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INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

This book has two main aims. Its subject is the far north in the fifteenth century, in a time period significant for the region in being much less well understood than either the preceding century (dominated by Anglo-Scottish warfare) or the following one (in which the so-called border reivers were so well documented by Tudor administrators and their Scottish counterparts). The first aim is to investigate the far north in light of its prevailing reputation as different from the rest of England: an alien, turbulent and exceptional 'periphery' distant from the realm's heartland. The question to be pursued is how local society governed itself, in particular, how it sought to manage conflict, in the northern marches. The second aim is the more ambitious. While drawing local, national and international comparisons where relevant and helpful, it is to raise questions from this example about the geography of power and the nature of conflict in the English kingdom as a whole.[1]

Our knowledge of these matters concerning late medieval England is well established. The present state of the field owes its foundation to the work of K.B. McFarlane. In the middle decades of the last century McFarlane rewrote the agenda for the study of politics and political society, demolishing the Whig approach which had dominated for a hundred years. The older interpretation, set by William Stubbs and Charles Plummer, was concentrated on criticism of 'overmighty subjects' and their use of 'bastard feudalism' to secure personal interests, and on seeking to understand England's past chiefly in order to explain the institutional development of parliament as the pillar of Victorian

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[1] Footnotes in this overview section are kept to a minimum; subsequent notes in this chapter contain full references.

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English liberty.[2] Since the McFarlane reformation, a great deal of work has been done on late medieval England's rich array of archives, which lend themselves well to the study of landowners in the localities. From this has emerged a patchwork of local studies, many of them focused on particular counties; the landmark statement of this type is Christine Carpenter's *Locality and Polity: A Study of Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401–1499.* A number of other works have explicitly used evidence drawn from case studies in certain areas to illuminate national issues. The best examples of this work, such as Edward Powell's *Kingship, Law and Society: Criminal Justice in the Reign of Henry V* and Helen Castor's *The King, the Crown, and the Duchy of Lancaster*, have tended to focus on localities no further north than the midlands. All this has achieved a present under-standing of the late medieval (and in particular of the fifteenth-century) kingdom which was defined by a precociously centralised monarchical government, requiring effective rulership exercised by capable kings (and prone to drift towards disaster if kings were unable to provide this). The governance of the realm required cooperation between kings and nobility, and, in turn, collaboration between the nobility and the gentry. In this way private power and public authority were fused together. The private power of all landowners and the ability to command men was derived from land, and the king's law guaranteed rights in land; effective kingship was thus especially about making the law work. The gentry gave their support to the nobility by participating in a nobleman's following or affinity; in return, gentlemen, esquires and knights received their lord's backing in the protection of their landed interests. All land-owners shared in a fundamental consensus about the acceptable limits of occasional violence and the preference for swift, informal and peaceful resolution of disputes.[3]

If such is the current understanding of the late medieval kingdom as a whole, the place of the English far north in this framework remains unresolved. 'In a society so disorderly, so physically remote from the king and the central courts at Westminster, bastard feudalism provided the squirearchy with its only hope of some kind of security.'[4] This is one view of the region expressed some time ago by R.L. Storey and it is a perspective which if problematic in some regards has proved

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[2] M.C. Carpenter, 'Political and Constitutional History: Before and After McFarlane', in R.H. Britnell and A.J. Pollard (eds), *The McFarlane Legacy: Studies in Late Medieval Politics and Society* (New York, 1995), 175–206.

[3] G.L. Harriss, 'Introduction', in K.B. McFarlane (ed.), *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays* (London, 1981), xx–xxv. For Carpenter, Powell and Castor, see below, notes 31, 43, 82.

[4] R.L. Storey, 'The North of England', in S.B. Chrimes, C.D. Ross and R.A. Griffiths (eds), *Fifteenth-Century England 1399–1509* (Manchester, 1972), 132.

