CHESHIRE AND THE DEFENCE OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF AQUITAINE*

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BETWEEN 1362 and 1371 the earldom and county of Chester had been part of a lordship on which were imposed the twin burdens of war finance and military service. The profits and resources of that lordship in Cheshire and Cornwall, no less than in Aquitaine, were devoted to the maintenance of a court at Bordeaux which sought to compete with those at London, Paris and Avignon. It was also a court, as its most eloquent apologist the *Chandos Herald* reminds us, that was geared for war.[1] The fortunes of that court and its involvement in Spain were the concern of the Prince's 'subjects' throughout his lordship, and in the county of Cheshire we may consider the extent and character of those burdens of finance and military service placed upon the community. In a limited sense the period offers an opportunity to assess the impact of war in a local society.

The creation of the Principality of Aquitaine in July 1362 was not merely a recognition of the territorial gains of the treaty of Brétigny and of the personal status of king Edward III's eldest son. At the same time it represented a response to the growing burdens of war finance in a period when the defence of Gascony had become a regular charge on the incomes of the English exchequer. During the period of heightened military activity between 1348 and 1361 some £86,227 had been paid to the constable of Bordeaux, the duchy's chief financial official, and even in years of comparative peace the annual cost of garrisons had become an onerous burden. Thereafter, English financial administration was marked by a series of experiments, both in Ireland and in Gascony, under which the responsibility for defence was moved from the exchequer to the regions themselves.[2] The independence of provincial France which the rule of the Black Prince was to sustain and strengthen was to be self-financing, and

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indeed beyond the initial cost of equipping the Prince's retinue there were to be few liveries of money from the exchequer.[3]

The creation of the Principality had endowed the Prince with lands which overshadowed his English possessions, and engendered a lordship which stretched in extent from the estuary of the Mersey to the Rouergue. In a series of ceremonies beginning in July 1363 at the cathedral of Saint André in Bordeaux the Black Prince received the homage of 1,747 lords and towns throughout the Principality.[4] The rule of Edward of Woodstock was to be no mere lieutenancy, but a lordship of men and land; a lordship, moreover, which would brook no liberty or franchise and which recognised no geographical or territorial boundary. In the Rouergue, an area which had not figured in the itinerary of 1363, the first action of the English seneschal, Sir Thomas Wetenhale, was to order the erection of the Prince's arms at the gates of Millau and Rodez. Like the public ceremony of homage it was to be a firm and permanent reminder of the mastery under which the region lay.[5]

While these lands, both in England and in Aquitaine, were characterised by a wide diversity of custom and administrative practice, all were subject to a greater or lesser degree to the political and military ambitions of the Black Prince. These ambitions centred increasingly on the Principality and Spain, with the former bearing the brunt of demands for finance and manpower, but few even of the peripheral areas of the Prince's lordship could hope to escape the dominion of their lord. It is a point which is made forcibly enough in a surviving memorandum from the council to Sir John Delves, who was acting as governor of the Prince's business in 1363. It represents a single act of lordship in which the concern of the council moves inexorably from pardons granted in Wales and Cheshire to arrangements made for the Prince's arrival at Bordeaux and enquiries into the ravages of the companies in the Limousin.[6]

It was, however, a lordship that floundered in the aftermath of an ill-judged campaign in support of Pedro I of Castille, on the cumulative financial deficit of the Prince's administration and the collapse of his taxation policy of 1368/9. That failure was underlined and indeed exemplified in the conduct of campaigns undertaken in defence of the Principality during 1369 and 1370. Even before the appeal of the count of Armagnac to the *parlement* of Paris in June 1368 there had been clear indications of a resumption of hostilities in south-west France with the progress of attacks on the Rouergue by Henry of Trastamare and the activities of the mercenary companies in the Périgord. Charles V had himself been implicated as early as October 1367 when he retained

Jean d'Armagnac, the count's son, with 1,000 men-at-arms and a similar number of auxiliaries, 900 of whom were recruited among the Gascon companies.[7] In response to this and further escalations in the military situation the Prince had organised the raising of retinues in England which ultimately found service in Poitou. Elsewhere, however, the Rouergue, the Quercy and parts of Agenais and the Périgord had been witness to numerous attacks and sieges of a type which would mark the conduct of war over the next decade, and which in 1369 struck a mortal blow at the Prince's lordship in Aquitaine. Without the ultimate sanction of military power and force, men throughout the Principality withdrew from their lord and acknowledged the sovereignty of Charles V.[8]

I

The first half of the fourteenth century in England saw the growth and elaboration of a national system of public finance based upon the insistent pressure of warfare and which grew from the military and political ambitions of successive kings. From the interplay of interests between the crown and the lords and commons in parliament and on the events of frequent crises over taxation there developed the characteristic institutions of the early modern state. Within that polity, however, the commons had secured recognition of claims which served to mitigate the effects of war finance and purveyance within the local communities.[9] It is apparent, however, that these demands, and in particular the taking of subsidies in successive years, often in combination with purveyance, had pressed heavily upon the resources of the peasant population as well as exercising a cumulative influence on economic development.[10] Although the social and geographical incidence of these demands was widely varied few counties could hope to escape from them to the extent that was possible in Cheshire as a result of its independent 'palatine' status.[11] For much of the later middle ages the county is not known to have contributed to parliamentary taxes on the laity, nor indeed was it represented in the commons of the medieval English parliament. Thus far it was a liberty that the county shared with the March of Wales.

Here, however, a form of lay taxation had developed in response to the pressures of Marcher lordship and appears as an irregular series of aids, gifts and subsidies exacted in recognition of the lord's superiority or recent succession. Such casual revenues assumed an increasing importance in the income of Marcher lords during the fourteenth century and reached a level compar-

able with parliamentary taxation.[12] Although a similar development may be followed in Cheshire, the county is not known to have granted or paid such subsidies before 1346. For perhaps as long as fifty years Cheshire had to a large extent been insulated against both the burdens of war finance and the pressures of an aggressive and masterful lordship. It is ironic that an area which holds a reputation for the degree of militarisation in local society should, in that respect at least, have been so protected from the impact of war upon the civilian population.

