel.⁴⁹⁵ Ayala consistently portrays Gaunt as the actor and Constance as the excuse for his actions. Describing Constance’s birth, he notes that

a daughter was born to Doña Maria de Padilla in the town of Castrojeriz, whom they called Doña Constanza, who later married the Duke of Lancaster, and they had a daughter, Doña Catalina, who is now wife of the king Don Enrique.⁴⁹⁶

From her first appearance Constance’s importance to Ayala is mainly dynastic. Ayala repeats the pattern in explaining the background of the conflict:

The said Duke of Lancaster called himself King of Castile and Leon, and he bore arms of Castile and Leon, because he said that Doña Costanza his wife, whom he had married, was the eldest and legitimate daughter of King Don Pedro... and by her that he inherited the said realms. And the said Doña Costanza called herself Queen of Castile and Leon.⁴⁹⁷

Ayala believes Gaunt to be the more formidable half of the relationship, but the reader still gets a sense of Constance’s pride in Ayala’s description of how she insisted on ‘calling herself’ queen, despite clearly (from Ayala’s point of view) having no claim to the title. Ayala is also the only chronicler to report that Gaunt’s advocates maintained that he personally had a better claim, with or without Constance, to the Castilian throne, since he

⁴⁹² Ibid., p. 525.

⁴⁹³ Ibid., p. 540.

⁴⁹⁴ Russell, p. 575.

⁴⁹⁵ Covodanga Valdaliso, ‘La Dimensión Política de la Obra Cronística de Pedro López de Ayala’, in *Autor de Pedro Lopez de Ayala* (Paris: Indigo, 2009), pp. 189-202 (pp. 190-192). My translation.

⁴⁹⁶ Pero Lopez de Ayala, *Crónicas de los Reyes de Castilla: Don Pedro, Don Enrique II, Don Juan I, Don Enrique III*, 2 vols., ed. by Eugenio de Llaguno Amirola et.al. (Madrid: 1779-1780) Accessed via Google Books [2 August 2012.] <<http://www.books.google.co.uk>>, I, p. 131. All translations from Ayala are mine.

‘...nasciera una fija de Doña Maria de Padilla en la villa de Castro Xeriz, que le dixeron Doña Constanza, la qual casó despues con el Duque de Alencastre, é ovieron fija á la Reyna Doña Catalina, que es agora muger del Rey Don Enrique’.

⁴⁹⁷ Ayala, II, pp. 59-60.

‘é llamaase el ducho Duque de Alencastre Rey de Castilla é de Leon, é traia armas de Castillos é Leones; ca decia que Doña Costanza su muger, con quien él casára, era fija del Rey Don Pedro mayor é legítima... é por ende que él beredaba los dichos Regnos: é llamabase la dicha Doña Constanza Reyna de Castilla é de Leon’.

is of the House of England... Doña Leonor [Eleanor of Castile, wife of Edward I], who was daughter of Don Ferrando [Ferdinand III of Castile] who won Seville, was married to the King of England, whence he [Gaunt] comes, and he is legitimate heir of the said realms of Castile and Leon.⁴⁹⁸

Although the argument is unique, Ayala may have been present when it was made or heard a first-hand account of it. If this was an argument that Gaunt genuinely raised, it demonstrates his concern that his claim to Castile not rely only on his wife. Ayala gives Constance no credit for fostering good relations between Gaunt and Juan, though other sources indicate that she was responsible for some of the diplomatic overtures between the two.⁴⁹⁹ Overall, it is difficult to say how much we can trust Ayala's description of John and Constance's relationship when it came to the pursuit of Castile. He certainly met and interacted with both of them, and probably found it difficult to decide how best to depict them – they were pretenders to the Castilian throne, but also the parents of Queen Catherine. Ayala clearly sees Gaunt as the driving force of the relationship, and depicts Constance as a pawn in his pursuit of power.

The Portuguese chronicler Fernão Lopes presents an alternative view of their relationship. Born around 1380, Lopes was secretary to Duarte I (the son of João of Portugal and Philippa of Lancaster) and guardian of the Portuguese crown's official archives. He wrote in the mid-fifteenth century, borrowing from other sources, many of which no longer survive. Lopes relates how messengers came to Gaunt inviting him to join with João of Portugal in defeating Castile, and Constance begged him to help, saying,

'My lord, for all the success that God has given you in this world in your wars and struggles on behalf of others, it seems to me that you have even greater reason to struggle for your own honour and for that of your daughter, and to claim the inheritance which is mine and your daughter's, and of which we have been deprived. For the kingdom of Castile belongs to me by right and not to the sons of that bastard traitor who wrongfully killed my father.'⁵⁰⁰

While either Lopes or one of his sources clearly invented this conversation, he may have been inspired by tradition regarding Constance and Gaunt, so his depiction could reflect the sense of how the two interacted. Lopes also describes Gaunt's decision to invade Castile, since Constance 'was determined, with God's aid and his, to go and conquer the kingdom'.⁵⁰¹ This description strikes a very different note from Ayala's. In general, Lopes's more literary account presents Gaunt as a chivalrous knight defending the rights of his lady. Lopes has Gaunt inform Juan in a letter that

he had brought his wife Queen Constanza, a daughter of King Pedro who had been King of Castile and Leon, in order to obtain those kingdoms that were hers by right. She fully intended to recover them because they belonged to her, and if Don Juan maintained that this was not

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 259.

'él ha mayor derecho en el Regno de Castilla, por causa de ser él de la Casa de Inglaterra ... Doña Leonor, fija que fué del Rey Don Ferrando que ganó a Sevilla, fué casada con el Rey de Inglaterra donde él viene, é es legítimo heredero de los dichos Regnos de Castilla é de Leon'.

⁴⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 281.

⁵⁰⁰ Fernão Lopes, *The English in Portugal, 1367-1387: Extracts from the Chronicles of Dom Fernando and Dom João*, ed. and trans. by Derek W. Lomax and R. J. Oakley (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1988), p. 187.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid., p. 189.

so and chose to put obstacles in their way, the Duke was determined to decide the dispute by fighting a pitched battle.⁵⁰²

The picture of the couple's relationship that Lopes and Ayala present together is a plausible one. In public, at the sorts of events where Ayala would have seen them, Gaunt may have seemed in charge, but their Portuguese allies may have seen a more private side of their relationship, and this may explain why Lopes gives Constance more credit for enforcing the Castilian claim as far as possible.

Constance's marriage to Gaunt coloured her own identity, and while she had pride in her royal Castilian heritage, she integrated into English society as well. In January 1372 the Register records a gift made from Constance to Edward III of enamelled silver flasks, decorated with white and blue silk.⁵⁰³ This suggests an attempt to highlight her new Englishness: blue and white were the colours of Lancaster and this is the only gift on a long list that specifically came from Constance, not Gaunt.⁵⁰⁴ Further evidence comes from a letter, undated, from Constance to the Chancellor of England, asking him to arrange a place for a Brother Alvaro at the Dominican priory at Oxford, where Alvaro was to study.⁵⁰⁵ Constance looked out for the Castilians who had joined her in England and encouraged them to join English society; in turn, they looked to her for patronage and support. She also fulfilled a traditional role, regularly petitioning for pardons on behalf of Gaunt's supporters.⁵⁰⁶ Here Constance was more active than Gaunt's other wives; only one such petition is recorded from Blanche of Lancaster, and none from Katherine Swynford. Meanwhile, Castilians also integrated into Gaunt's English household. In the receiver general's account of 1377-78, immediately following records of payments for the ducal children's household come a series of payments for retainers who we might assume (based on those with whom they are included and their early placement in the account) were of particular importance. These include Geoffrey Chaucer, the chaplains in Blanche's St Paul's chantry, and several Castilians: John Gutierrez, Peter Giron, Gonsalez Ferrandes, John Ferrandes and Alfonso Ferrandes.⁵⁰⁷ David Estradev, one of the chaplains in St Paul's, may also have been Spanish. In the 1390s, after Gaunt and Constance had given up their claims in Castile, they still maintained connections in Iberia. The receiver general's account of 1392-93 records payments to John Alphons de Seynteryn of Portugal and Arnaldo son of John Palays; both men were paid in a combination of pounds, franks and florins – they were probably representing Lancastrian interests in Castile and Portugal.⁵⁰⁸

3.2.2.3 An 'Unsuccessful' Marriage?

This marriage coincided with Gaunt's political ascendancy in England and his increasing unpopularity; did his relationship with Constance suffer as a result? Some chronicles hint that she may have been

⁵⁰² Ibid., p. 197.

⁵⁰³ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 915.

⁵⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁵ *JGR 1372-76*, no.1803, reprinted from *Ancient Correspondence* XXXXI, no. 53.

⁵⁰⁶ CPR 1370-74 pp. 384, 447; CPR 1374-77, p. 22; CPR 1377-81, pp. 313, 557; CPR 1388-92, p. 360; CPR 1391-95, p. 322.

⁵⁰⁷ TNA DL 28/3/1, mm. 4,6.

⁵⁰⁸ TNA DL 28/3/2, f. 10v.

negatively affected, particularly during the Peasants Revolt, when the rebels forced her to flee from Hertford. Knighton tells us that

the lady Constance, the duchess of Lancaster, hearing of those events [in London, and the threat to Leicester] was smitten in her heart with great fear, and wishing to flee the rage of the wicked, and to find safety under the wing of her lord, she made her way towards him as swiftly as she could...⁵⁰⁹

She was turned away at Pontefract and eventually found shelter at Knaresborough. Walsingham explicitly connects Gaunt's unpopularity with Constance, explaining that the rebels would 'accept no king who was called "John" (this was owing to their dislike of John, duke of Lancaster, who through his marriage to the daughter and heiress of Peter, once king of Castile, called himself "king of Castile")'.⁵¹⁰ Clearly Gaunt's unpopularity placed Constance in a precarious position, and the concern he showed her after the revolt, which will be discussed below, may reflect his awareness of this. The author of the *Anonimale Chronicle* describes how, after the Revolt, Gaunt repudiated his mistress Katherine Swynford and returned to Constance:

the lord de Neville escorted [Gaunt] to Allerton where the duchess met him with a fine company from her household. When she saw her lord inside the bishop of Durham's manor, she dismounted her horse and lay prostrate on the ground, close to fainting. This happened three times before she came to the duke. The last time, the duke took the lady by the hand and kissed her. Both implored that all the circumstances between them should be forgiven and the duke graciously begged forgiveness for his wrongdoing towards her. She pardoned him readily and there was great joy and happiness between them and their company the following day and night.⁵¹¹

Most scholars have claimed that this marriage was unsuccessful and unhappy. At the time of Constance's death, according to Russel, 'she had played her part as far as Lancaster was concerned and her disappearance can have given him nothing but satisfaction'.⁵¹² Given-Wilson and Curteis have suggested that Gaunt 'never showed any sign of affection' for Constance.⁵¹³ Most point to Gaunt's relationship with Katherine Swynford, which started within months of Gaunt's marriage to Constance, as proof that the marriage was doomed from the beginning. Goodman notes that Gaunt's liaison with Katherine 'lay between them like a sword'.⁵¹⁴ It has been suggested that powerful medieval men had affairs because they were pushed into child-marriages with foreign women with whom they could not communicate and to whom they were not necessarily attracted.⁵¹⁵ This argument demonstrates how a

⁵⁰⁹ Knighton's *Chronicle*, p. 231.

⁵¹⁰ *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham, 1376-1422* trans. by David Preest, ed. by James G. Clark (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), p. 121

⁵¹¹ *Anonimale Chronicle*, ed. Galbraith, pp. 153-154.

Le seigneur de Neville luy convoie tanqe al Allertoun ou la duchesse luy encontrast od bel compaignye de sa mesnee; et quaunt el vist soun seigneur deinz le manoir del evesqe de Doreme, el descendist le chivalle et soy cocha a terre en sa longe veny a poy en palmisone et si fist trois foitz en diverses avaunt qil vient a soun seigneur; et au darrein le duc prist la dame sus par la mayne et la baysa, ambedeux explorantz issint qe toutz les circumsteantz avoient pite de eux, et le dit duc demanda benygnement pardone de ses mesfaites devers luy, et el luy pardona bonement et fuisit graunde ioy et leese parentre eux et lour compaignye le iour et noet esuant'.

⁵¹² Russell, p. 539.

⁵¹³ Chris Given-Wilson and Alice Curteis, *The Royal Bastards of Medieval England* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), p. 147.

⁵¹⁴ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 50

⁵¹⁵ Given-Wilson and Curteis, p. 36.

modern perspective can lead to anachronistic interpretations when it comes to medieval marriage. The assumption that couples desired marriages based on love, mutual respect, desire to create a life together, and fidelity is a modern one. This was not true of aristocratic marriage in the Middle Ages, where marriages were formed more for political and social gain and love was not guaranteed. Medieval men may have had affairs for precisely these reasons, but that does not mean that these affairs were problematic. We cannot assume that Gaunt's relationship with Katherine Swynford resulted from dissatisfaction with his wife, or that it created unhappiness in his marriage. Constance was herself the product of a relationship that bore far more resemblance to an adulterous affair than to the honourable marriage it was made out to be, and so was probably unsurprised by Gaunt's extramarital activities. As discussed above, marital fidelity was not the norm for men – particularly elite men – and she may have expected that Gaunt would have a mistress.

Lucraft has even suggested that Constance and Katherine had a positive relationship. Constance would have crossed paths with Katherine socially: Richard II issued Garter robes to both women between 1388-90.⁵¹⁶ In 1390, at least, both were in the country and may have been present. An entry in the Register from April 1373 may also be informative. It orders Robert atte More, receiver at Tutbury, to repair and supply Tutbury castle for the arrival of Constance 'and of our very dear children and others of our *meinie*'.⁵¹⁷ This indicates that Constance was bringing her daughter Catherine and probably Gaunt's other daughters Philippa and Elizabeth, as well as household servants. Another entry in the Register notes that Katherine, Philippa and Elizabeth's governess, was in Lincolnshire at the time (it was probably late in her first pregnancy by Gaunt), but she potentially re-joined her charges at Tutbury later. Although it is impossible to know, the possibility paints an intriguing picture of Constance and Katherine's relationship. In 1381 the ducal stables provided for mounts for Constance, Philippa of Lancaster, Blanche Morieux (John's illegitimate daughter by Marie de Sainte Hilaire, one of his mother's ladies-in-waiting, prior to his first marriage), and Katherine Swynford simultaneously, suggesting that the entire extended family were spending time together.⁵¹⁸ The sorts of extended family gatherings this evidence suggests may not seem terribly comfortable from a twenty-first-century perspective, but were probably more common in the Middle Ages.

Although Gaunt's affair with Katherine makes poor proof that his marriage to Constance was unhappy, there were other sources of tension within the marriage. The lack of children, particularly sons, from this marriage, would have been disappointing. Since aristocratic women generally employed wet nurses, they often had children very closely together.⁵¹⁹ The evidence from John's other known long-term sexual partners corroborates this: Blanche had at least five pregnancies in nine years of marriage and we know that Katherine Swynford had four healthy children over eight or nine years, in both cases despite limited contact with Gaunt. In this case, a male heir was crucial to strengthen Constance and Gaunt's claim to the Castilian throne. All this suggests that Constance had difficulty bearing children, since after Catherine of Lancaster's birth, her only other child was the short-lived son

⁵¹⁶ Lucraft, p. 127.

⁵¹⁷ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 1236.

⁵¹⁸ Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*, p. 13.

⁵¹⁹ Karras, *Doing Unto Others*, p. 74.

John, born in 1375. Meanwhile, Katherine Swynford gave birth to three sons and a daughter by Gaunt, making it clear that the problem lay with Constance. If we were searching for a reason to find conflict between Constance and Katherine, the regular reminder throughout the 1370s that her husband's mistress was better at giving him sons must have been humiliating.

The lack of time John and Constance spent together has also been interpreted as evidence of unhappiness, and may be attributable to the difficulty in producing an heir. Constance spent the early years of the marriage not at the Savoy, but in Hertford, within a day's journey of London. This may suggest that she preferred solitude, or that it was considered appropriate that she be installed there, with her Castilian court, so that she could raise her children in a more Spanish style. Early in their marriage, Gaunt visited Constance regularly, sometimes briefly, sometimes for several weeks; he spent Christmas at Hertford in 1372, 1373, and 1375. Constance also travelled with him during this period: she was with him in Flanders in 1375 when their son was born.⁵²⁰ Later, however, Gaunt spent less time at Hertford, generally preferring London or his northern estates when circumstances permitted time off.⁵²¹ Along with the decrease in Constance's income around this time, this could indicate that by about 1379, both had accepted they would have no more children, or that it might be dangerous to continue trying. However, as Will has noted, the assumption that Constance retired to Leicester and lived in seclusion at the end of their marriage is untrue: she certainly left it for major holidays, spending Christmas 1391 and 1393 with the family (including Katherine Swynford and the Beauforts) in Hertford.⁵²²

Ultimately, though there is little evidence that either Constance or Gaunt was particularly unhappy with the marriage, there is little to suggest they were happy either. From a political viewpoint, the marriage failed to secure the Castilian throne, but for Gaunt, establishing his daughters as foreign queens and receiving 10,000 marks annually from Castile was far from a complete failure – and was only possible because Constance's claim was so valuable. Moreover, though there is little evidence that the pair felt excessive affection for each other, there is quite a bit that indicates mutual respect. Before leaving for France in 1373, Gaunt issued letters authorising Constance to pardon crimes committed in Castile, including any that took place in Pedro II's lifetime.⁵²³ After the settlement with Juan, Constance travelled through Castile while Gaunt remained in France, visiting her homeland and the towns granted to her as part of the settlement. She took advantage of the visit to do some diplomacy on Gaunt's behalf, giving Juan the gold crown that Gaunt had intended to use at his coronation, and suggesting that Juan and Charles of Navarre meet with Gaunt to discuss mediation between France and England.⁵²⁴ In England, Constance occasionally helped Gaunt politically; in 1379, she interceded with the king to arrange a pardon for Nicholas Atherton, who had been a Lancastrian retainer since 1370

⁵²⁰ Armitage-Smith, pp. 119-120.

⁵²¹ *JGR*, passim.

⁵²² Elizabeth H. Will, 'John of Gaunt's Household: Attendance rolls in the Glynde Archive, MS 3469' in *Fourteenth Century England*, V, ed. by Nigel Saul (Woodbridge, Boydell, 2008) pp. 13-30 (p. 17).

⁵²³ *JGR* 1372-76, no. 321.

⁵²⁴ Russell, pp. 513-522.

and had a reputation for violence. It seems reasonable to assume that Constance did this at Gaunt's request.⁵²⁵ Overall, their relationship seems to have been built more on pursuit of a common political goal and mutual respect than affection, but they were both probably satisfied with it. The changes in Constance's allowance, the gifts Gaunt sent her, and the amount of time they spent together demonstrate that as their situations evolved, so did their marriage.

3.2.3 Legacy

As Palmer has pointed out, John of Gaunt's claim to Castile was an essential factor of European diplomacy in the late fourteenth century. The Franco-Castilian alliance, which gave France access to the Castilian navy, played a crucial role in the second phase of the Hundred Years War. From a French point-of-view, Gaunt could not be allowed to upset the alliance by usurping the Castilian throne. As a result, Anglo-French negotiations in the 1370s-80s often hinged on the question of Gaunt's claim to Castile. It is not a coincidence that peace between England and France was reached within months of Gaunt officially renouncing his claim.⁵²⁶

Constance died in 1394, while Gaunt was in Aquitaine; he spent £600 on her tomb and funeral, which seems to have been delayed until he could be present in person. Constance died in March that year but was not buried until 5 July, the day before her daughter-in-law Mary de Bohun's funeral.⁵²⁷ Presumably the rebellion in Aquitaine that broke out in April that year kept Gaunt busy until July. Constance was buried in front of the high altar at St Mary Newarke in Leicester, in a marble tomb with a brass image of herself as queen of Castile.⁵²⁸ Chroniclers noted her death politely, generally connecting it with the deaths of Mary de Bohun, Constance's sister Isabel of Castile and Queen Anne of Bohemia which occurred around the same time. Walsingham notes that 'while the duke was in France, his wife Lady Costanza died in England. She was the daughter of Lord Pedro, once king of Castile, and an exceptionally pious lady'.⁵²⁹ Knighton was content to mention that Constance was 'buried at Leicester with great honour'.⁵³⁰ The sixteenth-century inscription on Gaunt's tomb (which incorrectly claimed Constance was buried with him) noted that

his second wife was Constance (who is also entombed here), daughter and heir of Peter King of Castile and Leon, through whom he enjoyed his greatest title in law, King of Castile and Leon. She bore him one daughter, Catherine, from whom, by Henry, the Kings of Spain descended.⁵³¹

Gaunt was not as concerned about Constance's commemoration as he had been when Blanche died. The account of 1397-98 records £10 spent on Blanche's obit as well as payments for chaplains

⁵²⁵ Walker, p. 158, referencing CPR 1378-1381, p. 313.

⁵²⁶ J. J. N. Palmer, *England, France and Christendom, 1377-99* (London: Routledge, 1972), pp. 4, 39-40, 42, 105.

⁵²⁷ Walker, p. 99; *The Westminster Chronicle, 1381-1394*, ed. by L. C. Hector and Barbara F. Harvey (Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), p. 521.

⁵²⁸ *John Leland's Itinerary*, I, p. 16.

⁵²⁹ Walsingham, *Chronica Maiora*, ed. Clark, p.291.

⁵³⁰ *Knighton's Chronicle*, p. 550.

⁵³¹ John Weever, *Ancient Fvnerall Monvments* (London: Thomas Harper, 1631) Accessed via EEBO

<www.eebo.chadwyck.com> [accessed 21 June, 2012], p. 365. All translations from Weever are mine.

'Alteram habuit uxorem Constantiam (que his contumulatur filiam & heredem Petri Regis Castillie et Legionis, cuius iure optimo titulo Regis Castillie et Legionis usus est. Uac unicam illi peperit filia Catharinam, ex qua ab Henrico Reges Hispanie sunt propagati'.

celebrating masses for her soul; as discussed above, these had been arranged within two or three years of her death at the latest. No amount was spent on an obit for Constance, which seems an interesting omission, though Gaunt did set these up in his will of 1399.

Even after they had abandoned their royal claims, the money paid to Gaunt and Constance from Castile remained an important part of Gaunt's income. Although the financial terms of the treaty were not enforced for long, they remained important throughout the early 1390s. The receiver general's account of 1392-93 demonstrates the complexity of this. The duchy received 2739 florins, 12,189 Castilian doubloons, 8101 Aragonese florins and 5000 francs – totalling £11,735 11s. 9¼d. – from Castile that year, effectively doubling Gaunt's already-considerable income.⁵³² Gaunt's English land, foreign income and international contacts all made him a force to be reckoned with, both domestically and in Europe, to the end of his life. His marriage to Constance was key in establishing this role. As Tuck has noted, the Iberian relationships created under Gaunt were crucial to his son Henry IV achieving international recognition.⁵³³

In the beginning of the marriage, there was reason to anticipate success. Gaunt had fought successfully at Nájera in 1367; he was the son of Edward III, the brother of the Black Prince, and a protégée of Henry of Grosmont, three great generals of the age. Constance was young and bore a child less than a year after she married. Military and reproductive failures were the marriage's outcomes, but were far from foregone conclusions. The marriage as a whole was still not a failure, however. Catherine of Lancaster's union with Enrique of Castile combined the two houses and solved the problem of succession, and Gaunt and Constance can hardly have been disappointed with their annual payoff. In the end, both were probably content with the marriage. The amount of time spent separately, especially beginning in the late 1370s, suggests that once it became clear that Constance would have no more children, they preferred to pursue separate lives. Meanwhile, Constance remained an active member of the Lancastrian household and the English court. While Gaunt's personal affections clearly lay elsewhere, there is no reason to think this was troubling for their relationship. As a result from the marriage, Gaunt and Constance added to their wealth; placed their daughter on the Castilian throne in a manner which secured peace and her security; and negotiated a valuable alliance with Portugal that still exists today. It is an impressive legacy for a marriage that history has generally considered a failure.

3.3 John of Gaunt and Katherine Swynford

John of Gaunt's best-known wife, who was famously his mistress for nearly twenty-five years, was probably born around 1350. Katherine Swynford was the daughter of Sir Payn de Roet, Guyenne king of arms, a Hainaulter who came to England in Philippa of Hainault's household. Little is known of Katherine's childhood, but Lucraft has speculated that she grew up in the queen's household, probably

⁵³² TNA DL 28/3/2, f. 8v.

⁵³³ Anthony Tuck, 'Henry IV and Europe: A Dynasty's Search for Recognition', in *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society*, ed. by R. H. Britnell and A. J. Pollard (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 107-125. (pp. 112-113).

joining the Lancastrian household when John of Gaunt married Blanche of Lancaster.⁵³⁴ She had married Sir Hugh Swynford, a Lancastrian retainer, by 1365; Hugh died by November 1371.⁵³⁵ Katherine's relationship with Gaunt likely began in 1372, despite contemporary assertions that it had begun in the lifetimes of Blanche and Hugh.⁵³⁶ Katherine's first mention in the Register is in a warrant to the receiver of Lincoln to pay Katherine £10 owed to her from Gaunt's previous gift, dated 1 May 1372. There is no other record of this earlier gift in the extant Register, so it must date originally from 1371 or earlier. As £10 was a standard annuity for members of the household of approximately an esquire's rank, the original grant probably predated the relationship; the 1372 grant does not mention for what services the first grant was made.⁵³⁷ Two weeks later, in mid-May 1372, the Register records three new annuities for Katherine: twenty marks yearly for service to Blanche; another twenty marks on account of 'the very great affection which our said companion [Blanche] had for the said Katherine'; and a further fifty marks.⁵³⁸ These sums are far above what a woman of Katherine's rank could ordinarily expect to receive from her lord and clearly indicate that the relationship began in the spring of 1372, probably after Gaunt's return from Gascony with Constance of Castile. Around the same time, Katherine became governess to Gaunt's daughters by Blanche, Philippa and Elizabeth. As Katherine had probably been in Blanche's service when the girls were born, this was a very suitable appointment. How the relationship began is unclear – Armitage-Smith charmingly suggests Gaunt's visits to his children facilitated a growing attraction; Goodman describes Gaunt as Katherine's 'seducer'. Karras's suggestion that Katherine might have sought the relationship herself should not be ignored, either.⁵³⁹

The relationship continued until the autumn of 1381, and Katherine gave birth to four surviving children, John, Henry, Thomas and Joan Beaufort, a surname given, Armitage-Smith argues, after lost French Lancastrian lands (originally from Blanche of Artois's inheritance) which would not prejudice the interests of Gaunt's legitimate children.⁵⁴⁰ Given-Wilson and Curteis suggest the relationship was probably known publicly by 1375, coinciding with a sharp decline in Gaunt's popularity.⁵⁴¹ In that year the town of Leicester paid 16s. to send wine to Katherine, which reinforces this idea.⁵⁴² By this point, Katherine, now widowed for four years, had likely given birth to John and Henry Beaufort. Within the Lancastrian household, their relationship was probably at least tacitly recognised before this. In 1381, several chronicles report a split between the couple in the wake of the Peasants Revolt; several entries in the Register attest the termination of Katherine's position as governess around this time, though

⁵³⁴ Lucraft, p. 102.

⁵³⁵ CFR 1368-1377, p. 153.

⁵³⁶ Jean Froissart, *Chronicles of England, France, Spain, and the Adjoining Countries*, 12 vols. (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and J. White, 1805-1806), XI (1805), p.227; Walsingham, ed. Taylor and Childs, p. 13.

⁵³⁷ Walker, p. 91.

⁵³⁸ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 409

⁵³⁹ Armitage-Smith, p. 391; Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 367; Karras, *Unmarriages*, p. 78.

⁵⁴⁰ Armitage-Smith, p. 199.

⁵⁴¹ Given-Wilson and Curteis, p. 149. See below for more.

⁵⁴² J. S. Bothwell, 'Making the Lancastrian Capital at Leicester: The Battle of Boroughbridge, Civic Diplomacy and Seigneurial Building Projects in Fourteenth-Century England', *Journal of Medieval History* 38 (2012) 335-357 (p. 347).

whether the split was directly related to the revolt is uncertain.⁵⁴³ The pair certainly remained in contact. In 1386 or 1387, Katherine lent Gaunt five hundred marks.⁵⁴⁴ By 1389 she was again part of the Lancastrian circle, living with Henry of Bolingbroke's wife, Mary de Bohun.⁵⁴⁵ In 1396, two years after Constance's death and within weeks of Gaunt's return from Aquitaine, they married with papal permission. Parliament officially legitimised the Beauforts the next year. It was Gaunt's shortest marriage – he died in 1399 – but his longest relationship. After his burial in London, Katherine retired to Lincoln, where she died in 1403. She was buried in Lincoln Cathedral, where her tomb still stands today.

3.3.1 Relationship

3.3.1.1 Perception of Mistresses

Katherine Swynford, Alice Perrers and Medieval Mistresses

Katherine's relationship with Gaunt raises questions about medieval affairs and marriages. She does not seem to have experienced the bad press that plagued her obvious comparison, Alice Perrers, Edward III's mistress. Other than scattered chronicle references after the Peasants Revolt and one particularly nasty mention from Walsingham, her affair with Gaunt did not interest contemporaries.⁵⁴⁶ She cannot, however, have been unknown; by 1380, there were four Beaufort children and the pair were spending more and more time together.⁵⁴⁷ Although one was mistress to a king, and another to a duke, a comparison of Katherine and Alice Perrers's 'careers' as royal mistresses sheds light on how society perceived such women and the role they played.