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remarkably durable.[5] We have come to know a great deal about the late medieval English north generally, or, rather, to know a great deal about the careers of the northern nobility, especially the magnates, and about many of the more prominent knights and barons. Much less is clearly known about the lesser rungs of political society in the region, the lower gentry and upper peasantry, and about the deep assumptions which shaped their choices and actions in local affairs. As it presents the conceptual framework for what is to follow, the second section of this introductory chapter will review the relevant historiography of the north. All the same it is worth noting here at the very outset that the English 'north' is amorphous. The 'north' of course refers to a cardinal direction, an idea, not a place. It took on a particular modern sense as a consequence of industrialisation, but it has a deeper past too, for the 'north' as an idea has always had a mythical status in European culture.[6] For the purposes of this book, the focus is on a defined area, identified in our period as the marches towards Scotland. That consisted of the three counties of Westmorland, Cumberland and Northumberland and the liberties within them. This, as we shall see, has long been understood as a disturbed upland zone with atypical social structures, shaken further by the effects of late medieval Anglo-Scottish border war.

Much of the archival research for this study was completed during the years when the US and NATO-led war in Afghanistan was at its most intense. Journalists at the time regularly reported on 'remote rural' Afghanistan and its 'often violent culture of blood feud and local justice where the reach of central government is weak or non-existent'.[7] The mountainous valleys of the Afghan–Pakistan border were described as 'tribal frontiers'.[8] Influential in shaping such thinking about the region by journalists and Western generals was Sir Winston Churchill's quasi-ethnographical account of his experience there in another conflict, *The Story of the Malakand Field Force: An Episode of Frontier War*.[9] Then Churchill wrote of a world in 'a state of continual tumult' which led the border clans to dwell in fortified towers, possess an 'absolute lack of reverence for all forms of law and authority' and engage in 'family vendettas and private blood feuds' instructed by an honour code

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[5] For example, see S.G. Ellis, *Defending English Ground: War and Peace in Meath and Northumberland, 1460–1542* (Oxford, 2015), 84. For the development of this theme in the historiography see below, p. 7.

[6] P. Davidson, *The Idea of North* (London, 2005).

[7] 'Afghanistan's Feared Woman Warlord', *BBC News Online*, 16 March 2006.

[8] 'Analysis: Pakistan's Tribal Frontiers', *BBC News Online*, 14 December 2001.

[9] 'Dinner Date with the Presidents', *BBC News Online*, 30 September 2006.

'incomprehensible to a logical' and 'civilised' mind.[10] The present study has nothing to do with Afghanistan, but it does have much to do with the ideas expressed here which parallel the range of assumptions at work in enduring interpretations of England's northern frontier in the late middle ages: that it was also a remote and hilly landscape inhabited by feuding clansmen who, in response to incessant tumult, built fortified houses and lived by raiding and feud.[11] One of the chief contentions of this book is that otherwise poorly understood patterns (both violent and peaceful) of local conflict and social organisation are detectable in the northern marches, but that such behaviours and structures were not primarily a consequence of a hostile border or of life in a sub-mountainous landscape. Rather, it will be argued that something like 'feud' may be identified here and explained as a function of a culture of conflict which is best understood in a European context. Of England it has been said that 'if blood-feuds did arise they were rare'.[12] Such was the view expressed by McFarlane on the nature of conflict among the nobility in a foundational essay on the War of the Roses. It is the second aim of this book which is the more daunting: to bring the far north more satisfactorily into a framework of understanding applicable to the whole kingdom. This is to prompt questions about conflict throughout England and, in relation to this, about our understanding of some of the rules, and the geography, of power in the kingdom.

THE FAR NORTH, CONFLICT AND GOVERNANCE

In 1419 the castle of Wark [castrum de Werk] was captured at night by William Haliburton of Fast Castle, who was then tricked [deceptus] by Sir Robert Ogle and killed [interfectus] treacherously [proditorie] along with twenty-three very gallant Scots [Scoti viri fortissimi]. After they had taken the castle, Sir Robert Ogle was there at once, parleying [tractatum] with them and making many promises in connection with handing over the building [deliberacione domus]. But meanwhile the English ascended the rope ladders which the Scots had left hanging from the walls, climbed over and threw the headless corpses [decapitatorum cadavera] of all the Scots over the walls.

