

THE MEN OF CHESHIRE AND THE REBELLION
OF 1403¹

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I

IT is perhaps insufficiently appreciated that the rebellion against Henry IV in the summer of 1403 was very much a Cheshire rising. There is no doubt that the insurrection was raised by Henry 'Hotspur', son of Henry Percy, first earl of Northumberland, and was inspired by the personal ambitions of the Percies. Nevertheless, all the evidence points to the likelihood that the greater part of the army which faced the king in the battle of Shrewsbury on 21 July was levied in the Palatinate. The *Dieulacres Chronicle*, which provides the most circumstantial account of the rebels' recruitment, states that after arriving in Cheshire on about 9 July, the insurgents gathered an imposing force of men by proclaiming that Richard II was still alive and would meet his former supporters at Sandiway on 17 July.² Thomas Walsingham's *Historia Anglicana* maintains that many Cheshire men joined the rising, especially those who had been retainers or beneficiaries of the late king, and the same chronicler's *Annales Henrici Quarti* says that men-at-arms and archers were recruited by the promise that they would see Richard at Chester Castle.³ According to the continuation of the *Eulogium Historiarum*, the rebels 'venerunt ad comitatum Cestriae et Cestrenses secum assumpserunt.'⁴ Though these three chronicles state that Hotspur also obtained support from the Welsh, this claim receives little corroboration from official contemporary sources. Walsingham's statement that the majority of the knights and esquires of Cheshire, to the number of two hundred, fell at Shrewsbury⁵ can only be regarded as a gross exaggeration, but it still appears to represent the general impression of the character of the rising. There is nowhere any hint of significant recruitment elsewhere in England, and the supposition that Hotspur was heavily dependent on Cheshire support is strongly reinforced by the surviving records of the fate of individual rebels. We have the names of ninety-one people who joined the insurrection of 1403,⁶ and a further thirty-

one who probably rose with them. Of these 122, ninety-five were Cheshire-based, and five had interests either in the Palatinate or a few miles across the Welsh border in Flintshire. The purpose of this article is not to account for Hotspur's rather surprising reliance on Cheshire men as the mainstay of his army, but to assess the extent and nature of the support which he received from the county. While his recruitment was successful in terms of both quantity and quality, the response from Cheshire was neither universal nor indiscriminate. Who, then, were the men who chose to align themselves with the rebels, and what are likely to have been their motives?

II

There seem to be sound reasons for maintaining that the rising in Cheshire began in the hundred of Bucklow. The heavy concentration of rebels in the eastern parts of that hundred very probably represents one of a number of clues to the insurgents' route through the county. The *Dieulacres Chronicle* maintains that a small force of northern rebels passed through Lancashire before arriving in Cheshire.⁷ Hotspur was unlikely to wish to draw attention to his southward march, and it might therefore be assumed that he proceeded along the western foothills of the Pennines. One item of evidence may lend support to this theory. Geoffrey Bold, a Lancashire man who joined the rising, held the manors of Whittleswick, near Eccles, and Lower Darwen,⁸ and either or both of these places may have lain on Hotspur's route. It certainly seems reasonable to conjecture that the rebels entered Cheshire somewhere to the south of Manchester, and that they had reason to believe that they would draw substantial support there.

Hotspur's hopes of this region were very probably enhanced by the fact that it was the home of two esquires who could be regarded as the most irreconcilable opponents of the Lancastrian usurpation. John Legh of Booths and Thomas Holford had been two of the seven captains of the notorious 'Cheshire guard'⁹—the private army specially designated as Richard II's personal body-guard. The claim that these men were his most intimate and loyal associates receives much support from the events of January 1400. Legh, Holford and their fellow captains Thomas Beeston and John Done all rose in Richard's cause, and were specifically said to have been contacted by agents of the ex-king's aristocratic friends with a view to their raising the county. Moreover, Legh and Holford were named as the leaders of an armed band which marched into Chester at the height of the rebellion to make

proclamations on behalf of 'their' king.¹⁰ Their support for the rebels in 1403 could only be described as predictable.

Legh had been retained for life by Richard II for an annuity of £5. Although his original landed interests were to the south-east of Knutsford, he had been granted his principal rewards and responsibilities much further to the east. In December 1398 he obtained a grant for life of the town of Sutton in Macclesfield Forest, worth £20 annually, and at about the same time he was appointed steward of High Peak, surveyor of the Peak Forest, and constable of Castleton Castle. He served on Richard's ill-fated Irish expedition in the summer of 1399,¹¹ and on 20 August he found it expedient to submit personally to the invading Henry of Lancaster and find sureties for his good conduct in the substantial sum of £200.¹² Not surprisingly, Legh and Holford were among eight men barred from even seeking pardon after their prominent role in the rising of 1400.¹³ Legh also seems to have been the only member of the Cheshire gentry to have suffered forfeiture, although he was apparently restored soon after a number of his fellows had raised another £200 as surety in July 1400. A year later he was confirmed in his tenure of Sutton, but was finally stripped of his annuity.¹⁴

Holford, of Holford Hall to the south-west of Knutsford, is a surprisingly obscure figure. There is not even any positive proof that he was the holder of a royal annuity, although it is surely reasonable to assume that this was the case.¹⁵ The likelihood that he was closely associated with Legh of Booths is reinforced by the fact that the latter acted as a surety for his good behaviour on 8 December 1400, and both of them performed a similar service for another rebel, Gilbert Legh, on the same day.¹⁶

In 1394 Holford had been ordered to appear before the justice of Chester,¹⁷ and this summons may indicate that he was involved in the obscure but apparently anti-Lancastrian disturbance in Cheshire in the previous year.¹⁸ If this was the case, he would have risen in the company of Sir John Massey of Tatton, one of the two acknowledged leaders of the rising and probably the most important, in terms of local influence, of the men of Bucklow who rebelled in 1403. Massey had had a long and chequered career. He had been retained by Richard II's father, the Black Prince, and had served in Spain with Henry IV's father John of Gaunt.¹⁹ He had been sheriff of Cheshire before his misconduct in 1393 led to his imprisonment in Chester Castle for about nine months.²⁰ In October 1397 he received a life annuity of 20 marks from the king, while his eldest son Thomas obtained one of £5. Sir John took part in the Irish expedition, and found himself in custody again after Henry of Lancaster's invasion.²¹ Although his career

between 1393 and 1399 suggested that he might prove one of the most recalcitrant of the deposed king's retainers, he remained consistently on the right side of the law for the first three years of the new reign. After a brief internment, he was appointed a commissioner of the peace in Bucklow hundred on 23 January 1400, and in March he was one of the most distinguished of the jurors who gave evidence at the enquiry into the rising of 1400.²²

Though Massey's family seat was not far from those of Legh of Booths and Holford, there is little positive indication that they were closely associated in the years under discussion. It may be noted, however, that Thomas Massey was one of the sureties for Legh's good conduct in 1400, and that he was also a surety for four more of Legh's fellow rebels. In the event, the family of Massey proved that it had preserved its loyalty to the memory of Richard II. Both Sir John and his eldest son rose in 1403,²³ and another rebel, Richard Massey, was possibly a younger son.

Although Sir William Legh of Baguley was associated with Massey in the administration of their hundred, his family connections suggest that he may have been actively involved in the rebellion in his own right. He was the uncle of Legh of Booths and the stepfather of Ralph Davenport,²⁴ the one captain of the Cheshire guard who seems to have escaped involvement or incrimination in the troubles of 1400 and 1403. Like Massey, Sir William had received a life annuity of 20 marks from Richard.²⁵ He and Massey were involved, with others, in the distribution in Bucklow hundred of a sum of money awarded by the king to those who had suffered as a result of the defeat of a Cheshire force which had fought on Richard's behalf at Radcot Bridge in 1387.²⁶ Furthermore, as Legh received a pardon on 15 October 1393,²⁷ he may have been involved in Massey's rising of that year. He certainly served with Massey in Ireland in 1399 and on the commission of the peace in Bucklow in January 1400.²⁸ His principal lands, at Baguley and Northenden,²⁹ probably lay very close to the rebels' line of march, and geographical considerations suggest that he could even have been the first of the Cheshire gentry to join Hotspur.

This last factor was unlikely to have figured in the recruitment of Sir Peter Dutton, whose lands lay in the extreme west of the hundred. Dutton was probably the leading member of the gentry of that part of the county, and as such he was associated with his opposite numbers in the east on various commissions. He acted with Massey of Tatton and Legh of Baguley in the distribution of the 'Radcot Bridge' compensation in 1398, and on the commission of the peace in January 1400. Dutton had been retained by Richard II in 1397 for the large annuity of 40 marks for life, was

appointed constable of the important Welsh border castle of Chirk in the same year, and served in Ireland in 1399.³⁰ In common with Massey, he was one of the jurors at the enquiry into the 1400 rebellion. Solidarity with two of his chief colleagues in the hundred might be supposed to have been one of the reasons for Dutton's rebellion.