Barbara Hanawalt argues that medieval society expected women of all ranks to occupy certain physical spaces, and that women who moved outside these spaces were literally 'marginalised'.⁵⁴⁸ Women who posed a threat to the male-dominated establishment – prostitutes and Beguines are classic examples – were eventually confined to certain spaces.⁵⁴⁹ This helps explain why Katherine, despite falling outside the typical bounds of female space, rarely came under fire personally. Alice Perrers was perceived as occupying a public and political role that was inappropriate, but Katherine would have generally remained in the relative privacy of Lancastrian castles outside London. Furthermore, her role as governess provided 'official' cover for her presence in Gaunt's life. Though occasionally involved in Gaunt's public life, taking the occasional bribe or working with Gaunt to mollify a political opponent, she was very rarely made the object of a personal attack.⁵⁵⁰ Because Katherine occupied an official

⁵⁴³ *JGR 1379-83*, nos. 984, 1157 (dated 7 September, 1381 and 14 February, 1382 respectively). For more on these, see below.

⁵⁴⁴ Goodman, p. 116.

⁵⁴⁵ See below, chapter 4.

⁵⁴⁶ See below

⁵⁴⁷ Register, passim.

⁵⁴⁸ Barbara A. Hanawalt, 'At the Margin of Women's Space in Medieval Europe' in *Matrons and Marginal Women in Medieval Society*, ed. by Robert R. Edwards and Vickie Ziegler (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1995), pp.1-17, (p.4).

⁵⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p.16.

⁵⁵⁰ Walker, pp. 85, 162. In 1375-76, the city of Leicester sent Katherine wine costing 16s. (though it was unfortunately consumed by those tasked with travelling with it!). Later the city gave her a horse and an iron plate in return for her intercession with Gaunt on the city's behalf. (J. S. Bothwell, 'Making the Lancastrian Capital at Leicester: The Battle of Boroughbridge, Civic Diplomacy and Seigneurial Building Projects in Fourteenth-Century England', *Journal of Medieval History* 38 (2012) 335-357 (p. 347)).

space in her lover's life and because she was physically removed from the political arena, she was never considered a threat. This helps to explain why their relationship was not generally considered problematic.

In some ways, Alice and Katherine were quite similar. Both, for instance, decided against remarriage after their first widowhood. Ormrod argues that Alice's choice to remain *femme sole* for the period when she was in power – she married after Edward III's death in 1377 – was crucial, as it allowed her to retain personal and legal independence.⁵⁵¹ Katherine may have remained single during her liaison with Gaunt for the same reasons. In his introduction to Thomas Walsingham's *Chronicon Angliae* Thompson noted that what probably really prompted Edward III to agree to Alice's banishment in the Good Parliament of 1376 was the revelation that she was married or betrothed to William Windsor.⁵⁵² The strong suggestion is that it was undesirable for a man's mistress to be married and there were three obvious reasons for this. First, it helped the couple to avoid double adultery: though the man might be married, there was no reason to add to the sin. Second, the medieval world-view, which saw women as property and placed higher value on men's pride, considered sex with a married woman an insult to her husband. A male adulterer was perceived as poorly governing himself and depriving another man of his rights. Sex with a married woman was insulting to her husband, but the adulterer also cast his *own* masculinity into doubt by demonstrating this lack of self-control and respect.⁵⁵³ Finally, as with a wife, controlling a mistress's sexual activity ensured the paternity of any children she might bear. Illegitimate children could be a helpful source of support and political connections, but their father would want to be sure of his paternity. A mistress's legal status as *femme sole* might also come in handy. When, following an acrimonious dispute with John Stanley over the inheritance of the Lathum lands, Gaunt successfully received the inheritance, he then granted the lands to Katherine, who herself sold them to Stanley for fifty marks below their market value.⁵⁵⁴ A mistress who was able to operate as a separate legal entity was precisely the right person for this sort of deal.

Both Alice and Katherine may have played the role of 'official mistress' for Edward III and Gaunt respectively. Holmes has noted that wardrobe accounts show that payments for Alice's clothing were included with payments for that of Edward III's daughter Isabella in 1375.⁵⁵⁵ It was acknowledged, at least in the royal household, that Alice's status was closer to that of family than servant. There are clear similarities here with the way that Katherine and her Beaufort children were accounted for in John of Gaunt's household accounts, which again tacitly acknowledge their 'pseudo-familial' position (see below). A close reading of Walsingham's description of Alice's sins reveals that he distinguishes between the Latin words *meretrix* and *pellex*. Both words have a variety of meanings, ranging from 'mistress' to 'prostitute', but Walsingham uses them differently, one a 'courtesan' (*meretrix*) and the

⁵⁵¹ Ormrod, 'The Trials of Alice Perrers', *Speculum* 83 (2008), 366-396 (p. 366).

⁵⁵² Thomas Walsingham, *Chronicon Angliae, ab Anno Domini 1328 usque ad Annum 1388*, ed. by E. M. Thompson (London: Longman, 1874), p. xlix.

⁵⁵³ Neal, p. 69.

⁵⁵⁴ Walker, pp. 161-162.

⁵⁵⁵ Holmes, *The Good Parliament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1975), p. 68, referencing TNA E 101/397/20.

In Cameram domini nostri Regis apud Shene ad dandum dominis Comitisse Bedeford filie eius et Alicie Perrers de dono Regis pro diversis garnamentis ...'

other a ‘mistress’ (*pellex*). Walsingham refers to Alice as *meretrix*, writing for instance that ‘in England at that time there was a certain shameless woman, a most impudent courtesan [*meretrix*] named Alice Perrers’.⁵⁵⁶ He goes on to say that ‘Fortune must have been blind to elevate her to such a great summit, that she should be promoted from maid-servant [*ancilla*] and mistress [*pellex*]... to an intimacy with the king which was more than she was due’.⁵⁵⁷ The implication is that while Alice may have been an appropriate mistress (*pellex*) she was an inappropriate choice for the promotion to courtesan (*meretrix*). *Meretrix* is the same word Walsingham uses to describe Katherine Swynford later in his chronicle. It seems safe to conclude that a *meretrix* was more along the lines of an ‘official mistress’ to a powerful man than a mere sexual partner, and that this was a position that was understood to come with certain benefits (a clothing allowance, acknowledged paternity) and expectations. A *meretrix* was perhaps more akin to an extramarital girlfriend than a more casual sexual partner.

Walsingham’s issue with Alice was not that she had a sexual relationship with the king, but on two other counts. First, she was not qualified for the position: Walsingham writes that she ‘was of the lowest stock. She was the natural daughter of a certain weaver in the village of Henneye [Essex], but was great in fortune, for she was neither fair nor beautiful, but she knew how to make up for these failings with charming speech’.⁵⁵⁸ Clearly a *meretrix* was meant to be beautiful and of higher birth. Second, as Walsingham and other chroniclers related in detail, Alice abused her position (see below). The sexual relationship was not a problem, but the fact that Alice’s sexual intimacy with the king gave rise to other issues was concerning. That Walsingham, a monk, does not go out of his way to condemn extra-marital sex itself sheds an important light on how contemporaries might view elite adultery. His description of Alice’s ‘intimacy’ with the king as ‘more than she was due’ is of particular interest. His wording implies that such intimacy between an elite man and his *meretrix* was to be expected. Part of the issue with Alice’s low birth, then, may have been that she was seen as of too low standing or education to be privy to the king’s private thoughts on important matters.

A papal letter from Gregory XI to Alice asking her to intervene with Edward III on behalf of the pope’s brother indicates that even the pope found it acceptable to communicate with such women.⁵⁵⁹ One of a series of letters to prominent people, including the Black Prince and Richard Fitzalan, it is evidence of both Alice’s influence and of the extent to which this was acknowledged and accepted. If we take Walsingham’s description of Alice’s abuses as a code for how a *meretrix* should behave, it becomes clear that, by and large, John of Gaunt’s relationship with Katherine Swynford followed the

⁵⁵⁶ Walsingham, *Chronicon Angliae*, p. 95.

‘Erat in Anglie eadem tempestate quaedam mulier impudica, meretrix procacissima, appellata Alicia cognomento Perrys’.

⁵⁵⁷ Walsingham, *Chronicon Angliae*, p. 95.

‘Quam caeca fortuna ad tantum fastigium elevavit, ut eam de ancilla et pellice... ad familiaritatem regis plus quam debitam promovet’.

⁵⁵⁸ Walsingham, *Chronicon Angliae*, p. 95.

‘...genere infima, quippe quae tectoris cujusdam de villa de Henneye fuerat filia, sed illata fortuna, neque formosa neque pulchra, sed quae sciret hos defectus supplere blanda lingua’.

Recently, Laura Tomkins has demonstrated that Alice was actually a member of a prosperous London family. Her first husband, Jankyn Perrers, was a goldsmith who worked regularly for the royal family, and this connection may have brought Alice to the king’s attention.

⁵⁵⁹ *Calendar of Papal Letters vol. 4, 1362-1404*, p. 96.

'rules'. Katherine was apparently known for her beauty; she came from the appropriate level of society, well born and educated, but not so high that her sexual indiscretion could cause offence; she had no living male relatives who might be insulted by the liaison. Karras has noted that a *meretrix* might not have had legal status in late medieval England, but she occupied a position that society understood. Elite men often formed relationships with women of slightly lower status, and these unions could result in the creation of another household, even if the man was not always resident. She cites this as an example of 'resource polygyny' – when a man was capable of supporting more children, and extra children were beneficial (certainly the case with Gaunt), he would usually take advantage of the option. It is important not to assume that women were coerced into these arrangements; indeed, some women sought them out. Women might enter into such relationships for economic or social advantage, or out of personal desire.⁵⁶⁰

Though they may have occupied the same position, there were key differences between Alice Perrers and Katherine Swynford. Bothwell argues that part of the problem with Alice was that she behaved as a *male* favourite might, flaunting the wealth and prestige that her position had granted her, for instance by blatantly using her relationship with Edward III to help her friends.⁵⁶¹ Certainly Walsingham's description makes it clear that the real issue with Alice – and the crucial point where she differed from Katherine Swynford – was her behaviour in her position. Alice interfered in the judicial process to her own advantage and, according to Walsingham, used the services of a magician to keep the king's interest. He writes that Alice

grew in shameful forwardness... to the point that she did not blush to ascend the judge's seat at Westminster. There she did not fear to publicly pass judgement and decrees as judges do, whether they were for herself, her friends, or for the king. Doubtless the judges, led by fear of the king (or, more likely, dread of the courtesan) did not often dare to rule otherwise'.⁵⁶²

The 'Good' Parliament of 1376 passed an ordinance proscribing certain behaviours – practising maintenance, interfering in due process – for women, illustrating precisely where Alice had crossed the line.⁵⁶³ Parliament records state that 'a complaint was made to the king that some women have pursued various business and disputes in the king's courts by way of maintenance, bribing and influencing the parties, which thing displeases the king; the king should forbid any woman to do it, and especially Alice Perrers'. Peter de la Mare, the Speaker, also argued that the king's generosity to Alice Perrers was one of the reasons why the crown was short of cash that year.⁵⁶⁴ During the Good Parliament, Thomas Brinton, bishop of Rochester, famously preached in London that 'it is not fitting or safe that all the

⁵⁶⁰ Karras, *Unmarriages*, pp. 68-70, 78.

⁵⁶¹ James Bothwell, 'The Management of Position: Alice Perrers, Edward III, and the creation of a landed estates, 1362-1377', *Journal of Medieval History* 24 (1998), 31-51 (pp. 46-47).

⁵⁶² Walsingham, *Chronicon Angliae*, p. 96.

'Ad tantum enim ejus excrevit in verecundia procacitas... ut illa apud Westmonasterium solium judicum ascendere non erubesceret; et ibidem, sive pro se sive pro suis, vel pro rege, tamquam promotrix ejus negotiorum, verba facere, et sententias definitivas pro causis suis ibidem publice a iudicibus petere non timeret. Qui nimirum iudices, ducti timore regis, sive, quod verius est, metu meretricio, aliter quam ipsa definierat judicare multotiens non audebant'.

⁵⁶³ Ormrod, 'The Trials of Alice Perrers', p. 370.

⁵⁶⁴ 'Edward III: April 1376,' in *PROME*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson, et. al. (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005) <<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/>> [accessed 14 January 2015].

keys to the kingdom should hang from the belt of one woman'.⁵⁶⁵ This reflects concern that Alice was reaching above her station. It also emphasises the fact that it was not Alice's position *per se*, but what she was perceived to be doing with it, which was controversial. Again, this suggests that there was an accepted code of behaviour for a royal mistress. Ormrod suggests that Alice's quick downfall after Edward III's death is due at least partly to her status as an outsider to the royal court, with no obvious political allies.⁵⁶⁶ Katherine, however, had ongoing relationships with members of the Lancastrian establishment outside of Gaunt, as well be discussed later.

In Richard II's first parliament in October 1377 it was charged that Alice had incurred the penalty (banishment and forfeiture) set out in the 1376 ordinance. She was accused of influencing Edward III to countermand an order for Sir Nicholas Dagworth to investigate the conduct in Ireland of William Windsor (later Alice's husband). John of Gaunt's own testimony against Alice reveals fears that Alice's sexual intimacy with the king gave her inappropriate influence. Gaunt stated that he had spoken to the king about Dagworth's assignment and they agreed that Dagworth should be sent to Ireland after all, despite Alice's objections. However, 'the next morning, when the said duke took leave of the king in his bed, the king himself ordered him, upon his blessing that he should by no means allow the said Sir Nicholas to go to Ireland'.⁵⁶⁷ The implication is that Alice used the unique access she had to the king as his sexual and bed partner to pursue her own agenda. Others – Sir Philip de la Vache and Nicholas Carew – testified to Alice's presence in the king's chamber and in his bed when the matter was discussed. Gaunt was probably also behind one petition against Alice in which Piers Peterwych, one of Gaunt's valets, complained that Perrers had unlawfully seized a group of Peterwych's London properties.⁵⁶⁸

By contrast, Katherine herself, as well as her children, may have been an accepted and integrated member of the family. A papal indult from 5 February 1376 permitting Katherine to have a portable altar was followed by a similar indult for Blanche, Lady Poynings on the same date, which may be evidence that the two women applied to the pope at the same time and via the same messenger.⁵⁶⁹ As discussed above, Blanche Poynings was probably close to her cousin Blanche of Lancaster and she and Katherine may have become close while serving Blanche. If this is the case, then clearly Katherine's position as Gaunt's mistress was no barrier to a decent woman interacting with her.

Public and Private Perception

Another significant question is how Gaunt and Katherine themselves perceived their affair. Little in the primary documentation suggests an answer, but there are hints. The Register is quiet about Katherine, generally listing only the lands, annuities, and wardships Gaunt granted her, and few material gifts, though there are lists of gifts to others throughout the Register. This suggests that if Gaunt gave such personal items to Katherine, it was generally done with discretion. Later, when they

⁵⁶⁵ Holmes, *The Good Parliament*, p. 103.

⁵⁶⁶ Ormrod, 'The Trials of Alice Perrers', p. 393.

⁵⁶⁷ PROME, April 1376.

⁵⁶⁸ TNA SC 8/134/6670.

⁵⁶⁹ *Calendar of Papal Letters vol. 4, 1362-1404*, p. 220.

married, more clues emerge. In 1397, when Parliament confirmed the Beauforts' legitimacy, the entire family appeared in Parliament under a mantle.⁵⁷⁰ 'Mantle children' were traditionally children born out of wedlock – but not from adultery – whose parents later married.⁵⁷¹ The Beauforts certainly did not match this description. It may have been political spin, an attempt to encourage people to forget the years of adultery; alternatively, it may indicate that the couple saw their earlier relationship as honourable, though Gaunt was married during it. Possibly, Gaunt and Katherine saw themselves as engaging in a more old-fashioned form of concubinage, a sort of quasi-marriage reserved for couples who could not marry. It was legally recognised for centuries – Augustine, in the fourth century, had a concubine – but the church outlawed it in the twelfth century. This may have been a system that resonated with Katherine and Gaunt, as well as their contemporaries.

Katherine's role as governess to Philippa and Elizabeth of Lancaster was more than simply 'cover' for her other position. The Register often lists annuities and other gifts to Katherine as coming from the receipts of the Lincoln or Leicester areas, indicating that she split her time between Kettlethorp, her home near Lincoln, and Gaunt's children at Leicester and Kenilworth. Evidence suggests she went to Kettlethorp for the birth of their children: entries in the Register from the summer of 1373 ordering that Katherine be paid her overdue annuity, and that three bucks, fuel, and materials for timberwork be sent to her from Gryngley, near Lincoln, show that she was there at the time.⁵⁷² Other entries suggest that Philippa and Elizabeth were, unusually, with Constance and her daughter, their half-sister Catherine. At this point, Gaunt was preparing to leave for France and these orders demonstrate that Katherine's welfare was a concern; orders for food and fuel suggest Katherine was planning a prolonged stay. It seems reasonable to surmise that John Beaufort was born around this time and Katherine remained in Lincolnshire before returning to her other duties with Philippa and Elizabeth. Similarly, a series of gifts in the Register from January 1375 of a wardship, one mark, and a cask of Gascon wine may indicate the birth of a second child.⁵⁷³ Wine commonly marked the birth of a child: Constance of Castile was sent wine after Catherine of Lancaster's birth and Edward III gave Alice Perrers wine around the times when their children were born.⁵⁷⁴ The wardship and the mark were given on 1 and 2 January, so were probably New Year gifts, but the wine was given later in the month. The birth of a new child explains these gifts, as well as Katherine's absence from the ducal children's company during the feast. Gaunt had returned from France in April 1374, making a birth date for Henry Beaufort of January 1375 possible. The Register records no instances of Gaunt traveling outside London or Hertford at the times when Katherine would have conceived these children, however, suggesting that she visited him there.⁵⁷⁵ Philippa and Elizabeth may have travelled with her to visit their father, or Katherine may have gone alone. Though she may not always have been personally present, Katherine nonetheless exercised a good deal of power over Philippa and Elizabeth's lives. The receiver general's account of 1377-78 reveals that the £200 for the girls' chamber was paid directly to

⁵⁷⁰ Lucraft, p. 117.

⁵⁷¹ Given-Wilson and Curteis, p. 44.

⁵⁷² *JGR 1372-76*, nos. 1289 (12 May, 1373), 1356 (27 June, 1373), 1357 (27 June, 1373).

⁵⁷³ *JGR 1372-76*, nos. 181 (1 January, 1375), 1686 (2 January, 1375), 1608 (14 January, 1375)

⁵⁷⁴ James Bothwell, 'The Management of Position', p. 36, referencing CPR 1364-1367, p. 321.

⁵⁷⁵ *JGR*, *passim*.

Katherine, who personally accounted for it.⁵⁷⁶ This is evidence of the trust placed in her and the very real role she played in the lives of Gaunt's legitimate daughters.

In post-Plague Europe, sex and sexual pleasure were increasingly seen as social problems, and contemporary descriptions of Gaunt and Katherine's relationship are best interpreted in this context. Women were considered particularly susceptible to lust and promiscuity. Age, gender and rank influenced charges of sexual misconduct and visible members of society were more vulnerable to such charges.⁵⁷⁷ In the mid-1370s, around the time that his relationship with Katherine probably became public knowledge, Gaunt was the most influential man in England and, unsurprisingly, chroniclers' references to his sexual impropriety date from this period. Thomas Walsingham, Gaunt's most enduring critic, first noted his transgressions in 1376, describing Gaunt as

without conscience and his character dishonoured by every kind of outrage and sin. Indeed a fornicator and adulterer, he had abandoned lawful wedlock and deceived both his first wife... and the daughter of Pedro, king of Spain. He not only dared to do such things secretly and privately, but also took the most shameless prostitutes to the beds of those wives, who, grief-stricken as they were, did not dare to protest.⁵⁷⁸

It has been argued that, while sexual slander increased in the fourteenth century, accusations of promiscuity were more political than moral.⁵⁷⁹ This passage coincides with fears that Gaunt intended to seize the throne from Richard, heir of the obviously-ailing Edward III. As such, it may be more a critique of Gaunt's proximity to the throne, rather than of his lifestyle. Walsingham's failure to mention specifically any of the women with whom John dishonoured his wives implies that either Katherine was not notorious at this time, or that her reputation did not match Walsingham's account. By 1378 the situation had changed: a passage from the 'Scandalous' version of the chronicle that Walsingham later removed, says that

having disregarded the modesty of men and the fear of God and even deserted the care that he had assumed as a soldier, he [Gaunt] was seen riding around his lands with his abominable concubine, namely a certain Katherine Swynford, and holding her bridle in public, not only in his wife's presence, but in the sight of all the people.⁵⁸⁰

Originally placed among discussion of English activities in Spain, this passage probably speaks more to Gaunt's perceived mismanagement of the Castilian situation than anything else. Certainly, other than describing her as an 'abominable concubine', this passage is much more about Gaunt than Katherine – if anything, his reputation is harming hers. Neal points out that medieval society saw 'lovesickness' as a problem which was debilitating to a man's mind, body and soul.⁵⁸¹ Hadley has demonstrated that poor military performance rendered a man's masculinity questionable to the medieval mind, as did the

⁵⁷⁶ TNA DL 28/3/1, m. 4.

⁵⁷⁷ Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society* pp. 490-492.

⁵⁷⁸ *The St. Alban's Chronicle: The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham 1376-1394*, 2 vols., ed. by John Taylor and Wendy R. Childs, trans. by Leslie Watkiss (Oxford: Clarendon, 2003) I, p. 13.

⁵⁷⁹ Given-Wilson and Curteis, p.40.

⁵⁸⁰ *The St Alban's Chronicle* I, ed. Taylor and Childs, p. 970. My translation.

⁵⁸¹ Neal, pp. 198-199.

notion that a man was incapable of controlling his sexual urges.⁵⁸² In describing Gaunt as so overcome by lust that he deserted his military obligations, Walsingham makes a very pointed connection between Gaunt's sexual (mis)adventures, his military conduct and his masculinity.

3.3.1.2 1381 Split

After the Peasants Revolt, other chronicles began to mention Katherine, generally depicting Gaunt coming to his senses and repudiating her. The *Anonimale Chronicle* describes Gaunt's conclusion that God had chosen to chastise him for his lechery, especially with 'dame Katherine Swynford, a she-devil and enchantress... against the wish of God and the law of the holy church'.⁵⁸³ Knighton says that Gaunt

frequently had heard... that his reputation was greatly tarnished in all parts of the realm, and that he had paid no attention to what was said to him because he was blinded by desire, fearing neither God, nor shame amongst men. For in his wife's household there was a certain foreign lady, Katharine Swinford, whose relations with him were greatly suspect. And... he vowed to God that he would, as soon as he was able, remove that lady from his household, so that there could be no further offence.⁵⁸⁴

The chroniclers agreed that Gaunt, having somewhat belatedly developed a conscience, ended his liaison with Katherine after the Peasants Revolt brought him face to face with his unpopularity. This may, of course, be precisely what happened. As mentioned above, the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries saw a new concern about sexual behaviour, within marriage and without.⁵⁸⁵ Gaunt and Katherine were not married, but they may have decided that the adultery must cease. That Katherine had no more children, though only in her early thirties, certainly suggests that their sexual relationship ended. Others have identified more cynical motives for the end of the affair. Given-Wilson and Curteis suggest that Gaunt initiated the split because he was beginning to pursue the Castilian throne more seriously and more discretion was required.⁵⁸⁶ This argument assumes firstly that Gaunt had not been seriously pursuing the Castilian throne all along; numerous applications for funds to raise an army to take to Spain throughout the 1370s-80s would suggest otherwise.⁵⁸⁷ It also presumes that his relationship with Katherine was so problematic that it endangered his relations with Constance or his allies to the extent that they would refuse to aid him, which is rather far-fetched. If, however, a rift had developed between Gaunt and Constance, it is logical that Gaunt might work to improve his relationship with his wife, especially if he planned to conquer Castile and live there with Constance.

Their relationship certainly changed in the autumn of 1381, and the Register attests to this. An entry from September 1381 records a grant of two hundred marks yearly to Katherine for her services to the

⁵⁸² D. M. Hadley, 'Medieval Masculinities', in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe*, ed. by D. M. Hadley (London: Longman, 1999), pp. 1-18 (pp. 11-12).

⁵⁸³ *Anonimale Chronicle*, p. 153.

'Dieu luy vodroit chastier pur ses malefaitz et sa malveis vie qil ad vesqui par longe temps, et nonement en peche de licherie, qare il avoit haute specials de dame Kateryne de Snyynforth une deblesse et enchauntresse, et plusours autres pres de same femme encontre la volunte de Dieu et la ley de seint esglise.'

⁵⁸⁴ Knighton, p. 237.

⁵⁸⁵ Brundage, *Law, Sex and Christian Society* pp. 503, 507.

⁵⁸⁶ Given-Wilson and Curteis, p. 149.

⁵⁸⁷ Russel, pp. 247, 300-301, 341, 403.

duke's daughters.⁵⁸⁸ This almost certainly marks the end of Katherine's tenure as governess, and the beginning of any split that occurred. Two hundred marks per year was a more than fitting reward for a decade of service and, since the entry records no requirement that she give up the annuities granted previously, nearly tripled her income. This would have given Katherine considerable autonomy and allow her to live with her children in a similar style to Constance.

A quitclaim of February 1382 to 'Katherine de Swynford, former mistress of our daughters Philippa and Elizabeth of Lancaster', marks the official end to Gaunt and Katherine's working relationship.⁵⁸⁹ The wording is standard: neither Katherine nor any of her heirs were to have any claim on Gaunt or his heirs, and they had no claim on her. This is usually seen as the end of their affair; Lucraft suggests that the quitclaim was circulated to attempt to win back public affection for Gaunt.⁵⁹⁰ It was probably more about protecting Katherine and the Beauforts, who were more vulnerable. Moreover, the quitclaim may have as much to do with the end of Katherine's tenure as governess as the end of the relationship. Philippa and Elizabeth of Lancaster were twenty-two and nineteen years old respectively, and Elizabeth had married the year before; neither had need of a governess anymore. Possibly, Gaunt and Katherine decided to take advantage of the end of her employment to publicise a story of their separation – real or invented – in an attempt to mollify public opinion. Katherine had occasionally experienced delays receiving her annuities, and the Register notes one occasion where she spent her own money on Philippa and Elizabeth before being repaid by the Lancastrian chancery.⁵⁹¹ The quitclaim may be acknowledgement that her employment had ended and that she was owed no more money.⁵⁹² It may also have been intended to protect the properties that Gaunt had granted Katherine. After Edward III's death, many of the lands he had given Alice Perrers were confiscated; by quitclaiming all connection with Katherine, Gaunt may have hoped to safeguard his grants to her, in case someone also attempted to confiscate them.⁵⁹³ A public claim that their relationship had ended may have been intended to prevent Katherine from suffering the same public humiliation as Alice, as well as ensure her safety. If this is the case, it worked. Some story must have been made public for chroniclers who had never bothered to mention Katherine previously to suddenly declare that Gaunt had sent her away. Whether for moral or practical reasons, it is difficult not to draw a connection between the Peasants Revolt and the end of their affair. There is, however, evidence that Gaunt remained in touch with Katherine in their separation. In May 1382, the Register lists gifts Gaunt gave at the New Year. It describes five gifts that John delivered to unnamed recipients, including golden tablets, two gold nouches, a gold ring, and a gold goblet. The most expensive gift, the goblet, cost £34 15s. 4d. The same list already includes gifts to Gaunt's legitimate children, the king and queen, and other close family members; these gifts come immediately after.⁵⁹⁴ They were given personally,

⁵⁸⁸ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 984.

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 1157.

⁵⁹⁰ Lucraft, pp. 66-67.

⁵⁹¹ *JGR 1372-76*, nos. 1289, 1373, 1534; *JGR 1379-83*, no. 279.

⁵⁹² See below.

⁵⁹³ 'Richard II: October 1377,' in *PROME*, ed. Chris Given-Wilson, et. al. (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005)

<<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/no-series/parliament-rolls-medieval/>> [accessed 12 November 2015], p. 43.

⁵⁹⁴ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 715.

suggesting that Gaunt was with the recipients during the festival. Additionally, most unusually, the Register records no business done at the time; Gaunt was in London in early December, 1381 and in late January, 1382, but nothing is listed between these times. In the years immediately prior to this, he had spent New Year at Kenilworth and Leicester, presumably with Katherine and their family.⁵⁹⁵ It is tempting to speculate that Gaunt spent the New Year with Katherine and the Beauforts, as he had done previously, but kept the celebrations quiet because they were supposed to have separated (see opposite). If this is the case, it suggests that John and Katherine's relationship continued after their public split, and their separation was intended only for public consumption. After 1381, Katherine disappears from the chronicles until her marriage to Gaunt fifteen years later, but she did not disappear from his life. In 1389, records show her living in the household of Henry Bolingbroke's wife, Mary de Bohun.⁵⁹⁶ Katherine was also issued Garter robes between 1388-90, indicating a relationship with the court and that Richard II, at least, found her acceptable company.⁵⁹⁷ Either Katherine and Gaunt recommenced their relationship around this time or they decided it was again acceptable to resume a public liaison, especially since he had renounced the Castilian claim.

3.3.1.3 The Beauforts and other Lancastrian Connections

Evidence of Gaunt's affection for Katherine can also be found in the many provisions he made for her and for their children. The years covered in the Register show that Katherine received an income that went beyond that of a simple governess. After the ninety marks granted at the relationship's beginning in 1372, Gaunt generally granted Katherine lands and wardships.⁵⁹⁸ Walker suggests that Katherine regularly received the most valuable wardships that became available.⁵⁹⁹ In June 1372 John granted her guardianship of the lands held by her late husband during the minority of her son Thomas, in thanks for her good service to Blanche.⁶⁰⁰ Since Thomas Swynford was a minor, his wardship fell to Gaunt; granting it to Katherine was a sign of affection and trust in her administrative abilities, but also meant a small loss of income for Gaunt, who could have kept or sold it. In January 1375, possibly as a New Year gift, Gaunt granted Katherine the guardianship of the lands and heir of Sir Robert Deyncourt for her daughter (Gaunt's goddaughter) Blanche Swynford.⁶⁰¹ Later that year, Katherine was granted the holdings and appurtenances of the town of Boston, Lincolnshire.⁶⁰² In July 1380, he gave her the guardianship and marriage of the heir of Sir Bertram de Sauneby, with the service clause (requiring appropriate work to be done for the lord if he required) stricken *de mandato domini*.⁶⁰³ In January 1381, John gave Katherine the guardianship of the lands and marriage of the heir of Elys de Thoresby, the service clause again omitted.⁶⁰⁴ The register records only two items given to Katherine. A list of gifts

⁵⁹⁵ *JGR*, passim.