—Walter Bower, *Scotichronicon*[13]

[10] W.S. Churchill, *The Story of the Malakand Field Force* (2nd edn, London, 1899), 7–8.
[11] See comment on Sir Walter Scott below at note 26.
[12] McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century,* 243.
[13] *Scotichronicon*, viii, 112–13. Wark's description as a '*castrum*' suggests that Wark-on-Tweed is intended, not the tower of Wark-in-Tynedale. See also *Liber Pluscardensis,* i, 353 (Latin); ii, 265 (translation).

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Thus the chronicler Walter Bower recounted in the 1440s a particularly gruesome, calculated and exhibitory episode of border violence. The Scottish abbot's matter-of-fact prose touches a number of themes pertinent to England's far north, not least that of Anglo–Scottish conflict, which had oscillated fitfully between war and truce since 1296; the most recent interjection of formal peace was that of 1328, quickly abandoned.[14] There is savagery and deceit too: by the fifteenth century the inhabitants of the English northern counties, and especially of those counties within the frontier jurisdiction known as the marches towards Scotland, had a well-established reputation for fierceness and unrest that was observed by English writers.[15] This was not just martial belligerence directed towards the Scottish foe. The experience of border raiding and defence, so the familiar assertion goes, generated a militarised society in a region where violent assault and plunder were accepted and normalised facts of life.[16] Chronicle accounts of the Wars of the Roses that noted 'the malyce of the northermen' are well known to historians, as are the colourful verses on the perfidious and alien nature of the '*Gens Boreae*' penned by Abbot John Whethamstede of St Albans.[17] Malory's Sir Balin 'le saveage' arises from sepentrional stock; 'borne in Northehumbir-londe', without hesitation he decapitates the Lady of the Lake in revenge for the slaughter of his mother.[18] Even if such a perception of English northerners was nothing new, the case has been made that the civil convulsions of the fifteenth century – and the role therein of militarised northerners – was of particular significance in the development of attitudes towards the English north, and of a 'northern consciousness'.[19] In this vein Clement Paston informed his brother by letter following the battle of Wakefield that the 'pepill in the northe robbe and styll and ben

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[14] I.A. MacInnes, *Scotland's Second War of Independence, 1332–1357* (Woodbridge, 2016), 1.

[15] *Plumpton Letters,* 1; A. Goodman, *The Wars of the Roses: Military Activity and English Society, 1452–97* (London, 2002), 225–6; A.J. Pollard, *North-Eastern England during the Wars of the Roses* (Oxford, 1990), 25–7; H.M. Jewell, *The North-South Divide: The Origins of Northern Consciousness in England* (Manchester, 1994); M.C. Carpenter, *The Wars of the Roses: Politics and the Constitution in England, c. 1437–1509* (Cambridge, 1997), 55–6, 184, 259; A. King, 'The Anglo-Scottish Marches and the Perception of "the North" in Fifteenth-Century England', *Northern History,* 49 (2012), 37–50, esp. 44.

[16] The traditional view is rehearsed in S.G. Ellis, 'Region and Frontier in the English State: The English Far North, 1296–1603', in S.G. Ellis and R. Esser (eds), *Frontiers, Regions and Identities in Europe* (Pisa, 2009), 77–100, at 88; Ellis, *Defending English Ground,* 84.

[17] *English Chron.*, 97; *Political Poems and Songs,* ed. T. Wright, 2 vols, Rolls Ser. (1859–61), ii, 262. Elsewhere Whethamstede wrote affectionately of his kinsmen who served Tynemouth Priory: John Amundesham, *Annales Monasterii S. Albani,* ed. H.T. Riley, 2 vols (London, 1870–1), i, 220.