It is not surprising that Massey's nearest neighbour to the north-west, Hugh Legh of High Legh, also joined the rising. Legh had been retained by Richard II for a life annuity of £5.³¹ He acted with Massey, William Legh and Dutton on the commission of the peace in 1400, and may be assumed to have been a junior associate of these prominent members of the Bucklow gentry. His lands cannot have been far from the line of Hotspur's march, and the pressures upon him to rise must have been considerable.

Until at least 1402, it could have been maintained that the member of the Bucklow gentry with the closest personal link with Massey of Tatton was Peter Warburton, esquire, who had been Massey's ward and had been contracted in marriage to his daughter Dulcia. The marriage was not consummated and was annulled in May 1402,³² but this development need not be regarded as evidence of a personal breach between Warburton and his former guardian. The connection with Massey may have represented his main contact with Ricardian views, as there is no indication that he was retained by the late king. Warburton appears to have been more involved than most of his fellow gentry in the early stages of the war against the Welsh rebels. In October 1400 he had been in trouble for leaving the royal army in Wales without permission, and his appointment to a commission on 30 May 1403 to commandeer horses for the army of the prince of Wales³³ may therefore not have been very congenial. If this was the case, his fellow commissioners Legh of Booths and Dutton may have been able to exploit his reservations and persuade him to join them in a very different venture.³⁴

Robert Toft of Toft Hall, to the south of Knutsford, had links with several of the principal rebels. His family's seat lay midway between those of the two Bucklow 'captains' Legh of Booths and Holford, and as he had received an annuity of £5 for life in 1397,³⁵ it is not unlikely that he was closely associated with men who formed the king's most intimate entourage. Toft had been a surety for Holford's appearance before the justice of Chester in 1394, and he had also acted as a surety for Holford's good conduct, together with Legh of Booths and Thomas Beeston, after the rising of 1400.³⁶ When the almost certain presence of Hotspur's army in the region of Knutsford is added to such connections, it is hard to see how Toft could have avoided involvement. The same

might be said of the only Bucklow parson known to have risen in 1403. The parish of Roger Venables, parson of Rostherne, included both Tatton and High Legh, and local influences were probably even more compelling than the fact that his patron was Sir Richard Venables of Kinderton,³⁷ a rebel from Northwich hundred who will be considered later.

While it therefore seems clear that a powerful contingent of Bucklow gentry had remained faithful to the memory of Richard II, another factor may have helped to ensure support in the hundred for the Percy cause. Midway between the lands of Hugh and William Legh, and not far north of Tatton, lay the manor of Dunham Massey, held by John Kynaston. Kynaston's varied connections made him perhaps the most interesting individual rebel in the rising in the north-west. He had been closely associated with the Shropshire baronial family of Lestrangle of Knockin. John, Lord Lestrangle, had alienated Dunham Massey to Kynaston and three other men at some time before his death in 1397, and Kynaston was thus well placed to make contact with all the principal gentry of eastern Bucklow. However, he also had important interests in North Wales. Lestrangle had given Kynaston and others custody of the manor of Overton Madoc and the lordship of Maelor Saesneg, in the 'detached' south-eastern portion of Flintshire.³⁸ The outbreak of the Welsh revolt in 1400 inevitably meant that Kynaston was deeply involved with one of the most sensitive border regions and with the conflict of loyalties among its inhabitants. At the time of his rebellion in 1403, he was steward to the young Richard, Lord Lestrangle, in his lordship of Ellesmere, and held lands in Ellesmere and Hampton Wood, valued at 20 marks annually, as well as Dunham Massey, worth 100 marks, and an annuity of £5 from lands at Kelsall, in Delamere Forest.³⁹ This last grant provided for the possibility of contact with another of Richard II's leading supporters, John Done of Utkinton, forester of Delamere. Moreover, Kynaston also had a link with the Percies. In June 1400 Hotspur and three other men alienated the manor of Fulk-Stapleford, in Broxton hundred, to John Lestrangle's widow, Kynaston, and others.⁴⁰ Kynaston is known to have levied a band of rebels from the Ellesmere estates, with the assistance of Richard Edenewey, parson of Llanymynech⁴¹ and Kynaston's main associate in the administration of various Lestrangle lands. It was also alleged that Kynaston attempted to obtain support for Hotspur from Owen Glendower.⁴² While the charges against him seem to imply that he joined the rebellion in Shropshire, the position of his Cheshire interests at least raises the possibility that he was an intermediary between Hotspur and the Bucklow gentry, and that

his role as a co-ordinator of the whole campaign might have been second only to that of Hotspur himself.

III

The situation in Macclesfield hundred, to the east of Bucklow, was in one respect very straightforward. The hundred provided two major rebels: Sir Robert Legh of Adlington and Sir Lawrence Fitton of Gawsworth. Legh was evidently the senior member of the Macclesfield gentry. He had served as a justice for the three hundreds of the eyre of Macclesfield on several occasions, and had been sheriff of Cheshire in 1393 and 1397. Though there is no suggestion that he was personally close to Richard II, he had been retained in 1397 for the very substantial life annuity of £40, and was granted the office of constable of Oswestry Castle.⁴³ In 1399, he was one of the leaders of a deputation to treat with Henry of Lancaster on behalf of Cheshire.⁴⁴ He was a surety for the good conduct of John Legh of Booths on 20 August, and performed a similar service for two archers of Richard II's body-guard.⁴⁵ Though he may have been at least partly motivated by conciliatory intentions, the summary beheading of his half-brother Peter Legh of Lyme⁴⁶ may have been even more instrumental in his prompt submission. However, in spite of this family disaster, Sir Robert appeared to have had little difficulty in transferring his allegiance to the House of Lancaster. He was perhaps the most important of the jurors at the enquiry into the 1400 rising, and his large annuity was confirmed by the new king. He continued to be active as a justice in Macclesfield hundred,⁴⁷ a duty which he shared with his surviving half-brother John Legh of Macclesfield and with Fitton, whose estates lay some ten miles the south of Adlington.

There is no proof that Fitton was retained by Richard II, although he served in Ireland in 1399. Both Legh and Fitton served as commissioners of the peace in their hundred in 1400, and they were ordered, in October 1402, to head an enquiry into the 'unprecedented enormities' of malefactors there.⁴⁸ Although Fitton acted with John Done, Thomas Beeston and Robert Toft in July 1397 as a surety for 'John son of James Legh' (who could have been Legh of Booths),⁴⁹ and must have been in contact with many of Richard II's principal retainers in Ireland, the men with whom he associated in the administration of his own hundred, with the exception of Legh of Adlington, seem to have remained unequivocally loyal to Henry IV. It could hardly be claimed that these two knights rose because of their dissatisfaction with the treatment which they had received from the new government. It

is not impossible, however, that Hotspur's rebellion revived Legh's suppressed resentment of his half-brother's fate, and it may also be noted that Fitton was married to Agnes Hesketh, of Rufford, Lancashire, who may have been related to John and Adam Hesketh, the alleged prime movers in the Cheshire rising of 1400.⁵⁰ Furthermore, while it is most unlikely that the rebel army passed anywhere near their estates, there were men of more than doubtful loyalty who were in a position to put pressure upon Legh and Fitton. Chief of these was Legh of Booths, himself a distant kinsman of Legh of Adlington,⁵¹ whose estates at Sutton virtually bordered on those of Fitton. In the event of a rising of the principal gentry to the west of their estates, in a cause which appeared to have some prospect of success, Legh and Fitton could have found themselves uncomfortably isolated if they had failed to give at least some measure of support.

If the main force of rebels proceeded directly from the Knutsford region to Sandiway (in Eddisbury hundred) it would have passed through the north-western part of the hundred of Northwich.⁵² The probability that Hotspur's itinerary was a significant factor in recruitment is strengthened by the fact that this region produced a contingent of rebels which almost rivalled that of eastern Bucklow.