⁵⁹⁶ Lucraft, p. 13.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁵⁹⁸ See above.

⁵⁹⁹ Walker, p. 90.

⁶⁰⁰ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 446.

⁶⁰¹ *Ibid.*, no. 181.

⁶⁰² *Ibid.*, no. 720.

⁶⁰³ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 963.

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, no. 979.

Recipient	Gift	Cost
Anne of Bohemia	A saddle covered in red velvet	£20 10s.
Richard II and Anne of Bohemia	Gold hanaps decorated with crowns, eagles and lions	£38 9s. 11d.
Richard II and Anne of Bohemia	Cloths of gold of blue and white silk	£29 6s. 8d.
Constance of Castile and Joan of Kent	Gold hanaps	£29 12s. 8d.
Henry of Bolingbroke, Philippa of Lancaster, Elizabeth of Lancaster Catherine of Lancaster, Isabella de Coucy, the countess of Norfolk, the duchess of Brittany, Lady de Mohun,	Gold hanaps	£69 14s.
Thomas of Woodstock	A gold hanap	£13
?	Two gold, enamelled tablets – <i>delivered personally</i>	£10 13s. 4d.
The earl of Pembroke	A gold tablet	5 marks
The earl of Nottingham	A gold tablet	16s.
The countess of Hereford	A gold tablet	6s. 8d.
?	A gold hanap, decored with crowns and engraved with a motto – <i>delivered personally</i>	£43 19s. 11d.
?	A gold broach with a ruby, made in the shape of two arms – <i>delivered personally</i>	£8 14s. 2d.
?	A gold broach with a diamond made in the shape of a heart – <i>delivered personally</i>	£7 7s. 4d.
?	A gold ring with a diamond – <i>delivered personally</i>	£5 14s. 8d.

Figure 12 Partial list of gifts given by John of Gaunt for New Year, 1382 (JGR 1379-83, no. 715)

given at Easter 1373 includes a pair of rosaries given ‘to the mistress of our very dear children’.⁶⁰⁵ Since we do not know precisely when Katherine took up the post of governess, we cannot say absolutely that the rosaries went to her, but it seems likely. This gift was standard; many other women on the list

⁶⁰⁵ JGR 1372-76, no. 1342.

received the same.⁶⁰⁶ A more personal sign of affection comes from a list of gifts given at the New Year in 1381, which includes a silver warming pan for Katherine.⁶⁰⁷

Gifts to the Chaucers are more difficult to interpret. Katherine's sister Philippa was Geoffrey Chaucer's wife; all of them had served in royal households much of their lives. The gifts Gaunt gave to Philippa Chaucer for service to Constance may, of course, have been made because she provided truly excellent service.⁶⁰⁸ More likely, especially since Gaunt so rarely gave gifts to Constance's servants, they were favours to Katherine. Foster notes that the first gift made to Philippa in August 1372 may have coincided with the confirmation of Katherine's first pregnancy by Gaunt, suggesting he intended that Philippa would serve her sister during her confinement.⁶⁰⁹ Geoffrey Chaucer also benefitted from his sister-in-law's liaison. In 1377 he was granted the lucrative office of controller of the customs on wools, hides, and woolfells in the port of London, for which he certainly owed thanks to Gaunt, at that point the most powerful figure in the English government.⁶¹⁰ He was given 100s. in 1377 for his services, which suggests that he was actually employed by Gaunt as well.⁶¹¹ This payment is included in a list of payments for high-status servants in the ducal household, including Gaunt's Castilian retainers and the chaplains at Blanche of Lancaster's chantry in St Paul's (see above), implying that Chaucer was considered a particularly important member of the household. More intimate is a gift of 46s. 8d. to John Maudelyn, the son of Katherine's maidservant, Hawise Maudelyn.⁶¹²

Gaunt provided handsomely for his children by Katherine. As mentioned above, Katherine's final annuity of 200 marks per year was probably intended to provide for the Beauforts. In 1391, Gaunt alienated the manor of Oveston to John Beaufort; in 1394, he alienated three of his manors in Somerset to John.⁶¹³ Constance had died four months previously, which may suggest that John Beaufort's later elevation to the earldom of Somerset had already been discussed. In 1391, Richard II granted the prebend of Sutton and Buckingham (co. Lincs) to Henry Beaufort.⁶¹⁴ This is a remarkable gift, considering that Henry was, at most, seventeen years old and that bastards could not be ordained, a prohibition that apparently did not apply to John of Gaunt's bastards.⁶¹⁵ In January 1394, two years before his parents married, John Beaufort was in Prussia, probably scouting ahead for a never-realised crusade to be led by Gaunt that year.⁶¹⁶ April 1399 saw a confirmation of a grant originally made in February 1398 to Joan Beaufort and Ralph Neville of monies and lands worth 500 marks annually, made on the condition that Joan surrender a previous annuity of 400 marks.⁶¹⁷ Joan had married Neville, the earl of Westmoreland, in 1396. The previous grant refers to her as 'Joan de Ferrers',

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁷ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 558.

⁶⁰⁸ See Chapter Two.

⁶⁰⁹ Foster, 'On Dating the Duchess', p. 187.

⁶¹⁰ *CPR, 1377-81*, p. 8.

⁶¹¹ TNA DL 28/3/1, m. 4.

⁶¹² *JGR 1372-76*, no. 1686. No date is given.

⁶¹³ *CPR, 1396-99*, pp. 15, 529. No. 529 is from 20 September, 1394.

⁶¹⁴ *CPR 1388-91*, p. 409.

⁶¹⁵ I have been unable to find evidence for a papal dispensation allowing Henry's ordination on account of his bastardy and/or age.

⁶¹⁶ Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, p. 200.

⁶¹⁷ *CPR 1396-99*, p. 548.

indicating that it was given while she was married to her first husband, Robert Ferrers, who had died in 1395. Both amounts probably represent Joan's dowries. When Gaunt's other illegitimate daughter Blanche married Sir Thomas Morieux, a Lancastrian retainer, in 1381, by comparison, Gaunt gave her housewares totalling £47 9½d. in value.⁶¹⁸ The fact that Joan's second marriage, made after she was legitimised, was much more advantageous than her first, illustrates the change that legitimacy made in the Beauforts' lives. John and Thomas Beaufort waited until after they were legitimised to make good marriages as well. Walker notes that members of the Lancastrian household were sent to serve the Beauforts throughout the late 1390s.⁶¹⁹ Clearly, it was important to Gaunt that the Beauforts were well supported, and that their fortunes were tied to Lancaster.

The Beauforts were closely integrated with the official and unofficial Lancastrian household. Evidence from household rolls demonstrates that the Beauforts were regularly in attendance with the Lancastrian household and apparently included in the family. Christmas 1391, for instance, saw Constance, Henry of Bolingbroke and all four Beauforts gathered at Hertford. The 1393 celebrations saw an even larger group, this time including Mary de Bohun, Henry of Monmouth (the future Henry V), Katherine herself and her nephew Thomas Chaucer.⁶²⁰ The receiver general's account of 1392-93 is revealing. Immediately following an account of the money granted to Constance of Castile's chamber a section labelled 'annuities for divers knights' includes John Beaufort (£100), Thomas Swynford (£20) and Robert Ferrers (50 marks).⁶²¹ This provides a window into Gaunt's mind and into the medieval concept of family, because it suggests that Gaunt saw his son-in-law Ferrers as well as his mistress's son Swynford as members of his own family. Though he was obligated to provide for John Beaufort and Robert Ferrers, as they were direct family, there was no social rule dictating that he grant anything to Thomas Swynford, and yet he did. The fact that this entry comes immediately after Constance's allowance demonstrates that these were high-status payments. Their inclusion in this very official document is evidence that their involvement in Gaunt's life and family was known, not secret, and that the clerks assembling financial documents understood these men's position in the household.

The Beauforts had ongoing relationships with Gaunt's legitimate children throughout their lives. They probably spent their young years in the ducal nursery with Philippa and Elizabeth of Lancaster – Katherine's position as the girls' governess allowed her to care for her children in appropriate surroundings and helped them establish connections with their half-siblings from a young age. Henry of Bolingbroke seems to have had a particularly close relationship with John and Thomas Beaufort and Thomas Swynford. In 1381-82, Thomas Swynford, at that point a young teenager, spent nearly the entire year in Bolingbroke's service, for which he was paid. 7d. per day.⁶²² 1387 saw John Beaufort accompany Bolingbroke to London for the Merciless Parliament, though he was only about fourteen years old: he was given fabric for a gown for the occasion.⁶²³ At Christmas 1391, Bolingbroke made

⁶¹⁸ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 558.

⁶¹⁹ Walker, p. 37.

⁶²⁰ Elizabeth H. Will, 'John of Gaunt's Household', p. 17, referencing Glyne Archive MS 3469.

⁶²¹ TNA DL 28/3/2, f. 10.

⁶²² TNA DL 28/1/1, ff. 7-10.

⁶²³ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 5.

gifts of attaby and camlet, luxurious fabrics from the Middle East which he had probably acquired on his crusade that year, to John Beaufort and Robert Ferrers – an indication that Ferrers’s marriage to Joan Beaufort had probably been finalised by this time.⁶²⁴ In 1392-93 Gaunt covered John Beaufort’s expenses (£22 7s. 2d.) in preparing to go to Eastern Europe with Bolingbroke.⁶²⁵ Christmas 1393, when Gaunt was in Aquitaine, saw Bolingbroke purchase arms and armour for himself and Thomas Beaufort to use in jousts held with the family in Hertford.⁶²⁶ He seems to have thought of Katherine as a particularly important part of his life; the same Christmas he gave his wife Mary de Bohun, Katherine and Joan Beaufort a baldachin (richly embroidered brocade) of white damask. Joan was given more than the other women, which may suggest she was pregnant at the time.⁶²⁷

The Beauforts’ shift in status after they were legitimised in 1397 is clear. The 1397-98 receiver general’s account gives no money to John Beaufort, who, having been created earl of Somerset in 1397, presumably had his own income. Thomas Beaufort, now ‘the lord’s son’, received 100 marks from the hands of the receiver general himself, which suggests that he was personally attendant on Gaunt and Katherine much of the time. Thomas’s marriage to Margaret Neville (Joan Beaufort’s step-daughter) had taken place by this time, as Katherine was granted £20 for Margaret’s custody, household and wardrobe expenses.⁶²⁸ Margaret was fairly young, only about fourteen at the most, which may help to explain why Katherine was given custody of her and why the couple stayed close to home. A gift of £10 to Joan, Margaret’s governess, made at Hertford in January 1398 is slight indication that Hertford was their residence in this period. In the absence of Henry of Bolingbroke (exiled later that year), Thomas Beaufort may have taken on some of the pressure of managing the Lancastrian estates during his father’s decline. The 1397-98 account shows several small repayments (20 marks and 100s.) for his expenditures.⁶²⁹ A chalice and water-bowl of silver purchased for and given to the daughter of the earl of Kent, which probably refers to Margaret Holland, who married John Beaufort in 1399, was probably a betrothal gift. The same year saw a Richard Eton paid £50 for travelling to the papal curia to acquire a papal letter – presumably a dispensation, though none is listed in the papal records – for John Beaufort.⁶³⁰ This is all further evidence that the Beauforts’ legitimation was planned and that Gaunt waited to marry them off until this occurred.

3.3.2 Motivations

The most intriguing questions about John and Katherine’s relationship come in January 1396, when they married. Since Gaunt had been godfather to Katherine’s daughter Blanche Swynford, they required papal dispensation to marry. This was granted orally, and in September 1396, followed up with a written dispensation, addressing both Gaunt’s relationship to Katherine’s daughter and their

⁶²⁴ TNA DL 28/1/3, f. 20.

⁶²⁵ TNA DL 28/3/2, f. 16.

⁶²⁶ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 153.

⁶²⁷ TNA DL 25/1/4, f. 20; DL 41/424, m. 1.

⁶²⁸ TNA DL 28/3/2, f. 7.

⁶²⁹ TNA DL 28/3/5, f. 13.

⁶³⁰ TNA DL 28/3/5, f. 12v.

past adultery. Boniface IX declared their marriage lawful, and that all offspring, both past and future, were legitimate.⁶³¹

Chroniclers' accounts suggest the marriage was a surprise to many. Walsingham recounts how Gaunt returned to England from Aquitaine in late 1395 and spent Christmas with the king, then

hurried to Lincoln, where Katherine Swynford was staying at that time. He married her after the octave of the Epiphany [13 January], to the amazement of all at such a miraculous happening, for she had a very small fortune. Such was the magnitude of his error.⁶³²

Froissart also found the marriage surprising, noting that public reaction was 'the great astonishment of France and England, for Catherine Swineford was of base extraction in comparison to his two former duchesses'.⁶³³ If Froissart is correct, the only people who found the marriage inappropriate on account of Katherine's previous position as Gaunt's mistress were the great ladies of England. Froissart says that

when this marriage was announced to the ladies of high rank in England, such as the duchess of Gloucester (sic), the countess of Derby, the countess of Arundel, and others connected with the royal family, they were greatly shocked, and thought the duke much to blame. They said, 'he had sadly disgraced himself by thus marrying his concubine,' and added, that 'since it was so, she would be the second lady in the kingdom, and the queen would be dishonourably accompanied by her; but that, for their parts, they would leave her to do the honours alone, for they would never enter any place where she was. They themselves would be disgraced if they suffered such a base-born duchess, who had been the duke's concubine a long time before and during his marriage, to take precedence, and their hearts would burst with grief were it to happen?.

Those who were the most outrageous on the subject were the duke and duchess of Gloucester. They considered the duke of Lancaster as a doating (sic) fool for thus marrying his concubine, and declared they would never honour his lady by calling her sister.⁶³⁴

Whether Thomas of Woodstock and the ladies were offended more by Katherine's low rank or by her dubious sexual history is unclear from Froissart's description. Despite his personal familiarity with Gaunt, with whom he must have interacted when in residence in the English court in the 1360s-70s, Froissart was relatively unfamiliar with Gaunt and Katherine's relationship, incorrectly stating, for instance, that the pair had three children and confusing Thomas and Henry Beaufort.⁶³⁵ Froissart visited Richard II's court in the autumn of 1395, and present at St Omer in October 1396 for the king's betrothal to Isabella de Valois.⁶³⁶ His description of leading nobles' reaction to Gaunt's marriage to Katherine may reflect how he saw her treated at that event, rather than the aftermath of the marriage itself.

Rosenthal's study of marriages of English peers from 1350-1500 is useful in understanding contemporaries' reactions to the marriage. He noted only four per cent of peers born before 1350 –

⁶³¹ *Calendar of Papal Registers: Papal Letters, 1362-1404*, p. 545.

⁶³² *Chronica Maiora*, ed. Clark., p. 295.

⁶³³ Froissart, ed. by Johnes, XI, p. 226.

⁶³⁴ Froissart, ed. by Johnes, XI, pp. 226-227.

⁶³⁵ Froissart, ed. Johnes, XI, p. 226.

⁶³⁶ Michael Jones, 'Froissart, Jean (1337?-c.1404)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* [www.oxforddnb.com] <accessed 14 January 2016>.

seven men, including Gaunt – married more than twice. Unsurprisingly, the longer a man lived, the more marriages he was likely to have.⁶³⁷ Since Gaunt and Katherine were fifty-six and about forty-six respectively, their contemporaries might have found the marriage puzzling or unnatural, and this could help explain chroniclers' reactions. Murray has pointed to the *Merchant's Tale*, which mocks sixty-year-old January for wanting to marry young May, to demonstrate that medieval society considered it ridiculous for elderly men to be sexually active.⁶³⁸ Thomas Walsingham's observation in connection to Edward III that 'truly a wanton young man is sinning, but a wanton old man is mad'⁶³⁹ lends credence to the idea that sexual activity among the elderly was considered unnatural, if not actually a sign of insanity. This may have been a bit different for elites – there was no censure of Edward I for fathering children into his sixties, for instance – but contemporaries may nonetheless have looked askance at such behaviour.

Froissart explains that 'from affection to these children, the duke married their mother'.⁶⁴⁰ Armitage-Smith suggests that Gaunt's motivation was to allow the eldest Beauforts, John and Henry, to realise their already-obvious potential, an opinion Goodman echoes.⁶⁴¹ Major motives for the marriage certainly included Gaunt's love for Katherine and the Beauforts' legitimisation, and scholars have been content to leave it at that. However, the political dimension to this marriage, which helps to clarify Gaunt's motivations, has been ignored. In 1376, Edward III had entailed the crown, restricting it to male heirs. This effectively removed Lionel of Clarence's issue from the succession and made Gaunt heir to Richard.⁶⁴² By Constance's death in 1394, this had become particularly relevant. Richard II was in his late twenties; his twelve-year marriage to Anne of Bohemia had produced no children. In October 1396, he married six-year-old Isabella of France, and so was unlikely to have children for some time, if ever. Gaunt himself was already in poor health and probably knew he would not outlive Richard; from his point of view, based on the entail, his son Henry was the next likely king. Of Gaunt's other legitimate children, two were foreign queens, and his daughter Elizabeth was married to Richard's half-brother John Holland; none of them could provide any 'on-the-ground' support to Henry if he inherited. The older Beauforts were capable adults, loyal Lancastrians, and valuable commodities on the marriage market. Legitimising them created a new Lancastrian branch of the royal family and a key source of support for the crown, as the children of Edward III had been for their father and for Richard II.

Although Gaunt's legitimate son Henry of Bolingbroke was set to inherit the duchy, the Lancastrian succession relied only on his line, and his children were minors when Gaunt and Katherine married. In the uncertain political climate of the 1390s, Gaunt's best interests were in strengthening the potentially weak line of succession. Plots against the family in 1397 and the events of the Epiphany Rising of 1400

⁶³⁷ Rosenthal, 'Aristocratic Marriage', p. 182.

⁶³⁸ Jacqueline Murray, 'Hiding Behind the Universal Man: Male Sexuality in the Middle Ages' in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, ed. by Vern L. Bullough and James A. Brundage (London: Garland, 1996), pp. 123-152, (p.138).

⁶³⁹ Walsingham, *Chronicon Angliae*, p. 98.

'Nam juvenis luxuriosus peccat, senex very luxuriosus insanit'.

⁶⁴⁰ Froissart, ed. and trans. Johnes, II, p. 600.

⁶⁴¹ Armitage-Smith, p. 391; Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 364.

⁶⁴² Bennett, pp. 584, 591-592.

(which targeted Henry IV and all his sons) indicate that the idea that someone might attempt to eliminate the entire Lancastrian line was not entirely unrealistic. Negotiating a new marriage might take months or more, and was not guaranteed to produce children before he died. Marrying the woman he loved and legitimating their intelligent, loyal, adult children was simple logic. If Bolingbroke and his line were entirely eliminated, then the Beauforts could inherit; or, in the event that one of Bolingbroke's young children inherited, the Beauforts might protect the inheritance. Both Gaunt and his son were widowers in 1396. Gaunt's decision to marry Katherine and legitimise the Beauforts bolstered the line of succession while allowing Bolingbroke to negotiate for the best possible remarriage. Upon Constance's death in 1394, then, Gaunt had a multitude of motivations beyond affection for entering into marriage with his long-term mistress. The political situation in the late 1390s provides insight into Gaunt's motivations for marrying Katherine. By the same token, his unconventional choice to marry her underscores the seriousness of his concerns about the threat to the Lancastrian succession.

3.3.3 Legacy

The couple's married life was brief, but fairly well documented. The receiver general's account of 1397-98 has some clues. Gaunt's wardrobe expenses that year dropped to £800, from 2000 marks in 1392-93; Katherine was granted £600, while Constance had received 1000 marks in the previous surviving account.⁶⁴³ This is unlikely to point to a lack of funds (the money from Castile, despite not being paid in full, would see to that), and may suggest that Gaunt spent more time with Katherine than he had with Constance, and so there was no need to pay for entirely separate households. It may also be an indication that as Gaunt became older – he is known to have been in poor health beginning around this time – he travelled less and required a smaller household. Total ducal expenditure for this year, £5530, is not substantially lower than the 1392-93 expenditure of £5740, but dramatically lower than the 1377-78 amount of £8740.⁶⁴⁴ Katherine's property was incorporated into the duchy of Lancaster: the receiver general's account shows that Gaunt's chief steward John Bussy was paid £25 for his travels inspecting Nottingham, Leicester, Pontefract and Kettlethorp; the receiver general travelled to Kettlethorp, along with Lincoln and Hertford, in April of 1397.⁶⁴⁵

Katherine spent several months as the highest-ranked woman in England before Richard II married Isabella of France in 1396; after the marriage, Katherine took official charge of the young queen.⁶⁴⁶ She and her daughter Joan accompanied Gaunt and Richard II to Calais for the spectacular betrothal ceremony.⁶⁴⁷ In September 1398 Gaunt founded a chantry at Lincoln Cathedral for himself and Katherine, an indication that she was already planning to be buried there.⁶⁴⁸ He was unwell by this

⁶⁴³ TNA DL 28/3/5, ff. 6-6v.

⁶⁴⁴ TNA DL 28/3/5, f. 16v; DL 28/3/1, m. 6; DL 28/3/2, f. 20v.

⁶⁴⁵ TNA DL 28/3/5, ff. 9-9v.

⁶⁴⁶ *The St Alban's Chronicle*, ed. by Taylor et.al., pp. 49-51.

⁶⁴⁷ Meyer, M. P., et. al., 'L'Entrevue d'Ardres, 1396', *Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'histoire de France*, 18 (1881), 209-224.

⁶⁴⁸ CPR 1396-99, p.412.

time, so possibly both were thinking of the future. Gaunt died in Leicester on 3 February 1399, having been married to Katherine just over three years. In his will, he left her money, jewels, beds, and other items of value, as well as more intimate items, including some of his clothing and the contents of ‘a little coffer of cypress, for which I carry the key myself’.⁶⁴⁹

The months between Gaunt’s death and Bolingbroke’s accession created some difficulty for Katherine: Richard II seized the lands that Gaunt had granted her and those that were hers in dower along with the rest of the Lancastrian possessions after his death. Katherine petitioned to have them returned on 9 March, a week before Gaunt’s interment in St. Paul’s.⁶⁵⁰ She petitioned again in May for the return of possessions she had held personally before the marriage, which had also been seized.⁶⁵¹ She was successful in both instances. After Bolingbroke’s accession, her life became easier. November 1399 saw the new king grant her a gift of £100. In the same document Henry granted the same amount to Elizabeth Fitzalan countess of Norfolk and widow of Thomas Mowbray – the king may have been seeking to redress wrongs done to women who had been victims of his conflict with Richard II.⁶⁵² In January 1401, a grant ‘to the king’s mother Katharine’ gave her all the liberties and franchises under which Gaunt had held the manors and castles of Tickhill and Laghton and the manors of Gryngely and Whetely.⁶⁵³ In an order of November 1399 for annual deliveries of four tuns of wine ‘to Katherine who was the wife of the king’s father’, a marginal note corrects her description to ‘the king’s mother’.⁶⁵⁴ This may indicate an intimate relationship between Henry IV and Katherine, and hints at Henry’s feelings about Katherine’s relationship with his father. By the spring of 1403 her health was failing; March of that year saw the pope issue at Katherine’s request a ‘general inhibition... from hindering the executors of her will’, an indication that she was preparing for death.⁶⁵⁵ In April 1403, the royal grant of wine was amended; two of the tuns of wine were to go to Thomas Swynford and his wife ‘at the prayer of Katherine the king’s mother who was wife of his father’.⁶⁵⁶ The request was probably due to her failing health – Katherine died less than a month later, on 10 May.

Records of Gaunt’s tomb inscription at St Paul’s tell us that ‘his third wife was Katherine, from a knightly family and a woman of exceptional beauty, from whom many offspring succeeded. Whence, from his mother, descended Henry VII, most wise King of England’.⁶⁵⁷ This reflects the inscription’s date, early in the reign of Henry VII. The intriguing reference to Katherine’s ‘exceptional beauty’ may suggest a genuine tradition that lasted to the sixteenth century, or perhaps some lingering embarrassment over the nature of her relationship with Gaunt. More conventional descriptions, for example of piety or honour, might have been considered inappropriate and beauty was chosen as an appropriate alternative. Orders from 1401 for the church of St Mary Graces by the Tower of London

⁶⁴⁹ Armitage-Smith, pp. 425-426, 428. My translation.

⁶⁵⁰ TNA SC 8/256/12758; CPR 1396-1399, p. 516; CCR 1396-1399, pp. 365-366.

⁶⁵¹ CPR 1396-99, p. 555; CCR, 1396-99, p. 476

⁶⁵² TNA E 42/536.

⁶⁵³ CPR 1399-1401, p.408

⁶⁵⁴ CCR, *1399-1402*, p.17.

⁶⁵⁵ *Calendar of Papal Letters, 1398-1404*, p. 527.

⁶⁵⁶ CCR 1402-05, p.60.

⁶⁵⁷ Weever, *Ancient Fvnerall Monuments*, p.365.

reveal that Henry IV ordered the monks there to celebrate Gaunt's anniversary with prayers at the altar for St Katherine in the church, which may reflect a memory of Gaunt's affection for his third wife.⁶⁵⁸

3.3.4 Conclusion

This marriage highlights the importance of fully understanding a relationship's context. Assumptions about the degree to which his affair with Katherine damaged his public image, for instance, have not generally taken into account medieval society's tolerance for such liaisons. Understanding of the political situation when Gaunt and Katherine married in 1396, on the other hand, adds to our knowledge of motivations for marriage. Because Katherine as an individual brought no political or financial gains, historians have been generally content to conclude that they married for love and to legitimise their children. The result is that the political implications and motivations of the marriage – a more secure Lancastrian succession and source of support for Bolingbroke – have been overlooked. An examination of the political situation at the time of the marriage casts some interesting light on why legitimising the Beauforts was a good idea.

In this instance, more clearly than in Gaunt's other marriages, we see personal and political motivations working together. The couple clearly had a more 'modern' relationship, in the sense that they were two individuals who chose a romantic relationship. Their liaison underscores the fact that medieval attitudes towards adultery, legitimacy, and marriage were diverse and depended a great deal on context. Chroniclers' disinterest in Katherine until the Peasants Revolt demonstrates that the adultery only became an issue when Gaunt's politics became so unpopular that they disrupted society. Contemporary responses to the marriage, when it occurred, illustrate the idea of marriage as a material transaction – even Walsingham, Gaunt's most outspoken critic, objected to the marriage not on moral grounds, but ones of social status. Conducting an affair over the course of more than two decades cannot have been easy, as the events following the Peasants Revolt demonstrate, but their choice to persist despite obstacles is an illustration of their on-going affection for each other.

John of Gaunt's marriages had a lasting impact, not only on his own family, but on English and European history. In many ways, his marriages defined his positions in national and global politics. Marriage to Blanche of Lancaster gave him immense wealth and a central political role that were not entirely commensurate with his position as Edward III's third son. Gaunt's marriage to Constance of Castile directed his involvement in English and international affairs for the next twenty years of his life. His last marriage, to Katherine Swynford, reflects a weakening man's desire to live out his last years in contentment – and concern that his legacy live on.

⁶⁵⁸ CPR 1399-1401, p. 457.

Appendix 3.A: Split of the Lancaster inheritance, 1361

Lands granted to John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster

Yorkshire

Pontefract

Bradebord

Almanbury

Altoftes

Warnefeld

Rothewell

Leeds

Roundehay

Scoles

Berwick

Kepax

Alberton

Knottyngleye

Beghale

Kamsale

Ouston

Elmesale

Akworth

Tanshelf

Osgodcros

Agbrigge

Stayncross

Kritelyng

Barlay

Pickering

Esyngwold

Scalby

Total Yorkshire

£,1187 3s. 3d.

Northumberland

Dunstanburgh

Sheplaye

Stanford

Burton

Emeldon

Twede

Total Northumberland

£,220 15s. 8½ d.

Lancashire

Leyland

Amundernesse

Londesdale

Oueswalton

Preston

Shingelton

Riggeby		Asthull	
Wra		<i>Total Warwickshire</i>	<i>£72 4s. 6d.</i>
Overton			
Skerton		Cheshire	
Lancaster		Halton	
Slyne		Ronkore	
Blackbournshire		More	
Office of forester beyond		Whitelawe	
Ribbell		Congelton	
Wyresdale		Keleshale	
Penwortham		Bedestan	
Totyngton		Wyndenes	
Rachedale		Wyndes	
Clitherou		<i>Total Cheshire</i>	<i>£312 11s. 5 1/2d.</i>
Boulond			
The forest of			
Blackbournshire		Lands granted to	
Ightenhull		Maud of Lancaster	
	<i>£433 4.5d.</i>	Gloucestershire	
<i>Total Lancashire</i>	<i>£549 1/4d.</i>	Tyberton	
		Rodeleye	
		Mynstreworth	
		<i>Total Gloucestershire</i>	<i>£121 19s. 4 1/4d.</i>
Warwickshire			
Kenilworth		Welsh Marches	
Wotton		Monmouth	
Shrewele		Hodenakz	
Radesle		White Castle	
		Skenfrith	
		Grosmont	
		Ettelowe	

Eggemor			£597 9s. 3.5d.
Kidwelly			
Cadugan			
Penryn			
Karwathlan			
Iskoyt			
<i>Total Welsh Marches</i>	£1180		
Hampshire			
Southampton			
Briggestoke			
Berkshire			
Estgarten			
Standen			
Poghele			
Sandon			
Hungerford			
Wiltshire			
Lavyngton			
Colyngbourn			
Everle			
Dorset			
Shapwyk			
Kyngeston			
Chauton			
Lecchelade			
Eton Meysy			
The forest of Bradden			
Surrey			
Brittesgrave			
Staffordshire			
Newcastle-under-Lyme			
<i>Total Hampshire, Berkshire,</i>			
<i>Wiltshire, Dorset, Surrey and</i>			
<i>Staffordshire</i>			

Leicestershire

Shulton
Dersford
The honour of Leicester

Carleton
Glenfeld

Sylby
Hetheley

Leicester

Total Leicestershire £325 3s. 8.5d.