[18] Thomas Malory, *Malory, Works,* ed. E. Vinaver (2nd edn, Oxford, 1971), 37, 39, 41.

[19] H.M. Jewell, 'North and South: The Antiquity of the Great Divide', *Northern History,* 27 (1991), 1–25, at 19 (discussing William of Malmesbury); Jewell, *North-South Divide,* esp. 42–52, 57–63, 130, 133–4.

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apoyntyd to pill . . . and gyffe a-way menys goodys and lyfflodys in all the sowthe cwntré'.[20] It is telling that the soldier and chronicler John Hardyng, who relished narrating skirmish and war with the Scots, was careful in the 1460s to remind his addressee, Edward IV, of the loyalty of 'the north parte', and to suggest that the oracle of Jeremiah 1:14 referred in fact to the true north: to Scotland.[21] Two decades later the Crowland continuator readily applied the same piece of scripture to the insurrection of the king's northern lieges.[22] Of course, reading such material requires sensitivity to the universal *topos* of northern barbarity and incivility cultivated since classical antiquity, and which is more often to the fore in studies of periods preceding and following the later middle ages.[23] Indeed, historians of Scotland have also become alert to the 'portfolio of developed motifs' upon which late medieval authors drew as they wrote about the peoples of their own realm.[24] Walter Bower himself turned to passages from Vegetius on the *sepentrionales populi* in order to explain the headstrong pugnacity of his co-lieges, the *Scoti transmontani*, those dwelling beyond the Mounth.[25]

This book is about how local society was governed, and governed itself, in particular, how conflict was managed, in England's fifteenth-century far north. These 'remote provinces', wrote Sir Walter Scott in 1814, 'were inhabited by wild clans as lawless as their northern neighbours, resembling them in manners and customs, inhabiting similar

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[20] *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century,* ed. N. Davis, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1971–6), i, no. 114, p. 198.

[21] *Chron. Hardyng,* 380, 420.

[22] *The Crowland Chronicle Continuations 1459–1486,* ed. N. Pronay and J. Cox (London, 1986), 191, noted by Pollard, *North-Eastern England,* 26n 66.

[23] W.R. Jones, 'The Image of the Barbarian in Medieval Europe', *Comparative Studies in Society and History,* 13 (1971), 376–407; K. Lavezzo, *Angels on the Edge of the World: Geography, Literature and English Community, 1000–1534* (Ithaca, 2006), 65–70. See comment on Jean Bodin in S. Carroll, 'Introduction', in S. Carroll (ed.), *Cultures of Violence: Interpersonal Violence in Historical Perspective* (Basingstoke, 2007), 36. This *topos* later came to be developed and, to an extent, reversed: Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws,* trans. T. Nugent, rev. J. V. Prichard (London, 1914), 241. On perceptions of the Tudor north, see Jewell, *North-South Divide,* 56–76, esp. 63; S.G. Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers and Noble Power: The Making of the British State* (Oxford, 1995), 67–77; S.G. Ellis, 'Civilizing Northumberland: Representations of Englishness in the Tudor State', *Journal of Historical Sociology,* 12 (1999), 103–27; 'Civilizing the Natives: State Formation and the Tudor Monarchy, c. 1400–1603', in S.G. Ellis and L. Klusáková (eds), *Imagining Frontiers, Contesting Identities* (Pisa, 2007), 77–92; Storey, *The End of the House of Lancaster* (London, 1966; rev. 2nd edn, 1999), 105 (on the fifteenth century).

[24] M. MacGregor, 'Gaelic Barbarity and Scottish Identity in the Later Middle Ages', in D. Broun and M. MacGregor (eds), *Mìorun Mòr nan Gall, 'The Great Ill-Will of the Lowlander'? Lowland Perceptions of the Highlands, Medieval and Modern* (Glasgow, 2009), 11; T. Brochard, 'The 'Civilizing' of the Far North of Scotland, 1560–1640', PhD thesis, University of Aberdeen (2010).