The relationship of the earldom to the crown as the customary endowment of the king's eldest son had perpetuated and supported the traditions of 'palatine' independence which were asserted with some success against occasional and unwarranted demands for military service.[13] But whereas the independence of the March was dynamic and the product of a developing lordship, in Cheshire it remained an expression of political inertia. From 1301 to 1344 the county was isolated by the successive minorities of Edward of Caernarfon, Edward of Windsor and Edward of Woodstock, punctuated only by brief periods of royal control. In a situation of almost perpetual minority, unmatched on any noble estate, the resources of comital lordship were weakened and diminished to the advantage of the local gentry who usurped the leadership of local society.[14]

The long rule of the Black Prince from 1333 to 1376 marks the development of a quality of lordship which had long been absent from the county, and it is in this context that one must view increasingly strident demands for revenue raised on a variety of pretexts or the scale of *Quo Warranto* enquiries during the 1360's.[15] The Prince visited the county on only two occasions but his was nonetheless a lordship which aimed to be both masterful and enduring, a lordship, moreover, which was geared to the pursuit of military ambitions. As a result the emergence of a system of public finance in the county was even more obviously related to the exigencies of warfare.

In 1346 a mise of £1,000 was granted by the 'community' of Cheshire explicitly 'in aid of his (the Prince's) great expenses in furthering the king's war', although in the event that sum proved extraordinarily difficult to collect. In April 1347 the council reported that no money had yet been received, and in May writs addressed to the hundred of Macclesfield were returned with an endorsement that the coroners had been unable to collect the amounts due.[16] Although the success of comital lordship might often fall below the level of its ambitions, its progress is made apparent in the increasing profitability of the county which had virtually doubled the income of the earl since 1301.[17] The greater

part of that increase, of the order of perhaps £2,000 *per annum*, came as a consequence of a growing range of novel and arbitrary exactions of a type that mark a domineering and expansive lordship. In 1347 a forest eyre was held for the first time, in 1353 the community of the county offered 5,000 marks for the redemption of a general eyre and in 1357 Wirral and Delamere offered a fine of £3,000 for the redemption of a second forest eyre.[18] There can be little doubt that the Prince's continuing involvement in the French war had acted as a catalyst in the development of his lordship in Cheshire, for although the exchequer was by this date almost entirely responsible for the financing of continental expeditions, warfare remained the principal form of investment for lordly revenues. The payment of annuities and rewards, and the provision of uniforms and equipment had each to be set against the value of liveries from the exchequer and the profits of lordship: a relationship in the Prince's career which seldom approached a balance. In 1362 he borrowed £1,000 from the earl of Arundel as a result of his 'great need of money for the equipment of himself and his men for the coming expedition to Gascony'.[19] The continuing inadequacy of the Prince's income and the particular circumstances of the Principality after 1363 had placed a more secure and enduring burden upon the lordships of Edward of Woodstock than upon those of other magnates.

As we have suggested the Principality of Aquitaine was to be financially independent of the English exchequer, and although Edward III himself invested heavily in his son's rule from the profits of king John's ransom, the Prince was largely forced upon the income of his own lordship. Here the summary account of Richard Fillongley reveals a steady increase of income throughout the Principality as Aquitaine, in the same manner as Cheshire twenty years earlier, felt the renewed weight of lordly rule.[20] The quality of the Prince's court and the defence of the Principality did, however, bring a corresponding increase in the costs of that rule. The development of the crisis in Aquitaine is well established in the work of French historians, although it is not generally recognised that the Prince's financial demands had fallen with equal weight upon his English lands. At the same time as the Estates met at Angoulême to vote the *fouage* the 'community' of Cheshire had granted a subsidy of 2,500 marks payable over two years, and in 1373 added a 'gift' of 3,000 marks.[21] The Prince's subjects in Cheshire, no less than in Gascony, were asked to subsidise the financial deficit of the Spanish campaign of 1367, and the events of 1368 to 1370 in this sense exemplify the unity of the Prince's lordship in England and Aquitaine. In England the development of the casual revenues of the earldom of Chester had

taken place over two decades under the rising pressure of the Prince's military ambitions, reaching a peak during the defence of the Principality of Aquitaine. In 1369 almost the entire yield from the subsidy was accounted for by wages of war paid to men-at-arms and archers raised in Cheshire for service in Aquitaine, although the Cheshire revenues had in fact long been dominated by the Prince's military lordship.[22]

In the chamberlain's account for 1361/2 annuities payable at the Chester exchequer amounted to some £350, for the most part grants of minor offices and small incomes to the lesser members of the Prince's affinity such as his tailor and baker.[23] In 1369 the payment of annuities reached a level of over £1,500, many of them as a result of indentures of retinue entered into during the early years of the Principality.[24] The escalation began at Plymouth in 1363 during the muster of troops for the retinue in Aquitaine and continued during its service at Bordeaux on a scale which had not marked the Prince's earlier campaigns.[25] For almost a decade the ordinary resources of comital patronage, both in the payment of fees and the grant of offices were governed to an unprecedented extent by considerations of military service in Aquitaine. Robert Mascy received a pardon for abducting the daughter of John Snelson because 'he is in our service'; Roger Swetenham, John Eton and Roger Page grants of money, land and minor office as archers in the Prince's service and military service clearly determined the grant of pensions and offices to many others.[26] Of the grants enrolled at the Chester exchequer between 1362 and 1369 perhaps as many as 70 per cent may be considered to have been based upon similar considerations.

Of greater significance the majority of the larger annuities were paid to members of the retinue with little or no demonstrable connection with the county; an arrangement which suggests that the running costs of the retinue in Aquitaine were being paid, at least in part, from the issues of the county of Chester. Sir Robert Neville, whose annuity of 100 marks was paid at Chester in 1361 until he could be found an income elsewhere, had by 1365 deputed his brother, the archdeacon of Cornwall, to act as his treasurer of war in collecting his fee at Chester.[27] In 1367 five life annuities of £40 each were granted in return for service in Spain and by 1369 as many as twenty-five annuities had been granted to men who are known to have been serving in Aquitaine.[28] In the short term not merely were the augmented profits of lordship in the county carried elsewhere but increasingly military service had become a point, often the sole and necessary point of access to comital patronage and largesse. When John Holford petitioned the Prince for an office in Newcastle or an unknown Cheshireman pleaded

for a pardon for the murder of Kenrik of Wirswall they did so on the basis of service 'in Spain, Guyenne, Brittany and Gascony', as men who had followed their lord.[29] Such claims, from men who had served the Prince, would persist well into the reign of Richard II when as many as eight annuities granted during the period of the Principality were still being drawn on the Chester exchequer.[30]

In a real and obvious manner the years of the Principality of Aquitaine had brought Cheshire firmly within the orbit of war finance, to which the county had previously been reluctantly and only fitfully exposed. Elsewhere in England the tax on wool had become the only regular peace-time levy and during the period 1362 to 1370 there was no taxation of the laity for the needs of war. In a decade of peace, therefore, the county of Chester had for the first time felt the full impact of war.