A glance at the chronicles would suggest that the most important of the rebels of Northwich hundred were Sir Richard Venables of Kinderton and Sir Richard Vernon of Shipbrook. The fact that they were the only two Cheshire men known to have been executed after the battle of Shrewsbury⁵³ almost implies that they were the leaders of the rebellion in Cheshire. Such an assumption does not appear to be upheld by any other information. Venables and Vernon had been retained by the late king for life annuities of 20 marks and £5 respectively, and both served in Ireland, but there is no indication that they were especially favoured by Richard or that their allegiance to Henry IV was ever under suspicion before 1403. Vernon had been appointed a commissioner of the peace in Nantwich hundred on 23 September 1399,⁵⁴ a week before Henry became king, and Venables was one of the jurors at the enquiry of March 1400. Apart from Venables's tenure of the advowson of Rostherne, and the possibility of a link between Vernon and Peter Warburton (Vernon was a surety for Warburton in 1397, and was one of his sureties in a recognizance relating to his divorce in 1402),⁵⁵ they seem to have had no obvious links with the Bucklow gentry. Venables appears, however, to have had some connection with the man who might have been the key figure in the rebellion in the Northwich region. Adam Bostock, esquire, retained by

Richard II for a life annuity of £20,⁵⁶ had been one of the captains of the 'Cheshire guard'. His old associates Legh of Booths and Holford were based not far to the north-east, and he was well placed to rally support for the next stage of the rebels' march. Bostock was a surety for Venables in February 1399, and both men were commissioners of the peace in Northwich hundred in January 1400.⁵⁷ Though Bostock had apparently not risen in 1400, he would have found it hard to resist joining his former associates as they marched down from Knutsford. Bostock also held land in Wettenhall, in Eddisbury hundred,⁵⁸ and may therefore have played some part in persuading Thomas Spark, of that town, to join the rising.⁵⁹

The insurgents also recruited Robert Leftwich, who held part of Vernon's barony of Shipbrook as well as holding, like Vernon, a portion of the barony of Nantwich. There is no indication that he was retained by Richard II, but his proximity to Ricardian sympathisers doubtless played a part in his rebellion, and it may be significant that in July 1396 he acted with the subsequent rebel Adam Hesketh as a surety that a certain Robert Walker would not escape from Chester Castle.⁶⁰ Leftwich held the advowson of the church of Davenham,⁶¹ whose parson William Legh must have succumbed to pressure from all sides to join the rebellion.

If there was a link between the rebel gentry of Bucklow and Northwich, it may have been reinforced by Sir Thomas Grosvenor of Hulme, who held lands at Pulford and Churton Heath near the Welsh border but whose seat lay midway between Holford Hall and Kinderton. Grosvenor may not have been retained by Richard II, but he was closely associated with Sir Richard Venables, who was his father-in-law. They both served in Ireland in 1399 and as commissioners of the peace (with Bostock) in their hundred in January 1400. Grosvenor was also a collector of a subsidy in Northwich hundred in 1402,⁶² and his career both before and after 1403 suggests that he may have had divided loyalties during these troubled years.

According to the *Dieulacres Chronicle*, the forces which Hotspur mustered at Sandiway marched to Shrewsbury by way of Prees Heath,⁶³ a few miles to the south of Whitchurch. If this was the case, their route through Eddisbury hundred may have taken them close to the estates of two of Richard II's most faithful esquires, John Done of Utkinton and Thomas Beeston. The almost inevitable support for the rebel cause of these prominent members of the local gentry made it possible that the insurgents might draw recruits from virtually every corner of the hundred. Both men had been captains in Richard II's private army. Done

was best known as forester of Delamere Forest, which covered the greater part of Eddisbury. He held an annuity of just over £20 for life from the late king, to be paid from the forest revenues.⁶⁴ His colleague Beeston was also the recipient of one of Richard's larger grants, an annuity of £20 from the herbage and pannage of the forest, and was made warrenor and park-keeper of Shrawardine and janitor of Shrawardine Castle. As well as his family seat at Beeston, to the south of Delamere, he held lands in Kingsley, Norley and Onston, on the north-eastern side of the forest.⁶⁵ The combination of political and geographical factors made it likely that Done and Beeston worked together closely during the last years of Richard's reign. Though they both joined the rising of 1400, it is possible that they were not as deeply implicated as Legh of Booths and Holford, as they were appointed commissioners of the peace in their hundred only days after the collapse of the rebellion.⁶⁶ Done appears to have retained his responsibilities in Delamere, although his annuity from the forest revenues was reduced to £10 in July 1401. The proceedings leading to the rehabilitation of Done and Beeston give some hint of their relations with other subsequent malcontents. Robert Toft was a surety for Done's good conduct in the sum of £200, with others, on 1 June 1400, and Beeston, together with Legh of Booths and Toft, was a surety for Thomas Holford's good behaviour in the following December.⁶⁷

One of the associates of Done and Beeston provided a possible link with the rebels of Northwich hundred. Sir Richard Winnington had obtained the lease of the town and lordship of Northwich from the earl of Huntingdon, Richard II's half-brother, in 1395. However, he also had interests in Eddisbury, where he had been commanded to arrest disturbers of the peace in 1392. He had received an annuity of 20 marks for life from Richard II in 1397, and served, as did Thomas Beeston, on the Irish expedition of 1399. On 14 August of that year, after Henry of Lancaster's conquest of England, he was appointed a commissioner of the peace in Eddisbury, several weeks before Lancastrian rule became legitimate.⁶⁸ In spite of this apparent readiness to compromise, Winnington was one of five men (the others being Beeston, Done, Legh of Booths and Holford) said to have been approached by Adam and John Hesketh with a view to their raising an insurrection in Cheshire in January 1400.⁶⁹ Perhaps his connection with Huntingdon, one of the initiators of the 'main' Ricardian rising in the south of England, was a factor in his rebellion. Like Done and Beeston, he was made a commissioner of the peace shortly after the failure of the rising.⁷⁰

The rebellion of Beeston and Winnington brought in at least

two of their relatives. John Beeston of Tiverton had held a royal annuity of £5 and had served on the Irish expedition. He was one of the sureties for Thomas's good conduct in June 1400, and acted as a collector of a subsidy in Eddisbury in 1402.⁷¹ John Winnington, Sir Richard's brother or nephew, had received Richard II's livery as an archer for 6d. a day from 1397, and his kinsman was a surety for his good conduct after his involvement in the rebellion of 1400.⁷²

Three other important rebels had connections with Eddisbury. Arthur Davenport was the sixth son of Sir John Davenport of Davenport, and therefore a younger brother of the Ricardian captain Ralph Davenport. Though he held various lands from Heswall on Wirral to Macclesfield Forest, his principal estate was the manor of Calveley, not far to the east of Beeston. He had served with Sir Richard Winnington on the commission to arrest troublemakers in Eddisbury in 1392, and in October 1397 he was retained by Richard II for a life annuity of £5. He was apparently not involved in the rising of 1400, but his association with Legh of Booths in December 1400 as a surety for the good conduct of a rebel named Richard Healey⁷³ may have been indicative of his personal affiliations. His interests in the hundreds of Eddisbury and Macclesfield certainly brought him geographically close to two of the late king's captains, Beeston and Legh.

The other two men, Richard Bromley of Baddington⁷⁴ and John Kingsley, esquire, of Nantwich,⁷⁵ seem to have provided a link between the gentry of the hundreds of Eddisbury and Nantwich. Bromley had been retained by Richard II in September 1398 for an annuity of £10 'during pleasure'. In January 1400 he was a commissioner of the peace in Eddisbury with Sir Richard Winnington, John Done and Thomas Beeston, and in July he was commanded by the prince of Wales to collect archers in the same hundred to march against the Scots. Bromley acted with Sir Richard Venables, Adam Bostock and others in March 1397 as a surety in a recognizance to the king for the payment of arrears due to John Done as forester of Delamere.⁷⁶ He thus seems to have had some contact with several of the most turbulent members of the Cheshire gentry. Kingsley was Bromley's chief associate on certain commissions in their 'home' hundred of Nantwich both before and after their rebellion.⁷⁷ In January 1400 he served with Sir Richard Vernon, who had lands in Nantwich hundred well to the south of his main estates, as a commissioner of the peace there.⁷⁸ His lease of the turbarry of Delamere Forest, granted in 1396 and confirmed by Henry IV in April 1400, opened the way to contact with Done, Beeston and other leading supporters of the late king. Kingsley himself had received a life annuity of

20 marks from Richard II in 1397, and Done and Bostock had acted as sureties for his good behaviour in 1402.⁷⁹ His mother Petronilla Clark was the only woman specifically named as being involved in the rising of 1403.⁸⁰

The gentry of Nantwich hundred provided at least three other rebels. William Crewe of Sound, a major landowner in the hundred, had received a life annuity of £5 from Richard II and had served on the Irish expedition.⁸¹ He was one of the associates of Kingsley and Vernon on the commission of the peace in 1400. Neither Randal More, whose lands were in Coppenhall and Haslington, near Crewe, nor Robert Brindley⁸² had been retained by the late king, but Brindley's estates probably lay very close to Hotspur's southward route.