[25] MacGregor, 'Gaelic Barbarity', 19; *Scotichronicon*, viii, 266–7.

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strong-holds, and subsisting, like them, by rapine'.[26] As suggested above, this view has held considerable sway over historians. Even in works of high calibre they have long been satisfied to make colourful throw-away remarks about society in the northern English marches: that it was riddled with 'endemic violence'[27] and a 'characteristic northern indifference to the authority of the law'.[28] Another historian describes the borderlands as 'traditionally lawless and including some of [England's] wildest terrain', a 'sensitive area' where 'problems of maintaining order and administrative machinery were endemic'.[29] In more recent work comparable claims are still to be found about 'a taste for violence and "private" warfare',[30] a 'culture of an unstable march society' in the 'isolated and fragmented world' of the 'rugged border valleys'.[31] Further comment on this 'remote region' has described the far north as 'set apart from the main currents of English society by virtue of the dictates of border warfare and its close proximity to England's perennial enemy'.[32] And other work using evidence drawn from the area points to the role of the 'armed frontier' in fostering 'the social and the legal conditions that [allowed] feuding to continue' in the marches up to the regal union of 1603.[33] There is no question that the late medieval far north was among those parts of the

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[26] W. Scott, *The Border Antiquities of England and Scotland,* 2 vols (London, 1814), ii, p. lxv.

[27] M.E. James, *Change and Continuity in the Tudor North: The Rise of Thomas, First Lord Wharton* (York, 1965), 7. See also G.M. Trevelyan, *English Social History* (London, 1994), 153.

[28] C.D. Ross, *Edward IV* (London, 1983), 202 (and similar comment at 194 on Wales and the Welsh Marches). For 'endemic' criminality elsewhere, see A. Herbert, 'Herefordshire, 1413–61: Some Aspects of Society and Public Order', in R.A. Griffiths (ed.), *Patronage, The Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England* (Gloucester, 1981), 103–22.

[29] J.S. Cockburn, 'The Northern Assize Circuit', *Northern History,* 3 (1968), 118–30, at 122. See also Storey, 'The North of England', 131; G.W. Bernard, *The Power of the Early Tudor Nobility: A Study of the Fourth and Fifth Earls of Shrewsbury* (Brighton, 1985), 109–12.

[30] M.L. Holford and K.J. Stringer, *Border Liberties and Loyalties in North-East England, c. 1200–c. 1400* (Edinburgh, 2010), 322. This important book is discussed below with regard to liberties and franchises.

[31] Ibid., 332. See also M.C. Carpenter, *Locality and Polity: A Study in Warwickshire Landed Society, 1401–1499* (Cambridge, 1992), 484, 641.

[32] M. Arvanigian, 'Henry V, Lancastrian Kingship and the Far North of England', in G. Dodd (ed.), *Henry V: New Interpretations* (Woodbridge, 2013), 77–101, at 77 (quote), 78, 80. See also G. McKelvie, 'Henry VII's Letter to Carlisle in 1498: His Concerns about Retaining in a Border Fortress', *Northern History*, 54 (2017), 149–66, at 151–2; M. Arvanigian, 'A County Community or the Politics of the Nation? Border Service and Baronial Influence in the Palatinate of Durham, 1377–1413', *Historical Research,* 82 (2009), 41–61.

[33] K.J. Kesselring, *Making Murder Public: Homicide in Early Modern England, 1480–1680* (Oxford, 2019), 75 (quote), 83–4. For similar examples, see J.M. Schultz, *National Identity and the Anglo-Scottish Borderlands, 1552–1652* (Woodbridge, 2019), 92, 117; E.M. Jamroziak, *Survival and Success on Medieval Borders: Cistercian Houses in Medieval Scotland and Pomerania from the Twelfth to the Late Fourteenth Century* (Turnhout, 2011), 17–18; D.E. Thiery, 'Plowshares and Swords: Clerical Involvement in Acts of Violence and Peacemaking in Late Medieval England, c. 1400–1536', *Albion,* 36 (2004), 201–22, at 22n 5, 109n 8; J. Gray, 'Lawlessness on the Frontier: The Anglo-Scottish Borderlands in the Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century', *History and Anthropology,* 12 (2001), 381–408.