Huntingdonshire

Huntingdon

Gurmecestre

Total Huntingdonshire £183 4s.

France

Beaufort

Nogent

Total France £400

Appendix 3.B: Expenses Pertaining to a Memorial for Blanche of Lancaster, 1374⁶⁵⁹

In bread consumed at the anniversary by the order of W. Croyser, steward of the lord's household	4 s. 1 d.
In beer	7 s. 6 d.
In 11 flagons of wine with 1 small bottle, consumed at the Savoy	8 d. each 7 s. 8. d.
In beef	4 s. 6 d.
In powder of ginger and pepper with saffron	12 d.
In various fruits	2 s. 2 d
In fuel	2 s. 4 d

In mutton	10 s. 4 d.
Item in 11 geese	8s. 7 d.
In 3 pigs	3 s. 1½ d.
In 9 pigeons	6. s
In 38 chickens	8 s. 8 d.
In portage for the said provisions	10½ d.
In various salted fish, flour of oats, and salt	8½ d.
In candles	8 d.
And to William Wafrer for making wafers	3 s. 4 d.
Total	70 s. 8½ d.

⁶⁵⁹ This account has been translated and edited previously, by N. B. Lewis in 1937 (N. B., Lewis, 'The Anniversary Service for Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster, 12 September, 1374' *John Rylands Library Bulletin* (1937), 176-192). What follows is my own transcription, translation and edition, based on John of Gaunt's Register in The National Archives (TNA: DL 42/13, f. 217). In a couple of instances I have

relied on Lewis's translation to clarify a particularly obscure item; otherwise, this translation (and any errors it contains) is entirely my own. This transcription corrects several inaccuracies found in Armitage-Smith's transcription of the Register.

Item in 2 lbs. of ginger comfits

In 17 flagons of wine, consumed at the same time

8 d. each

6 s. 4 d.

And 2 lbs. of anise comfits

2 lbs. of gobbet royal⁶⁶⁰

In 2 clay jars, obtained for the same wine

8 d.

2 lbs. of cloves

2 lbs. of sugar-plate⁶⁶¹

In 25 cups obtained

15 d.

2 lbs. of large dragée⁶⁶²

18 d. per lb.

Total

25 s. 3 d.

1 lb. of flower of cinnamon comfits

1 lb. of clove comfits at

2 s. per lb.

All obtained and consumed by the magnates and by the chapter of St. Paul's, London, on the vigil of the anniversary in the usual manner after vespers of the dead

Item in 5 twelves of white and blue purchased and stored in the lord's wardrobe

In 24 gowns with the same number of hoods given, held by 24 poor men

22 s.

24 burning torches in their hands around the tomb of the said Blanche at the time of this anniversary service

⁶⁶⁰ A type of sweetmeat flavoured with ginger and mace.

⁶⁶¹ Another type of sweetmeat, often flavoured with rose or other flowers.

⁶⁶² Yet another sweetmeat, a comfit usually containing a seed or grain of spice

	£ 6		
In the making of the said garments through labor conducted	Price per piece, 2 d. 4 s.	And released to the same Roger for 36 old square tapers standing and burning around the said tomb through the entire year at the time of masses, put aside, and for new made for the same anniversary, weighing among themselves 275 lb. Namely in wax for making [the tapers]	1 d. per lb. 24 s. 11 d.
Item in 1 lb. of thread purchased for the same garments	16 d.	And to the same for 82 lb. in wax purchased for the same 36 square tapers more than was recovered from the old tapers	Price per lb, 6 d. 11 s. 6 d.
In portage of the said garments and other black cloth from the Savoy to the said church and back	3 d.		
And in 24 new torches purchased by Roger Chauderer, burned around the said Blanche's tomb in the hands of the said 24 poor at the time of the same service weighing among themselves 303 lb.	At 6 d. £ 9 9 s. 6 d.	And to the same Roger for the making of 40 lb. of wax stored in two round tapers burning over the same tomb for the whole year at the time of masses	For 1 lb, 1 d. 3 s. 4 d.
		And for 22 lb. of wax, gathered from the same round tapers through the entire past year	11 s.

To the same Roger for 2 similar round tapers,
weighing among themselves 20 lb. made new for
this anniversary, placed and remaining above the
same tomb

Total

£ 20 6 d.

With the manufacture [of the tapers]

At 7 d.

11 s. 8 d.

To the same Roger for 8 basins for tapers, made
by the same and placed over the tomb at the time
of the anniversary

Item in alms distributed to the poor and prisoners,
with offerings at the great mass on the day of the
anniversary

8 s.

£10

And to the same for 4 lb. of wax allocated for the
celebration of masses by two chaplains celebrating
in the same church of St. Paul for the soul of the
said Blanche through the entire past year

In alms given to the five orders of friars of
London at the celebration for the said Blanche's
soul

100 s.

2 s. 4 d.

Item to the same chaplains for bread and wine per
their expenses in the celebration of the same
masses through the same time

In regard made to 8 of the canons of the said
church of St. Paul attending and performing this
anniversary: that the one who celebrated the high
mass should have 6 s. 8 d and the others 4 s. 4 d.

3 s. 4 d.

And in transport by boat, paid for Lord de Poyng
and his wife, who were present at the same
anniversary at the expense of the lord⁶³

And to the 12 minor chaplains, that each should
have 20 d.

4 d.

⁶³ Thomas de Poynings and his wife, Blanche de Mowbray, Blanche of Lancaster's
cousin.

To the 31 chaplains and 10 vicars, that each should have 12 d.

To 9 choristers and 4 servers of the same church, that each should have 6 d.

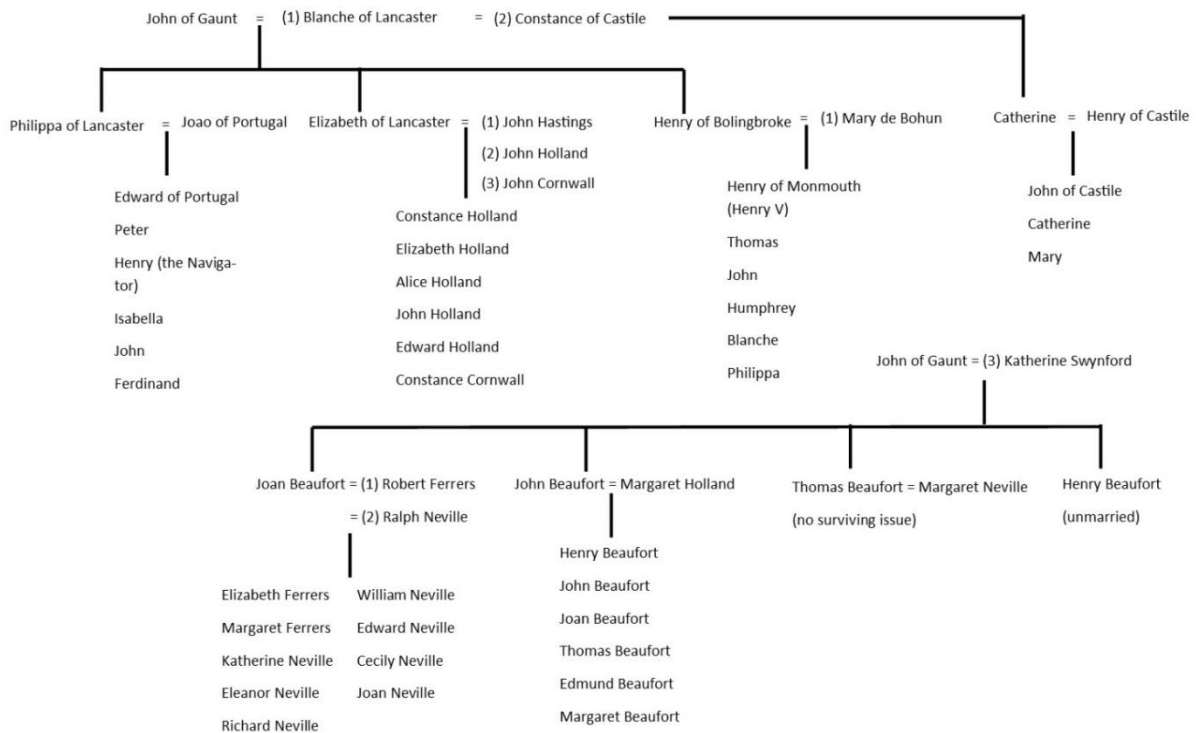
Total £19 18 s. 6 d.

Sum Total £45 4 s. 10½ d.

Chapter Four

The Marriages of John of Gaunt's Children

The marriages of Henry of Bolingbroke, John of Gaunt's oldest legitimate son and heir, and of his siblings, illustrate a good deal about political life in late fourteenth-century England. In particular, they emphasise the crucial role that in-laws played in the transfer and creation of family identity. This chapter focuses on Henry of Bolingbroke's marriage to Mary de Bohun, with some comparison to his brothers' and sisters' marriages where appropriate.



4.1 Henry of Bolingbroke and Mary de Bohun

4.1.1 Background

Born in about 1367, Henry of Bolingbroke was the only surviving son of John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster. Bolingbroke's early career as Appellant, crusader and eventually usurper is fairly well known. His first wife Mary de Bohun is usually said to have been born in about 1368 (though I will argue for a birthdate of 1370), the second daughter of Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford and Essex, and his wife Joan Fitzalan, one of the daughters of Richard Fitzalan and Eleanor of Lancaster. As great-grandchildren of Henry of Lancaster, Mary and Henry were related in the third degree of consanguinity. Humphrey de Bohun died in 1373, leaving his daughters Mary and Eleanor as co-

heiresses to his estate, worth about £2000 per year. Mary was about eleven and Henry fourteen when the marriage occurred in late 1380-early 1381. After the wedding she returned to her mother's custody, probably until she turned fourteen. The marriage eventually produced six surviving children: four boys, Henry (the future Henry V), Thomas, John and Humphrey, and two girls, Blanche and Philippa. Mary died in July 1394, while giving birth to Philippa. She was buried in St Mary in the Newarke, Leicester, the day after her mother-in-law Constance of Castile's burial in the same church. Henry remained single for nine years, only remarrying in 1403 after he had become king, this time to Joan of Navarre, dowager duchess of Brittany.

4.1.1.1 Sources

The most complete published work currently on Henry IV is Kirby's 1970 biography. As Kirby notes, the paucity of records relating to Bolingbroke's early life means scholars must emphasise those events for which records remain, even if Henry himself would not have thought them significant.⁶⁶⁴ Kirby discusses Bolingbroke's marriage to Mary de Bohun and Thomas of Woodstock's efforts to keep the Bohun inheritance for himself and his alleged anger upon discovering that she had married anyway, briefly noting the complicated split of the Bohun lands.⁶⁶⁵ Goodman's work on the events of the period follows a similar pattern, with a good deal of attention focused on the relationships between Bolingbroke, Gaunt and Woodstock.⁶⁶⁶ Given-Wilson's introduction to *Chronicles of the Revolution*, focussing on the events of 1397-1400, gives some good insight into Bolingbroke's exile in Paris in 1398-99, especially his marriage negotiations there.⁶⁶⁷ Although Mary's life is unusually well-documented, neither she nor many of the important women in her life (her mother Joan and sister Eleanor, for example) have received much scholarly attention.

Primary sources for this marriage and the relationships it produced are numerous, and provide good evidence for Mary and Henry's marriage. Government records testify to the events surrounding the marriage and the split of the Bohun inheritance, as well as the major events of Bolingbroke's life, including the Appellant Crisis, conflict with Thomas Mowbray and exile, and his eventual usurpation of the throne in 1399. Papal records are intriguingly sparse, with little mention of Mary or Henry. The lack of evidence for a dispensation to marry is a particularly interesting gap, as the couple were related in the third and fourth degrees of affinity. Given that there was apparently some conflict around the marriage, the dispensation would have been important. Diplomatic correspondence offers some insight into marriage negotiations during Bolingbroke's widowhood.

Chroniclers' depictions of the events again focus on the Appellant crisis and the dramatic events at the end of Richard II's reign. Froissart is the only chronicler to discuss the events of Henry and Mary's wedding, making it difficult to determine how accurate his dramatic account is. More writers discuss

⁶⁶⁴ Kirby, p. 3.

⁶⁶⁵ Kirby, pp. 17-18.

⁶⁶⁶ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, pp. 266-267, 365; Anthony Goodman, *The Loyal Conspiracy: The Lords Appellant under Richard II* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971), pp. 29, 91, 153.

⁶⁶⁷ Chris Given-Wilson, 'Introduction' in Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution: The Reign of Richard II 1397-1400* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), pp. 27-31.

Mary's death, though usually only briefly and in the context of the deaths of Anne of Bohemia and Constance and Isabel of Castile, which occurred around the same time. Froissart and the *Chronique de Religieux de Saint Denys* both offer a helpful discussion of Bolingbroke's exile in France and his marriage negotiations there.

Duchy of Lancaster records are particularly strong for this relationship. They provide good evidence for the partition of the Bohun lands, emphasising in particular how lengthy this process was.

Household accounts from Henry of Bolingbroke's receivers general survive from much of the 1380s-90s. They provide insight into household organisation, as well as the relationships between not only Mary and Henry themselves, but also others, including the Appellants and in-laws. Like these accounts, John of Gaunt's Register reflects the wider relationships between these extended family members. It also sheds light on the early years of Henry and Mary's marriage, particularly their wedding ceremony itself.

4.1.2 Motivations

4.1.2.1 Practical Motivations

Scholars of both John of Gaunt and Henry of Bolingbroke have generally been happy to note the practical motive for this marriage – Mary's half of the Bohun inheritance – and leave their analysis there. John of Gaunt purchased the marriage of Mary de Bohun in July 1380, by writing off 5000 marks of debt the crown owed him for military service.⁶⁶⁸ Walker suggests that acquiring Mary de Bohun's marriage for Henry was thus the result of political leverage. If he is correct, the fact that Gaunt was willing to spend political capital as well as actual money underscores how desirable he considered this marriage.⁶⁶⁹ Mary's half of the Bohun inheritance was clearly the major practical motive for the match, worth just over £900 per year. It is worth remembering that Eleanor and Mary were heirs of the earldom of Northampton, as well as the main Bohun inheritance of Hereford and Essex. Several entries in the close rolls speak to the split of various parts of the Northampton inheritance.⁶⁷⁰ Mary's half of the Bohun inheritance added significantly to the Lancastrian patrimony in the long run. In the short term, it was an easy way to provide for Henry – who, though he had not yet inherited Lancaster, still had a lifestyle to maintain as earl of Derby – without excessively depleting duchy resources. Gaunt was only in his early forties when Mary and Henry married and could expect to live a good while yet; as Mary had already come into her inheritance her contribution was particularly valuable.

4.1.2.2 Personal Motivations

This marriage also underscores the personal relationships between Henry and Mary's parents and ancestors. In particular it highlights the fallout of Henry of Lancaster's ambitious marriage strategy for his six daughters. Mary's mother Joan de Bohun and Elizabeth Fitzalan were sisters-in-law twice over. Joan, born a Fitzalan, had been the wife of Humphrey de Bohun and Elizabeth, born a Bohun, married

⁶⁶⁸ Kirby, *Henry IV*, p. 17; Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*, p. 65; Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility*, p. 25; Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 365. CPR 1377-1381, p. 537.

⁶⁶⁹ Holmes, *Estates of the Higher Nobility*, p. 25.

⁶⁷⁰ CCR 1392-96, pp. 350-351, 441-442, 448-449; CCR 1396-99, p. 169; CFR 1391-99, pp. 150-151.

Humphrey's sister Elizabeth. The clearly close relationship between Fitzalan and Bohun families makes it unsurprising that Joan and Elizabeth might work together to make the marriage happen. Both women were also first cousins of Henry's mother Blanche of Lancaster and thus we might speculate that all three women had hoped for a marriage to keep the families close. In arranging for his son to marry Joan de Bohun's daughter, Gaunt may have been honouring his late wife's wishes. Schutt has demonstrated that in the early modern and modern periods, women were as involved – if not more involved – as men in arranging their children's marriages.⁶⁷¹ There is little reason to think this was less true in the medieval period, and a widow like Joan de Bohun would have had to play the role of both father and mother for her daughters in this regard. She probably worked closely with Gaunt in arranging Henry and Mary's marriage. Humphrey de Bohun and John of Gaunt were both knights of the Garter. The close relationship that this created is underscored by the fact that after Humphrey's death in 1373, Gaunt paid for masses to be said for his soul.⁶⁷² There is also evidence of an ongoing Lancaster-Bohun relationship beyond that created by family. Humphrey de Bohun's great-great-grandfather (also Humphrey) had been one of Thomas of Lancaster's closest supporters and died fighting for him at Boroughbridge in 1322. As Walker has pointed out, both the Bohun and Lancaster families patronised the cult of Thomas of Lancaster – in his will, Humphrey de Bohun ordered that 40s. be given to Thomas's shrine at Pontefract.⁶⁷³ A marriage that made good political and financial sense thus also reflected – and helped to facilitate – longer-term relationships as well.

4.1.2.3. The Marriage

The marriage itself was quite the dramatic event. Froissart recounts that Thomas of Woodstock had been hoping to have Mary become a Poor Clare, but while Thomas was out of the country Mary was persuaded to marry Henry instead:

The youngest [Mary] was unmarried, and the earl of Buckingham would willingly have had her remain so, for then he would have enjoyed the whole of the earl of Hereford's fortune. Upon his marriage with Eleanor, he went to reside at his handsome castle of Pleshey, in the county of Essex, thirty miles from London, which he possessed in right of his wife. He took on himself the tutelage of his sister-in-law, and had her instructed in doctrine; for it was his intention she should be professed a nun of the order of St Clare, which had a very rich and large convent in England. In this manner she was educated during the time the earl remained in England, before his expedition into France. She was also constantly attended by nuns from this convent, who tutored her in matters of religion, continually blaming the married state. The young lady seemed to incline to their doctrine, and thought not of marriage.

Duke John of Lancaster, being a prudent and wise man, foresaw the advantage of marrying his only son Henry, by his first wife Blanche, to the Lady Mary: he was heir to all the possessions of the house of Lancaster in England, which were very considerable. The duke had for some time considered he could not choose a more desirable wife for his son than the lady who was intended for a nun, as her estates were very large, and her birth suitable to any rank; but he did

⁶⁷¹ Schutt, pp. 15-16, 30-32.

⁶⁷² *JGR* 1372-76, 1242.

⁶⁷³ Simon Walker, 'Political Saints in Later Medieval England', in *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society*, ed. by R. H. Britnell and A. J. Pollard (Stroud: Alan Sutton, 1995), pp. 77-106 (p. 83); *Testamenta Vetusta* I, p. 80.

not take any steps in the matter until his brother of Buckingham had set out on his expedition to France. When he had crossed the sea, the duke of Lancaster had the young lady conducted to Arundel castle; for the aunt of the two ladies was sister of Richard, earl of Arundel, one of the most powerful barons of England [Froissart is confusing Joan de Bohun and Elizabeth Fitzalan here]. This Lady Arundel, out of complaisance to the duke of Lancaster, and for the advancement of the young lady, went to Pleshey, where she remained with the countess of Buckingham and her sister for fifteen days. On her departure from Pleshey, she managed so well that she carried with her the Lady Mary to Arundel, where the marriage was instantly consummated between her and Henry of Lancaster.⁶⁷⁴

Goodman has observed that the grant of Mary's marriage to John of Gaunt in July 1380 does indeed date to about the time that Thomas sailed for France, which suggests a degree of duplicity. However, as Gaunt, Henry's sisters Philippa and Elizabeth, Joan de Bohun and Edmund of Langley were all present, the marriage was clearly not a secret, spur-of-the-moment affair.⁶⁷⁵ Froissart's timeline is incorrect as well. Though Woodstock did leave England in the summer of 1380, the marriage took place sometime between November 1380 and February 1381 (see below), not immediately after his departure.

Details of the marriage celebration, held at Rochford, come through in John of Gaunt's Register. A record of payments connected to the marriage dating from 6 March 1381 pushes the latest possible date for the marriage itself to 26 February 1381, as this was the last day before Lent that year. The entry immediately following is for a list of New Year gifts, so it seems reasonable to assume that the ceremony took place in late December 1380 or January 1381. The most likely date for the wedding is 5 January 1381 – Twelfth Night, the Saturday before Epiphany that year. Joan de Bohun was to receive payments from Gaunt for Mary's upkeep annually beginning on 5 January.⁶⁷⁶ The evidence points to a grand celebration. Gaunt paid for alms given to the poor, sixty marks to members of Joan de Bohun's household for their services on the day, as well as ten marks to his brother Edmund of Langley's minstrels, who also performed. He also provided wine – a tun of Gascon wine and a vat of wine of Rennes – and repaid Joan for some wine she provided. Part of Joan agreeing to the marriage between Bolingbroke and Mary may have involved an agreement that Gaunt would cover the costs of the wedding celebration. If so, she was probably having to apply to him to have the costs covered, as this order for payment dates from February 1382.⁶⁷⁷ Gifts were also given. Gaunt gave the bride a ruby and a gold girdle decorated with the letter 'J'. He paid for his daughters Philippa and Elizabeth to each give Mary a gilded hanap – Philippa's costing £11, Elizabeth's £19.⁶⁷⁸ These details give a sense of what a typical aristocratic wedding ceremony might involve: a mass, with offerings made to the poor; a feast with many minstrels and probably dancing; the giving of gifts to the new family member. It is also interesting to note no record of gifts given by Constance of Castile or Catherine of Lancaster. A gift from Constance we might expect to be listed in her own accounts, now lost; however, if Gaunt paid

⁶⁷⁴ Jean Froissart, *Chronicles of England, France and Spain by Sir John Froissart*, ed. and trans. by T. Johnes, I, in *Women of the English Nobility and Gentry*, ed. by Jennifer Ward, pp. 623-624.

⁶⁷⁵ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 276.

⁶⁷⁶ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 996 (p. 309).

⁶⁷⁷ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 688.

⁶⁷⁸ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 556.

for Philippa and Elizabeth to give gifts, it seems odd that he did not pay for Catherine to do so. This could be because she did not attend, or because half-siblings were not expected to participate in such things.

4.1.3 Relationships

4.1.3.1 The Relationship between Henry of Bolingbroke and Mary de Bohun

The first years of the marriage were spent with Mary still living separately in her mother's custody.⁶⁷⁹ It has been suggested that Mary gave birth to a short-lived son in 1382, though this is debatable. It is possible that, as Thomas of Woodstock had good reason to contest the marriage, Mary and Henry were urged to consummate even though she was very young and she unexpectedly became pregnant. Froissart's reference to the marriage being 'consummated immediately' is unhelpful, as it is unclear whether he is suggesting a sexual consummation or merely that the ceremony was performed. Although there might have been good reason to have the marriage consummated, there is little proof that Mary had a child. The evidence given for this, a line in Bolingbroke's receiver general's account from that year simply reads: 'Given to an esquire of my lord Buckingham, called Westcome, on my lord of Lancaster's [Gaunt's] orders, 66s. 8d., for bringing my lord the news that his lady was delivered of a son' and notes further that Bolingbroke later gave gifts of money to the baby's nurse and governess.⁶⁸⁰ This could refer to a child of Mary de Bohun and Henry of Bolingbroke, but is considerably more likely to indicate it was Eleanor de Bohun who had given birth to a son – the original Latin allows both translations. The birthdate for Eleanor and Thomas's eldest son Humphrey is generally given as 1381-82, so this reference could easily refer to his birth.

Multiple records attest to the fact that after the wedding, Mary returned to her mother's custody. Beginning in January 1382, Gaunt paid Joan de Bohun 100 marks annually to cover Mary's expenses. The payments were to be made until either Mary turned fourteen, or until she departed her mother's custody.⁶⁸¹ This is a clear indication that Mary was not expected to take up her duties as a wife until she reached some sort of maturity, which was considered to be at age fourteen. The reference to the possibility of Mary leaving her mother's custody before this point could be an acknowledgement that if she reached childbearing age (probably indicated by first menstruation) before fourteen, she might be expected to join Henry's household earlier. Apparently Joan was also in a position to bargain, as evidenced by the provision in the grant that if her payments should go into arrears for more than three months, she would be leased a certain set of manors to cover the amount she was owed.

The king also contributed £100 per year to Joan de Bohun for Mary's upkeep. The assignment had been made 16 January 1380 and was paid until 31 March 1385; the 1385 account specifically mentions that this was a pro rata payment as Mary had recently come of age.⁶⁸² Assuming that the king was also

⁶⁷⁹ Kirby, *Henry IV*, p. 19.

⁶⁸⁰ TNA DL 28/1/1, f. 5

'Et datus une armigero vocatur Westcome domini de Bokyngham perduc' domino meo quod domina sua erat deliberata de puero per mandato domini mei Lancastrie xvij die Aprilie lxxij s vijij d'.

⁶⁸¹ TNA DL 29/262/4070, m. 2; JGR 1379-83, no. 996 (p. 309).

⁶⁸² TNA E 403/508, m. 18.

working on the premise that Mary would come of age and enter Henry's household when she turned fourteen, we can conclude that her birthday was sometime in December and that she turned fourteen in 1385, since the royal payments stopped then. This would place her birth in December 1370, somewhat later than what it is usually given. However, if she had been born in 1368, this would make her seventeen when she left her mother's household, which would be unusually late. The king kept official custody of Mary, despite her marriage, and exercised control over some of her property, for instance making presentations in her name.⁶⁸³ July 1382, for instance, saw a commission to look into any lands Humphrey de Bohun held beyond those listed in inquisitions post mortem, as his daughter Mary was a minor in the king's custody. As Richard II himself was not yet of age, we might speculate that John of Gaunt was behind this commission.⁶⁸⁴ If Gaunt was exerting behind-the-scenes influence, it could also explain why the inheritance was split and Henry given Mary's half in 1384, instead of 1385 when she joined Henry's household. They had certainly received seisin of Mary's lands by June 1385, when the sheriff of Hereford was ordered to pay Henry and Mary the fee of the earl of Hereford, noting that Mary had officially proved her age.⁶⁸⁵ The whole process seems to have taken some time. In 1388, the king was still making presentations to churches in Mary's name.⁶⁸⁶

Henry and Mary certainly began co-habiting by the end of 1385, as Henry of Monmouth, the future Henry V, was born in September 1386, followed by Thomas (1387), John (1389), Humphrey (1390), Blanche (1392) and Philippa (1394). Mary died giving birth to Philippa in 1394.⁶⁸⁷ In the *Book of Illustrious Henries* Capgrave remembered the children as the most important legacy of the marriage. Capgrave provides a description of each of them, waxing particularly lyrical on their youngest son Humphrey. Regarding Mary herself he notes only that, 'from his first wife Mary, daughter of a certain earl of Hertford (sic), this king had four sons, outstanding princes among the whole world. Of them the first was Henry V, whose deeds are told in the next chapter'.⁶⁸⁸

Financial accounts from the 1380s-90s indicate that Mary and Henry were far from opposed to each other's company, though they may not have always seen that much of each other. Bolingbroke seems to have spent Christmas and the New Year in London in 1387-88; his accounts show his receiver general giving him money on 1 January 1388 at London. This is unsurprising, given that he was busy with his fellow Appellants at the Battle of Radcot Bridge and attending parliament in December. The same account includes a tip paid to one of Mary's gentlemen for bringing her New Year gift to him, so apparently she did not join him in London, which was to be expected, as she had two young children at that point. It is tempting to speculate that the gold ring with a diamond that he purchased around

⁶⁸³ CPR 1381-85, pp. 56, 490.

⁶⁸⁴ CPR 1381-85, p. 193.

⁶⁸⁵ CPR 1381-85, p. 548.

⁶⁸⁶ CPR 1385-89, p. 381.

⁶⁸⁷ There is some debate regarding the birthdate of Henry of Monmouth. He was almost certainly born in 1386, as at Christmas 1387 Mary de Bohun's accounts show fabric being purchased for 'two gowns for the young lords'. While not impossible, it would have been remarkable for Mary to have given birth to both Henry and Thomas within the space of a year. TNA DL 58/1/2, f. 19.

⁶⁸⁸ Capgrave, *Liber de Illustribus Henricis*, p. 109.

'Hic autem rex, ex prima uxore sua Maria, filia scilicet comitis Hertfordiae (sic), suscitavit quatuor filios, inter mundi principes praefulgentes. E quibus primus fuit Henricus Quintus; cujus gesta in posteriori capitulo divulganda sunt.'

the same time was a belated gift for Mary, in addition to the gown he also gave her.⁶⁸⁹ The same year she made him a gift of a gown made of blue and white – Lancaster colours.⁶⁹⁰ She may have been living at Kenilworth at the time, as fabric was purchased for the infant Thomas of Lancaster’s nurse at Kenilworth that year.⁶⁹¹ Numerous purchases made at Coventry, the closest major town to Kenilworth, as well as messengers sent by Mary from Kenilworth, suggest that Mary and her sons spent a good deal of time there.⁶⁹² John Leventhorp, Henry’s receiver general, was at some point sent from Kenilworth to Oxford to fetch a doctor for Mary, ‘in her infirmity’, which may refer to her pregnancy.⁶⁹³ Mary did travel to court at some point that year: her accounts show that she paid for furs to be added to a gown for the Garter ceremony at Windsor.⁶⁹⁴ In 1391-92, Mary was granted 200 marks for the expenses of her household, and Henry received £300 for his. The children were accounted for separately, so this presumably reflected only their personal expenses.⁶⁹⁵

Gifts given from Henry to Mary for the New Year also allow insight into their relationship, as well as how much time they were spending together. Christmas 1391 saw Henry give Mary a golden *hynde* enamelled in white wearing the collar of the Garter around its neck – this could refer to the Lancastrian greyhound, an indication of Mary participating in displays of family identity. Only the gifts Henry gave to Gaunt and Constance were more expensive (at £12 17s. 4d. and £9 6s. 8d., respectively). The king received a *nouche* of gold in the shape of a leopard with sapphires and pearls – Lancaster colours, again – around its neck.⁶⁹⁶ Bolingbroke apparently did spend Christmas with Mary and their children that year. Tips to messengers bringing him gifts from elsewhere included those of the king and queen, Constance of Castile, Thomas of Woodstock and Eleanor de Bohun, Elizabeth of Lancaster, Katherine Swynford and Thomas Mowbray. That neither his father nor wife are mentioned here suggests he was with them at the time.⁶⁹⁷ He may have been particularly eager to see his family (and beget another heir) while home in between going on crusade in 1390-91 and 1392-93 – their daughters’ birth dates certainly support this conclusion.