IV

While it seems that Chester and its environs were at the centre of the rising in 1400, and provided a large proportion of the rebels, there is no suggestion of a similarly intense recruitment there in 1403. The main army may only have passed through the extreme south-eastern corner of Broxton hundred, and if it is true that Hotspur was at Sandiway on 17 July 1403 and at the gates of Shrewsbury on the 20th, he cannot have remained long in the south or west of the county. The only two named Chester rebels were Thomas Allen and Robert Goldsmith. Allen may have had the closest links with the Percies of any Cheshire rebel. At some time in 1403, one of Allen's servants received payment for going to Denbigh from Chester with letters from the earl of Worcester, Hotspur's uncle, who had nothing to do with Cheshire but who rose with his nephew in July. After Shrewsbury, Allen was one of a group of men who were sureties for the good behaviour of John Ambell, Hotspur's personal chaplain.⁸³

Whatever the limitations of the response from Chester, the hundred of Broxton and the adjacent Welsh border region provided Hotspur with an interesting and varied assortment of recruits. Nearly all the known rebels from Broxton originated in the south-east of the hundred; the region which may be assumed to have been nearest to Hotspur's southward march. Here the most obvious representative of the Ricardian interest was Richard Cholmondeley of Cholmondeley, the most obscure of the six captains of the Cheshire guard who were involved in the rising. Like most of his colleagues, he had received a life annuity of £20 from Richard II. There is no positive evidence that Cholmondeley had any more personal links with his fellow captains, or indeed with any of the other principal rebels of 1403. It might be con-

jectured that his closest associate before 1399 was Thomas Beeston, whose estates lay only a few miles to the north of Cholmondeley. On 21 November 1399 Cholmondeley was appointed to a commission of Broxton gentry who were to deal with men who had found refuge in the hundred after committing crimes in Shropshire and Flintshire, and he acted as a commissioner of the peace in his hundred in the following January.⁸⁴ There is no suggestion that he participated in the rebellion of 1400, even though Thomas Cholmondeley, who served under his captaincy and was probably a kinsman, is known to have been involved.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, it would have been difficult for him to resist the temptation to join five of his former colleagues, especially as the rebel army cannot have passed far to the east of his estates and could conceivably have marched to Cholmondeley itself from the neighbourhood of Beeston.

Two men who had served under Cholmondeley's command also rose in 1403. Thomas Huxley, although a commissioner of the peace in 1400 and a collector of a subsidy in 1402, had rebelled in 1400.⁸⁶ Hugh Bickerton, who rose with his namesake Roger in 1403,⁸⁷ was one of Cholmondeley's nearest neighbours to the west.

A second, and perhaps independent, Ricardian connection was provided by John Aldersey. Aldersey served under the captaincy of Beeston in the previous reign, and acted as bailiff of Broxton hundred. His sons David and William both rose (perhaps under Beeston's leadership?) in 1400: Beeston was subsequently one of the sureties for their good behaviour, and their father performed a similar service for Beeston himself. In common with several men of patently uncertain loyalty, Aldersey had been given local responsibilities between 1400 and 1403. With John Carden, he was beadle of Broxton for one year from June 1400,⁸⁸ and he was a collector of the subsidy, with Thomas Huxley and others, in 1402. Two other rebels who seem to have belonged to a loosely-knit contingent from this part of the county were John Knight, who held land in Clutton, little more than a mile to the south of Aldersey,⁸⁹ and David Bickley, Cholmondeley's nearest neighbour to the south, who was one of the eight rebels of 1400 initially debarred from seeking a pardon.⁹⁰

From the point of view of status within the county, however, the most important individual Broxton rebel was Sir Hugh Browe, 'a great purchaser and lessee of lands in . . . this hundred, as well as a farmer of offices.'⁹¹ Browe was a seasoned soldier who had been abroad in the service of Richard II's uncle Thomas, earl of Buckingham (later duke of Gloucester) in 1380, and with Richard, earl of Arundel in 1386.⁹² Though he served in Ireland in 1399,⁹³

there is nothing to suggest that he had any more positive association with the late king, and he appeared to be readily reconciled to the Lancastrian usurpation. He headed the commission of Broxton gentry appointed to deal with itinerant malefactors at the end of 1399, and gave evidence at the enquiry into the rising of January 1400. On 11 February of that year he was retained for life by Henry IV for £40 annually.⁹⁴ He subsequently served in the early campaigns against the Welsh rebels.⁹⁵ He may, however, have had some dealings with the rebellious gentry of east Cheshire. He was a surety for the good conduct of Peter Warburton, together with Sir Richard Vernon and others, in July 1397, and a surety that Massey of Tatton would not escape from Chester Castle in 1399, a responsibility which he shared with Legh of Booths and Legh of Adlington.⁹⁶ Browe was considered sufficiently important to be specifically mentioned as a rebel in the *Annales Henrici Quarti*.⁹⁷ His son Robert also rose in 1403.

The seriousness of the defection of this apparently reliable warrior was paralleled by the rebellion of one of the Crown's most crucial administrators on the opposite side of the border. John Healey's father of the same name, who died in 1396, had held various offices in Flintshire, and Richard II had granted his son the lease of part of the town of Coleshill and of Adycross Mill, near Flint, shortly before he was appointed deputy sheriff of Flintshire and deputy constable of Flint Castle in 1397. On 2 February 1398 he received a life annuity of £5 from the king. There is no evidence that Healey was associated with any of Richard II's Cheshire retainers, and his appointment as under-sheriff and his Flintshire grants had been promptly confirmed by the new regime.⁹⁸ It is probable, however, that Healey had some contact with David ap Blethyn ap Ithel, who died fighting for Hotspur at Shrewsbury and who had been among those appointed on 14 June 1403 to protect the commote of Coleshill against the Welsh rebels.⁹⁹ It may also be noted that Healey was one of the sureties for the good behaviour of Hotspur's chaplain John Ambell after the failure of the rebellion.¹⁰⁰

Broxton hundred and the Flintshire border region provided four clerical recruits for the rebel cause—the parsons of Dodleston (William Clotton), Pulford (John Kingsley), Handley (John Hawarden) and Hawarden (Roger Davenport).¹⁰¹ Clotton may have been retained by Richard II at 6d. a day for life;¹⁰² Pulford was under the patronage of Grosvenor of Hulme;¹⁰³ Handley lay only about two miles north-east of Aldersey; and Davenport may either have been following the example of Healey or of Welsh malcontents in Flintshire.

Although it seems almost inconceivable that the main rebel army entered the Wirral, that hundred supplied Hotspur with several recruits. These included Sir William Stanley, his son William, Sir John Poole and his son John, James Poole, John Litherland, esquire, Henry Bruen, Richard Moreton, John Gleave, Richard Mawery and Thomas Hodgkinson, who appear to have formed a cohesive group led by the elder Stanley and John Poole. James Poole was possibly Sir John's brother,¹⁰⁴ Litherland was perhaps the two knights' closest associate in the administration of their hundred, and the five last-named men were all linked to Stanley and Poole by land tenure.

Sir William Stanley of Hooton, Stanley and Storeton¹⁰⁵ and Sir John Poole of Poole were near neighbours who had been colleagues for a number of years. Both received life annuities of £5 from Richard II in 1397,¹⁰⁶ but they do not seem to have experienced any difficulty in adjusting to the revolution of 1399. Together with James Poole and John Litherland, they acted as commissioners of the peace in the Wirral in January 1400, and they both left shortly afterwards to serve in Ireland with James Poole and Sir John Stanley, Sir William's uncle.¹⁰⁷ They must subsequently have fought in Scotland, as they were mentioned in a document of 15 July 1402 as holding Scottish prisoners.¹⁰⁸ Both men also served prominently in Wales. Poole was appointed governor of the castle and town of Caernarvon on 18 September 1400, and was transferred to Beaumaris at some time during the next two years.¹⁰⁹ Stanley seems to have associated with gentlemen from well outside his own hundred, even though the fact that he acted in recognizances with Massey of Tatton and Legh of Booths in the year before the 1403 rising¹¹⁰ is insufficient evidence that he was positively exposed to disloyal influences. However, while Litherland and James Poole had been retained for life by Richard II for £5 annually, and Bruen had acted as a surety for the good conduct of the subsequent Bucklow rebel Peter Warburton in 1398,¹¹¹ this band of rebels as a whole appears to have had little really significant contact with the principal Cheshire malcontents. Furthermore, two other rebels from the Wirral gentry—John Mollington and Henry Bebington—do not appear to have been associated either with the late king or with the above-mentioned men of their hundred.

The absence of evidence that continuing Ricardian sentiment may have been a motive for the defection of several of the rebels who originated in the two westernmost hundreds and the Welsh border region, raises the question of whether other specific issues played a part in inducing these and other men to rise. How far, for instance, were the Welsh troubles a contributory factor?

Cheshire, with its close geographical, political and economic links with North Wales, was bound to suffer as a result of Owen Glendower's rising. Some degree of compulsory military service was imposed, and on 15 June 1403 the escheator was ordered to seize the lands of men who had failed to answer Prince Henry's summons to go with him to the relief of Harlech Castle.¹¹² However, many Cheshire men relished a fight, and this aspect of the conflict may not have caused as much resentment as the war's commercial repercussions. Trade with the Welsh in grain, livestock and beer was seriously affected,¹¹³ and the rebels' raids brought further hardships. It may be significant that several of the English rebels of 1403, most of them from the west of the Palatinate, had been concerned in some way with commercial restrictions and other border problems. Henry Bruen had been arrested for illegally taking cattle out of Wales into the Wirral in 1402, and Thomas Allen and Peter Warburton had been in trouble for a similar offence, as well as for desertion, in 1400. In June 1403 John Kingsley and Richard Bromley had been ordered to seize cattle in Nantwich hundred which had been bought from the rebels. Sir William Stanley, his son William, Sir John Poole and John Litherland were ordered to investigate speculation in grain in the Wirral in 1402, and in the same year John Healey was involved in preventing beer from Chester from being sold to the Welsh rebels.¹¹⁴ Links between the men of Wales and Cheshire had obviously been close, particularly, perhaps, in the last reign, and Englishmen such as Healey and Kynaston, who may have worked with Welshmen more than with their fellow countrymen, must have found the worsening crisis psychologically as well as economically distressing. Men who already had no particular affection for the House of Lancaster may have resented the fact that hostilities had broken out so soon after the change of ruler, or have felt frustrated by the king's failure to solve the problem either by negotiation or coercion. While the effect of the war on the affiliations of Cheshire men may only have been secondary, it can only have reduced the possibility that they might be quickly reconciled to the new king.