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kingdom with the lowest distribution of population and lay wealth.[34] Yet hand in hand with the actuality of a relatively sparsely inhabited and impoverished territory is another old chestnut, that the far north was in consequence isolated and distant, a socially and culturally backward 'dark corner of the land', contrasted with the more populous, prosperous, cultivated and unified south-east.[35]

Linked directly to the view of a remote, violent and hopelessly 'lawless' English far north is an issue that has been fundamental to the historiography of fifteenth-century England as a whole: the role of lordship, both its exercise in the locality and its effects in the wider kingdom. Here most attention has been directed to the greater nobility, in an older school of thought in the guise of the 'overmighty subject'. Not least among these medieval megafauna were the great northern magnates, the Percys and the Nevilles, who, so the older formulation went, flouted royal authority and led their unruly followers in private quarrels, ultimately leading to civil war and the collapse of the Lancastrian regime in the later 1450s.[36] Of course, that regime itself was founded by a vastly 'overmighty subject', and much scholarship concerning the north in the reigns of Richard II and Henry IV has focused on the relationship between the crown and the Percys and Nevilles, who were so important to the Lancastrian usurpation.[37] Arising from this theme is

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[34] R.S. Schofield, 'The Geographical Distribution of Wealth in England, 1334–1649', *Economic History Review,* 18 (1965), 483–510, at 506; Jewell, *North-South Divide,* 90–5; G.L. Harriss, *Shaping the Nation: England 1360–1461* (Oxford, 2005), 210. See also *The Poll Taxes of 1377, 1379, and 1381,* ed. C.C. Fenwick, 3 vols (Oxford, 1998–2005).

[35] S.G. Ellis, 'Crown, Community and Government in the English Territories, 1450–1575', *History,* 71 (1986), 187–204; S.G. Ellis, 'The English State and Its Frontiers in the British Isles, 1300–1600', in D.J. Power and N. Standen (eds), *Frontiers in Question: Eurasian Borderlands, 700–1700* (Basingstoke, 1999), 153–81; and M.J. Bennett, *Community, Class and Careerism: Cheshire and Lancashire Society in the Age of 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight'* (Cambridge, 1983), 8. For a summary, see J. Le Patourel, 'Is Northern History a Subject?', *Northern History,* 12 (1976), 1–15, at 11–13. See also T. Thornton, *Cheshire and the Tudor State 1480–1560* (Woodbridge, 2000), 251; A.J.L. Winchester, *Landscape and Society in Medieval Cumbria* (Edinburgh, 1987), 2; Pollard, *North-Eastern England,* 1–2. On early modern 'dark corners' and an east–west divide, see D. MacCannell, '"Dark Corners of the Land"? A New Approach to Regional Factors in the Civil Wars of England and Wales', *Cultural and Social History,* 7 (2010), 171–89, esp. 174, 185n 23.

[36] An influential interpretation adopted by Storey, *House of Lancaster,* 27; Storey, 'The North of England', 137.

[37] For example, J.M.W. Bean, *The Estates of the Percy Family, 1416–1537* (Oxford, 1958); J.M.W. Bean, 'Henry IV and the Percies', *History,* 44 (1959), 212–27; P. McNiven, 'The Scottish Policy of the Percies and the Strategy of the Rebellion of 1403', *BJRL,* 62 (1979), 498–530; J.A. Tuck, 'Richard II and the Border Magnates', *Northern History,* 3 (1968), 27–52; J.A. Tuck, 'Northumbrian Society in the Fourteenth Century', *Northern History,* 6 (1971), 22–39; J.A. Tuck, 'The Emergence of a Northern Nobility, 1250–1400', *Northern History,* 22 (1986), 1–17; J.A. Tuck, 'The Percies and the Community of Northumberland in the Later Fourteenth Century', in J.A. Tuck and A. Goodman (eds), *War and Border Societies in the Middle Ages* (London, 1992), 178–95.