No small part of that impact had resulted from the recruitment of troops by the Prince, and the levels of manpower demand in Cheshire have already been the subject of extensive comment.[31] In considering the significance of the period of the Principality, however, it is not simply the fact of military service in which we are interested, although the level of recruitment was clearly of vital importance within an essentially agrarian economy; but rather the social context of that service. Which groups in society formed the military community, and why and under what circumstances did they serve? Of the campaigns mounted in the Principality, that in Poitou during the spring and summer of 1369 is indeed already known to Cheshire historians from the evidence of a heraldic dispute in 1385.[32]

II

In the most celebrated case heard in the court of chivalry in the fourteenth century many of the witnesses in favour of the Cheshire knight Sir Robert Grosvenor recalled a common bond of service with Sir James Audley 'a Blank en Berry, et al gayne del tour de Brose, et a Issouden et al siege de Rochsirion en Payto'.[33] That memory of the campaign in Poitou in 1369 was perhaps sharpened by common experience of the recent expedition of Richard II in Scotland during which many had indeed seen Sir Robert Grosvenor bear the arms *azure a bend or*, possession of which was then disputed by the Yorkshire knight Sir Richard Scrope. Earlier campaigns make only a limited appearance in the testimony of the witnesses for by the 1380's death had perhaps greatly thinned the ranks of survivors from Crécy and Poitiers,

although several still recalled 'Edward III's last French voyage' in 1359. It is clear, however, that these martial recollections reached a wide and sympathetic audience in local gentry society where the experience of warfare was widespread. The moment when the 'dominus Princeps et alii magnates regni Angliae extiterunt ultimi cum exercitu suo in regno Franciae', like the *prima pestilencia*, were each instantly recognisable to local jurors; points as fixed and well known in the secular chronology as the saints' days of the religious.[34] Both events illustrate the formation of a collective memory of already distant campaigns under the impact of another, that in Scotland in 1385, which appeared to follow in the same tradition.

In another sense the Scrope/Grosvenor hearings stand as a spontaneous demonstration of a class unity in Cheshire which suggests the operation of a county community in a form which is readily apparent to historians.[35] The forms of social cohesion which bound together such local and regional communities are well known and embraced the widest spectrum of inter-personal relationships based upon a common experience in local society. What has hitherto seemed less intelligible, at least in Cheshire, is the way in which these forms appear to find expression in a high level of commitment to military service.

In part of his testimony Sir Hugh Browe observed that although he had been armed for twenty years he could not offer evidence as to the justness of Scrope's claim because he had served 'during the war in the garrisons and companies in France, and never on the great expeditions'.[36] It was not the fact of military service that was important but his participation in, or absence from, musters which had a clear social context. In his evidence for Grosvenor, Browe recorded that he had seen him armed in Poitou eighteen years before and again in Scotland in 1385.[37] Within the context of Cheshire society it was these campaigns which formed the common strand in the military experience of the local gentry. Browe's long service, like that of Sir Hugh Calveley, had taken him outside the confines of local society. The 'great expeditions' to which he referred and, we may suspect, those of Crécy and Poitiers exemplify a universal obligation of military service within the county which was neither a muster of tenantry nor, in the contractual sense, the service of an indented retinue. In Cheshire military service grew from the imposition of a widespread and personal lordship which was reflected clearly and directly in the equipment of the Prince's retinues. These wore a distinctive uniform of green and white cloth which was neither a concession to national sentiment among the Welsh levies nor the means by which an unruly element in the army might be held under

discipline: they proclaimed the identity of the lord in whose service these men had mustered and under whose lordship they fell.[38]

In Cheshire it seems that military service embodied a focus of personal lordship which supported and underpinned the ordinary recruitment of troops by indenture or on the promise of pay. Furthermore the leadership of gentry society in peace was, within the compass of the great campaigns, also its leadership in war. Warfare in that respect simply represents a continuation of established social forms, within which military service was perhaps an inevitable and conventional experience for the membership of local society. By 1385, however, the experience of Sir Hugh Browe had clearly differed in both form and content from that of many of his contemporaries, for whom military service may have been an isolated adventure. There is, therefore, a clear need to measure the assumptions of the Scrope/Grosvenor evidence against the records of military service during the period of the Principality of Aquitaine.

Trastamare's escape from Nájera had had immediate consequences in the Principality where a secret treaty with the duke of Anjou had led to attacks on the Rouergue as early as June 1367.[39] The breakdown of the peace of Brétigny and the scale of renewed hostilities with France passed into sharper focus during the spring and early summer of 1368 following the appeal of the count of Armagnac to Charles V. Almost immediately, however, the Prince had undertaken the raising of reinforcements in England which mustered at Northampton in the autumn. The progress of recruitment remains obscure although John Montviron, who was serving as marshal of the Prince's household in Gascony, appears to have supervised the arrays of the justice and chamberlain of north Wales in the early part of 1369.[40] It seems likely that the active recruitment in Cheshire had similarly been the responsibility of the justice and chamberlain of Chester, perhaps with the assistance of the seneschal of the Rouergue, Sir Thomas Wetenhale.[41] More significantly the retinue proved to be largely a muster of the Prince's lordship, for the exchequer had persisted in its notions of military and financial independence for Aquitaine. A retinue led by the earls of Pembroke and Cambridge which joined the Prince, and was paid from the exchequer, does not appear to have been large and its strength was omitted from the Northampton muster.[42] This, therefore, was a document of the Prince's household which retained responsibility for the payment of wages and regards. Edward III is known to have delivered some £26,000 to the Prince from the ransom of king John in June 1369, some of which may have reached the retinue, but at least £700 and possibly the whole subsidy of 2,500 marks raised

in Cheshire appears in the chamberlain's account as wages of war.[43] In military and financial terms the burden of the defence of the Principality fell essentially on the resources of the Prince's lordship in England and Aquitaine.