There was, of course, another respect in which developments in the north-west since 1399 may have affected the recruitment of rebels. Hotspur himself had been given administrative and military interests in the region second only to those of the prince of Wales.¹¹⁵ Were, therefore, any of the rebels positive supporters of the Percies? There is certainly evidence of links between Hotspur and Cheshire men. Sir Richard Winnington was taken under his protection after the invasion of Cheshire in 1399.¹¹⁶ Sir Hugh Browe served with Hotspur in Wales in 1401. Sir John

Poole was constable of Hotspur's castle of Beaumaris, and he and Sir William Stanley entered into an indenture with Hotspur in May 1402 to serve him at sea.¹¹⁷ As they had previously served in Scotland, they may have been in some way associated with the Percies for two or three years before their rebellion.

These details, given the predisposition of certain men of the county to seek out the nearest theatre of conflict, should perhaps be treated with a degree of caution. It may be noted, for instance, that John Hulgreve, a retainer of Richard II who had served on the Scottish border with Hotspur, appears to have remained loyal in 1403.¹¹⁸ On the other hand, Hotspur's position as justice of Chester, and more especially the fact that he presided over the enquiry into the 1400 rebellion, meant that he was ideally placed to assess the persistence and distribution of Ricardian loyalties. Moreover, although he had no direct connections with the leading rebel gentry, there were perhaps aspects of the rebellion which were influenced by Hotspur's personal dealings with Cheshire men. Thomas Allen's link with the Percies, and the possible role of John Kynaston, have already been mentioned. The association of Stanley and Poole with Hotspur may have helped to ensure that two men whose lands lay well away from the rebels' line of march had both the inclination and the opportunity to raise a significant contingent from a hundred in which there was much support for the new dynasty.

There remain an assortment of rebels about whom little is known. David Nunnerley had risen in 1400, and had been obliged to sue individually for his pardon.¹¹⁹ Robert Heath and John Ashbourne, both described as 'of Cheshire', held lands in Derbyshire at Chaddesden and Spondon respectively. Heath could have been the Robert Heath of Overton who was granted 6d. a day by Richard II in 1397.¹²⁰ Thomas Eddesley had been retained for a similar fee, and had served as an archer under the captaincy of Thomas Holford.¹²¹ Nothing is known of David Manley except that he forfeited his property as a result of his rebellion.¹²²

V

While these details of individual rebels cast valuable light on the scope of the insurrection, a fuller assessment of its nature and strength needs to take into account several general factors. For instance, it seems that the extant evidence understates the degree to which the men of Cheshire were involved, both in absolute terms and by comparison with the rising of 1400. Although there is no doubt that the latter rebellion was far less serious than that of 1403, the names of 139 rebels survive,¹²³ as against less than a

hundred Cheshire rebels for Hotspur's rising. The fact that the majority of the 139 were specifically excluded from a general pardon indicates that the 'list' for 1400 derives from deliberately selective treatment of the insurgents, and there are grounds for believing that this was even more true in the case of 1403. In the years 1397 and 1398 Richard II recruited a formidable body of men in Cheshire as 'yeomen of the livery of the Crown' or 'archers of the Crown'. The Recognizance Rolls record the names of about four hundred such men. Yet whereas in 1400, when little or no fighting took place, the names of over thirty of these men appeared on the list of rebels, only about half-a-dozen are recorded as having joined in the campaign which ended in the valiant stand of the Cheshire archers at Shrewsbury. It therefore seems that the government chose to overlook the treasonable conduct of a considerable number of Cheshire yeomen who must have risen in 1403, and to concentrate its wrath almost exclusively on those members of the county's gentry who were implicated in the rebellion. Nearly fifty of the known Cheshire rebels appear to have fallen into this category.

The chroniclers' emphasis upon the Ricardian element in the rising receives strong support from the evidence of the affiliations of the known rebels of 1403. Twenty-five of them (and probably also Thomas Holford) had been retained by the late king for annuities of £5 or more. Between four and eight had received a wage of 6d. a day from Richard. A further two, possibly three, were sons of Richard's retainers; two more had served in Ireland in 1399; one was the son of one of these latter two; one was the mother of one of Richard's retainers; and two had risen in the avowedly Ricardian disturbances of 1400. Furthermore, of the six Cheshire or Flintshire parsons known to have been involved, one may actually have been retained by the late king, and three or four others could be regarded as under the influence of Ricardian rebel gentlemen. On the strictly limited numerical evidence, the Ricardian nature of the rising of 1403 was more immediately obvious than that of 1400, when about twelve of Richard's retainers from among the gentry and about thirty lesser followers contributed little more than forty names to the list of rebels.

However, in order to obtain a more balanced assessment of the degree to which Richard II's policy of 1397-9 influenced men's allegiances in 1403, it is necessary to look beyond the list of rebels in that year. The Recognizance Rolls mention somewhat over a hundred Cheshire men as having been retained by Richard between 1397 and 1399 for £5 or more annually. Of these, nearly a quarter definitely rose in 1403. While this represents a not insignificant display of loyalty to the memory of a king who

had been dead for more than three years, the fact that about eighty of his principal retainers cannot be proved to have joined the rising can hardly pass without comment.

An examination of the origins of these retainers¹²⁴ throws some light on the degree of recruitment in different parts of the Palatinate. Only five rebel gentlemen are known to have come from Nantwich hundred, and two of them had links with the hundred of Eddisbury. The records of retainers, however, show that only another three—John Audlem, David Crewe and Richard Rope—can reasonably be assigned to Nantwich hundred. In the light of the extent of Richard's recruiting elsewhere, it seems that Nantwich provided him with markedly less retainers than any other hundred, and that what appears to have been a rather modest response may have represented a quite impressive display of loyalty to the late king's cause.

In Broxton the situation was superficially very different. While the hundred produced an important contingent of rebel gentry, including men who were apparently not retained by Richard, several former retainers of that king chose not to join them. These included William Bellew, John Eaton and John del Lee, all of whom had been involved in the rising of 1400,¹²⁵ John Boydell, Thomas Brereton, Philip, David and Ralph Egerton, Ralph Egerton junior, Ughtred Huxley, David Malpas, William Mulneton and William Venables of Trafford. At least three explanations might be offered for Broxton's equivocal response in 1403. Firstly, the men of the hundred, particularly those from the region of Chester, may have been chastened by the failure in 1400 of a rising which primarily involved their hundred, and many of them may have been wary of risking another attempt. Secondly, it seems that Chester and the surrounding countryside were securely in the hands of reliable supporters of the House of Lancaster who could be expected to offer active resistance to a Ricardian rebellion. Thirdly, it is possible that some of the men of the hundred were directly involved in the suppression of the Welsh revolt as a result of their proximity to the border. Cheshire men serving in Prince Henry's army at the time of Hotspur's rising would hardly have had time to learn of the rebellion of their compatriots before they faced them at Shrewsbury.

The last of these arguments might also have been applicable to Wirral. Although several rebels came from that hundred, it seems that the majority of them represented a contingent affiliated to two specific knights. These men were not the only notable gentry of their hundred, and at least eight of their fellows who were retained by Richard—John Capenhurst, Nicholas and Vivian Foxwist, Gilbert Glegg of Gayton, Richard Massey of Pudding-

ton, William Tranmere, John Warwick and John Whitmore of Thurstaston—appear not to have joined them.