It would seem that Christmas 1393 was also spent with Mary, as no member of her household was paid to deliver Bolingbroke a gift that year.⁶⁹⁸ Gifts released directly into Bolingbroke’s hands for personal delivery that Christmas included a rosary of jasper and mother-of-pearl, a *nouche* of gold, a brooch inscribed with the words *sanz mal penser*, and gold crucifixes decorated with pearls. These very personal gifts may have been for Mary and probably coincided with confirmation of her final pregnancy – she died giving birth to their youngest daughter Philippa six months later.⁶⁹⁹ These accounts also includes hints of affection between Henry and his wife. In 1391-92, he sent Mary apples

⁶⁸⁹ TNA DL 28/1/2, ff. 17v-18, 25.

⁶⁹⁰ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 21.

⁶⁹¹ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 19v.

⁶⁹² TNA DL 28/1/2, ff. 19v-20v; 26.

⁶⁹³ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 26; Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*, p. 286.

⁶⁹⁴ TNA DL 28/1/2, 24.

⁶⁹⁵ TNA DL 28/3/3, m. 1.

⁶⁹⁶ TNA DL 28/1/3, f. 15v.

⁶⁹⁷ TNA DL 28/1/3, f. 19.

⁶⁹⁸ TNA DL 28/1/4, f. 18v.

⁶⁹⁹ TNA DL 28/1/4, f. 19.

from London along with spending money.⁷⁰⁰ When he returned to London after spending Christmas with his extended family, he had arranged for oysters and mussels to be sent to Mary at Hertford.⁷⁰¹

One account of Mary's household, from 1387-88, survives, and gives insight into her day-to-day life. It shows her busy making clothing for herself and her children, as well as a riding gown for her husband.⁷⁰² On Maundy Thursday in 1388 Mary provided gowns for eighteen poor women and purchases of an apron and towel for her to wear for the same day indicate that Mary herself played a public role in the ceremonies.⁷⁰³ Multiple references to Mary wearing blue and white show her participating in the public display of family identity. She also made an effort to stay abreast of current events and her husband's activities, making sure that she got updates from the parliament held at Cambridge in September 1388.⁷⁰⁴ Mary also communicated with John of Gaunt's household, for instance corresponding with Gaunt's chamberlain, Richard Abberbury.⁷⁰⁵ She travelled to London at some point that year, as her accounts show her shopping with her sister Eleanor on Bread Street (just behind St Paul's Cathedral) and purchasing a pair of tongs and four collars of leopards.⁷⁰⁶ Like the other members of her family she participated in public displays of wealth and power: Herman Goldsmith (who also worked for John of Gaunt and Henry of Bolingbroke) was paid to make collars, rings and a coronet.⁷⁰⁷

More evidence of shared identity comes after Mary's death in 1395-96 when a Peter Swan was paid for embroidering tapestries 'with eagles and with my lord's badges, namely the arms of England with a label of the arms of Hereford and Derby, with a border of blue and white'.⁷⁰⁸ These are a sign that marriage might shift a man's identity towards his wife's family – even after her death – as well as the opposite. There is no indication of where these tapestries were meant to be hung, though such decorations often travelled with the household. The imagery would have been striking, however, as a sign that Henry represented Hereford and Derby in addition to his royal Lancastrian heritage.

4.1.3.2 Mary de Bohun and Women's Networks in the Duchy of Lancaster

Eleanor de Bohun and Thomas of Woodstock

Mary de Bohun's relationship with her sister Eleanor seems to have been close, and it is worth considering that the sisters' intimacy helped to smooth over any lingering awkwardness between Bolingbroke and Woodstock on the matter of the inheritance. Mary clearly maintained connections with her family, sending gifts to her sister Eleanor, shopping with her, and sending letters to her mother.⁷⁰⁹

⁷⁰⁰ TNA DL 28/1/3, f. 17v.

⁷⁰¹ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 153; TNA DL 28/1/4.

⁷⁰² TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 19.

⁷⁰³ TNA DL 28/1/2, ff. 20v, 21v. The number of women provided for suggests that Mary herself was eighteen that year and was following in her husband's footsteps – Henry famously served the same number of men as his age on Maundy Thursday. This is further evidence of a 1370 birthdate for Mary.

⁷⁰⁴ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 29.

⁷⁰⁵ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 26.

⁷⁰⁶ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 25v.

⁷⁰⁷ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 25.

⁷⁰⁸ TNA DL 28/1/5, f. 24v.

⁷⁰⁹ TNA DL 28/1/2, ff. 25v-26r.

We might question the assumption that because it took some time to sort out the split of the inheritance, it must have been an acrimonious process. Bolingbroke's relationship with his uncle and brother-in-law Thomas of Woodstock is of particular interest. Froissart says that Thomas of Woodstock was livid when he heard that Mary and Henry had married, describing how he

had not any inclination to laugh when he heard these tidings; for it would now be necessary to divide an inheritance which he considered wholly as his own, excepting the constablership which was continued to him. When he learnt that his brothers had all been concerned in this matter, he became melancholy, and never after loved the duke of Lancaster as he had hitherto done.⁷¹⁰

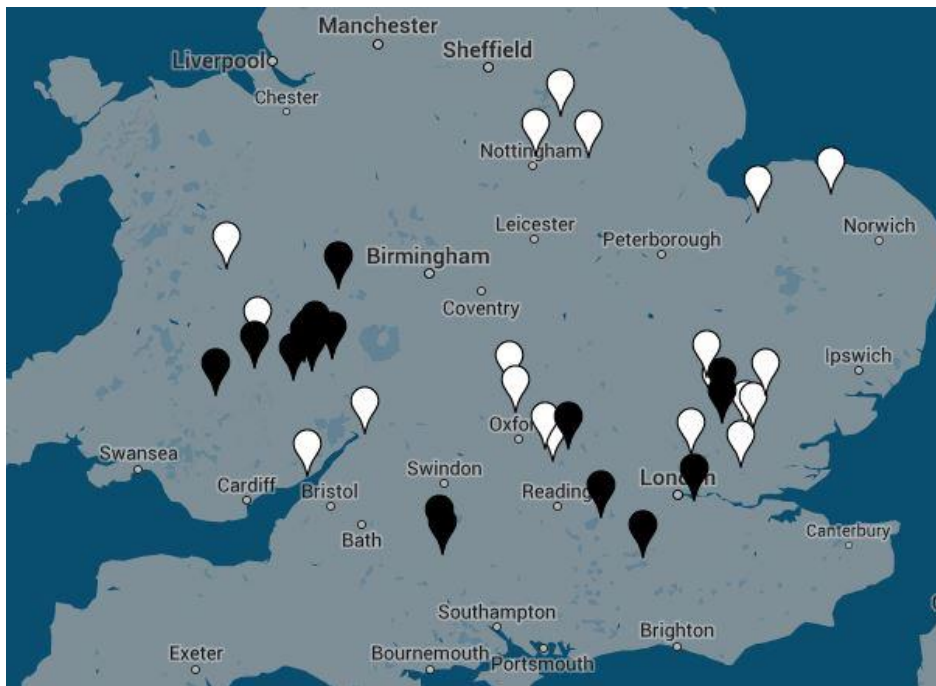


Figure 13 Partition of the Bohun inheritance. Lands granted to Eleanor de Bohun and Thomas of Woodstock are shown in white; those granted to Mary de Bohun and Henry of Bolingbroke are in black.

Goodman argued that dividing the estate created long-lasting problems between the two and made it surprising that Bolingbroke should join the Appellants in 1387.⁷¹¹ Tuck suggested that conflict between Bolingbroke and Woodstock over the Bohun

inheritance 'smouldered' until 1395.⁷¹² However, there is little evidence of much tension between the two, and a good deal to suggest that they got on well. A roll detailing the partition of the lands, which may date from the reign of Henry IV, reveals that the inheritance was divided so that Mary and Henry received a number of those in Herefordshire and Wales (see Figure 13, above), while Eleanor and Thomas were given an area of strength in Essex. The split was not quite even: those given to Eleanor were worth approximately £935 per year, while those Mary received were worth only about £913 – there is no indication that Eleanor was expected to make up the difference to Mary, as happened in the case of Blanche and Maud of Lancaster.

Henry was apparently concerned that he and Mary received everything to which they were entitled. An account from 1391-92 shows payments made to Henry Malpas, custodian of the rolls in the Tower of

⁷¹⁰ Jean Froissart, *Chronicles of England, France and Spain* by Sir John Froissart, ed. and trans. by T. Johnes, I, in *Women of the English Nobility and Gentry*, ed. by Jennifer Ward, p. 624.

⁷¹¹ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 276; *The Loyal Conspiracy*, p. 29.

⁷¹² Anthony Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), p. 9.

London, for looking at and copying Humphrey de Bohun's inquisition post mortem and the assignment made to his widow Joan de Bohun.⁷¹³ Certainly it did take some time to sort out the split, and changes continued to be made afterwards. In 1395, Woodstock agreed to grant to Bolingbroke Canbrefselly, Brentles, Penkelly and Brecknock, all in Wales, in exchange for Westcott (co. Bucks), Newenham (co. Gloucs) and Wethersfield (co. Essex).⁷¹⁴ While it might have been drawn out, there is no indication that this was acrimonious – if anything, it seems that the two were working together to ensure that each had a favourable set of properties. Richard II may not have liked it, though: Woodstock later had to be pardoned for entering into the lands without royal permission.⁷¹⁵ Negotiating this exchange was a fairly complicated process. In 1393, Bolingbroke's receiver John Leventhorp was sent to Winchester to hold talks with Thomas of Woodstock's council regarding the Bohun inheritance and then to London to look at evidence regarding the lands.⁷¹⁶ The fact that there was a disagreement over the best way to split the inheritance does not necessarily indicate that there was tension over this.

In the long term, this relationship seems to have been positive. At Christmas 1391, Henry gave Eleanor a gift (a rosary made of coral and gold), but not Thomas.⁷¹⁷ In 1394, Thomas founded a college of chaplains at Pleshey who were ordered, in addition to prayers for himself and the royal family, to pray for Thomas Fitzalan archbishop of Canterbury and particularly for Henry of Bolingbroke and Mary de Bohun.⁷¹⁸ As late as 1397, Henry of Monmouth was staying in Thomas's household at Pleshy.⁷¹⁹ Bolingbroke's household account of 1397-98 has multiple references to payments for bargemen who formerly worked for his uncle, suggesting that Henry may have taken some responsibility for Woodstock's household after he died.⁷²⁰ After Thomas's murder Richard II granted Bolingbroke some of Woodstock's lands.⁷²¹

Mary de Bohun, Katherine Swynford and the Beauforts

Household accounts – particularly Mary's personal account of 1387-88 – indicate an ongoing relationship between Mary, Katherine Swynford and Katherine's children by Gaunt, particularly Joan Beaufort. At Christmas 1387 Mary made a gift of cloth of white and blue, as well as furs, to Katherine Swynford and Joan Beaufort. Use of the Lancastrian colours of blue and white is further indication that Katherine and Joan were considered part of the family – at the same time Margaret Bagot, wife of William Bagot, was also given cloth, but of red and black.⁷²² This indicates that even after Katherine had ostensibly split from Gaunt, she and the Beauforts were still part of the Lancastrian fold, and also possibly that Katherine's expertise with children was being extended to the next generation. They seem to have stayed with Mary beyond just the Christmas season – at another point that year, Mary gave

⁷¹³ TNA DL 28/3/3, m. 1. The same account shows payments made to Malpas and to Robert Veel, custodian of the rolls in the king's bench, for looking up and copying materials relating to Alice de Lacy's inheritance.

⁷¹⁴ TNA DL 27/170.

⁷¹⁵ CPR 1396-99, p. 13.

⁷¹⁶ TNA DL 41/423.

⁷¹⁷ TNA DL 28/1/3, f. 16.

⁷¹⁸ Goodman, *The Loyal Conspiracy*, p. 83.

⁷¹⁹ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 277.

⁷²⁰ TNA DL 28/1/6, passim.

⁷²¹ CCR 1396-99, p. 246.

⁷²² TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 21.

Katherine and Joan miniver for gowns.⁷²³ The same year, Mary paid to have Herman Goldsmith fix the tongue of a buckle belonging to John Beaufort, which she had broken, suggesting that she was intimate with the entire extended family (and also that John had some expensive buckles).⁷²⁴

4.1.3.3 Marriage and the Appellants

Interrelatedness of the Appellants

Henry's marriage into the Bohun family reaffirmed the importance of the web of relationship Henry of Lancaster had created two generations previously with the marriages of his daughters. In particular, it brought him close to the Fitzalan and Mowbray families, who would prove instrumental during the Appellant Crisis. Research has failed to appreciate the level of inter-relatedness within the Appellants. Goodman, for instance, noted that Richard Fitzalan, John of Gaunt and Richard II shared a mutual descent from Henry III, but failed to mention that Fitzalan was even more closely related to Henry of Bolingbroke through their shared Lancastrian descent.⁷²⁵ The relationship between the Fitzalans and Bohuns, discussed above, seems to have been key. Richard Fitzalan was related to Bolingbroke and Mowbray in the same way: their mothers were his first cousins. Mary and Eleanor de Bohun were also his nieces. He was Humphrey de Bohun's brother-in-law twice over. Connections between the Fitzalans and the Appellants continued into the next generation as well: Thomas Mowbray's wife was Fitzalan's daughter Elizabeth. Richard Fitzalan was Blanche Wake's nephew – he may have been present during the early years of Henry and Thomas's childhoods when they both lived in her household (see below). Certainly their families' involvement at court and in government would have meant that they saw a good deal of each other. There are indications that the families stayed close. When Humphrey de Bohun placed the manors of Rochford and Foulness (Essex) in a trust, the trustees included Thomas Fitzalan, then bishop of Ely, Richard Fitzalan, Joan de Bohun (his sister) and members of the Bohun administration.⁷²⁶ Another trust, for the manors of Thorpe and Great Wakering, Essex included Richard Fitzalan and was evidently created to provide income for Joan de Bohun.⁷²⁷ Another, for the manors of Langham and Peldon, Essex, also included Richard Fitzalan.⁷²⁸ Richard Fitzalan's will testifies to a strong consciousness of family relationships, with specific bequests made to his sons-in-law, including Thomas Mowbray, and his sisters Joan and Alice countess of Kent.⁷²⁹

⁷²³ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 24.

⁷²⁴ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 25.

⁷²⁵ Goodman, *The Loyal Conspiracy*, p. 3.

⁷²⁶ CCR 1385-89, p. 116.

⁷²⁷ CCR 1392-96, pp. 350-351.

⁷²⁸ CPR 1391-96, p. 210.

⁷²⁹ *Testamenta Vetusta*, vol. 1, pp. 131-134.

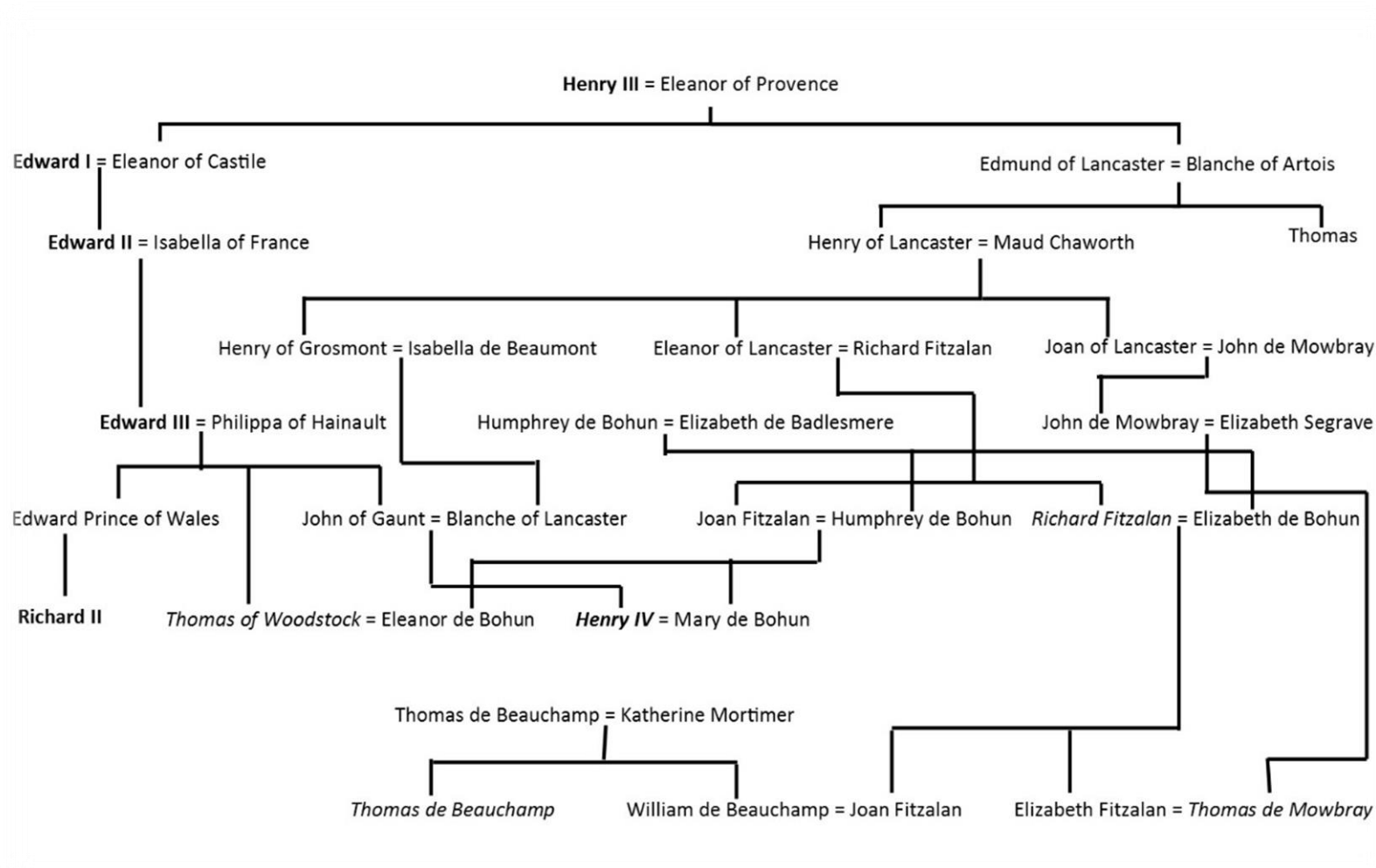


Figure 14 Inter-relatedness of the Appellants. Kings of England shown in bold and Appellants in italics.

John of Gaunt maintained a close ongoing relationship with several of the Appellants, probably facilitated by his wife's relationship to their families, as well as by the natural ties resulting from shared background and interests. William Beauchamp, the younger son of the earl of Warwick who joined the Appellants, and who was married to a Fitzalan, retained for life with Gaunt in 1373, probably in time for the French campaign of that year. He certainly served with Gaunt in the naval campaign of 1378.⁷³⁰ Gaunt attended Eleanor of Lancaster's obit on the first anniversary of her death in January 1373 – he paid the bargemen who transported him from Lambeth to the Savoy on the occasion.⁷³¹ Like many, Gaunt borrowed a great deal of money from Richard Fitzalan (Eleanor of Lancaster's husband and father of the Appellant) – 9000 marks between 1372 and 1380.⁷³²

There was a clear connection between service to the Bohun family and service to Lancaster or others of the Appellants. In November 1389, Bolingbroke interceded to have a pardon granted to Sir Thomas Maundevill, a member of his and his father's retinues who had first served under Humphrey de Bohun as a soldier and administrator.⁷³³ A comparison of men-at-arms who served under Humphrey de Bohun with those who later served in the Lancastrian administration reveals that service to the Bohuns was a route to service with their relatives, both by blood and by marriage. An examination of the *Medieval Soldier Database* provides 101 men-at-arms who served either Gaunt or an appellant and who also served, or were related to those who served, under Humphrey de Bohun in the 1371-72 naval campaigns. Of these men, 44% went on to fight under John of Gaunt, who was clearly the most popular and promising source of patronage; a further 28% served under Richard Fitzalan, the second most popular (see Appendix 4.B).

Gaunt, Bolingbroke and the Mowbrays

Scholars have usually approached the relationship between Henry of Bolingbroke and Thomas Mowbray in the context of the Appellant Crisis and the tragic events of 1398, which saw the pair accuse each other of treason, ordered to duel to the death and ultimately both banished for life. Until the late 1390s, Bolingbroke enjoyed a close friendship with Thomas Mowbray, facilitated by a relationship between the families that extended back several generations. As children, both boys lived in the household of Blanche of Lancaster, the widow of Thomas Wake (see Chapter 2). Blanche acted as guardian for the Lancastrian children in the late 1360s until about 1372 – probably until Katherine Swynford took over as governess.⁷³⁴ Bolingbroke then moved to Katherine's custody, presumably until late 1374, when Thomas de Burton became his governor.⁷³⁵ Blanche Wake was also guardian of Thomas Mowbray and his older brother John (d. 1383) around the same time.⁷³⁶ It is thus reasonable

⁷³⁰ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 832 (pp. 330-332); Adrian Bell et. al., *The Soldier in Later Medieval England Database* <www.medievalsoldier.org> [accessed 11 August 2015].

⁷³¹ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 941.

⁷³² *JGR 1372-76*, no. 94; 161-2, 167, 172, 1241-2, 1659, 1668; *JGR 1379-83*, no. 927.

⁷³³ CPR 1388-92, p. 128; *Medieval Soldier Database* [accessed 12 May 2015].

⁷³⁴ Kirby, *Henry IV*, pp. 14-15; TNA DL 29/262/4069, m. 2; TNA DL 29/248/2809.

⁷³⁵ *JGR 1372-76*, no. 369.

⁷³⁶ TNA SC 8/163/8116.

to assume that Bolingbroke and Mowbray's friendship went beyond the superficial and was actually a lifelong relationship begun when they shared a household as very young children. The Lancastrian children lived with Blanche Wake beginning in Christmas 1367 at the latest, when Henry was only about a year old, so her home was probably the first that he could remember.⁷³⁷ Since Henry was so young, we might speculate that his mother Blanche of Lancaster was with him and had, Gaunt being abroad at the time, gone to stay with her aunt in her husband's absence. It is particularly interesting to note the importance of maternal family: Bolingbroke and Mowbray were most closely connected by their mothers' descent from Lancaster. It is telling that it was to this side of the family that John of Gaunt turned when arranging for his children's care after their mother died.

John of Gaunt, Henry Percy and others seem to have had some sort of official responsibility for John and Thomas Mowbray during their minority. In 1378, Gaunt paid 500 marks to Margaret duchess of Norfolk towards the marriage of the earl of Nottingham, which probably refers to John Mowbray.⁷³⁸ In February 1380 Gaunt paid £20 for the expenses of Mowbray's chamber.⁷³⁹ In March the same year he was paid 100 marks towards the 200 he was owed by the king for John's upkeep. The payment was made by Henry Percy earl of Northumberland, who, like Blanche of Lancaster, was Mowbray's second cousin through their shared descent from Henry earl of Lancaster. In 1381 Gaunt gave John Mowbray a New Year gift of a gold tablet costing five marks. The following year Mowbray received another gold tablet, this time costing 16s.⁷⁴⁰ In March 1381 he paid a further £20.⁷⁴¹ When Mowbray died in February 1383, Gaunt received money from him, though whether this was a bequest or payment of a debt is unclear.⁷⁴² Margaret of Brotherton, duchess of Norfolk, seems to have been another central, albeit behind-the-scenes, figure uniting the Appellants. Archer has noted that she maintained connections with Gaunt, Bolingbroke, Thomas Beauchamp and Richard Fitzlan.⁷⁴³ Henry of Bolingbroke's son John also lived under her guardianship in the 1390s.⁷⁴⁴

Bolingbroke and Mowbray's friendship remained strong into adulthood. May 1389 saw the pair supplicate jointly for a pardon for a John de Thorneton of Leicester.⁷⁴⁵ New Year's gifts are an indication of ongoing friendship as well. At Christmas 1391, Henry gave Mowbray a gold tablet purchased for 40s. While this may not be the sort of personal gift that he gave to his wife or the king the same year, it is worth noting that Mowbray was included in the 'family' section of the list, immediately after Henry's sister Elizabeth and before Katherine Swynford.⁷⁴⁶ Christmas 1397 may show some indication of a deteriorating relationship between Bolingbroke and Mowbray, as there were no gifts exchanged between them that year. The same account does, however, show that Henry gave

⁷³⁷ TNA DL 29/262/4069, m. 2.

⁷³⁸ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 88.

⁷³⁹ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 209.

⁷⁴⁰ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 557; *JGR 1379-83* no. 715.

⁷⁴¹ *JGR 1379-83*, no. 928, no. 556.

⁷⁴² *JGR 1379-83*, no. 914.

⁷⁴³ Rowena Archer, 'Brotherton, Margaret' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* <www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 17 August 2015].

⁷⁴⁴ Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*, p. 207; TNA DL 28/1/6, f. 46; DL 28/1/9, f. 15.

⁷⁴⁵ CPR 1388-92, p. 41.

⁷⁴⁶ TNA DL 28/1/3, f. 16.

gifts to Mowbray's wife Elizabeth (a tablet of gold costing £4) and her oldest daughter Elizabeth. That this child was picked out specially may indicate that Henry was her godfather. The account also lists multiple gifts given to Margaret duchess of Norfolk, at that point custodian of Bolingbroke's third son John of Lancaster, and her household. It includes twenty-three gold rings released to the eight-year-old John to give out to members of the duchess's household.⁷⁴⁷ In this context, the accusations that arose in 1397 that Mowbray had attempted to arrange the murder of John of Gaunt seem utterly bizarre. I have little to add to ongoing discussion of this, beyond suggesting that the peculiar turn of events that culminated in mutual accusations of treason in 1398 might have been prompted, at least in part, by Bolingbroke's fury at realising that a man he considered a close personal friend had been involved in plots on his father's life.

Why did Bolingbroke join the Appellants?

Why Bolingbroke and Mowbray joined the Appellants in the first place has been a matter of some debate. Goodman observed that John of Gaunt associated himself with Henry of Grosmont's family connections, especially the Fitzalans, Mowbrays and Percies. All these connections would prove critical for Henry of Bolingbroke as well, particularly in the Appellant Crisis.⁷⁴⁸ Neither Bolingbroke nor Mowbray were part of the original appeal of treason, but joined immediately prior to the battle at Radcot Bridge in December 1387. Goodman suggests that the decision to join the Appellants was influenced by a combination of concern over Robert de Vere's growing influence, royal recruitment in Lancashire and possibly a desire to gain access to the Appellants' deliberations.⁷⁴⁹ Saul notes that for Thomas of Woodstock, a prime source of annoyance was being forced to compete with de Vere for leadership in his county seat of Essex.⁷⁵⁰ The sense that de Vere was interfering with the Bohun inheritance may have motivated Bolingbroke also. With Gaunt abroad, Woodstock would have found it easier to suggest to his nephew that de Vere should be stopped. Some of the language the chroniclers use supports the notion that Woodstock stepped into a paternal role while Gaunt was abroad in Iberia. Walsingham describes how 'when the duke of Gloucester saw where things were heading, he secretly summoned the earls of Arundel, Warwick and Derby... and revealed his thoughts and told them of the danger which affected all of them alike'.⁷⁵¹ The fact that Walsingham could realistically portray Bolingbroke as responding so readily to his uncle's summons suggests he wielded some influence over his nephew. In July 1385, Richard II granted to Robert de Vere the castle and lordship of Oakham, in Rutland, and the office of sheriff of Rutland, which had previously been held by Humphrey de Bohun as earl of Northampton.⁷⁵² As Bohun's heirs, Bolingbroke and Woodstock could reasonably have expected that one of them would receive these appointments. There may have been a sense that de Vere was interfering with the rights they inherited by marriage. In 1390, the lands were worth £299, so

⁷⁴⁷ TNA DL 58/1/6, ff. 24-24v.

⁷⁴⁸ Goodman, *John of Gaunt*, p. 286.

⁷⁴⁹ Goodman, *The Loyal Conspiracy*, p. 29. It is worth noting that clearly family was not everything. Robert de Vere was related to Henry of Bolingbroke and Thomas de Mowbray in precisely the same way: as a descendent of Maud of Lancaster, he was their second cousin.

⁷⁵⁰ Nigel Saul, *Richard II*, pp. 178-179.

⁷⁵¹ Walsingham, *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham*, ed. by Preest and trans. by Clark, p. 253.