The retinue which mustered at Northampton in September 1369 included 369 men-at-arms and 428 archers, of whom 101 men-at-arms and 240 archers were raised in Cheshire and north Wales.[44] Eleven, including Sir Robert Grosvenor, appear as witnesses in the heraldic dispute of 1385, and the service of a further six may be established during the campaign which preceded the battle of Poitiers.[45] Here, therefore, is that tradition of service on the 'great expeditions' suggested in the later testimonies before the court of chivalry. For the most part the remainder of the retinue consisted of men whose association with the Prince was of long duration; many had earlier returned from Nájera and service in the Principality, and as many as eleven held annuities drawn on the exchequer at Chester.[46] The retinue was, therefore, a muster of the Prince's permanent retainers bolstered from his lordship in Cheshire and north Wales. In a limited sense it was a 'Cheshire retinue', raised or at least financed largely from within the county whose contributions to warfare had seldom before reached such proportions. It is not difficult to imagine why for these reasons, if not for those of military success, the campaign retained a hold on the popular imagination.

Although the retinue did not finally reach the Principality until April 1369, protections granted to it were recorded during the late autumn and winter of 1368. The reasons for the delay remain a matter for speculation but were clearly vital to the maintenance of the Prince's lordship in Aquitaine. The best account is given in an anonymous news latter written in March 1369 which describes the impact of French attacks during the year.[47] Since Christmas the news had all been bad and the pressure of the French had kept many of the Prince's men to their castles, to the extent that he could not raise an army in the field to meet the threat. The Rouergue and the Quercy were both already all but lost, and Jean de Mauqenchy and Louis de Sancerre were about to enter the Périgord. 'The war is open and the French have already dealt such a blow to the Principality that we shall not be able to recover for a long time'; the tone of despair is punctuated only by astonishment that the greater part of the men-at-arms and archers who were to have come from England at Christmas had yet to arrive.

Sir Thomas Wetenhale and many of the Prince's permanent retainers had left England in the autumn of 1368 and appeared within the Principality in the campaigns during the winter and spring of 1369.[48] The greater part of the retinue which mustered

at Northampton, including most of those troops raised in Cheshire, did not in fact reach the Principality until March 1369 under the leadership of the earls of Pembroke and Cambridge.[49] In the event many found service with Audley and Chandos on a *chevauchée* through Poitou and Saintogne, the points of which can be identified from Froissart's narrative and the testimony of the Scrope/Grosvenor witnesses. According to the witnesses for Grosvenor, Audley's ride had reached to within twenty miles of Bourges after taking the castle at Brosses as a reprisal against the lord of Chauvigny. Later in the year many were present at the siege of La Roche-sur-Yon where the castellan, Jean Bellon, is reported to have betrayed the castle to the English, and a few remembrances dealt with events at Belleperche early in 1370.[50] It seems probable, however, that the majority of Cheshiremen had already returned to England, for at the county court in Chester in December 1369 twelve men-at-arms and forty-four archers were indicted for deserting the army without licence.[51]

That part of the retinue which had been raised in Cheshire appears on the Northampton muster roll in three separate groupings; a block of five esquires described as the leaders of seventy archers chosen in Cheshire, seven knights, each with a small number of men-at-arms, but leading three groups of forty archers, and finally a list of individual men-at-arms. Four of that second group had served at Poitiers, two as leaders of archers and a third as a deputy. It is possible that, as in 1355, these four sets of archers represent contributions from the hundreds of Macclesfield, Nantwich, Broxton and Bucklow raised through an obligation of service to the Prince in those areas where the leaders were important land or office holders. In the event those recruited in Macclesfield appear to have joined Wetenhale in the Rouergue before Christmas 1368, while the latter groups evenually found service in Poitou.[52] However employed what remains to be answered is the extent to which these brief excursions into military service in response to the sporadic demands of the Prince present an accurate picture of the military community in Cheshire and of the impact of war upon the civilian population. Any narrative which concentrates on the 'great expeditions' of Crécy, Poitiers, 1359 or 1369 may well amount to only a partial selection of military activity in the county. The nature of these campaigns, in so far as they represent the military experience of the whole of local society under the lordship of the Prince, may fundamentally unbalance our view of the character of military service in Cheshire. In short to what tradition, if any, did the service of Sir Thomas Wetenhale and Sir Hugh Browe belong?

In 1363 as the Prince prepared to visit his new lordship in

Aquitaine the justice of Chester had been ordered to array 200 archers in the county under the leadership of a group of knights and esquires.[53] Similar demands, it seems, were made in the duchy of Cornwall where the Prince was himself present prior to his departure from Plymouth.[54] It seems likely, however, that a substantial part of that retinue was disbanded before it had reached the Principality, perhaps even before it had mustered.[55] The reasons were both military and political. Since 1347 Gascon troops had been organised along English lines, with retinues recruited for limited periods of military emergency replacing the permanently garrisoned infantry forces which had characterised an earlier period in the duchy's military history.[56] The importance of these local retinues has fallen under the shadow of the *chevauchées* of 1346 and 1355–7, although between that date and 1361 the greater part of the defensive actions in the duchy were undertaken by a group of some ninety-nine Gascon captains who recruited among their own feudal dependents. That group also formed the core of the political community, and up to 50 per cent of the homages received by the Prince at the cathedral of Saint André came from that section of the Gascon nobility.[57] Clearly there was little need for the Prince to be accompanied by the kind of retinue which had been raised for an offensive campaign in France, and that which crossed the channel in 1363 was a personal entourage rather than an English garrison.