In Eddisbury, despite the presumed influence of Done and Beeston, Roger and Richard Bruen, Robert Griffin, Richard Manley, Thomas St Pierre, Henry Spurstow, Thomas Wethen-hall, and (perhaps) Lawrence Aston and John Hulgreve evidently avoided involvement. In Northwich hundred, the absence of David and Richard Bostock, Sir William Brereton, Hugh Cotton, William Done, John Harding of Twemlow, John Littleover, Richard Needham, Robert Smethwick and Peter Wilbraham suggests that even in the tract of country between Northwich and Shipbrook, active support for the rebels was not universal. Of fourteen men appointed commissioners of the peace in the hundred in January 1400, at least half of whom had been retained by Richard II, only three (Venables, Grosvenor and Bostock) rose in 1403.¹²⁶ In Bucklow, though support was strong in the east, apparent 'abstainers' included Sir George and Randal Carrington, John Domville (who had acted, in conjunction with several subsequent rebels, as a surety for at least three of the rebels of 1400),¹²⁷ Robert Ashton, William Daniel, John Hallum, Thomas Halton, John Holford, Roger Massey of Sale, Robert Massey of Hale, and (perhaps) William and Nicholas Massey. Not one of the nine collectors of a subsidy in the hundred in 1402, who included four former retainers of Richard II, rebelled in 1403, and of twelve men appointed commissioners of the peace in 1400, eight of whom had been retainers of the late king, only four (Massey of Tatton, Legh of Baguley, Legh of High Legh and Dutton) are known to have risen. In Macclesfield hundred, former retainers who escaped involvement included Sir John Arderne, Nicholas Bulkeley (who probably rose in 1400), Ralph and Richard Davenport, Reginald Downes, John Legh of Macclesfield, William Siddington, John Sutton, Thomas Worth of Tytherington, and (possibly) John and Geoffrey, 'sons of John Legh'. Only two of the twelve commissioners of the peace in 1400 (five of whom had been retained by Richard II) rose in 1403, and none of the eight collectors of the subsidy of 1402 (half of them retainers) were involved.¹²⁸

It is, moreover, easy to lose sight of the possibility that there were Cheshire gentry who were comparatively unaffected personally by the developments of the period 1397-1403. For instance, of a total of eighty-eight commissioners of the peace appointed in 1400, nearly half were neither retained by Richard II nor involved in the risings of 1400 and 1403. An examination of the lists of collectors of the 1402 subsidy indicates that only about twenty out of fifty-seven fell into either of the above categories.¹²⁹

Though this data may serve as a salutary corrective to the claim that the majority of the gentry of Cheshire rose in 1403, it would seem even more unsound to maintain that the insurrection was confined to a close-knit faction of malcontents and their immediate followers. Several factors may have contributed to an under-representation of the supporters of the rising in the records. The short duration of the campaign must have reduced the opportunities for recruitment in areas such as Macclesfield hundred, southern and eastern Northwich, northern Eddisbury and eastern Nantwich hundreds, which almost certainly did not lie on Hotspur's line of march. Active service in Wales—or elsewhere—may, as already suggested, have deprived men of the choice of whether or not to rise. Perhaps most important, it is impossible to say how far the Crown carried its undeniable policy of refraining from taking action against individual lesser rebels. It may be highly significant that the proportion of Cheshire knights who were brought to book for their rebellion seems to have been considerably greater than that of the county's gentry as a whole.

Nor does there appear to be any evidence to support the conclusion that Hotspur's arrival in Cheshire split the Palatinate into two active parties of approximately equal size. It is true that several members of the gentry had committed themselves positively to the Lancastrian regime. Such men obviously included Sir John Massey of Puddington and Sir John Calveley, the only two Cheshire men known to have fallen on the king's side at Shrewsbury;¹³⁰ John Capenhurst, a neighbour of both these knights, and mayor and escheator of Chester;¹³¹ Matthew del Mere, attorney-general of Cheshire from 1399 and escheator for three years from September 1403; John Mainwaring of Over Peover, who became sheriff at the same time; William Venables of Trafford, constable of Chester Castle; and Sir William Brereton, appointed one of the prince of Wales's lieutenants in Cheshire and Flintshire on 22 April 1403.¹³² Nevertheless, the general impression given by both chronicles and official sources is that an army composed almost exclusively of Cheshire rebels was sufficiently substantial to come close to defeating the combined forces of king and prince. Moreover, the demand that the whole county, and even the apparently little-involved city of Chester, should pay for a general pardon—measures not taken after the rising of 1400—suggests something much more than a localised insurrection or even a divided county. It is more pertinent to note that a hastily levied rebellion attracted support from the tip of Wirral to the Pennine foothills, obtained recruits from among the leading gentry of every hundred, and secured the adherence of

men who had appeared to have assumed the role of trusted servants of the new government.

VI

The battle of Shrewsbury, which brought about the abrupt end and total failure of the rising, ranks as one of the great disasters in Cheshire's history. Sir John Massey of Tatton, Sir Hugh Browe, Sir William Legh, Thomas and John Beeston, Hugh Legh, Arthur Davenport, William Crewe, John Aldersey, Hugh and Roger Bickerton, John Knight, Henry Bebington, John Mollington, Robert Brindley, Randal More, Thomas Eddesley, David Bickley and Thomas Huxley may all be presumed to have died on the field of battle. Thomas Holford and Thomas Spark seem to have succumbed later to wounds inflicted at Shrewsbury.¹³³ Another thirty-one men, mainly of humbler status, who were the subjects of inquisitions *post mortem* held at the same time as those of known rebels,¹³⁴ almost certainly died fighting for Hotspur. Sir Richard Venables and Sir Richard Vernon were executed two days after the battle. This prompt action by the victors may simply indicate that Venables and Vernon were the only men of knightly rank to be taken prisoner, and that they were beheaded as an example to their fellows. Casualties among the lesser rebels, even at the lowest estimates, must have made severe inroads into the county's reserves of able-bodied men.

On 25 July, Prince Henry was instructed to punish or pardon the surviving offenders.¹³⁵ The process of dealing with the aftermath of the rebellion had actually started the day after the battle, when John Kingsley's lands had been granted to 'the king's yeoman' Matthew Swettenham.¹³⁶ On 31 July the escheator was ordered to take control of the lands and possessions of William Legh, and similar orders were issued in early August in respect of over thirty other rebels.¹³⁷ On 15 August eight of the Wirral rebels forfeited lands in Moreton worth £12 annually, which were immediately granted to Sir John Stanley.¹³⁸ Sir Hugh Browe's lands were taken over on 16 August, to be awarded two days later to John Mainwaring.¹³⁹

But the process of pardoning rebels also began early. On 10 August the prince commanded John Trevor, bishop of St Asaph and chamberlain of Chester, Sir John Stanley and six 'loyal' members of the Cheshire gentry to pardon 'all those . . . rebels who should be repentant.'¹⁴⁰ Sir Thomas Grosvenor was pardoned on the 15th, and excused any forfeiture of his lands and goods. The following day Richard Massey was pardoned on payment of the modest fine of £5. Robert Browe was pardoned on 18 August, as was Robert Toft, who was also pardoned certain

forfeitures. Similar generosity was extended to Peter Warburton on 5 September, and Sir Robert Legh was pardoned two days later.¹⁴¹

Even more remarkable was the fact that some of the rebels were soon restored to positions of responsibility. Sir William Stanley, Sir John Poole and John Litherland were among those appointed on 25 August as 'conservators and guardians' of Wirral: their duties included the protection of the coast against the Welsh rebels. Sir Robert Legh and Sir Lawrence Fitton became justices for the three hundreds of the eyre at Macclesfield once again on 30 September. Sir Thomas Grosvenor was a commissioner of array in Northwich hundred on 11 October, and Peter Warburton, in Bucklow, and Sir John and James Poole and Sir William Stanley, in Wirral, held similar commissions from the same date.¹⁴² It seems that the Welsh menace was such that an early reconciliation was considered essential. The nature of the Crown's priorities is suggested by the fact that although only two of the above men appear to have suffered forfeitures, four had not been pardoned at the time of their appointment.

From the last week of September, Prince Henry set about dealing with those rebels whose offences may be assumed to have been considered most serious. On 27 September he was commanded to treat individually for pardons with a number of rebels excepted from a general pardon who were to pay 'reasonable' fines. These included Thomas Holford and Thomas Spark (who may have already died), John Legh of Booths, Adam Bostock, John Done, John Kingsley, Robert Leftwich, Richard Cholmondeley, Sir Richard and John Winnington, David Nunnerley and Robert Goldsmith. It is noteworthy that the government took an equally firm line with the six Cheshire or Flintshire parsons who are known to have risen. On 7 October the escheator was ordered to seize the lands of all the above-mentioned laymen except Holford and Goldsmith, as well as those of John Kynaston.¹⁴³

One of the 'excepted' rebels, Robert Leftwich, appears to have been accurately identified as particularly recalcitrant. He may have joined the Welsh rebels after Shrewsbury, as on 1 November William Kirby was granted his possessions 'should the said Robert persist in rebellion'. This warning did not have the desired effect, as on 11 July 1404 the lands were handed over to Kirby. Leftwich evidently made his peace eventually, as he had been restored to his lands before his death in 1407.¹⁴⁴ John Kynaston was specifically alleged to have joined Glendower's rising: he too seems to have been rehabilitated within the next three years,¹⁴⁵ although there is no indication that he recovered any of his former responsibilities or possessions.