⁷⁵² CCR 1385-89, p. 147; CPR 1385-89, pp. 14, 70-71.

it was not an insignificant oversight on the king's part.⁷⁵³ By 1390 Oakham and the shrievalty of Rutland had been granted to Edward of Aumale, earl of Rutland.⁷⁵⁴

The 'Revenge' parliament, 1397

Relations between Bolingbroke and the former Appellant leaders, Thomas of Woodstock and Richard Fitzalan cooled by the mid-1390s. When Fitzalan was appealed of treason in parliament, Bolingbroke seems to have supported these actions. In exchange for their loyalty, Bolingbroke, along with John and Thomas Holland, Thomas Mowbray and Edmund of Langley were created dukes in January 1398. Several chroniclers depict Richard Fitzalan's disgust at what he understandably saw as Bolingbroke and Mowbray's desertion. Adam Usk, who was probably present in person at the earl of Arundel's trial in parliament, emphasises the betrayal Fitzalan felt:

The articles [of treason] having been explained to him, and he having denied being a traitor with a vigorous spirit, he petitioned for the benefit of the pardon already conceded, protesting that he never wished to remove the king from his grace. The duke of Lancaster said to him, 'Traitor, that pardon is revoked'. The earl responded, 'Truly, you lie! I was never a traitor!' The duke of Lancaster said, 'Why then did you petition for a pardon?' The earl replied, 'To stop the tongues of my rivals, of whom you are one; and certainly, when it comes to treason, you are a greater traitor than I.' The king said to him, 'Respond to the appeal.' The earl responded, 'I see well that those people accuse me of treason, making their appeals. Truly, they all lie! I was never a traitor! I have always petitioned for the benefit of my pardons, which you conceded to me, six years ago, when you were of full age and by your own volition.' Then the king said, 'So I did concede, if it was not contrary to me.' Then the duke of Lancaster said, 'Then it was not a valid concession.' The earl responded, 'Truly I did not know more about that treason than you, who were then overseas.' Then said John Bushey, 'That pardon is revoked by the king, the lords, and us, the faithful commons.' The earl responded, 'Where are the faithful commons? I knew you and your comrades well, what sort of gathering you are, not to act faithfully, because the faithful commons of the king are not here. But I know that they grieve for me, and I know well that you were always false.' And then Bushy and his associates cried, 'See, lord king, in what manner this traitor strives to encourage sedition between us and the common people of the kingdom at home!' The earl responded, 'You all lie! I am no traitor!'

Then the earl of Derby arose and said to him, 'Did you not say to me at Huntingdon, we were first gathered in uprising, that it would be better to seize the king?' The earl responded, 'You, earl of Derby, you lie in your head! I never thought our lord the king, except that good and honour go to him.' Then the king said to him, 'Did you not say to me, at the time of your parliament, in the baths at Whitehall, that Simon Burley, my knight, was deserving of death from many causes? And I responded to you that I knew in him no causes of death; and then you and your associates traitorously killed him.'

And then the duke of Lancaster passed the sentence of death with these words: 'Richard, I steward of England judge you to be a traitor, and that you be taken, hanged, decapitated and quartered, and your lands, entailed and not entailed, confiscated, I officially and definitively condemn you.'⁷⁵⁵

⁷⁵³ CPR 1388-92, p. 354.

⁷⁵⁴ CPR 1388-92, pp. 251, 255.

⁷⁵⁵ Adam Usk, *Chronicon Adae de Usk, AD 1377-1421*, ed. by Edward Maunde Thompson, (London: Henry Frowde, 1904), pp. 12-14. All translations from this work are mine.

Expositis uque eidem comiti articuli, forti animo negando se proditorem, peccit sue perdonacionis beneficium alias concessum, protestando quod nunquam a regis sui gracia vellet recedere. Dux Lancastrie sibi dixit: "Proditor, illa perdonacio est revocata." Comes respondit: "Vere mentiris! Nunquam fuit proditor!" Item dux Lancastrie dixit: "Quare tunc impestrasti perdonacionem?" Comes respondit: "Ad obturandum linguas emulorum meorum, quorum tu es unus; et pro certo, quantum ad prodiciones, tu magis

Thomas Walsingham and John de Trokelowe both describe Fitzalan's anger at Thomas Mowbray and Thomas Holland. Walsingham describes how Fitzalan

was led and pushed to the goal of death by the earl Marshal and the earl of Kent (one his son in law and the other his daughter's son)... And then, looking at his kinsmen and relations, the earl Marshal and the earl of Kent, he urged them to finish the business of his execution and said to them, 'Yes, you especially should have been absent and stayed away from this business. The time is coming when as many people will marvel at your misfortunes as now they marvel at my downfall'.⁷⁵⁶

Trokelowe takes things a step further, informing us that

when he had bent his knees at the drums, and looking at his accomplices, the earls of Nottingham and Kent, the earl of Arundel, to accelerate his beheading, said, 'Truly, you should have been absent in this entire business. I trained, enriched and raised you, and you are repaying me shamefully, like the ungrateful men you are. Surely the time, God willing, shall soon come when you marvel at all your misfortunes...' Then, having pardoned the executioner and given him the kiss of peace, he begged him not to torture him all day, but to cut his head off with one strike.⁷⁵⁷

The appellants and their supporters also played a role in Bolingbroke's invasion of 1399. When he landed at Ravenspur, among those with him were Thomas Fitzalan, archbishop of Canterbury, and the executed Richard Fitzalan's son and heir. The fact that these relationships were ongoing reinforces the suggestion that the Appellants had not been united only out of political expediency, but also by a sense of family relationship.

indiges perdonacione quam ego." Rex dixit sibi: "Respondeas appellacioni tue." Comes respondit: "Bene video quod ille persone accusant me de prodicione, ostendendo appellaciones. Vere mentiuntur omnes! Nunquam fui proditor! Ego semper peto beneficium perdonacionis mee, quam mihi infra vj. annos ultimo elapsos, in plena etate et libera voluntate vestris, ex proprio motu concessistis." Tunc dixit rex: "Ita concessi, si non esset contra me." Tunc dixit dux Lancastrie: "Tunc non valet concessio." Comes respondit: "Vere de illa prodicione plus nescivi tunc quam tu qui in partibus transmarinis fueras." Tunc dixit dominus Johannes Buschey: "Illa perdonacio revocata est per regem, dominos, et nos fideles plebeios." Comes respondit: "Ubi illi fideles plebei? Bene novi te et comitavam tuam ibi, qualiter congregati estis, non ad fidelitatem faciendam, quia plebei fideles regni non sunt hic. Sec scio quid ipsi multum dolent me; et bene scio quod tu semper fuisti falsus." Et tunc Buschei et socii sui clamaverunt: "Ecce, domine rex, qualiter iste proditor nititur suscitare sedicionem inter nos et regni plebeios domi existentes." Comes respondit: "Vos omnes mentimini! Non sum proditor!" Tunc surrexit comes de Derby et dixit sibi: "Nonne tu dixisti mihi apud Huntingtoniam, ubi primo ad insurgendum eramus congregati, quod melius esset omnia capere regem?" Comes respondit: "Tu, comes Derbeij, tu mentiris in caput tuum! Nunquam de domino nostro rege cogitavi, nisi quod sibi boni esset et honoris." Tunc dixit sibi rexmet: "Nunne tu dixisti mihi, tempore parliamenti tui, in balneo deposit albam aulam, quod dominus Symon de Beryrley, miles meus, propter plures causas erat mortis reus? Et ego respondi tibi quod nullas mortis causas in eo scivi; et tunc tu et socii tui ipsum proditore interfecistis." Et tunc dux Lancastrie mortis sentenciam sub hiis verbis tulit in eundem: "Ricarde, ego senescallus Anglie te proditorem esse judico, et te trabendum, suspendendum, decollandum, et quatriperciendum, ac terras tuas taliatas et non taliatas confiscandas sentencialiter et diffinitive condempno."

⁷⁵⁶ Walsingham, *The Chronica Maiora of Thomas Walsingham*, ed. by Preest and trans. by Clark, pp. 300-301.

⁷⁵⁷ Trokelowe, pp. 217-218. My translation.

'Comersus Comes, cum jam genua flexisset ad percussione[m] et intuens attentius suos affines, Comites Notynghamiae atque Canciae, ita ferventes ut acceleraretur ejus decollatio -- 'Vere,' inquit, "vos decussisset absentes fuisse in isto negotio. Ego vos nempe educavi, ditavi, et extuli, et vos dedecus rependitis mihi, velut ingrati. Certe tempus, Deo dante, veniet, et in brevi, quando tot mirabuntur de vestris infortuniiis, quot de meis casibus modo mirantur". Deinde data lictori venia, atque pacis osculo, rogavit ne cum torqueret diutius, sed unico ictu caput ejus amputare studeret.'

4.1.3.4 In-Laws and Others

Mary and Bolingbroke's marriage created extended relationships with their in-laws as well. Mary was probably not terribly close to her father-in-law John of Gaunt, particularly in the early years of her marriage to Bolingbroke. Her New Year gift from Gaunt in the first year of their marriage, 1381, was a gold tablet which cost £2 6s. 8d. This relatively impersonal gift (Gaunt gave Joan of Kent a tablet with the image of a scallop shell and another tablet with the image of St Margaret to Eleanor de Bohun) implies that at this point Mary and Gaunt saw little of each other.⁷⁵⁸ She may, however, have struck up a closer relationship with her sister-in-law Philippa of Lancaster during these years: in July 1388, Philippa sent a message to Mary personally informing her of the birth of her oldest daughter Philippa of Portugal.⁷⁵⁹ By the late 1380s Mary was also communicating personally with John of Gaunt and Constance of Castile, as evidenced by payment for couriers delivering letters between Kenilworth and Bayonne.⁷⁶⁰

Henry of Bolingbroke maintained good relations with his mother-in-law Joan de Bohun; the pair seem to have remained close after Mary's death as well as during her life. The gold tablet with an image of the Virgin Mary which he gave Joan as a New Year gift in 1395-96, for instance, might be a poignant testimony to shared grief at Mary's death.⁷⁶¹ Joan was not forgotten after he became king. A pardon granted in February 1400 at Joan's supplication refers to her as the king's mother.⁷⁶² In April 1401, she was granted the patronage of the hospital of St Katharine by the Tower, a foundation which typically enjoyed the patronage of the queens of England. These are indications that Joan took on a public role at Henry's court, possibly taking on the sorts of queenly roles in which Katherine Swynford, the other woman who could claim the title of Henry's 'mother', was uninterested.

4.1.4 Death and Memory

4.1.4.1 Mary de Bohun's Death

Mary died 2 July 1394 and was buried at the Lancastrian foundation St Mary in the Newarke in Leicester. Her funeral was held, according to John de Trokelowe 'with great expense and solemnity' the day after her mother-in-law Constance's.⁷⁶³ There is little of the sort of evidence for memorialisation that we have for Bolingbroke's mother Blanche of Lancaster – Bolingbroke never found the time to have an effigy made for Mary and this was eventually done under Henry V.⁷⁶⁴ Bolingbroke was concerned that Mary be appropriately and promptly commemorated, however. In 1395, gowns for twenty-four paupers were brought from London to Leicester for Mary's first obit. It is unclear whether the gowns had been made in London, or whether they might actually have been the

⁷⁵⁸ JGR 1379-83, no. 715 (pp. 231-233).

⁷⁵⁹ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 26v.

⁷⁶⁰ TNA DL 28/1/2, f. 26v.

⁷⁶¹ TNA DL 28/1/5, f. 25.

⁷⁶² CPR 1399-1401, p. 199.

⁷⁶³ John de Trokelowe's Chronicle, p. 168.

'Obiit eo tempore Comitissa de Derby, conjux Domini Henrici de Derby, filii Ducis Lancastriae. Quarum exequiae factae sunt apud Leycestriam duobus diebus continuatis, scilicet, Dominica et feria secunda sequente [or die Lunae sequente], cum magnis sumptibus et solemnitate.'

⁷⁶⁴ Fehrman, p. 87.

same ones used for Blanche's obits.⁷⁶⁵ After Henry acceded, it was arranged that the monks of St Mary Graces near the Tower of London should hold annual obits for Mary. The letters patent confirming the exchange ordered that

her name shall be read in the chapter and her soul absolved by the abbot or president with psalms and collects for the dead and ringing of bells as it customary in the order for founders and abbots and the office if the dead, viz. *placebo* and *dirige* with music and all other solemnity, shall be sung in the choir by the abbot and convent with chaplains and four singers in the more noble vestments of the monastery, and on the day of the anniversary a mass of the Virgin with music and another solemn requiem mass shall be celebrated by the abbot, prior or president at the high altar with candles lit and the altar prepared as at Christmas.⁷⁶⁶

These services probably only began after Henry IV's accession to the throne, but may nonetheless reflect Mary's personal wishes. Possibly Henry arranged for obits to be celebrated in London so he could attend in person, something that would have been difficult with the services held in Leicester. The requests of a mass for the Virgin and that the altar be prepared as if for a Christmas may reflect Mary's own wishes for her commemoration, though without a surviving copy of her will, it is impossible to say definitively. She may have had a particular affinity for the Virgin Mary (which could explain why Bolingbroke arranged obits in a church named for the Virgin), after whom she was named. This, combined with the Christmas decorations, might suggest that Mary identified strongly with her role as a mother. If Mary's birthday was around Christmas, as I have argued, and since the couple also married in the Christmas season, the altar decorations may have been intended to commemorate these events.⁷⁶⁷ Those attending the services would have been metaphorically transported to these earlier events of Mary and Henry's life together, a reminder that in the medieval world, the relationship created by marriage lasted past death.

4.4.1.2 Henry of Bolingbroke's 'Widowerhood', 1394-1399

Discussions of Bolingbroke's second marriage began reasonably quickly after Mary's death. Richard II's correspondence with the Aragonese court suggests that there was some discussion of Henry marrying a daughter of King Martin of Aragon.⁷⁶⁸ When Anne of Bohemia died in 1394, Yolande of Aragon was mooted as a second wife for Richard II.⁷⁶⁹ An alliance with Aragon was thus seen as desirable, which may explain the suggestion that Richard was also hoping to arrange an Aragonese marriage for Bolingbroke. A marriage for Bolingbroke's oldest son Henry of Monmouth was also discussed, with the suggestion tabled that the young Henry might marry Michelle, youngest daughter of Charles VI of France.⁷⁷⁰

⁷⁶⁵ TNA DL 28/1/5, f. 27v.

⁷⁶⁶ CPR 1399-1401, p. 457. St Mary Graces was a Cistercian foundation established by Edward III in 1350 just outside the Tower of London. It was a small foundation created essentially as a royal free chapel.

⁷⁶⁷ Many thanks to Anna M Duch for her helpful assistance and suggestions in this analysis.

⁷⁶⁸ Richard II of England, *Diplomatic Correspondence of Richard II*, ed. by Edouard Perroy, Camden Third Series, XLVIII (London: Camden Society, 1933), no. 229A (p. 169).

⁷⁶⁹ Saul, *Richard II*, p. 225.

⁷⁷⁰ *Diplomatic Correspondence of Richard II*, no. 237 (p. 172).

Bolingbroke's banishment in 1398 saw him move to France, a very appropriate move for a number of reasons. A more European outlook may have been part of his life from a young age. Walker has noted that Gaunt's household, particularly in the years after his marriage to Constance of Castile, included an abnormally large number of foreigners, lending it 'a distinctively cosmopolitan glamour' that not only highlighted Gaunt's reputation, but also signified that his ambitions were perhaps more European in outlook than English.⁷⁷¹ This was true for many English aristocrats of Henry's generation, in part because Richard II's failure to produce children pushed them and their children more into international politics.⁷⁷² His upbringing in this atmosphere may have emphasised to Henry and his siblings that they, too, would have a role to play on the European stage. Evidence of Henry's continental links is clear in some of his financial accounts as well. For instance in 1395-96, we have him paying to have boots given him by the king of Hungary (presumably when he passed through on crusade) embroidered.⁷⁷³ Bolingbroke's crusading experience certainly gave him a more international outlook than many of his peers had.

As Given-Wilson has noted, Bolingbroke's arrival in Paris after his banishment coincided with a period of deterioration in Anglo-French relations, as well as increasingly polarised factions within the French court. In particular, the dukes of Orléans and Berry were dissatisfied with the English truce and Richard II's marriage to Isabella of Valois. Bolingbroke's presence in Paris only highlighted this tension, especially as many at the French court believed Richard II had behaved foolishly in his relations with Bolingbroke.⁷⁷⁴ He struck up a relationship with Louis duke of Orléans, who helped Henry in marriage negotiations for the hand of both Lucia Visconti and Mary countess of Eu, the duke of Berry's daughter. Given-Wilson observes that Bolingbroke and Orléans were united by their mutual interest in Anglo-French relations further deteriorating – Orléans because he favoured war with England and Bolingbroke because weak relations could loosen Richard II's grip on power and allow him to return home.⁷⁷⁵

The duke of Orléans, apparently eager to have some say in who would be Bolingbroke's next wife, helped Henry in his negotiations for both Mary countess of Eu and Lucia Visconti. Orléans almost certainly went on to supply secret aid to Bolingbroke's invasion of England in 1399, and it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he used his own remarriage as leverage to gain support for his cause.⁷⁷⁶ Negotiations with Mary of Berry highlight the ongoing conflict between Bolingbroke and Richard II, as well as providing insight into Anglo-French relations and how these things were negotiated in the first place. The *Chronique de Religieux de Saint-Denys* tells us that Henry

had already begun to think in terms of hostile action against the English king and his kingdom. The duke of Berry, in whom he placed special trust, had noticed his mood, and, whenever he heard him complaining, endeavoured to sympathise with him. He told him that brave souls do not allow themselves to be downhearted by reversals of fortune, but resign themselves to

⁷⁷¹ Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*, p. 12.

⁷⁷² Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, p. 175-176.

⁷⁷³ TNA DL 28/1/5, f. 24v.

⁷⁷⁴ Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution*, pp. 25, 28.

⁷⁷⁵ Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution*, p. 28.

⁷⁷⁶ Palmer, *England, France and Christendom*, pp. 128-129, 225.

waiting for better times. He reminded him in eulogistic terms of the valour and loyalty of his father, and whenever the young duke showed him letters from his partisans in England urging him to return, he advised him to eschew any dishonourable action which might sully the reputation bequeathed to him by so great a prince. Henry thanked the duke of Berry for his words of consolation; he feigned indifference, and pretended to be cheerful.⁷⁷⁷

Clearly Bolingbroke was spreading his influence as far as possible, as the author of the chronicle also reveals that Henry made a secret alliance with the duke of Orléans as well as with the duke of Burgundy.⁷⁷⁸ In the end, Richard II sent John Montagu earl of Salisbury to Charles VI's court with instructions that he ask the king to end the negotiations. According to Froissart, Charles took Bolingbroke's side privately, but did agree that talk of the marriage should nonetheless stop.⁷⁷⁹ Froissart reveals that

in truth, the king of France and his family were perfectly well disposed toward the earl of Derby, whom they greatly respected, and wished always for his company. It was considered that he was a widower, likely to marry again, and that the duke of Berry had a daughter, who, though so young, was a widow of two husbands: she had been first married to Louis de Blois, who had died in his youth, and then to the lord Philip d'Artois, count d'Eu, who died in Turkey, as you have read in this history. Mary of Berry was not more than twenty-three years old, and a marriage between her and the earl of Derby was talked of and nearly concluded.

The duke of Berry knew well that the earl of Derby was the greatest heir apparent in England, as did the king of France, who was anxious this match should take place, on account of his daughter being queen of England. It was natural to imagine that two such ladies, so nearly related, would be agreeable company to each other, and that the kingdoms of France and England would enjoy longer peace, and be more intimately connected.

All this would probably have been true, if it could have been accomplished, but King Richard and his council broke off all these measures.⁷⁸⁰

Negotiations were also opened with Gian Galeazzo Visconti duke of Milan for the hand of his niece Lucia Visconti. Lucia wanted to marry Henry, whom she had possibly met when he travelled through Milan on his return from the Holy Land in 1393. An interrogation of Lucia reveals that her uncle expressed concern that Bolingbroke had fallen out of favour with Richard II, asking whether

if after she had waited two or three years for the Earl of Derby and he had not within that time found favour with the king, whether after the expiry of those years she was disappointed of both marriages, to wit, that with the Earl of Derby and that with the Margrave of Misnia, whose ambassadors are here, whether she would consent to the duke giving her to wife to Dom Gabriele, the duke's own son, legitimated by the King of the Romans, if she pleased, and if not, that he should provide her with another suitable husband; and if she would not have either Gabriele or another, but would rather wait for the Earl of Derby, the duke is content that she shall wait for the earl and have him for her husband after he has returned to favour with the King of England, the said earl giving one of his daughters to one of the duke's sons. The Duke of Milan asked Donna Lucia to think well over these things before any further steps

⁷⁷⁷ *Chronique de Saint-Denis* in *Chronicles of the Revolution : 1397-1400 : The Reign of Richard II*, ed. and trans. by Chris Given-Wilson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), pp. 105-106.

⁷⁷⁸ *Chronique de Saint-Denis*, pp. 109-110.

⁷⁷⁹ Given-Wilson, *Chronicles of the Revolution*, p. 29; Froissart, *Chroniques*, pp. 97-100

⁷⁸⁰ Froissart, *Chronicles of England, France and Spain*, vol. 2, pp. 94-95.

were taken with the ambassadors of the Margraves of Misnia, who had come for a marriage between her and Frederick, Margrave of Misnia, so that they might give a reply to the said ambassadors. And that Donna Lucia in reply to the duke's suggestions aforesaid replied to him as follows: that if she was certain to have the Earl of Derby for her husband, she would wait for him as long as she could, to the very end of her life, even if she knew that she would die three days after the marriage; but as she was not certain, and as Don Gabriele might refuse her for being too old, she was content that the duke should proceed with the ambassadors for a marriage with the Margrave of Misnia. The duchess therefore asked Donna Lucia if she still adhered to that answer, and Donna Lucia in the presence of all the witnesses aforesaid replied that she was still of the same opinion and was content that they should proceed to the conclusion of the marriage between her and the said margrave.⁷⁸¹

This interrogation highlights the roles that women played in planning marriages, both for themselves and each other, acting as intermediaries for men and staying aware of political necessities. Particularly interesting is the fact that Lucia's opinion was taken into account and her worry that she was too old. Lucia Visconti was about twenty-seven in 1399, which was considerably later than most women married; this helps explain why she was given more choice than was perhaps typical for a woman of her rank. Bolingbroke's position as exile was crucial – the idea that Lucia might marry him while he was still out of favour with the king was apparently never even considered, even though Lucia clearly wanted the marriage. Lucia's opinions underscore how personal and practical considerations could comfortably coexist: she saw no conflict between her preference for Henry and her unwillingness to marry a man who was out of favour with his king. This sheds more light on Bolingbroke's position in exile: not only could he not return to England and not claim his inheritance, but while out of favour, he could not move forward with his life at all, with marriage negotiations also closed to him.

4.1.5 Conclusions

Henry of Bolingbroke's marriage to Mary de Bohun highlights how motives for marriage which might, on the surface, appear straightforward, can in fact reflect a very complicated set of family relationships. Mary and her sister were the great heiresses of their generation, but her connection to Lancaster and Arundel were also important considerations – and her mother took advantage of all these factors to ensure that her daughter had the best possible start to marriage. Mary and Henry, who were of a similar age and had probably met in childhood, developed a positive relationship, as evidenced by a care shown for each other's wellbeing, personalised gifts and Henry's concern that Mary's memorials reflect her personality. Relationships with in-laws were particularly important in this marriage. Mary developed connections with Henry's legitimate and illegitimate siblings; Henry, for his part, adopted the Bohun political circle as his own. He seems to have genuinely mourned Mary's early death, ensuring that she was promptly remembered and that, even when he was in London, he would be able to attend memorials. The negotiations he entered for his second marriage reflect Lancaster's shifting concerns as it moved from a national to an international power.

⁷⁸¹ *Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts in the Archives and Collections of Milan, 1385-1618*, ed. by Allen B Hinds (London: HMSO, 1912), accessed via British History Online <www.british-history.ac.uk> [accessed 11 August 2015]. In 1406 Lucia did make an English marriage – to Edmund Holland, earl of Kent.

Appendix 4.A Split of the Bohun Inheritance⁷⁸²

Eleanor de Bohun

Essex

Pleshey 106s. 8d.

High Easter £50

Waltham £50

Wykes 40 marks

Shenfield £22

Court and honour of High
Easter £4

Fee of the earl of Essex £40 10s. 10d.

Chishill 4s.

Total Essex £198 14s. 10d.

Hertfordshire

Farnham £19

Hertford 17s. 4d.

Mary de Bohun

Wales

Brecon Castle £293 6s. 8d.

Hay Castle £51

Total Wales £354 6s. 8d.

Herefordshire

Court of the honour of Hereford 10s.

Fee of the earl of Hereford £20

Bodenham, Great Cowerne,
Kyngeston, Burghulle, Stratford 17s. 8d.

Total Herefordshire £21 7s. 8d.

Gloucestershire

Harsefield £20

Newenham 40s.

Total Gloucestershire £22

⁷⁸² Based on CCR 1377-1381, pp. 390-394; 511-516

Total Hertfordshire £19 17s. 4d.

Gloucestershire

Wheatenhurst £21 7s.

Total Gloucestershire £21 7s.

Herefordshire

Huntingdon Castle 42 marks

Caldicot Castle/Newtown 40 marks

Total Herefordshire £54 13s. 4d.

Lincolnshire

Long Bennington £72 16s. 8d.

Total Lincolnshire £72 16s. 8d.

Nottinghamshire

Kneesall £21 14s. 9½d.

Arnold £11 5s. 5½d.

Total Nottinghamshire £33 3d.

Oxfordshire

Hasele £10

Kertyngton 20 marks

Peryngton 20 marks

Total Oxfordshire £36 13s. 4d.

Berkshire

Henton £26 13s. 4d.

Total Berkshire £26 13s. 4d.

Wiltshire

Uphaven £26 13s. 4d.

Frankpledge of Netherhaven 6s. 8d.

Moneken Farle 13s. 4d.

Total Wiltshire £27 13s. 4d.

Kent

Westgrenewhyche 20d.

Total Kent 20d.

Northamptonshire

Fee of the earl of Northampton £20

Total Northamptonshire £20

Essex

Hallingbury 13s. 4d.

Total Essex 13s. 4d.

Oxfordshire

Ascote 10 marks

Total Oxfordshire £6 13s. 4d.

Berkshire

Wodespene 106s. 8d.

Total Berkshire £5 6s. 8d.***Norfolk***

Fulmodeston £20 4s. 8d.

Total Norfolk £20 4s. 8d.***Kent***

Frankpledge of Sauston 5s.

Total Kent 5s.***Wales***

Barony of Penkelly £22 4s. 5¼d.

Total Wales £22 4s. 5¼d.***Knights' Fees******Hertfordshire***

North Mymms £7 10s.

Shenley £3 15s.

Bushey 100s.; £6; 25s.

Stapelford 100s.

Ayette 100s.

Enfield and Sawbridgeworth 100s.

Buckinghamshire

Westcote £10

Total Buckinghamshire £10***Herefordshire***

Gadorton Hyldehop 100s.

Humbre 50s.

Testeshormarfre 50s.

Testeserne 100s.

Lastres 50s.; 50s.

Weston Bret 25s.

Enefield	100s.	Little Couherne	50s.
Gedleston	5s.; 50s.	Strateford	50s.
Sawbridgeworth	50s.; 50s.	Borleton	50s.
Stortford	50s.	Bodenham	100s.
Bolyngton and Farnham	£3 15s.	Kyngeston	100s.
Hide	50s.	Burghulle	100s.
Honesdon	25s.	Couherne	50s.; 33s. 4d; 33s. 4d.
Berkwey	50s.	Irdesleghe and Balynghulle	50s.
Henxteworth and Asshewelle	100s.	Whiteneye	100s.
Bissheie and Bekeswelle	100s.	Heregast	50s.
Gedleston	50s.; 10s.	Mokkas and Sutton	100s.
Dekeswelle	50s.	Avenebury	100s.
Berden	25s.	Venne	50s.
<i>Total Herefordshire</i>	<i>£80 10s.</i>	Rouden	50s.
<i>Somerset</i>		Prestemedede	£10
Purye	33s. 4d.	Thorleston	50s.
<i>Total Somerset</i>	<i>£1 13s. 4d.</i>	Little Hereford	£10
<i>Cambridgeshire</i>		Penkelly	50s.; 25s; £22 4s. 5 ¼d.
Chipenham	50s.	Skateroke	50s.

Foulbourne	100s.	Lanhankelok	50s.
Lynton	£12 10s.	Peiteveneschastell	50s.
Trippelowe	50s.	Laughty	25s.
Sauston	£15	Lower Venne	50s.
<i>Total Cambridgeshire</i>	<i>£37 10s.</i>	Little Freine	50s.
		Hulle	50s.
<i>Rutland</i>		Rous Maune	50s.
Holbeche	£12 10s.	Hopton, Habornelle	50s.
Little Paunton, Great Paunton, Germesthyrop, Kesteven, Glaston	£12 10s.		
<i>Total Rutland</i>	<i>£25</i>	Alisandriston	50s.
		<i>Total Herefordshire</i>	<i>£146 16 1¼</i>
<i>Lincolnshire</i>			
Thoresby	150s.	<i>Gloucestershire</i>	
<i>Total Lincolnshire</i>	<i>£7 10s.</i>	Elmor	50s.
		Harsecombe and Brokthrop	100s.
<i>Sussex</i>		Pagenhulle	100s.
Wyngeselle	100s.	Upper Lupeyate	100s.
Ore	100s.	Harnhulle	50s.
<i>Total Sussex</i>	<i>£10</i>	Alkrynton	50s.; 50s.
		Baundaynton	50s.; 50s.
<i>Surrey</i>			
Clopham, Kyrsalton, Waunebeugh, Maundevylle	£20		

Horslegh	100s.	Bislee and Wynston	100s.
<i>Total Surrey</i>	<i>£25</i>	Baudyngton and Wygewold	25s.
<i>Oxfordshire</i>		Westbury	100s.
Kyngham	50s.; 50s.	Langford	10s.
Wendelbury	100s.	Biselee	25s.
Stonhore	100s.	Leightryngton	50s.
Lacheford	50s.	Shenecote	100s.
<i>Total Oxfordshire</i>	<i>£17 10s.</i>	Shipton Pelye	50s.
<i>Middlesex</i>		Frompton and Bolysdon	50s.
Greneford and Stekelyngdon	£10	Blechedon	50s.; 10s.; 5s.
Enefeld	20s.; 20s.	Lower Lupeyate	50s.
Northalle in Ickenham	£4 15s.	Morecote	50s.
Southmymmes	100s.	Dontesborne	50s.
Stekelyngdon, Iselden, Hadden by Hundeslowe	50s.	Culkerton	10s.; 50s.
Iselden	100s.	Barnedeslegh	100s.
<i>Total Middlesex</i>	<i>£29 5s.</i>	Wygewold	50s.
<i>Kent</i>		Southcerneye	£7 10s.
Heriettesham by Osprynge	75s.	Asebrok	5s.
Swynefeld	100s.	Waddon and Morton	£10
Otrendon	10s.	Dodmerton	50s.