The loss of records relating to the Prince's lordship in both Aquitaine and Cheshire tends to obscure the importance of service in the Principality for many members of local society in the county.[58] This is in part restored by the issue of letters of protection enrolled either on the Gascon rolls or the 'recognizance' rolls of the Chester exchequer which identify those serving abroad. At the same time because of the nature of service in Aquitaine where there was an increasing renewal of letters of protection, there was some awareness of a special problem with regard to the operation of law and order in the county and in some instances, therefore, letters were enrolled on the Chester plea rolls alongside cases, the hearing of which they automatically suspended.[59] The yield from such sources is, of course, far from comprehensive but nevertheless suggests that service in France on a semi-permanent basis had assumed an increasing importance in the period after the creation of the Principality. The evidence is perhaps speculative but the experience of John Jodrell may not have been untypical of the lesser soldiery in the county. He had served initially on the first *chevauchée* of the Prince in Gascony in 1355, deserting after the return to Bordeaux only to reappear among the reinforcements raised in Cheshire in the spring of 1356.[60] At Poitiers he shared in

the day's spoils, picking up a silver salt-cellar belonging to king John which was later bought by the Prince for £8.[61] As a younger son, however, the opportunities for advancement in local society were limited and military service had perhaps suggested itself as an alternative career. He makes a final appearance in Cheshire in a deed of 1362.[62] In 1376, now describing himself as John Joudrell de Peytowe, he petitioned John of Gaunt and the Council for help in raising a ransom of 1,000 francs to secure his release by Guillaume de Mareuil.[63] Jodrell claimed in his petition to have lost horses, men, goods, houses and rents during the campaigns in Poitou which had left him without the means to effect his own ransom; losses which nonetheless suggest the advantages of war gained through service in the Principality and the winning of a landed status that might have escaped Jodrell had he remained in Cheshire.

Isolated references of this nature, whether in the form of indentures, petitions or protections only rarely establish the duration and rewards of military service. In the administration of the Rouergue and the service of *routier* captains during the Breton civil war long and unbroken periods of service do, however, make an impact upon the surviving documentation. In May 1365 the Gascon seneschal of the Rouergue, Amanieu de Foussat, was replaced by the Cheshire knight Sir Thomas Wetenhale who undertook the organisation of the Prince's lordship.[64] A younger son of Sir John Wetenhale of Derfold, he is known to have served in Gascony under Sir James Audley of Heighley in 1345 and under the duke of Clarence in Ireland in 1361.[65] The historian of the Rouergue, abbé Rouquette, suggested that the Prince's rule was here undermined by 'the seneschal and a group of avaricious knights'; an opinion that may earlier have been shared by Urban V who petitioned the Prince on a number of occasions concerning the exactions of Wetenhale and his retinue.[66] Whatever the opportunities for peculation, however, the burden of that retinue was recruited among the local nobility and eventually found service in September 1366 on the Prince's Spanish expedition.

The defence and administration of the region had fallen to another Cheshireman, Sir David Cradock, who was faced after October 1367 by an escalation of military activity culminating in the campaign of the duke of Anjou in 1369. Wetenhale had returned from England, where he had been raising troops for the defence of the Principality in December 1368, by which time the situation in the Rouergue was already critical. By March 1369 the anonymous news letter was unsure whether Wetenhale had been 'captured or killed' in an ambush near Villeneuve, and observed

that his lieutenant, David Cradock, had been besieged for over six weeks.[67] The details of a rapidly worsening situation can be recovered from the accounts of the *consuls boursiers* of Millau which report the unbridled itineraries of the seneschal, Cradock and the castellan of Millau, James Mascy.[68] Beyond a small core of English men-at-arms and archers, including the seventy raised in Cheshire, the seneschal was dependent upon the faltering resources of lordship in the Rouergue where the pace of defections to the duke of Anjou had already quickened. A brief and largely unsuccessful campaign following the siege of Compeyre ended during the pursuit of the count of Vendôme in September 1369. Wetenhale was mortally wounded at Montlaur and carried to a neighbouring house where he died. The *consuls* organised a remembrance service at Millau on October 3rd, less than a week after they had received the sealed opinions of fourteen *legists* from the University of Bologna on the sovereignty of Aquitaine.[69] The town formally submitted to the sovereignty of Charles V at Rodez in November, although Cradock and his family did not finally leave under a safe conduct until February 1370.[70]

Many of those who had served during the period of the Principality had not done so as members of the Prince's permanent retinue or as officials in the provincial administration, but in the free companies in Brittany, Spain and Poitou. It seems likely that these companies were not merely the debris of earlier conflicts, or associations founded on a developing criminality in medieval society but that their emergence may be related to a crisis in political authority between 1360 and 1369.[71] Many were those whose service and ambitions fell beyond the resources of the Prince's lordship in Aquitaine, and for whom the continuance of conflicts in Brittany and the collapse of political authority elsewhere offered the prospects of further employment. The springs of their service were simply those of a general commitment to warfare on a semi-permanent basis; those for whom military service had become a career. It is clearly suggested by the ease with which most were reabsorbed into the normal social milieu after 1369, finding service in the long rear-guard action in defence of English lordship in Aquitaine.[72] In Cheshire the most notable, although by no means unique example is provided by the career of Sir Hugh Calveley which is echoed in the experience of a number of lesser-known captains.

Among those who are known to have served in Brittany were a number of Cheshiremen including two *routier* captains, Sir David Hulgreve and John Norbury, both of whom received quittances from duke John IV in 1368.[73] Hulgreve later reappears in the campaigns in Poitou, first in the garrison of Montcontour and

later at Niort and Chizé where he was captured and ransomed by Du Guesclin.[74] Norbury's presence is not reported until 1377 when he appears as the captain of Libourne.[75] The origin of many of the garrison captains in Gascony during this period does suggest, however, a widespread commitment to warfare among the Cheshire gentry which had survived the decay of the Prince's lordship in Aquitaine. In 1373 at least six garrisons were led by Cheshire captains, including that at Derval held by Sir Hugh Browe.[76]

The 'great expeditions' had been musters of men whose ambitions and position in local society grew from the lordship of the earl, and who therefore responded to irregular demands for military service. The advantages of war might also attract the service of local gentry to particular campaigns, as in 1375 when Sir John Leycester of Tabley led a retinue of three esquires and eight archers under the seneschal of Aquitaine, Sir Thomas Felton.[77] A general commitment to regular military service could not, however, be easily reconciled with the necessity of directly controlling small estates; and at the same time many of the advantages of war were those which could not be remitted to England.[78] It is clear that in the conduct of war there was a great variety of individual experience spread between those who served regularly and those who served perhaps once or twice during their lives, either in pursuit of ransoms and booty or in response to the weight of lordship exercised in the county. The tradition of service exemplified by the careers of Wetenhale, Cradock and Hulgreve differed greatly from that which found expression in the heraldic dispute of 1385, in which the testimony of Sir Hugh Browe had sounded a discordant note. What remains to be considered is whether this division within the military community in Cheshire may be expressed in terms other than of the quality of martial experience, whether it corresponds in any degree to an identifiable social stratification. Those who served in the campaign of 1369 might of course serve on other occasions and those, like Sir Hugh Browe, who served in the garrisons might belong to the same social stratum, although it does seem likely that there are broad economic and social boundaries which may be drawn.