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the long-standing notion of a governmental 'problem of the north'
generally – not just of the three marcher counties – in which English
rulers, on the one hand, needed powerful nobles to defend the border
but, on the other, faced a potential threat from these same men.[38]
Historians have been less clear as to what areas constituted the region
of 'north' which presented this dilemma; certainly, magnates with power
bases firmly established in Yorkshire served the crown as wardens of the
march, the crown officers who supervised border defence and border
law.[39] Older work viewed the wardens as avaricious lords, recruiting
from among the gentry 'private armies at the king's expense' and posing a
'formidable a threat to the peace of England'.[40] Certainly, some magnates
who served as wardens caused serious trouble. The Percys between
1403 and 1408, and again in 1442–3, the Middleham Nevilles in 1469,
and both families in 1453 fit this profile of behaviour,[41] but the role of the
wardens and the courts of march law which they administered has come
to be viewed as integral to the system not only of local defence but also of
peacekeeping in northern England.[42] More generally, historians came to
view the gentry followings of late medieval English nobles in a con-
structive light, no longer simply the unruly consequence of corrupt
'bastard feudal' recruiting, committing depredations at their lord's whim.
As already noted, through work inspired by McFarlane, historians'
understanding of magnate affinities moved towards appreciating their
political complexity. Although sometimes difficult to control (and, so

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[38] G.T. Lapsley, 'The Problem of the North: A Study in English Border History', *American Historical Review,* 5 (1900), 440–66, at 452; M.L. Bush, 'The Problem of the Far North: A Study of the Crisis of 1537 and Its Consequences', *Northern History,* 6 (1971), 40–63. Reframing this as a wider 'problem of the borders' linking the 'outlying parts' towards Wales, Ireland and Scotland, see Ellis, 'Crown, Community and Government', 193; Ellis, *Tudor Frontiers,* 33, 40–5, 48.

[39] For example, Lapsley, 'Problem of the North', 441; Storey, 'The North of England', 129–31. For comment, Pollard, *North-Eastern England,* 150–3; Jewell, *North-South Divide,* ch. 1; Macdonald, *Border Bloodshed: Scotland, England and France at War 1369–1403* (East Linton, 2000), 202.

[40] R.L. Storey, 'The Wardens of the Marches of England towards Scotland 1377–1489', *EHR,* 72 (1957), 593–615, quotations from 607, 609. See also Tuck, 'Richard II', 27–30, 48. On the wardens, see also T. Hodgkin, *The Wardens of the Northern Marches* (London, 1908); H. Pease, *The Lord Wardens of the Marches of England and Scotland* (London, 1913); R.R. Reid, 'The Office of Warden of the Marches: Its Origin and Early History', *EHR,* 32 (1917), 479–96; S.B. Chrimes, 'Some Letters of John of Lancaster as Warden of the East Marches towards Scotland', *Speculum,* 14 (1939), 3–27; C.H. Hunter Blair, 'The Wardens and Deputy Wardens of the Marches of England towards Scotland in Northumberland', *Archaeologia Aeliana,* 4th ser., 28 (1950), 18–95.

[41] Pollard, *North-Eastern England,* 246–7, 255–7, 304–7; Harriss, *Shaping the Nation,* 496–7, 521–2, 532–3, 607, 627.