Sauenden	25s.
Mayhamme in Rollyngden	£10
Rollynden	£10
Samdenne	25s.
Lossenham	25s.
Louedane	£15
Kaeoke and Wokkele of the abbot of Robertsbridge	50s.
Stapelherst	25s.
Swynefeld	£12 10s.
Bylsyngton	£10
Rollynden	100s.
<i>Total Kent</i>	£78 15s.
 <i>Northamptonshire</i>	
Northampton	£10
Hynton	£10
Ayne	£7 10s.
Aston	100s.
Colleworth, Creuilton, Lachamstede	£10

<i>Total Gloucestershire</i>	£97
 <i>Southamptonshire</i>	
Borgate	100s.
Walop	100s.
Mayweston Somborne	£7 10s.
Chelworth	50s.
Estrop	100s.
Grateleghe	50s.
Suthmygham	25s.
<i>Total Southamptonshire</i>	£28 15s.
 <i>Berkshire</i>	
Wanesyngge	50s.
Idesleghe and Wydehay	£10
Deneford	100s.
Godyngfloud	10s.
Stretlegh	100s.
<i>Total Berkshire</i>	£23
 <i>Wiltshire</i>	

Compton	100s.
Hynton by Brackele	£10
Aston	100s.
Hynton by Wodeford	100s.
<i>Total Northamptonshire</i>	<i>£68 10s.</i>

Kyngeston Lovell	100s.
Horyngham	100s.
Swaleleve	50s.
Berton	50s.
Netherhaven	100s.
Wynterslowe and Newenton	100s.
Wynterborne Cherebergh	100s.
Chiriton	50s.
Westambresbury	50s.
Somerford	50s.; 10s.
Segre, Benyngton, Westkokham	100s.
Pouerton and Whitford	100s.
Westambresbury	6s. 3d.
Wynbourne	100s.
Newenton	50s.
Couleston	50s.
Erdescote	25s.
Lokerugge	50s.
Hetynton	5s.; 5s.
Thornhulle	50s.

Hertham	50s.
Trolle	20s.
Grafton	100s.
Brodehenton	100s.
Rikarkeston	50s.
Aschelebeche	100s.
<i>Total Wiltshire</i>	<i>£,86 1s. 3d.</i>

Somerset

Launeyate of Kyngton	100s.
Clotton and Farnebergh	£10
Nony	100s.
Foxcote	50s.
Great Mersshton	100s.
Trente	50s.
<i>Total Somerset</i>	<i>£,30</i>

Dorset

Frome in Wytefeld	100s.
Upwymbourne	6s. 3d.
Thorneton	50s.
Gussych	100s.

		Bradeford and Mokelford	100s.
		Brokhampton	25s.
		Little Churchelle	50s.
		Bere	50s.
		<i>Total Dorset</i>	<i>£24 1s. 3d.</i>
Advowsons			
Essex			
Dependen	£20		
Quenden	100s.		
Snefeld	£8		
Pleshey	10 marks		
Badwe	20s.		
Wykes	20 marks		
<i>Total Essex</i>	<i>£53 10s.</i>		
Bedfordshire			
Pertenhale	£8		
Tillebroke	£10		
<i>Total Bedfordshire</i>	<i>£18</i>		
Buckinghamshire			
Nottele Abbey	£40		
		Gloucestershire/March of Wales	
		Landencilok	£8
		Penderyn	£8
		Brechon Castle	40s.
		Barndeslegh	20 marks
		Bislee	20 marks
		Lanthonry Priory	100 marks
		<i>Total Gloucestershire/March of Wales</i>	<i>£111 6s. 8d.</i>
		Berkshire	
		Hulegh Priory	40 marks
		Henton	£10
		<i>Total Berkshire</i>	<i>£36 13s. 4d.</i>
		Hertfordshire	
		Farnham	£12

Total Buckinghamshire £40

Huntingdonshire

Stonle Priory 10 marks

Total Huntingdonshire £6 13s. 4d.

Norfolk

Ketelston £8

Total Norfolk £8

Oxfordshire

Haselee £40

Total Oxfordshire £40

Gloucestershire

Barndeslegh 20 marks

Total Gloucestershire £13 6s. 8d.

Wiltshire

Farlee Priory 40 marks

Total Wiltshire £26 13s. 4d.

March of Wales

Stangedeles 10 marks

Neweton 20 marks

Total Hertfordshire £12

Shropshire

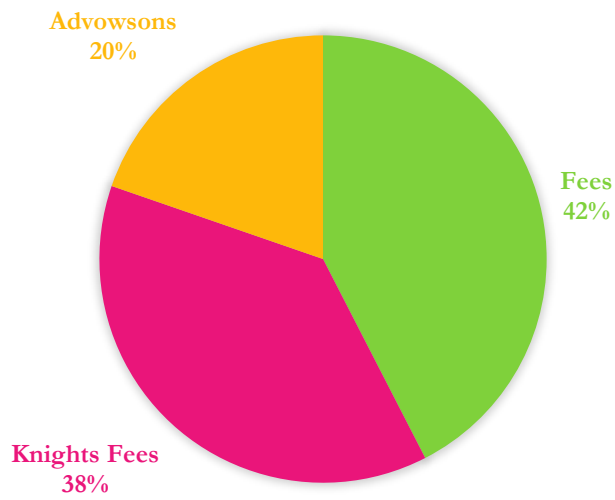
Ideshale 100 marks
12d.

Total Shropshire £66 14s. 4d.

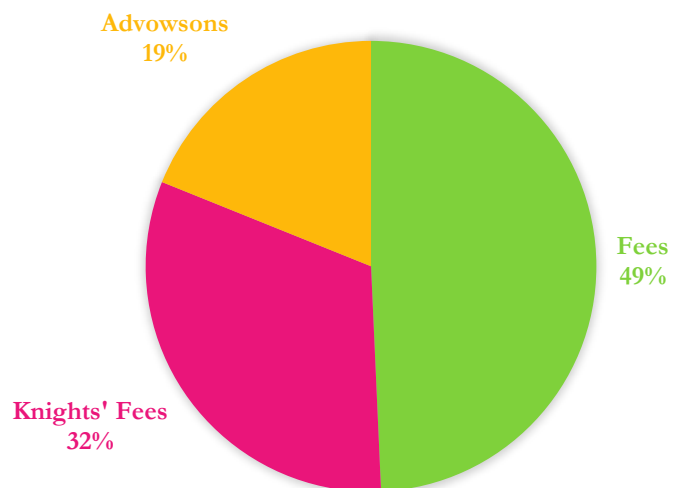
Total March of Wales

£20

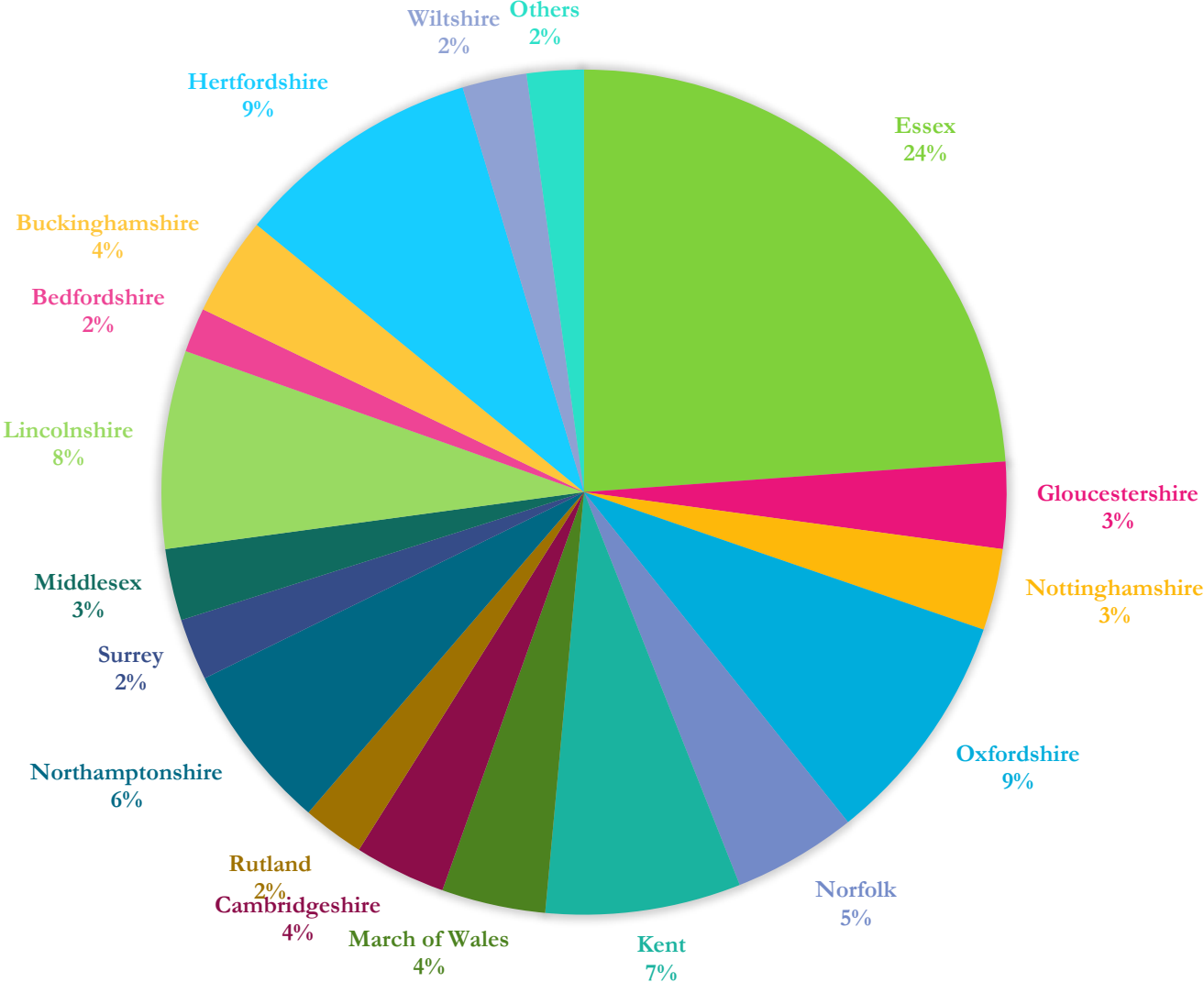
HENRY OF BOLINGBROKE/MARY DE BOHUN



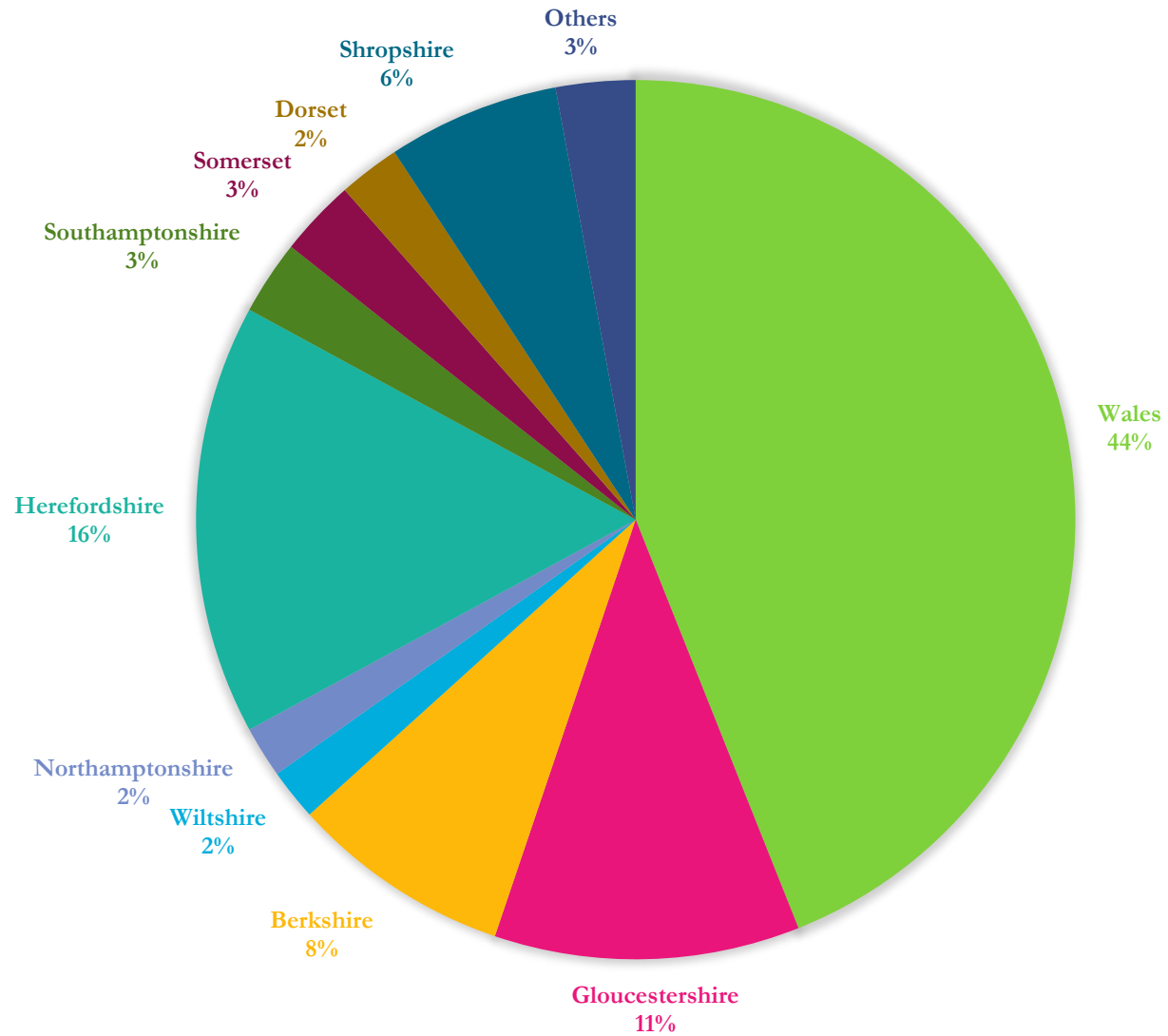
THOMAS OF WOODSTOCK/ELEANOR DE BOHUN



THOMAS OF WOODSTOCK/ELEANOR DE BOHUN



HENRY OF BOLINGBROKE/MARY DE BOHUN



Appendix 4.B Men who Served Humphrey de Bohun and Gaunt/an Appellant

The following is a list of men-at-arms who contracted with Humphrey de Bohun to serve on either the 1371 or 1372 naval campaigns, who also then went on to serve under John of Gaunt (or known retainers of Gaunt), one of the Appellants, or Henry IV. In some cases, the same man served; in others, where a family relationship can be assumed, members of the same family served.

NAME	EXPEDITION	NAME	SERVED	CAPACITY
Baldwin Malet	1371, naval	John Malet	John of Gaunt	Retainer
Peter/Piers Lestrangle Hamo Lestrangle	1371, naval 1372, naval	Richard Lestrangle Robert Lestrangle Roger Lestrangle Roger Lestraunge John Lestrangle Hamo Lestrangle Hamo Lestraunge Hamo Lestrangle Sir John Lestrangle "	Richard Fitzalan " " " " " " " John of Gaunt " Henry IV	1378, naval " " 1387, naval 1378, naval " 1387, naval Retainer, 1382 Retainer, 1373-82 Controller of Henry IV's household
William Lucy	1371, naval	Sir William Lucy Thomas Lucy	John of Gaunt "	Retainer, 1381-99 Retainer, 1398-99
Gilbert Gyffard	1371, naval	John Giffard	John of Gaunt	Retainer, 1381-82
Thomas Maundeville ", senior	1371, naval 1372, naval	Thomas Maundeville	John of Gaunt	Retainer, 1372-99
Thomas Burton	1371, naval	Thomas Burton	John of Gaunt	Retainer, 1370-82
Ralph Basset	1371, naval	Ralph Basset Ralph Basset, esq.	John of Gaunt "	France, 1373 "
John Bonham	1372, naval	John Bonham	Thomas Beauchamp Richard Fitzalan Henry IV	France, 1373 1378, naval 1387, naval Scotland, 1400
John Braham	1372, naval	John Braham	Michael de la Pole Stephen le Scrope Henry IV	1377, naval Ireland, 1395-97 Scotland, 1400
John Bray	1372, naval	John Bray John Bray [jr?]	Thomas of Woodstock Hugh Luttrell Richard Fitzalan John of Gaunt Thomas of Lancaster	1378, naval 1387, naval 1388, naval Retainer, 1372-75 France, 1415
John Brewes	1372, naval	John Brewes Thomas Brewes John Brewes [jr?]	Richard Fitzalan Richard Fitzalan Henry V	1378, naval 1387-88, naval 1387, naval France, 1415
John Burgh (knight)	1371, naval	John de Burgh	Richard Fitzalan	1387, naval

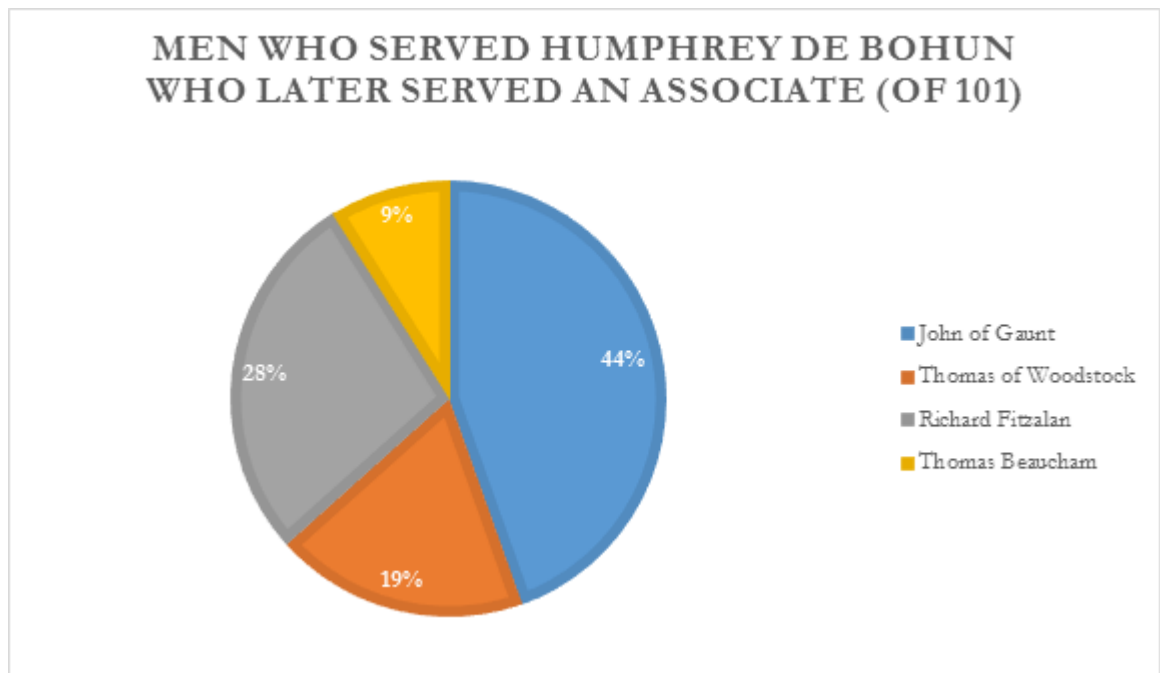
Thomas Cheyne	1371, naval	Roger Cheyne "	Thomas Beauchamp John of Gaunt	France, 1373 Retainer, 1382
John Clanevough	1372, naval	John Clanvowe Thomas Clanvowe Thomas Clanevowe	William de Neville John of Gaunt " Henry IV	1378, naval " Scotland, 1400
John Clenele	1372, naval	James Clenele	Richard Fitzalan	1388, naval
Walter Clopton	1371, naval	Walter Clopton Walter Clopton	Thomas of Woodstock Humphrey of Lancaster	1378, naval France, 1415
John Colville	1372, naval	Thomas Colville	John of Gaunt	Retainer, 1372-73
Thomas Cotes	1372, naval	Thomas de Cotes	John of Gaunt	France, 1373
Thomas Courteys	1372, naval	Reginald Curteys John Curteys	Michael de la Pole John of Gaunt John Beaufort John of Gaunt	Calais, 1386 Retainer, 1396-99 Wales, 1403 Retainer, 1391-99
Edward Dalyngrigg	1371, naval	Edward Dalingrigge John Dalingrugg Edward Dalyngrugg	John of Gaunt Richard Fitzalan	1378, naval " 1387, naval
Ralph Danyel	1372, naval	John Daniel	Thomas Beauchamp	France, 1373
Richard Darundell	1371, naval	John Darundell William Darundell	John of Gaunt Richard Fitzalan "	1378, naval 1387-88, naval 1388, naval
John Daubeney	1372, naval	John Daubeney	John of Gaunt	France, 1373
Robert Donyngton	1372, naval	Hugh de Donyngton	John of Gaunt	France, 1373
Laurence Everard	1372, naval	Laurence Everard	Thomas of Woodstock Henry V John of Gaunt	France, 1380 France, 1415 France, 1373 France, 1373-74 France, 1380-81 1387, naval Wales, 1403
William Everard	1372, naval	John Everard William Everard Reginald Everard	Thomas Beauchamp John Beaufort	France, 1380-81 1387, naval Wales, 1403
Robert Fitz Rauf	1372, naval	Robert Fitzralph	John of Gaunt	Retainer, 1373-87
John Gedeneye	1372, naval	John Gedeneye William Gedny	Richard Fitzalan Thomas of Woodstock	1387, naval 1380, France
William Golofre	1372, naval	Nicholas Golofre	Thomas Beauchamp	France, 1373
William Grymeston	1372, naval	Thomas Grymeston Thomas Grymston William Grymston	Richard Fitzalan " "	1388, naval 1387, naval 1387, naval
Piers Hauton	1372, naval	Hugh Hauton	Thomas of Woodstock	1377, naval
Esmon Hevenyngham	1371, naval	John Hevenyngham	Thomas of Woodstock	1377, naval

John Leche	1371, naval	John Leche	Thomas of Woodstock	1378, naval
John Merland	1372, naval	John Merland John Merland	Richard Fitzalan Thomas of Woodstock	1387, naval 1377-78, naval
Walter Meux	1371, naval	Thomas Meaux John Meux	John of Gaunt Thomas of Woodstock	Retainer, 1382 1378, naval
John Michel Robert Michel	1372, naval "	Robert Michel Simon Michel	Thomas Beauchamp (Gaunt) Richard Fitzalan	France, 1373 1378, naval
Thomas Moreux	1371, naval	Thomas Morieux	John of Gaunt	Retainer, 1381-85 Gaunt's son-in-law
John Multon Roger Multon	1372, naval 1372, naval	John Multon	Thomas of Woodstock	1377-78, naval
Robert Neuton Simon Neuton John Neuton	1371, naval 1372, naval "	Simon Neuton	Thomas of Woodstock (Gaunt)	1378, naval
Richard Neville Robert Neville	1372, naval "	Robert Neville	John of Gaunt	Constable of Pontefract
John Parys	1372, naval	John de Parys	Thomas Beauchamp (Gaunt)	France, 1373
William Peche	1372, naval	John Peche John Pecche	Thomas of Woodstock John of Gaunt	1377-78, naval Retainer, 1382
Walter Power	1372, naval	Walter Power "	John of Gaunt Henry IV	1372-74 (naval, France) Scotland, 1400
John Preston(e)	1372, naval	John de Preston John Preston	John of Gaunt Thomas of Woodstock	France, 1373 France, 1380-81
Roger de Scales	1372, naval	Robert de Scales	Henry IV	Scotland, 1400
Thomas Seyncler Thomas Sencler	1371, naval	Janebyn Seyncler Thomas Sencler Philip Sencler John Seynclere	John of Gaunt Richard Fitzalan " John of Gaunt	1378, naval 1388, naval " Retainer, 1377-83
Thomas Shank	1372, naval	Thomas Shank "	John of Gaunt Richard Fitzalan	1378, naval 1388, naval
Ralph Shelton	1372, naval	Ralph Shelton "	Richard Fitzalan Henry IV	1388, naval Scotland, 140
Thomas Shrouesbury	1372, naval	Thomas Shrouesbury	John of Gaunt	France, 1373
John Staple	1372, naval	John Staple	Richard Fitzalan	1387-88, naval
William Stone	1372, naval	William Stone	Thomas Beauchamp (Gaunt) John of Gaunt	France, 1373 1378, naval
Theobald de Sudbury	1372, naval	William Sudbury	John of Gaunt	Retainer, 1372-82

Thomas Symond	1372, naval	Thomas Symond	John of Gaunt	Retainer, 1373-87
William Testard	1372, naval	William Testard	John of Gaunt	1372-74 (naval, France)
Robert Teye	1371, naval	John Teye	John of Gaunt	1372-74 (naval, France)
Thomas Trivet	1371, naval	Thomas Tryvet	John of Gaunt	1372-74 (naval, France)
Hugh Tyrel	1372, naval	Hugh Tyrel John Tyrel " (sr. and jr.) John Tirell Hugh Tirell	Thomas of Woodstock " Richard Fitzalan Thomas Beauchamp (Gaunt) "	1377-78, naval " 1388, naval France, 1373 "
Richard Waldegrave Walter Waldegrave	1371, naval	Walter Waldegrave	John of Gaunt	1378, naval
Alexander Waldene Richard Walden	1372, naval	Alexander Walden	Thomas of Woodstock (Gaunt)	1378, naval
Ralph Walton	1371, naval	Ralph de Walton Ralph Walton	John of Gaunt Thomas of Woodstock (Gaunt)	France, 1373 1378, naval
Robert Waynflete	1372, naval	Robert Waynflete	Richard Fitzalan	1388, naval
Robert Witteneve Baldwin Witteneve	1372, naval "	Roger Witteneve	John of Gaunt	1378, naval
William Wrotham Richard Wrotham	1372, naval "	William Wrotham	Thomas of Woodstock	1377-78, naval
William Wyndesore	1372, naval	William de Wyndesore	William Windsor Thomas of Woodstock	Ireland, 1374-76 France, 1380-81
John Wynter	1372, naval	John Wynter " John Winter	Thomas of Woodstock Richard Fitzalan John of Gaunt	France, 1380-81 1388, naval Receiver of Norfolk and Suffolk, 1396-98

Men who Served Gaunt	Men who Served an Appellant	Both
Ralph Basset	John Brewes (Fitzalan)	John Bray (Fitzalan)
John Braham	Thomas Brewes (Fitzalan)	Roger Cheyne (Beauchamp)
Thomas Burton	Richard Lestrangle (Fitzalan)	Hamo Lestrangle (Fitzalan)
John Clanvowe	Robert Lestrangle (Fitzalan)	John Lestrangle (Fitzalan)
Thomas Clanvowe	Roger Lestrangle (Fitzalan)	Edward Dalingrigge (Fitzalan)
Thomas Colville	John Bohham (Fitzalan, Beauchamp)	John Darundell (Fitzalan)
Thomas de Cotes	John de Burgh (Fitzalan)	John Everard (Beauchamp)
Reginald Curteys	James Clenele (Fitzalan)	John Preston (Woodstock)
John Curteys	Walter Clopton (Woodstock)	Thomas Shank (Fitzalan)
John Dalingrugg	John Daniel (Beauchamp)	William Stone (Woodstock)
John Daubeney	William Darundell (Fitzalan)	Ralph Walton (Woodstock)
Hugh de Donyngton	Laurence Everard (Woodstock)	John Winter (Woodstock, Fitzalan)
Robert Fitzralph	William Everard (Woodstock)	
Baldwin Malet	Reginald Everard (Fitzalan)	
John Giffard	John Gedeneye (Fitzalan)	
William Lucy	William Gedny (Woodstock)	
Thomas Lucy	Nicholas Golofre (Beauchamp)	
Thomas Maundeville	Thomas Grymston (Fitzalan)	
Thomas Meaux	William Grymston (Fitzalan)	
Thomas Morieux	Hugh Hauton (Woodstock)	
Robert Neville	John Hevenyngham (Woodstock)	
John Pecche	John Leche (Woodstock)	
Walter Power	John Merland (Woodstock, Fitzalan)	
Janekyn Seyncler	John Meux (Woodstock)	
John Seynclere	Robert Michel (Beauchamp)	
Thomas Shrouesbury	Simon Michel (Fitzalan)	
William Sudbury	John Multon (Woodstock)	
Thomas Symond	Simon Neuton (Woodstock)	

William Testard	John de Parys (Beauchamp)
John Teye	Thomas Sencler (Fitzalan)
Thomas Tryvet	Philip Sencler (Fitzalan)
Walter Waldegrave	Ralph Shelton (Fitzalan)
Roger Witteneve	John Staple (Fitzalan)
	Hugh Tyrel (Woodstock, Beauchamp)
	John Tirell (Woodstock, Fitzalan, Beauchamp)
	Alexander Walden (Woodstock)
	Robert Waynflete (Fitzalan)
	William Wrotham (Woodstock)
	William de Wyndesore (Woodstock)



Includes men who served more than one.⁷⁸³

⁷⁸³ From *Medieval Solider Database* [Accessed 15 July 2015]; Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity*, pp. 262-292.