While the experience of those who served regularly holds its own intrinsic interest we are perhaps equally concerned with the extent to which they retained links with local society. There is a clear qualitative difference between the impact of military service which merely represents a permanent loss of surplus manpower, a movement beyond the constraints and bounds of the local community, and that which serves to broaden its base and widen the experience of its membership. In that respect the example of

John Jodrell is far from characteristic and the ties of locality appear to have exercised a vital influence even among those who found continuous service in the Rouergue, Brittany and Poitou.

In November 1365 Sir Thomas Wetenhale had entertained the retinue of Sir Hugh Calveley at Milleau on its journey to Spain to join Du Guesclin's *routier* army in the conquest of Castille. The two knights belonged to a cosmopolitan world which embraced a wide variety of social and political experience but, as the account of the *consul boursier* ruefully observed, the town had been burdened because 'Hugh Calveley said that he was a cousin of the seneschal'.[79] Within that world the importance of kinship and locality was paramount and found expression in the development of clearly identifiable military fraternities.[80] At Millau, Calveley and Wetenhale were joined by the lieutenant of the seneschal, David Cradock, whose own retinue included at least one son and an uncle, the castellan of Millau, James Mascy.[81] Few of the group, perhaps significantly, are well served by the survival of evidence of a private nature for they were rarely drawn from amongst those who held significant lands, but in a small number of extant petitions Calveley's concern for the strength of kinship links is made apparent. In 1365 he had petitioned the pope from the Limousin in an attempt to secure benefices for 'three nephews and one kinsman' who were still minors.[82] In 1377 he petitioned Richard II on behalf of John Calveley, 'his nephew and others of his cousins and friends' who were then accused of an assault on Saint Asaph in support of a clerk, David Calveley, claiming the immunity of the liberty of Cheshire and recalling their service in the garrisons of Calais.[83] In the following year yet another kinsman, Jenkin Calveley, shared in the grant of the Channel Islands as Sir Hugh's lieutenant.[84] These examples are far from unique and the demands of a kinship society and the elaboration of a military lineage are repeated elsewhere. In 1380 Sir David Hulgreve's retinue which served under Thomas of Woodstock had included at least three close kinsmen.[85] William Hulgreve had earlier served in the Principality with another brother and in 1369 appears as a leader of those archers raised in Cheshire which may have reached the Rouergue.[86] Another member of the 1380 retinue, John Hulgreve, could later petition Richard II claiming to have fought for twenty-two years in the earl's service.[87]

Beyond the bonds of kinship lay the ties of locality, and these men shared a common social and geographical background among the landless and younger sons of the minor gentry in the Nantwich area. The opportunities in war were greater among that section of the community which could not depend on the

income of inherited wealth, or on access to the resources of comital patronage except through military service. Notwithstanding the widening of horizons which came from service in Spain or the Principality these men maintained strong and vital links with the locality, often returning to the county to recruit men for service in France. In 1380 the two surviving muster rolls of Sir David Hulgreve and Sir Hugh Calveley bear all the hallmarks of a Cheshire retinue.[88]

In considering the manpower demands upon Cheshire society during the period of the Principality of Aquitaine it is apparent that military service stands as a response to a complex interplay of differing social circumstances, many of which are not yet fully explained but which cannot be reconciled to any simplistic view of the nature of war in the later middle ages. If we are to discern those 'calculations of mutual advantage' which K. B. McFarlane felt lay at the heart of military service in the later middle ages we must recognise the varieties of individual experience in warfare and set these against the important realities of local history.

III

Between 1360 and 1370 the county of Cheshire had for the first time during the fourteenth century felt the full impact of war which grew from the claims of a masterful lordship exercised by the Black Prince. In the defence of the Principality of Aquitaine demands upon the resources of that lordship, both in terms of finance and manpower, had reached a peak. The insularity and independent development of the county which had previously been based upon the insecure foundations of political inertia and royal acquiescence now gained a surer footing in the lordship of the earl. It is exemplified by the growing use of 'parliamentary' assemblies in the elaboration of the casual revenues of the earldom and in the character of military service on the 'great expeditions' which represent the martial experience of local gentry society under the dominion of the Prince.[89] Such service had, however, already undergone a fundamental transformation.

In 1390 John Savage complained at the tournament of Saint-Inglevert, as he might have done during the defence of the Principality, that he had not crossed the sea merely to run one lance.[90] The character of the Prince's lordship in Aquitaine and the development of individual enterprise in warfare had stretched the bounds of the local community to the extent that military service was no longer solely an aspect of a vigorous lordship but an attractive prospect for a section of the lesser gentry which

assumed the leadership of local society at war during the later fourteenth century. The retinue of 1369 which was later celebrated in the testimony of witnesses before a case in the court of chivalry in 1385 marked the end of a period of large-scale musters of the Prince's lordship in Cheshire. Thereafter it was the garrison captains such as Browe, Hulgreve, Cradock and others who dominated the organisation of war in the county. Their importance is understated in the written evidence of medieval local society, swallowed up by the doings of those with land and the misdeeds of those without it; and distorted by the cloying influence of the romantic myth of Crécy and Poitiers.[91] Cheshire nonetheless constituted a polyhierarchical society within which the ownership of land and a nobility acquired through military service coexisted at the apices of gentry affinities.