[42] C.J. Neville, 'Border Law in Late Medieval England', *JLH,* 9 (1988), 335–56; C.J. Neville, 'Keeping the Peace on the Northern Marches in the Later Middle Ages', *EHR,* 109 (1994), 461–78; C.J. Neville, *Violence, Custom and Law: The Anglo-Scottish Border Lands in the Later Middle Ages* (Edinburgh, 1998). For 1442–3, see R.A. Griffiths, *The Reign of King Henry VI* (Berkeley, 1981), 578–9.

the historiography suggests, perhaps especially so in areas distant from Westminster), they could facilitate effective local governance when managed aptly by a powerful lord.[43] The present study is indebted to the work of others who have explored the structures of landed society in the English north and the role of northern magnates in local and national politics. Such work, especially studies of the north-east published in the 1970s–1990s, found that the Percy and Neville of Middleham affinities tended to provide a measure of continuity and a 'stabilising bond' among local nobility and gentry.[44] By contrast, regarding Cumberland and Westmorland, one researcher has argued for the strength of gentry localism triumphing over noble politics, and a similar point has been made about the limits of Percy influence in Northumberland.[45] The period after 1471, however, has produced contradictory interpretations. Whereas earlier scholars argued for continuing crown reliance on powerful northern magnates, like Richard, duke of Gloucester, and Henry Percy, fourth earl of Northumberland, newer work questions the influence these men actually wielded and the extent of the resources put at their disposal by the crown. While Gloucester's influence in Yorkshire has long been understood to have been dependent upon Percy support, research now suggests that his dominance in the north-west was also far from complete.[46] On the other hand, according to one writer, it was

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[43] The seminal statement is K.B. McFarlane, 'Bastard Feudalism', in K.B. McFarlane, *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays* (London, 1981), 23–43. The landmark study is Carpenter, *Locality and Polity,* and indispensable contributions are S. Walker, *The Lancastrian Affinity 1361–1399* (Oxford, 1990); and H.R. Castor, *The King, the Crown, and the Duchy of Lancaster* (Oxford, 2000). See also Carpenter, *Wars of the Roses,* chs 1–3; Harriss, *Shaping the Nation,* 6; M.C. Carpenter, 'Bastard Feudalism in Fourteenth-Century Warwickshire', Dugdale Society Occasional Papers, 52 (2016), esp. 3–5.

[44] Pollard, *North-Eastern England*, 401; P. Jalland, 'The Influence of the Aristocracy on Shire Elections in the North of England, 1450–70', *Speculum,* 47 (1972), 483–507; A.J. Pollard, 'The Northern Retainers of Richard Nevill, Earl of Salisbury', *Northern History,* 11 (1975), 52–69; A.J. Pollard (ed.), *The North of England in the Age of Richard III* (Stroud, 1996); R.A. Griffiths, 'Local Rivalries and National Politics: The Percies, the Nevilles, and the Duke of Exeter, 1452–55', in R.A. Griffiths (ed.), *King and Country: England and Wales in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1989), 321–64.

[45] (For further comment on more recent work see the following paragraph.) P.W.N. Booth, 'Landed Society in Cumberland and Westmorland, c. 1440–1485: The Politics of the Wars of the Roses', PhD thesis, University of Leicester (1998); P.W.N. Booth, 'Richard Duke of Gloucester and the West March towards Scotland, 1470–1483', *Northern History,* 36 (2000), 233–46, at 237, 239, 241; P.W.N. Booth, 'Men Behaving Badly? The West March towards Scotland and the Percy-Neville Feud', in L. Clark (ed.), *The Fifteenth Century III: Authority and Subversion* (Woodbridge, 2003), 95–116; A. King, '"They have the Hertes of the People by North": Northumberland, the Percies and Henry IV, 1399–1408', in G. Dodd and D. Biggs (eds), *Henry IV: The Establishment of the Regime, 1399–1406* (Woodbridge, 2003), 139–59.

[46] James, *Change and Continuity*, 4–5; M. Weiss, 'A Power in the North? The Percies in the Fifteenth Century', *Historical Journal,* 19 (1976), 501–9; M. Hicks, 'Dynastic Change and Northern Society: The Career of the Fourth Earl of Northumberland, 1470–89', *Northern History,* 14 (1978), 78–107;