On 3 November the promised general pardon was granted to

all the people of Cheshire who had rebelled, although a fine of 3,000 marks was exacted from the Palatinate, and individual rebels forfeited their life annuities and offices.¹⁴⁶ Richard Bromley, Sir Peter Dutton, Sir Lawrence Fitton, John Litherland, Sir John and James Poole, Sir William Stanley and his son William, Thomas Allen and Richard Moreton received individual pardons on the same day.¹⁴⁷ The city of Chester obtained a separate pardon on condition that the citizens either paid a fine of 300 marks or found shipping and provisions for the transport of forces going to the relief of Beaumaris. By 31 December they had decided to obtain their pardon by the latter course.¹⁴⁸

One of the few men who appear to have incurred the lasting wrath of the government was John Healey. On 5 November Nicholas Hauberk received a life grant of all Healey's forfeited lands. It was not until 4 March 1404 that Prince Henry pardoned him,¹⁴⁹ and he seems to have remained out of favour for another three years. John Kingsley also had to wait for his pardon, which he received on 20 January 1404.¹⁵⁰

From early in 1404, most of the former rebels were rehabilitated. On 11 January 1404 Sir Robert Legh, Sir Lawrence Fitton, Sir Thomas Grosvenor and Sir Peter Dutton were ordered to take up residence on the border to defend Cheshire against the Welsh. Richard Cholmondeley was one of those commanded on 26 to organise a system of watches and beacons in Broxton hundred. In the same month, many of the principal rebels were appointed to commissions to enquire by juries of their respective hundreds 'touching those who spread false rumours to the disquiet of the people.'¹⁵¹ Thomas Allen was ordered, on 11 June 1404, to guard the passes between Chester and Heswall to prevent trade with the rebels, and appears to have become sheriff of the city of Chester at about the same time.¹⁵²

On 1 October 1405 John Kingsley received a life grant of £10 annually from the prince of Wales.¹⁵³ Far more noteworthy was the restoration of the town of Sutton to Legh of Booths, on 20 April 1406, as his fee for services to be performed for the prince. In the next reign, when he became sheriff of Cheshire,¹⁵⁴ this once seemingly irreconcilable member of the county's gentry assumed the role of one of the leading figures in the conversion of Cheshire into a Lancastrian stronghold. In February 1407 Peter Warburton received a life annuity of 10 marks from the prince,¹⁵⁵ and in the same year John Healey recovered much of his influence in Flintshire. He became a steward of the courts of Flint and steward of the prince's lead mines in the county, and recovered his lease of Adycross Mill. By September 1408 he was once again under-sheriff.¹⁵⁶

Almost from the moment that Venables and Vernon were executed, the government pursued a policy of consistent leniency towards men who had demonstrated in the most decisive way that they preferred loyalty to the memory of a dead king to acceptance of the Lancastrian monarchy. Henry IV's gamble on the possibility that time and tolerance would eventually bring the men of Cheshire to accept his rule proved amply justified. Cheshire gave him no trouble during the two subsequent northern risings of his reign. His cause was probably helped by the growing realisation that the interests of the county were better served by bringing about a swift end to the Welsh rebellion than by toying with the idea of making common cause with the Welsh in the hope of restoring a privileged regime which had been destroyed beyond recall by Richard II's death early in 1400. The growing appeal of the prince as a military leader after 1403, as the remarkable case of Legh of Booths demonstrated, may have been an important additional factor. But conciliation had failed to prevent both the abortive rising of 1400 and the serious insurrection of 1403. Henry's success had not been achieved by magnanimous treatment of the rebels alone, or even by the passage of time. It had also been brought about by one method which the men of Cheshire readily understood: by a murderous battle which destroyed hundreds of the Palatinate's best fighting men and many of its leading gentry. Under a rule which was not nearly as harsh as they might have expected, there must have been few who were willing to risk a second Shrewsbury. Almost from the day of the battle, it seems that Henry IV and his Cheshire subjects had finally come to terms.

NOTES

- 1 I would like to acknowledge the valuable assistance of my colleague Dorothy Clayton in the preparation of this article.
- 2 Dieulacres Chronicle, hereafter *Dieulacres*, in M. V. Clarke and V. H. Galbraith, 'The Deposition of Richard II', *Bul. Jn. Ryl. Lib.* 14 (1930), p. 177.
- 3 H. T. Riley ed., *Thomas Walsingham ... Historia Anglicana*, Rolls Series (1863-4), II, p. 256; H. T. Riley ed., *J. de Trokelowe, Chronica et Annales*, Rolls Series (1866), hereafter *Annales*, p. 363.
- 4 F. S. Haydon ed., *Eulogium Historiarum*, Rolls Series (1858-63), III, p. 396.
- 5 *Annales*, p. 368.
- 6 See P. McNiven, 'Rebellion and Disaffection in the North of England, 1403-8', Manchester University MA thesis 1967, pp. 139-52, for details of individual rebels from other parts of the country.
- 7 *Dieulacres*, p. 177.
- 8 *Cal. Pat. Rolls 1401-5*, p. 258; *Victoria History of Lancashire*, VI,

- pp. 276-7. He was also involved in the northern rebellion in 1405. (*CPR 1405-8*, p. 47).
- 9 *Dieulacres*, p. 172; *PRO E 101/42/10*.
- 10 *PRO Chester 25/10 m.1*.
- 11 Calendar of Recognizance Rolls of the Palatinate of Chester, 36th *Rep. Deputy Keeper, PRO* (1875), hereafter *CRR*, p. 292; *CPR 1396-9*, p. 538.
- 12 *CRR*, p. 292.
- 13 *CPR 1399-1401*, p. 286.
- 14 *CRR*, pp. 14, 293, 462. The value of the confirmed grant of Sutton was said to have been 20 marks, but as £20 appears to have been the standard amount for the principal annuities of Richard II's captains, the previously quoted figure seems more likely to be correct.
- 15 He appears to have been the son of John Holford of Holford, who was to outlive him. See J. L. Gillespie, 'Richard II's Cheshire Archers', *THSLC* 125 (1974), pp. 15, 19 for further notes and suggestions regarding Holford's family and career.
- 16 *CRR*, p. 293.
- 17 *Ibid.* p. 291.
- 18 J. G. Bellamy, 'The Northern Rebellions in the Later Years of Richard II', *BJRL* 47 (1964-5), pp. 254-74.
- 19 G. Ormerod, *History of the County Palatine and City of Chester* (1875-82), rev. ed. by Helsby, hereafter Ormerod, I, p. 440; Calendar of Chester Plea Rolls, 29th *Rep. Deputy Keeper, PRO* (1868), hereafter *C.P.L.R.*, p. 56.
- 20 *CRR*, pp. 95, 290, 330; *Cal. Close Rolls 1392-6*, p. 305.
- 21 *CRR*, pp. 331-2, 491.
- 22 *Ibid.* p. 100; *Chest. 25/10 m.2, q.v.* for other jurors and witnesses.
- 23 *CRR*, pp. 14, 332-4, 537.
- 24 Ormerod I, pp. 499, 551.
- 25 *CRR*, p. 291.
- 26 *Ibid.* p. 68.
- 27 *C.P.L.R.*, p. 59.
- 28 *CRR*, pp. 100, 491.
- 29 *Chest. 3/21 no. 14*.
- 30 *CRR*, pp. 161, 491.
- 31 *Ibid.* p. 92.
- 32 Ormerod I, p. 570; *CRR*, pp. 505-6.
- 33 *CRR*, pp. 162, 279.
- 34 There must be at least a possibility that Hamo Massey of Rixton, one of the few known Lancashire rebels (*CPR 1401-5*, p. 258) was induced to join the rising by Warburton, whose lands lay on the opposite bank of the Mersey.
- 35 Ormerod I, p. 502. His father Hugh Toft was still alive at the time of his rebellion. For the annuity, see *CRR*, p. 472.
- 36 *Ibid.* pp. 291, 293.
- 37 Ormerod I, p. 538.
- 38 *CRR*, p. 456.
- 39 *CPR 1401-5*, pp. 253, 365; *Chest. 3/22 no. 5*.
- 40 *CRR*, p. 448.
- 41 *CPR 1401-5*, p. 253.
- 42 *Chest. 3/22 no. 5*.
- 43 *CRR*, pp. 290-2, 310, 312.
- 44 T. Hearne ed., *Historia Vitae et Regni Ricardi II... a monacho quodam de Evesham* (1729), p. 154.