NOTES

1 Diana B. Tyson, 'La Vie du Prince Noir by Chandos Herald', *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie*, 147 (1975), ll. 1616–1648 describing the court of the Prince and the expedition to Spain, 'Car ceo fuist le plus noble emprise Q'onqes cristiens emprist'.
2 G. L. Harriss, *King, Parliament, and Public Finance in Medieval England to 1369* (1975), pp. 329–32, 476–8.
3 *Ibid.* p. 476. Edward III did, however, make substantial payments to the Prince from the ransom of king John, *ibid.* pp. 491–5.
4 J. P. Trabut-Cussac, *Le Livre des Hommages d'Aquitaine* (1959), *passim*.
5 J. Rouquette, *Le Rouergue sous les Anglais* (1887), p. 92, pièce jusificative, xi.
6 Public Record Office, Diplomatic Documents, E30/1647. (All references to unpublished records refer to collections at the Public Record Office, unless otherwise stated.)
7 Philippe Contamine, 'Les Compagnies d'Aventure en France pendant la Guerre de Cent Ans', *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome*, 87 (1975), p. 385.
8 E. Perroy, *The Hundred Years War* (1951), pp. 158–65.
9 Harriss, *op. cit.* pp. 509–17.
10 See in general J. R. Maddicott, 'The English Peasantry and the Demands of the Crown 1294–1341', *Past and Present Supplement*, 1 (1975), *passim*; Edward Miller, 'War, taxation and the English economy in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries', *War and Economic Development*, ed. J. M. Winter (1975), *passim*.
11 The standard account is given by G. Barraclough, *The Earldom and County Palatine of Chester* (1953), *passim*.
12 R. R. Davies, *Lordship and Society in the March of Wales 1282–1400* (1978), p. 185.
13 See for example Chancery Miscellanea, C47/2/23 no. 29 and C47/2/25 no. 11. Two royal writs endorsed by the justice of Chester with a refusal to do service in Brittany in 1325 and 1342.

14 The observation is made by P. H. W. Booth, 'Taxation and Public Order: Cheshire in 1353', *Northern History*, 11 (1976), pp. 29–31.
15 Booth, *op. cit.* p. 24 and Plea Rolls, Chester 29/67 m 98–99 (Claim of the Master Forester of Wirral to a writ of *quo warranto*).
16 *BPR* I, p. 67; Gaol Files, Writs, etc., Chester 24/2 Bundle 21EIII.
17 H. J. Hewitt, *Cheshire Under the Three Edwards* (1967), pp. 8–9.
18 Booth, *op. cit.* pp. 21–2, 24.
19 *BPR* III, p. 482.
20 Exchequer King's Remembrancer, Accounts Various E101/177/9 printed in M. J. Delpit, *Collection Générale des Documents Français qui se trouvent en Angleterre* (1847), pp. 132–69.
21 SC 6/772/5 (Account of the Chamberlain of Chester 1369–70), m 3; SC 6/772/9 (Account of the Chamberlain of Chester 1372–4), m 2.
22 SC 6/772/5 m 2d. See for example the scale of grants made to the Prince's retinue in the aftermath of the 1355–7 campaign recorded in *BPR* III, *passim*. The majority of these grants were, however, pardons or exemptions; awards which did not substantially lessen or deplete the resources of comital lordship.
23 SC 6/772/3 (Account of the Chamberlain of Chester 1361–2) m 2d.
24 SC 6/772/5 m 2d.
25 Enrolments, Chester 2/45 m 2d. Grant of an annuity of £40 to Bertram de Saint Omer dated at Plymouth June 4th 1363.
26 Chester 2/47 m 3; Chester 2/48 m 2d; Chester 2/46 m 2; *ibid.* m 1d.
27 Chester 2/47 m 1.
28 Chester 2/48 m 2, m 2d; SC 6/772/5 m 2d.
29 Ancient Petitions, SC 8/333 nos. 1043, 1026. The name in the latter is lost.
30 SC 6/773/6 (Account of the Chamberlain of Chester 1389–90), m 2; see also the references cited by R. R. Davies, 'Richard II and the Principality of Chester 1397–9', *The Reign of Richard II*, ed. F. R. H. Du Boulay and C. M. Barron (1971), p. 261 n. 12–13.
31 H. J. Hewitt, *Medieval Cheshire* (1929), pp. 157–60. Hewitt's work forms the basis of most modern comment, see for example A. Tuck, *Richard II and the English Nobility* (1973), p. 166.
32 N. H. Nicolas, *The Scrope and Grosvenor Controversy* (2 vols. 1832). Volume I contains the testimony of the witnesses, volume II a history of the Scrope family and biographical notices of the witnesses in their favour. A projected third volume dealing with the Grosvenor witnesses was never issued.
33 Nicolas, *op. cit.* p. 256.
34 The phrase is that of an inquisition *probatio aetatis* of 1374, Inquisitions Post Mortem, Chester 3/7 (1).
35 See the discussion by M. J. Bennett, 'A County Community: Social Cohesion Amongst the Cheshire Gentry 1400–1425', *Northern History*, 8 (1973), pp. 27–8.
36 Nicolas, *op. cit.* p. 82.
37 *Ibid.* p. 256.
38 The former suggestion is that of A. D. Carr, 'Welshmen and the Hundred Years War', *The Welsh History Review*, 4 (1968), p. 27. Uniforms were, however, already in use amongst the lords of the March as an advertisement for their lordships, cf. Davies, *op. cit.* pp. 81–4. The Prince had already ordered the use of green and white cloth for the exchequer table at Chester where his lordship was equally forcibly proclaimed, SC 6/772/1 (Account of the Chamberlain of Chester 1360–1), m.2.

39 The fullest account of the campaigns in the Rouergue is given by Rouquette, *op. cit.* chs. 6–9.

40 B(ritish) L(ibrary), Harleian MS. 2074 (Transcripts of the Chester records made by Randle Holmes in 1640), f. 230 v. Montviron is described as *nuper mareschallus aulae domini principi* in SC 6/772/5 m 2d.

41 This had been the arrangement prior to the expeditions of 1355 and 1363, *BPR* III, pp. 200, 454. Wetenhale had returned to England after Nájera and appears in the Northampton muster, after which he was paid £56 for the wages of men-at-arms and archers, SC 6/772/5 m 2d.

42 J. Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues and English Expeditions to France', *E.H.R.* 79 (1964), p. 733.

43 Harriss, *op. cit.* p. 501; SC 6/772/5 m 2d.

44 E101/29/24.

45 William Caryngton, Richard Mascy, John Griffyn, John Danyers, Hamo Mascy and William Donne. A list of Cheshiremen who are known to have served at Poitiers is given in H. J. Hewitt, *Cheshire Under the Three Edwards* (1967), Appendix I.