Conclusion

This project has examined the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of elite marriage in late medieval England, using the earldom and duchy of Lancaster as a case study. Considered by many anthropologists the cornerstone of kinship and society, marriage is a subject of contention in the modern world. To grasp where society is now and where it is going, we must clearly understand where we have been. Much that is assumed about marriage in the past – that couples married exclusively for money or power; that no one freely chose his or her spouse; that women’s opinions were irrelevant; that marriage was exclusively between one man and one woman – is only part of the truth. A study of medieval marriage illustrates areas where this institution has changed remarkably little and areas where it is drastically different.

To that end, I have focused on three major questions: why did the elite class marry? What was marriage like and what defined a ‘successful’ marriage? What were the effects of marriage, in the short and long term? I have taken a chronological approach, allowing an analysis of how and why marriages changed – or remained the same – through time. In line with my research questions, each individual study has addressed the questions of motives for marriage, the relationships created by marriage and the legacy of each marriage.

Although medieval marriage has been thoroughly addressed in scholarly literature, and aristocratic marriage has been touched upon, this study is the first in-depth examination of elite marriage in the medieval period. It also contributes to the growing field of medieval family biography. It offers insight into political history, providing a new look at some of the most famous figures of the period, as well as highlighting some whom scholarship has overlooked.

Motives

Scholars have generally identified the growth of landed wealth and political influence as the main motives for marriage among medieval elites. My research confirms that these considerations were among the most important, and usually at the forefront of marriage negotiations. Thomas of Lancaster, Henry of Lancaster, John of Gaunt and Henry of Bolingbroke all married heiresses who brought lands into the Lancastrian fold. Nonetheless, an examination of the political motives for marriage is more revealing than has been previously appreciated. Marriages must be discussed within quite a broad context in order to fully understand the motives behind them. Edmund of Lancaster’s marriage to Blanche of Artois adds nuance to our understanding of Anglo-French policy in the decades before the Hundred Years War. It also highlights the change in English focus in the time between Edmund’s marriage to Aveline de Forz and his marriage to Blanche: where in the 1260s ties between the royal family and the nobility were most important, by the time Edmund married Blanche, the focus had moved outside England’s borders. Thomas of Lancaster’s marriage to Alice de Lacy helps clarify Edward I’s ‘policy’ towards his earls. The marriages of Henry of Lancaster’s seven children allowed him to, in effect, create more sons to be allies. These marriages demonstrate his reaction to the politically unstable 1320s-30s. By marrying some of his daughters to established families like the Fitzalans or Percys and others to more risky up-and-comers like the Beaumonts or Burghs,

Henry guaranteed that he and his heirs would have allies no matter how politics played out. In particular, the double marriages with the Beaumont family reveal the importance of these crucial allies in the short-term – Henry of Grosmont’s marriage to Isabella de Beaumont, which would not normally have been considered, was probably only made practical by the number of his sisters who could be married elsewhere. John of Gaunt’s marriages also reflected national and international politics. His first marriage to Blanche of Lancaster was certainly motivated by her half of the Lancastrian inheritance, as well as Edward III’s desire to make sure that the Lancastrian inheritance strengthened his own family, not a potential enemy. Constance of Castile’s marriage to Gaunt, like Edmund of Lancaster’s to Blanche of Artois, underscores the shifts between domestic and international concerns. It also demonstrates the importance of Castile and its navy to England as the second phase of the Hundred Years War began. Gaunt’s final marriage to Katherine Swynford highlights his concerns about Richard II’s rule and the Lancastrian succession. Like Gaunt’s marriage to Blanche of Lancaster, Henry of Bolingbroke’s marriage to Mary de Bohun was intended not only to bring him half of the Bohun inheritance, but also to make sure that no one else received it. Bolingbroke’s negotiations for his second marriage demonstrate that, particularly after his exile in 1398, he was envisioning a more international than domestic role for Lancaster. Although contracted between individuals, marriages at the top of society thus had a ripple effect across England and Europe.

There is no simple answer to the question of whose needs elite marriages were meant to meet. Unsurprisingly, most of these marriages of the highest level of society benefited the crown in some way. The unions of Edmund of Lancaster and Aveline de Forz, Thomas of Lancaster and Alice de Lacy, Henry of Lancaster and Maud Chaworth, and John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster all reinforced the crown’s domestic policy, bringing valuable land into the sphere of royal influence. Other marriages – between Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois, Maud of Lancaster and both her husbands, and John of Gaunt and Constance of Castile – extended English influence internationally. The evidence I have discussed suggests that the most important factor was how a marriage would benefit the family (though, of course, family and crown overlapped in many instances). Edmund of Lancaster’s marriage to Blanche of Artois was obviously valuable from the perspective of European politics, but her proven fertility was crucial to the family’s success. Thomas of Lancaster’s marriage to Alice de Lacy brought lands which complemented those Thomas was set to inherit. His brothers’ marriages created areas of influence that would allow for the most efficient management of the Lancastrian patrimony. Henry of Lancaster’s daughters married influential men who would prove to be valuable sources of support for the family over several generations. John of Gaunt’s marriage to Katherine Swynford reinforced a fragile line of succession. Henry of Bolingbroke’s marriage to Mary de Bohun extended Lancastrian landed influence. There were no marriages that met only the needs and desires – whether practical or personal – of the couple involved. John of Gaunt and Katherine Swynford, and Eleanor of Lancaster and Richard Fitzalan, had reasons other than personal satisfaction that made their unions good for the family and crown as well as themselves. While John of Gaunt may have married Constance of Castile to pursue his own ambitions, the match was equally about European politics. In this context, the double marriages Henry of Lancaster arranged with the

Beaumont family in the late 1320s are anomalous. These unions did nothing for the Lancastrian patrimony, and must be explained by Henry's personal need for alliances towards the end of Edward II's reign. The best marriages worked on a number of levels: Henry's own marriage to Maud Chaworth, for instance, extended royal and Lancastrian influence in the Welsh marches, helped to divide his brother's lands for easy management, and saw to it that Henry would be well supported. The most important thing at the end of the day, however, was supporting the family, whether by securing the succession, adding valuable land or ensuring the heir would be well allied.

Although this thesis has discussed 'practical' and 'personal' motives at length, it has also demonstrated that these two categories are neither distinct nor mutually exclusive. Elites were obliged to participate in political life by virtue of their birth; what these men and women did in their personal lives was bound to affect politics at all levels. A look at 'personal' choices – such as whether, when and whom to marry – can illuminate individuals' reactions to and opinions on events of their time, which can be difficult to gauge otherwise. Medieval society conceived of marriage not as an institution best based on love, but rather one best based on shared family interests, teamwork and mutual respect. While today we might feel that a marriage must be either a 'love match' or made for personal gain, the medieval mind had no difficulty taking into account both the emotional and the practical. Lucia Visconti, for instance, was perfectly capable of expressing a strong personal preference while also refusing to marry a man who was out of favour with his ruler. To the modern mind, this smacks of hypocrisy, but to the medieval mind it was perfectly rational – marriage was simply too important to be based on emotion alone. Of course people *did* marry for love, but in this study even the 'love matches' were also supported by persuasive practical factors. Alice de Lacy probably loved Ebulo Lestrangle, but their marriage also allowed her protection while simultaneously providing her with a high degree of autonomy. John of Gaunt probably loved Katherine Swynford, but their marriage also served the practical purpose of bolstering the Lancastrian succession.

Discussion of motives for marriage can create the impression that medieval elites were emotionless automatons, which is far from the truth. Henry of Lancaster and his great-grandson Henry of Bolingbroke both seem to have developed genuine feeling for their wives, though this was not a guaranteed result from the marriage's outset. John of Gaunt appears to have genuinely grieved at Blanche of Lancaster's death. His later marriage to Katherine Swynford was politically justifiable, but it is unlikely he would have made such an unusual decision if not motivated by love. Eleanor of Lancaster and Richard Fitzalan certainly behaved rashly; they were a good match, but the fact that she became pregnant before his first marriage was annulled suggests they allowed their emotions to overcome their better judgement. We should avoid assuming that love and passion were not there, simply because such evidence has not been recorded.

This study has demonstrated that women as well as men played a central role organising marriages for themselves and their daughters, though it is often more implied than explicit. Failing to address women's motivations for marriage reinforces the notion, often incorrect, that all medieval women were pawns in their male relatives' machinations. Powerful medieval women had their own goals and

concerns and were keen to pursue these through marriage (among other means), just as their male counterparts did. In her study of early modern and modern aristocratic marriage, Schutt has argued that women's choices in marriage provide 'a good suggestion' to their personal identities, an idea that can be translated backwards as well.⁷⁸⁴ For women who were in a position to make their own choice of marriage partner, like Blanche of Artois, Alice de Lacy and Katherine Swynford, their decisions illuminate their concerns and desires. Blanche of Artois was a political actor in her own right: as dowager queen of Navarre she organised a marriage for her infant daughter and negotiated a treaty with France. She arranged her own marriage to Edmund of Lancaster, and though a number of men were involved in the negotiations, Eleanor and Margaret of Provence, queens of England and France respectively, were almost certainly acting behind-the-scenes. Alice de Lacy was responsible for her marriage to Ebulo Lestrage, and, as discussed above, her choice clearly reflects her personal concerns. Constance of Castile had the guidance of her father's supporters, but with no close living male relative to arrange the marriage, John of Gaunt was *her* choice as husband. Gaunt is often given the credit for organising Henry of Bolingbroke's marriage to Mary de Bohun, but sources make it clear that Mary's mother Joan, and her aunt Elizabeth Fitzalan, also played a role – possibly a duplicitous one – in orchestrating the marriage. First marriages *were* often negotiated by parents, and fathers certainly played the most public role, though it is safe to assume that many mothers exerted influence where they could. There is evidence, however, that while girls' fathers first considered practical motives, they also worked to create marriages that could be true partnerships. They generally saw to it that their daughters were relatively close in age to their husbands, and in many cases girls married boys they had known from young childhood. Women's needs were considered in the arranging of marriages, and they sat at the negotiating table along with men.

Factors taken into account in first marriages often differed from those subsequent marriages. While a first marriage was always based on practical considerations in this sample, subsequent marriages might take other considerations into account. If a widowed man had no heirs, his later marriages were more likely to be based on practical considerations. Edmund of Lancaster's first marriage to Aveline de Forz was childless when she died in 1274. When he remarried to Blanche of Artois the next year, the goal was expansion of landed and political interests. That Blanche's first marriage had produced two children would have been extra reassurance. If heirs had been produced in an earlier marriage, later marriages could be delayed and were more likely to be based on personal considerations, though this was not always the case. Although John of Gaunt's marriage to Katherine Swynford had a political element, it was also at least partly based on his personal affection for her. When Henry of Bolingbroke's first wife Mary de Bohun died in 1394 she left six surviving children, including four sons. In the 1390s, Bolingbroke leveraged his status as a widower in his political manoeuvrings; he took his time remarrying and did not take another wife until he married Joan of Navarre after succeeding as Henry IV.

⁷⁸⁴ Schutt, p. 1.

The complexity of the political considerations and fallout from medieval marriages has not been fully appreciated. The motives for marriage were often considerably more involved than has been appreciated in scholarly literature on aristocratic society. The same literature has often depicted motives for marriage as a straightforward ‘tit-for-tat’ exchange; in fact, my research has begun to reveal that the best marriages might allow for a number of positive outcomes. Finally, an appreciation of the political and social circumstances surrounding a marriage can help to reveal individuals’ reactions to contemporary events.

Relationships

This thesis’s second theme has been relationships, both of the couple in question as well as those created with in-laws and others. Personal relationships between the married couples were diverse. John of Gaunt and Katherine Swynford, as well as Eleanor de Bohun and Richard Fitzalan, seem to have been very much in love. Others – Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois, Henry of Lancaster and Maud Chaworth, John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster, Henry of Bolingbroke and Mary de Bohun – married for practical reasons, but developed strong (and possibly loving) partnerships. Still others – Henry of Grosmont and Isabella de Beaumont, John of Gaunt and Constance of Castile – married for practical reasons, but had relatively little to do with each other in the end. The only marriage in this study that was a complete failure on the personal level was that of Thomas of Lancaster and Alice de Lacy. The most common marriage was one based on practicality, but which developed into affection and cooperation. The so-called ‘love match’ may not have been common, but neither was the complete disaster.

The experience of sexual transgression, especially adultery, was gendered. Evidence gathered from chronicles – generally the product of male clerics – reveals that in practice, men could behave in ways that women could not. Thomas of Lancaster had two sons out of wedlock during his marriage to Alice de Lacy. These sons were known and went on to become part of the royal administration under Edward III, but no criticism of Thomas’s adultery survives. In 1317, however, when Alice de Lacy was taken by John, Earl Warenne, several chroniclers were happy to criticise her behaviour. Thomas Walsingham was clear that Alice was innocent in her abduction and rape, and equally clear that she was still ‘the foulest prostitute’.⁷⁸⁵ Walsingham was similarly happy to tarnish the reputation of Katherine Swynford to criticise John of Gaunt. Women who committed sexual transgressions were labelled whores, but men who engaged in similar acts were rarely criticised.

It has been suggested that a crucial goal of elite marriage was the creation of in-laws, and my study has backed this up, though to in-laws I would add friends, rulers and step-families. Blanche of Artois’s relationships at the French court, particularly with her daughter the queen, facilitated Edmund of Lancaster’s activities as a diplomat and gave Lancaster a stake in the French throne. At the same time, Blanche seems to have developed a close (if occasionally tense) relationship with Edward I. Thomas of

⁷⁸⁵ Thomas Walsingham, *Chronica Monasterii S. Albani, Thomae Walsingham, Quondam Monachi S. Albani, Historia Anglicana*, ed. by Henry Thomas Riley, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1863), p. 148. All translations from this work are mine.

Lancaster's marriage to Alice de Lacy made him heir to Henry de Lacy; in addition to inheriting his father-in-law's property, he may have also inherited Lacy's position as dissident under Edward II. For Alice, the marriage ensured that for the rest of her life, well after Thomas's death, she had to deal with subsequent earls of Lancaster, and they with her. Henry of Lancaster's relationships with his sons-in-law were central to his political activities in the turbulent 1320s-30s. The women of the family also developed relationships – Eleanor of Lancaster and Isabella de Beaumont spent time together, Blanche Wake and Isabella de Beaumont sent papal petitions together. Blanche of Lancaster's marriage to John of Gaunt reflected Lancastrian connections to the throne strengthened by Henry of Grosmont – and the hope that that relationship would continue into future generations. For Constance of Castile, marriage to Gaunt guaranteed not only his personal involvement in the question of Castilian succession, but the continued interest of the English court more generally. Henry of Bolingbroke's marriage to Mary de Bohun was probably a central element of his support of the Appellants and particularly of Thomas of Woodstock, his brother-in-law as well as uncle. Evidence suggests that well after Mary's death, Bolingbroke maintained a relationship with her mother Joan. Step-relationships were also important: Richard Fitzalan took responsibility for the marriages of Eleanor of Lancaster's Beaumont children; Henry IV referred to Constance of Castile and Katherine Swynford as 'mother'. Elite marriage meant not only marrying a specific person, but also his or her family, previous children, associates and rulers –categories which often overlapped.

Legacy

Finally, this study has addressed the question of a marriage's legacy, both in the short and long term. Scholars have long recognised the key role that heirs, particularly male heirs, and inheritance played in medieval marriage. Many male heirs created a good deal of flexibility. The three sons of Edmund of Lancaster and Blanche of Artois – Thomas, Henry and John of Lancaster – made marriages with great noble families of England and France, extending their parents' influence across both countries. Thomas's unusual marriage agreement with Alice de Lacy, which guaranteed that her inheritance would pass to his heirs in the event that they had no children (which is what eventually happened) surely depended on the fact that Thomas had younger brothers. Having many children opened possibilities. Henry of Lancaster and John of Gaunt both had a number of children and were able to make crucial alliances nationally and internationally. By the same token, a failure to produce heirs had real consequences, not only in terms of patrimony. Gaunt already had three children, including a son, when he married Constance of Castile. However, Constance's failure to produce a male heir to the throne of Castile made it difficult to attract Castilian nobility to their cause and may have contributed to their inability to successfully claim the Castilian throne. In other cases, however, political factors took precedence over questions of inheritance. When Philippa of Lancaster, daughter of John of Gaunt and Blanche of Lancaster, married João of Portugal in 1387 she was twenty-six, quite old for a first marriage. There must have been questions as to how many children, if any, she would be able to have at such an 'advanced' age, yet the political necessity for an alliance between Lancaster and the royal house of Portugal was such that the marriage proceeded. As it happened, Philippa gave birth to six surviving children.

When male heirs were lacking, members of the house of Lancaster employed strategies to ‘create’ sons. As mentioned previously, the marriage agreement of Thomas of Lancaster and Alice de Lacy, which ensured that Alice’s inheritance would pass into the house of Lancaster whether or not there was issue from the marriage, can be interpreted in the context of marriages arranged by Edward I for his daughters and leading English earls. In each of these cases, the earldom was granted in such a way that, in the absence of heirs, it would pass to a royal house instead of the earl’s nearest male heirs. These marriages were all made between 1284 and 1302, a period in which Edward had only one living son. This suggests that, in addition to curtailing the growing power of earls, Edward was eager to add powerful men – and their property – to the royal family. Henry of Lancaster had only one son, Henry of Grosmont, but six daughters. Three of them married their father’s wards, which suggests that Henry was keen to contract marriages for his daughters with men who could be expected to represent his interests.⁷⁸⁶ When Constance of Castile died in 1394, John of Gaunt had only one son, Henry of Bolingbroke. As mentioned above, John’s marriage to Katherine Swynford and the subsequent legitimisation of their children created three new legitimate male heirs. The Beauforts played crucial supporting roles for the royal house of Lancaster into the reign of Henry VI, roles they would not have been able to play if they had remained illegitimate.

My research has not demonstrated much in terms of an ongoing family strategy for marriage. Of course most marriages were made with the goal of adding landed wealth, but this hardly sets Lancaster apart. There was probably a slight preference for spouses with influence in the Midlands – Alice de Lacy, Thomas Wake and Mary de Bohun all came from families who owned land in the area. The problem of Lancaster’s power affected marriage decisions for several figures under discussion here: Henry of Lancaster and Henry of Bolingbroke may have chosen not to remarry partly out of concern that the move would look provocative. John of Gaunt may have married Katherine Swynford in part because she brought little land to the marriage. Whether this amounted to a family strategy is difficult to say. At the same time, there is little evidence that marriages reflected longterm family alliances. The only example might be Henry of Bolingbroke’s marriage to Mary de Bohun, as the Bohun family had been allies of Lancaster at least since the early fourteenth century. Shorter-term relationships – Edmund of Lancaster and Henry de Lacy, Edward III and Henry of Grosmont – seem to have been more important. In general, Lancaster’s marriage strategy was generally more *ad hoc*, designed to meet the needs of the moment and perhaps of the next generation, without too much thought of the family’s longterm past or future.

I have suggested that choices made for burial and memorialisation of a deceased spouse reflect, in some cases, the amount of grief at that person’s death. Generally, a couple’s choice to be buried together or separately does not seem to have reflected the quality of their relationship. Where burial clearly reflects an individual’s wishes (as opposed to, for example, convenience or tradition), we might take this choice as a statement of identity. For Blanche of Artois, Alice de Lacy and Maud Chaworth, burial in establishments patronised by their natal families suggests that, in death, they preferred to

⁷⁸⁶ Blanche of Lancaster married Thomas Wake; Maud of Lancaster married William de Burgh; and Joan of Lancaster married John de Mowbray. All men were wards of Henry of Lancaster.

symbolically return home. Evidence suggests that Katherine Swynford had planned to be buried in Lincoln Cathedral for some time before she died. She chose burial in a foundation to which she had personal ties over one with strong Lancastrian connections. Henry of Lancaster and his son Henry of Grosmont chose to be buried at St Mary in the Newarke in Leicester, symbolically tying themselves to the growing Lancastrian mausoleum. Mary de Bohun and Constance of Castile were also buried at St Mary's. In Constance's case this was clearly planned, as over three months passed between her death and burial, and when Mary died only days before Constance's funeral, it may have been decided that burying her at the same time as her mother-in-law was the simplest – and cheapest – solution. If he had not become king, we might speculate that Henry of Bolingbroke would have also chosen St Mary's for himself. For Blanche of Artois, Constance of Castile and Katherine Swynford, the choice to be buried alone was probably connected to the fact that their husbands were buried with their first wives. Edmund of Lancaster was buried near Aveline de Forz in Westminster Abbey and John of Gaunt in St Paul's Cathedral in a double tomb with Blanche of Lancaster. This may have reflected the disquieting concern that only a first marriage could be entirely valid, though in the case of Blanche, it surely also reflected Gaunt's genuine affection for her. Elsewhere, the decision to be buried next to a second spouse made the statement that *this* was the marriage that mattered: Eleanor of Lancaster was buried next to Richard Fitzalan, not John de Beaumont; her sister Maud was buried next to Ralph de Ufford, not William de Burgh. Hand-holding tombs may have been something of a Lancastrian tradition, possibly highlighting a marriage where the wife was seen to have contributed more than usual.

Evidence for memorialisation is limited to later generations of the family. In the case of Blanche of Lancaster, there is a good deal of evidence for genuine grief on John of Gaunt's part, but equally that Gaunt 'spun' his grief for political gain. This is also the first evidence of a memorialisation strategy, in which regular reminders of Blanche's piety and goodness were used to bolster the reputation of Lancaster. Constance of Castile's death sparked none of the outpouring of grief that Blanche's did; Gaunt's comparative laxness about arranging the appropriate set of obits and masses suggests a lack of motivation. He remedied this, and arranged for masses to be said for Katherine Swynford, his widow, in his will. In contrast, Henry of Bolingbroke's prompt arrangement for burial and memorials for Mary de Bohun demonstrates that he was keen that Mary be properly shepherded into the afterlife. The obits he arranged for her in London reflect Mary's personality and their life together, as well as Henry's desire to be present in person to remember Mary. Memorials took many forms and served a number of purposes, from care for the dead, to a means of managing grief, to political spin.

As with a close examination of motives for marriage, an examination of choices made in widowhood reveals much about both individuals and their historical context. This choice was clearly gendered: men and women experienced different pressures and different choices. Widowed women, often for the first time in their lives, could choose whether to try marriage again, enter religious life or simply remain single. At the same time, however, they faced the challenge of negotiating a patriarchal society which distrusted female sexuality. Widowhood could leave women without a male protector. Alice de Lacy was pressured, and possibly forced, to remarry twice after Thomas of Lancaster's execution; Maud of

Lancaster was chosen to marry Robert de Ufford when he was made justiciar of Ireland. It could also give women a chance to make a 'better' second marriage: Eleanor of Lancaster and Joan Beaufort both made better matches after their first husbands died. For some women, the choice to remain single after they were widowed was a statement of their personal wishes. After Thomas Wake's death, Blanche of Lancaster adopted the role of Lancastrian matriarch; her sister Maud joined a convent, explaining that it had always been her true desire; Alice de Lacy, understandably fed up with marriage, took a vow of chastity; Katherine Swynford stayed single in order to conduct an affair with John of Gaunt. Widowed men did not have the social pressure women did; their task instead was to balance their own wishes with the need to secure their inheritance for the next generation. Edmund of Lancaster and John of Gaunt, both short on male heirs, remarried quickly in an attempt to produce more. Henry of Lancaster's choice not to remarry when he had only one son seems irresponsible in this sense and suggests he genuinely grieved at Maud Chaworth's death. When Mary de Bohun died leaving four sons, Henry of Bolingbroke had the option to take his time remarrying.

Marriages also created interests and relationships that could last for years. Landed interests proved influential over generations. Beaufort and Nogent, part of Blanche of Artois's inheritance, were passed to her son John, then to Henry of Lancaster, his granddaughter Maud of Lancaster and finally to her brother-in-law John of Gaunt. After they were lost in the Hundred Years War, Gaunt, and later Henry V, took an interest in re-securing them. The earldom of Lincoln, part of Alice de Lacy's inheritance, became a central element of the Lancastrian patrimony; the fight to regain elements of the earldom of Salisbury, from Alice's mother's inheritance, formed part of political life in the 1390s. John of Gaunt's pursuit of Constance of Castile's inheritance may have failed, but it created a permanent Lancastrian interest in Iberia. Henry IV's Iberian connections were crucial to securing international recognition of his accession and the Anglo-Portuguese alliance is, famously, still the oldest active alliance in the world. Family relationships were also crucial. The many marriages of Henry of Lancaster's daughters created connections with a number of important families. A couple generations later, much of the higher English nobility was related through their descent from Henry of Lancaster and Maud Chaworth, a descent which, I have suggested, is crucial in understanding the conflict during Richard II's reign. John of Gaunt's marriage to Katherine Swynford and the legitimisation of their children ensured that the first Lancastrian kings had loyal supporters. Henry VII was finally able to claim the English crown (albeit quite tenuously) through his Beaufort ancestry. With such far-reaching consequences, elite marriage was a serious business to the late medieval elites.

Examining marriage in one family over such a broad time period also enables a prosopographical study of aristocratic marriage more generally. A look at the age at which people tended to marry reveals that generally, at least in this family, women tended to marry at a younger age than men – unsurprising, as canon law allowed women to marry at twelve and men at fourteen. Husbands were nearly always older than their wives, though the age difference between husband and wife was rarely large.⁷⁸⁷ This suggests that when marriages were arranged, though practical considerations were key, the medieval aristocracy

⁷⁸⁷ The largest is a sixteen-year age gap between Joan Beaufort, daughter of John of Gaunt, and Ralph Neville, earl of Westmorland. The average age difference between husband and wife is seven years.

also hoped to create a strong relationship between husband and wife. The stereotype of noble fathers marrying their daughters off to old men for material gain simply does not hold up, though the opposite – women marrying much younger men – happened from time to time (see Introduction, Appendix A).⁷⁸⁸ Comparing the age at which women married to the age at which they had their first child reveals that marriages were rarely consummated before women were physically mature (probably indicated by first menstruation) and considered old enough to safely carry a pregnancy to term (see Introduction, Appendix E). Though this is obviously impossible to say for certain – miscarriages or children who died in infancy may not have made it into the record – the trend is clear. Moreover, a significant proportion of women did not have children until their mid or late twenties, which is surprising, given the early age at which they tended to marry. Those who did have children while teenagers (Blanche of Lancaster and Mary de Bohun, for example) were more likely to have been married to the earl or duke, or to his heir, than a younger son. Women also continued to have children much later than we might expect, given declining fertility and the dangers that childbirth posed to women. Several women in this study had children into their late thirties and early forties (see Appendix E). Only three women in this study – Aveline de Forz, Blanche of Lancaster (John of Gaunt's first wife) and Mary de Bohun – are suspected to have died in childbirth.

A study of this nature is of course limited by a number of factors. Examining only one family (and an unusual family at that) makes it difficult to determine how universal my conclusions are. Did the house of Lancaster behave more like a royal house, or more like a noble one? Testing my conclusions against other families would add more detail and nuance to this discussion. The data used in this study is also limited. Certain types of documentation – property transactions, financial accounts, chancery records – are over-represented. The conclusions I have drawn from this evidence, for instance about how property was used or how much time couples spent together, might be very different if other types of evidence – women's financial records, letters, marriage agreements – survived at higher rates. This study has also relied heavily on documentation preserved in The National Archives, producing a focus on the main line of succession. Research based in local archives would allow a closer look at cognate branches, and particularly at the women, of this family. My analysis has been limited by our lack of knowledge about the everyday lives of the medieval nobility. For instance I have assumed that couples who had many children, or who spent more time together, probably had a stronger relationship, but this may be wrong. I believe these assumptions are logical, but a better understanding of how the elite classes spent their time would strengthen my conclusions.

⁷⁸⁸ John of Gaunt's daughter Elizabeth of Lancaster married John Hastings when she was sixteen and he only eight years old. His daughter Catherine, by Constance of Castile, married Enrique of Castile when she was fifteen and he nine.

The twenty-first century has its own image of marriage and, as discussed in the introduction, historians face the challenge of removing their own modern cultural blinders as much as possible. Facts that many twenty-first-century Westerners take for granted – that couples are happiest when they freely choose their marriage partners; that adultery means a marriage is in trouble; that a marriage ends with a spouse's death – were untrue in the Middle Ages. The difficulty with such cultural blinders, of course, is recognising them in the first place. While I have worked to eliminate them in my research there are certainly some that have escaped my notice.

This study has also opened new avenues of research for the future. Most obviously, studying different periods, families, regions or social classes would reveal how universal my conclusions have been. The growing field of history of emotions has not looked much at pre-modern history, and where it has, has generally focused on anger and grief. My research raises questions about the history of love: how did people of the Middle Ages express love? How did they experience it? Scholars of gender and of women's history have addressed medieval England quite thoroughly; however, my study has implications for the study of medieval masculinity. Examinations of the pressures that elite men faced, as politicians, soldiers, providers and, of course, husbands, are overdue. An area of particular interest to me is the question of transgressive behaviour within marriage. This study has raised a number of questions about adultery – How common was it? How acceptable was it? Was medieval England, as some have suggested, essentially a polygynous society?⁷⁸⁹ – which I am eager to answer.

Part of the appeal of medieval history is the paradox that medieval people were simultaneously very like us today (Chaucer's portrayal of the Black Knight's grief over White's death is hauntingly familiar to a modern reader) and also very different (Henry of Grosmont apparently found flirtation-by-mackerel bizarrely effective). Medieval marriage is similarly paradoxical. The mid to late Middle Ages saw the creation of the institution that would eventually become modern marriage in the West. Marriage was, for the first time, expected to be monogamous; husbands and wives were expected to love and respect each other; widows were expected to keep the memory of their deceased spouse alive through appropriate memorials. At the same time, marriage was very different. First marriages were almost always negotiated by a couple's parents, and for territorial and political gain; a mistress might be publicly accepted as part of a married man's life; lifelong grief for a departed spouse was not considered incompatible with remarriage. An understanding of marriage's past will help us to understand the present and future of this enduring and universal relationship.

⁷⁸⁹ See d'Avray, *Papacy, Monarchy and Marriage* and Betzig, 'Medieval Monogamy' for more on this.

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