- 45 *CRR*, pp. 222, 292.
 46 *Dieulacres*, p. 172; Ormerod III, p. 661.
 47 *CRR*, p. 293.
 48 *Ibid.* pp. 100, 293, 491.
 49 *Ibid.* p. 291.
 50 Ormerod III, p. 552; Chest. 25/10 m.2.
 51 Ormerod III, p. 661.
 52 There is no completely conclusive evidence as to Hotspur's precise movements. In spite of the *Dieulacres Chronicle's* statement (p. 177) that the rebel cause was proclaimed in Chester (among other places), there is no positive proof that Hotspur was ever very far to the west of Sandiway. Both geographical considerations and the distribution of the places of origin of known rebels make it seem quite possible that he could have spent eight days recruiting between the Lancashire border and Sandiway, followed by a rapid three-day march to Shrewsbury. What seems certain is that the main army cannot have passed through every district which provided rebels: those from the west of the county seem most likely to have joined in response to a general call to arms which spread to every hundred.
- 53 *Annales*, p. 371.
 54 *CRR*, pp. 490-1, 497-8.
 55 *Ibid.* p. 505.
 56 *CPR 1396-9*, p. 381.
 57 *CRR*, pp. 100, 491.
 58 Chest. 3/27 no. 1.
 59 Spark also appears to have been one of the archers under the captaincy of Thomas Holford. (E 101/42/10.)
 60 Chest. 3/21 no. 12; 3/23 no. 3; *CRR*, p. 286.
 61 *C.P.L.R.*, p. 68. The advowson was held as part of Vernon's barony of Shipbrook. See Ormerod III, pp. 241, 271.
 62 Ormerod III, pp. 151-2; *CRR*, pp. 208, 491.
 63 *Dieulacres*, pp. 177-8.
 64 *CRR*, p. 154. In spite of assertions that John, son of John Done of Utkinton, was the captain of the Cheshire guard and subsequent rebel mentioned in the records, only one document refers specifically to the younger John, who submitted to Henry of Lancaster in August 1399. (*CRR*, p. 154.) There seems no reason to believe that the other allusions to Done 'of Utkinton' do not refer to the father, especially as the son was probably under age at the time of the formation of the Cheshire guard. *C.f.* Gillespie, 'Cheshire Archers', pp. 15, 19.
- 65 *CRR*, pp. 30-1.
 66 *Ibid.* p. 101.
 67 *Ibid.* pp. 154, 240, 293.
 68 *Ibid.* pp. 31, 160, 491, 531.
 69 Chest. 25/10 m.2.
 70 *CRR*, p. 101.
 71 Ormerod II, pp. 270, 272; *CRR*, pp. 30-1, 417.
 72 Ormerod II, p. 205; *CRR*, pp. 531-2.
 73 Ormerod II, pp. 283, 285; III, p. 68; Chest. 3/21 no. 6; *CRR*, pp. 138, 293.
 74 Ormerod III, p. 369.
 75 Ormerod II, p. 90; III, p. 440.
 76 *CRR*, pp. 59, 101, 153.
 77 *Ibid.* pp. 273, 532-3.
 78 Chest. 3/21 no. 12; 3/25 no. 8; *CRR*, p. 101.

- 79 *CRR*, p. 273.
 80 *CPR 1401-5*, p. 257.
 81 *CRR*, p. 131; Chest. 3/21 no. 5.
 82 Chest. 3/21 no. 5; BL Lansdowne ms. 644 f.22v-23.
 83 J. Bain ed., *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland* (1881-8), IV, pp. 135-6; *CRR*, p. 241; *CPR 1401-5*, p. 371.
 84 *CPR 1396-9*, p. 215; *CRR*, pp. 61, 101.
 85 E 101/42/10; Chest. 25/10 m.2. The Diculacres Chronicle's assertion (p. 172) that Thomas, rather than Richard, was one of the captains, appears to be an error.
 86 *CRR*, pp. 54, 101; Chest. 25/10 m.1.
 87 Lansdowne ms. 644 f.22v-23. Hugh had been retained at 6d. a day for life by Richard II. (*CRR*, p. 35.)
 88 *CRR*, pp. 3, 31.
 89 Chest. 3/21 no. 11.
 90 *CPR 1399-1401*, p. 286.
 91 Ormerod II, p. 656.
 92 *C.P.L.R.*, pp. 52, 57.
 93 *CRR*, p. 61.
 94 *CPR 1399-1401*, p. 191.
 95 N. H. Nicolas ed., *Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council* (1834-7), hereafter *PPC*, I, pp. 152-3.
 96 *CRR*, pp. 332, 505.
 97 *Annales*, p. 366.
 98 *CRR*, pp. 224, 229-30.
 99 *Ibid.* pp. 236, 261.
 100 *Ibid.* p. 241.
 101 *CPR 1401-5*, p. 264.
 102 *CRR*, p. 113.
 103 Ormerod II, p. 859.
 104 *Ibid.* p. 423.
 105 For further discussion of Sir William's career, see W. F. Irvine, 'The Early Stanleys', *THSLC* 105 (1953), pp. 58-61.
 106 *CRR*, pp. 385, 445.
 107 *Ibid.* pp. 101, 445; *CPR 1399-1401*, p. 235.
 108 *CRR*, p. 326.
 109 *Ibid.* p. 385; *PPC* II, p. 66.
 110 *CRR*, pp. 273, 446.
 111 *Ibid.* pp. 300, 385, 505.
 112 *Ibid.* p. 102.
 113 *Ibid.* pp. 13, 24, 60, 78, 83, 123, 211, 226, 253, 304, 454, 545.
 114 *Ibid.* pp. 230, 273, 279, 333, 385.
 115 P. McNiven, 'The Cheshire Rising of 1400', *BJRL* 52 (1970), p. 396.
 116 *CRR*, p. 531.
 117 *Ibid.* pp. 379-80.
 118 *Ibid.* pp. 254-5.
 119 Chest. 25/10 m.1; *CPR 1399-1401*, pp. 285-6.
 120 PRO E 149/82(i) m.3; E 357/15 m.47; *CRR*, p. 228.
 121 *CRR*, p. 165; E 101/42/10.
 122 Lansdowne ms. 644 f.22v-23.
 123 *CPR 1399-1401*, pp. 285-6; Chest. 25/10 m.1-4. See McNiven, 'Cheshire Rising', especially pp. 386-92, for further details of the rebels of 1400. Only about four of them seem to have come from outside the Palatinate.
 124 These retainers have been assigned to specific hundreds on the evidence

of the entries for themselves or their kinsmen in *CRR*, *passim*, and on the basis of the geographical origin of their names, usually confirmed by Ormerod. It is possible that a few of them died between 1397-8 and 1403 without their deaths being noted in the above sources, but the names of retainers who are known to have died during this period have, of course, been omitted.

- 125 Chest. 25/10 mm.1-2.
 126 *CRR*, pp. 100-1.
 127 *Ibid.* p. 293.
 128 *Ibid.* pp. 86, 100, 363.
 129 *Ibid.* pp. 100-1; 54, 86, 208, 320, 363, 417-18, 446.
 130 *Annales*, p. 369. Massey had not been retained by Richard II, and soon became one of the key figures in the county under the new regime. As sheriff of Cheshire he had been besieged in Chester Castle in 1400, and had played a leading part in the enquiry into the insurrection. On 21 November 1401 he received a life annuity of 40 marks from the prince of Wales, and on 15 January 1402 the prince appointed him one of his five lieutenants in North Wales. (Chest. 25/10 m.1; *CRR*, pp. 333, 442.) Calveley was the recipient of an annuity of £30 in the previous reign, but this was granted in recompense for the cancellation of a grant to him of the manor of Shotwick, near Puddington. (*CRR*, p. 80.)
 131 Chest. 25/10 m.1.
 132 *CRR*, pp. 10, 318, 340-1, 491-2. William Venables was the younger brother of the rebel Richard Venables of Kinderton.
 133 *Ibid.* pp. 31, 35, 61, 138, 241, 294, 333; Chest. 3/21; Lansdowne ms. 644 f.22v-23; Harleian ms. 1988 f.141v.
 134 Chest. 3/21 nos. 3, 6, 7, 11.
 135 *CRR*, p. 502.
 136 *CPR 1401-5*, p. 257.
 137 *CRR*, pp. 31, 294, 492, 498; Lansdowne ms. 644 f.22v-23; Harleian ms. 1988 f.141v.
 138 *CPR 1401-5*, p. 253.
 139 *CRR*, p. 61.
 140 *Ibid.* p. 502.
 141 *CPR 1401-5*, pp. 238, 253, 256, 259, 265.
 142 *CRR*, pp. 55, 86, 294, 446, 534.
 143 *CPR 1401-5*, p. 264; *CRR*, pp. 45, 107, 155, 273-4, 287, 294, 367, 438, 532.
 144 *CRR*, pp. 269, 287; Chest. 3/23 no. 3.
 145 Chest. 3/22 no. 5; *CRR*, p. 274.
 146 *CRR*, p. 103; *CPR 1401-5*, p. 330.
 147 *C.Pl.R.* p. 63; *CPR 1401-5*, pp. 330-1.
 148 *CRR*, p. 103.
 149 *Ibid.* pp. 225, 230.
 150 *Ibid.* p. 273.
 151 *Ibid.* pp. 108, 162, 181, 208, 294, 532.
 152 *Ibid.* p. 4; List of Officers of the Palatinate of Chester, *31st Rep. Deputy Keeper, PRO* (1870), p. 169; Ormerod I, p. 210.
 153 *CRR*, p. 274.
 154 *Ibid.* p. 295; Ormerod I, p. 499.
 155 *CRR*, p. 506.
 156 *Ibid.* p. 230.