46 SC 6/772/5 m 2, 2d. Sir Alan Cheyne, Sir Robert Neville, Sir Nicholas Bonde, Sir Richard Abberbury, Sir Robert Roos, Sir William Thorpe, Sir John Golofre, Sir Gerard Braybrook, Sir Reginald Malyns, Sir Baldwin Frevill and Sir John de la Warre.

47 M. D. Legge, *Anglo-Norman Letters*, Anglo-Norman Text Society, 3 (1941), pp. 198–202.

48 Rouquette, *op. cit.* pp. 148–50.

49 *Chroniques de J. Froissart*, ed. Siméon Luce, VII (1878), pp. 116–19.

50 *Froissart*, ed. Luce, vii, pp. 136–9, 160–1, 216–17.

51 Indictment Rolls, Chester 25/4 m 22, 29d. They included Robert Grosvenor, Sir William Brereton and Sir John Danyers.

52 The seventy archers were included under the heading *passerent puis la seint Michel* on the muster roll and were presumably among those accounted for by Sir Thomas Wetenhale in the chamberlain's account who had served with him in the Rouergue.

53 *BPR* III, p. 454.

54 John Hatcher, *Rural Economy and Society in the Duchy of Cornwall 1300–1500* (1970), p. 145.

55 *BPR* III, p. 482. 'Divers men-at-arms and archers who were retained . . . to join the Prince in Aquitaine, and were afterwards countermanded'.

56 K. Fowler, 'Les Finances et la Discipline dans les Armées Anglaises en France au XIV^e Siècle', *Les Cahiers Vernonnais*, 4 (1964), *passim*.

57 P. J. Capra, 'Les Bases Sociales du Pouvoir Anglo-Gascon au milieu du XIV^e siècle', *Le Moyen Âge*, 81 (1975), pp. 278–9.

58 The accounts of the constable of Bordeaux do not survive between 1362 and 1372 when it was no longer necessary for them to be submitted to the exchequer. The loss is matched by a similar hiatus in the accounts of the chamberlain of Chester.

59 See for example the terms of the letters of protection enrolled in 1363 which were to be invalid on the return of the recipient, or in the event of his not embarking, Chester 29/72 m 15; *ibid.* m 16, 19 (William Bulkeley and Hugh Scot) for hearings suspended *sine die* as a result of the submission of letters of protection.

60 BL Harleian MS 2074 f. 228.

61 *BPR* IV, p. 254.

62 John Rylands Library, Jodrell Mss. 3a.

63 SC 8/118 no. 5878. Undated but probably *c.*1375/6.

64 Rouquette, *op. cit.* p. 92.
65 E101/24/20; E101/28/18.
66 *Cal. Papal Registers*, ed. W. H. Bliss and J. A. Twemlow, IV (1902), pp. 17–18, 20, 22.
67 Legge, *op. cit.* p. 199.
68 Jules Artières, 'Documents sur la ville de Millau', *Archives Historiques de Rouergue*, 7 (1930), pp. 100–76.
69 Rouquette, *op. cit.* p. 207; P. Chaplais, 'Some Documents Regarding the Fulfilment and Interpretation of the Treaty of Brétigny 1361–1369', *Camden Miscellany*, 19 (1952), p. 55.
70 Artières, *op. cit.* p. 176.
71 Contamine, *op. cit.* pp. 376–7.
72 *Ibid.* p. 376; A. D. Carr, 'A Welsh Knight in the Hundred Years War: Sir Gregory Sais', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1977), pp. 40–53 conveniently summarises the details of the campaign. A Flintshire knight, Sais, recruited widely in Cheshire during the 1380's and served in the Rouergue in 1367, *ibid.* p. 50 and references; Rouquette, *op. cit.* p. 113.
73 Michael Jones, *Ducal Brittany 1364–1399* (1970), Appendix B.
74 *Froissart*, ed. Luce, viii, pp. 51–3, 113, 279; R. Memain, 'Les Misères de la Guerre en Bas-Poitou aux XIV^{e} et XV^{e} siècles', *Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest*, 12 (1941), p. 652.
75 E101/181/4 Pt. 2 no. 21; M. Barber, 'John Norbury: An Esquire of Henry IV', *E.H.R.* 68 (1953), *passim* gives only brief details of his early career. Fowler, *op. cit.* is here more helpful.
76 *Archives Historiques du Département de la Gironde*, 12 (1870), pp. 328–41. Geoffrey of Frodsham, Saint Macaire; Hugh Calveley and John Griffin, La Réole; John Legh, Montsecour; John Savage, Salveterre. *Froissart*, ed. Luce VIII, pp. 113, 133, 147. David Hulgreve, Niort; 'messires Hues Broe et ses freres', Derval.
77 Cheshire Record Office, Leycester of Tabley MSS., DLT/A11/85.
78 An obvious example is provided by the resources of the court of the seneschal at Millau over which Wetenhale and Cradock presided, Artières, *op. cit.* p. 146.
79 *Ibid.* 'Ugo de Carolei dizia que el era casis del senescale'.
80 Contamine, *op. cit.* pp. 381, 388–9.
81 Artières, *op. cit.* p. 176.
82 *Cal. Papal Registers*, IV, p. 17.
83 SC 8/103 no. 5103.
84 SC 8/257 no. 12825; John Rylands Library, Bromley-Davenport Muniments II (3), Calveley Box 2/2. Appointment of attorneys by Jenkin Calveley at Hastings.
85 E101/39/9. William Hulgreve, John Hulgreve, David Hulgreve jr.
86 Chester 29/72 m 16, petition of William and Thomas Hulgreve, October 1367.
87 Davies, *op. cit.* p. 269 n. 55.
88 E101/39/9 m 1, 3.
89 M. Sharp, 'Contributions to a History of the Earldom of Chester 1237–1399', University of Manchester Ph.D. thesis, 2 vols. (1925), pp. 43–4 argues, however, that the government of Cheshire under the household of the Black Prince represented a slackening of the traditions of independence in Cheshire.
90 Froissart, *Chronicles*, ed. G. Brereton (Penguin edition 1968), pp. 377–8. See above n. 76.
91 Peter Legh, a leader of archers in 1369 who was later executed by

Henry IV, is commemorated on a brass of 1506 in the Legh chapel of Macclesfield church 'at the battell of Cressie'. The reference is erroneous but for the antiquarians of the early modern period the great expeditions had become synonymous with military service.